

Shattering the Glass Ceiling: Women Can Break the Mould

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The metaphor of the glass ceiling describes a transparent barrier that keeps women from rising above a certain level in organisations. Nonetheless, the prevailing nature of the glass ceiling is a big conundrum owing to the advanced legislation on gender egalitarianism, the higher educational qualification of the women and the minorities and the traditional gender role ideology is fading. The pervading nature of men's over-representation and dominance impelled to investigate whether women are hampered in advancing into the higher level position of the organisation. For instance, women's representation in Parliament of Sri Lanka was less than six percentages, which is the lowest representation in the South Asian Region, which ranks Sri Lanka in the 128th of 140 countries. Anchored in philosophical assumptions, this research adopted interpretivist approach with inductive approach. Using a convenient sampling technique, a total of twenty (20) female teachers were interviewed and the size of the sample was considered sufficed in line with renowned qualitative research scholars. The majority of the teachers interviewed did not concord with the existence of the glass ceiling effect in advancing their career, nonetheless, a handful of informants informed that they have not been promoted owing to them being women. The overriding important aspect is that the informants did not realise the artificial barrier in advancing their careers as they have not moved up the next level. It was the evident that the majority of the higher level positions in education were held by men. Further, it was found that there is a limitation for women to reach middle level positions; beyond this level, they are hampered. Therefore, the apex of the management or government should revisit its policy with regard to the glass ceiling effect and should consider redesigning the policy to equalise men and women in all aspects. Future research is required to uncover what remains unknown about the glass ceiling effect across the variegated government and public sector organisations.

Keywords: *Gender egalitarian; Glass ceiling; Traditional gender role ideology.*