

TRPRO_14th International Conference on Air Transport – INAIR 2025: Fly High, Learn Far Gender Diversity in Aviation: Barriers, Opportunities, and Pathways for Equity

Marina Efthymiou^{a,*}

^aDublin City University Business School, Dublin, Ireland

Abstract

Gender imbalance remains a persistent challenge in male-dominated industries such as aviation. This paper examines the state of gender diversity in the Irish aviation sector using original data collected through a national survey conducted in 2023. By analysing responses from organisations across the industry, the study identifies modest gains in overall workforce diversity but continued underrepresentation of women in senior leadership roles. Drawing on gendered organisation theory and research on occupational segregation, the paper explores the structural and cultural dynamics that shape women's participation and advancement in aviation. By situating the Irish case within the broader international literature on gendered sectors, the analysis offers an empirically grounded contribution to understanding how industry traditions, organisational cultures, and career trajectories interact to sustain gender disparities.

© 2025 The Authors. Published by ELSEVIER B.V.

This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>)

Peer review under the responsibility of the 14th International Conference on Air Transport - INAIR 2025: Fly High, Learn Far.

Keywords: Gender diversity; Aviation workforce; Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI); Aviation; Women in aviation.

1. Introduction

The aviation sector has long been characterised by a pronounced gender imbalance, particularly in technical, operational, and leadership roles. Research has found that female pilot representation has remained minimal despite commitments, while administrative posts were primarily filled by women (Novak Sedláčková et al., 2022). While women are more visible in customer-facing and administrative positions, their representation in flight operations, engineering, and executive decision-making remains disproportionately low. This underrepresentation mirrors patterns across other transport and STEM-intensive industries, where occupational segregation and structural barriers have proven resistant to change (Charles & Grusky, 2004). Diversity is not only a matter of equity, but it also has a positive impact on performance. Suau-Sanchez et al. (2025) found that board and executive gender diversity have a positive correlation regarding capacity efficiency and KPI efficiency.

* Corresponding author. *E-mail address:* marina.efthymiou@dcu.ie

Research on gender in aviation has highlighted a range of contributing factors, including the persistence of masculine occupational cultures, the reinforcement of gendered career pathways through recruitment and training practices, and the influence of work–life balance considerations in a sector characterised by irregular hours and high mobility demands (Acker, 1990; Ferla & Graham, 2019). These dynamics are compounded by limited female role models in leadership positions and a scarcity of formal mentoring and sponsorship opportunities.

Ireland offers a distinctive and understudied context for examining these issues. As a global centre for aircraft leasing, airline management, and aviation services, the country hosts a diverse range of aviation enterprises, from multinational corporations to regulatory bodies. Despite this prominence, there is a paucity of empirical research on gender representation within the Irish aviation workforce. This paper addresses this gap by presenting and analysing findings from a national survey conducted in 2023, which collected both quantitative and qualitative data from aviation organisations across multiple sub-sectors.

The purpose of this study is threefold. First, it seeks to establish an evidence-based profile of women’s participation in the Irish aviation workforce, including their representation in leadership roles. Second, it aims to compare these findings with international trends in gender diversity within aviation and related industries. Third, it examines the organisational and cultural factors that may contribute to the persistence of gender disparities, drawing on gendered organisation theory (Acker, 1990), the glass ceiling framework (Cotter et al., 2001), and scholarship on occupational segregation. By addressing these aims, the paper contributes an original, nationally focused dataset to the literature on gender in aviation and situates it within broader debates on diversity, equity, and inclusion in male-dominated professions.

The paper is structured as follows: Section 2 reviews literature on gender, diversity, and inclusion in aviation. Section 3 explains the methodology. Section 4 presents and discussed the findings, and Section 5 concludes the paper and offers recommendations for fostering a more inclusive aviation industry.

2. Literature Review

Theoretical frameworks provide valuable insights into the dynamics of gender inequality in aviation, showing how organisational structures, policies, and cultures reinforce these inequities. In addition to structural and institutional perspectives, Social Identity Theory offers a psychological lens for understanding gendered workplace exclusion. It holds that individuals categorise themselves and others into social groups based on perceived similarities, producing in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination (Turner et al., 1979). In male-dominated fields like aviation, women and gender minorities are often positioned as “out-group” members, facing barriers in leadership networks, career advancement, and informal mentorship.

Acker’s (1990) gendered organisation theory argues that workplaces are built on gendered assumptions that perpetuate inequality. The masculinisation of pilot roles and feminisation of cabin crew positions exemplify how traditional gender stereotypes become embedded. Feminist institutionalism extends this analysis by examining how formal and informal rules sustain gendered power imbalances (Kenny, 2014). Organisations maintain these dynamics (Carvalho et al., 2019) through recruitment, promotion, and workplace cultures that discourage women from entering or advancing in technical and leadership roles (Smith et al., 2021). In aviation, service roles like cabin crew remain hyper-feminised and subject to aesthetic labour expectations (Smith et al., 2023a).

The “glass ceiling” metaphor describes invisible barriers to women’s progression into leadership (Carvalho et al., 2019) and remains highly relevant to aviation. While initiatives such as IATA’s 25by2025 aim to boost representation, women still occupy fewer than 13% of senior roles outside human resources (IATA, 2022). These efforts often fail to address root causes and risk remaining symbolic. Women who reach leadership may also face the “glass cliff” (Ryan et al., 2016), being placed in precarious roles during crises (Bruckmüller & Branscombe, 2010). “Sticky floor” effects also restrict upward mobility, producing a dual labour market (Rees, 2022). Carvalho et al. (2019) caution that focusing solely on the glass ceiling oversimplifies gender inequality by ignoring systemic discrimination throughout careers.

Social Identity Theory helps explain these phenomena: male-dominated leadership fosters in-group bias, with out-group members facing greater scrutiny that undermines their credibility and advancement. This is consistent with

findings that women in aviation are more heavily questioned and less likely to be integrated into leadership pipelines (Smith et al., 2023b). A lack of representation at senior levels reinforces exclusion, creating a self-perpetuating cycle.

Feminist poststructuralism offers another lens for analysing the intersection of gender, power, and organisational practices, framing gender as a socially constructed identity shaped by discourse (Gavey, 1989; Davis, 1991). It critiques binary oppositions (male/female, rational/emotional) that underpin workplace norms and sustain masculine dominance (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Smith et al., 2023b). In aviation, such discourses marginalise femininity and intersectional identities while privileging male norms in recruitment and leadership assessment. Feminist poststructuralism also highlights opportunities for resistance and transformation by disrupting dominant narratives and amplifying diverse voices (Smith et al., 2021).

The concept of gendered subjectivities explores how organisational practices shape employees' perceptions of their gender at work (Duffy et al., 2017). In aviation, this is evident in the hyper-sexualisation of cabin crew roles and the heightened scrutiny of women in technical and leadership positions (Smith et al., 2023a). Expectations tied to competence and authority can create tension between professional identities and organisational norms, reinforcing exclusionary practices.

Intersectionality further clarifies how overlapping identities produce compounded disadvantage (Crenshaw, 2013a). For example, Ragbir et al. (2021) found that Black female pilots were perceived as less competent than their white or male peers, perpetuating both racial and gender stereotypes. Woods et al. (2024) similarly show that ethnicity compounds barriers for women in aviation, while Moore and Taylor's (2020) analysis of industrial disputes in British Airways highlights how gender, race, and sexuality intersect with organisational dynamics. Cultural sexism and patriarchal norms can further constrain women's careers; for instance, women in Turkey face societal pressures that complicate balancing family expectations with professional aspirations (Dinçer & Yirmibeşoğlu, 2024). Globally, women of colour contend with both racial and gender bias, further limiting career advancement (Marintseva et al., 2022; Morrison, 2023).

Tokenism, defined as the marginalisation of individuals in minority positions, is prevalent in male-dominated industries. It is not only a numerical issue but embedded in organisational practices (Yoder, 1991). Women in token roles often face over-scrutiny, limited advancement, and increased stress. Increasing numerical representation without addressing discriminatory practices does little to dismantle these systemic issues.

Work–life balance remains a significant challenge in aviation, where irregular hours and high-pressure environments disproportionately affect those with caregiving responsibilities. Moore and Taylor (2020) found that balancing domestic responsibilities with demanding schedules burdens women disproportionately. Boundary theory examines how individuals manage the borders between work and personal life, distinguishing “segmentors” (who separate work and home) from “integrators” (who blend them) (Desrochers & Sargent, 2004). For many women in operational roles, long hours and travel demands make flexibility difficult, exacerbating work–life conflict.

Recent research introduces the concept of “work–life blending,” where boundaries between work and personal life become increasingly blurred (Smith et al., 2022; Steffens et al., 2023). While this can enable flexibility, it also increases interference between domains, especially for women (Vloo et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic added further complexity (Diab-Bahman & El-Enzi, 2020; Vyas, 2022), with the aviation sector experiencing furloughs, salary cuts, and layoffs (Warnock-Smith et al., 2021; Hiney et al., 2023) that disproportionately affected women. The pandemic's long-term effects on gender equity in aviation remain underexplored.

Structural and cultural barriers have long restricted women's participation in aviation, sustaining its male-dominated character. Roles are starkly divided along gender lines, with piloting and technical positions seen as “masculine” and service roles like flight attendants marked as “feminine” (McCarthy et al., 2015). Hegemonic masculinity in technical and leadership roles excludes women through implicit biases and workplace behaviours (Germain et al., 2012; Foley et al., 2022). Harassment, from both colleagues and customers, reinforces exclusion — from passengers questioning female pilots' competence to strict grooming standards imposed on cabin crew (Smith et al., 2023b).

Stereotypes portraying piloting as inherently masculine deter women early, influencing career aspirations. Social role theory posits that women are socialised into caregiving and supportive roles, steering them toward certain occupations, while men are socialised into leadership and technical roles. In training, women often face scepticism

from instructors and peers, financial barriers, and even cockpit design limitations — with 26% citing height as a barrier to reaching aircraft controls (Germain et al., 2012).

Aviation’s organisational cultures continue to reinforce biases, stereotypes, and tokenism, particularly in piloting and maintenance, where women report low belonging and visibility. Leadership positions bring heightened scrutiny, while unconscious bias in recruitment and promotion favours men. Woods et al. (2024) found that white males dominate high-status roles like pilots, while women and people of African descent are overrepresented in lower-paying service roles.

Measures such as flexible work arrangements and mentorship programmes have potential but are inconsistently applied. Flexibility can improve work–life balance but risks reinforcing perceptions of reduced commitment (Chung, 2020; Galea et al., 2014). Mentorship and sponsorship are vital but remain constrained by male-dominated networks (Yanikoglu et al., 2020); only 23% of female flight instructors and 5.5% of trainees reported having a female mentor (Germain et al., 2012). The absence of these supports exacerbates isolation and undermines self-efficacy.

Addressing these challenges requires systemic change, including transparent promotion processes, targeted mentorship, and organisational cultures that value diversity. Male-dominated leadership structures perpetuate gender gaps, making it essential to address both formal rules and informal norms. While liberal feminism advocates for quotas, equal pay, and recruitment campaigns, these must be complemented by efforts to dismantle the deeper cultural and structural barriers sustaining inequality.

3. Methodology

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design to capture a comprehensive snapshot of gender representation across the Irish aviation sector. The approach was chosen to enable quantitative measurement of workforce composition and leadership demographics, complemented by qualitative insights into perceived barriers and organisational practices. The survey was designed to collect data from individual employees, thereby providing a sector-wide overview based on aggregated responses.

The target population comprised all individuals (men and women) operating within or directly serving the Irish aviation sector, including airlines, aircraft leasing companies, maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) providers, airports, regulatory agencies, air navigation service providers, and aviation training institutions. A purposive sampling strategy was employed to ensure coverage across these subsectors.

Significant effort was made to boost response rates and design the surveys with inclusive, unbiased language, particularly on sensitive topics like gender identity, race, and disability. The surveys allowed self-identification, avoided stereotypes, and prioritised anonymity to encourage honest responses. Data were collected via Qualtrics surveys from May 2021 to February 2022. Responses were obtained from 14 aviation organisations, with 441 valid employee responses retained after rigorous data cleaning. The demographics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Employee survey Demographics

Variable	%	Variable	%
Gender (N= 439)		Age group (N= 439)	
Men	51.5%	18 - 24	8.7%
Women	47.8%	25 - 34	26.2%
Other	0.7%	35 - 44	26.0%
Caring for dependent adults (N=440)		45 - 54	28.2%
Yes	8.4%	55 - 64	9.1%
No	91.6%	65+	1.8%

Experience in the aviation industry (N=409)		Do you have any children (N=439)	
Less than 2 Years	6.4%	Yes, children under 18	32.8%
2-5 years	21.3%	Yes, children above 18	12.5%
5-10 years	18.6%	Yes, under 18 and above 18	5.2%
10 + years	53.8%	No	49.4%
Aviation sector (N=441)		Current role (N=437)	
Aircraft Manufacturer	2.9%	CEO / C-suite	8.2%
Airline/aircraft operator	27.0%	Senior Manager	34.8%
Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul	7.9%	General Employee	33.9%
Aircraft Leasing	23.4%	Contract worker	2.7%
Aviation Regulation	2.3%	Pilot	7.3%
Airport Operator	12.5%	Air Traffic Control Officer	5.0%
Air Navigation Service Provider	7.3%	MRO Technician, Engineer, other	3.2%
Aviation Student- pilot/engineer	0.7%	Other	4.8%
Ground Handling	1.1%	Years in the current role (N=400)	
Air Force	3.2%	Less than 2 Years	26.3%
International agency (e.g. ICAO, IATA)	0.5%	2-5 years	38.3%
Aviation Consultancy	5.2%	5-10 years	19.5%
Other	6.1%	10 + years	16.0%
<i>Note: The discrepancy in the reported sample sizes (N) across variables arises because some survey questions were optional, and a small number of respondents chose not to provide answers to every item.</i>			

Ethical approval was obtained from Dublin City University, ensuring compliance with research ethics guidelines. Participants provided informed consent, and all data was anonymised to protect identities.

4. Results

The survey results provide critical insights into the state of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in the aviation industry, highlighting both progress and persistent challenges. This section explores key themes emerging from the survey data, focusing on organisational practices, gender disparities, EDI training, flexible working arrangements, career development barriers, and differences across sectors, roles, and age groups.

The survey highlights significant gender disparities. Women respondents reported higher rates of experiencing or witnessing workplace discrimination (62.9%) compared to men respondents (49.3%). Additionally, 16.3% of respondents had negative experiences requesting maternity, paternity, or adoption leave, with women reporting less satisfaction with the leave process (47.7% positive experience) compared to men (63%). These findings reflect the

persistence of barriers described by the glass ceiling metaphor (Carvalho et al., 2019), where women face challenges in accessing equitable workplace treatment and opportunities.

Age influenced experiences, with respondents aged 45-54 reporting the highest discrimination rates (59.7%), while younger (18-24) and older (55+) groups reported lower rates (54.1% and 50%, respectively). Notably, middle-aged groups expressed greater scepticism towards workplace inclusivity compared to their younger and older counterparts. These age-related differences resonate with Moore and Taylor's (2021) analysis, which emphasises that perceptions of equity are shaped by both career stage and accumulated workplace experience.

Levels of workplace discrimination varied by sector (Table 2). The Air Force reported the highest discrimination rates (71.4%), followed by Maintenance, repair & Overhaul organisations (MRO) (68.6%) and Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSP) (65.6%), while lower rates were observed in Airport Operators (36.4%) and Aircraft Leasing (43.7%). Pilots (68.8%) and people managers (55.7%) reported the highest levels of discrimination, whereas contract workers reported the lowest (41.7%). Senior managers (49.3%) and people managers (47.4%) were more likely to agree that line managers were committed to EDI compared to pilots (28.1%). These variations reflect the intersectionality of organisational roles and sectors (Crenshaw, 2013b), suggesting that different environments create unique barriers and opportunities for employees.

Table 2. Experiences and Observations of Workplace Discrimination by sector

	Manufacturer	Airlines	MROs	Aircraft Leasing	Airports	ANSPs	Air Force	Other
Yes	46.2%	62.7%	68.6%	43.7%	36.4%	65.6%	71.4%	64.3%
No	46.2%	35.6%	28.6%	51.5%	61.8%	34.4%	21.4%	31.4%
Prefer not to say	7.7%	1.7%	2.9%	4.9%	1.8%	0.0%	7.1%	4.3%
N	13	118	35	103	55	32	14	70

The data reveal that 80% of respondents indicated their organisations have procedures to address discrimination. Furthermore, 74% of participants agreed that their colleagues take EDI seriously, while 85% affirmed the same for senior managers. This consistency across different levels of the organisation suggests a strong cultural commitment to EDI. However, the absence of targeted groups such as LGBTQI+, racial and ethnic minorities, working parents, and individuals with disabilities was evident, revealing gaps in inclusivity-focused initiatives. These findings align with Acker's (1990) gendered organisations theory, which posits that organisational structures often reinforce existing inequalities, particularly when tailored support systems are absent.

Over 50% of participants reported having no EDI training. This lack of training was consistent across genders, indicating a widespread gap in organisational initiatives aimed at fostering awareness and understanding of EDI principles. Without adequate training, organisations may find it challenging to translate formal anti-discrimination procedures into practical, day-to-day inclusivity. The absence of structured training mirrors findings in the literature that highlight the limitations of current diversity initiatives.

Prior to COVID-19, 29% of respondents utilised flexible working arrangements, primarily flexible start/end times (61%) and working from home (35%). Among respondents, 33% of women considered part-time schedules very important compared to 16.4% of men, while 56.6% of women valued remote working compared to 31.3% of men. Conversely, nearly half of all respondents (47.5%) cited organisational culture as a barrier to utilising flexible work arrangements, followed by a lack of policies (25.8%) and role unsuitability (21.3%). These barriers reflect findings by Desrochers and Sargent (2004), who emphasise the role of workplace culture and structural constraints in shaping access to work-life balance initiatives.

Disparities in career development opportunities were apparent (Table 3). Men are more likely to attribute career advancement to taking on a new role (24.8% vs. 16.1% for women). Women value sponsors and mentors more for career advancement (16.6% and 20.7%, respectively, vs. 8.1% and 20.0% for men). Women also more frequently cited a lack of development opportunities (73.9% vs. 62.9%) and mentors (57.6% vs. 50.3%) as barriers to progression.

Additionally, 65.0% of women perceived bias in promotion processes compared to 56.6% of men. Confidence also emerged as a gendered factor, with 65.9% of women finding confidence as a barrier, compared to 47.7% of men.

Interestingly, more men found their personal choice as a barrier to progression than women. These findings (Table 4) align with feminist institutionalism (Kenny, 2014), which highlights how formal and informal practices can perpetuate gendered barriers within organisations.

Table 3. Key Factors Impacting Career Advancement

Factors	Men	Women
An inspiring or helpful mentor	20.0%	20.7%
Taking on a new role	24.8%	16.1%
A sponsor in my business at a more senior level than me	8.1%	16.6%
Expansion of current role responsibilities	14.8%	12.4%
A positive experience working on a project	7.6%	11.9%
Not applicable	16.7%	11.4%
Other	8.1%	10.9%

Table 4. Perceived barriers to career progression

Barriers	Men	Women	Barriers	Men	Women
Confidence in own ability	47.7%	65.9%	Lack of Skills or experience	28.6%	26.7%
Bias in Promotion in my Organisation	56.6%	65.0%	Lack of Mobility	34.5%	36.4%
Personal Choice	49.5%	40.7%	Lack of Sponsor	46.0%	60.1%
Lack of Manager Support	49.5%	58.7%	Lack of Mentor	50.3%	57.6%
Lack of an opportunity	62.9%	73.9%	Appraisal Process	47.2%	53.7%

Overall, the findings indicate that the Irish aviation sector must address both cultural and structural dimensions of inequality. Culturally, there is a need to shift entrenched norms within traditionally male-dominated roles and subsectors, where discrimination remains comparatively high and inclusion is often perceived as peripheral to operational priorities. Structurally, recruitment, promotion, and development systems require redesign to actively dismantle gendered hierarchies, ensuring that career progression is not dependent on informal networks or limited to those who conform to dominant occupational cultures. The persistence of disparities despite widespread perceptions of senior leadership commitment underscores that visible support must be matched with targeted, evidence-based interventions tailored to the distinct contexts of different subsectors and roles.

5. Conclusions

This study provides the first sector-wide, individual-level analysis of equity, diversity, and inclusion within the Irish aviation workforce, revealing persistent gender disparities alongside indications of organisational commitment to change. Women in the sector continue to experience higher rates of discrimination, lower satisfaction with parental leave processes, and more limited access to career development opportunities compared with men. These inequalities are compounded by sectoral and role-specific cultures, particularly in technical and operational domains, where discrimination is most prevalent and managerial commitment to inclusion is viewed with greater scepticism.

Generational patterns suggest that mid-career professionals are particularly sensitive to perceived inequities, while the generally positive perceptions of senior leadership commitment highlight a paradox: symbolic endorsement of EDI at the top has not yet translated into substantive change in workplace practices. The absence of targeted initiatives for specific underrepresented groups, together with limited access to EDI training, reflects a broader implementation gap that constrains the sector's ability to realise the benefits of diversity. These findings contribute to the literature by

illustrating how gendered organisational structures and occupational cultures interact to shape career trajectories in male-dominated industries, with implications that extend beyond aviation.

In light of these findings, the following actions are proposed to address the structural and cultural barriers identified:

1. Targeted interventions for underrepresented groups: Organisations should design and resource initiatives specifically tailored to the needs of women, LGBTQI+ employees, ethnic minorities, working parents, and individuals with disabilities. Setting measurable targets for representation at different organisational levels, coupled with transparent progress reporting, would provide both direction and accountability.
2. Embedding inclusive practices into operational cultures: In subsectors where discrimination rates are high, such as technical and operational domains, leaders and line managers should receive role-specific EDI training. Inclusion metrics should be integrated into managerial performance evaluations to ensure cultural change is treated as an operational priority rather than an ancillary objective.
3. Strengthening career development pathways: Mentorship and sponsorship programmes should be formalised to ensure equitable access across genders, roles, and subsectors. Promotion and appraisal processes must be reviewed to reduce bias, increase transparency, and provide structured feedback with clear advancement criteria.
4. Expanding and normalising flexible work: Flexible work policies should be broadened to cover all roles where operationally feasible and reframed as standard practice rather than an exception. Communication strategies should be employed to reduce stigma and career penalties associated with utilising flexible arrangements.
5. Bridging the implementation gap: EDI policies need to be supported by adequate resources, leadership accountability, and regular evaluation of their impact. Applying an intersectional lens will help identify overlapping disadvantages experienced by individuals belonging to multiple underrepresented groups, enabling more effective and equitable interventions.

Taken together, these recommendations emphasise that achieving meaningful change will require a dual focus on transforming workplace cultures and reforming organisational systems. By addressing both simultaneously, the Irish aviation sector can move beyond symbolic compliance towards substantive equity and inclusion, strengthening its capacity to attract, retain, and promote diverse talent in the competitive global aviation industry.

Future research should identify where barriers arise along the career pathway through longitudinal studies and workplace observation, paying attention to differences by role and social identity. It should also test interventions such as mentoring schemes, bias-aware promotion processes, and flexible rostering using rigorous evaluation methods. Finally, partnerships with schools and training providers should examine how outreach, inclusive curricula, and instructor development can challenge stereotypes and widen access to aviation careers.

Acknowledgment

This research was supported in part by the Irish aviation industry and by the European Commission through the MSCA LABOUR project (Grant Agreement No. 101007766). The author gratefully acknowledges the contributions of Gerry Conyngham, industry stakeholders, and all survey participants whose time and insights made this study possible.

References

- Acker, J., 1990. Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender & Society*, 4(2), 139–158.
- Bruckmüller, S., Branscombe, N.R., 2010. The glass cliff: When and why women are selected as leaders in crisis contexts. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 49(3), 433–451.
- Carvalho, I., Costa, C., Lykke, N., Torres, A., 2019. Beyond the glass ceiling: Gendering tourism management. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 75, 79–91.
- Charles, M., Grusky, D.B., 2005. *Occupational Ghettos: The Worldwide Segregation of Women and Men*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA.
- Chung, H., 2020. Gender, flexibility stigma and the perceived negative consequences of flexible working in the UK. *Social Indicators Research*, 151(2), 521–545.
- Connell, R.W., Messerschmidt, J.W., 2005. Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept. *Gender & Society*, 19(6), 829–859.

- Cotter, D.A., Hermsen, J.M., Ovadia, S., Vanneman, R., 2001. The glass ceiling effect. *Social Forces*, 80(2), 655–681.
- Crenshaw, K.W., 2013a. Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. In: *The Public Nature of Private Violence*. Routledge, 93–118.
- Crenshaw, K., 2013b. Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. In: *Feminist Legal Theories*. Routledge, 23–51.
- Davies, B., 1991. The concept of agency: A feminist poststructuralist analysis. *Social Analysis*, (30), 42–53.
- Desrochers, S., Sargent, L.D., 2004. Boundary/border theory and work–family integration. *Organizational Management Journal*, 1(1), 40–48.
- Diab-Bahman, R., Al-Enzi, A., 2020. The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on conventional work settings. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 40(9/10), 909–927.
- Dinçer, F.C.Y., Yirmibeşoğlu, G., 2024. Constraints on women pilots in airline industry: A rising sector of international trade. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 115, 102538.
- Duffy, K., Hancock, P., Tyler, M., 2017. Still red hot? Postfeminism and gender subjectivity in the airline industry. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 24(3), 260–273.
- Ferla, M., Graham, A., 2019. Women slowly taking off: An investigation into female underrepresentation in commercial aviation. *Research in Transportation Business & Management*, 31, 100378.
- Foley, M., Oxenbridge, S., Cooper, R., Baird, M., 2022. ‘I’ll never be one of the boys’: Gender harassment of women working as pilots and automotive tradespeople. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 29(5), 1676–1691.
- Galea, C., Houkes, I., de Rijk, A., 2014. An insider’s point of view: How a system of flexible working hours helps employees to strike a proper balance between work and personal life. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 25(8), 1090–1111.
- Gavey, N., 1989. Feminist poststructuralism and discourse analysis: Contributions to feminist psychology. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 13(4), 459–475.
- Germain, M.L., Herzog, M.J.R., Hamilton, P.R., 2012. Women employed in male-dominated industries: Lessons learned from female aircraft pilots, pilots-in-training and mixed-gender flight instructors. *Human Resource Development International*, 15(4), 435–453.
- Hiney, N., Efthymiou, M., Morgenroth, E., 2023. Impact of COVID-19 on Irish airport stakeholder relationships. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 102, 103622.
- IATA, 2022. IATA Economics’ Chart of the Week: Women are still under-represented in leading positions at airlines. IATA. Available at: <https://www.iata.org/en/iata-repository/publications/economic-reports/women-are-still-under-represented-in-leading-positions-at-airlines/> (accessed 13 March 2023).
- Kenny, M., 2014. A feminist institutionalist approach. *Politics & Gender*, 10(4), 679–684.
- Marintseva, K., Mahanecs, A., Pandey, M., Wilson, N., 2022. Factors influencing low female representation in pilot training recruitment. *Transport Policy*, 115, 141–151.
- McCarthy, F., Budd, L., Ison, S., 2015. Gender on the flightdeck: Experiences of women commercial airline pilots in the UK. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 47, 32–38.
- Moore, S., Taylor, P., 2021. Class reimagined? Intersectionality and industrial action – The British Airways dispute of 2009–2011. *Sociology*, 55(3), 582–599.
- Morrison, S.M., 2023. *Women of Color in the Aviation Industry*. Routledge, London.
- Novák Sedláčková, A., Remencová, T., Nedvídková, J., 2022. Women as pearls of air transport. In: *Proceedings of the 26th International Scientific Conference Transport Means 2022*. Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania.
- Ragbir, N.K., Rice, S., Winter, S.R., Baugh, B.S., Milner, M.N., Gupta, M.B., Neal, J.G., 2021. An examination of consumer bias against female and minority commercial pilots. *Technology in Society*, 64, 101492.
- Rees, T., 2022. *Women and the Labour Market*. Routledge, London.
- Ryan, M.K., Haslam, S.A., Morgenroth, T., Rink, F., Stoker, J., Peters, K., 2016. Getting on top of the glass cliff: Reviewing a decade of evidence, explanations, and impact. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27(3), 446–455.
- Smith, T.A., Butts, M.M., Courtright, S.H., Duerden, M.D., Widmer, M.A., 2022. Work–leisure blending: An integrative conceptual review and framework to guide future research. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 107(4), 560–575.
- Smith, W.E., Cohen, S., Kimbu, A.N., de Jong, A., 2021. Reshaping gender in airline employment. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 89, 103221.
- Smith, W.E., de Jong, A., Cohen, S., Kimbu, A.N., 2023a. “Creamy and seductive”: Gender surveillance in flight attendant work. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 98, 103507.
- Smith, W.E., Kimbu, A.N., de Jong, A., Cohen, S., 2023b. Gendered Instagram representations in the aviation industry. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 31(3), 639–663.
- Steffens, K., Sutter, C., Sülzenbrück, S., 2023. The concept of “work-life-blending”: A systematic review. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1150707.
- Suau-Sanchez, P., Voltes-Dorta, A., Lamolla, L., 2025. Board and executive gender diversity as a driver of airline efficiency: A network-DEA analysis. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 124, 102745.
- Turner, J.C., Brown, R.J., Tajfel, H., 1979. Social comparison and group interest in ingroup favouritism. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 9(2), 187–204.
- Vloo, A., Alessie, R.J.M., Mierau, J.O., 2021. Gender differences in the mental health impact of the COVID-19 lockdown: Longitudinal evidence from the Netherlands. *SSM – Population Health*, 15, 100878.
- Vyas, L., 2022. “New normal” at work in a post-COVID world: Work–life balance and labour markets. *Policy and Society*, 41(1), 155–167.
- Warnock-Smith, D., Graham, A., O’Connell, J.F., Efthymiou, M., 2021. Impact of COVID-19 on air transport passenger markets: Examining evidence from the Chinese market. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 94, 102085.

- Woods, S., Harris, M., Rice, S., Boquet, A., Rice, C., Rosales, D., Crouse, S., 2024. Using social role theory to predict how gender and ethnicity of aviation job candidates affects perceived job classifications. *Technology in Society*, 76, 102481.
- Yanikođlu, Ö., Kılıç, S., Küçükönal, H., 2020. Gender in the cockpit: Challenges faced by female airline pilots. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 86, 101823.
- Yoder, J.D., 1991. Rethinking tokenism: Looking beyond numbers. *Gender & Society*, 5(2), 178–192.