"Glass ceiling escalating corporate ladder": A study of Women Employees with reference to service industries in Marathwada Region

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Abstract: *Always being treated as a second gender even today in this century, a woman is trying to escalate corporate ladder by proving her potential at work spot. A woman, in every walks of her life, she experiences a glass ceiling from obtaining upper-level positions. Glass Ceiling is the unseen, unbreakable barrier that keeps minorities and women from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements. Also it can be said as an intangible barrier within a hierarchy that prevents women or minorities from obtaining upper-level positions. Glass ceilings are most often observed in the workplace and are usually a barrier to achieving power and success equal to that of a more dominant population. A common manifestation of this is seen where a woman who has better skills, talent, and education than her male peers but is obviously being passed over for promotions. Or for a woman to get paid lesser for the same job that her male peers are doing despite holding similar qualifications. This research paper was an attempt to study the existence of Glass Ceiling for women employees with reference to service industries in Marathwada Region.*

Keywords— Glass Ceiling, Woman, Service industry.

Introduction:

Glass Ceiling is the unseen, unbreakable barrier that keeps minorities and women from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements. Also it can be said as an intangible barrier within a hierarchy that prevents women or minorities from obtaining upper-level positions. Glass ceilings are most often observed in the workplace and are usually a barrier to achieving power and success equal to that of a more dominant population. A common manifestation of this is seen where a woman who has better skills, talent, and education than her male peers but is obviously being passed over for promotions. Or for a woman to get paid lesser for the same job that her male peers are doing despite holding similar qualifications. This research paper was an attempt to study the existence of Glass Ceiling for women employees with reference to service industries in Marathwada Region.

Objectives:

1. To understand the concept of Glass Ceiling.

2. To study the existence of Glass Ceiling for women employees with reference to service industries in Marathwada Region.

3. To assess the scenario of glass ceiling that effects women's career growth in the specified area.

Significance of the Study:

Glass ceilings are most often observed in the workplace and are usually a barrier to achieving power and success equal to that of a more dominant population. A common manifestation of this is seen where a woman who has better skills, talent, and education than her male peers but is obviously being passed over for promotions.

Hypotheses

H_1 Women are treated as a second gender while taking strategic decisions

H_2 There is existence of Glass Ceiling for women employees with reference to service industries in Marathwada Region.

Review of Literature:

"Glass ceiling[1]" means an invisible upper limit in corporations and other organizations, above which it is difficult or impossible for women to rise in the ranks. "Glass ceiling" is a metaphor for the hard-to-see informal barriers that keep women from getting promotions, pay raises and further opportunities. The "glass ceiling" metaphor has also been used to describe the limits and barriers experienced by minority racial groups.It is glass because it's not usually a visible barrier, and a woman may not be aware of its existence until she "hits" the barrier. In other words, it's not an *explicit* practice of discriminating against women, though specific policies, practices, and attitudes may exist that produce this barrier without intention to discriminate. The term was popularized in the 1980s.

The term was invented to apply to major economic organizations like corporations, but later began to be applied to invisible limits above which women had not risen in other fields, especially electoral politics. The U.S. Department of Labor's

1991 definition of glass ceiling is "those artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevents qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management-level positions." (*Report on the Glass Ceiling Initiative*. U.S. Department of Labor, 1991.)

Derivation of the Glass ceiling

The term was used in a 1984 book, The Working Woman Report, *by Gay Bryant.* Later it was used in a 1986 Wall Street Journal article on barriers to women in high corporate positions.

The Oxford English Dictionary notes that the first use of the term was in 1984, in Ad week:"Women have reached a certain point -- I call it the glass ceiling. They're in the top of middle management and they're stopping and getting stuck. A related term is pink collar ghetto, referring to jobs to which women are often relegated.

Opinions from Other side of the Coin, Who Believe There's No Glass Ceiling

Women's liberation, feminism and civil rights legislation already provide for women's equality. Women's job choices keep them off of the executive track. Women don't have the right educational preparation for senior executive jobs (e.g. an M.B.A.) Women who do make job choices that put them on the executive track and do have the right educational preparation have not been in the corporation long enough to build up experience -- and this will automatically correct itself with time.

Progress Scenario since the 1970s and 1980s

The conservative feminist organization, Independent Women's Forum, points out

that in 1973, 11% of corporate boards had one or more women members, and that in 1998, 72% of corporate boards had one or more women members.

On the other hand, the Glass Ceiling Commission (created by Congress in 1991 as a 20-member bipartisan commission) in 1995 looked at Fortune 1000 and Fortune 500 companies, and found that only 5% of the senior management positions were held by women.

Elizabeth Dole once said, "My objective as Secretary of Labor is to look through the 'glass ceiling' to see who is on the other side, and to serve as a catalyst for change."

In 1999 a woman, Carleton (Carly) Fiorina, was named CEO of a Fortune 500 company, Hewlett-Packard, and she declared that women now faced "no limits whatsoever. There is not a glass ceiling."

The number of women in senior executive positions still lags considerably behind the number of men. A 2008 survey (Reuters, March 2008) showed that 95% of American workers believe that women have made "important advances in the workplace over the last 10 years" but 86% believe that the glass ceiling has not been broken, even if it has been cracked.

Highly Qualified Women at Workplace

For International Women's Day 2017[2], Reuter's photographers around the world sought out women from many different backgrounds and cultures, and created portraits of them on the job. They also shared their experiences and thoughts on gender discrimination and what they thought the future held for women in the workplace.

Ana Maria del Verdun Suarez, 27, a police officer, poses for a photograph in the outskirts of Montevideo City, Uruguay, on February 23, 2017. "More women should be able to have jobs that traditionally were considered only for men. I believe that discrimination comes sometimes from all of us, it comes from the inside. There are already many professions that were exclusively male and are now performed by women,

Tara Mc Cannel, 44, Associate Professor of Ophthalmology, M.D., Ph.D., Director of the Ophthalmic Oncology Center at the UCLA Stein Eye Institute of the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), is photographed in Los Angeles, California, on February 27, 2017. "Women are held to a higher standard in knowledge, in abilities, in how the clinical practices go, in appearance," Mc Cannel said, "Women just can't be themselves or just think: 'Oh I'm just going to do my work,' and focus on the job. There are these other things that need to be considered because it's not completely equal even though things are getting better."

Paloma Granero, 38, a skydiving instructor, poses for a photograph inside the wind tunnel at Windobona indoor skydiving in Madrid, Spain, on February 24, 2017. "Men don't have to prove themselves like we do. We are tested every day," Granero said. "The instruction jobs still go mostly to men, whereas the administrative jobs go mostly to women."

Alkadry, M. G. & Tower, L. E. (2006)[3] states that, The United States workforce is still facing challenges even after the passage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963. We

define the glass ceiling as an invisible barrier that prevents women from entering into executive positions. Federal laws include the Equal Pay Act of 1963, which guarantees equal pay for equal work, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits sex -based employment discrimination (e.g., hiring, firing, training, promotion, and wages). The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces these two laws. "Despite years of equal opportunity and affirmative action efforts, women remain concentrated in certain lower-level positions. In a study of the federal senior service, Mani (1997) noted that women occupied 85 percent of all clerical positions but only 13 percent of the Senior Executive Services positions in federal public service" (Alkadry & Tower, 2006). Alkadry and Tower (2006) reported that out of the 1,600 responses that were collected from an online national survey which included four groups of the public professionals, the wage gap between genders ranged from $5,035 to $9,577. This indicates that gender plays a major role in salaries of public officials in similar positions. Different employers and occupations have different sets of wages between men and women.

Sarmistha Nandy, Arnab Bhaskar and Sovonjit Ghosh; (2014)[4] opined that ,For the decades, it has been seen that the presence of women in senior managerial positions is very low in spite of having good scholastics, plethora of knowledge, quality and efficiency and this happens only due to the barriers like mental blockage or prejudices and glass ceiling phenomenon. Organizations publish their balance sheets to disclose their financial health and to motivate shareholders as per financial considerations but the invisible balance sheets of human resources are unbalanced from the long past as per gender is concerned and are discouraging our society and women.

Usha Dinakaran (2016)[5] states that, the glass ceiling seems to manifest itself across many industries, but given the erratic nature of the hospitality industry and in lieu of the Indian context, its presence is felt a little more than usual. To completely remove any form of discrimination and the existence of such a barrier, both organizations and individuals need to play a crucial role. There is a necessity to let go of decade old practices and assessment measures – no evaluating bias must come into play. While abolishing sexist discrimination, men should also be entitled to paternity leave and flexible work timings.

Catalyst (2001)[6] commented on Meeker that she is a workaholic who puts in eighteen hours days on the workspot. She is known for her charm and wit. She once had a reputation for offering sound advice but moved quickly from being the heroine of the internet craze to being blamed for its woes. She received many precious awards in her career. She was coined as top analyst by Institutional investor in 1997 and 2000. By 1998 she had written four books about the business of internet.

Ronald J. Burke, Mary C. Mattis; (01-Jan-2005)[7] Supporting Women's Career Advancement: Challenges and Opportunities; Edward Elgar Publishing-the success of Shell's Diversity efforts in the last ten years can be seen in its diversity statistics. At present four of the seven members of its executive committee and two members of its board of directors are women. 57 precent of the total staff comprises women.

Sunita Chugh, Punam Sahgal; (December 1, 2007)[8] have put forth that Women comprise a large segment of the available managerial talent across the globe, yet their representation at top level managerial positions in business and public administration, is rather obscure. The leadership prospect for women managers is a critical issue in gender equality and remains a researchable proposition. This article examines the literature of the last two decades on career advancement and leadership to unearth the impediments for women in management. Sex role orientation and the stereotyping of a manager's role as a masculine construct, along with the glass ceiling effect in organizations, are predominant themes that explain why so few women progress to positions of leadership and authority. The literature also points out that lack of career planning amongst women managers and their collaborative, power sharing management style, that are in sharp contrast to male managers, significantly influence women's advancement to the top echelons of management. Nixdorff, Janet and Rosen, Theodore H. (2010)[9] opined that research tells us there is definitely something about the "community" aspect of femaleness—whether it is learned, forced, or an opportunity—that helps women find success in their work lives. It does appear that there is value in studying the "community" aspect of femaleness further if there are some situations in which a single-sex environment may promote the self-efficacy of young women as they launch their careers or move into entrepreneurship. In addition, this focus could address whether the social networking skills developed then, and later, support the women as they move up their career ladders, whether as entrepreneurs or in the corporate world.

In a study conducted by Albrecht (2003)[10], the authors found the existence of a glass ceiling in Swedish organizations. Despite the fact that Sweden is considered to be a feminine culture, based on Hofstede's cultural dimension, women in Sweden are experiencing the glass ceiling effect. Interestingly, based on the research conducted by Albrecht (2003), the effect of the average wage gap at the top of the wage distribution followed a progressive path from the late 1960s to the 1990s. The glass ceiling effect was not present in the late 1960s, was evident in the 1980s and much more pronounced in the 1990s.

Goodman (2003)[11] investigated variables that differentiate work establishments that have women in top management positions from those that do not. Women occupied top management positions in slightly more than all of the 228 medium-to-large-sized private sector establishments the authors studied. They found that women are more likely to occupy top management ranks in establishments that have a higher number of lower level management positions filled by women, have higher management turnover, have lower average management salary levels, place greater emphasis on development and promotion of employees, and operate in non-manufacturing industries.

Sarmistha Nandy, Arnab Bhaskar and Sovonjit Ghosh; (2014)[12] uttered that we simultaneously utter "Half the sky thou art woman" and celebrate International Women's Day(IWD) not only for the role of women in society but to draw the attention of gender issues or gender discrimination which is all pervading and

continuously affecting our modern society. The concept "Women, the incarnation of motherhood" must not be changed but be modified with the time. Till now, women are considered in such a way as if they come from different planets and societies have curiosities on them but have no faith. Like new gadget in the new market, organizations treat women where they have interests on women but cannot rely on their efficiency. So women in an organization are still facing barriers on career advancement, gender stereotyping and other threats from within or out of the organization. There is a hairline difference between female feticide and gender diversity or gender stereotyping because killing the honest motives of life of human being is very much synonymous with the killing of lives.

Research Methodology

As the Population selected for study was service industry it was a herculean task to identify the total universe, so a sample of 100 working women was interviewed on the basis of convenience random sampling method. 10 Respondents' each were selected from the service sectors, including financial services like consumer, commercial and investment banking, publishing, professional services like consulting, accounting & auditing, health care and hospitality like Medical representatives, Office superintendents & Hotel Industry, advertising and market research.

Questionnaire content

The interviews provided a means of identifying key themes and patterns in the experiences of women at different junctures in their career. The focus was on identifying issues facing working women. The interview was based on the

Interviewees had practical backgrounds functioning in finance, human resource Management, strategic planning and marketing. The years of professional work experience ranged from 10 to 25 & above years. They were at different levels of the organizational hierarchy; some of them were in leadership role. Potential interviewees were identified and sent brief project descriptions and agreed to participate. They were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality in reporting the results.

Data collection and analysis

Data was gathered using the extensive interview which provides the social and cultural context for behavior and to get positive response, adding a valuable dimension to the research. To maximize the value of the time spent on the interview, a combination of close and open‐ended questionnaire was used to streamline the data collection process. The close ended question were rated on a five point scale namely Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree and Strongly Agree. Qualitative approach was estimated to be the appropriate methodology. This was an exploratory study to determine the issues and challenges facing women employees in Marathwada region. Also, to enhance the reliability and validity of the data collected women employees having a good stake were contacted and included in the study.

career line, and experiences through their career which included current role and responsibilities, organizational demographics, relations with senior management, climbing to leadership positions. All the critical and striking experiences were shared that they had

encountered in their career and their most salient achievements and any rejections. Distinguishing that the organizational environment represents one side of the coin, the interview based on Work & Family life balance factors that might have affected their careers, including personal issues such as family support and demands, the cooperation played by spouses, parents and children, and personal sacrifices the women may have made.

The second part of the interview focused on the status of women in the organisation the interviewee worked at, including the number and level of women in the organisation, their experiences and how those might differ from those of their male colleagues, whether there were any biases within the organisation, against hiring women. Additionally, specific organizational initiatives for the development of women managers and how these were seen to affect the experience of women in the firm were discussed. Reactions about an invisible barrier or a "GLASS CEILING" that hinders or excludes women from advancement to upper management positions were taken. Close ended questions on a five point scale included were:

- I believe women are as capable as men of serving in senior executive positions.

- Overall, I am satisfied with my current employer.

- Considering just my specific job, all in all, I am satisfied with my job.

- If I were completely free to choose, I would prefer to continue working for my current employer.

- Women and men are respected equally in my organization.

- Sufficient opportunities exist in my organization for women to advance into senior management positions

- In my organization, women are primarily encouraged to apply for support roles rather than for operational, technical, and general management positions.

- I am disappointed that I ever accepted a job at this organization.

- In my organization, competitiveness or assertiveness in women is viewed as a negative trait.

- I would not recommend my job to a friend.

- The way my organization operates, a woman could be CEO within the next 10 years.

- "Good old boy" networks in my organization limit women's opportunities for promotions to senior positions.

- In my organization, there are equal career development opportunities for men and women.

- In my company, the number of women penetrating the hierarchy and achieving senior positions is steadily rising.

- I often think of leaving the organization I currently work for.

- In my organization, anti-discrimination or affirmative-action regulations are viewed as a mandated inconvenience.
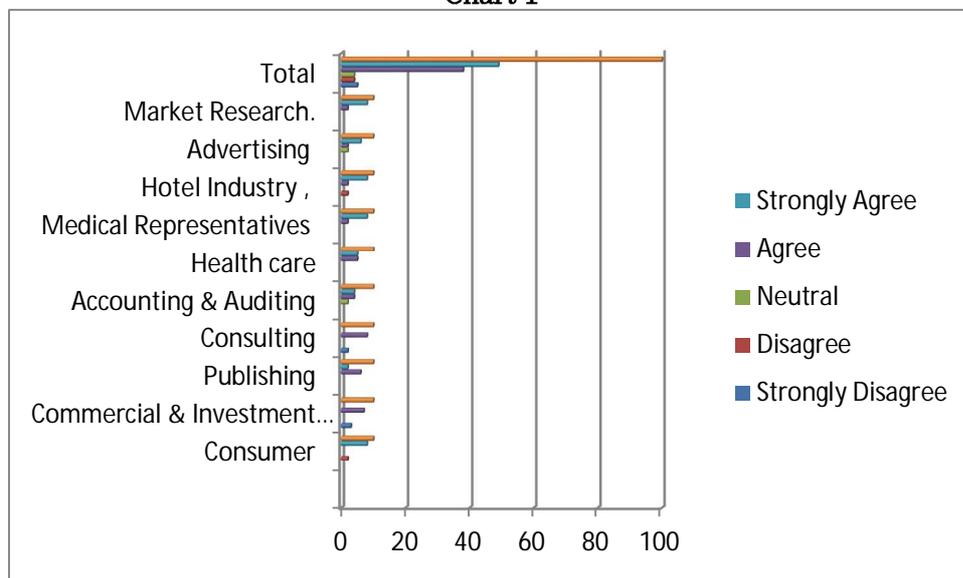
Table No: 1

H_1. Women are treated as a second gender while taking strategic decisions

Service Sector	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses
Consumer		2			8	10
Commercial & Investment Banking	3			7		10
Publishing				6	2	10
Consulting	2			8		10
Accounting & Auditing			2	4	4	10
Health care				5	5	10
Medical Representatives				2	8	10
Hotel Industry ,		2		2	8	10
Advertising			2	2	6	10
Market Research.				2	8	10
Total	5	4	4	38	49	100

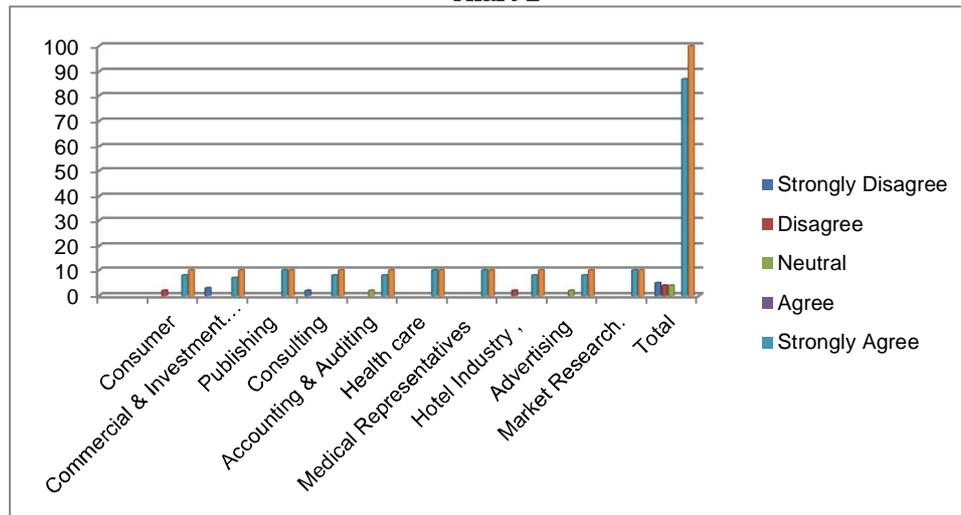Source: Field Survey (2016-17)

Chart 1

Table No: 2

H_2 There is existence of Glass Ceiling for women employees with reference to service industries in Marathwada Region.

Service Sector	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses
Consumer		2			8	10
Commercial & Investment Banking	3				7	10
Publishing					10	10
Consulting	2				8	10
Accounting & Auditing			2		8	10
Health care					10	10
Medical Representatives					10	10
Hotel Industry ,		2			8	10
Advertising			2		8	10
Market Research.					10	10
Total	5	4	4		87	100

Source: Field Survey (2016-17)

Chart 2

Conclusion:

Table No.1 show that 9 % of the working women have an opinion that they are treated as a second gender while taking strategic decisions, 4 % are neutral and 87 % of the working women agreed that they are treated as a second gender while taking strategic decisions.

Table No.2. Clearly show that only 9% of working women have an opinion that there is existence of Glass Ceiling for women employees with reference to service industries in Marathwada Region, 4 % are neutral and 87 % of the working women strongly agreed that there is existence of Glass Ceiling for women employees with reference to service industries in Marathwada Region

As the respondents were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality in reporting the results. The interviews provided a striking data. Each respondent provided an abandoned interview, full of detail and insight. Clearly, this issue was one on which they had done a great deal of soul searching and thinking as it was at the cost of balancing work with home. The interview provided the women an opportunity to validate their experiences and learning. A common theme in the interviews was the significant role played by the family in encouraging the women to pursue careers. In some cases, this encouragement was direct, in others it was indirect. In some cases it was witnessed that women expect more cooperation.The source of support changed as the women progressed in their careers and their lives. It was not always easy to come by and many women spoke of the gender bias being boxed not only at work, but at home.

Working Women in the speicified area have a negative experience in progression through the organisation, despite a traditional culture that might have suggested otherwise. They have not been successful owing to the interplay of organisational and familial support, coupled with a strong personal drive to succeed.

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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