Research report

INVESTIGATING GENDERED SOCIAL NORMS AFFECTING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION RELATED TO RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION IN VIETNAM

June 2020

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Investigating gendered social norms affecting women's economic participation related to recruitment and promotion in Vietnam

Foreword

A diverse and skilled labour force is crucial for businesses and economies to grow. Over the past decade, the labour force participation rate of women in Vietnam has been high relative to regional peers, and women's work has been key to Vietnam's competitiveness and GDP. The private sector is a driver of growth and prosperity, and the business case for investing in workplace gender equality is clear.

Australia is committed to supporting the Government of Vietnam's objective of promoting economic equality between men and women. This includes removing barriers and improving conditions for women in the workforce.

Australia's Investing in Women initiative is a strong component of this support to Vietnam, which includes formation of the Vietnam Business Coalition for Women's Empowerment (VBCWE). VBCWE membership brings together some of Vietnam's largest companies which have committed to implementing policies to promote equality between women and men in their workforce. This makes business sense, and has returns for workplace culture and occupational health and safety.

The passage of Vietnam's revised Labour Code in 2019 introduced a number of provisions that enhanced gender parity and protections at work. Importantly, it also acknowledged men and women's shared role in family care – which enables participation in the economy.

Legislation plays a vital role in setting standards. However, in all countries, attitudinal change is also essential for closing gender gaps in recruitment and promotion. This research by CARE International is therefore timely.

The research has confirmed that gendered social norms limit the extent to which women seek promotion, take on leadership roles or negotiate their share of unpaid caring work. This research highlights the experience of women in businesses - both offices and factories - and provides insights on how companies can address gender norms to help achieve workplace gender equality.

These challenges are not only Vietnam's to overcome. We must continue challenging social norms on women's disproportionate role at home and as carers, and the lack of women's representation in workforce leadership. In Australia, only 17.1% of CEOs, and 26.8% of company directors are women. Australia also has a persistent gender wage gap, favouring men.

I welcome the findings of this research, and its application to boost economic recovery from COVID-19. The impact of the pandemic has been different for women and men. It has led to the downsizing and suspension of sectors for women's employment, such as tourism and retail, and increased women's unpaid roles at home. As we all work towards a rapid and inclusive economic recovery, it is more important than ever to understand and address these gender constraints.

H.E Robyn Mudie
Australian Ambassador to Vietnam

Photo: @Anh Tran/CARE

Acknowledgements

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Acknowledgements

About Investing in Women

Investing in Women (IW), an initiative of the Australian Government, catalyses inclusive economic growth through women's economic empowerment in South East Asia.

IW uses innovative approaches to improve women's economic participation as employees and as entrepreneurs in the Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Myanmar through:

- Workplace Gender Equality (WGE) – IW supports Business Coalitions who work with influential businesses on shifting workplace cultures, practices and policy barriers to achieve WGE;

- Impact Investment for Women's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) – IW partners with Impact Investors and ecosystem builders to expand market opportunities for women, with a view to incentivising and catalysing access to capital for SMEs – led by and responsive to the needs of women; and

- Influencing Gender Norms – IW works with partners to positively shift attitudes and practices to support women in the world of work.

In collaboration with corporations and business leaders, impact investors, entrepreneurs and advocates, IW is working with those who are driving change for women's economic equality in our region.

About Vietnam Business Coalition for Women's Empowerment (VBCWE)

The Vietnam Business Coalition for Women's Empowerment (VBCWE) was launched in February 2018 through IW, for the purpose of pursuing gender equality in the workplace and women's economic empowerment in Vietnam.

VBCWE is made up of Vietnamese influential businesses that employ a large number of employees. They will take appropriate steps to improve gender equity in their workplace and fulfil their commitment to inspire and influence other businesses and communities in the country.

VBCWE's members must commit themselves to acting towards gender equality goals within their organisation by:

- Closing the gender pay gap;
- Progressing women into leadership and management positions;
- Improving female workplace participation;
- Investing in family-friendly working conditions; and
- Ensuring that leaders and managers drive gender equality.

About CARE International in Vietnam

CARE International in Vietnam is a creative and dynamic organisation which has worked with Vietnamese and international partner organisations since 1989 in over 300 projects. We recognise that the key to achieving equitable development outcomes lie in addressing deeply rooted, structural underlying causes of poverty and injustices which contribute to the exclusion and vulnerability of particular groups in society.

Our long term program goals in Vietnam are that Remote Ethnic Minority Women (REMW) and Socially Marginalised People (SMP) in urban areas equitably benefit from development, are resilient to changing circumstances and have a legitimate voice.

Disclaimer

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Abbreviations

EDGE	Economic Dividends for Gender Equality
IDI	In-Depth Interview
ILO	International Labour Organization
IT	Information Technology
IW	Investing in Women
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEARS	Gender Equality Assessment, Results and Strategy
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
HR	Human Resources
SNAP	Social Norms Analysis Plot
SNET	Social Norms Exploration Tool
VBCWE	Vietnam Business Coalition for Women's Empowerment

Key concepts

Photo: © Ech Phu Ho/CARE

Social norms are unspoken collective shared rules about typical (empirical expectations) and appropriate (normative expectations) behaviour within a social group. In other words, social norms are beliefs/perceptions about what others do and what others think one should do (Bicchieri 2006).

In 2015 to measure social norms, CARE USA developed the Social Norms Analysis Plot (SNAP) based on Bicchieri's synthesised theory of social norms. SNAP proposes five components of a norm that CARE feels are useful for understanding if a norm exists and signs of strength/weakness and the process of change over time.

Components of norm according to SNAP	Definition
Empirical expectations	Beliefs about what others do. For example, "I believe that most women should be economically independent".
Normative expectations	Beliefs about what others expect one to do. For example, "I believe that husbands think I should balance work and caring responsibilities".
Sanctions	Social approval (positive sanctions) or disapproval (negative sanctions) for one's actions. For example, "If I do not spend time with my family, my husband will complain a lot about me".
Sensitivity to sanctions	The extent to which a negative reaction from others, would result in a change in behaviour in the future. For example, "Most women would consider not applying for a management position if their husbands do not support them with household and caring responsibilities".
Exceptions	The circumstances under which it would be permissible to break the norm. For example, "Women can do whatever they want if their husbands and partners support their ambitions by sharing household and caring responsibilities".

Reference groups are people whose opinions matter to the individual making decisions on whether to comply with a social norm. Understanding these reference groups provides insights into which groups should be included in social norms change programming (Bicchieri et al 2016).

Factual beliefs are beliefs about how the world is; for example, the earth orbits the sun (Mackie et al 2015).

Personal attitudes are an individual's beliefs about how the world should be or how things ought to be, what is good or bad, wrong or right; for example, children ought to obey their parents (Mackie et al 2015).

Social norms are different from behaviours (what an individual does) **and attitudes** (what an individual thinks/believes). For example, a man may believe that violence against women is unacceptable (an attitude). However, he may still comply with a social norm to beat his wife, if he believes that most other men beat their wives and would think he was weak if he did not beat his wife if she disobeyed him. The interaction between many factors, including attitudes and social norms, influences behaviours (see the model on page 50).

Stereotypes are associations and beliefs about the characteristics and attributes of a group and its members that shape how people think and respond to the group; for example, all Asians are good at maths (Dovidio et al 200).

Executive summary

Despite the high proportion of women engaged in the Vietnamese labour market, gender inequalities persist - in job selection, recruitment processes, occupational structures, income and opportunities for promotion. Vietnam has a deeply segregated workforce. One in five companies report that female employees cluster around certain job functions, for example, accounting, office work and human resources (ILO 2015). The proportion of men working in management or accredited professions is higher than women in both rural and urban areas. Within management positions, women with the same education level as men manage smaller teams compared to men (ISDS 2015).

A gap remains in understanding how social norms affecting the recruitment and promotion of women are maintained, what makes people comply with these norms, and who can help shift these social norms. We also know very little about the relative strength of norms affecting women's economic participation and the interconnections between them. There is little understanding about how gendered social norms intersect with other social determinants like age, marital and children status, location and working sectors. Therefore, building on earlier research on gender norms in Vietnam, Investing in Women (IW), an initiative of the Australian Government, funded this qualitative research '*Investigating gendered social norms affecting women's economic participation related to recruitment and promotion in Vietnam*'.

Based on the literature review and IW's Influencing Gender Norms Strategy, this research selected to explore three gendered social norms related to recruitment and promotion:

- Women should be primarily responsible for child and family caretaking;[1]

- Women should not be in leadership positions within the workplace; and

- Only men should be hired for technical jobs.

Research Methodology

The research used qualitative methods to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do the three identified gendered social norms influence women's economic participation in Vietnam, in particular, recruitment and promotion?

2. What, if any, are the comparative effects of the identified norms on different groups of women, in particular women in different age groups and workplaces?

3. What are the opportunities to catalyse norms change?

The SNAP framework guided the design and analysis of 16 qualitative vignettes that were used in focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews (IDIs) to elicit responses on the five components of norms (what others do; what others expect one should do; sanctions; sensitivity to sanctions; and exceptions).

Purposive sampling was used to select participants across the following criteria: age, marital status, children status, sectors of work (factory settings and professional office settings) and location (rural and urban populations from the north and south of Vietnam). In total, 485 research participants were selected (318 female and 167 male participants) from garment and food processing factories, banking, information technology (IT) and electricity sectors working in Hanoi, Thai Nguyen, Ho Chi Minh City, Can Tho and Hau Giang.

Contributions

This research contributes to the broader literature on the role of social norms as brakes on or accelerators to women's economic participation as well as enhancing the evidence base for influencing gender norms in support of women's economic participation. CARE Vietnam conducted the research in partnership with CARE Australia and the CARE Global Gender Cohort.

The research is pioneering in two ways. Globally, in the use of a rigorous approach exploring

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social norms influencing women's economic participation, namely by applying CARE's Social Norms Analysis Plot (SNAP) methodology, and the use of SNAP in South East Asia. The research offers insights into two norms and a firmly held personal attitude that influences women's economic participation in Vietnam.

Two gendered social norms

- Women should be primarily responsible for child and family caretaking (caregiving norm).

- Women should not be in leadership positions within the workplace (leadership norm).

Attitude

- Men are more suitable for technical jobs than women.[2]

Findings

The research draws on Bicchieri's (2006) conceptualisation of social norms. Social norms are complex and multi-dimensional. Social norms are defined as unspoken collective shared rules about typical (empirical expectations) or appropriate (normative expectations) behaviour within a social group. To operationalise this theory into measurement tools for programs, CARE developed the SNAP framework. SNAP proposes several elements to gauge norm influence and strength, including: the extent to which there is broad agreement between expectations about what others do and approve of, whether sanctions are weak or severe, the sensitivity to sanctions and the existence of acceptable exceptions to break a norm.

This research explores the influence of the following two norms on female workers in factory settings, female employees in office settings, and HR staff and managers: "women should be primarily responsible for child and

family caretaking" (which we call the caregiving norm), and "women should not be in leadership positions within the workplace" (which we call the leadership norm). The research indicates that what was initially thought to be a social norm, "only men should be hired for technical jobs," is not a norm, but a firmly held attitude. For the caregiving norm, the main reference groups for female workers and employees are husbands and/or partners, and parents and/or parents-in-law. For the leadership norm, the reference groups are husbands/partners and managers (in a factory setting they are called supervisors).

We found the caregiving norm to be a strong norm. There was a clear and shared expectation between respondent groups about typical and appropriate behaviour (i.e. agreement about the presence of a norm). We also found evidence that women complied with the norm because of anticipated sanctions for violating the norm (i.e. women appear to be highly sensitive to sanctions). There were few exceptions to the norm, which also suggests that it is inflexible or rigid.

A unique finding of this research is how the caregiving norm interacts with the leadership norm. The strong influence of the caregiving norm on leadership makes it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about the presence of a leadership norm. The findings indicate that if women comply with the caregiving norm, then they do not expect to face as many sanctions for being in leadership positions. Most of the anticipated sanctions are related to the caregiving norm. However, few are linked to leadership (such as questioning leadership capabilities, gossiping, which poses a risk to a woman's reputation). The sensitivity to sanctions, however, is low, and there are many exceptions. Together, these signs indicate the presence of a weak norm: it is not widely shared, infrequently influences behaviour, and seems flexible.

Turning our attention to the influence of age, marital status, children status and sectors of work, we find that irrespective of age, the caregiving norm is strongest among women who have children under the age of two, as these women are expected to be the primary

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2   At the start of the research, we used the phrase 'Only men should be hired for technical jobs' to align with Bicchieri's theory. The research findings indicate that this is an attitude. Hence, this has been rephrased in order to distinguish this attitude from the other two social norms.

caregiver. Despite anticipated sanctions, women in their late twenties believed that sanctions should be ignored and women should follow their careers. In other words, this group personally disagreed with the norm. Thus, there may be more opportunities to consolidate norm change among women in this age group, for instance, by bridging connections among likeminded women in similar situations for peer support and broadening their reference group to be more supportive of change. There are more opportunities to facilitate change in the garment sector (support from the reference groups) and IT sector (firm personal beliefs about the need to challenge the norm resulting from strong individual agency and exposure to progressive ideas about women's value). In particular, female workers in the garment sector expressed that women should follow their careers. There are fewer opportunities to facilitate norm change in the food processing and banking sectors, as women perceive their reference groups as firmly upholding the norm.

While women in all sectors, except electricity, shared perceptions that they would be sanctioned for holding or seeking leadership positions, in some sectors the anticipation of sanctions was more pronounced. Female factory workers were more likely to anticipate that women would be sanctioned for holding leadership positions than female employees in the office settings. Women working in factories perceived that women would also face sanctions from peers, in addition to sanctions from identified reference groups (e.g. husbands, partners and managers/ supervisors). The research finds that there are more opportunities to facilitate norm change for young female millennials, who are under 25 years and in their early thirties; single women; women with no children; and women working in the garment sector. Despite strong anticipated sanctions related to caregiving roles, these women strongly believed that women should ignore sanctions from the reference groups (mostly from husbands and partners) and pursue leadership opportunities.

Workplace related factors could support compliance or non-compliance with gendered social norms. These factors include good career prospects, good remuneration packages, high job demand in the market, gender-sensitive policies at the workplace, accessible training and leadership opportunities, good teamwork and job security.

Recommendations

Based on our findings, we make three sets of recommendations to inform:

- Programing and communication approaches to change the two gendered social norms. These recommendations are most relevant for partners of IW in Vietnam, including CARE International in Vietnam, who will be implementing campaigns for influencing social norms in phase II. Other actors who are interested in social norm change will also find these recommendations useful.

- Addressing barriers to women's economic participation. As these barriers are at the macro level, recommendations for removing these barriers are more suitable for policymakers and social impact investors who commit to promoting gender equality and women empowerment.

- Actions that business partners, who are VBCWE members and those who participated in this research, can take to improve institutional gender equality policies and practices. These recommendations apply to other business partners who are interested in promoting gender equality and women economic empowerment in the workplace.

The caregiving norm appears to be a "meta-norm." Meta-norms influence multiple behaviours, so strategies to address meta-norms can affect multiple behaviours of interest. Therefore, we recommend prioritising resources on facilitating change in the caregiving norm. A related recommendation is that interventions and communication messages to facilitate change in the leadership norm should focus solely on changing the perception that women in leadership positions are not common; that in fact it is typical to find women in leadership

positions. The strong moderating effect of the caregiving norm implies that facilitating change in the leadership norm alone will be met with limited success, if any. Finally, changing social norms is only one strategy to improve women's economic participation. To drive gender equality, barriers to women's economic participation must be addressed at the same time, and strategies need to be adopted to address common barriers and those that are unique to sectors, as well as the experience of women of different ages, marital status and caregiving responsibilities.

Learnings on using SNAP

This research was the first time SNAP was adapted and used to research women's economic participation in South East Asia. SNAP has typically been used to understand social norms relating to health and gender-based violence in a community context. The research demonstrated that SNAP could be adapted to different thematic areas as social norms are prevalent across all aspects of society. By using the SNAP framework, this research has produced valuable results about the opportunities for norm change.

This research confirms the advantages of using vignettes of hypothetical scenarios (rather than directly asking respondents) about constructs like expectations about what others do or approve of in specific situations. Finally, while the research was able to confirm who the reference groups were, it was not able to explore interactions among reference groups and people making decisions on whether to comply with a norm (decision makers). This relationship can be explored through social network analysis.

Future research

The inclusion of social network analysis, resources permitting, will enable exploring the influence/interaction between an individual reference group members in the decision maker's network and the way these individuals influence decisions to comply or not comply with a norm.

Such analysis will help us to identify the weak points within social networks for targeting norm change interventions.

In terms of other factors that influence norms, regional, migration, and company ownership (state-owned vs. private; domestic vs. foreign investment) can be explored in more detail.

Finally, the scale of the research can be expanded by replicating the study across more sectors to provide a comprehensive picture of how social norms around caregiving and leadership affect women's economic participation in Vietnam and provide sector specific strategies for changing these norms.

This research was undertaken before the COVID-19 pandemic and does not take into account the economic disruptions brought about by the spread of the virus. However, the findings of this research are relevant in helping stakeholders ensure a gender-equal response to the economic challenges resulting from COVID-19. Vietnam, like much of the world, is facing multiple challenges from the pandemic. Economic growth has declined, particularly in key sectors including manufacturing, retail, and services. The impact of COVID-19 has also been gendered. Women are over-represented in temporary or part-time employment, and therefore are more at risk of losing their jobs compared to men. Women also comprise the majority of employees in the services sector, which has been particularly hit by restrictions to curb the spread of the virus. The crisis has also exacerbated women's double burden in balancing family and work responsibilities. In this context, it is crucial for companies to understand the benefits that workplace gender equality brings, both to better protect their employees from the immediate impacts of the economic downturn, and to position themselves for stronger performance through the period of recovery.

Introduction

Research background

Despite the high proportion of women engaged in the Vietnamese labour market, gender inequalities persist - in job selection, recruitment processes, occupational structures, income and opportunities for promotion. Vietnam has a deeply segregated workforce. One in five companies report that female employees cluster around certain job functions, for example, accounting, office work and human resources (ILO 2015). The proportion of men working in management or accredited professions is higher than women in both rural and urban areas. Within management positions, women with the same education level as men manage smaller teams compared to men (ISDS 2015).

A gap remains in understanding how social norms affecting the recruitment and promotion of women are maintained, what makes people comply with these norms, and who can help shift these social norms. We also know very little about the relative strength of norms affecting women's economic participation and the interconnections between them. There is little understanding about how gendered social norms intersect with other social determinants like age, marital and children status, location and working sectors. Therefore, building on earlier research on gender norms in Vietnam, Investing in Women (IW), funded this qualitative research *'Investigating gendered social norms affecting women's economic participation related to recruitment and promotion in Vietnam'*.

Investing in Women, an initiative of the Australian Government, catalyses inclusive economic growth through women's economic empowerment in South East Asia. IW aims to influence the enabling environment to promote women's economic empowerment in the Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam and Myanmar through three outcome pathways:

- Workplace Gender Equality;
- Impact Investment for Women's Small and Medium Enterprises; and
- Influencing Gender Norms.

This qualitative research funded by IW aims to gain deeper insights about the influence of gendered social norms on women's economic participation and workplace gender equality, in particular on the recruitment and promotion of women in Vietnam. This research contributes to the broader literature on the role of social norms as brakes on or accelerators to women's economic participation as well as enhancing the evidence base for influencing gender norms in support of women's economic empowerment.

CARE International in Vietnam conducted this research with technical support from CARE Australia and CARE International's Global Gender Cohort. This research is path breaking in two ways – in the use of CARE's Social Norms Analysis Plot (SNAP) methodology to explore social norms influencing women's economic participation and the use of SNAP in South East Asia.[3] The research provided an opportunity to adapt SNAP to a new thematic area and geographic context.

Research focus: gendered social norms in recruitment and promotion

A review of literature conducted during the development of the research proposal found evidence that gendered social norms negatively affect women's recruitment and promotion opportunities. Both employers and employees uphold and abide by gendered social norms. An ILO study found that apart from academic qualifications and work experience, the most important factors when it comes to recruitment decisions by employers are the availability to work outside regular working hours, marital status and female candidates' plans to have children (ILO 2015). Gendered social norms about women's and men's family responsibilities affect their choices regarding employment. For example, women aged 25 and older tend to choose jobs which are closer to home and which gives them more time with the family (ISDS 2015). This limits women's geographical mobility and prevents them from seeking better

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3   SNAP has been used in over a dozen countries in Africa, South Asia, and Latin America to unpack gendered norms related to violence against women, early marriage, nutrition, and girls' education.

jobs further afield, compared with men of a similar age. Decisions regarding jobs and careers are constrained because women know or assume that their partners will not equally share the burden of unpaid care work. In contrast, men do not face any difficulties in making choices about their place of work as long as the job gives them a reasonable income and meets their health needs and skill sets (ISDS 2015).

Promotion opportunities are unequally distributed between women and men. Men have greater access to promotions and attending conferences/workshops (ISDS 2015). Ethnic minority women and women from rural areas are more disadvantaged when it comes to recruitment, benefits and promotion compared with urban Kinh women (General Statistics Office 2012).

Gendered perceptions about leadership traits restrict women's opportunities for promotion and give men an unequal advantage. In general, men are perceived as working more effectively and having more technical and management skills compared to women. Women's subordinate position within the household carries over into the workplace where men are perceived as 'natural' leaders. Men are seen as more decisive, open-minded and with a broader worldview, while women are considered complicated, emotional and narrower in vision. In a patriarchal society where male superiority and privilege is generally accepted, it is difficult for a woman to supervise a male colleague or be in a more senior position than her husband (UNDP 2012).

There is some evidence to suggest that some norms are shifting. For instance, according to IW, a 2018 survey of urban millennial women and men in Vietnam indicates that an increasing percentage of men (70%) and women (67%) think that men and women can do the same jobs (IW 2019b). A gap remains in understanding how social norms affecting the recruitment and promotion of women are maintained, what makes people comply with these norms, and who can help shift these social norms.

To make the invisible visible and unpack the above areas of silence, we used the SNAP

methodology to better understand how gendered social norms affect women's economic participation in Vietnam. This research drew on Investing in Women's Influencing Gender Norms Strategy, which identified four norms[4] as significantly affecting women's economic participation (IW 2019). Based on the literature review and IW's Influencing Gender Norms Strategy, this research selected to explore three gendered social norms related to recruitment and promotion:

1. Women should be primarily responsible for child and family caretaking;

2. Women should not be in leadership positions within the workplace; and

3. Only men should be hired for technical jobs.

These norms were selected for two reasons. First, the literature identifies these norms as significantly affecting women's economic participation in both factory and professional sector contexts. Second, the exploratory nature of the research, and resource and time constraints made restricting the number of norms selected for analysis a reasonable research strategy.

The way the selected norms were phrased was deliberate and aimed to help researchers become clear about how norms were measured. These selected norms were not used *per se* in vignettes or in the interview guide with research participants.

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4   According to the Influencing Gender Norms strategy (Investing in Women 2019a), in phase II four norms will be targeted:

- Women's primary role perceived as carer for children and family members, homemaker.
- Men's perceived role as primary income earner/ provider for the family.
- Perceptions that certain job types are specific to women and others to men, leading to occupational segregation.
- Perceptions of women as better in supportive roles and men as better leaders.

Theoretical overview of social norms

Photo: © CARE

The section on key concepts, at the start of the report, defines the terminology associated with social norms research. While words like sanctions are used in everyday language, in this research, we use such terms to mean very specific things. Therefore, in this section, we once again draw attention to the key concepts relating to social norms and what they mean.

Social norms are complex and multi-dimensional. While interpretations vary between the disciplines, social norms are defined as unspoken collective shared rules about typical (empirical expectations) or appropriate (normative expectations) behaviour within a social group (Heise and Manji 2016). More specifically, norms are beliefs/ perceptions about what others do (empirical expectations) and what others think one should do (normative expectations). According to Bicchieri (2006), the existence of both empirical expectation/s and normative expectation/s signals the presence of a social norm. In other words, social norms are made up of expectations about what behaviour is typical (what others do) AND what is appropriate (what others think one should do).

Using Bicchieri's synthesised theory of social norms as a base, CARE USA developed the Social Norms Analysis Plot (SNAP) framework, in 2015, to measure social norms. The SNAP framework proposed five components of a norm that CARE felt were useful for understanding not only if a norms exists, but also signs of strength/weakness and, over time, change: (1) expectations of typical behaviour (empirical expectations); (2) expectations of appropriate behaviour (normative expectations); (3) sanctions; (4) sensitivity to sanctions; and (5) exceptions.

Table 1: CARE's Social Norms Analysis Plot (SNAP) framework

Components of norm as per SNAP	Examples of SNAP responses
Empirical expectations (typical behaviour or what others do)	"I believe that most women should be economically independent".
Normative expectations (appropriate behaviour or what others expect one to do)	"I believe that husbands think I should balance work and caring responsibilities".
Sanctions (social approval or disapproval of one's actions).	"If I do not spend time with my family, my husband will complain a lot about me".
Sensitivity to sanctions (the extent to which a negative reaction from others would result in a change in behaviour in the future)	"Most women would consider not applying for a management position if their husbands do not support them with household and caring responsibilities," indicates a high sensitivity to sanction.
Exceptions (under what circumstances would it be permissible to break the norm)	"Women can do whatever they want if their husbands and partners support their ambitions by sharing household and caring responsibilities".

Adapted from Stefanik & Hwang. (2017). Applying Theory to Practice: CARE's Journey Piloting Social Norms Measures for Gender Programming.

Reference groups or 'reference networks' (for example, parents, family elders, friends) hold a social norm in place. Reference groups are people whose opinions matter to the individual deciding what is typical or appropriate behaviour and whether or not to comply with the social norm (Bicchieri et al 2016). Tightly connected social groups will often have more deeply entrenched norms. The more closely connected the people are within a group, the more powerfully the group norm will be enforced (Bicchieri et al 2016). Thus, understanding these reference groups is critical for identifying which groups should be targeted for changing gendered social norms.

The anticipation of social sanctions (rewards/disapprovals) for one's actions often keeps norms in place, even though in some cases this belief in the existence of sanctions is unsubstantiated (Mackie et al 2015). Norm-breakers may face social backlash, which usually entails losing power and status in a community (Stefanik and Hwang 2017).

Sanctions work in complex ways. The assumption that unequal power maintains a harmful norm may not always be correct and could mislead programme design. Those who sanction and those who are sanctioned may belong to the same reference group. Reference group members can sanction each other for failure to sanction non-compliance with a norm. For example, a group of men can mock and ridicule a member who does not discipline his wife if she disobeys him. Alternatively, dominant social groups in society can sanction those in a subordinate position for non-compliance. For example, a mother-in law can discipline her daughter in-law for not obeying her husband. Those in subordinate groups can sanction each other if the norm has been internalised. For example, other women discipline a peer for not obeying her husband by refusing to associate with her.

Using SNAP as a guide, norm strength, including its rigidity and influence is interpreted by the extent to which there is broad agreement between typical and appropriate behaviours, whether sanctions are weak or severe, the sensitivity to sanctions and the existence of acceptable exceptions for defying a norm. Sensitivity to sanctions is a unique contribution that SNAP makes to our understanding of the influence of norms (specifically the expectation of sanctions) on behaviour (Stefanik and Hwang 2017).

Research framework and methodology

Photo: © Giang Vu/CARE

Research questions

This research used qualitative methods to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do the three identified gendered social norms influence women's economic participation in Vietnam, in particular, recruitment and promotion?

- How strong are these norms? What sanctions hold these norms in place? Do the sanctions matter and are they influential enough to compel compliance with the norm?

- Who are the key reference groups that hold these norms in place?

2. What, if any, are the comparative effects of the identified norms on different groups of women, in particular women in different age groups and workplaces?

- How are the social norms similar or different for factory workers and professional sector employees?

- What factors (such as age, marital status) seem to affect how people experience social norms related to recruitment and promotion?

3. What are the opportunities to catalyse norms change?

- Are there any signs of weakness in the social norms (e.g. disagreements about normative or empirical expectations within or among focus group respondents)?

- Are there exception for people or circumstances when it is more acceptable to transgress norms?

- What factors influence sensitivity to social sanctions and support changes?

CARE's Social Norms Analysis Plot (SNAP) framework

This research used CARE's SNAP framework to confirm the existence of specific norms, understand norm strength (rigidity and influence), and opportunities to facilitate norm change. Signs of strength under each of the five norm components can be analysed by taking into account the following questions:

- Is there broad agreement/shared perceptions about typical and appropriate behaviours?

- Are the sanctions weak or severe?

- Are individuals, who are deciding whether to comply with a norm, highly sensitive to the sanctions? Are the sanctions strong enough to prevent people from deviating from the norm?

- Are there any/many acceptable exceptions to defy the norm (flexibility/rigidity)?

Table 2: CARE's SNAP framework, adapted to highlight signs of norm strength

Components of norm as per SNAP	Definition	Understanding social norm strength
Empirical expectations	Beliefs about what others do (typical behaviour)	Responses reflect a shared perception of what people believe others are doing The extent of conformity in expectations among homogenous groups and across the different respondent groups
Normative expectations	Beliefs about what others expect me to do (appropriate behaviour)	Responses reflect a shared perception of what others expect respondents to do The extent of conformity among homogenous groups and across different respondent groups Alignment between empirical and normative expectations
Sanctions	Anticipated social approval (positive sanctions) or disapproval (negative sanctions) for one's actions – specifically from others whose opinions matter to me	Negative sanction(s) identified Severity of sanction Likelihood of sanctions being enacted Consistency in the anticipation of sanctions across groups
Sensitivity to sanctions	The extent to which a negative reaction from others, would result in a change in behaviour in the future	Responses reflect the extent to which there will be non-compliance with a norm in the face of sanctions
Exceptions	Under what circumstances would it be permissible to break the norm	Exceptions allows individuals to break a norm Types of individuals who deviate from the norm Responses about individuals who are impervious to social sanctions

Adapted from Applying Theory to Practice: CARE's Journey Piloting Social Norms Measures for Gender Programming (Stefanik and Hwang 2017)

As mentioned earlier, we did not directly ask research participants about the three selected social norms; namely women should be primarily responsible for child and family caretaking, women should not be in leadership positions within the workplace, and only men should be hired for technical jobs. Instead, the SNAP framework guided the design and analysis of qualitative vignettes that were used in focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews (IDIs) to elicit responses on the five components of norms (what others do;

what others expect one should do; sanctions; sensitivity to sanctions; and exceptions). Vignettes are short stories about imaginary characters in specific contexts. They include guiding questions that invite people to respond to the story in a structured way (see Box 1 for an example of a vignette developed for the food processing sector). A total of 16 vignettes were developed.

Box 1: Example of a vignette developed for the food processing sector focussing on recruitment

Vignette 1.2.

Hoa used to be a worker in a canned-food processing factory. She stopped working for 2 years to give birth and raise her child. Hoa's husband is the only income earner. His salary is just enough to support the whole family. Now Hoa wants to return to work. She has seen a large seafood processing company in Ho Chi Minh City recruiting workers for the freezing process. She feels confident that she can do this job due to relevant experience from her previous job. However, the company is about 20km away from her house. She will have to do shift work and probably take the night shift. She is thinking about if she will apply for this position. She talks to her husband (Binh) about this.

Note: For each social norm, sector and type of participants (e.g. workers, office staff, men, women, decision makers, reference groups), the content of vignettes was tailored to ensure relevance to the context.

character's behaviour (sensitivity to sanctions). A possible sign of the perceived strength of sanctions is whether publicly defying the norm is even perceived to be an option. Lastly, questions explored if there are any situations when it is acceptable to act outside the norm. Are there individuals or groups who deviate from the norm, and what makes it possible for them to do so? Are there individuals or groups who face less social pressure for deviating from the social norm, or who are more resistant to social pressure, and if so, why? After tool testing, vignettes were revised for data collection (see Annex 5).

Research sampling methods: locations, sectors and participants

Purposive sampling was used to select participants across the following criteria: age, marital status, children status, and sectors of work (factory settings and professional office settings). Purposive sampling is the deliberate selection of a participant due to the qualities the participant possesses (Research Methodology 2019). Simply put, the researcher decides what needs to be known and finds people who can provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience.

CARE's experience has shown that telling a fictional, yet relatable story, is a more straightforward way to ask respondents about their social expectations and potentially reduce socially desirable responses. The vignettes introduced a locally relevant, hypothetical scenario where a specific social norm would take effect and lead the main character to a decision point. Following the reading of the vignette, the respondents were presented with semi-structured discussion questions to surface social expectations and explore agreements with these expectations from the main character's reference groups.

The vignette narration continued with the lead character deciding to act against the norm. This was followed by questions exploring the anticipation of sanctions for non-compliance and if these sanctions would influence the

Hanoi
(n=165)
Thai Nguyen
(n=73)
HCMC
(n=171)
Hau Giang
(n=35)
Can Tho
(n=41)
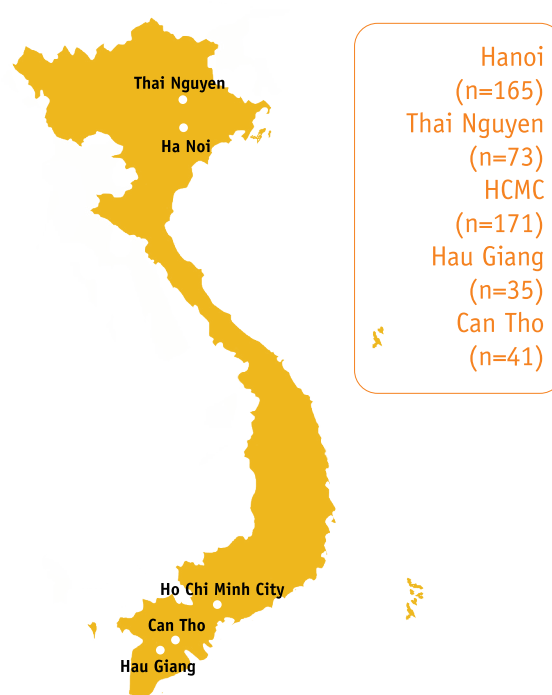
Research locations and sectors

The literature indicates that people living in rural areas are more likely to stereotype women's work (as opposed to those living in urban areas). Further, people living in Northern Vietnam have stronger gender biases (ISDS 2015). To enable comparisons, the research explored both rural and urban populations in north and south Vietnam, namely, Thai Nguyen and Hanoi in the north and Can Tho, Hau Giang and Ho Chi Minh City in the south.

Regarding sectors, garment and food processing were chosen for the factory context, representing one that is female dominated (garment) and the other that has a greater gender balance (food processing). Banking, IT and electricity were chosen for the professional office context. The IT and electricity sectors are male-dominated and the banking sector has greater gender balance. CARE Vietnam has an established working relationship with garment factories. This enabled the research team to more easily access workers

in this sector. Further, the Vietnam Business Coalition for Women's Empowerment (VBCWE), who participated in the research design, recommended relevant research sites for data collection.

In each province, the research team collected data from workers from a factory setting (garment and food processing) and an office setting (bank, IT and electricity). In one province, the local authority requested a meeting to help them understand the purpose of the research and the team's expectations for support. Despite the briefing, CARE was still unable to gain the necessary support from this local authority to collect data in an office setting. The research team, therefore, made a substitution and collected data from the banking sector in Can Tho province. The substitution helped the research to produce comparable findings across sectors between the Northern and Southern provinces. In total, the research was conducted in five research sites.

Table 3: Summary of research locations and sectors

Sector	Hanoi	Thai Nguyen	Ho Chi Minh City	Can Tho	Hau Giang
Garment		x	x		x
Food processing	x		x		
Electricity	x				
Bank	x	x	x	x	
Information technology	x		x		

Research participants

Purposive sampling was used to invite people to participate in this research, both through professional networks and personal connections of the research team. Two groups were sampled for this research:

1. People making decisions on whether to comply with the identified norms.

2. Reference groups whose opinions matter most to people that are making decisions on norm compliance.

Based on the literature review, the experience of the CARE Vietnam gender programing team and the results of research tool testing we found that:

- The people making decisions on whether to comply with the identified norms are factory workers, people working in the professional sectors, managers, and human resource (HR) staff.[5]

- The main reference group members are: immediate family members (husbands/partners, parents/parents-in-law), managers and senior managers, (see Annex 3 for information on reference groups and people making decisions on whether to comply with each of the three norms).

Table 4: Overview of sample groups

Sample group	Who	Description and rationale
People making decisions on norm compliance	Factory workers and professional employees	According to the literature review, gender stereotypes are more embedded in older age groups. Marital and motherhood status is linked to gender stereotyping. FGDs with women working in factories from two age groups: 18-24 (likely to be single) and 25-35 years and above (likely to be married and have children). FGDs with women working in the professional sector from two age groups: 22-30 and 31-40 years and above. Those employed in the professional sector are often university graduates and tend to get married and have children later.[6]
	HR staff and managers[7]/ supervisors	IDIs with HR staff and managers/supervisors (from the targeted sectors – banking, IT, electricity, garment and food processing factories) involved in recruitment and promotion based on their availability and willingness to participate in the research.
Reference groups	Husbands/ partners, parents and parents in law	IDIs with husbands/partners, parents and parents-in-law of women working in factory or professional sector, covering reference groups for married and unmarried workers. The research used both IDIs and FGDs with men as reference groups.
	Managers Senior managers	Managers can be both decision makers and the reference group of female workers and employees. Managers were engaged in IDIs. Senior managers were the reference group of HR staff and managers and were engaged in IDIs.

The research team spent one day in Hanoi and one day in Hai Phong province to test the tools and assumptions about reference groups. Based on findings of the tool testing, the research design and tools were finalised. Field data collection took place in two periods; the first was from 27th December 2019 to 9th January

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5   Throughout the document, HR and managers are referred to as decision makers (i.e. people making decisions whether to comply with a norm) with regard to social norm compliance. HR and managers are the ones who decide whether or not they will adhere to a social norm during recruitment and promotion process. Their decision to follow a social norm is influenced by two factors: i) whether they believe that most people in HR and management positions will take child care responsibility into account when they recruit a female candidate and ii) whether they believe that their senior managers also expect them to consider child care responsibility of a female candidate because it can affect her work performance. This research only explores HR's and managers' perceptions and decisions to adhere to social norms. We did not collect data about their decisions to recruit or promote.

6   From the section on findings, sometimes we use 'millennials' to refer to young people from 18 to 39 years old. According to William (2018), the "millennial" label is applied to a generation with birth years of 1981 through 1997 (e.g. from 23 to 39 years old). As many factory workers in Vietnam start working from the age of 18, we have increased the age range to be from 18-39 years after consulting with Investing in Women.

7   Managers is the language which has been used in the office setting and supervisors are used in the factory setting.

2020 and the second was between 27th February and 3rd March 2020.[8] In total, 485 research participants were recruited (318 female and 167 male participants). The detailed sample size of each sector is presented in Annex 4. Detailed information about the demographics of the research participants can be found in Annex 5.

Table 5: Summary of sample size by sector and location

Research participants	Hanoi				Thai Nguyen		Ho Chi Minh City				Hau Giang	Can Tho	Sub-total
	*EL	Bank	Food	IT	**GM	Bank	GM	Food	IT	Bank	GM	Bank	
Husbands/partners	0	1	3	1	3	4	3	4	1	0	1	0	**21**
Parents/parents-in-law	0	0	0	3	1	2	1	4	0	0	1	2	**14**
Factory/professional workers	26	12	41	56	42	13	37	42	32	25	30	35	**391**
Managers and HR staff	1	3	3	6	4	1	4	4	5	1	2	2	**36**
Senior managers	0	3	2	4	2	1	1	2	2	3	1	2	**23**
Total by sector	27	19	49	70	52	21	46	56	40	29	35	41	
Total by location	165				73		171				35	41	485

*EL: Electricity; **GM: Garment

All IDIs and FGDs were conducted and recorded in Vietnamese. Field notes/memos kept by the enumerators were also analysed. An inductive approach was taken to content analysis focusing on extraction of themes. The SNAP framework guided the design of tools and data analysis with the focus on identifying typical and appropriate behaviours, sanctions, sensitivity to sanctions and exceptions. Data coding and analysis was conducted in Vietnamese using NVivo 12.

Ethical considerations

Informed consent was obtained from the research participants before conducting FGDs and IDIs. Before commencing FGDs and IDIs, participants were fully briefed on their rights, the purpose of the study, the data collection procedures, as well as the potential risks and benefits of participation. To ensure confidentiality and privacy, all FGDs and IDIs took place in a private setting. The data collected was de-identified during analysis and reporting to protect the identity of informants.

Research participants were paid a small allowance to compensate them for their time for participating in this study.

Research participants who disclosed traumatic experiences or expressed a need for emotional or psychological support were referred to support services upon their consent. Only one case of gender-based violence was disclosed. A research team member offered to refer the individual to a support service, but this person declined to seek support.

Research limitations

Due to time constraints, data had to be collected during a peak business period around Christmas and before the Vietnamese New Year. This affected the recruitment of businesses and the availability of senior managers, in particular. To recruit the required number of research participants, CARE took several actions including, one field visit from 27th December 2019 to 9th January 2020 and a subsequent

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8   The period from 27th December 2019 to 9th January 2020 was the peak business time for the garment, banking and IT sectors. During this time, the research team recruited only 412 participants. The research team was not able to start the second trip until after the traditional New Year due to the outbreak of COVID-19.

field visit from 27th February to 3rd March 2020. Accessing senior managers to gain deeper insights into why women are often promoted to low and mid-level management but not to the top-level proved to be a challenge, as one requires organisational connections to leadership which we did not have. Time constraints made it difficult to leverage networks to gain such access.

Even with purposive sampling, access to research participants can be challenging. In this research, employers requested the participant selection criteria in advance of the research so that they could assign relevant workers and organise interview times that did not affect the production lines. This meant that we did not always get the diverse sample we would have liked. There is also a degree of uncertainty regarding what information workers share with their employers (for example, workers may not disclose their sexual orientation and gender identity or their marital status or invisible disabilities) as they may perceive that disclosing personal information may lead to discrimination.

We have already detailed the challenge we faced with one local authority being unsupportive of the research. In this province, we encountered another issue by local authorities observing, uninvited, almost all the IDIs and FGDs. The presence of local authorities could have made research participants in this location feel reluctant to share their personal perceptions, particularly if they differed from the prevailing perspectives deemed acceptable in their locality and culture. Since the research triangulates analysis from a large sample size for qualitative research, the effects on data quality are mitigated.

The research also faced challenges in collecting data on the norm "only men should be hired for technical jobs". First, the concept of "technical

jobs" varies across sectors. For example, in garment and food processing factories, technical jobs are perceived as operating a system (e.g. electrical systems or freezing systems) or a large machine (manoeuvring a cutting machine or an oven) or a job requiring physical strength to lift heavy items (e.g. a hot industrial cooking pot). These do not apply to the banking sector. Since we discovered this during the testing of the tools, the research team made the decision only to explore the two social norms, women should be primarily responsible for child and family caretaking and women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace, in FGDs in the banking sector. As detailed earlier, to allow us to explore the norm related to technical jobs, electricity and IT sectors were added as research sites. The sample size from the electricity sector was small because only one company in Hanoi agreed to support data collection. This electricity company could only organise about three fourths of the sample size (27/32) because data collection time was very close to the Vietnamese New Year. Although data from the IT sector provided valuable insights into the norm on technical jobs, we are unable to make comparisons across sectors given the different perceptions about what constitutes "technical jobs." Furthermore, there is insufficient data on the social norm that only men should be hired for technical jobs, from all sectors, except IT.

Research findings

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Research findings are presented for each norm and follow the structure of the SNAP framework, expectations about typical and appropriate behaviour, sanctions, sensitivity to sanctions and exceptions. This is followed by comparing the influence of age and marital status on the norm. Regional differences, if any, are explored in the Discussion section. The findings on each norm begin with a summary that succinctly captures the significant findings and is followed by a more detailed analysis. The implications of findings are explored in the Discussion section of this report.

Social norm: Women should be primarily responsible for child and family caretaking (caregiving norm)

The findings indicate the clear presence of the caregiving norm in the study sites. In other words, most respondents believed that:

1) women are taking primary responsibility for family caretaking roles, and 2) most other people believe that women should be primarily responsible for family caretaking. The presence of anticipated sanctions (such as women being prevented from undertaking paid work or the anticipated use of violence) ensures compliance and the high sensitivity to sanctions contributes to the influence of this norm over women's behaviours. There are few exceptions to the norm. Taken together, these signs indicate the presence of a strong norm, it is widely shared, often influences behaviour, and seems rigid or fixed.

The vignette for this norm presented the story of a woman making decisions about applying for a job or applying for a promotion that would result in less time with the family (this could be because the job requires travel or taking on a night shift. See Annex 6 for details on the vignettes used).

Table 6: Summary of key research findings

Social Norm: Women should be primarily responsible for child and family caretaking (caregiving norm)	
Strength of norm: STRONG	
People making decisions on whether to comply with the norm	Female factory workers and professional employees HR staff and managers
Reference groups:	Husbands/partners, parents/parents-in-law Senior managers
Components of norm as per SNAP	**Research findings**
Beliefs about what others do -Typical behaviour	Women prioritise caregiving roles
Beliefs about what others think one should do - Appropriate behaviour	Reference groups expect that women should prioritise caregiving roles
Sanctions	Women report being prevented from undertaking paid work; anticipated use of violence
Sensitivity to sanctions (opportunities for norm change)	Overall, high sensitivity to sanctions. Women would comply with the norm, if they encountered disapproval from the reference groups.
Exceptions (opportunities for norm change)	Reference groups strongly hold the norm in place. Very few of them expect women not to follow prescribed gender roles and norms. Challenging the norm is dependent on a woman's individual agency and determination.

Expectations of typical and appropriate behaviours

Theoretically, widespread agreement about typical and appropriate behaviours, within and across the groups, indicates the presence of a norm. In other words, most female respondents believed that: 1) women are taking primary responsibility for family caretaking roles, and 2) most female respondents and their reference groups (e.g. husbands, partners, parents, and parents-in-law) believe that women should be primarily responsible for caregiving.

Research participants shared the perception that the lead character in the vignette should not apply for jobs requiring working extra hours, taking night shifts, or frequently traveling far from home. This norm shapes the personal attitudes of the reference groups who expect a woman to be a good wife, a good mother, a good cook, respect the elderly, be gentle, nice, calm, tactful in dealing with family relationships and dress appropriately. While women are expected to have a stable job, work hard and to be economically independent, they must not earn more money than their husbands.

Female workers and employees in all sectors expressed the perception that the lead character in the vignettes would prioritise their caring responsibilities over formal employment opportunities explored in this research, when the two came into conflict. They perceived that the reference groups expected women to balance their career and caring responsibilities, and many of the respondents expressed pride in their ability to balance two jobs - one at work and one at home.

Across sectors and locations, HR staff and managers consistently shared the perception that most people in their positions would not consider women if they applied for jobs requiring working extra hours, taking night shifts, or frequently traveling far from home. HR staff and managers perceived that senior managers (their reference group) expected them not to process job applications from women if it would affect their caretaking roles. Interviews with senior managers (the reference group), confirmed that these perceptions about their preferences significantly affected recruitment decisions as they shaped their personal beliefs around recruitment and promotions. Senior managers, for example, stated that married female staff with children were unable to give their undivided attention to work because of family and childcare responsibilities. This was seen as affecting the productivity of these individual staff as well as of the whole team.

Managers seemed to have strong expectations about what their supervisors expected in terms of upholding the caregiving norm through their staffing decisions, compared to HR staff. This is concerning, as managers and supervisors are often responsible for recruitment and promotion decisions. HR staff typically perform administrative functions and process paperwork according to labour laws and policies, which are likely to codify measures to counteract biases and discriminatory practices.

Reference groups and people making decisions on whether to comply

Among the reference group for this norm, husbands were the strongest norm holders. Factory workers, professional sector employees, managers and HR staff in the factory and in professional organisations who were married also said that parents-in-law (reference group), also strongly upheld the norm. When they moved away from living with extended families, the sensitivity to sanctions from parents-in-law was less than when living with them in the same house.

"It is very restrictive if we live with parents in law, i.e. women would have to wake up very early to do housework. The elderly will grumble when women have to stay after working hours to take care of customers. They might question why women should be involved in this kind of work. It is easier if we live in our own place. We can come to visit them once in a while and prepare food to bring over.

(Male manager, 41 years old, HCMC, food processing).

Sanctions

Research participants perceived that women would experience most sanctions when they expressed that they did not want to be solely responsible for household and child caring work. Women expected their reference groups, e.g. partners, husbands and parents-in-law to sanction them. The most common forms of sanctions expressed by women included arguments among couples; husbands using children and family happiness to put pressure on women; complaints from parents-in-law; husbands stopping women from doing her work; not sharing childcare responsibility; and domestic violence.

At work, HR staff and managers in compliance with the caregiving norm, expressed that they would not consider job applications from women on merit and may remove them from the assessment process. As a result of these sanctions at home and in the workplace, women perceived that it is not possible to be a "good wife" and a have a good career at the same time.

"If a woman is successful with her career, she will become single. It's a trade-off.

(Female staff, 34 years old, Thai Nguyen province, banking).

Women are faced with a difficult choice. On the one hand, not complying with the norm results contributes to long-lasting stress and tension in the family and divorce/ break-up of the relationship. On the other hand, complying with the norm results in financial dependence on the husband. Some women stated that they made decisions to delay getting married and having children.

The findings provide evidence to suggest that when men made decisions not to comply with the norm, they did not face any sanctions (e.g. if they did not think that women should be responsible for caregiving or if they perceived themselves as caregivers). HR staff and managers did not discuss any sanctions they may face if they recruited women without worrying about women's caregiving responsibility. They did not expect that they would face sanctions from their reference group (senior managers) for not upholding the norm. The behaviour of HR staff and managers seems to be motivated by their own attitudes. However, as we have pointed out earlier, in the absence of overt sanctions it is possible that the *anticipation of sanctions* is so strong that HR staff and managers do not want to risk their careers by deviating from the norm.

Sensitivity to Sanctions

To assess the sensitivity to sanctions, research participants were asked to share their perceptions about whether the lead character in the vignettes would change her decision if her reference groups displayed disapproval. Information about sensitivity to sanctions provide insights on whether anticipated social sanctions are strong enough to influence behaviour and compel compliance. Information about sensitivity to sanctions also helps in assessing opportunities for norm change.[9]

Overall, women shared the perception that the lead character would change her decision and comply with the caregiving norm if she encountered disapproval from the reference groups (e.g. husbands, partners, parents and parents-in-law). This indicates a high sensitivity to sanctions, which in turn suggests a strong norm – that is, the norm appears to wield influence over behaviour. Some of the strategies that women recalled in FGDs and IDIs to comply with the norm included, working harder to complete both roles (one in the workplace and one at home), arranging external support (e.g. having a nanny to share caring responsibilities) or letting go of the paid work opportunity and waiting for another one. Very few women perceived that the lead character would be ready to risk her marriage to pursue her career ambitions.

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9   When we say 'more opportunities for norm change', we mean 'more likely to achieve success with norm change interventions' among the groups who have low sensitivity to sanctions (e.g. who seem to have strong agency or live in circumstances that enable them to follow their career ambition despite anticipated sanctions). Program interventions need to spend more resources and use different strategies to challenge norms among groups who have high sensitivity to sanctions compared to groups with low sensitivity to sanctions.

Exceptions

Another approach to assessing opportunities to facilitate norm change is to explore exceptions, these are circumstances allowing people to deviate from the norm. Women perceived that the lead character in the vignette could go against the norm if she had support from her husband or partner (reference group), in the form of sharing household and caregiving responsibilities. In other words, support from the reference group could encourage non-compliance with the norm. Very few male reference group members agreed with women who said that men should share household and caregiving responsibilities and that women could work extra hours, take night shifts or frequently travel far from home for work. This group of men also told us that they support a woman's decision to seek jobs with higher income or for career development. Few of these men acknowledged the need to change men's perceptions and expectations around gender roles that would allow women not to comply with a strongly held norm. For example, one man told us:

"If men are still considered the breadwinner and are more valued than women, gender equality are just empty words.

(Husband of a worker, 30 years old, Hanoi, food processing).

Women from families where parents and parents-in-law (reference group) do not expect their children to follow gendered social norms find it easier to make their own decisions. A few research participants told us that parents-in-law had changed their expectations of women regarding caregiving responsibilities. Parents-in-law understood that daughters-in-law want to be financially independent and have their own career. They cannot expect that daughters-in-law will devote themselves to taking care of the in-laws. For example, one female garment worker told us:

"Before the eldest daughter-in-law was expected to stay home to look after parents-in-law. Now this expectation has changed.

(Female worker, 33 years old, HCMC, garment).

Other female garment workers provided these examples of how parents had changed their expectations of women's roles:

"Before parents often advise their daughters to obey and accept husbands. Now they say that if their daughters cannot bear it anymore, they can leave the relationship.

(Female worker, 26 years old, HCMC, garment).

"Parents understand that their daughter cannot have a happy life if the husband is not a good man.

(Female worker, 40 years old, HCMC, garment).

Women felt that they also have an important role in changing norms. They described the need for women to feel confident about their skills and capabilities, having dreams and ambitions, being decisive to achieve their dreams, and not feel pressure to marry. Women who were married, had no children or had children above the age of two, placed greater emphasis on this agency than those who were single or had small children. The following quotes are indicative of the sentiments expressed by women:

"As the whole of society becomes more progressive, women are more interested in gaining more knowledge, becoming stronger and more independent. They don't need to rely on men anymore.

(Female worker, 37 years old, HCMC, garment).

"I don't accept my husband playing games while I'm cooking and looking after children at the same time.

(Female worker, 22 years old, Hanoi, food processing).

*"**Some** women have a perception that after marriage their husbands will look after them. Now more and more women understand that they are the only ones who can look after themselves.*

(Female staff, 26 years old, Hanoi, IT).

Overall married women agreed that the lead character in the vignette would comply with the caregiving norm, if she faced disapproval from her reference group. This is consistent with the finding above that having children influences women's decision-making. However, married women also perceived that they could challenge the norm (they talked about challenging the norm more than single women did). Married research participants explained that when women had children, they were more motivated to accept hardship and go with their own decision if a new job opportunity could bring a better future for the whole family.

The influence of age, marital status and children on the strength of caregiving norm

Irrespective of age, the caregiving norm was the strongest among women who had children under the age of two, as these women were expected to be the primary caregiver. Not surprisingly, therefore, women with children under the age of two perceived more sanctions than women who did not have children or had children above the age of two.

Young female millennials, particularly those in their late twenties (e.g. 25-30 years old), perceived that the lead character in the vignettes would face strong sanctions if she decided to apply for jobs and/or promotions. Most women in this age group were married with small children under the age of two, which might explain their strict adherence to the norm. **Despite anticipated sanctions, women in their late twenties believed that women should ignore social sanctions and follow their career – in other words, this group personally disagreed with the norm**. Thus, there may be more opportunities to consolidate norm change among women from this age group, for instance, by bridging connections among likeminded women in similar situations for peer support and broadening their reference

Photo: © Cam Van Suong/CARE

group to be more supportive of change.

It is easier to consolidate norm change among women above the age of 40. Women in this age group perceived less sanctions than their peers from other age groups. This is probably because these women often had grown-up children, less caregiving responsibilities, more established relationships with their husband and family-in-law, more mature as a result of life experiences and more economically independent. Together with increasing social capital, these women often had more power to challenge social norms due to their seniority. Women above the age of 40 also strongly perceived that they would challenge norm even if they faced disapproval from the reference groups. Reference groups (partners/spouses, parents and parents-in-law) also stated their support for women in this age group to take up a job or apply for a promotion.

The influence of a workplace on the strength of the norm

There are more opportunities to facilitate norm change in the garment sector (support from the reference groups) and IT sector (strong personal beliefs on the need to challenge the norm due to strong women's agency and greater exposure to more progressive ideas about women's value). In particular, female workers in the garment sector expressed that women should follow their career decisions. There are fewer opportunities to facilitate a norm change in the food processing and banking sectors, as women perceived their reference groups as firmly upholding the norm. This explains the strength of the norm in these sectors.

Food processing sector: Female workers in this sector broadly agreed that the lead character in the vignette would not take up job opportunities if doing so compromised caregiving roles. They also anticipated that the reference groups would not support women to take up job opportunities. Findings from the reference groups confirmed that they held high expectations relating to women's caregiving responsibilities.

Both HR staff and managers strongly upheld the caregiving norm when making recruitment decisions. We can see the norm in operation in the ways managers discuss how they make decisions regarding recruitment and promotions. For example, a manager in a food processing company said:

"When I interview candidates, I ask both men and women about their marital status, if they have a son or a daughter, if they bear any responsibility to their family and so on in order to assign suitable jobs. If a woman has a small child, she is allowed to leave early or go home during lunch break for breastfeeding. I will not recruit a woman if her child is less than six months.

(Female manager, 36 years old, HCMC, food processing).

Another manager said:

"If we find a female applicant who is already married, has children and has technical experience, we would be very confident to take her in.

(Female manager, 56 years old, Hanoi, food processing).

Garment sector: Female garment workers shared perceptions that the lead character in vignettes should take up new job opportunities that offered higher incomes or could potentially progress her career. Existing circumstantial factors seemed to be behind these expectations – working extra hours and night shifts are part of job requirements. Further, the migrant women we spoke with highlighted that they needed to work extra hours because the base salary was insufficient to cover basic living costs.[10] This indicates that any interventions to change norms must be supported by community-driven solutions that promote the rights and dignity of all, for instance better income and better working conditions.

According to most female garment workers, their reference groups (mostly husbands) would expect them to take up new job opportunities. The research participants explained the support from this reference group in terms of living far from home and without family support because of migrating to work in this sector. This migration necessitated men having to share household work. However, the women were quick to point out that their husbands (reference group) still expected them to prioritise family over having a career, even though their husbands were more willing to share household chores.

HR staff and managers in the garment sector also complied with the norm when they made recruitment decisions. For example, a manager told us that she would not recruit women who had children under the age of one. To comply with the Vietnam Labour Code, women who have children under the age of one should be given an hour of leave per day for breastfeeding.

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10   Because many factory workers are migrants, they have to pay for rent and childcare, which they would not have to do if they stayed in their hometowns. Therefore, the base salary, which is already low, becomes insufficient.

According to this manager, providing this entitlement could jeopardise the sewing line in terms of quality and meeting targets. Another manager told us that she preferred recruiting men as she felt they were more focussed on their work, as men were the breadwinners in the family.

Information Technology (IT): Female staff in their interviews[11] shared perceptions on complying with the norm, even though their personal beliefs did not always align with expectations on what is appropriate behaviour. They held strong personal beliefs that they must have a career. They also believed that women should be economically, emotionally and socially independent. Women in this sector were the only ones who repeatedly voiced the statement 'women don't need to get married to be a happy person' (Female technical staff, 23 years old, HCMC, IT).

Females working in the IT sector were likely to comply with the caregiving norm, because they perceived that their reference groups would not support them to take new job opportunities. This was confirmed in FGDs with male IT staff and interviews with reference groups. The actual lack of support from reference groups for these women was even higher than what the women themselves believed. Except for one participant, parents, husbands, partners, and parents–in-law expected that women in the IT sector should prioritise time for household and caregiving responsibilities.

From the perspective of employers, HR staff and managers complied with the norm by demonstrating a preference to recruit men because of personal beliefs that men can easily work overtime, take on night shifts and work on weekends and public holidays. Their strong compliance was also evidenced by their preference for male candidates (recruitment and promotions) even when a more qualified woman candidate is available. This preference was articulated in terms of men being able to focus on work unencumbered by caregiving

responsibilities.

The norm around caregiving also manifested in gendered stereotyping around male and female skills sets, which affected how HR managers recruited and promoted staff. HR staff and managers told us that they strongly preferred to recruit men because of the belief that men and women had different capacities. For example, women were perceived as being better at teamwork and customer relations while men were seen as better negotiators and therefore able to finalise and close deals for the company.

Banking sector: Female bank staff broadly agreed that the lead character in the vignettes would not be supported to take up job opportunities. They perceived that the reference groups would not support them to take job opportunities and expected them to prioritise their family. The reference groups shared the same expectations as female bank staff.

Female staff in the banking sector demonstrated compliance with the norm by making decisions that prioritised their caregiving responsibilities. For example, women told us that they prefered working in the customer service department even though this meant working long hours. The trade-off was that such jobs did not require them to travel far and allowed them to fulfil their caregiving roles.

HR staff and managers in the banking sector demonstrated compliance with the norm through their preference for hiring and promoting men because they believed that caregiving responsibilities may negatively affect female candidates performance in senior leadership roles. This compliance with the norm is reflected in practices such as enquiring about marital status and children during interviews.[12] Furthermore, HR staff and managers told us that single women were favoured over married women based on the assumption that they had fewer caregiving responsibilities and could, therefore, fully devote their time and energy to working. Even in roles that are usually dominated by women, the preference for men, was clearly evident:

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11   In the IT sector, we could not recruit enough female staff for FGDs. The research interviewed only a few female staff to learn about their perceptions and personal beliefs with regard to three gendered social norms. We organised FGDs with male staff as reference groups due to the dominant number of men in this industry.

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12   Asking about marital status and children during interviews is not regarded as illegal in Vietnam.

"When I recruited a bank teller, I really wanted to get a man because this position required physical strength to pack and carry money. In addition, men would not be busy with small children, caring for sick children, or pregnancy. It is easier to assign them to do any emerging tasks. Women are often caught up with care responsibilities.

(Female HR staff, Hanoi, banking).

Norm compliance was also evidenced in decisions made by senior managers when recruiting for particular types of work, such as a sales job. They shared expectations that as caregivers, some women needed to take maternity leave. This translated into shared fears that sales targets would not be achieved if women were part of sales teams. The compliance with the norm also explains why if two candidates (one male and one female) with similar qualifications and experience present for a job, it is more likely that the male is selected.

Female bank staff confirmed this shared perception of HR and management staff. For example, we were told that if women applied for an office support position (such as administrative position), she would not be asked about her plans to start a family; but this question would be posed in an interview for a sales job.

Electricity: In accordance with expectations about typical and appropriate behaviour, male staff perceived that employers did not hire or promote women because of perceptions that women are expected to be the primary caregiver. This manifested in employers expressing concerns about work effectiveness if women had to leave early to breastfeed, or women's inability to be on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week to resolve technical issues, or women lacking required skills because they had to take time off from work due to parental leave.

Social norm: Women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace (leadership norm)

Summary

The strong influence of the caregiving norm on leadership makes it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about the presence of a leadership norm. The findings indicate that if women comply with the caregiving norm, then they do not expect to face as many sanctions for being in leadership positions. The caregiving norm appears to be a "meta-norm" underpinning the leadership norm. Meta-norms influence multiple behaviours, so strategies to address meta-norms can affect multiple behaviours of interest (Heise and Manji 2016). Most anticipated sanctions for deviating from the leadership norm were related to the caregiving norm, however, there were a few that were linked to leadership (such as questioning leadership capabilities and gossiping which poses a risk to a woman's reputation). The sensitivity to sanctions, however, is low and there are many exceptions. Taken together, these signs indicate the presence of a weak norm: it is not widely shared, infrequently influences behaviour, and seems flexible.

The vignette used to gather data presented a story of a woman considering a leadership position (e.g. moving up the organisational hierarchy or laterally to a more prestigious/ better paying role. See Annex 6 for all vignettes used for this norm).

Table 7: Summary of key research findings

Norm: Women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace	
Strength of norm: WEAK	
People making decisions on whether to comply with the norm	Female factory workers and professional employees HR staff and managers
Reference groups:	Husbands/partners, parents/parents-in-law Senior managers
Components of norm as per SNAP	**Research findings**
Beliefs about what others do -Typical behaviour	Women take up leadership opportunities.
Beliefs about what others think one should do - Appropriate behaviour	Reference groups support women to take up leadership opportunities as long as they can comply with the caregiving norm.
Sanctions	Unrealistic leadership expectations (i.e. questioning women's credibility as leaders), persistent stereotyping of women's leadership behaviours, gossiping, and sanctions for not fulfiling caregiving roles.
Sensitivity to sanctions (opportunities for norm change)	Low sensitivity to sanctions among young female millennials, particularly those who are under 25 years and in their early thirties, single women, women with no children, and women working in the garment sector.
Exceptions (opportunities for norm change)	Reference groups support women's leadership, presence of women in leadership positions, and their aspiration and determination to be leaders.

Expectations of typical and appropriate behaviours

Female workers and female employees working in the professional sector and their reference groups (husbands, partners) were supportive of women in leadership positions. Women in all sectors strongly perceived that reference groups would support them to gain and retain leadership positions. This corresponds with the reference groups stated support for women in leadership positions. This perceived support translated into women expressing confidence about their leadership capacity at a personal level with the expectation that a leadership role in management would lead to a better life for them and their families:

"I would just apply and ignore the gossip. If Minh [the main character in the vignette] can do it, I can do it too. As long as I feel confident about my capacity and experience, I would still apply and try my best, then the gossip will gradually go away... I would explain to my husband that my salary is now 10 million; if I get promoted to the supervisor position, I will earn 15 millions, which mean more money for children and the whole family.

(Female staff, 38 years old, HCMC, garment).

However, reference groups, mostly husbands, expected women to fulfil their caregiving roles. A recurring theme was the need to first comply with the caregiving norm. Therefore, for example, 'once a woman completes her caring role in the family, she would be able to do anything she wants' (Female worker, 25 years old, Thai Nguyen, garment). **The requirement to comply with the caregiving norm, thus, moderates the leadership norm.** This moderating effect of the caregiving norm is

reflected in the contradictions between, on the one hand, reference groups being supportive of women's leadership but, on the other hand, a broad agreement that women should not take leadership opportunities due to their caregiving roles.

Sanctions

The moderating effect of the caregiving norm was linked to sanctions faced by women who decided to pursue leadership opportunities, especially if they did not want to take up a caring role as well. Some sanctions for seeking or holding leadership roles were related to the perception that in doing so women were forsaking their caregiving role. Typical forms of sanctions were arguments and tension at home, due to the lack of support from reference groups who could be husbands, partners, parents and parents-in-law. Women felt pressured at work because colleagues and managers tended to make judgements about their leadership capacity, both because of perceptions of the need to comply with the caregiving norm and personal attitudes about gendered leadership traits. For example, attitudes that women have a narrow approach to problem solving, get lost in the details (or in other words cannot see the bigger picture) and are not quick when it comes to decision making. Some women in the food processing and garment sector expressed perceptions of being strongly judged and gossiped about by peers as well:

"Colleagues would gossip about the promotion, because they may doubt her leadership capabilities.

(Female worker, 38 years old, Hanoi, food processing).

The pressure to comply with the norm on caregiving in order to be in leadership positions resulted in women expressing the need to work harder to prove their leadership credibility as well as the pressure to be able to fulfil caregiving responsibilities. Women reported that the pressure to fulfil both leadership and caregiving roles sets up a difficult choice. The strength of the caregiving norm often resulted in women prioritising their caregiving roles.

Sensitivity to Sanctions

Young female millennials, particularly those who are under 25 or in their early thirties, perceived strong sanctions for taking leadership opportunities. This was due to the perception that older women were more mature and made better decisions and because of expectations around younger women fulfiling their caregiving responsibilities. Despite anticipated sanctions, women in these age groups strongly believed that the lead character in the vignette would ignore sanctions from the reference groups and pursue leadership opportunities. Similarly, single women and women with no children perceived, more often than women with children, that the main character in the vignette would ignore sanctions from the reference groups (mostly husbands and partners).

Though female garment workers anticipated sanctions for non-compliance with the norm, they still held strong perceptions that the lead character in the vignettes would ignore sanctions to follow leadership opportunities. This stands in contrast to women in food processing who said that the lead character in the vignette would change her decision if the reference groups did not support the pursuit of a leadership position. Female workers in food processing strongly emphasised the importance of women sacrificing their ambitions for the sake of the marriage and the family's happiness. Their reference groups also expressed clear expectations that women should not apply for leadership roles.

Exceptions

Reference groups (mostly husbands) required compliance with the caregiving norm as a precondition for supporting women in the leadership positions. Thus, the moderating effects of caregiving norm results in women emphasising the importance of having support from husbands and partners to take up leadership opportunities. For women in the banking sector, being single was considered a factor in making decisions to follow leadership opportunities.

The presence of women in leadership positions and their aspirations to be leaders was an

exception. The data also showed that some women, (for example, married women, women with no children or with children above the age of two), placed more emphasis on the importance of having aspirations and the confidence to be a leader. In the opinion of these women, to mitigate against the effect of strong sanctions for taking leadership positions, women needed to have ambition, passion, and the determination to achieve success in their careers.

The influence of age, marital status and children on the strength of the norm

There are more opportunities to facilitate norm change for young female millennials, who are either under the age of 25, or single, or have no children and women in their thirties (e.g. 31-35 years old) who often have children above the age of two and women in the garment sector.

Despite strong anticipated sanctions related to caregiving roles, these women strongly believed that the main character in the vignette would ignore sanctions from the reference groups (mostly husbands and partners) and pursue leadership opportunities. Young women, particularly factory workers, saw having children as a critical factor that would motivate them to advance their career in the hope for a better future. Young female millennials in their early thirties often have few years of work experience and good education. These attributes contributed to greater confidence in applying for promotions to leadership positions.

Among married women, there was widespread agreement that the reference groups would support them to take leadership opportunities. This was attributed to their belief that after a few years living together, married women and their partners had a better understanding of each other and were more aware of mutual obligations to each other. There was also the recognition that a leadership position could bring a better future for the whole family. However, single women, (as compared to married women and women with children), had more perceptions that if faced with disapproval from the reference groups, the lead character in the vignettes would ignore sanctions.

Middle aged women (e.g. 36 and above) did not perceive that their reference groups would support them to be leaders – this had less to do with caregiving and more to do with an age bias. The research found that in most sectors, there is an age preference, which in turn limits promotion opportunities for women.

"Coders must be under 35 years old because after that age they don't have strong creativity and energy. The best age is from 23 to 30 years. For men they are not yet married and are not under pressure of financially responsible for the family. For women this is the time for getting married, giving birth and taking care of the whole family.

(Male manager, 38 years old, HCMC, IT).

"The age range for a bank teller is from 22 to 26 years old. Candidates with relevant experience will be given priority but they should be within this age range, cannot be older.

(Female HR staff, 31 years old, Thai Nguyen, banking).

"Junior management positions are for staff from 27-28 years old and senior positions are for those from 35 years old.

(Female manager, 31 years old, HCMC, banking).

The influence of the workplace on the strength of the norm

While women in all sectors, except electricity, shared perceptions that they would be sanctioned for holding or seeking leadership positions, in some sectors the anticipation of sanctions was more pronounced. Female factory workers were more likely to anticipate that women would be sanctioned for holding leadership positions than female employees in the office setting. Women working in factories perceived that women would also face sanctions from peers, in addition to sanctions from identified reference groups (e.g. husbands, partners and managers/ supervisors).[13]

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13   As presented previously, there are several ways to analyse the strength of a social norm, including its likely influence over behaviour through sensitivity to sanctions. If people perceive that

Food processing sector: Despite the anticipation of sanctions and the perceived lack of support from reference groups, female workers strongly perceived that the lead character in the vignettes would apply for promotion opportunities. The data suggests that the reference groups were more supportive of women taking up a leadership position in this sector than others.

HR staff and managers (reference groups) shared perceptions that they would support women to move into leadership positions. This is evidenced by, according to female workers, the adoption of progressive policies. For example, women in a food processing company in HCMC noted that the company had invested significant resources to support workers to participate in training and capacity building programs, so they would become qualified and apply for more skilled jobs. As women were the majority of the workforce in this factory, they benefited from this policy. It is noteworthy that **while the company supports women to advance their careers, HR staff and managers still strongly upheld the caregiving norm**. The expectation remained, for this reference group, that women who apply for a leadership position will comply with the caregiving norm. In addition, there were a few gender-biased beliefs about women's leadership. A female HR staff said that:

"Women's health is affected by their emotion and mental health. They need more energy to be an effective leader than men do.

(Female HR manager, 38 years old, Hanoi, food processing).

Garment sector: Female garment workers perceived that their peers would apply for a leadership position and that their reference groups would be supportive of applying for such positions. Interviews with the reference groups confirmed that they held the same expectations The strong moderating effects of caregiving norm was evident among HR staff and managers in the garment sector. For example, a female

manager felt proud that she was a good wife and a good worker at the same time and stated:

"Only lazy women complained about the pressure of working and caring responsibilities. Two roles should be fulfilled together. If a woman only completes one role, she is 'impaired'.

(Female manager, 37 years old, Thai Nguyen province, garment).

In one garment factory, Vietnamese staff work on the sewing lines or as heads of the sewing lines. All heads of departments are foreigners. In the case of this foreign-owned company, structural barriers (e.g. policies and governance) seem to determine the promotion, not the leadership norm.

Information Technology (IT): Female staff in the IT sector expressed strong perceptions that they and their peers would take up leadership opportunities even though they believed the reference groups would not be supportive of them doing so, because of caregiving responsibilities. Few parents and parents-in-law (reference group) were supportive of women taking up leadership. In FGDs with male IT staff (reference groups), few men perceived that they would support women's leadership.

HR staff and managers did not perceive that they would support women's leadership in line with personal beliefs and the moderating effects of the caregiving norm on the leadership norm. According to a manager:

"If there are two candidates, one male and one female who have similar qualifications and experience, I would chose the male candidate. I find men more reliable and more effective in their work. It's part of my thinking and way of living.

(Male staff, 32 years old, HCMC, IT).

"Another manager said that 'because women are too emotional, they are not decisive. They are not good at developing strategic plans.

(Male HR manager, 39 years old, Hanoi, IT).

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there are sanctions but that they do not compel people to comply with a norm, it can be seen as a sign of weakness in the norm, and a possible opportunity for change. This means that, perhaps, there are other factors influencing behaviour that are more important than the norm/anticipated social sanctions.

Banking sector: Female bank staff perceived that their peers would apply for leadership opportunities even though their reference groups (husbands, partners and parents-in-law) might disapprove because of the caregiving norm. The sensitivity to sanctions was low because women felt that their families over time had become accustomed to long working hours.

In the banking sector, there is a reasonable gender balance at mid-level management even though this balance is mostly in the office support departments (for example, administration, HR, teller services). Not many women work as managers in sales and customer relationship management, particularly in managing corporate partners.

Compliance with the norm was justified by perceptions about acceptable behaviour for women in public (e.g. not going out for a drink with customers), beyond the moderating effects of caregiving norm. For example, managers told us that women were perceived, compared to men, as indecisive and not as good at negotiating with challenging customers. According to female research participants working in the banking sector, when women do not work in or manage the sales department, they have fewer opportunities to move up to top-level management. Managers told us that working in the banking sector was high-pressure work and women were not capable of doing such work. Another manager assumed that the majority of banking sector employees were women, so women were already in leadership positions. Finally, we were told that HR staff and managers use their networks to recruit staff for high-level management positions. When HR staff and managers already hold non-supportive perceptions about women's leadership, particularly requiring compliance with the caregiving norm as a precondition for

not complying with the leadership norm, then men will have more promotion opportunities than women.

Electricity: Female technical staff working in this highly male dominated sector have already challenged the caregiving norm and the belief around differing technical capacity among men and women. It was, therefore, not surprising that these research participants perceived that the lead character in the vignettes would take up a leadership opportunity and that their reference groups would support this decision.

We were unable to verify the assumptions made about reference group support or expectations regarding the leadership norm, as the research could not recruit reference groups of female technical staff in the electricity sector. What the FGDs with male technical staff (i.e. peers) revealed was that even though some men appreciated the technical capacities of female colleagues, they still disapproved of their partners/spouses choosing a job in the sector as they expected women to prioritise their caregiving roles.

Attitude: Men are more suitable for technical jobs than women

The research aimed to first verify the existence of the social norm "only men should be hired for technical jobs". The research team was uncertain if this was indeed a norm. As mentioned in the theoretical overview, expectations of both typical and appropriate behaviours signals the presence of a social norm. The data indicated that there was a significant preference for hiring men for technical jobs but little evidence on expectations that this action was considered to be typical and appropriate behaviour. Importantly, there was a lack of expected sanctions for anyone who hired a woman for a technical job, or for a woman who sought a technical job. Thus, we concluded that "only men should be hired for technical jobs" is not a norm but a strongly held attitude that men are more suitable for technical jobs than women. This attitude was particularly strong in the IT sector.

The vignettes used to gather data to test

if "only men should be hired for technical jobs" was a norm, presented the story of a woman applying for a job/promotion requiring a technical skill set. For example, jobs in a cutting department in a garment factor, operating the freezer system in a food-processing factory, being a member of the operations team in an electricity provider and coding for the IT sector (see Annex 6 for all vignettes used for this attitude).

Main findings

The attitude that men are more suitable for technical jobs than women was strongest in the IT sector. While women working in the IT sector felt that their reference group would not support them to apply for technical jobs, they also did not expect to be negatively sanctioned for doing so. Nevertheless, female research participants working in the IT sector felt that the lack of support from their reference groups (husbands, partners and managers), would deter them and other women from applying for technical jobs. The small number of reference group members in the IT, whom we spoke with, reiterated the importance of compliance with the caregiving norm. They also expressed a concern about women's physical strength, as certain technical tasks required lifting heavy equipment, whilst others felt that working at night or on weekends (e.g. electricity and IT sector) might prove challenging for women.

HR staff and managers and reference groups (senior managers) held strong gender biases about women's technical capacity:

"Women are good at details and are more patient so they would be more suitable doing tester, not coder job.

(Female HR staff, 23 years old, Hanoi, IT).

Their overwhelming concern with women's caregiving responsibilities had a significant impact on recruitment and promotion decisions related to technical jobs.

"In this sector, in the first ten years, there are not much differences between male and female staff. Women even have stronger capacity than men because when they are young, they have time for their work, for learning and development until they get married. Women in IT sector get married at a later age compared with women in other sectors. This sector requires strong technical capacity... Mindset of male and female staff is different. In general, men are more logical and determined while women are good at teamwork, communication and product development. It is hard for women to do a technical job because it requires logical thinking. Most female staff work in product development and management.

(Female HR manager, 36 years old, HCMC, IT).

Male research participants working in technical roles in the IT sector also revealed gender biases, which contributed to the strongly held attitudes. For example, research participants talked about men being better at mathematics and logical thinking. Some provided biological reasons, such as relating the age of coders (35 years) to the brain's inability to keep pace with rapid changes and innovations taking place in IT. The rapid pace of change was also highlighted as a reason behind fewer women taking up technical roles in the IT, as they find it difficult to keep pace once they have left the workforce to have children.

"It is challenging for women to do their technical and caring jobs at the same time, unless they are superwomen.

(Female staff, 23 years old, Hanoi, IT).

Impacts on women's recruitment / promotion to technical roles

Female research participants reported that women were treated unequally by their colleagues due to the lack of trust in their technical capacities. One male technician working in an IT company shared:

"Managers can assign not important tasks to female staff. If she is busy with other things or cannot complete her tasks, it does not affect to the whole team.

(Male technical staff, 28 years old, Hanoi, IT).

Women felt that their colleagues and managers made judgements about their technical capacities, which contributed to them feeling under pressure. As a result, women felt that they had to work harder to prove their qualification,

for technical positions. Some female research participants reported applying for roles that required comparatively less technical skills, for example, testing software instead of coding.

"Some young men don't accept that women have better technical capacity. Therefore female technical staff have to work harder and are under greater pressure to prove her capacity.

(Male technical staff, 28 years old, HCMC, IT).

"I have seen that after few years coders often move to work as testers because this job is less busy and stressful. It is suitable for a married woman because she has more time for the family. Some women who are not ambitious with career development accept the tester job to prioritise her family.

(Female coder, 30 years old, Hanoi, IT).

The strength of the attitude that men are more suitable for technical jobs was reflected in HR practice. For example, a female research participant working in the IT sector told us that during recruitment only women were asked about their marital status. HR staff and managers in the IT and electricity sector believed that men were more suitable for technical jobs because they could easily work at night, on weekends, and carry heavy equipment for installation.

The influence of age, marital status and children on the attitude 'men are more suitable for technical jobs than women'

Women with no children, women with young children, single women, and women from all age groups except those in their early thirties held the belief that men were more suitable for technical jobs. Women with young children were under pressure to comply with the caregiving norm. For women with no children and single women, they are often young and still need time to decide if they want a technical job and if they can do it as a career.

Married women with children over the age of two felt that their husbands or spouses would support them to undertake technical roles. These women usually had a few years of work experience and felt more assured that they could progress further in their careers than women with less work experience. Furthermore, married women with children over the age of two felt less pressure to fulfil caring responsibilities than women of a younger age. Finally, female research participants working in technical roles reported that being passionate about their work, personal confidence, and determination to pursue career interests were key factors that kept them in technical jobs despite the challenges. They also cited the fact that their qualifications from top universities boosted their confidence in applying for technical jobs as they felt that they had the knowledge and skills to compete in a male dominated sector. It is worthy of note that no research participants mentioned the importance of having support from managers as a reference group.

Discussion

We begin this section with a brief summary of the research findings. We then proceed to focus the discussion on prioritising norms for change programing through identifying signs of weakness or "cracks" in gender norms (Stefanik and Hwang 2017). This is followed by a reflection on the SNAP methodology, insights for future research and recommendations.

Summary of research findings on social norms

The literature identified three potential norms linked to women that impacted economic participation. The research firstly confirmed the presence of two norms: 'women should be primarily responsible for child and family caretaking', (caregiving norm) and 'women should not be in leadership positions in the workplace' (leadership norm). A third potential norm investigated turned out to be a widely held attitude that 'men are more suitable for technical jobs than women'. Our research explored the extent to which these norms and this attitude affect women's economic participation in Vietnam, in particular the impact on recruitment and promotion. We also explored if age, marital status and the workplace had any impact on the norms and the opportunities for norm change.

Of the norms and attitude under investigation in this study, the caregiving norm has the **strongest influence on recruitment and promotion for both women, HR staff and managers when they make decisions on whether to comply with a norm**. Women tend to forego jobs that require frequent travel or working extra hours outside normal working hours, or working at night. The primary reason given for this decision was the need to fulfil caregiving roles. Reference groups (e.g. husbands, partners, parents and parents-in-law) also firmly uphold the caregiving norm. Women expect that their reference groups would sanction them for non-compliance with the norm, and the fear of sanctions is influential enough to compel them to adhere with the norm. The strength of the caregiving norm was also evidenced by the fact that, HR staff and

managers tend to comply with the norm. The behaviour of HR staff and managers seems to be motivated by their own beliefs. However, it is possible that the anticipation of sanctions is so strong that HR staff and managers do not want to risk their careers by deviating from the norm. This compliance is reflected in their prioritisation of men as employees in recruitment and promotion including leadership and technical positions.

The moderating effect of the caregiving norm on the leadership norm has implications for women's economic participation. Husbands and partners are supportive of women's leadership as long as they also comply with the caregiving norm. HR staff and managers tend to make judgements about women's leadership capacity, both due to the perception about the caregiving role and attitudes about gendered leadership traits. The requirement to comply with the caregiving norm moderates the weakness of the leadership norm. Women feel pressured to fulfil their caregiving roles and to gain support to be in leadership positions. The moderating effect of the caregiving norm leads women to prioritise their caregiver roles over leadership roles. An important takeaway for the leadership norm is that is appears to be considered typical, even if sanctions are mostly due to violating the caregiving norm. This means for norm change there is a need to shift the perception that some women are in leadership positions and that it is typical to find women in leadership positions, along with other activities to address sanctions and social pressure experienced by women who are seen as violating the caregiving norm (e.g. when they seek a leadership position).

Some of the strategies that women used to comply with the norm, included working harder to complete both roles (one in the workplace and one at home), arranging external support (e.g. having a nanny to share caring responsibilities), or letting go of the opportunity and waiting for another one. **While such coping strategies could affect women's economic participation, it also shows the importance of affordable childcare in order to mitigate some aspects of this norm.**

The caregiving norm also influences attitudes around technical skills. In some sectors (e.g. electricity and IT sector) there is a clear preference to hire and promote men because women are perceived as the primary caregiver. This manifests in employers expressing concerns about work effectiveness if employers need to be flexible to accommodate caregiving roles. In the IT sector, women have fewer opportunities to work as technical staff, both because of the moderating effect of the caregiving norm and because of the gender bias about their technical capacity.

Opportunities to facilitate norm change

Many women pass up promotion opportunities because these opportunities coincide with the age of marriage and childbearing. Without support from reference groups, (particularly husbands) to share caregiving roles, women are forced to give up on promotion prospects.

There are opportunities to circumvent the caregiving norm in young female millennials who are in their late twenties (e.g. 25-30 years) or have small children, despite the fact that these women anticipate strong sanctions. Single women, women working in the garment and IT sector, and those who live in Ho Chi Minh City also have greater leeway for non-compliance with the norm. There are also more opportunities to change the caregiving norm among women above the age of 40. These women face fewer sanctions than their peers from other age groups and are more likely to ignore sanctions from reference groups. At this stage of life, women above 41 years have less caring responsibilities, more social capital and more power due to seniority. Reference groups (partners, spouses, parents and parents-in-law) also stated their support for these women to take up a job or apply for promotion. **This is a significant research finding as there is no published research in Vietnam that has discussed the reasons and importance of supporting women in this age group to challenge social norms.**

With regard to the leadership norm, there are more opportunities to facilitate norm change in young female millennials who are under 25 and female millennials in their thirties (e.g. 31-35 years). Despite anticipated sanctions, women in these age groups felt that women could ignore sanctions from the reference groups to pursue leadership opportunities. Similarly, single women and women with no children (less caregiving responsibilities) are more likely to ignore sanctions from the reference groups (mainly husbands and partners). However, some married women are willing to challenge the caregiving and leaders norms if the opportunity would bring a better future for the whole family.

Turning our attention to the sectors, there are more opportunities to facilitate changes in caregiving norm and leadership norm in the garment sector. Reference groups in this sector are supportive and willing to share caregiving roles and existing working practices support changes in norms. The potential to change the caregiving norm in the garment sector, also increases the opportunities to facilitate change in the leadership norm. In the IT sector, women's high self-esteem creates opportunities for changing the social norm about caregiving roles. Women and reference groups in the garment sector and women in the IT sector can be seen as early adopters of new norms and influence other women working in sectors that are more resistant to change.

What needs to happen to facilitate norm change?

Cislaghi and Heise (2019) suggest a Dynamic Framework for Social Change where social norm change is one of the main drivers. Other drivers include changes at material, institutional, global and individual levels. All drivers of change are inter-connected, which can either support or hamper development efforts to achieve women's empowerment and gender equality. In order to facilitate social norm change, there is a need to take into account the influence of related factors, which are outlined under each driver of change in the next image.
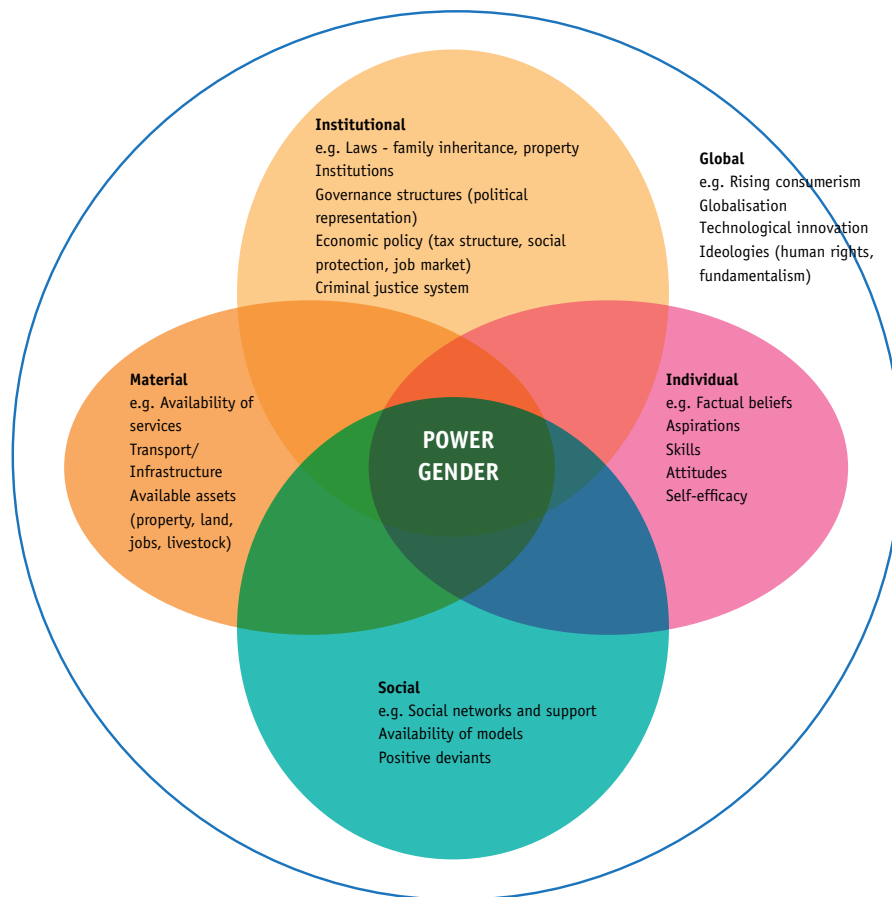
Image 1: The Dynamic Framework for Social Change (Cislaghi and Heise 2019)

Strongly held personal beliefs combined with support from the reference groups creates opportunities to facilitate norm change:

This is the case in all sectors where non-compliance with a norm is enabled by support from reference groups, especially husbands/partners, (the most important reference group for women making decisions on whether to comply with a norm). Although there are only a few male respondents who report being willing to share caregiving roles and support women to take up work that earns a better income or a promotion, it shows that positive male role models do exist for a more equitable sharing of caretaking roles. Such men could be identified and may be willing to be recognised publicly as positive role models, and share their experiences with other men. For norms to change, perceptions need to shift about what most people believe is typical and appropriate. It is important that the whole community experience this change together. Hence the importance, for example, of public events that raise the visibility of men performing caregiving roles as a shared experience with one's reference group. Facilitating change in the caregiving norm, which will create a more equitable sharing of responsibilities in the family and community, is vital to enabling women's economic participation.

Regional and migration factors:

The southern part of Vietnam, especially HCMC, seems to have a less restrictive environment that makes it easier to embrace non-compliance with social norms. HCMC is a big economic hub with a large number of migrant workers. People from different social economic status, cultures, diverse genders and sexual identities have found that they are able to make their home in this dynamic city. Where diversity is more widespread and accepted, it is harder for a homogenous culture (for example, the Northern culture) to keep its dominant status.

Research findings have shown a pattern of less restrictive gender roles in the South. According

to research participants, many local people in the South enjoy a more relaxed lifestyle. They strive for a better work-life balance. During important festivals such as the traditional New Year, they spend less time on ritualist practices and visiting extended family members than people in the North, and prefer going out with the family. Parents-in-law in the South are more open-minded and have fewer expectations that their daughters-in-law have to devote their lives to caregiving roles. The less restrictive environment signals lower sensitivity to sanctions for the caregiving norm. This means that focussing norm change work in the South might yield more immediate results and that longer investment of resources is required to achieve similar results in the North.

Our research shows that migration from the North, (where both the caregiving and leadership norms are more strongly held and rigid), to the South also facilitates opportunities for norm change. When a couple lives far from their family, men are more willing to share caregiving roles such as cooking meals, shopping for groceries, and childcare.

Workplace practices:

Workplace related factors support compliance or non-compliance with gendered social norms. In most workplaces, we found that there is an age preference, which in turn limits promotion opportunities for women. For example, garment workers above the age of 40 are seen as slow with poor eyesight. In the IT sector, coders above 35 are perceived as having lower creativity. People in the 22-26 age group are preferred as bank tellers. In the electricity sector, women in the 25-30 age group and those above 40 years of age are seen as too old to take on nightshifts with detrimental effects on their physical and emotional health.

Workplaces that provide good career prospects and remuneration packages, are in high demand, have gender sensitive policies at the workplace, accessible training and leadership opportunities, good teamwork, and job security tend to encourage increased flexibility to transgress both the caregiving and leadership norms. For example, we found that a food processing company's human resource policies, which support workers (male and female) to take up training and skill building courses for career development supported aspirations for and confidence in applying for promotion. In

Photo: @ Freepik.com

another example, in a garment factory the recruitment procedure for promotions is open and transparent. Therefore, while competitive, it is also motivating as male and female workers perceive an equal chance in securing promotions. **When women are successful in being promoted, other women feel encouraged to aspire to leadership positions**. Thus, norm change interventions should focus on increasing the visibility of women in leadership positions, with positive, aspirational messages/images of women in these roles, to inspire women and shift the perception that first, these behaviours are in fact typical, and that second that women are capable of excelling/holding leadership positions.

Addressing HR practices can contribute to promoting gender equality in the workplace and women's economic participation. The requesting of personal information, particularly marital status and children, from women contributes to gender biased recruitment and promotion practices. This practice further ingrains the social norm on women's caregiving responsibility.

Across sectors, we found gendered perceptions about the connections between physical strength and the jobs assigned to men and women. For example, beliefs around only men being able to work in cold and noisy server rooms, climbing up hills to install electric equipment, standing for hours to iron clothes or carrying heavy boxes. This supports prevailing notions of masculinity that emphasise toughness, strength and contribute to the idea that men should be able to withstand and accept unsafe working conditions. As a result, men remain silent about these unsafe working conditions. Neither men nor women should be involved in activities that expose them to unsafe work practices. When adequate occupational health and safety measures are available in the workplace, both women and men should have access to all jobs and be able to carry them out safely.

The banking sector is a good example of a business sub-culture that makes it difficult for women to participate equally in pursuing a career in this sector. For example, we found that staff in the sales department receive higher remuneration and have more promotion opportunities and are most likely to be male. The sector expects that sales staff have the flexibility to meet business

clients outside office hours, meet in non-work places (such as playing golf), answer phone calls from customers at any time, frequently travel to clients' workplaces to assess borrowing capacity, and be willing to spend long periods of time away from home (for example spend 3-4 months in a province to establish a new bank branch). Consequently, more men work in sales and customer relationship management, particularly with corporate partners. Women working as sales staff often move to other departments after they get married or have children. There needs to be an attempt to create a business sub-culture in Vietnam that makes it less challenging for women to participate equally.

Applicability of the SNAP model to research on women's economic participation in South East Asia

The strength of SNAP in social norm research

This research was the first time SNAP was adapted and used to conduct research on women's economic participation in South East Asia. SNAP has typically been used to understand social norms relating to health and gender-based violence in a community context. The research demonstrated that SNAP could be adapted to different thematic areas as social norms are prevalent across all aspects of society. SNAP helps to explore and confirm social norms by systematically identifying and testing the different components that make up a norm and the links between them.

The SNAP framework has many similarities with existing tools and frameworks to explore social norms, for example, the Social Norms Exploration Tool (SNET) developed by the Institute for Reproductive Health (2020) and DFID's guidance note 'Shifting social norms to tackle violence against women and girls' (Alexander-Scott et al. 2016). **The unique characteristic and the strength and influence of SNAP in informing social norm change interventions is providing a way to assess norm strength**, in particular through 'sensitivity to sanctions', which attempts to assess whether the norm influences behaviour. A norm can exist, but that does not mean it

necessarily influences behaviour, and that piece of information is crucial for those designing a program strategy for behaviour change. By using the SNAP framework, this research has produced valuable findings about opportunities for norm change, for example, findings about how the influence of a social norm weakens across sectors, age groups, marital and children status. These findings can be used to inform the design and implementation of social norm change campaigns in IW's phase II in Vietnam. Furthermore, findings and recommendations of this research are beneficial to VBCWE business partners if they wish to take further actions to improve gender equality in the workplace.

Social norm change practitioners suggest that vignettes of hypothetical scenarios, (rather than directly asking respondents about typical and appropriate behaviours), are most likely to elicit beliefs and expectations among a reference group. Using vignettes provides space in the conversation for unexpected findings (Alexander-Scott et al. 2016). In this research, we had the same observation and experience. Using vignettes in focus group discussions, allowed in-depth exploration of the different components that make up a social norm. Further, the testing of vignettes, as we did in this research, is important in order to ensure that they resonate with research participants.

SNAP methodology – what we improved for similar research in the future

While vignettes are useful in eliciting insightful data from research participants, in order to be effective, vignettes must be highly focussed. In other words, one vignette can only explore one norm at a time. This research was ambitious in its attempt to examine two norms and one attitude, in two contexts: recruitment and promotion. This meant the creation of a large set of vignettes and the need to explore at least one or two vignettes in each FGD. This can be tiring for the research participants, as FGDs need to be conducted over a longer period. On the other hand, researchers feel a time pressure that could result in rushing through eliciting responses.

We therefore do not recommend trying to achieve 'breadth' and 'depth' by using only vignettes in exploring social norms. Further, we find that

vignettes work better when used in FGDs rather than IDIs. IDIs seem to get more information about individual beliefs and attitudes, which help to inform interventions in behaviour change rather than providing information about perceptions for each component of the SNAP framework.

Formative research to identify norms, instead of relying on literature a review, before using SNAP for norm measurement (strength/influence and change) is more efficient. Tools such as SNET[14] can be used alongside SNAP to identify norms and gain deeper and richer data on norm components. Similarly, while the research was able to confirm who the reference groups were, it was not able to explore interactions among reference groups and people making decisions on whether to comply with a norm. This relationship can be explored through social network analysis.

The large data set (N=485) made data analysis challenging especially within a restricted period. SNAP aligns with a qualitative research methodology and traditionally such research does not require a large data set. The purpose is not to make generalisations to the population or to test a hypothesis, forecast, predict or measure a single-criterion outcome (albeit multidimensional). The aim of qualitative research is to understand a complex phenomenon (gendered social norms), by considering the multiple "realities" experienced by the participants themselves—the "insider" perspectives. The description of people's lived experiences is often described as "thick" (Denzin, 1989), meaning attention is given to rich detail, meaningful social and historical contexts, and experiences (Patton 2002). If a large sample is being used, it needs to be used iteratively or in a rolling pattern where data is collected in multiple phases analysed at each phase and more data collected to fill gaps in understanding. This necessarily means that the research process takes longer.

For future social norm research, the number of research participants and variables should be significantly revised down and the research timeframe extended to allow the research to

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14   SNET recommends using tools like the 'five why', 'problem tree analysis' in addition to vignettes (for group discussions) and an interview guide for 'my social networks'.

analyse the rich data collected. This iterative way of collecting data, analysing data, and then collecting further data will also support better testing of data collection tools. For example, this research found there were different understandings of what is considered a 'technical job' and who is considered a 'grown-up' child. An iterative process of data collection and analysis would have uncovered these different understandings and enabled further refining of the tools. This also means that those who commission such research and the researchers themselves need to be comfortable with emergent research designs - a process that is not predetermined but evolves and is likely not clarified until data collection ends.

Future research

This standalone research aims to explore how two social norms and one personal belief affected women's economic participation by assessing the strength of norms and identifying opportunities for norm change. The research was not designed to measure the extent to which social norms have changed, or the reasons behind any observed change.

IW's partners in phase II who will implement interventions that seek to influence social norm and behaviour change, can consider using CARE's SNAP framework in collecting baseline and end line qualitative data. It is also suggested that quantitative data be collected at baseline and end line on attitudes and behaviour and other non-norm factors of interest, but not on norms. Quantitative measures of social norms have proved difficult to answer, have complicated wording, and require extra time in survey tools. Ultimately, implementers are most interested in whether, and to what extent, target behaviours are changing, and the interest in social norms is in service to that aim: to understand the change

process and what might be holding back or accelerating behaviour change. Qualitative data using the SNAP is more useful to understand this process of norms change.

In the future, for such research on norms, in addition to using SNAP, social network analysis could be included as part of the research design and methodology, resources (financial, time and technical expertise) permitting. The inclusion of social network analysis would enable exploring the influence and interaction between each individual 'reference group' member, in the decision maker's network and the way these individuals influence people's decision to comply or not comply with a norm. Such analysis will help to identify the actual, most influential points within social networks for targeting norm change interventions.

In terms of other factors that influence norms, regional and migration needs to be explored in future research. In our research, we see a pattern in women from the South being less restricted by traditional gender roles and men who are willing to openly discuss supporting and sharing caregiving roles. There is a need to better understand why this is the case. Exploring the impact of migration can support more nuanced analysis on whether location is more significant than age and lifecycle stages in affecting norms around women's economic participation. Another external factor that needs further exploration is whether company ownership (state-owned vs. private, domestic vs. foreign investment), affects caregiving and leadership norms.

Finally, the scale of the research can be expanded by replicating the study across more sectors to provide a comprehensive picture of how social norms around caregiving and leadership affect women's economic participation in Vietnam and provide sector specific strategies for changing these norms.

Recommendations

Recommendations are organised in to three main parts:

- Programing and communication approach to change the two gendered social norms. These recommendations are most relevant for partners of IW in Vietnam, including CARE International in Vietnam, who will implement campaigns for influencing social norms in phase II. Other groups who are interested in social norm change also can find these recommendations useful.

- Addressing barriers to women's economic participation. As these barriers are at the macro level, recommendations for removing these barriers are more suitable for policy makers and social impact investors who commit to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

- Actions that business partners who are VBCWE members and who participated in this research can take to improve institutional gender equality policy and practices. These recommendations also apply to other business partners who are interested in promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the workplace.

Recommendations for programing and communications approaches

These recommendations are most relevant for partners of IW in Vietnam, including CARE International in Vietnam who will implement campaigns for influencing social norms in phase II. Others who are interested in changing the social norm will also find these recommendations useful.

Research findings have indicated that the caregiving norm is a strong norm and the leadership norm is a weak norm.

1. Prioritise resources on facilitating change in the caregiving norm, which the research shows also has a strong moderating effect on the leadership norm. A related recommendation is that interventions and communication messages to facilitate change in the leadership norm should focus solely on changing the perceptions that women in leadership positions are not

common. The strong moderating effect of the caregiving norm implies that facilitating change in the leadership norm alone will meet with limited success, if any.

Research found that there were differences between women deciding on whether to comply with the norm, and what reference groups considered appropriate behaviours. As the reference groups have a strong influence on the division of labour within the household and decisions about engaging in the labour force, changing reference groups' expectations on appropriate behaviour will have a greater impact than focusing only on changing the perception of those making decisions about whether to comply with a norm.

2. Interventions for influencing social norms should take a community approach, and ensure that both reference groups and decision makers will be targeted using different strategies. Particular attention could be paid to changing expectations of the reference groups (e.g. husbands, partners) on what is considered appropriate behaviour. This recommendation aligns with the experience of other social norm change campaigns (Paluck and Ball 2010) and DFID's framework for shifting social norms (Alexander-Scott et al. 2016). For example, instead of using the message 'men should share caring responsibilities with women', we can say 'I am a man. I don't believe that taking care of the home and children is only a woman's responsibility and so I will share this responsibility with my wife'.

The social norms and attitude explored in this research are mutually reinforced by other gendered stereotypes and personal beliefs. These include effective working age, appearance of staff working in customer service departments, the personal beliefs about women's relatively poor health status compared with men, and messaging 'women are good at work and resourceful at home'.

3. Communication messages should target changing gendered stereotypes and harmful personal beliefs to weaken gendered norms associated with caregiving and leadership. Changing these stereotypes and beliefs could contribute to facilitating change in both

the caregiving and leadership norms, and women's unsuitability for technical jobs. DFID's framework for shifting social norm (2016) also suggest that when the support for an existing behaviour is strong, individual attitudes need to change before social expectations can change. In other words, attitudinal change is insufficient on its own to shift social norms (Alexander-Scott et al. 2016).

Heteronormative and patriarchal ideologies explain perceptions and expectations about a women's caring role. Vietnamese women are expected to get married, give birth and take care of her family in order to be accepted in this society. In turn, this has affected women's economic participation as expressed in statements like this: 'a middle age woman who is single can be problematic. She might not be flexible and doesn't have emotional balance', (Male manager, 36 years old, Hanoi, banking).

4. Social norm campaigns can mobilise new norms, which aim to challenge heteronormative and patriarchal ideologies. For example:

- Women do not need to get married to be happy (a notion that some women in the IT sector repeated several times in their interviews);

- A woman's value should not be judged according to her decisions to marry, have children or pursue a career;

- Women's capacity should not be assessed according to age, health status, appearance and marital status; and

- Men should not be expected to be the head of the household.

Norm change by IW campaign partners will be more effective when they can identify the source of resistance and select relevant influencing strategies to reduce resistance. Resistance can come from conscious or unconscious gender bias or from institutions who feel that their legitimacy can be challenged (for example, heterosexual families, school, mainstream media etc.).

5. Recommended strategies to reduce resistance can include:

- Using participant-led social change activities in which participants critically reflect, explore and challenge the pressing social norms, beliefs and practices that are important to them. For example, CARE's Social Analysis and Actions (SAA) approach facilitates critical reflection and gender dialogues within households as well as the wider community (CARE International 2018). Other examples from CARE's gender transformative toolkit includes addressing social norms change in women's economic empowerment through Family Business Management Training (also called Family Financial Management Training). The training is targeted at households to make it possible for families to share caregiving and household decision-making responsibilities.

- Social gatekeepers such as micro-influencers on social media channels, religious/ traditional and political leaders in the community, can help show the way towards more equitable norms (Van der Gaag et al. 2019). Working with these groups can be particularly important for ensuring the legitimacy of the new information that may go against the current norm. It also helps to disseminate this new information more broadly and shape public support. This is particularly critical in contexts where a backlash is possible, as opinion leaders can play a key role in risk mitigation.

6. Invest in facilitating norm change as part of early childhood education when children start their day care. Changing the social norms on caring responsibility, women's leadership and individual belief about different technical capacity among men and women should start from early childhood education. We should not wait until young people make career choices or start looking for jobs. Schools, family and the media are key actors who can either reinforce or change norms. Programs that aim to change gendered social norms in recruitment and promotion practice will have little effect if changes at a wider social level have not yet taken place.

Recommendations for addressing barriers to women's economic participation

As barriers to women's economic participation are at the macro level, recommendations for removing these barriers are more suitable for policy makers and social impact investors who commit to promoting gender equality and women empowerment. Changing social norms is only one strategy to achieve improvements in women's economic participation. Gender equality barriers to women's economic participation must be addressed at the same time.

7. Advocate for businesses to adopt the Women's Empowerment Principles[15] that promote gender equality and women's empowerment (UN Global Compact and UNWomen). These principles promote leadership and accountability to gender equality. The Women's Empowerment Principles are:

- Principle 1: Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality;

- Principle 2: Treat all women and men fairly at work – respect and support human rights and non-discrimination;

- Principle 3: Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers;

- Principle 4: Promote education, training and professional development for women;

- Principle 5: Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women;

- Principle 6: Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy; and

- Principle 7: Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality.

8. Advocate and encourage social impact investors to introduce the Economic Dividends for Gender Equality (EDGE) certification (EDGE Certified Foundation n.d.), and implement the Gender Equality Assessment, Results and Strategy (GEARS) developed by IW. GEARS was developed as a resource for companies to

understand gaps, opportunities and strengths of their current strategies in relation to workplace gender equality. GEARS has been applied in four ASEAN countries under the IW Initiative, including Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines and Vietnam (Investing in Women 2020).

Recommendations for business partners who are VBCWE members

The following recommendations are actions that business partners who are VBCWE members and who participated in this research can take to improve institutional gender equality policy and practices. These recommendations also apply to other business partners who are interested in promoting gender equality and women economic empowerment in the workplace.

9. Based on CARE's lessons learned in promoting gender equality in the workplace, strong commitment from senior managers (reference groups) to gender equality is vital. Alongside this commitment is the need to establish accountable feedback mechanisms to ensure that gender equality policies and regulations will be effectively implemented. A stronger commitment from business leaders of VBCWE members would be critical to facilitate the implementation of the following recommendations:

- Review HR policies and practices to make them more equitable and inclusive:

  - Use gender-sensitive language in job advertisements, brand promotion or recruitment materials.

  - Mandate all recruitment processes to include gender balanced candidate pools (at shortlist and/or interview list stage) for all positions.

  - Delete requirements to provide information about gender, age, marital and health status of candidates in existing curriculum vitae templates and job application formats. Regulate that if a candidate does not provide such personal information, this individual will not be excluded from recruitment and promotion processes.

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15   The seven Women's Empowerment Principles are informed by international labour and human rights standards and grounded in the recognition that businesses have a stake in, and a responsibility for, gender equality and women's empowerment.

- Ensure HR and all staff involved in the recruitment and promotion process are not allowed to ask about personal information of candidates regarding gender, age, pregnancy, parental, marital and health status. Where possible, set this requirement as part of the codes of conduct.

- Develop and review policies to ensure HR staff and managers receive training to improve their awareness of gender bias and perceptions related to gendered social norms, for example: developing behaviour change communication products for each norm, using specific scenarios about inequalities in recruitment and equitable promotion practices to facilitate discussion in training workshops. Experience and lessons learned from CARE's STOP Sexual Harassment project (CARE Australia n.d.) can be used to inform such interventions.

- Include regulations supporting staff's fulfilment of their caring roles such as flexible working hours, working from home, childcare support facilities/arrangements, employer funded paid parental leave and communicate these regulations for all candidates during the recruitment process. Access to these measures can be assessed through employee surveys.

- Create flexible promotion practices which include distinct conditions like flexible promotion rhythms, not requiring geographical mobility and enabling career breaks.

- Establish a formal remuneration policy, or a commitment embedded in a broader corporate policy which outlines specific gender pay equity objectives aligned with national regulatory requirements. Assess all financial benefits including health and life insurance benefits, bonuses and retirement contributions when reviewing compensation as part of its pay equity analysis.

- Communicate transparently about the current pay equity gap and any objectives for closing the overall gap internally to all employees and externally (e.g. annual report, sustainability report).

- Monitor and analyse data on recruitment (applications, shortlists, interviews, offers, commencements) and promotion outcomes, resignations, and involuntary exits by gender).

10. Improve internal communication to support the implementation of gender equality policy and practices:

- Communicate the following information to all staff:

i) company/organisation's regulations supporting staff's fulfilment of caring roles; and

ii) recruitment and promotion process without requirements of providing information about gender, age, pregnancy, parental, marital and health status.

- Organise Family Day/Events:

i) circulate information on company's supporting staff's fulfilment of caring roles to staff's spouses;

ii) honour role models of men sharing caring roles, for example organise public competitions to raise the visibility of men performing caregiving roles in a fun and engaging way, for instance a cooking competition or giving a baby a bath; and

iii) champion leaders to tell their story of their journey and how they overcome gender norms to inspire employees.

- Provide all workers and employees with information about referral services and ensure that they can easily access gender based violence and social support services if they experience violence or other sanctions due to not complying with social norms.[16]

- Address the business sub-culture to make it less challenging to women to participate equally.

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16   The National Study on Prevalence of Violence against Women in Vietnam in 2010 found that 58% of women reported having experienced at least one of the three types of violence: physical, sexual or emotional (GSO 2010). Though this research doesn't aim to collect data about GBV, we recorded one incidence of violence. The high prevalence of GBV means that at the minimal level, any interventions need to anticipate and mitigate unintended consequence and provide women with referral information to support services.

Annex 1: Research matrix

Table 8: Matrix of research questions and methodology

Research questions	Sub-questions	Source of information and tools
To what extent do the three identified gendered social norms influence women's economic participation in Vietnam, in particular, relating to recruitment and promotion?	How strong are these norms? What sanctions hold these norms in place? Do the sanctions matter and are they influential enough to compel compliance with the norm? Who are the key reference groups that hold these norms in place?	FGDs and interviews to collect data for five components of norms by using Vignettes
What, if any, are the comparative effects of the identified norms on different groups of women, in particular women in different age groups and workplaces?	How are sanctions, sensitivity to sanctions and exceptions similar or different for factory workers and professional sector employees? How do factors such as differences in age influence gendered social norms related to recruitment and promotion?	FGDs and interviews to collect data for five components of norms by using Vignettes
What are the opportunities to catalyse norm change?	Are there any signs of weakness in the social norms (e.g. disagreements about normative or empirical expectations within or among focus group respondents)? Are there exceptions to people or circumstances when it is more acceptable to transgress norms? What are factors that influence sensitivity to social sanction and support changes?	FGDs and interviews to collect data for five components of norms by using Vignettes Interviews with senior managers Interviews with key informants

Annex 2: Consent form

CONSENT FORM
Research on gender social norms on women economic empowerment in Vietnam
A Focus on Recruitment and Promotion.

Introduction

Thank you for making time to talk with us today. My name is _____ and I am from CARE International, an NGO working on gender equality in Vietnam.

We are here today as part of a research team which is seeking to better understand gender social norms related to recruitment and promotion. You are invited to join this focus group discussion/in depth interview for about 60 minutes.

We would like to hear from you on your perceptions on recruitment and promotion practices in your area. We are particularly interested in the differences between women and men. This research will contribute to a report on women's economic participation in Vietnam.

Before the conversation, we would like you to confirm your participation in this in depth interview/ focus group discussion. This is an oral consent form which contains your rights to participation. I will read out all the information and tick a box when you say you agree with the information.

Please confirm if you are aware that
☐ You are not forced to participate in this research
☐ You have the right to pass when you do not want to answer any of the questions
☐ You have the right to stop the conversation at any time
☐ You can withdraw from the research at any time which means you can request us not to use the information you share
☐ Your name and personal information will not be disclosed in any reports (all of your personal information will be kept confidential)

Please confirm if you agree that:
☐ Our conversation will be noted
☐ Our conversation will be recorded
☐ The information you share will be used for our research report (without mentioning your name)

Researcher specify..
IDI: Name of the respondent; Time and place of the interview.
FGD: FGD name (men/women, sector, time and place of the FGD

☐ The oral consent obtained on:...(date/place)
☐ The oral consent recorded
☐ The oral consent obtained with the following people as witness

Name of researcher 1:.....................................Signature of researcher 1:................................
Name of researcher 2:.....................................Signature of researcher 2:................................

Annex 3: Sample size for tool testing

Table 9: Tool testing in a Garment Factory in Hai Phong

Social norms [17]	Decision makers	Reference groups	Methods	Female	Male	Total
1) Women should be primarily responsible for child/ children and family caretaking	Factory workers	Husbands/ partners	2 IDIs (reference group)		4	4
		Parents, and parents in-law	4 IDIs (reference group)	2	2	4
		Factory workers (decision makers)	FGD: 21-30 years old, norm 1+2 FGD: 31-40 years old, norm 1+3	6 6		12
2) Women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace		Factory workers (decision makers)	2 interviews (Norm 1+2) 2 interviews (Norm 1+3) 2 interviews (reference group)	2	4	6
	Managers and human resource (HR) staff in the factory	Manager and HR staff (decision maker)	1 interview with HR staff (Norm 1+2) 1 interview with a technical manager (Norm 1+3)	1 1		2
3) Only men should be hired for technical jobs		Factory workers	4 interviews (reference group)	2	2	4
		Senior managers	2 interviews (reference group)	1	1	2
Total				21	13	34

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17   Participants discussed two norms in one FGD or interview. We made decision which norm will be suitable with which group, depending on the nature of work and their positions

Table 10: Tool testing in a bank in Hanoi

Social norms [18]	Decision makers	Reference groups	Methods	Female	Male	Total
1) Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking 2) Women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace 3) Only men should be hired for technical jobs	Bank officers	Husbands/ partners	4 IDIs (reference group)		4	4
		Parents, and parents in-law	2 IDIs (reference group)	1	1	2
		Bank staff (decision makers)	FGD: 22-30 years old, norm 1+2 FGD: 31- 40 years old, norm 1+3	5 5		10
		Bank staff (decision makers)	2 interviews (Norm 1+2) 2 interviews (Norm 1+3) 2 interviews (reference group)	2 2	 2	6
	Managers and HR staff	Supervisor and HR staff (decision maker)	1 interview with HR staff (Norm 1+2) 1 interview with a head of department (Norm 1+3)	 1	1	2
		Bank staff	2 interviews (reference group)	1	1	2
		Senior managers	2 interviews (reference group)	1	1	2
Total				18	10	28

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18   Participants discussed two norms in one FGD or interview. We made decision which norm will be suitable with which group, depending on the nature of work and their positions

Annex 4: Summary of sample size from data collection

Table 11: Summary of decision makers and their reference groups

Practice	Social norms	Who makes decisions whether or not to adhere to the norm (decision makers)	Whose opinion is most influential or second most influential to decision makers (reference group)?
Gender inequality in recruitment and promotion	Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking	Factory workers	Family members (husbands/partners, parents/parents in-law)
		Managers and human resource (HR) staff in the factory	Managers and HR staff in the factory Senior managers
		Professional sector employees	Family members (husbands/partners, parents/parents in-law)
		Managers and HR staff in professional organisations	Managers and HR staff Senior managers
	Women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace	Factory workers	Family members (husbands/partners) Managers/supervisors
		Managers and HR staff in the factory	Managers and HR staff in the factory Senior managers
		Professional sector employees	Family members (husbands/partners, managers)
		Managers and HR staff in professional organisations	Managers and HR staff Senior managers
	Only men should be hired for technical jobs	Factory workers	Family members (husbands/partners, parents/parents in-law) Managers and HR staff in the factory
		Managers and HR staff in the factory	Managers and HR staff in the factory Senior managers
		Professional sector employees	Family members (husbands/partners, parents/parents in-law) Managers and HR staff
		Managers and HR staff in professional organisations	Managers and HR staff Senior managers

Adapted from CARE's Journey Piloting Social Norms (Stefanik and Hwang 2017)

Table 12: Detail sample size of each sector

Social norms	Decision makers about the norm	Reference group	Methods	Female	Male	Total
Garment sector: Thai Nguyen, HCMC and Hau Giang						
1) Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking 2) Women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace 3) Only men should be hired for technical jobs	Factory workers	Husbands/ partners (reference group)	10 IDIs		10	10
		Parents and parents in-law (reference group)	3 IDIs	2	1	3
		Factory workers (decision maker)	12 FGDs (6-10 participants FGD)	94		94
		Factory workers (combined decision maker and reference group)	12 IDIs	6	6	12
	Managers and human resource (HR) staff	Managers and HR staff (decision maker)	11 IDIs	8	3	11
		Senior managers (reference group)	3 IDIs	2	1	3
Food processing sector: Hanoi and HCMC						
1) Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking 2) Women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace 3) Only men should be hired for technical jobs	Factory workers	Husbands/ partners (reference group)	7 IDIs		7	7
		Parents and parents in-law (reference group)	4 IDIs	2	2	4
		Factory workers (decision maker)	8 FGDs (8-10 participants/FGD)	74		74
		Factory workers (combined decision maker and reference group)	9 IDIs	4	5	9
	Managers and HR staff	Managers and HR staff (decision maker)	7 IDIs	4	3	7
		Senior managers (reference group)	4 IDIs	2	2	4
Banking sector: Hanoi, Thai Nguyen, HCMC and Can Tho						
1) Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking 2) Women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace	Professional organisations (bank)	Husbands/ partners (reference group)	5 IDIs		5	5
		Parents and parents in-law (reference group)	4 IDIs	2	2	4
		Bank staff (professional employees) (decision maker)	11 FGDs (4-7 participants/ FGD)	58	9	67
		Bank staff (professional employees) (combined decision maker and reference group)	18 IDIs	11	7	18

All 3 norms	Managers and human resource staff	Managers and HR staff (decision maker-3 norms)	7 IDIs	5	2	7
		Senior managers (reference group-3 norms)	9 IDIs	3	6	9
Electricity sector: Hanoi						
1) Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking 3) Only men should be hired for technical jobs	Professional organisations	Technical staff (professional employees)	4 FGDs (4-7 participants/ FGD)	8	14	22
		Technical staff (professional employees) (combined decision maker and reference group)	4 IDIs	2	2	4
	Managers and human resource staff	Managers and HR staff (decision maker-3 norms)	1 IDI with a man who is cum HR and manager		1	1
Information technology sector: Hanoi and HCMC						
1) Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking 3) Only men should be hired for technical jobs	Professional organisations (IT)	Husbands/ partners (reference group)	2 IDIs		2	2
		Parents and parents in-law (reference group)	3 IDIs	2	1	3
		IT staff (professional employees)	12 FGDs (4-10 participants/ FGD)	4	53	57
		IT staff (professional employees) (combined decision maker and reference group)	29 IDIs	16	13	29
All 3 norms	Managers and human resource staff	Managers and HR staff (decision maker-3 norms)	11 IDIs	6	5	11
		Senior managers (reference group-3 norms)	6 IDIs	1	5	6
Sub-total				**31**	**79**	**110**
Total				**318**	**167**	**485**

Annex 5: Demographic information of research participants

These following charts provide an overview of research participants[19] who shared perceptions about three gendered social norms, not their individual behaviours regarding these norms. Whether an individual is married or not, they will still have a perception about norms around marital status and its impacts on women's economic participation. In relation to this topic, when a research participant is married, this person tends to provide more specific and richer data based on their reflection of personal experience of marriage. By collecting data across different reference groups, sex, age groups, and levels in the organisation, the research produces sufficient information to triangulate and make reliable conclusions.

Chart 1 and 2 present the distribution of research participants by gender[20] and marital status. Among five provinces, Hau Giang and Thai Nguyen province had the highest percentage of women,[21] Thai Nguyen province had the highest percentage of married women, while the proportion of single and married women in Can Tho was quite balanced.

Chart 1: Participant distribution by gender (N=485)
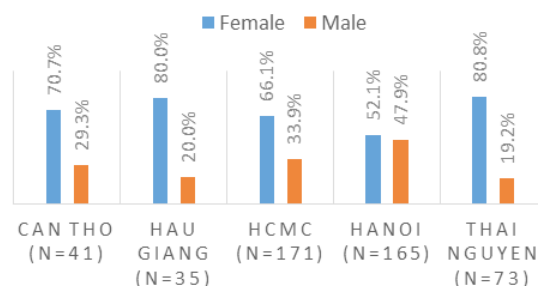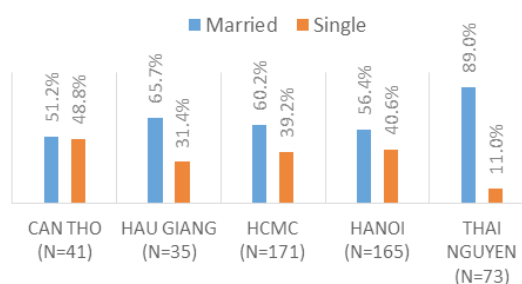

Chart 2: Participant distribution by marital status (N=485)

Participants in Can Tho and Hau Giang were homogeneous in terms of the sector with participants in Can Tho from the banking sector and Hau Giang from the garment sector. About 61% of women in Can Tho and 42.9% of women in Hau Giang had no children. The majority of participants in Can Tho were from 25 to 30 years old [22] (43.9%) while those of Hau Giang was under 25 years old (42.9%) and from 25-30 years old (45.7%).

19   Research participants include both decision makers and reference groups

20   Distribution of research participants by gender means the percentage of male and female participants, who can be either decision makers or reference groups.

21   As explained above, the number of women can include female workers, female employees, female HR and managers. The number of men can include male workers, male employees, male HR and managers.

22   The table 4 in the methodology section presents the age ranges for recruiting female workers and employees as decision makers. When the research team coded data, they divided decision makers into the groups of every 5 years to closely examine any differences due to age.

In Thai Nguyen 71.2% of participants worked in garment factories and 8.8% of participants worked in the banking sector. Women made up 80% of total participants. Most of them were married (89%) and a third (37%) children above 2 years of age.[23]

Demographic characteristics of research participants in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City were quite similar. Both cities had research participants from banking, food processing and IT sector. Almost half of the participants in Hanoi (46.1%) and Ho Chi Minh City (44.4%) had no children. In Ho Chi Minh City, a third of them had children above 2 years of age (31.6%).

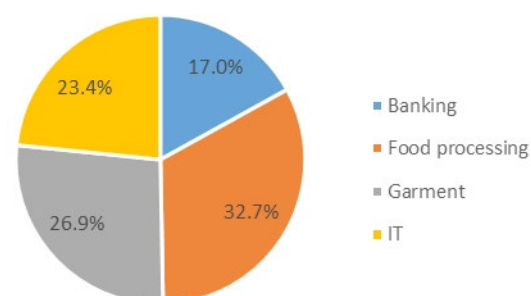**Chart 3: Participant distribution by sector in Ho Chi Minh City (n=171)**

- Banking — 17.0%
- Food processing — 32.7%
- Garment — 26.9%
- IT — 23.4%

Chart 4: Participant distribution by sector in Hanoi (n=165)

- Banking — 11.5%
- EVN — 16.4%
- Food processing — 29.7%
- IT — 42.4%

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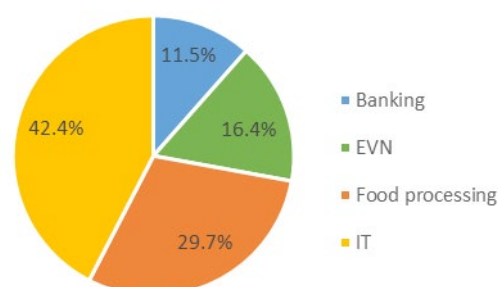
23   For the convenience of managing a large amount of data, researchers coded children to two groups: children under 2 years old and children from 2 years old. In Vietnam, children under 2 years old often stay at home with parents or relatives. They go to day care centres when they are above 2 years old. This implies that women will have more mobility and more choice about pursuing a career.

Annex 6: Research tools

** Please note: these tools draw on CARE's intellectual property and are therefore not to be used or replicated in other research without CARE's prior consent**

Focus group discussion guide with decision makers of three social norms

Tool 1: FGD with garment factory workers (Norm 1)

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking

Decision makers: Female factory workers

Reference groups:

1) Husbands/partners; and

2) Parents and/or parents-in-law

Vignette 1.1.

Hoa is a 24-year-old woman from Nam Dinh province. Four years ago, after finishing high school she moved to Hai Phong city to work in a garment factory. As Hoa was smart and hardworking, she was promoted to manager of a sewing team of 10 garment workers after two years. She is now considering applying for a manager position in another factory, which is bigger and offers a better salary package. It's a great career opportunity for Hoa but with higher responsibilities Hoa will have less time for herself and family. Binh – her boyfriend who is also a worker in the same factory – is not supportive of Hoa's dream of promotion in the bigger factory. At this time, Binh asks Hoa to marry him. Hoa accepts the proposal but still wants to apply for the manager position.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. What would most other women like Hoa do in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most partners like Binh think Hoa should do?

3. What would most parents and parents-in-law think Hoa should do?

Sanctions

4. What would Binh say about Hoa's decision?

5. What would parents, and future parents-in-law say about Hoa's decision?

Sensitivity to sanctions

6. Would Hoa's decision be different if her parents/ parents-in-law do not support her decision?

7. Would Hoa's decision be different if she will live with her parents-in-law after marriage?

8. Would Hoa's decision be different if she has a small child?

Exceptions

9. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Hoa to follow her career ambitions?

10. Whose opinion would be the most influential to Hoa's decision? Whose opinion would be the second most influential? (Reference group)

Tool 2: FGDs with food processing factory workers (Norm 1)

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking

Decision makers: Female food processing factory workers

Reference groups:

1) Husbands/partners; and

2) Parents and/or parents-in-law

Vignette 1.2.

Hoa used to be a worker in a canned food processing factory. She stopped working for 2 years to give birth and raise her child. Hoa's husband is the only income earner. His salary is just enough to support the whole family. Now Hoa wants to return to work. She has seen a large seafood processing company in HCMC recruiting workers for the freezing process. She feels confident that she can do this job due to relevant experience from her previous job. However, the company is about 20km away from her house. She will have to do shift work and probably take the night shift. She is thinking about if she will apply for this position. She talks to her husband (Binh) about this.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. What would most other women like Hoa do in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most partners like Binh think Hoa should do?

3. What would most parents and parents-in-law think Hoa should do?

Sanctions

4. What would Binh say about Hoa's decision?

5. What would parents, and future parents-in-law say about Hoa's decision?

Sensitivity to sanctions

6. Would Hoa's decision be different if her parents or parents-in-law do not support her decision?

7. Would Hoa's decision be different if she will live with her parents-in-law after marriage?

8. Would Hoa's decision be different if she has a small child?

Exceptions

9. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Hoa to follow her career ambitions? (Exceptions)

10. Whose opinion would be the most influential to Hoa's decision? Whose opinion would be the second most influential? (Reference group)

Tool 3: FGDs with bank staff (Norm 1)

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child and family caretaking

Decision makers: Female bank staff

Reference group:

1) Husbands/partners; and

2) Parents and/or parents-in-law

Vignette 1.3

Mai is married, 32 years old and has a 2-year-old daughter. She has a very good job with a good salary at a bank in Hanoi. Mai is highly appreciated by her colleagues for her professional capacity and great teamwork. She wants to apply for an internal manager position which requires travel to provinces at least once per month. Tung, her husband, shared his concern that the travel will mean she does not have much time to take care of the family, including their daughter. He says that they already have a house and good incomes, so why should Mai seek to earn more? However, Mai still wants to develop her career further.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. What would most other women like Mai do in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most husbands/partners like Tung think Mai should do?

3. What would most parents-in-law think Mai should do?

4. What would most parents think Mai should do?

Sanctions:

If Mai decides to take this position:

5. What would Mai's husband say about her decision?

6. What would Mai's parents-in-laws say about her decision?

7. What would Mai's parents say about her decision?

Sensitivity to sanctions

8. Would opinions and reactions of her husband make Mai change her mind?

9. Would opinions and reactions of her parents-in-law make Mai change her mind?

10. Would opinions and reactions of her parents make Mai change her mind?

11. Would Mai decide differently if she lives in the same house with her parents-in-law?

12. Would Mai decide differently if she did not have any children?

Exceptions

13. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Mai to apply for the management position?

14. Whose opinion would be most influential to Mai's decision? Whose opinion would be the second most influential? (Reference group)

Tool 4: FGDs with electricity female staff

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking

Decision makers: Female electricity staff

Reference group:

1) Husbands/partners; and

2) Parents and/or parents-in-law

Vignette 1.4

Hanh graduated from the electricity college. She has been working as a maintenance and operation technician in a private company for 3 years but it is boring. She knows that a district electricity branch is looking for a senior staff in maintenance and operation of TBA 220kV. This will provide her with an opportunity to improve and advance career but she will often need to work outdoors to conduct maintenance and work night shift. She is informed that hardly any women work in this position. She discusses her plan with Tung, her fiancé.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. How would most other women like Hanh react in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most boyfriends like Tung think Hanh should do?

3. What would most parents and parents-in-law think Hanh should do?

Sanctions

4. If Hanh decides to apply for this position:

What would Tung say and how would he react?

5. What would Hanh's parents say and how would they react?

6. What would Tung's parents say and how would they react?

Sensitivity to sanctions

7. Would Tung's opinions and reactions make Hanh change her mind?

8. Would Hanh's parents' and Tung's parents' opinions and reactions make Hanh change her mind?

9. Would Hanh change her mind if she is married and has children?

10. Would Hanh change her mind if she is living with her parents-in-law?

Exceptions

11. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Hanh to apply?

12. Whose opinion would be most influential to Hanh's decision? Whose opinion would be the second most influential?

Tool 5: FGDs with garment factory workers (Norm 2)

Norm 2: Women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace

Decision makers: Garment factory workers

Reference groups:

1) Husbands/partners; and

2) Line managers/managers

Vignette 2.1.

Thi is 27 years old. She has been working in a garment factory for 5 years, in the position of the Head of a sewing line. Thi has proved to have good managerial and technical skills. She doesn't speak up much, always tries to be consultative and consider how her decisions affect her staff. The current Head of the sewing department is Minh, who is warm, energetic, quick at making decisions and receives great support from his staff. As Minh will move to a new department, Thi is considering applying for his position. Workers in the sewing department have gossiped about Thi's plan.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. What would most other women like Thi do in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most husbands think Thi should do?

3. What would most line managers think Thi should do?

Sanctions

4. What would Thi's husband say if she still wants to apply for the manager's position?

5. What would line managers say if she still wants to apply for the manager's position?

Sensitivity to sanctions

6. Would opinions and reactions of Thi's husband make her change her decision to apply for the manager's position?

7. Would opinions and reactions of the line manager make Thi change her decision?

Exceptions

8. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less possible for Thi to keep her leadership style but still gain trust for her management capacity?

9. Whose opinion would be most influential in Thi remaining confident to stay in the management position with her leadership style? Whose opinion would be the second most influential? (Reference group)

Tool 6: FGDs with food processing workers (Norm 2)

Norm 2: Women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace

Decision makers: Food processing workers

Reference groups:

1) Husbands/partners; and

2) New managers

Vignette 2.2.

Thao is 27 years old. She has been working in a food processing factory for 5 years and is currently the production group leader. Through her work, Thao has shown her management and professional skills. Thao is quite reserved who always tries to listen and observe people when considering how her decisions affect other colleagues. Mr. Minh, an outstanding and reliable senior manager, is about to move to another department. Thao wants to apply for Minh's position. However, there has never been a female manager in the factory so she is hesitating whether she should go for it. She talks to her husband about the opportunity.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. How would most other women like Thao react in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most husbands think Thao should do?

3. What would most new managers think Thao should do?

Sanctions

4. What would Thao's husband say if she wants to apply for the manager's position?

5. What would Thao's new manager say if she wants to apply for the manager's position?

Sensitivity to sanctions

6. Would opinions and reactions of the husband make Thao change her decision to apply for the manager's position?

7. Would opinions and reactions of the new manager make Thao change her decision?

Exceptions

8. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less possible for Thao to keep her leadership style but still gain trust for her management capacity?

9. Whose opinion would be most influential in Thao remaining confident to stay in the management position with her leadership style? Whose opinion would be the second most influential? (Reference group)

Tool 7: FGDs with bank staff (Norm 2)

Norm 2: Women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace

Decision makers: Female bank staff

Reference groups:

1) Husbands/partners; and

2) New line managers/managers

Vignette 2.3

Minh has a Master degree in Business Administration and has been working in a bank for 10 years in different positions. Now she is the Director of the Retail Department. Headquarters is looking for an internal candidate for the Director of the Corporate Relationships Department. The annual income target is double that of her department. Minh is interested in this position so she talks with the Managing Director of the Corporate Relationships Department to seek more information. He tells her that the successful candidate needs long-term vision, strategic thinking, and innovative ideas including through using technology to reach new clients.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. What would most other women like Minh do in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most husbands/partners think Minh should do?

3. What would most line managers think Minh should do?

Sanctions

4. What would her husband/partner say if Minh applies for the manager job?

5. What would her line manager say if Minh applies for the manager job?

Sensitivity to sanctions

6. Would opinions and reactions of the husband/partner make Minh change her mind?

7. Would opinions and reactions of the line manager make Minh change her mind?

8. Would Minh change her mind if she has small children?

Exceptions

9. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Minh to apply for the manager job?

10. Whose opinion would be most influential to Minh's decision? Whose opinion would be the second most influential? (Reference group)

Tool 8: FGDs with garment factory workers (Norm 3)

Norm 3: Only men should be hired for technical jobs

Decision makers: Female garment factory workers

Reference group:

1) Human resource (HR) staff; and

2) Line managers in cutting department

Vignette 3.1.

Hong is a 21-year-old married woman, working in the sewing department in a garment factory. The factory is recruiting workers for the cutting department and will provide training to successful candidates. Hong wants to apply for the job in the cutting department because the salary is better than the sewing department. However, recruitment staff advise her that cutting jobs are more suitable for men as they are stronger and better at manoeuvring machines.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. How would most other women like Hong react in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most HR staff think Hong should do?

3. What would most new line managers think Hong should do?

Sanctions

If Hong decided to apply for the cutting job:

4. What would HR staff say and how would they react?

5. What would the new line manager say and how would they react?

Sensitivity to sanctions

6. Would opinions and reactions of HR staff make Hong change her mind?

7. Would opinions and reactions of the new line manager make Hong change her mind?

8. Would Hong apply for the cutting job if her husband didn't support her decision?

9 Would Hong apply for the cutting job if she had small children?

Exceptions

10. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Hong to apply for the cutting job?

11. Whose opinion would be most influential to Hong's decision? Whose opinion would be the second most influential? (Reference group)

Tool 9: FGDs with food processing factory workers (Norm 3)

Norm 3: Only men should be hired for technical jobs

Decision makers: Female food processing factory workers

Reference group:

1) HR staff; and

2) New line managers

Vignette 3.2.

Bich is 24 years old. She works in the storage department in a food processing factory. As the salary is not enough to pay for her living expenses, she decides to look for a new job. She knows that another factory is looking for an operator of the freezing system. She feels confident that she can do this job due to her work experience. Even though there is no information in the advertisement that limits women from applying, she knows that there has never been any women working in this position before. She wonder if she should apply for this position.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. How would most other women like Bich react in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most HR staff think Bich should do?

3. What would most new line managers think Bich should do?

Sanctions

4. If Bich decides to apply for this position, what would the HR staff of this factory say and how would they handle her application?

5. If Bich decides to apply for this position, what would the new line manager of this factory say and how would they react to her application?

6. Would the HR staff invite her for an interview if they don't know about her gender from the application?

7. Would the HR staff invite her for an interview if they know that she is a woman?

Sensitivity to sanctions

8. If the HR staff knows that she is a woman and says that not many women apply for this position, would Bich still apply for it?

9. If Bich is married and her husband is not supportive for this application, would Bich still want to apply for it?

Exceptions

10. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Bich to apply for the operator of the freezing system?

11. Whose opinion would be most influential to Bich's decision? Whose opinion would be the second most influential? (Reference group)

Tool 10: FGDs with female electricity staff

Norm 3: Only men should be hired for technical jobs

Decision makers: Female electricity staff

Reference group:

1) Husband; and

2) New line managers

Vignette 3.3

Ha is 34 years old, married and has 2 children. She is the only woman working in the cable maintenance team in an electricity company in a large district in Hanoi. The work was not hard and it is in her expertise so she can manage to look after the children very well. After 7 years working in the same position, she wants a new challenge. Her office has a new project on smart electric grids. Ha wants to apply for a technical position who will be responsible for coding the operations system. She discuss the opportunity with her husband, Quan, as he works in the IT sector.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. How would most other women like Ha react in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most husbands like Quan think Ha should do?

3. What would most project managers think Ha should do?

Sanctions

If Ha decides to apply:

4. What would Quan say and how would he react?

5. What would the project manager say and how would they react

Sensitivity to sanctions

6. Would Quan's opinions and reactions make Ha change her mind?

7. Would the project manager's opinions and reactions make Ha change her mind?

Exceptions

8. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Ha to apply?

9. Whose opinion would be most influential to Ha's decision? Whose opinion would be the second most influential?

Interview guide with decision makers of three social norms

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

General information

Gender, age, marital status, children

Guiding questions:

1. What is your perception of the 'ideal' woman at home? At work?

2. What makes you feel appreciated as a woman at home? At work?

3. What do you think a woman needs to think of when she applies for a job?

Probe:

- Work outside normal working hours due to job requirement

- Travelling frequently far from home

- A job with a higher salary than that of her husband or partner

- Requires leadership capabilities

- What else does she needs to take into account

4. Let's say a woman decides anyway to apply for a job that regularly requires working overtime, travelling frequently far from home or offers higher salary than her husband:

- Who would disagree with her?

- What would be their opinions and reactions? (Choose suitable pronouns, depending on the answers of the above question)?

5. Would opinions and reactions of those who disagree make her change her decision? (Note: ask specific questions about if she would change her decision because of opinions/reactions from each person who shows disapproval).

6. Are there any circumstances in which a woman could easily go beyond social norms to make her own career decisions, based on her wishes and capacity?

7. Are there any factors that would enable a woman to easily make career decisions? If so, what?

Probe: being single, have no children, being young (under 30 years), have good education, have supportive friends, receive support from parents, good human resource development policy etc.

8. Are there any other factors that would constrain her decision?

Probe: marital status, have children, over 30 years old, influence from parents, husbands/partners, siblings who support traditional gender norms etc.

Tool 12: Interview guide with female electricity workers and female IT staff (norm 1+3)

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking

Norm 3: Only men should be hired for technical jobs

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

General information

Can you tell us your age, marital status? Have you got any children?

Guiding questions:

1. What do you perceive as the 'ideal' woman at home? At work?

2. What do you perceive as the 'ideal' man at home? At work?

3. In your opinion, which jobs are considered technical? Which attributes/characteristics are essential for doing a technical job? Are there any differences between men and women?

4. What do you think a woman needs to think of when she applies for a technical position in your company?

Probe:

- Work outside normal working hours due to job requirements

- Travelling frequently far from home

- A job with a higher salary than that of husband or partner

- Must possess essential attributes/ characteristics for doing a technical job (refer to answers from respondents to the above question)

- What else does she needs to take into account

5. In your community or at your work, do many women need to think of the above traits when she wants to apply for a technical job? If yes, what do you mean by "many"?

6. Let's say a woman decides anyway to apply for a technical job that regularly requires working overtime, travelling frequently far from home or offers a higher salary than her husband or partner, who might disagree with her?

7. If she decided to apply for this kind of job despite disagreement or objection, what would be the opinions and reactions of those who disagree?

8. Would opinions and reactions of those who disagree make her change her decision? (Note: ask specific questions about if she would change her decision because of opinions/reactions from each person who shows disapproval).

9. Are there any circumstances in which a woman could easily go beyond social norms to make her own career decisions, based on her wishes and capacity?

10. Are there any other factors that would enable a woman to easily make career decisions? If so, what?

Probe: being single, have no children, being at young age (under 30 years), have good education, have supportive friends, receive support from parents, good human resource development policy etc.

11. Are there any other factors that would constrain her decision?

Probe: marital status, have children, over 30 years old, influence from parents, husbands/ partners, siblings who support traditional gender norms etc.

Tool 13: Interview guide with HR staff and managers in garment, food processing and bank (norm 1+2)

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking

Norm 2: Women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Guiding questions:

1. What do you perceive as the 'ideal' man at home? At work?

2. What do you perceive as the 'ideal' woman at home? At work?

3. Please provide me with an overview of the personnel structure of your factory/company.

4. What is the recruitment and promotion process for a senior manager position?

5. In your opinion, which attributes/ characteristics are essential for a leader? Are there any differences between men and women?

6. Which of the following issues do you believe human resource staff/managers need to take into account when they recruit a woman or promote a woman to a management position?

- Work outside normal working hours due to job requirement

- Travel frequently far from home

- Must possess attributes/characteristics of a leader (when recruiting a management/ leader position)

7. Let's say a HR staff/manager decides to hire a female over a male candidate for a leadership position, based on her qualifications and experience (e.g. not being influenced by social norms). Who would support this person? Who would disagree? What would they say and how would they react?

Probe:

- Ask for specific information about the differences between recruitment/promotion for a low/middle/high level management position.

- Ask for specific information about the differences between recruitment/promotion for a management position in the back office and that of in the sale department.

8. What would colleagues/senior managers say or how would they react if a HR staff/manager hires a qualified woman for a leadership position over a male candidate?

9. Are there any circumstances in which a HR/ manager can easily make their own decision to hire a female candidate over a male candidate for a leadership position based on qualifications and experience of candidates? (e.g. not being influenced by social norms)

10. What are other factors that enable a HR staff/manager to make such a decision?

Probe: polices, practice and working culture with regard to gendered social expectations and leadership trait, women's and men's capacity etc.

11. What are other factors that constrain their decision?

Probe: pressure to be cost effective (due to opportunity cost associated with maternity leave, raising small kids), don't want to take risk, lack of understanding and leadership support to gender equality.

Tool 14: Interview guide with HR staff and managers in electricity and IT sector (norm 1+3)

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking

Norm 3: Only men should be hired for technical jobs

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Guiding questions:

1. What do you perceive is the 'ideal' man at home? At work?

2. What do you perceive is the 'ideal' woman at home? At work?

3. In your company, which jobs are considered technical? Which attributes/characteristics are essential for doing a technical job? Are there any differences between men and women?

4. Which of the following issues do you believe that human resource staff/managers need to take into account when they recruit a woman for, or promote a woman to, a technical position?

- Work outside normal working hours due to job requirements

- Travel frequently far from home

- Must possess attributes/characteristics for doing a technical job (when recruiting a management/leader position)

5. Let's say a HR staff/manager decides to hire a female over a male candidate for a technical job, based on her qualifications and experience (i.e. they are not being influenced by social norms). Who would support this person? Who would disagree with this person? What would they say and how would they react?

6. What would colleagues/senior managers say and how would they react if a HR staff/manager hires a qualified woman for a technical job over a male candidate?

7. Are there any circumstances in which a HR/ manager can easily make their own decision to hire a female candidate over a male candidate for a technical job based on qualifications and experience of candidates? (i.e. they are not being influenced by social norms)

8. What are other factors enable a HR staff/ manager to make such a decision?

Probe: polices, practice and working culture with regards to gendered social expectations and leadership traits, women's and men's capacities, etc.

9. What are other factors that constrain their decision?

Probe: pressure to be cost effective (due to opportunity cost associated with maternity leave, raising small kids), don't want to take risk, lack of understanding and leadership support for gender equality.

Focus group discussion with reference groups of three norms

Tool 15: FGD with male technicians in an electricity office (Recruitment)

This tool was used with male technician as a reference group for norm 1+3 (electricity and IT staff)

> **Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking**
>
> **Norm 3: Only men should be hired for technical jobs**
>
> *Vignette 4.1 (Recruitment)*
>
> Hanh has a university degree in information and technology. After having worked for a private company for 3 years, Hanh is looking for a better job. She knows that a metropolitan electricity company is looking for a position in the technical department which offers better remuneration but requires working night shifts. Hanh knows that this electricity company has never recruited any female staff for the technical department. She talks with Tung, her fiancé about the plan to apply for this position.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. What would most other men like Tung do in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most parents-in-law think Tung should do?

3. What would most of Tung's male friends think he should do?

Sanctions

If Tung supports Hanh to apply for this position in the technical department"

4. How would Tung's parents react?

5. How would Tung's friends react?

Sensitivity to sanctions

6. Would Tung's decision be different if Tung and Hoa are already married and have a small child?

7. Would Tung's decision be different if Tung and Hanh live in the same house with Tung's parents?

8. Would Tung' decision be different if his parents insisted he not support Hanh?

9. Would Tung's decision be different if his friends insisted he not support Hanh?

Exceptions

10. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Tung to overcome social pressure from parents and friends in order to support Hanh?

Probe: responses from similar stories in the media or similar examples in the neighbourhood etc.

Tool 16: FGD with male workers in an electricity office (Recruitment)

This tool will be used with male workers as a reference group for norm 1+3:

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking

Norm 3: Only men should be hired for technical jobs

Vignette 4.2 (Recruitment)

Van graduated from the electricity college. While she is looking for a job, she knows that an electricity branch in a district is looking for staff in the operations team. This position requires shift work and a woman has never held the role. As Van wants to apply for this position, she talks with Hung, her fiancé, about this plan.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. What would most other men like Hung, Van's fiancé do in this situation?

Normative expectations

2 What would most parents-in-law think Hung should do?

3. What would most of Hung's male friends think he should do?

Sanctions

If Van decides to apply for this position:

4. How would Hung' parents react if he supports Van's decision?

5. How would Hung's friends react if he supports Van's decision?

Sensitivity to sanctions

6. Would Van's decision be different if Hung's parents do not support her?

7. Would Van's decision be different if Hung's friends do not support her?

8. Would Hung's decision be different if Hung's parents do not agree?

9. Would Hung's decision be different if Hung and Van are already married and have a small child?

10. Would Hung's decision be different if Hung and Van live in the same house with Hung's parents?

Exceptions

10. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Hung to overcome social pressure from parents and friends in order to support Van?

Probe: responses from similar stories in the media or similar examples in the neighbourhood etc.

Tool 17: FGD with male technicians in an electricity office (Promotion)

This tool was used with male technicians as a reference group for norm 1+3:

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking

Norm 3: Only men should be hired for technical jobs

Vignette 5.1 (Recruitment)

Phuong is 30 years old and married. She has been working for 3 years in a technical department of a metropolitan electricity company. Her colleagues appreciate her for her strong technical expertise and for being highly responsible. The head of her department is going to retire soon. The company wants to support all staff in the technical department who are interested in this position through a transparent and equal process. Phuong and two other male colleagues express an interest in this position. Phuong knows that in this company, there are not many women in the position of head of the department. She discusses her plan with her husband, Minh.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. What would most other men like Minh do in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most parents-in-law think Minh should do?

3. What would most of Minh's male friends think he should do?

Sanctions

If Minh supports Phuong to apply for this position:

4. How would Minh's parents react?

5. How would Minh's friends react?

Sensitivity to sanctions

6. Would Minh's decision be different if Minh and Phuong are already married and have a small child?

7. Would Minh's decision be different if Minh's friends do not support her?

8. Would Minh's decision be different if his parents do not support her?

9. Would Minh's decision be different if they live in the same house with Minh's parents?

Exceptions

10. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Minh to overcome social pressure from parents and friends in order to support Phuong?

Probe: responses from similar stories in the media or similar examples in the neighbourhood etc.

Tool 18: FGD with male workers in an electricity office (Promotion)

This tool was used with male workers as a reference group for norm 1+3:

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking

Norm 3: Only men should be hired for technical jobs

Vignette 5.2 (Promotion)

Ha is 34 years old, married and has 2 children. She is the only woman working in the cable maintenance team in an electricity company of a large district. She has been working there for 7 years and is appreciated for her performance. The area under Ha's responsibility experiences stable electricity supply. All problems have been resolved quickly and appropriately. Her technical expertise is on a similar level to male colleagues. In the coming period, Ha's team will be split into half in order to look after a new residential area. This change will require a new team leader. Ha thinks that this is a good opportunity for her to prove her leadership capacity and increase her income. She discusses the plan with her husband, Quan.

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. What would most other men like Quan do in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most parents-in-law think Quan should do?

3. What would most of Quan's male friends think he should do?

Sanctions

If Quan supports Ha:

4. How would Quan's parents react?

5. How would Quan's friends react?

Sensitivity to sanctions

6. Would Ha's decision be different if Quan's parent do not support her?

7. Would Ha's decision be different if Quan's friends do not support her?

8. Would Quan's decision be different if his parents do not support her?

9. Would Quan's decision be different if their children are grown up?

10. Would Quan's decision be different if Quan and Ha live in the same house with Quan's parents?

Exceptions

11. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Quan to overcome social pressure from parents and friends in order to support Ha?

Probe: responses from similar stories in the media or similar examples in the neighbourhood etc.

Tool 19: FGD with male IT staff (Recruitment)

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking

Norm 3: Only men should be hired for technical jobs

Vignette IT1: Recruitment

Hoa has just graduated from IT department for 3 months but does not have a job. She wanted to find job of her IT specialty. She said she will accept any working circumstance as long as it is an IT job. She was informed that a big bank in Hanoi was looking for IT technician with a requirement of extra working hour or at weekend. Hoa knows that this bank has never recruited female IT staff. She discussed with Tung, her fiancé on whether she should apply for this job.

Discussion questions

Empirical expectations

1. What would most other men like Tung say to Hoa in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most Tung's parents think Tung should do in this situation?

3. What would most Tung's male friends think Tung should do in this situation?

Sanction:

If Tung support Hoa and she decided to apply for this job

4. What would Tung's parents think and react?

5. What would Tung's friends think and react?

Sensitivity to Sanction

6. Would Hoa's decision be different if Tung's parent do not support?

7. Would Hoa's decision be different if Tung's friends do not support?

Attention to facilitator: If FGD participants mention no sanctions from previous questions, these questions regarding sensitivity can be passed.

Exception

8. Would Tung's decision be different if his parents do not support?

9. Would Tung's decision be different if his male friends tease him not able to control his fiancé?

10. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Tung to overcome social pressure from parents and friends in order to support Hoa? (Exceptions)

Probe: responses from similar stories in the media or similar examples in the neighbourhood etc.

Tool 20: FGD with male IT staff (Promotion)

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking

Norm 3: Only men should be hired for technical jobs

Vignette IT2: Promotion

Hoang is 30 years old and married. She has been working as IT staff in an assurance company for 3 years. She is appreciated by colleagues for her strong technical expertise and for being highly responsible. The Head of her department is going to retire soon. The company wants to support all staff in the technical department who are interested in this position through a transparent and equal process. Huong and two other male colleagues express an interest in this position. Huong knows that in this company, there are not many women in the position of Head of the department. She discusses with Minh, her husband about her plan to apply for it.

Discussion

Empirical expectations

1. What would most other men like Minh do in this situation?

Normative expectations

2. What would most parents-in-law think Minh should do?

3. What would most of Minh's male friends think he should do?

Sanctions:

If Minh support Huong to apply this position

4. What would Minh's parents react?

5. What would Minh's friends react?

Sensitivity to sanctions

6. Would Huong's decision be different if Minh's parents do not support?

7 Would Huong's decision be different if Minh's friend do not support?

Exception

8. Would Minh's decision be different if his parents do not support?

9. Would Minh's decision be different if they live in the same house with Minh's parents?

10. Would Minh's decision be different if they have small children?

11. Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Minh to overcome social pressure from parents and friends in order to support Huong? (Exceptions)

Probe: responses from similar stories in the media or similar examples in the neighbourhood etc.

Interview guide with reference groups

Tool 21: Interview guide with male workers and staff

This tool was used for interviews with male workers and staff who are both decision makers and reference groups of female workers and professional staff employees regarding the three norms.

Norm 1: Women should be primarily responsible for child/children and family caretaking

Norm 2: Women should not be in leadership positions within a workplace

Norm 3: Only men should be hired for technical jobs

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

Guiding interview questions:

1. What is your perception of an 'ideal' man at home? At work?

2. What is your perception of an 'ideal' woman at home? At work?

3. In your opinion, which jobs are considered technical? Which attributes/characteristics are essential for doing a technical job? Are there any differences between men and women?

4. What do women need to think of when she wants to apply for a technical job?

- Work outside normal working hours due to job requirements

- Travel frequently far from home

- Has higher salary than that of her husband or partner

- Must possess attributes/characteristics for doing a technical job (when recruiting a management/leader position)

- Are there any other things that she need to think of for the technical position

5. In your community or at your work, do many women need to think of the above traits when applying for a technical job? If yes, what do you mean by "many"?

Sanctions

6. Let's say a woman does these things (e.g. apply for a job that regularly requires working overtime, travel frequently far from home or offers higher salary than her husband etc.), would you disagree with her? What would you think? What would you say to her?

7. If she decided to apply for this kind of job, who else in the family or community would disagree with her? What would be their opinions and reactions?

Sensitivity to sanctions

8. Would your opinions and reactions make her change her decision?

9. Would opinions and reactions from other family members, friends or community people make her change her mind?

Exceptions

10. Who might find it acceptable for women to behave like this?

Probe: husband/partner, parents, parents-in-law, siblings, close friends, colleagues etc.)

11. Who might support women to do these things, despite the consequences? Please give examples from your community.

12. Are there any circumstances in which a woman could easily go beyond social norms to make her own career decisions, based on her wishes and capacity?

13. Are there any factors that would enable a woman to easily make career decisions? If so, what?

Probe: being single, have no children, being young (under 30 years), have good education, have supportive friends, receive support from parents, good human resource development policy etc.

14. Are there any other factors that would constrain her decision?

Probe: marital status, children, over 30 years old, influence from parents, husbands/ partners, siblings who support traditional gender norms etc.

Interview questions to men as decision makers:

15. If men apply for a job or seek promotion, are these issues applicable to men? (Go through each issue again)

16. Do you think that many men do these things in your community? If yes, what do you mean by "many"

17. Are there any negative consequences for the family and community if men do these things? If so, what?

If men don't experience any sanction, we can stop the interview. If respondents say yes and provide examples, we will follow the same structure of the SNAP Framework as above to ask further questions.

Tool 22: Interview guide with parents and parents-in-laws

Reference group of female factory workers and professional sector employees (three norms)

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

1. When a woman wants to apply for a job or promotion, which of the following issues does she need to consider?

- Work outside normal working hours due to job requirements

- Travel frequently far from home

- Has higher salary than that of her husband or partner

- Takes leadership position

- Takes technical job

2. Do you think that many women have to think of these issues when she applies for a job or in her decision to take a promotion? If yes, what do you mean by "many"?

Sanctions

3. Let's say a woman does these things (e.g. apply for a job that regularly requires working overtime, travel frequently far from home or offers higher salary than her husband etc.), would you disagree with her? What would you think? What would you say to her?

4. If she decided to apply for this kind of job, who else in the family or community would disagree with her? What could be their opinions and reactions?

Sensitivity to sanctions

5. Would your opinions and reactions make her change her decision?

6. Would opinions and reactions from other family members, friends or community people make her change her mind?

Exceptions

7. Who might find it acceptable for women to behave like this?

Probe: husband/partner, parents, parents-in-law, siblings, close friends, colleagues etc.)

8. Who might support women to do these things, despite the consequences? Please give examples from your community.

9. Are there any circumstances in which a woman could easily go beyond social norms to make her own career decisions, based on her wishes and capacity?

10. Are there any factors that would enable a woman to easily make career decisions? If so, what?

Probe: being single, have no children, being at young age (under 30 years), have good education, have supportive friends, receive support from parents, good human resource development policy etc.

11. Are there any other factors that would constrain her decision?

Probe: marital status, have children, over 30 years old, influence from parents, husbands/partners, siblings who support traditional gender norms etc.

Tool 23: Interview guide with HR staff, managers and senior managers

Reference groups of HR and managers who are often involved in recruitment and promotion in the factory or professional organisations

Purpose: to gain a deeper understanding about:

- Gendered perceptions and expectations of senior managers regarding recruitment and promotion

- Gaps in policies and practices with regard to recruitment and promotion in selected sectors

- Opportunities to catalyse norm change

Provide general introduction and obtain consent to proceed.

1. Please introduce yourself: name, age, position and how long have you been working in this position

2. What attitudes and characteristics do you believe that society expects of women when they apply for a job and seek promotion in your factory/company/sector? Why?

3. Apart from qualifications and experiences, what do women need to prove themselves to be accepted in your area of work?

4. What attitudes and characteristics are not considered acceptable for women when they apply for a job and seek promotion in your factory/company/sector? Why?

5. What would happen if a woman chose not to conform to these expectations? Why?

6. What specific requirements or characteristics do candidates have to possess to be employed in your company/sector?

Probing questions: skills, experience, qualifications, leadership characteristics, flexible to meet operational requirements (travelling, working extra hours as needed), fit the "culture" of the workplace.

7. What do you think about these requirements? Are they fair for men and women from different backgrounds and conditions (e.g. marital status, disability, educational level, pregnancy, having small children, being single parents etc.)

8. Do you know of any regulations and policies that support or restrict women from applying for certain positions in your factory/company/sector?

9. What are the challenges and barriers for women to join this workplace/sector? What are the challenges and barriers for women to be promoted in this workplace/sector?

10. What can help women gain employment in this workplace/sector? What can help women to be promoted in this workplace/sector?

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