

GLASS CEILING AND ITS IMPACT ON THE CAREER GROWTH OF WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Glass ceiling has been widely used which denotes barriers which are both visible and invisible that stop any women from progressing to further top positions. In the present research paper it has been tried to identify whether glass ceiling exist in the organization and whether it prevents the female to rise higher in their respective field and whether they are happy with the current scenario.

An empirical research has been conducted to get an idea about the existence of Glass Ceiling and its effect on efficiency of women's progression in the Organisation. The literature review has been carried out to trace the layers of glass ceiling and identify the difference (if any) exist between the leadership style of male and female.

It is found in this research that there exist glass ceiling in the organization and its sources traced from social norms, corporate practice, family obligation and within mind of the women. In this paper it has also been identified that there is a difference in the leadership style of male and female and it is interesting to note that respondents of this research paper have preferred female in the higher position. However, it is pertinent to note that everybody feels that glass ceiling should be removed so that organizational success can be ensured and it recommended strongly that both organization and women should take some steps to remove the glass ceiling and women should be empowered to climb the ladder of success in their respective field of work.

In the present research only few private and public sectors are covered and it is necessary that more comprehensive research can be carried out and further relationship between organization culture and existence of glass ceiling can be assessed to have proper understanding of glass ceiling and its impact on the growth of the organisation

Key Words : Glass Ceiling, Gender Equality, Organisation Behaviour, Work force Quality

Introduction

Historical Background

Term "Glass Ceiling" got appearance in the literature from the year 1980 and since then it has attracted number of researcher and scholar including Adams and Funk (2012); Bell, Mc Laughling and Sequeira (2002); Hoobler, Wayne and Lemmon (2009); Pichler, Simpson and Stroh (2008); and Al-mansra (2013).

Glass Ceiling is multidimensional term which includes multiple factors having cause and effect relationship. Somewhere this relationship is visible and somewhere it is not, However it is pertinent to note that various studies have concluded that it has tremendous benefits if this glass ceiling is removed and abolished in the organization and this will help the organization to pool the best talents and become successful in terms of productivity, innovative, profitable and successful. This will also help the women to feel at ease and use their potential for the benefits and success of the organization. (Northouse, 2013).

Objective of the Study

This research was carried out to understand this aspects and areas :

1. To assess whether there exist Glass Ceiling in the Organisation which hamper the progress of the women in the organization
2. To identify the barriers and its causes which prevent the women to climb the professional ladder and attain top position.
3. To examine whether male and female style of leadership differs from each other
4. To know the opinion of respondents on the removal of glass ceiling and providing equal opportunities in career advancement of women.
5. To identify the benefits of removal of Glass Ceiling
6. To suggest modes and measure to empower women to work freely

In addition to what is stated above research question, this study is based on hypothesis which is mentioned below :

H1- Glass Ceiling in the Organisation still exist which hampers the progression of women

H2- Leadership and management styles of Male and Female differs from each Other.

H3- There exist a correlation between leadership efficiency and Gender.

H4- The removal of the glass ceiling help the organization to fetch better results from Women Employees.

Research Methodology

An empirical research was carried out on employees of the various private and public sectors and both qualitative and quantitative approach was adopted and the result of which is discussed further in the paper.

Data Analysis

Respondents were asked to give their agreement on the likert scale which was further analysed and the result was provided hereunder :

Table 1.1

Sr. No	Question	Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Agree	Agree Strongly
1.	Women's are capable of holding senior position in the organization	1.2	3.5	31.4	64.0
2.	Women's are provided with equal opportunities in my organization for career growth and promotion		2.3	59.3	38.4
3.	Number of women holding managerial and senior position are increasing day by day		14.0	61.6	24.4
4.	Its difficult for women to get promotion from entry level to the middle level management position		36.0	47.7	16.3
5.	Women are not represented properly in the board of directors or top level committee		39.5	46.5	14.0
6.	Women's salaries differ from their male counterpart in the organisation		34.9	53.5	11.6
7.	Womens go getter attitude and competitvness are		19.8	60.5	19.8

	considered as negative trait				
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The above table clearly states that Majority of the Respondents (64% strongly agree and 31.4% agree) had belief that women are also capable of holding senior position just like any other male counterpart.

It is observed from the responses that (59.3 and 38.4%) believed that women have equal opportunity for career growth and promotion as men to achieve higher position in the organisation.

Majority of the respondents which is nearly 61.6% of the total participant observed that number of female in managerial position and above are increasing day by day and 24.4% of respondents strongly agreed to the upward movement of women in the higher position which implies that more and more women are getting managerial position.

Mean while, (47.7%) have opined that its not an easy for women to be promoted from entry level to higher position

It is very important to note that majority of the respondent i.e near about (46.5%) did not agree that that women receive salary less then their male counterpart which contradict the literature review regarding salary gap of men and women

It is interesting to point out that majority of the respondent which constitutes 60.5% and 19.8% have strongly agreed that go getter attitude and competitiveness among women are considered as negative trait which shows that still the the image of women is stereo type ime submissive and docile and they don't like women who compete with them.

Though majority of the respondent feel that women are competent to be absorbed in the senior position, 47.7% but they have admitted the fact in this situation women are required to deliver better than men in order to be absorbed in the senior position

From all the above points it can be inferred that role of women in the organization provide further details of the first sub question.

In the research question, further opinion of the respondents were sought on the difficulties which respondent feel women meet in their career enhancement provides a deeper insight into the second sub question. Summary of the finding is stated hereinbelow :

Table 1.2: Obstacles in women's career advancement

Sr. No	Question	Not an obstacle	Minor obstacle	Noticeable obstacle	Significant obstacle	Huge Obstacle
1.	Organisation policy and practices favour male employees rather than female employees	20.9	44.2	18.6	14.0	2.3
2.	Lack of self confidence among women	15.1	41.9	27.9	11.6	3.5
3.	Perception of men that women should work under them	15.1	32.6	29.1	16.3	7.0
4.	Absence of equal career opportunities for women	23.3	33.7	18.6	18.6	5.8
5.	Absence of women role models in the highest position	19.8	33.7	24.4	16.3	5.8
6.	Women low risk taking attitude	26.7	33.7	20.9	15.1	3.5
7.	Perceptions that women's primary role is to	23.3	30.2	25.6	15.1	5.8

	look after the home and then careers					
8.	Lack of experience in business line and general management	11.6	41.9	26.7	16.3	3.5
9.	Lack of commitment of gender equality	14.0	38.4	27.9	17.4	2.3
10.	Domination of Male in the Senior Position	20.9	33.7	19.8	17.4	8.1
11.	Unwillingness of women to make the sacrifices required to remain in the top senior position	22.1	39.5	22.1	10.5	5.8
12.	Imbalance of work and family life demands	19.8	31.4	29.1	16.3	3.5
13.	Perceptions that men's are more suitable for managerial position	17.4	31.4	27.9	12.8	10.5
14.	Lack of Ambition among Women to reach top position as compared to Men	20.9	40.7	20.9	12.8	4.7

In all the statement asked it is observed that all the above mentioned attributes are considered as minor to noticeable obstacle as majority of the respondent have given their response which suggest that the perception of society, organization, family and themselves matters only upto 60 % and 40% are just myth

Analysis of Statistics with respect to the fact Women have competence, caliber, skills and expertise required for Managerial Position

Table 1.3

	Sex	Mean	Std. Deviation
Belief in the fact that you have enough skills, abilities and knowledge to be in managerial positions	Male	1.13	0.37
	Female	1.70	0.70

To analyse categorical data cross tabulation analysis was done to record the relationship between gender and the belief that Wmen have competence, caliber, skills and expertise required for Managerial Position.

Total 68.8% of male respondent and 70.4% of female respondent feel confident.

Differences in leadership preference

In the questionnaire views were sought on preference of respondent to work with male or female leader manager. The number of respondents who liked to work under female executives' supervision constituted 53.48% and 46.51 preferred male leaders.

This is very interesting to note that majority of the respondent would prefer female as their boss.

Advantages of removing Glass Ceiling

Through Likert Scale Participants attitude was explored regarding advantages of removing galss ceiling and the findings are reflected hereinbelow :

Table 1.4

Sr. No	Question	Unimportant	Neither important	Some what important	Important

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1.	Increasing productivity	12.8	7.0	46.5	33.7
2.	Reducing costs	11.6	14.0	50.0	24.4
3.	Reducing employee turnover	9.3	26.7	46.5	17.4
4.	Increasing employee satisfaction	8.1	11.6	40.7	39.5
5.	Facilitating recruiting	7.0	14.0	50.0	29.1
6.	Improving decision making	8.1	10.5	40.7	40.7
7.	Enhancing customer satisfaction	10.5	11.6	38.4	39.5
8.	Increasing creativity	8.1	3.5	45.3	43.0
9.	Enhancing competitiveness	5.8	12.8	47.7	33.7
10.	Enlarging pool of management talent	7.0	10.5	44.2	38.4
11.	Enlarging pool of executive talent	10.5	14.0	40.7	34.9
12.	Meeting government regulations	8.1	11.6	53.5	26.7
13.	Equity facilitates belongingness	9.3	12.8	40.7	37.2
14.	Issue of Glass Ceiling is grievous in nature	5.8	26.7	19.8	47.7

It is pertinent to note that majority of the respondents have selected “Somewhat Important” an answer for the statement asked for.

Major Findings

The Major finding of the research paper after analysis is summarized as under :

1. It is observed that Glass Ceiling did exist in the organization which supports the hypothesis -1 but this may be just one factors which affect women’s career growth and other factors needs to be analysed
2. It is observed that leadership style and management style of men and women differ from each other. It is interesting to note that 12.24% of the respondents did not believe in the difference of gender of their leaders and nearly 87% have chosen their leader male or female as per their liking. This finding corroborate with the literature review done on the subject that male and female leadership and management style differ and the people have their own preference of gender as their boss (Gardiner and Tiggemann 1999; Eisner, 2013; Rosener 1990; Kennard 2012). This result support Hypothesis – 2 that leadership style of male and female differ from each other
3. In furtherance of what is stated earlier it is very interesting to note that the majority of the respondents who gave their preference of gender as their boss have chosen female over male as 53.48% have stated that they like to work under female head and 46.51% have preferred male as their boss. Though there is marginal difference but this finding contradicts to the finding of many papers which reviewed like Singh et al (2012), Quader (2011), Morin, Cohn, Clark, and Wang (2008).
4. With reference to Hypothesis -3 we have received mixed view points regarding effectiveness of leadership style of male and female. As found out in the present research majority of the respondents have considered women to be more effective in their leadership and managerial role than men which supports Hypothesis -3 that there is correlation between gender and leadership effectiveness.
5. It is also observed lots of benefits can be accrued if glass ceiling remove from the Organisation. Equal treatment of female at par with the other male counter part with respect to

promotion and climbing the professional ladder boost their confidence and they feel more satisfied and satisfied employees always contribute positively to innovativeness and productivity and help the organization in turn to retain the employees for a longer period of time. Among all the benefits which can be accrued on removal of Glass Ceiling, “Increasing Productivity” was chosen by most of the respondents which shows the direct correlation between abolishing glass ceiling and Increasing productivity. This result support Hypothesis – 4 that removing the glass ceiling leads to many advantages in the organization. Table 1.4 was analysed in comparison with literature which corroborate the fact that glass ceiling brings many benefits to the organisation.

6. This research paper strongly advocate about capability and competency of the Women to serve in higher position with total (64% strongly agree and 31.4% agree) that women are also capable of holding senior position just like any other male counterpart. The trust and faith in women capabilities is very crucial to boost the confidence among women and create a sense of urgency to remove the glass ceiling and barriers for women which creates obstacle in their professional career path.

General Recommendation

An empirical study has been carried out which shows that there are some internal and external factor which act as an obstacle in the career growth of the women. Some recommendations and suggestions are given for this which are also outcome of this study

Recommendations for women

- Women should improve their confidence and through this they should avoid of assuming any existence of glass ceiling
- Women if observed any existence of glass ceiling, they should raise their voice instead of staying mum
- Women should also work on improving their emotional intelligence so that they can be more confident and control their emotions as some of the respondents have stated that female leaders are more sensitive and emotion and which affect their decision making capability.
- Women needs to work on their leadership skill and involve themselves is strategy making and they should not feel hesitant to accept the role of leaders as more people want women boss rather than men. This is supported in this research paper also
- Women need to improve their time management skill so that they balance work and home and increase their chance of getting position and becoming successful in life.
- Women should gain knowledge skill and abilities which require in the top cadre and demonstrate it whenever they are given a chance.

Recommendations for organizations

- Organization should create conducive environment and create culture where there is no place for discrimination.
- Organisation should provide equal opportunity for career advancement
- Organisation can provide mentoring program to help women realize their self worth, potential and career path
- In summary, Organisations have to understand that women employee also play important role in the organization and they should be treated equally which can lead to higher profit and increase of productivity in the long run.

Limitations

This study has some limitation as survey focus was on women and hence gender influence cannot be ruled out. It is to be noted that every organization is different from each other on the basis of person who is leading it and it may be possible that some are more sensitive on women issues than others and

women may experience different level and layers of glass ceiling in their organization. In this study qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analysis process is complex therefore it may be possible that some data were left unintentionally. Last but not the least in the present research paper some of the variables and factors like Organisational environment and culture are not considered which may have an impact on the existence of glass ceiling. Therefore, chances are there that these variable may change the outcome of the research.

Future Research Opportunities

In furtherance of what has been found in this study, future study is proposed as under:

- In furtherance of this, research can be carried out to analyse the various style of leadership of men and women which may reveal factors for low participation of women employees
- Further study can be made to understand family background and other demographic feature of female executive which affect the level of support and whether it become a factor to influence the effect of glass ceiling.
- Same research but in different organization including government, semi government and military can be studies or comparative studies among various countries can be carried out to understand about this phenomenon.
- It is further suggested that future research can be carried out with more employees participant to get the appropriate accuracy.
- There is further scope of research as duration of service and difficulty in achieving and staying in the top position wrt to women can be studied.

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