GLASS CEILING IN STRATEGIC ROLES – ANALYSIS OF THE ANTECEDENTS OF THE PHENOMENON

S.K. Gaikwad[1] and P.C. Kalkar[2]
[1]Sinhgad Institute of Management, Pune
[2]Commerce and Management, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune
gaikwad.snehal16@gmail.com[1], pckalkar@gmail.com[2]

ABSTRACT

The glass ceiling refers to discriminatory policies that prevent women from rising to positions of power or responsibility and advancing to higher positions within the organization simply because they are women. The model for understanding the occurrence of glass ceiling is that developed by Elacqua et al. Through their research, these authors have investigated why female executives rarely reach higher levels of their organization. Among the 685 executives at a major insurance company in Midwestern, they proposed a model in which beliefs about individual organizational evolution and status were closely linked to the perceptions of gender equality, which, in turn, were closely related to the glass ceiling view. This article discusses important antecedents of glass ceiling phenomenon based on the model developed by Elacqua et al.

***Keywords**: Glass ceiling, strategic roles, Antecedents*

Introduction

The glass ceiling refers to the fact that a trained person who wishes to progress within the ranks of his organization is held in low esteem because of the prevalence of discrimination based on sexual or racial prejudice. The glass ceiling says so in the vertical discrimination that is so common among women in companies. The difficulty in this team is the variety of definitions and methods that define a glass ceiling. There are also no obvious terms and conditions that would make it possible to establish with certainty the actual glass ceiling in the company. However, based on some research, glass ceilings can be defined as subtle but persistent barriers, based on discriminatory practices, ignorance and ignorance, and attitudes that hinder access to senior / higher management positions of trained women (Jackson and O'Callaghan, 2009). The glass ceiling thus refers to discriminatory policies that prevent women from rising to positions of power or responsibility and advancing to higher positions within the organization simply because they are women (Li and Leung, 2001).

This glass ceiling event is based on many assumptions. Indeed, compared to other forms of discrimination and inequality, glass insertion is a specific and specific form of inequality due to several processes (Cotter et al., 2001). First, the essence of the glass ceiling is the discrimination against women in management. So a glass ceiling can affect women despite their level of education, knowledge and skills. The glass ceiling is considered sequentially, i.e., advances in women's occupations, promotions in management positions, which should be considered, rather than the number of women in those positions over a period of time (Cotter et al., 2001). The glass ceiling also points to the growing inequality between men and women as they progress in their professional careers at the company. Second, this bias is difficult to detect as current policies of equal opportunity prohibit blatant discrimination against these nations. In addition, this includes the unchanging norms / ideas that are revealed in actions, deeds, facts, processes, or attitudes that are often not immediately apparent. Finally, the presence of invisible barriers prevents hierarchical escalation (Cotter et al., 2001). Indeed, this definition focuses on high handling, assuming that glass ceilings occur more often at this level than in the middle and lower levels. These barriers to development are especially present as one approaches the peak of positions (Cotter et al., 2001). Indeed, most researchers agree that the unity of the state is at its peak at higher levels of governance (Baxter and Wright, 2000).

The Antecedent of the Glass Ceiling: The Model of Elacqua et al. (2009)

The model for understanding the occurrence of glass ceiling is that developed by Elacqua et al. Through their research, these authors have investigated why female executives rarely reach higher levels of their organization. Among the 685 executives at a major insurance company in Midwestern, they proposed a model in which beliefs about individual organizational evolution and status were closely linked to the perceptions of gender equality, which, in turn, were closely related to the glass ceiling view. Therefore, these authors suggest that the ideas of alternative therapies link the relationship between both these organizational aspects (i.e., issues affecting people and conditions) and the views of the glass ceiling.

Interpersonal Factors

According to these authors, certain relationships between people can affect how women and their male counterparts are treated differently in the company. In their study, Elacqua et al. specifically assessed: (a) directing, (b) the existence of an informal network of senior management, and (c) friendly relations with company decision makers, as all of these ideas are related to career development. Indeed, with regard to the first of these three factors, research has highlighted that the lack of quality organization counselors is a major threat to women's advancement, especially since counseling is an important source of information (e.g., Ibarra et al., 2010). In addition, people who are supported by coaches have seen more opportunities for promotion (Allen et al., 2004), and the chances of them being promoted are actually higher (Allen et al., 2004). These people will be more satisfied with their work and career (Kammeyer-Mueller and Judge, 2008). Therefore, counseling can be an important aid in the development of women's work and even in business development (Elkin, 2006). As noted by Elacqua et al. (2009, p. 286), “employees whose supervisors act as their mentors may feel that they are not excluded from important information and opportunities, and therefore, think that this is true of others.” As a result, they see a little different treatment among employees in their company (Raabe and Beehr, 2003).

A second aspect of the authors' research is the existence of an informal network of senior men in the company. Networks refer to the development and use of work-related contacts in which members exchange important strategic information (about new positions, ongoing projects, management decisions, etc.), contacts and recommendations (Burke, 1984). Several studies have shown that women are given positions with lower visibility, which limits their chances of interacting with people in higher positions and improving social networks (e.g., Ragins et al., 1998). In companies where there is an informal communication platform for senior men, female executives may not be treated in the same way as men due to a lack of visibility (Elacqua et al., 2009). Limited access to such a network can reduce the chances of elevation and therefore, lead to the appearance of a glass ceiling (Brass, 1985).

The third element of human interaction refers to the friendly relationships of company decision makers. People generally like to have friends who are of the same sex who have had similar experiences. Female leaders may face an additional challenge: “queen bee syndrome” (Keeton, 1996). This syndrome explains the fact that some female executives who have reached the top feel that they have to work hard to get to where they are. They think that some women have to work hard to become successful. Indeed, according to Cech and Blair-Loy (2010), women who break the glass ceiling tend to point to their success as appropriate rather than overcoming structural barriers older women can do something about.

In their study of a large U.S. sample of female participants, Cohen et al. (2020) highlighted the importance of these interpersonal factors in the occurrence of glass ceiling. Indeed, they have found that the lack of directing opportunities, communication opportunities, public support from male organization leaders and high-level job assignments have a strong positive impact on the perceptions of female accounting professionals.

Situational Factors

With regard to these second set of factors, Elacqua et al. have considered two factors that may contribute to the perception of glass ceiling from a different treatment perspective. The first factor is the existence of objective conditions for procedures established within the company (e.g., hiring, and promotions). Lyness and Heilman (2006) have shown that the promotion process is more complex and more closely related to the performance of female executives compared to their male counterparts. Women are more sensitive and support motivation on the basis of their performance (Beehr et al., 2004). Employees who believe that their company uses objective conditions related to the skills and performance of the promotion process evaluate the process as fair and do not see differentiated treatment among employees (Beehr et al., 2004). In their study, Cohen et al. (2020, p. 22) also found that "women accountants who believe that female employees who are not treated equally by male statisticians in connection with performance appraisals will be more likely to report a glass ceiling among their organizations."

The second element refers to "the chair of women executives who have held office long enough to be regarded as essential to their advancement" (Elacqua et al., 2009, p. 287). According to Elacqua et al., One can assume that a female manager is an important candidate for promotion if she already has a management position and participates in company development activities. However, as noted by Elacqua et al. (2009, p. 287), "women experience these two conditions more often than men." Therefore, there will not be so many women in a position to be promoted to senior management positions (Elacqua et al., 2009). "If executives believe that this is happening in their organization, they are more likely to experience gender inequality and therefore the existence of a glass ceiling" (Elacqua et al., 2009, p. 287).

Perception of differential treatment for Women

Men and women are often treated differently in the world of work (Blau and Kahn, 2007). This difference arises when employee decisions are based on gender, a specific factor, rather than individual qualifications or job performance (Gutek et al., 1996). According to Elacqua et al., Seeing a difference in the way a company treats women can lead employees to believe that there is a glass ceiling in the company. Although gender differences may be small in comparison, for example, promotions at each level, they combine to create a gap between the number of men and women holding senior positions in the company (Agars, 2004).

Organizational Culture in Relation to Gender

In their study, Elacqua et al. suggested further investigation of other factors that may influence the perception of different treatment men and women and the glass ceiling. Indeed, according to these authors, "the inclusion of glass and ideas is therefore more likely to be found in cultures that promote different ideologies and the treatment of men and women" (Elacqua et al., 2009, p. 293). Another factor influencing the emergence of a glass ceiling with a view to a different treatment would be the culture used within organizations, in other words organizational culture, referring to shared values and beliefs that reflect workers' judgments of what things should be and are truly real. (Lord and Maher, 1991). The literature has shown that two key aspects of organizational culture with regard to gender are significant barriers to women's progress (e.g., Egly and Johnson, 1990), i.e., organizational culture "male-oriented" and beliefs about gender inequality. Both of these elements refer to a set of beliefs and superstitions that define and explain the social roles of male and female bosses presented by the organization and its members.

Top executives, many men, define a "sex" culture that excludes and discriminates against women. This culture embodies a series of organizational practices and processes that promote and define values, ideals, behaviors, and perceptions of "masculine" leadership and leadership (Broadbridge and Hearn, 2008). In line with social role theory (Eagly, 1987), the image of a boss is often associated with a man with "masculine" qualities, such as authority, independence, competition, and aggression (e.g., Weyer, 2007). Therefore, women, who have been associated for centuries with highly

conflicting qualities (e.g., collaboration, obedience, empathy, and empathy), will be less committed to their responsibilities and less able to manage (e.g., Weyer, 2007). These gender stereotypes about women have a negative impact on their assessment and judgment (Lyness and Thompson, 1997). As a result, at the beginning of their careers, women managers were given different responsibilities than men. Women managers then face a dual responsibility: (a) if they do not comply with men's practices, they are at risk of being judged and misjudged; and (b) if they have a "masculine" attitude, they are harmed by their colleagues (Oakley, 2000).

Some beliefs about female executives can lead their managers to fail to view them as individuals who are determined to hold senior management positions. Among these beliefs are inconsistencies in the role of mother, wife and manager; being a manager that requires a lot of investment, flexibility and mobility. In line with this view, Hoobler et al. (2008) showed that managers think that occupational health conflicts are greater for women than for their male counterparts. However, this belief has implications as it will reduce the organization's perception of women's sufficiency in the workplace, and reduce the likelihood of women's empowerment (Rudman and Phelan, 2008).

Conclusion

The glass ceiling thus refers to discriminatory policies that prevent women from rising to positions of power or responsibility and advancing to higher positions within the organization simply because they are women. There are also no obvious terms and conditions that would make it possible to establish with certainty the actual glass ceiling in the company. However, based on some research, glass ceilings can be defined as subtle but persistent barriers, based on discriminatory practices, ignorance and ignorance, and attitudes that hinder access to senior / higher management positions. Elacqua et al. have identified two factors as causes for the glass ceiling – interpersonal factors, and situational factors. Elacqua et al. specifically assessed: (a) directing, (b) the existence of an informal network of senior management, and (c) friendly relations with company decision makers, as all of these ideas are related to career development.With regard to situational factors, Elacqua et al. have considered factors that may contribute to the perception of glass ceiling from a different treatment perspective like objective conditions for procedures established within the company. These factors are barriers in women's progression to top management positions.

References

1. Agars, M. (2004). Reconsidering the impact of gender stereotypes on the advancement of women in organizations. Psychol. Women Q. 28, 103–111.
2. Allen, T., Eby, L., Poteet, M., Lentz, E., and Lima, L. (2004). Career benefits associated with mentorat for protégés: a meta-analysis. J. Appl. Psychol. 89, 127–136.
3. Baxter, J., and Wright, E. O. (2000). The glass ceiling hypothesis: a comparative study of the United States. Sweden and Australia. Gen. Soc. 14, 275–294.
4. Beehr, T. A., Nair, V. N., Gudanowski, D. M., and Such, M. (2004). Perceptions of reasons for promotion of self and others. Hum. Relat. 57, 413–437.
5. Blau, F. D., and Kahn, L. M. (2007). The gender pay gap: have women gone as far as they can? Acad. Manag. Perspect. 21, 7–23.
6. Brass, D. J. (1985). Men's and women's networks: a study of interaction patterns and influence in an organization. Acad. Manag. J. 28, 327–343.
7. Broadbridge, A., and Hearn, J. (2008). Gender and management: new directions in research and continuing patterns in practice. Br. J. Manag. 19, 38–49.
8. Burke, R. (1984). Relationships in and around organizations: it's both who you know and what you know. Psychol. Rep. 55, 299–307.
9. Cech, E. A., and Blair-Loy, M. (2010). Perceiving glass ceilings? Meritocratic versus structural explanations of gender

inequality among women in science and technology. Soc. Probl. 57, 371–397.
10. Cohen, J. R., Dalton, D. W., Holder-Webb, L. L., and McMillan, J. J. (2020). An analysis of glass ceiling perceptions in the accounting profession. J. Bus. Ethics 164, 17–38.
11. Cotter, D. A., Hermsen, J. M., Ovadia, S., and Vanneman, R. (2001). The glass ceiling effect. Soc. For. 80, 655–682.
12. Eagly, A. H., and Johnson, B. T. (1990). Gender and leadership style: a meta-analysis. Psychol. Bull. 18, 233–256.
13. Eagly, A. H. (1987). Sex Differences in Social Behavior: A Social-Role Interpretation. Hillsdale: Erlbaum.
14. Elacqua, T. C., Beehr, T. A., Hansen, C. P., and Webster, J. (2009). Manager's beliefs about the glass ceiling: interpersonal and organizational factors. Psychol. Women Q. 33, 285–294.
15. Elkin, J. (2006). A review of mentorat relationships: formation, function, benefits and dysfunction. OtagoManag. Graduate Rev. 4, 11–23.
16. Gutek, B. A., Cohen, A. G., and Tsui, A. (1996). Reactions to perceived sex discrimination. Hum. Relat. 49, 791–813.
17. Hoobler, J. M., Wayne, S. J., and Lemmon, G. (2008). Bosses' perception of family-work conflict and women's promotability: glass ceiling effects. Acad. Manag. J. 52, 939–957.
18. Ibarra, H., Carter, N. M., and Silva, C. (2010). Why men still get more promotions than women. Harvard Bus. Rev. 88, 80–85.
19. Jackson, F. L., and O'Callaghan, E. M. (2009). What do we know about glass ceiling effects? A taxonomy and critical review to inform higher education review. Res. Higher Educ. 50, 460–482.
20. Kammeyer-Mueller, J. D., and Judge, T. A. (2008). A quantitative review of mentoring research: test of a model. J. Vocat. Behav. 72, 269–283.
21. Keeton, K. B. (1996). Characteristics of successful women managers and professionals in local government: a national survey. Women Manag. Rev. 11, 27–34.
22. Li, L., and Leung, R. W. (2001). Female managers in Asian hotels: profile and career challenges. Int. J. Contemp. Hosp. Manag. 13, 189–196.
23. Lord, R. G., and Maher, K. J. (1991). Leadership and Information Processing: Linking Perceptions and Performance. Boston: Unwin Hyman.
24. Lyness, K. S., and Heilman, M. E. (2006). When fit is fundamental: evaluations and promotions of upper-level female and male managers. J. Appl. Psychol. 91, 777–785.
25. Lyness, K. S., and Thompson, D. E. (1997). Above the glass ceiling? A comparison of matched samples of female and male executives. J. Appl. Psychol. 82, 359–375.
26. Oakley, J. G. (2000). Gender-based barriers to senior management positions: understanding the scarcity of female CEOs. J. Bus. Ethics 27, 321–334.
27. Raabe, B., and Beehr, T. A. (2003). Formal mentoring versus supervisor and coworker relationship: differences in perception and impact. J. Organ. Behav. 24, 271–293.
28. Ragins, B. R., and Cotton, J. L. (1999). Mentor functions and outcomes: a comparison of men and women in formal and informal mentoring relationships. J. Appl. Psychol. 84, 529–550.
29. Rudman, L. A., and Phelan, J. E. (2008). "Backlash effects for disconfirming gender stereotypes in organizations," in Research in Organizational Behavior: An Annual Series of Analytical Essays and Critical Reviews, Vol. 28, eds A. P. Brief and B. M. Staw (Amsterdam: Elsevier), 61–79.
30. Weyer, B. (2007). Twenty years later: explaining the persistence of the glass ceiling for women leaders. Women Manag. Rev. 22, 482–496.