

Exploratory Study of the Factors Responsible for Glass Ceiling in Public Sector of Punjab, Pakistan

Mozaama Naseer¹, Dr. Muhammad Shabbir Ch.^{2*}, Dr. Zahira Batool³

¹PhD Scholar in Sociology, Department of Sociology, GC University Faisalabad

²Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, GC University Faisalabad

³Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, GC University Faisalabad

Received: June 10, 2017

Accepted: September 9, 2017

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to present broad issue of gender phenomena and to provide different definitions. Special focus is given to those barriers which are creating hurdles for women advancement and achievement in their career. Cross Sectional study was conducted and quantitative approach was used in the study. A sample of 300 respondents was taken from 2 districts of Punjab, Rawalpindi and Sargodha. Data was collected from males and females employees through multistage sampling techniques. The major objective of the study was to explore the difficulties that stunts women's progression to the hierarchy and to propose feasible suggestions as how human resource professionals and organizations can address this issue. The study has found that 62.7% women who are doing jobs in public sector of Punjab province were facing Glass ceiling. 70% of the respondents have the view that beyond a point woman cannot grow in the organization. 85.7% of the respondents were agreed that gender discrimination and stereotypes down grade the abilities of women. Breaking the glass ceiling requires a major commitment on the part of organizations to take action in promoting and advancing people regardless of their gender or ethnicity.

KEYWORDS: Glass Ceiling, Gender discrimination, Gender stereotypes, working women, Women's progression

INTRODUCTION

A glass ceiling is a term used to describe the hidden, yet unbreakable barrier that keeps women from rising to the upper steps of the corporate Ladder, regardless of their education or experience. The word glass ceiling is explained as a symbol of unseen obstacles similar to glass from which woman are able to see top positions but they are not able to attain them and they are like ceiling to them. The Glass Ceiling Effect refers to obstacles blocking progress of any minority group to top level positions. It is a quite new phenomenon to probe the hurdles against working women (World Bank, 2001). The glass ceiling effect which refers to the barriers that stop women from advancing to the top positions in their organizations is a form of gender discrimination (Al-Manasra, 2013). For the purpose of this study, glass ceiling effect will be defined as an unseen but hidden obstacle between women and top ranking positions in the public sector in spite of their qualities, qualifications, occupations mainly influencing women and members of minorities. These obstacles prevent woman from achieving influential senior places with high status and earnings at workplace. The outcome of this occurrence is that women think that they don't have talents and abilities to attain the top level jobs to make development or managers don't believe them as a probable contender for progression (Farhat, 2014).

The glass ceiling can be defined as a biased obstacle that stops woman from growing to top level jobs of authority or accountability in an organization. It is uppermost edge to occupational development which works to eliminate depiction of women in the upper level of any sector. At the origin of the glass ceiling recline various factors that remain women away from attaining what men are having at workplace. Forces like lawful and financial are mainly biased for woman. These obstacles appear from predetermined ideas of screening woman unwell bodily and psychologically. It supposed that administration and management approach of women fluctuate from men (Wani, 2013).

In today's world it is generally manifest the same opportunity employment by every organization. But, it is approved that the same rights and positions are not enjoyable by women mainly in underdeveloped countries. At the same time, researches light on the facts that people face impediments in their workplace because of the demographic discrimination and opinion in their professional life. These impediments and obstacles are known as Glass Ceiling. The women face failure to be promoted to top ranking positions due to opinion that they are suited to empathetic

*Corresponding Author: Dr. Muhammad Shabbir Ch., Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, GC University Faisalabad. Email: drmsabbir@gcuf.edu.pk

role than decision making role (Jabbar and Imran, 2013). In politics, even Hillary Clinton, who is considered the “most powerful woman in American politics” shared her experience of being “kidded, ribbed and chided in boardrooms across the country” just because that she defended women’s issues (Tomasky, 2013).

For female workers in general, it is not easy to be on maternity leave and resume work after several months. Laws in many countries allows approximately 12 weeks of parental leave. However, it is even more challenging for female executives to go for around three-month’s leave. The case of Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer who took only two weeks for maternity leave has received a lot of criticism from the public. When female workers return to work from parental leave, they even might face the risk of losing their jobs or illegal discrimination which is referred to as “maternal wall bias” (Akoorie, 2013).

Related to the glass ceiling, or potentially stemming from the same sources, society is also struggling with a gender pay gap problem. “You know, today, women make up about half our workforce, but they still make 77 cents for every dollar a man earns,” President Obama stated. “That is wrong, and in 2014, it’s an embarrassment” (Jacobson, 2014). There is also the confidence problem faced by many women. After fighting this uphill battle for so long, there are battle scars. Women tend to self-deprecate, instead of presenting confidence and appearing assertive (Jones, 2014).

People exhibit gender stereotyping when they assign traits, behaviors, and roles to individual men and women on the basis of gender. Therefore, because of the prevalence of gender stereotypes, people generally believe that women and men are not alike (at least to some extent) in many aspects such as personality characteristics and gender features. Some of these negative stereotype assumptions which draw a distinction between men and women are the beliefs that women are more willing to give precedence to family duties over business concerns; they are required to take care of their children; therefore, they lose the time and enthusiasm for their work; they work to earn extra income, thus they do not have enough enthusiasm for success in business; women take negative feedback personal instead of taking it professional; and finally, women are not suitable for top management positions because they are too sentimental and without aggression (Block and Crawford, 2013).

Females are differentiated in civil services of Pakistan from entrance to senior positions. Traditional aspects are the major tentative obstructs for entrance of women in civil services of Pakistan (Habib, 2000). It is one of the most convincing metaphors recently used for analyzing discrimination between male and female in the office, in order to explain an obstacle to further progression once women have achieved a certain level. Ceiling argument suggests that gender and race disparities are largest at senior and top ranking positions. The demonstration of woman in a lot of production reduces with raising the superiority of the job. Woman inhabits subordinate and sustaining jobs within highly ranking occupations (Konrad, 2009).

Advancing women’s contribution in decision making positions is part of the effort for improving the human civil rights, liberty, and chances of all females worldwide. The progression of woman into the jobs of authority and control in is necessary if woman is to attain equal chances globally. A foremost obstacle to women’s advancement in administration globally is the gender stereotyping of the administrative jobs (Schein, 2007).

Conceptual Framework:

Background variables	Independent variable	Dependent variable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Gender • Qualification • Occupation • Monthly Income • Marital Status • Family Type • Transport System • Residential Area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender discrimination • Gender Stereotypes • Gender Differences • Social roles • Male dominance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glass Ceiling Effect

Objectives of the Study:

The proposed study aims to attain following objectives:

- To explore the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the respondents
- To analyze the perception of Glass Ceiling Effect in the workplace
- To explore the major individual, family and cultural obstacles that affects woman development
- To suggest some possible measures to minimize the Glass Ceiling Effect

Table 3 shows that gender stereotypes are considered as one of the reasons of discrimination at work place and the data shows that majority of the respondents 45.3% were agreed and 19.3% were disagreed with this statement. 24.7% of the respondents were mentioned ‘at times’ and only 10.7% were mentioned ‘quite often’. Majority of the respondents were agreed with this statement. The mean value of data is 2.01 and standard deviation is 1.063. Cortis and Cassar (2005) also confirmed that gender stereotypes are therefore preventing females from getting top ranking jobs. They explained that due to females in administrative jobs are not impartially presented in work place they are in a susceptible point because they are marginal.

Testing of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: Higher the Gender stereotypes higher will be the Glass Ceiling Effect

Table No 4: Association between gender stereotypes and Glass Ceiling Effect

Gender stereotypes	Glass Ceiling Effect			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Low	30	8	5	43
	69.8%	18.6%	11.6%	100.0%
Medium	32	52	41	125
	25.6%	41.6%	32.8%	100.0%
High	51	48	33	132
	38.6%	36.4%	25.0%	100.0%
Total	113	108	79	300
	37.7%	36.0%	26.3%	100.0%

Chi-square = 28.42 d.f. = 4 P-value = 0.000** Gamma = .111
 ** = Highly-Significant

Table 4 represents the association between gender stereotypes and glass ceiling effect. Chi-square value (28.42) shows a highly-significant (P= .000) association between gender stereotypes and glass ceiling effect. Gamma value shows a positive relationship between the variables. So the hypothesis “Higher the Gender stereotypes higher will be the Glass Ceiling Effect” is accepted. Schein (2007) also confirmed in his study that probably the single most important hurdle for women in all countries is the persistent stereotype that associates management with being male.

Hypothesis 2: Higher the Gender discrimination higher will be the Glass Ceiling Effect

Table No 5: Association between gender discrimination and Glass Ceiling Effect

Gender discrimination	Glass Ceiling Effect			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Low	27	24	5	56
	48.2%	42.9%	8.9%	100.0%
Medium	63	60	47	170
	37.1%	35.3%	27.6%	100.0%
High	23	24	27	74
	31.1%	32.4%	36.5%	100.0%
Total	113	108	79	300
	37.7%	36.0%	26.3%	100.0%

Chi-square = 13.49 d.f. = 4 P-value = 0.009** Gamma = .298
 ** = Highly-Significant

Table 5 represents the association between gender discrimination and glass ceiling effect. Chi-square value (13.49) shows a highly-significant (P=.009) association between gender discrimination and glass ceiling effect. Gamma value shows a positive relationship between the variables. It means gender discrimination is a cause of glass ceiling effect. So the hypothesis “Higher the Gender discrimination higher will be the glass ceiling effect” is accepted. Erik (2006) also confirmed in his study that women are discriminated through glass ceiling effect. He has found through his research that women suffer more from glass ceiling effect.

DISCUSSIONS

Reflection of the glass ceiling phenomenon indicated that man with the more income capability utilize it more efficiently, they have the capacity to do more work with more time and complete it cleverly, the qualification and certificates they acquire. As compare to, the qualification and certificates a woman have, the less work she did at

extremely challenging and compensable occupation. Female doctors see less patients on regular basis as compare to male doctors, female lawyers consult less clients as compare to male lawyers and female authors write less books as compare to male authors. It springs from totally admirable aspiration from women to get more time with their relations. The outcome is that woman who is ready to break the glass ceiling reluctant from the effort. It is obvious that glass ceiling is very complicated matter. It demands various factors which need to be addressed. To comprehend all perspectives it is essential to find out the reasons of this issue. Both nationally and worldwide, women present a comparatively unused basis of aptitude for top positions in organizations. Although improvement has been made throughout the world but obstacles to the development of woman still exists together with family factors, gender discrimination, gender stereotypes and cultural factors. As the well-known economist Lester Thurow, Lemelson Professor of Management and Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology said, Grand confronts lay in front of us and our financial upcoming is at risk. Organizations are not able to fight in an international atmosphere by not including woman. In spite of the existing laws and boundaries, gender discrimination continues to appear. It is clear that laws cannot resolve everything. Gender practices are deep-rooted in the culture and it takes long time to modify the attitude of the people. Causes of glass ceiling are various and their elimination will involve complex solution. Certainly, suitable measures cannot be undertaken if we do not know what we are facing.

CONCLUSIONS

There are several causes adding to the glass ceiling in public sector that is really complicated and diverse. Woman's occupational passage leans to be extra twisty and disrupted as compare to man who are naturally elongate and this thing hinders woman's development to upper level jobs. Woman frequently have to deal with the complications of the double position as working woman and mother and at times have to do negotiations that downgrade their professions. Woman having kids are frequently seemed to be fewer constructive as compare to those with no kids and they are observed as less devoted. Woman employees tolerate the main load of household tasks in contrast to man and have fewer times for additional official and unofficial communication which is vital for development in their profession. Due to these reasons women are mainly positioned in middle areas relatively the situations that engage decision making positions. Woman depiction at the upper level is relatively small in contrast to man. There is a firm glass ceiling that is presented and that is opposing their progress in their upper hierarchy of their occupational path. This recommends that there should be some transforms about encouraging capable woman to conquer the obstacles that people spaces in their professions. Breaking the glass ceiling involves a major dedication on the part of institutions to take action in promoting and advancing people apart from of their gender or background and for men to take a vigorous part as partners in implementing this change. Glass ceiling hampers not only women also whole humanity. It cuts our pool of talented people by removing half of our inhabitants. It eventually divests our financial system of new professionals, new resources of creativeness. In order to fight effectively in today's world we have to release the complete capacity of our work force. The time has come to break the "Glass Ceiling".

RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study has discovered some factors which are responsible for prevailing glass ceiling. It also brings out some aspects which help women to progress their career development. Hence, following recommendations are prepared:

- Perception of people regarding women employees as emotional or less competent should be changed.
- Every Government institution should have awareness program to change the opinion of its employees for women staff.
- Government institutions should be obvious about the policies related to recruitment and endorsement.
- Every institution should conduct gender audit on annual basis.
- Harassment policy should be implemented by the organizations. Appropriate complaint centers should be created for women to report their complaints.
- Woman should have obvious objectives and goals in life. Aims must be well defined from the starting point so that woman does not drop concentration in the middle of her occupation.

REFERENCES

1. Akoorie, N. (2013, March 16). Maternity leave breaches alleged. *The New Zealand Herald*. Retrieved from http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10871597
2. Al- Manasra, E.A. (2013). What are the “Glass Ceiling” barriers effects on women career progress in Jordan? *International Journal of Business & Management*, 8 (6), 40-46 DOI: 10.5539/ijbm.v8n6p40.
3. Block, R. A., & Crawford, K. C. (2013). Gender stereotypes of leadership behaviors: Social metacognitive evidence. *Psychology & Social Behavior Research*, 1(1), 9–17.
4. Cortis, R, and Cassar, V. (2005). Perceptions of and about women as managers: Investigating job involvement, self-esteem and attitudes. *Women in Management Review*,20(3): 149-164.
5. Erik, (2006). The glass ceiling-where is it? Women’s and men’s career prospects in the private vs. the public sector in Sweden 1979-2000. *The Sociological Review*, 54(1): 20-47.
6. Farhat, S. (2014). Glass ceiling effect: A focus on Pakistani women. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*.
7. Habib, Z. (2000). Through the brick wall and the glass ceiling: women in the civil services in Bangladesh. *Gender, Work and Organization*, 7(3): 197-209.
8. Jabbar, A, and Imran, A. 2013. Perception of glass ceiling in the educational institution: An Evidence from Pakistan. *World Applied Sciences Journal*,23 (5): 628-634.
9. Jacobson, L. (2014, January 29). Barack Obama, State of the Union, says women make 77 cents for every dollar a man earns. *Politifact.com*. Retrieved October 13, 2014, from <http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2014/jan/29/barack-obama/barack-obama-state-union-says-women-make-77-cents-/>.
10. Jones, B. (2014, October 10). Boomer women hit the glass ceiling; Four tips to crack it now. *Forbes.com*. Retrieved October 13, 2014 from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2014/10/10/boomer-women-hit-the-glass-ceiling-four-tips-to-crack-it-now/>.
11. Konrad, A. (2009). Gender and racial differentials in promotions: Is There a Sticky Floor, a Mid-Level Bottleneck, or a Glass Ceiling. *Department des relations industriels, university Laval*, 64(4): 593-619.
12. Shandana, S. (2010). The glass ceiling effect: A Pakistani perspective. *Business review*
13. Schein, V. (2007). Women in management: reflections and projections. *Women in Management Review*. 22(1): 6-18.
14. Sczesny, S, and Stahlberg, D. (2002). The influence of gender-stereotyped perfumes on leadership attribution. *European Journal of Social Psychology*. 32: 815-828.
15. Tomasky, M. (2013). Hillary Clinton: The most powerful woman in American Politics. *The Daily Beast*. Retrieved from <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2013/02/04/hillary-clinton-exitspolitics-her-enduring-legacy.html>.
16. World Bank, (2001). Advancing gender equality: World Bank Action since Beijing. World Bank Policy Research Report. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
17. Wani, A. (2013). Breaking through the glass ceiling. *Abhinav International Monthly Refereed Journal of Research In Management and Technology*.