

Glass ceiling in the workstation: Reviewing issues for today's organizations.**Sanjoy Roy****Abstract**

Since the beginning of the human race there been always a competition among the different groups based on caste, colour, creed sex etc. It's been more than 3000 years but still we are facing the differences and discriminations. There is power distance, there is racial distance and there is gender distance. This paper is a study on a much discussed issues related to glass ceiling for the women. Most of the women must have seen or felt some virtual barrier in their career ladder either through management or at personal front. There were biasness in the organization or at workplace with the females in context with salary, wages, promotion and opportunities etc. The most common reason for the biasness is given is that women gives birth and man do not. Women also opted for other careers in their life and priority for works become the secondary thing. Hence, they have been a target for biasness which management feels justified. This paper will deal with such issues and recommend few solution on the basis of study on particular industrial sectors.

Key words: - Female, Glass Ceiling, Biasness.**Introduction to Glass Ceiling**

It is in the latter stage of industrialization that women takes up job in the industries. Earlier to that they have been doing the household work. The term glass ceiling coined 1980's, when it was realize that discrimination is very much prevailing in the corporate world. There are virtual barrier for the women and minorities to reach at the top level in companies. Hence the perception of the discrimination with minorities and women is been observed and a theory of virtual barrier get reflected. The unseen barriers for the moving ahead in the hierarchy of organization is seemed to be based on biasedness instead of experience or education. The term glass ceiling is used to define this phenomenon.

The “glass ceiling” is a concept that betrays America’s most cherished principles. It is the unseen, yet unbreachable barrier that keeps minorities and women from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements (Federal Glass Ceiling Commission Washington, D.C. November 1995)

According to Allyson (2015), the term was used in a widely cited article titled: "The Glass Ceiling: why women can't seem to break the invisible barrier that blocks them from the top jobs" in the Wall Street Journal in March 1986. The article was written by Carol Hymowitz and Timothy D. Schellhardt. Hymowitz and Schellhardt opined on glass ceiling as something that is not discussed in the business manual or even not discussed at business meetings. It was initially introduced as an invisible, hidden, and unspoken phenomenon that existed to keep executive level leadership positions in the hands of males.

The glass ceiling metaphor has often been referred as an invisible barrier (glass) through which women can see high level positions but cannot reach them (ceiling) (Fritscher, 2007). These barriers prevent large number of women and people from minorities to obtain and secure the most powerful, prestigious, and highest-grossing jobs in the workforce (Ramos, 2016).

How can we experience the existence of Glass Ceiling?

Organizational climate is the first parameter to realize the inequalities among the employees and two form of climates namely diversity and climates for sexual harassment. Victims of such indifferent attitude (of the management) doesn’t come forward with their complaints as they perceive their grievances will not be taken up (Hulin et al., 1996). Consequently there would be more encouragement to the culprits and this create a climate of glass ceiling. Females will feel a barricade in their progress and generally leave those organization.

When we analyse the HR practices like diversity training, sensitivity training and cultural training etc. we can trace the organizational climate for the diversity and sexual harassment. It can be revealed by the investments made on such training and orientation programme by the organization (Traina and Garcia, 2009). Likewise, the policies adopted by the HR department on Sexual Harassment reveals how much the management is vigilant and approached towards the

culprits. These aspects of management develops the organizational climate for the gender discrimination and nondiscrimination.

The Root Cause:-

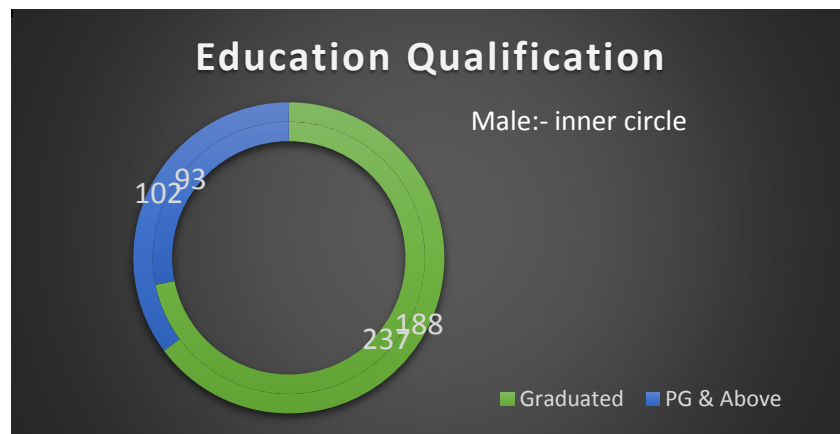
Root cause for the glass ceiling are general barriers, stereotypes and prejudices, and groupies (Dugan el. 1993) and one more reason is given by the director of The National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI), Orla O'Connor, says: "One root cause of the gender pay-gap is the lack of a publicly subsidized, accessible and affordable childcare system.

"This lack of affordable, accessible childcare has been identified by the EU and OECD as a major factor affecting equal labour-market participation by women in Ireland. The financial pressures of childcare often leave women, in particular, feeling that they cannot afford to work".

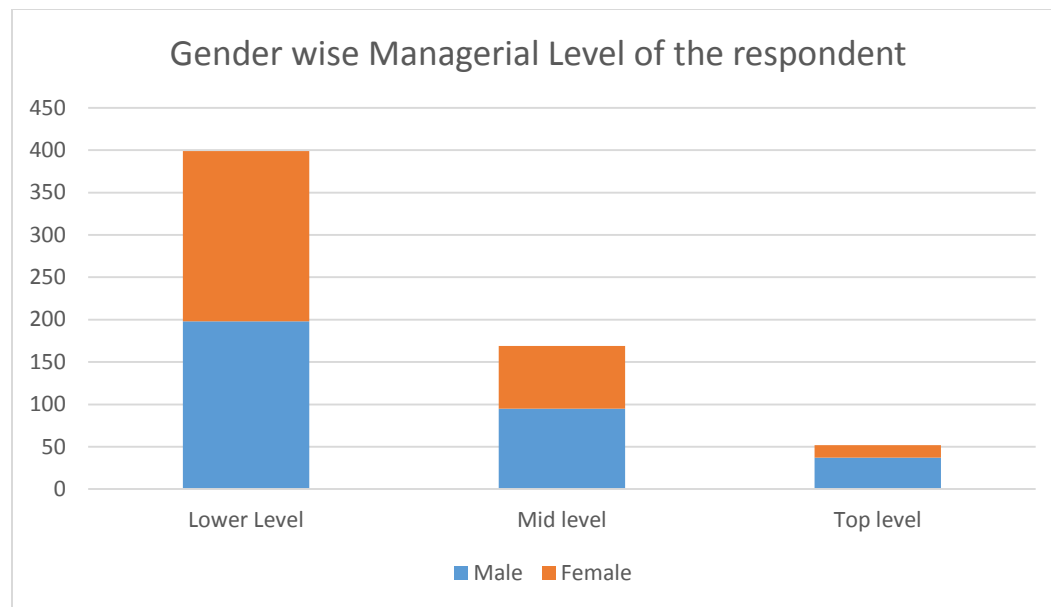
General barriers are widespread policies and practices that preserve prejudiced treatment. People in minorities and women are not appropriate for management level jobs, this is the most prevailing belief in general. As majority of the top level are man and from the upper section hence they wish to remain dominant and hence create barriers for others.

Data Analysis

Data has been collected from the various sector i.e. Banking, IT, Retail and Education. There were 620 respondents whose data have been analyzed. 290 (46%) were female and 330 (53%) were male.



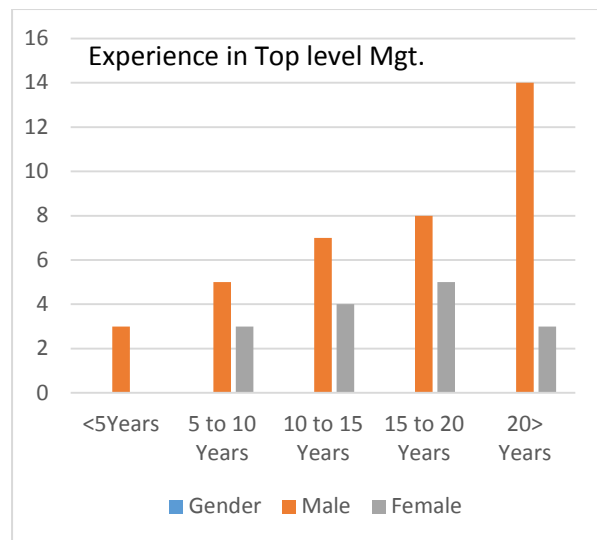
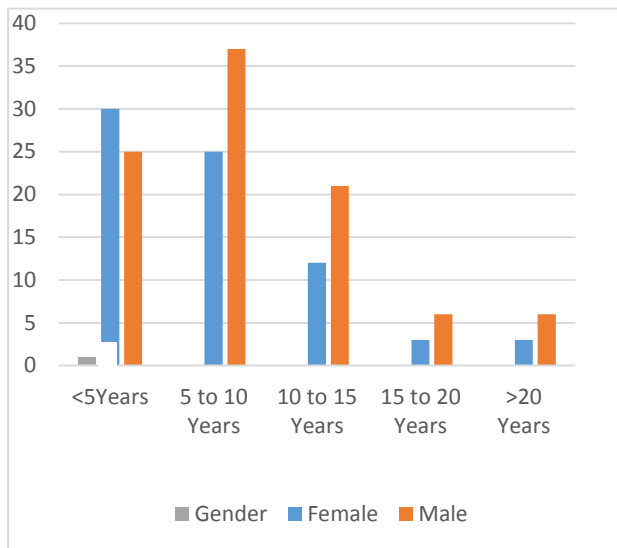
Gender	Graduated	PG & Above	Total
Male	237	93	330
Female	188	102	290



Gender * Mgt.level Crosstabulation

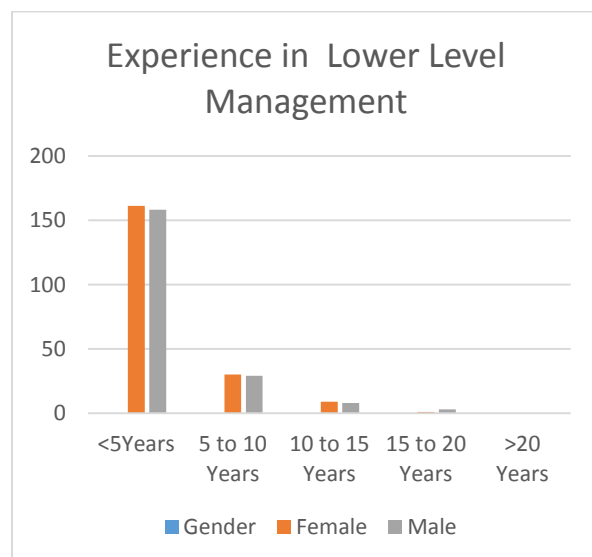
			Mgt. level			Total
			Lower level	Mid. level	Top level	
Gender	Male	Count	198	95	37	330
		Expected Count	212.4	90.0	27.7	330.0
		% within Gender	60.0%	28.8%	11.2%	100.0%
		% within Mgt.level	49.6%	56.2%	71.2%	53.2%
	Female	Count	201	74	15	290
		Expected Count	186.6	79.0	24.3	290.0
		% within Gender	69.3%	25.5%	5.2%	100.0%
		% within Mgt.level	50.4%	43.8%	28.8%	46.8%
Total	Count		399	169	52	620
	Expected Count		399.0	169.0	52.0	620.0
	% within Gender		64.4%	27.3%	8.4%	100.0%
	% within Mgt.level		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Difference between the male and female in context with the top level of management is significant. The above table shows that only 5.2% of the total female are holding position in top level however the same variable for male is 11.2%. The difference is not much in case of middle level positions. Hence, we can realize that there is significant difference between the male and female reaching at top level of management.



Experience in Top Level Management						
Gender	<5Years	5 to 10 Years	10 to 15 Years	15 to 20 Years	>20 Years	Total
Male	3	5	7	8	14	37
Female	0	3	4	5	3	15

Experience in Mid. Level Management						
Gender	<5Years	5 to 10 Years	10 to 15 Years	15 to 20 Years	>20 Years	Total
Female	30	25	12	3	3	73
Male	25	37	21	6	6	95



Experience in Lower Level Management						
Gender	<5Years	5 to 10 Years	10 to 15 Years	15 to 20 Years	>20 Years	Total
Female	161	30	9	1	0	201
Male	158	29	8	3	0	198

The data above shows that out of 37 total males 14 have more than 20 years of experience i.e., 38%. However in case of female out of 15 only 3 have more than 20 years of experience i.e. 20%. The total number of women in all categories 290 only 15 (5%) reached to top level and among the three only 8 have more than 15 years of experience. In case of male the total is 330 and 37 (11%) reached to top level management. The number of females in the category of higher

job levels and experience in the high level management is significantly low as compare to males, this shows that there is difficulties either with the policies or with the policy makers.

Gender	Management Level			Difference b/w top and mid. level	Percentage of difference	Total
	Lower Level	Mid. Level	Top Level			
Male	198	95	37	58	87	330
Female	201	74	15	59	13	290

If we look into the general career path of managers, a junior manager will be promoted to the middle and a middle level manager will reach to the top level. With the same assumption if we analyse the above table we can see that out of 198 junior managers only 95 reached to middle and out of 95 only 37 reached to top level. But in case of females out of 201 junior managers only 74 reached to middle and out of 74 only 15 reached to top level. Thus, the difference between the male and female reaching to the top level management is 74%. Males with similar education and qualification reaching at the top level 6 times higher than the females. While comparing the junior level to senior level males have more than 2 times of probability for promotion.

How to break the Glass Ceiling?

Government Policies: - Government should set policies to remove glass ceiling and lead by examples by providing equal opportunities to male and females to reach to their full potentials. Government departments and agencies must have policies to evaluate and remove internal glass ceilings. Government should make strategies for training, recruitment and job development policies to help qualified women to move upward on the career ladders that takes them to managerial and decision making spots.

Law Enforcement: - Law making and implementing agencies should frame anti-discrimination policies. It should develop some scheme through which this transparent barrier can be identified in every organization. Efforts should be made to end the systematic discrimination. The enforcement department should evaluate its effectiveness and efficiency on regular basis to improve their existing policies.

CEO of Business Houses: - Breaking glass ceiling barriers must start where the ceiling is — at the top. The presence of glass ceiling is generally appears on the top level of the management

hence, it should be broken at the starting point. Workforce diversity is one of the factor which should be taken care to discourage. Changing the workforce diversity is a long term process and affects the every employees. When the head of the organization is calibrated with the diversification he will be leading it further into the every level of the organization.

Communication and Commitment for diversification is pre-requisite. CEO should pay attention for the employee diversification and continuously communicate.

Human Resource Department:- Human resource department in every organization have a great role to play in creating a favorable climate for both diversification or non-diversification. The department should make policies which should give a conducive environment for the females to express them with confidence. There should be stringent policies against the culprits of systematic discrepancy.

It should provide training and development programs to facilitate the diversification in the organization.

Remove Quotas and promote qualified: - The planning and policies are to be made in such a way to promote the recruitment of qualified individuals rather than quotas for any particular group or caste or community. This means the organization should also refrain from allowing preferential treatment or employing or promoting unqualified people.

Conclusion

When we consider the power and potential of human capital is huge, every man and woman have great competency hence if we hinder one we are losing the tremendous potential. Women should find out the way to break the glass ceiling. They should come forward for the things they wish to achieve and fulfill their dreams and aspiration. The important aspects and key competencies should be analyzed by the females and they should develop accordingly. A corporate mentor have essence in this regard and he can help the females to grow networking and relation with the top management level which can further give recognition to the females competencies. The glass ceiling in business is not only holding back women, but also depriving our economy from vast human capital, tremendous source of creativity and innovation. Women constitute the half of the population hence we should unleash this huge potentiality and try to make this world more better place.

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