BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING

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Present Outline

- Introduction
- Background
- Definition of Glass Ceiling
- Theoretical concepts of class ceiling
- Causes of Glass Ceiling
- The Glass Ceiling effect
- Breaking the Glass ceiling
- Effects of the broken ceiling
- References
PAIR-UP AND DISCUSS WHAT YOU CAN SEE
SOME QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS

• What is the glass ceiling and how does it manifest in the work environment?
• What are systemic causes for it within the Higher Education system?
• How can the glass ceiling be broken?
• What happens to individual women and institutions when it is broken?
INTRODUCTION

• Women form small group in senior management positions and upper-level ranks in organizations.
  – Constitute over half of all professions but little more than a third of all managers

• Women exempted from many societal roles, political positions and higher executive positions at the place of work.
  – Gender roles and gender inequality have led to the many other inequalities in education, in the economy, in political affairs and even in family structure.

• There is always an unseen obstacle that seem to push women to remain at the bottom of societal and professional hierarchy.
The phrase “glass ceiling” first appeared in an AdWeek article in 1984. In 1986, the Wall Street Journal reintroduced the term as a headline on two occasions to describe the barrier that blocks women from the top jobs and executive positions in corporate America.

The term was coined originally on May 24, 1978 by Marilyn Loden, a mid-level manager who worked at the New York Telephone Company.

In 1993, the phrase was printed in the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary for the first time.
Marilyn Loden, shown in the 1970s, worked as a mid-level manager at New York Telephone Company.

Marilyn Loden used the phrase “glass ceiling” to describe what she called “an invisible barrier to advancement that people didn’t recognize.”
The glass ceiling is defined as “an intangible barrier within a hierarchy that prevents women or minorities from obtaining upper-level positions.”

The Federal Glass Ceiling Commission (1995:a), refers to glass ceiling as an "artificial barrier to the advancement of women and minorities."

According to Cotter et al., (2001), a glass ceiling is a specific type of gender or racial inequality that can be distinguished from other types of inequality.
DEFINING GLASS CEILING

• Morrison et al (1987), describes glass ceiling as “a transparent barrier that keeps women from rising above a certain level in corporations. It applies to women as a group who are kept from advancing higher because they are women.”

• The glass ceiling is the "unseen, yet unbreachable barrier that keeps minorities and women from rising to the upper ranks of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements" (Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995b).
THEORIES OF GLASS CEILING

• Social Role Theory

• Social Exclusion Theory
Eagly's (1987) social role theory argues that widely shared gender stereotypes develop from the gender division of labour that characterizes a society. Pertains to sex differences and similarities in social behavior. Socialization processes and the formation of gender roles, the behaviours of men and women are structured to support and sustain the division of labour. Women - homemakers and primary caretakers of children. Men - primary family providers and to assume full-time roles in the paid economy, often ones that involve physical strength, assertiveness, or leadership skills. – silently create barriers within societal hierarchy that prevents women from attaining higher positions in their professional fields.
• Social exclusion is conceived as a multidimensional concept operationalized as a combination of material deprivation, insufficient access to social rights and a low degree of social participation (Evans et al, 2000).

• It is the marginalization of people by denying them access to education, employment, human rights and other resources which are readily available to other groups within the same society.

• Linked directly to glass ceiling as specific groups of people, especially women are denied their full access to higher achievement in society.
BARRIERS TO GLASS CEILING – DISCUSS IN GROUPS OF 3-4
SOME CAUSES OF GLASS CEILING

• Individual factors – lack of self determination, poor resilience and prioritization etc.

• Organizational factors - male-oriented, unfair evaluation, lack of policies

• Family factors – child care, spousal influence, finance

• Cultural factors - gender-status beliefs, roles

• Governmental factors: no laws or policies
GLASS CEILING WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION

• Gender imbalance among senior university academics is an acknowledged problem (Airini, et. Al., 2011).

• Lack of women in vice-chancellor positions across the globe: no female vice-chancellor in Hong Kong, Kuwait has 2% of female vice-chancellors, Japan 2.3%, India 3% and Turkey 7%. (Marley, 2014)

• Male guardianship policy (Mahram) in Saudi Arabia prevents women from achieving higher heights in education. (Alsubaie &Jones, 2017; Forsythe, 2009).
Some reasons for slow academic achievement/progression

• Inadequate time to study
• Lack of knowledge on requirements and deadlines
• Plagiarism; Lack of depth and focus
• Supervision issues – delayed feedback
• Family circumstances
• Work demands – no study leave
• Lack of funding, delayed field work, lack of lab space and resources
• Tragedy etc. etc.

We can add more
THE GLASS CEILING EFFECT

• Suppresses initiative and interest for organizational leadership and creating inferiority complex in women.
• Deny women to express their potentials, confinement to only lower or dead-end levels within the institutions and further reducing possibilities for advancement.
• Leads to lack of high profile women role models for subordinates.
• Increases labour turnover or decreased labour retention and loss of productivity
• Leads to family disharmony and instability.
1. Company policies should be focused on increasing promotion opportunities for women (Clevenger & Singh 2013).
2. Promote and practice equal employment opportunities.
3. Creation of a working environment that women can balance their multiple roles.
4. Societal awareness programs highlighting the importance of women career advancement.
5. Learning to balance their family roles and career.
• Government should implement proper monitoring system against gender discrimination and proper policy and legislation against gender discrimination.

• Vigorous and consistent law enforcement, government reporting and publication system and a system for collection of employment related data such as gender and gender related issues.
WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL HAPPEN WHEN THE CEILING IS BROKEN??

JOT DOWN 3-4 KEY THINGS YOU THINK CAN HAPPEN – INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS WITH THE GROUP
EFFECTS OF BROKEN CEILING

• Women in leadership roles of higher education contribute with a different perspective to make an impact.

• Women through their participation in the leadership positions can become agents of change in fighting the gender disparity battle around the world.

• Women develop a sense of self worth and believe in their competencies and abilities.

• Women develop new skills and competencies and mentor other women for leadership roles.
EFFECTS OF BROKEN CEILING

- Enhanced collaborations for the organizations
- Increased image and ranking of the organizations
- The organization becomes a model or benchmark for others
- The organization becomes more competitive and attract more employees
- It serves as a motivation and generates commitment
STRATEGIES TO GET TO THE TOP OF THE CEILING AND FLOURISH THERE IN

• Find sense of purpose in life.
• Build positive beliefs in your abilities.
• Develop strong social network.
• Embrace change.
• Be optimistic
• Nurture yourself
• Develop problem solving skills.
• Establish goals
STRATEGIES CONT'D.

• Learn from mistakes
• Find things that help you remain calm.
• Don’t see yourself as a victim but focus on changing the things you can change.
• Be self confident.
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING – USING THE SELF

- Where am I???
- How did I get here?? And what complexities am I navigating??
- What specific strategies did I use or am I using now??
- What lessons can you learn from my journey???
- How do we proceed from here???

- We are all individuals and we need to contextualize our situations and carve our own path – be yourself
CONCLUSION

• Acknowledge the glass ceiling
• Make conscious effort to break it
• Believe in yourself that you can break it
• Develop yourself and market your skills
• Be proactive and take opportunities as they come
• Don’t forget the God factor
Thank you
REFERENCES


