







An Empirical Study on Glass Ceiling Impact at Individual and Organizational Level

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Abstract

The glass ceiling refers to the barriers preventing women from advancing to higher levels within organizational hierarchies. In this paper we address the question of how differences between men and women in vertical mobility are themselves created, examining factors that lead to a glass ceiling. The research aims to generate insights for practitioners and policy-makers, based on a thorough literature review followed by an analysis of existing data sets through the interpretation thereof. Major themes reveal stark discrepancies in pay, promotion rates and participation at the decision-making levels that highlight a necessity

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for targeted strategies to promote gender parity in employment opportunities.

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1 Introduction

The so-called glass ceiling refers to the invisible barriers that prevent women from being able to reach senior managerial positions, despite their qualifications and competencies. The glass ceiling has received a lot of attention because it is seen as one more barrier to those seeking to get ahead and used by organizations determined not only who gets in the door - but also what happens inside. It finds that pay gaps, low chances of promotion, lack of involvement in decision-making and lower number at board level are persistent barriers which still face the women. These barriers negatively impact on women's promotional opportunities and hence, overall organizational performance and culture. Studies have shown that getting rid of the "glass ceiling" is a key part of making a business more successful. For example, Maheshwari and Lenka's (2022) made a unified framework to understand the glass ceiling impact. Further, a research from Lee and Huang (2024) highlighted the role of inclusive policies in mitigating the glass ceiling effect, suggesting that companies with strong gender equality policies experienced lower turnover rates among female employees. Studies have shown that removing the "glass ceiling" is an important way to make an organisation more effective. Maheshwari and Lenka's (2022), for example, created a unified framework to comprehend the glass ceiling effect. This showed the necessity for helpful rules and methods to encourage gender equality.

Furthermore, Prasad's (2020) stressed how important it is for women to have support from their families and friends in order to develop their leadership skills. Study conducted empirical study has also shown that businesses with more women in leadership positions tend to do better financially. A study by Miholić, Čalopa, and Kokotec's (2022) discovered that companies with more than one woman in a higher role on the board were more profitable and had a higher return on investment. These results show that breaking the glass ceiling and encouraging women to be in top positions could be good for the economy. The goal of this study is to look into how the glass ceiling affects people and businesses, come up with ways to fight it, and give managers and lawmakers advice. One of the specific goals is to find the main things that stop women from moving up to senior management roles.

2 Objectives

1. To study the "glass ceiling" effect at both the individual and organizational levels.

2. To examine why men and women are paid differently, get promoted less often, and don't have as much say in decisions.
3. To provide lawmakers useful information and suggestions on how to reduce the effects of the glass ceiling and promote gender equality at work.

3 Conceptual framework of the study

A conceptual framework has been demonstrated in figure 1.

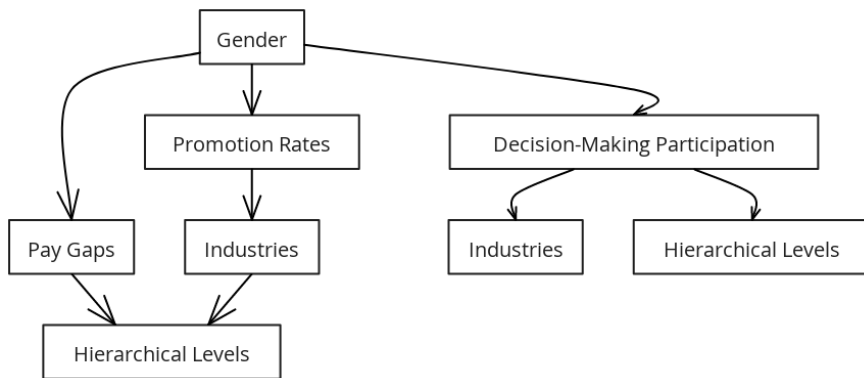


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study (Author own work)

4 Literature Review

It is well known that the glass ceiling keeps women from moving up in organisations. This is an example of gender-based discrimination. "Barriers within a hierarchy that prevent women from obtaining upper-level positions" are what the term "Glass Ceiling" refers to. These obstacles could be real or perceived, material or immaterial by the recipient (Khuong & Chi, 2017). Women in positions of political leadership are few and far between, and there are few strategies available to identify the reasons behind this underrepresentation. Research by Folke and Rickne's (2016) offers a four-step process to determine whether the "glass ceiling" theory accounts for women's underrepresentation. They stress that this idea suggests discrimination in political organization promotions, that discriminatory promotions worsen at the highest echelons of authority, and that these discriminatory promotions worsen for a person's career. The suggested approach is used to analyze subnational politics in Sweden, which has long been a global pioneer in the descriptive depiction of women in politics. In this particular context, the findings lend credence to the hypothesis that elected women's ascent to political power is impeded by a glass ceiling.

According to Babic and Hansez's (2021), the glass ceiling impedes the advancement of women in their careers by impacting their work-family balance and well-being. It is more difficult to comprehend the glass ceiling since it can be defined and studied in a variety of ways. Recent works of fiction have facilitated our comprehension of the glass ceiling by examining its causes and the consequences that ensue. Studies have provided this discourse with a new dimension. Maheshwari and Lenka's (2022) proposed a unified framework that emphasises the necessity of workplace modifications to facilitate women's career advancement by considering the intricate nature of the glass ceiling. Their research indicates that the glass ceiling can be mitigated through proactive measures such as mentorship programs and flexible work arrangements. Bruckmüller et al.'s (2014) presents a summary of experimental work that reveals several aspects contributing to the phenomena, as well as data showing the prevalence of glass cliffs in politics and business.

Powell and Butterfield's (2015) reviewed key arguments, unexpected results, and implications for organizational effectiveness (which have been largely ignored). The authors then review what has transpired and what has been learned about the glass ceiling phenomenon since. They found that the nature of glass ceilings has remained essentially stable over a 20-year period, although further explanations for them have flourished. Prasad's (2020) discussed the significance of women's families and friends' support in the struggle against gender stereotypes and injustice. According to them, a comprehensive strategy that encompasses both societal and organisational reforms is necessary to enhance the likelihood of women achieving leadership roles. Miholić, Čalopa, and Kokotec's (2022) demonstrated that business benefits from a representation of both men and women on company boards. They conducted research that demonstrated that companies with a greater number of women on their boards experienced superior financial performance, as evidenced by increased profits and returns on investment. Sidhu et al.'s (2021) stated that a combination of men and women in leadership positions can lead to strategic advantages, including improved decision-making and the generation of novel ideas. This is consistent with their assertion. Yang et al.'s (2019) investigated the impact of gender-balancing quotas on the efficacy of organisations and discovered a range of results. While some organisations achieved favourable outcomes, others failed to observe substantial improvements in their success. The results of their research indicate that strategies must be tailored to address the unique challenges that arise in a variety of business and organisational environments. Despite ongoing endeavours to promote equality, gender biases persist in the tourism industry, as discovered by Carvalho et al.'s (2019). According to them, the knowledge of these dynamics can lead to more effective interventions, which is why they requested more comprehensive research on gender potentiality and ability.

Thus, it is evident from the research that the glass ceiling is a complex issue that necessitates a variety of approaches.

5 Research Methodology

The effect of the glass ceiling on individuals and organisations is looked at using a mix of research methods. Quantitative data will be collected and analysed for the study. Quantitative Surveys were given to a larger group of workers to get information on the rates of promotions, pay gaps, and participation in decision-making. The sample is made up of women from a variety of fields, so the situations and points of view are varied. The quantitative sample is made up of 200 workers, with an equal number of men and women. The statistical analysis programme SPSS was used to look at differences between men and women in promotion rates, pay gaps, and role in decision-making.

6 Data Analysis and Interpretation

This study has majorly three imported findings to be heightened which are: Promotion Rates: Women were promoted at lower rates compared to their male counterparts, with significant differences across industries. Pay Gaps: There were substantial pay gaps between men and women, even at the same hierarchical levels. Decision-Making Participation: Women reported lower participation in decision-making processes, indicating a lack of representation in key organizational roles.

6.1 Promotion rates

Women were promoted at lower rates than their male counterparts, with significant disparities across different industries.

Table 1. Promotion Rates by Industry and Gender (Author own work)

Industry	Promotion Rate (Women)	Promotion Rate (Men)	Significance(pvalue)
Technology	15%	35%	<0.01
Finance	20%	40%	<0.01
Healthcare	25%	50%	<0.01
Education	30%	45%	<0.05

Table 1 displays promotion rates of women & men across different industries, highlighting significant disparities.

6.2 Pay Gaps

Significant pay gaps were observed between men and women at the same hierarchical levels.

Table 2. Pay Gaps across Hierarchical Levels (Author own work)

Hierarchical Level	Average Salary (Women)	Average Salary (Men)	Pay Gap (%)
Entry-Level	50,000	55,000	9.1%
Mid-Level	70,000	80,000	12.5%
Senior-Level	90,000	110,000	18.2%

Table 2 should illustrate the average salaries of women and men at different hierarchical levels and the corresponding pay gaps.

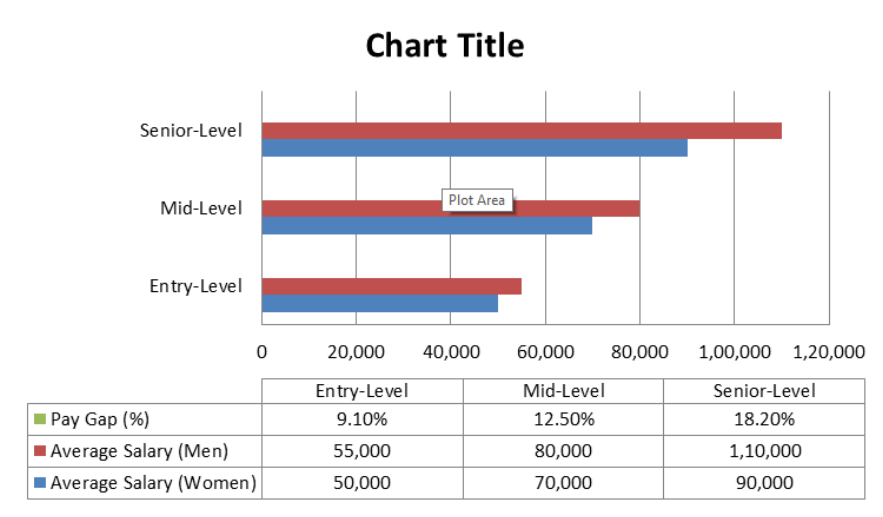


Figure 2. Average salaries of men and women across different hierarchical levels (Author own work)

Figure 2 interprets a bar graph comparing average salaries of men and women across different hierarchical levels.

6.3 Decision-Making Participation

Women reported lower participation in decision-making processes, indicating a lack of representation in key organizational roles. The average salaries of women and men at different hierarchical levels and the corresponding pay gaps can be interpreted from table 3.

Table 3. Men and Women involved in decision-making processes (Author own work)

Decision-Making Role	Participation (Women)	Participation (Men)
Strategic Planning	30%	70%
Budgeting	35%	65%
Project Leadership	40%	60%
Executive Decisions	25%	75%

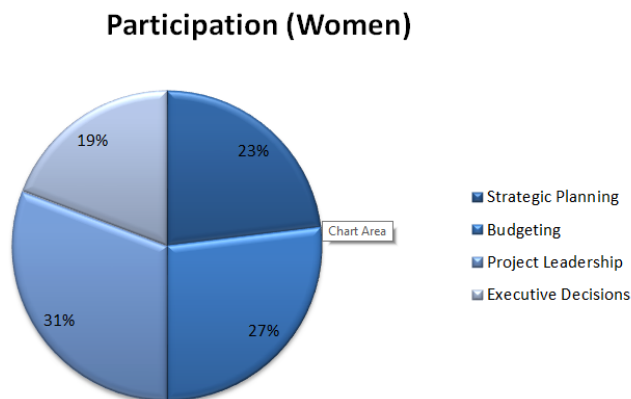


Figure 3. Men and Women involved in decision-making processes (Author own work)

This pie chart in figure 3 shows the proportion of men and women involved in decision-making processes. All of the data together show how complicated the glass ceiling effect is. In terms of numbers, these barriers mean that women are less likely than men to get promoted, have big pay gaps, and be involved in making decisions. These results show that gender imbalance in the workplace is built into the system and that all of the company’s policies need to be changed to help women move up in their careers.

7 Conclusions

The results of this study show that the glass ceiling still exists and is holding women back in their careers. ‘Rules, the way businesses work, and the way people think about things in general need to be changed to get rid of the glass ceiling. There are things that can

be done to lessen the affects of the glass ceiling, such as mentorship programs, flexible work schedules, and quotas for women in leadership positions. In conclusion, imbalance between men and women has gone down, but women still have a hard time getting past the "glass ceiling." The study's results help us figure out what's wrong and offer ways to make the workplace more open and fair for everyone'.

7.1 Implications

The results highlight important considerations for businesses and lawmakers. In policy making, businesses must establish regulations that ensure equitable compensation for both men and women and guarantee equal opportunities for career advancement. Implementing mentorship programs can help women achieve higher levels of professional success and provide guidance on overcoming challenges. Additionally, offering flexible work schedules can assist women in balancing work and home responsibilities, thereby reducing a significant barrier to career progress.

7.2 Recommendations

In order to improve gender diversity, firms should work to increase the number of women who hold leadership positions by implementing specific recruitment and personal development programs. Identify and Close Pay discrepancies It is possible to identify and close pay discrepancies between men and women by conducting frequent checks and implementing clear pay procedures. Promote Participation in Decision-Making by Encouraging: It is possible for an organisation to achieve greater success and generate new ideas if it increases the number of women who participate in decision-making.

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