

# ASSESSING GLASS CEILING AND GENDER INEQUALITY FOR WOMEN EMPLOYEE IN SERVICE SECTOR

**Mr. Utkarsh Agarwal**

Management Student, Department of Humanities and Management Science, Madan Mohan Malaviya University of Technology,  
Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, 273010, Email ID: utkarshagaral123@gmail.com

**Dr. Bharti Shukla**

Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Management Science, Madan Mohan Malaviya University of Technology,  
Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, 273010, Email ID: bhartimmec@gmail.com

**Dr. Sudhir Narayan Singh**

Associate Professor, Department of Humanities and Management Science, Madan Mohan Malaviya University of Technology,  
Gorakhpurnsnshms@mmmut.ac.in

---

---

## *Abstract*

*The glass ceiling is a barrier to the advancement of capable female professionals in the workplace, primarily due to gender or racism (Abidin, Z. Z. 2009). Carol Hymowitz and Timothy Schellhardt of the Wall Street Journal developed the term "glass ceiling" in 1986. Many researchers like (Shukla, 2015) have confirmed the presence of a glass ceiling based on various constructs such as social, cultural, and individual constraints. In India, there is no substantial proof on this topic. In their workplaces, the majority of the respondents had experienced some form of prejudice. Despite increases in women's education and knowledge, the percentage of women who advance in their careers is still quite modest. There are few studies that indicate the major impediments to women's advancement in the workplace. The study's sample size was set at 200 people. Data was obtained from female responders to eliminate any type of bias. So, sample were 145 respondents (Women Employee). SPSS was used to examine the data. Individual factors, social and societal factors, organizational factors, cultural aspects, family factors, and gender related issues were investigated using exploratory factor analysis. The effect of the factors on the respondents' job performance was calculated using percentages. According to the findings, women employees can only break through the glass ceiling if positive factors impacting their professional advancement are boosted. This can be done by improving their economic power by updating their abilities, educational qualifications, communication skills, and having competent mentors who can guide and counsel them in the right direction. The study's goal is to see, if there is a glass ceiling in different service industries. This research also looks into the effects of the glass ceiling on women's advancement in the workplace. The purpose of this study is to look for glass ceiling effects, which limit women's professional opportunities and advancement at a particular point.*

**Keywords-** Glass ceiling, Gender inequality, Service industry, women employee, work life balance

## INTRODUCTION

Since from the ancient time the man dominated society never wanted that the women should rise, or they should work on the higher position of the organization. After so much revolution and arguments till now women are not promoted to higher position of the organization. For such a situation there is the term called glass ceiling. Let us understand in detail about the glass ceiling.

Glass ceiling is the barrier that stop the person especially the woman to promote from the lower level to middle or higher-level management. It shows the difficulty faced by the woman in the organization to rise from middle level to top level management. This term was coined by Marilyn Loden in 1978 in women's exposition in New York.

This is generally driven by different-different country and different-different culture and the policies of the Organization. There is the similar term called glass cliff i.e. It says that promoting the women from middle level to top level or decision-making level when the tough

or at the time of crisis. The best example is seen that when Hillary Clinton won presidential election in 2008 of USA which was the increase of the Great Recession. The economy was slow down because the top position was given to woman.

Now let us see what service sector is. Service sector is the sector that mainly focuses on providing service to the people instead of providing any physical product of the consumer. It can be said as the third part of the economy.

E.g. - housekeeping, teaching, insurance, tours etc.

The first part of economy is primary sector that cover mining and agriculture business activity. There is the discrimination between men and women from the generations in India. And this discrimination effects the lives and situation for both men and women. Although the constitution of India and government of India given the equal right to both men and women. But this discrimination remains the same. There are various type of discrimination that prevails in the workplace like unequal pay, discrimination based on gender, unequal treatment among the employee. Lower chance of promotion low and poor visibility etc.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Women employee unable to enhance their career advancement due glass ceiling in and outside of the organization (Banihani, Lewis, & Syed, 2013). This is also revealed that the place or society from where the women belong also play an important role in women professional life in any organization (Abidin, 2009). A report on staffing service also mentioned that nearly half of the women working in any organization face some kind of discrimination in their organization (B.F., 2008). There are the various reason that lead to the glass ceiling with the women in the workplace. Some of them are jealousy among men and women, opinion without any evidence, any presumption, corporate ethics, etc (Singh & Shukla, 2019). This is the reason why there are fewer female directors in power than the male in the organization. Few researchers (Bombuwela & De Alwis, 2013) conducted research to know that how the discrimination in the workplace effect the motivation, satisfaction, and performance of the women employees (Rosenfeld, 1990). The result that arrived shows that it decreases the motivation and satisfaction level in women.

women are discriminated at the workplace, it led to increase the stress level. It is also found that the discrimination that women face in workplace in leading and to be at top level of management which concluded in misinterpretation of woman or wrong perception for women (Smith 2012) (Shukla, 2015). Few research conducted to find and conclude that whether women are capable or not, they are productive or not and also effective as compared to men or not. So he concluded that women are productive, effective, and then also they are not promoted to higher level. The result was concluded on survey done in California (Maume, 2008). Which reveal the facts, how it is very difficult for women to manage work and life both in efficient way (Singh & Shukla, 2019). Research is done to find out what are the relationship between the leadership style and their devotion toward their leader and how it effects in achieving the organizational goal in context of women employee (Shukla, B., 2020). (Yousaf & Schmiede, 2016) also conducted research and try to find what are the impact of women discrimination on their work and concluded that how their higher authority supports them, what are the scopes of development and how well their subordinate are and the feedback were the major driver of the women employment in the service sector. Researcher revealed that organizational commitment and no discrimination-based workplace should be provided to both men and women so that they both get equal opportunity in the workplace (Blanihani, Lewis and Syed 2013). In continuation of discussion related to women employees it is seen that employer's perception for women employees in hospitality sector may be a reason for glass ceiling in women career in this field (Shukla, B. 2020). The factors that stop women to go on high level are invisible obstacles, presence of male culture, belief and rule adopted by management and some hidden biases. The senior management position holds by women are the answer to the hidden biases and discrimination against women. some investigators like (Bombuwela & De Alwis, 2013) concluded that there has been a continuous growth in women employment in top and middle level of management. Some reason that might be favorable toward women is changing government policies, women awareness, women activities and equal opportunity for both men and women. Glass ceiling not only refer to advancement and hierarchy discrimination but also gap in wages, time duration, workload, their supervision, sexual harassment and creating barrier to the career.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Statement of the Problem:

When a woman works in the workplace, she is subjected to a great deal of discrimination. Discrimination or unfairness may not be obvious, but it can manifest itself in other ways, such as compensation, promotion, assigning less visible positions, negative feedback at work, limited career advancement, and a lack of training and development opportunities for women, among other things. The researcher wants to know if the presence of a glass ceiling has had an impact on women's professional advancement in businesses. The researcher sought to investigate both male and female employees' perceptions on the concept of a glass ceiling, as well as gender disparity in the workplace. Employees from diverse service sectors, such as financial institutions, IT, BPO, health care, the hospitality industry, and education, are the subject of the study.

### Conceptual Framework:

When women work in a company, the Glass Ceiling (GC) has an impact on their performance. GC is a stand-alone variable. The dependent variable is performance. In this approach, independent variables include Individual Factors (IF), Social & Societal Factors (SF), Organizational Factors (OF), Cultural Factors (CF), and Family Factors (FF).

### Objective of the study

The study was conducted with the following objective:

- To find out the effect of Glass Ceiling in Service Sector;
- To find out the effect of gender inequality in Service Sector;
- To find out what are the problem that women faces in the workplace;
- To find out the action for preventing gender inequality.

### Sampling Type:

The researcher employed convenience sampling to ensure that the population was properly represented in the study. The research is carried out using the primary method. Questionnaires are used to collect data for study.

### Types of research

The research that is used is Descriptive research

### Sampling Size

Sample sizes of 200 respondents are collected from the various women working in service sector.

### Research approach

Quantitative approach is used for Data calculations.

### Questionnaire design and pre-testing

To fulfil the study's goals, a structured, closed-ended questionnaire on the components of glass ceiling was designed utilizing a 5-point Likert scale with end points ranging from "strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1)." The respondents were also requested to provide information about their age, job title (entry level, lower-mid, upper-mid, higher level, and highest level), work tenure, educational background, and average monthly income. Initially, a prototype questionnaire was created based on secondary research, which included looking at results from many published studies on the subject, electronic sources, and intensive brainstorming. Before the questionnaire was finalized, it was pre-tested on a small sample of 15 randomly selected respondents, and any necessary corrections were made. The data was tabulated on the computer, and the final analysis was carried out using SPSS version

## DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Simple statistical approaches, such as frequency distribution with percentages, were used to check for data input errors and to provide descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation, which describe the relationships between a group of variables.

**Descriptive Statistics:** Demographic result of study is showing below

**Gender:** Female respondents made up the entire sample.

**Marital Status:** Unmarried respondents made up 56.8% of the total, while married respondents made up 43.3 percent.

**Level of employment:** 15.5 percent of respondents were from the entry level, 39 percent from the junior level, 35 percent from the middle level, and 10.5 percent from the senior level. The respondents were employees from various levels who were asked about their thoughts on the concept of a glass ceiling.

**Experience:** 25% of respondents have 1-5 years of job experience, 44% have 6-10 years of work experience, 17% have 11-15 years of work experience, and only 5% have more than 20 years of work experience.

**Age:** 40 percent of respondents are between the ages of 30-39, 30.8 percent are between the ages of 20-29, and only 9.2 percent are aged 50 and up. For the study, the researcher took into account all age categories of respondents.

**What do you think, that how efficiently women are able to balance both household work and office work**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	6	4.1	4.1	4.1
	2	12	8.3	8.3	12.4
	3	24	16.6	16.6	29.0
	4	67	46.2	46.2	75.2
	5	36	24.8	24.8	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

**Interpretation-** study reveals can say that women can manage both house and office efficiently because 70% respondents agree that women can manage both household and office efficiently.

**Number of female employees in your organization can be ranked as**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	7	4.8	4.8	4.8
	2	13	9.0	9.0	13.8
	3	25	17.2	17.2	31.0
	4	70	48.3	48.3	79.3
	5	30	20.7	20.7	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

**Interpretation-** Number of the female in the organization is good, because 48% respondents ranked number of female employees is good in their organization but since it is below 48% more work is needed to be done to increase the women employee in the organization.

**Rate the working conditions provided by your organization**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	5	3.4	3.4	3.4
	2	26	17.9	17.9	21.4
	3	31	21.4	21.4	42.8
	4	60	41.4	41.4	84.1
	5	23	15.9	15.9	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

**Interpretation-** working condition of the organization is good because 46 % respondents are satisfied with the working condition provided by their organization but still more work needed to be done to improve the working condition of the organization.

**Standards are higher for women than men**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	5	3.4	3.4	3.4
	2	15	10.3	10.3	13.8
	3	26	17.9	17.9	31.7
	4	53	36.6	36.6	68.3
	5	46	31.7	31.7	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

**Interpretation-** we can say that standard for women are higher because 65% respondents agree that standards are higher for women than men. It need to be improved.

**The viewpoint of a woman is often not heard at a meeting until it is repeated by a man.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	4	2.8	2.8	2.8
	2	18	12.4	12.4	15.2
	3	21	14.5	14.5	29.7
	4	62	42.8	42.8	72.4
	5	40	27.6	27.6	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

**Interpretation-** It is clear that women point is not heard as 65% respondents agree that women point is not heard until repeated by men.

**How important is a diversification of workforce in the organization :**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	6	4.1	4.1	4.1
	2	12	8.3	8.3	12.4
	3	38	26.2	26.2	38.6
	4	61	42.1	42.1	80.7
	5	28	19.3	19.3	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

**Interpretation-** An organization should be well diverged in the terms of gender equality and also 63% respondents agree that the organization should be well diverged.

**Women and men can perform the same work equally well.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	4	2.8	2.8	2.8
	2	8	5.5	5.5	8.3
	3	12	8.3	8.3	16.6
	4	52	35.9	35.9	52.4
	5	69	47.6	47.6	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

**Interpretation-** when asked that whether women and men can perform same work equally or not 81% respondents agree that women and men can perform the work equally when equal opportunity is provided to them.

**how effective was your organization been in achieving diversity in your workforce?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	3	2.1	2.1	2.1
	2	15	10.3	10.3	12.4
	3	20	13.8	13.8	26.2
	4	50	34.5	34.5	60.7
	5	57	39.3	39.3	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

**Interpretation-** when ask that whether their organization is diverged or not 67% respondents agree that their organization is well diverged but the equal opportunity is not provided to them.

**I felt that women has to prove more than the, man**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	9	6.2	6.2	6.2
	2	28	19.3	19.3	25.5
	3	23	15.9	15.9	41.4
	4	45	31.0	31.0	72.4
	5	40	27.6	27.6	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

**Interpretation-** when asked that whether women has to prove more than 62% respondents agree that women has to prove more than a men.

**Does your employer provide equal opportunity to men and women**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	7	4.8	4.8	4.8
	2	16	11.0	11.0	15.9
	3	25	17.2	17.2	33.1
	4	58	40.0	40.0	73.1
	5	39	26.9	26.9	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

**Interpretation-** 60% respondents agree that their employer provide equal opportunity for women and men but their viewpoint is not listened and this happened generally in the lower level.

**Frequency Table**

**Women and men are equally respected in the workplace.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	5	3.4	3.4	3.4
	2	16	11.0	11.0	14.5
	3	30	20.7	20.7	35.2
	4	68	46.9	46.9	82.1
	5	26	17.9	17.9	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

**Interpretation-** when asked whether they are equally respected or not 46% respondents agree that women and men are equally respected in the organization since it is less than 46% it should need to be improved.

**Do you think your employer is cooperative in terms of providing leaves and other facilities**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	8	5.5	5.5	5.5
	2	18	12.4	12.4	17.9
	3	37	25.5	25.5	43.4
	4	53	36.6	36.6	80.0
	5	29	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	145	100.0	100.0	

**Interpretation-** 47% respondents agree that their employer is cooperative in terms of providing leave so this need to be improved.



		People should be rewarded based on their performance, regardless of whether they are men or women.	Women and men can perform the same work equally well.	how effective was your organization been in achieving diversity in your workforce?	How important is a diversification of workforce in the organization :	The viewpoint of a woman is often not heard at a meeting until it is repeated by a man.	Women and men are equally respected in the workplace.
N	Valid	145	145	145	145	145	145
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.34	4.20	3.99	3.64	3.80	3.65
Median		5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Mode		5	5	5	4	4	4

Since the mean is 4.34, 4.20, 3.99, 3.64, 3.80, 3.65 which tell that most people agree that women viewpoint is not listened until repeated by men and their organization is also not equally diversified.

Mode is 5 and 4 which says that most people are surely agree about the discrimination against women.

Median is 4 so the middle value

		I felt that women has to prove more than the, man	Standards are higher for women than men	Does your employer provide equal opportunity to men and women	Number of female employees in your organization can be ranked as	Rate the working conditions provided by your organization	Do you think your employer is cooperative in terms of providing leaves and other facilities	What do you think, that how efficiently women are able to balance both household work and office work
N	Valid	145	145	145	145	145	145	145
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.54	3.83	3.73	3.71	3.48	3.53	3.79
Median		4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Mode		4	4	4	4	4	4	4

Since the mean is 4.34, 4.20, 3.99, 3.64, 3.80, 3.65 which tell that most people agree that women has to work more, standard are also higher for women in service sector they also not get equal opportunity

Mode is 4 which says that most people are agree about discrimination against women in service sector.

Median is 4 so there is large respondents who agree that there is glass ceiling for women

## FINDINGS

- The work schedule of the women employee is very stressful. Every woman has to work for more than 40 hours per week.
- Mostly women employees have more qualification, but they don't have work stability and due to continuous work pressure, it effect their work performance and create imbalance in their work life and also in their personal life and lead to discrimination for women.
- The time that the women most enjoy is when they are with the family.
- Since in service sector especially in hotel industry they have very busy schedule, so it also creates an imbalance in their life and make it difficult for women to work.
- The mostly the factor that create Glass Ceiling and imbalance are- unequal treatment with men and women, unequal Career development opportunities.

## RECOMMENDATION

With the help of study, it is clearly seen that many kinds of inequality between man and women at workplace happening. Also, glass ceiling approach create an obstacle for women employee growth. So, it is primary responsibility of employer to take care of every employee equally besides their gender and not only take care they should treat them equally.



Women employees must make a balance in between work and family. So flexible working hour and flexibility in job responsibility may be used. This is possible with the help of job rotation.

Pick and drop facility also help women employee a lot if night working or timing is there.

These are the few facilities that can be provided women employee.

## FUTURE SCOPE

As this study is only based on data collected for service sector, there may be scope to add some more sector like hospitality, tourism, and traditional sector like manufacturing. This study is limited to women employee only that may include glass ceiling related to minorities etc.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to look into the existing glass ceiling situation in the service industry. Companies are very demanding since they compete globally, and women find it very difficult to manage work and home life owing to societal and cultural difficulties that stifle their growth. The old boys' network is so powerful that it has become impossible for women to achieve substantial visibility in most organisation. Women are hindered from rising to the top due to social, individual, and organisational constraints. The lack of men willing to mentor women can be linked to societal and cultural constraints. Women's advancement is hampered by a lack of appropriate mentors at various phases of their careers and a lack of family support. The majority of employees have chosen to raise awareness. Furthermore, most female employees believe that they must advocate for their rights, become activists, and seek to achieve gender equality in the workplace. This research aids society in eliminating gender discrepancies in the workplace, resulting in a healthy environment where everyone works with equal status and respect.

## REFERENCES

- Abidin, Z. Z. (2009). The 'Glass Ceiling' Phenomenon for Malaysian Women Accountants. *Asian Culture and History*, 38-44.
- B. a. (2008). Women's Work, Men's Work: Sex Segregation on the Job, Washington, DC. *National Academy Press*.
- Banihani, M., Lewis, P., & Syed, J. (2013). Is work engagement gendered?. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 400-423.
- Bombuwela, P., & De Alwis, A. (2013). Effects of Glass Ceiling on Women Career Development in Private Sector Organizations—Case of Sri Lanka. *Journal of Competitiveness*, 3-19.
- Maume, J. D. (2008). Occupational Segregation and the Career Mobility of White Men and Women. *Social Forces*, 1433-1459.
- Rosenfeld, R. a. (1990). A Cross-national Comparison of the Gender Gap in Income. *American Journal of Sociology*.
- Shukla, B. (2015). The study of glass ceiling effect with special reference to women employees in hotels & Restaurants at Gorakhpur city,. *Pacific Journal of Humanities and Social Science*.
- Shukla, B. (2020). Employer Perception towards women employees in hospitality industry at Gorakhpur city Uttar Pradesh. *International Journal of Knowledge Management in Tourism and Hospitality*, 117-124.
- Singh, J., & Shukla, B. (2019). Work life Balance of Women employees in Gorakhpur, . *Iconioc Research and Engineering Journal*, 249-253.
- Yousaf, R., & Schmiede, R. (2016). Underrepresentation of Women at Academic Excellence and Position of Power: Role of Harassment and Glass Ceiling. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 173-185.