



Glass Ceiling: A Vertical Discrimination Against Women

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ABSTRACT

A gender or cultural inequality in the chances of advancement into higher levels not simply the proportions of each gender or race currently at those higher levels. A "glass ceiling," an unnoticeable barrier that prevents women from moving up in their jobs. Women had battled for equal chances and privileges throughout their lives. Regardless of their qualifications or achievements, women are prevented from climbing to the top rungs of the corporate ladder. A discrimination is when a woman is clearly passed over for advancements or receives less money for doing the same job as her male co-workers despite having superior education, talent, and skills. This observation reflects the phenomenon of the glass ceiling that constitutes vertical discrimination within companies against women's. This research paper was an attempt to study the existence of Glass Ceiling for women employees and vertical discrimination against women.

Keywords: - glass ceiling, vertical discrimination, inequality, corporate ladder, women.

INTRODUCTION

Glass ceiling is the unseen, unbreakable and unacknowledged barrier that describes domination of highest status jobs in both traditionally male and female occupation. Even today women within the workforce manage to bump into a "glass ceiling", an invisible barrier preventing them from further ascending within their careers. Fights for equal rights and opportunities had been fought by women in every phase of life. Women are held back from moving up the upper steps of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements.

A common thing of this is seen where a women has better skills, talent and education than her male peers but is obviously being passed over for promotions or for women to get paid lesser for the same job that her male peers are doing despite holding similar qualification. Though women play a integral role in today's workforce and continue to break barriers, many women and minorities experience instances of discrimination and are overlooked for senior roles because of the glass ceiling. This observation reflects the phenomenon of the glass ceiling that constitutes vertical discrimination within companies against women. In spite of the fact the glass ceiling has generated research interest therefore, our study aims to better understand the phenomenon of glass ceiling by considering its possible consequences.

The metaphor 'glass ceiling' was first used by feminists in reference to barriers in careers of high-achieving women. Marilyn Loden coined the phrase "glass ceiling" at 1978 Women's Exposition in New York. From 1991 to 1996, through The Glass Ceiling Commission, the US Department of Labour studied the phenomenon and how it affected women and minorities in the workforce.

What does the phrase Glass ceiling mean

A glass ceiling is a metaphor used to represent an invisible barrier that describes unfairly discriminatory practices or practices preventing women or other groups from achieving higher positions in a job, specific field of work, or organization, etc. For examples:

- Receiving less pay than colleagues who do the same job.
- Doing same amount of work as a male colleague and have the same qualification but never be promoted up to the senior level.
- Being treated as incompetent.
- Women are treated as a second gender while taking strategic decisions.

DISCRIMINATION AT WORKPLACE WITH WOMEN

The glass ceiling isn't just about women's choices or how they must navigate the world and the workplace. "The Indispensable explanation is that women are performing the same as men, but their performance is blinked or indeed estimated more inadequately indeed though it's exactly the same "(Rosalind M. Chow)

The main reason for all three problems – lack of access to the labour market, the pay envelope gap and the “glass ceiling” – is discrimination against women. In utmost cases, women pay a gender penalty as actual or potential mothers. Numerous employers incorrectly fear the cost and hassle motherhood may entail. In fact, according to recent ILO research, the additional cost of hiring a woman is lower than 1% of the monthly gross earnings of women employees. But women are not only discriminated against for profitable reasons – they are mainly discriminated against because of stereotyping and misguided preconceptions of women’s roles and capacities, commitment and leadership style.

About four-in-ten working women (42%) in the United States say they have faced discrimination on the job because of their gender. They report a broad array of personal experiences, ranging from earning lower than manly counterparts for doing the same job to being passed over for important assignments, according to a new analysis of Pew Research Centre survey data. The survey – conducted in the summer before a recent surge of sexual misconduct allegations against prominent men in politics, the media and other diligence – set up that, among employed grown-ups, women are about twice as likely as men (42% versus 22%) to say they have endured at least one of eight specific forms of gender discrimination at work.

India Discrimination Report 2022 says, woman in India despite their same educational qualification and work experience as men will be discriminated in the labour request due to societal and employers’ preconception. The Oxfam India’s ‘India Discrimination Report 2022’ shows that discrimination causes 100 per cent of employment inequality faced by women in rural areas in labour request and 98 per cent in urban areas. The report said self-employed males earn 2.5 times further than females, 83 per cent of which is attributed to gender-based discrimination and 95 per cent of the gap between the earnings of male and female casual pay workers is due to discrimination.

The fight against gender discrimination started in the 19th century. In 1872, Belva Ann Lockwood, an attorney, converted the U.S. Congress to pass a law guaranteeing equal pay for women employed as civil employees. Nearly a century later, the Equal Pay Act was passed in 1963, making it law to pay equal wages to men and women in all workplaces. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 granted equal rights to women in all areas of employment and was amended in 1991 to allow women to sue employers for sexual persecution. Despite the civil law against gender inequality and discrimination, it creeps into workplaces in insidious ways. While some progress has been made, gender inequality continues to persist even today.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Marilyn Loden constructed the phrase glass ceiling during a 1978 speech. According to the April 3, 2015, The Wall Street Journal the term glass ceiling was specially used. (1979 Maryanne Schriber and Katherine Lawrence at Hewlett-Packard). Lawrence outlined the conception at the National Press Club at the national meeting of the Women’s Institute for the Freedom of the Press in Washington DC. The glass ceiling was defined as discriminatory promotion patterns where the written promotional policy is non-discriminatory, but in practice denies promotion to qualified females. In a extensively cited article in the Wall Street Journal in March 1986 the term was used in the article’s title: “The Glass Ceiling: Why Women Can’t Seem to Break The Invisible Barrier That Blocks Them From the Top Jobs”. The composition was written by Carol Hymowitz and Timothy D. Schellhardt. Hymowitz and Schellhardt introduced glass ceiling was “not commodity that could be set up in any corporate manual or even discussed at a business meeting; it was firstly introduced as an unnoticeable, covert, and unspoken phenomenon that was to keep administrative level leadership positions in the hands of Caucasian males.”

In 1991, as a part of Title II of the Civil Right Act of 1991. The United States Congress created the Glass Ceiling Commission. This 21 member Presidential Commission was chaired by Secretary of Labour Robert Reich, and was created to study the “barriers to the advancement of minorities and women within commercial scales to issue a report on its findings and conclusions, and to make recommendations on ways to dis- mantle the glass ceiling. The commission conducted extensive exploration including, surveys, public hearings and interviews, and released their findings in a report in 1995.

Glass ceiling refers to the fact that a qualified person wishing to advance within the scale of his/her association is stopped at a lower level due to a discrimination most frequently grounded on sexism or racism. The glass ceiling refers therefore to vertical discrimination most constantly against women in companies. The difficulty essential in this theme is the diversity of definitions and approaches describing the glass ceiling. There are also no ideal and fluently observable criteria that would make it possible to establish with certainty the real actuality of a glass ceiling in a company. Nevertheless, grounded on several studies, the glass ceiling can be defined as subtle but persistent barriers/obstacles, sustained by discriminatory, conscious and unconscious practices, and attitudes that hinder access to top/elderly management positions for qualified women. Gender stereotyping is thinking that men are better than women in management and leadership roles; it is the conception of suggesting that women are inferior and more suited in their biological roles of mother. The nature of this stereotype is toxic and hindering to women’s success and their rights in every aspect but it is even more dangerous in the workplace in a patriarchal society. It represents an unnoticeable but strong barrier that stands in the way of women. Men are put at the utmost positions for they are primally viewed as better leaders whereas women are stuck in low or medium level positions. These walls to women’s progression in management roles and a of significant issue.

ARE WOMEN HAPPY WITH GLASS CEILING?

Even before The Wall Street Journal chased the term “glass ceiling” 20 years ago, Researchers debated why women infrequently reach the highest ranks in business. Do women Choose less stressful jobs so they can enjoy life more? And other informal networks that help men make crucial professional connections?

A global study conducted by Catalyst, found that men worldwide desire the top jobs more frequently by women. Women make sacrifices at work in exchange for greater happiness in their lives as a whole (Warren Farrell, author of *Why Men Earn More*) His book offers 25 reasons for the pay gap: Women work smaller hours, for example, and They don't stay at jobs as long as men do. Whether it's nature or socialization driving. Their decisions, women tend to choose lives that allow them to spend further time with their Families, Farrell contends. Even ambitious women don't measure success in high salaries and fancy job titles. Connections with colleagues and giving back to the community are more important to Women than salary, according to "The Hidden Brain Drain: Off-Ramps and On-Ramps in Women's Careers," a study by the Centre for Work-Life Policy, which was published in *The Harvard Business Review* last year.

Even if utmost women don't want to break glass ceiling, Wolfe says, the few that do shouldn't be ignored. Occasionally they choose twisting career paths, taking some time to care for children, prepare for a career change or work in the non-profit sector. There's another reason why women don't ask for further money, they don't think they earn it, "says Lois Frankel, Chairman of Corporate Coaching International.

Susan Solovic, CEO of SBTV, a website that creates video programing aimed at small – business owners , offers another reason why women aren't complaining , " They have decided to work for themselves . The number of owned enterprises grew 17 % between 1997 and 2004. Solovic says: "There is really no glass ceiling when it comes to retaining your own business.

INDIAN SCENARIOS: WOMEN CEOS

The world is full of examples glorifying women leadership and their courage and capability to lead. In India too, there are various examples of women making a mark across fields, from sports to politics. Though, when it comes to commercial world we are still lagging behind.

India has seen a reduce in number of women CEOs, over last six years as per the Deloitte study. Fortune magazine states that in 2020-21, the Fortune 100 companies in India had only five women CEOs specifically, Soma Mondal, director, SAIL; Anamika Roy Rashtrawar, director, IFFCO; Padmaja Chunduru, MD, Indian Bank; Vinita Gupta, CEO, Lupin and Zarin Daruwala, CEO, Standard Chartered Bank India. That is not all. Mondal and Daruwala were the first ever women CEOs appointed in the history of their individual companies!

We see and hear of a lot of companies perform to empower women and carry them in their rise up the corporate ladder, but it seems that's all was just a big talk that failed in reality. Seema Bangai, VP & chief people officer, believes that gender bias still exists in the Indian commercial sector. "Over the years, thanks to the way human brains are wired, a mindset has been created leading people believe that women are unable of taking up certain positions at the corporate level," states Bangai. That surely does explain why women are infrequently considered for the top spots in the scale in India.

The problem is in the gap between belief and actions in organisations. "The token gestures to promote gender diversity in companies don't go a long way because our ancient beliefs, that certain jobs aren't meant for women still exist". (Anup Seth, chief diversity & inclusion officer) There are jobs that are generally meant to be carried out by men similar as house repairs and money management, while women are relegated to cooking , child care and so on. We are stuck in our so called traditional gender roles, which is primary and major roadblock to achieving diversity in the workplace. Some of the times they get respect as women but not as working women in their work spot.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

According to a 2018 article published in *Our World in Data*, the wage gap that is generally mentioned in news headlines and debates is the unadjusted wage gap. This unadjusted wage gap is the result of calculations done through the comparison of all male and female workers without considering differences in worker characteristic similar age, expertise, and education position. The second wage gap is the adjusted wage gap. This is the result of calculations done only after counting for underlying differences in education, experience, and other factors (Ortiz-Ospina, 2018). An adjusted wage gap is an effective tool that is used to make comparisons within groups of workers that have similar jobs, experience, and education, and this comparison is useful to statistically analyse certain groups and levels to analyse the extent to which different factors contribute to observed inequalities. The effect of these various calculations can be seen in Figure 1, which illustrates how unadjusted, adjusted to human capital specification, and adjusted to full specifications can alter the size and distribution of the wage gap (Ortiz-Ospina, 2018). This figure shows that the unadjusted gender pay gap has been shrinking since 1980s, which eventually leads to the conclusion that the gender wage gap has in fact narrowed. Also, the graph shows that education has played a huge role in narrowing the wage gap. Finally, it was determined that while certain statistical manipulations lead to various findings, the main conclusion is that the gender-based wage gap is still a current issue that must be corrected, given that the unadjusted wage gap still sits at 79.3% in comparison to the completed adjusted gap at 91.6% (Ortiz-Ospina,2018).

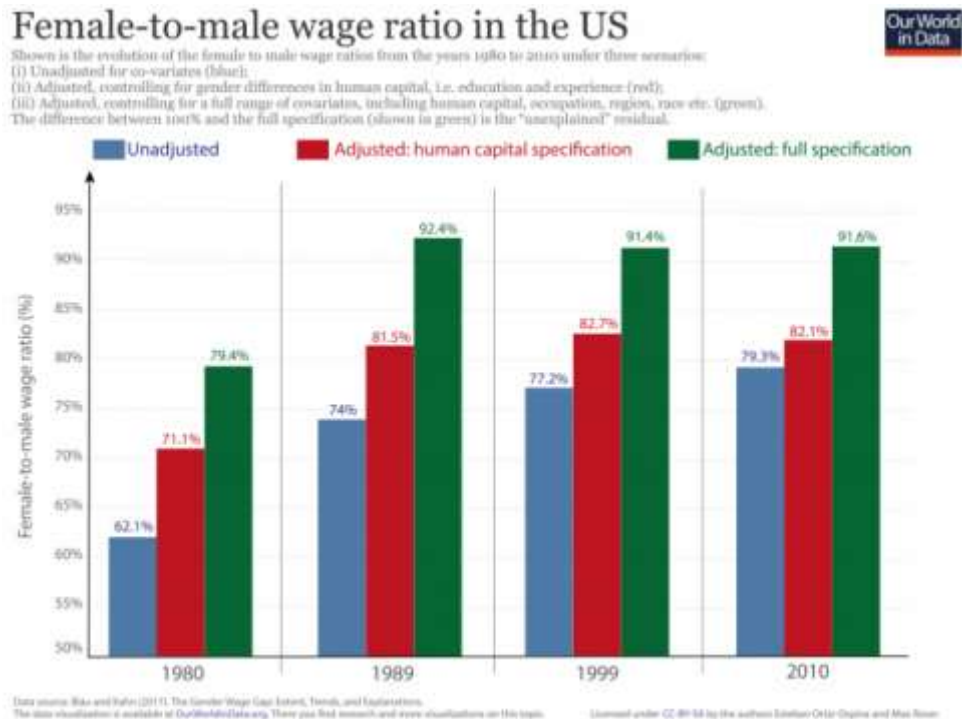


Fig. 1 Wage ratio based on gender

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CONCLUSION

The term “glass ceiling” refers to invisible and challenging restrictions that women encounter in the workplace that prevent them from moving up the corporate ladder. Despite their qualifications and expertise, it aims to impede ambitious women. While the invisible glass ceiling draws attention to bias that might be based on colour, gender, or ethnicity, the main body of this article is especially the vertical discrimination that women experience in the workplace. Women are not only discriminated against for profitable reasons – they are mainly discriminated against because of stereotyping and misguided preconceptions of women’s roles and capacities, commitment and leadership style.

We also observe that most of the women don’t want to break glass ceiling they are happy under glass ceiling. Occasionally they choose twisting career paths, taking some time to care for children, prepare for a career change or work in the non-profit sector. There is another reason why women are not complaining about glass ceiling because they have decided to work for themselves. 87% of the women are in opinion they are being treated as a second gender while taking strategic decisions and are involved only in implementation of those decisions. Always they come across the statements that, women do not understand the ground reality of the situation in which accordingly decision has to be taken. Some of the times they get respect as women but not as working women in their work spot.

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