

# Gender discrimination, glass ceiling and other obstacles faced by women in society

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## Abstract

Glass ceiling refers to the barriers that women face in advancing up the hierarchy at their organizations. It encompasses the hardships and hurdles that women face when they try to ascend the professional ladder to reach the top levels within their professional horizons. The repercussions (for women) resulting from its existence are quite evident; yet they are not talked about much. Women in Germany, Turkey, Pakistan, and many other countries suffer from the detrimental effects of this phenomenon. In this study, the underlying causes of the glass ceiling and gender discrimination are uncovered, alongside the numerous consequences faced by women due to gender inequality that engulfs their ambitions into oblivion.

**Keywords:** Gender Discrimination, Glass Ceiling, Gender Inequality, Gender Wage Gap

**JEL codes:** D63, J16

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Historically, women have suffered a lot of consequences due to their gender. The extent of glass ceiling and gender discrimination varies from country to country. An extensive amount of arguments has been made in favour of the claim that women in developing countries have it much worse compared to women in developed countries. An example in support of this claim is the fact that Norway implemented a law that stated that women should make up 40% of the directors by 2008. Research concerning the basic differences between men and women has been carried out (Marini, 1990; Croson and Gneezy, 2008) to determine if this is a worthwhile decision.

Other countries, including Belgium and Germany, have also taken this law into consideration. Other than the glass ceiling, women face plenty of other obstacles in their work-lives on a day-to-day basis that impede the progress of their careers, to name some: sexual harassment at the hands of senior male employees, and gender inequality in reference to opportunities stand out before others. The gender gap that exists in work-places arises out of factors such as the difference in attitudes towards risk (Eckel and Grossman, 2008; Sapienza, Zingales and Maestripieri, 2009), the level exposure to the competition faced by the firms (Gneezy, Niederle and Rustichini, 2003; Niederle and Vesterlund, 2007; Niederle, Segal and Vesterlund, 2008; Hogarth, Karelaia and Trujillo, 2011) and the level of Altruism (Andreoni and Vesterlund, 2001).

Extensive research has been conducted on the differences that generally exist between the two genders because gender differences were thought to be the primary reasons for the existence of a glass ceiling and gender inequality. The differences identified are as follows. To make more profits, men tend to lie and fabricate more frequently than women (Dreber and Johannesson, 2008). Surveys collected in the field of psychology suggested that gender differences resulted due to a stark contrast in the core values of both genders, whereas another finding indicated that gender differences vary drastically

from country-to-country (Schwartz and Rubel, 2005).

Another difference reflected in the findings was that competitive environments were favoured more by men compared to women (Niederle, Segal and Vesterlund 2008). A particular reason for men ascending the corporate ladder faster than women is gender discrimination that is based on ill-founded stigmas such as women being too "feminine" (Branson 2006). It has been increasingly difficult for researchers to derive any proper conclusion because the number of women at the top is limited to begin with. Out of 500 seats in the company Fortune, a mere 14.8% of women held seats at the board (Catalyst, 2007).

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Glass Ceiling and Its Consequences

Female directors are scarce even in countries like Australia, Canada, Japan, and Europe. The percentages range from 0.4% to 10.6% in these countries (Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA), 2006; European Professional Women's Network (EPWN), 2004). The following issues will be highlighted in this paper: the existence of glass ceiling as a barrier in women's work-lives, and other obstacles faced by women, gender inequality and sexual harassment, to name a few. A comparison will be drawn to determine which of these issues presents the biggest obstacle in women's work-lives. The differences between countries pertaining to the existence of glass ceiling will be discussed. Furthermore, the ambiguity as to whether women in developing countries actually have it worse (than women in developed countries) in terms of gender inequality and glass ceiling will be clarified.

The labour force disadvantages for women at all hierarchal levels only worsen as they climb up the corporate steps. This stems from the inherent understanding among male managers and CEOs which entails that only men should be promoted to higher ranks whereas women should compliantly work within the limited lower positions allocated to them. Is the glass ceiling, then, the intensified discrimination faced at higher levels or is it the cumulative

discrimination faced at every level by women? Some researchers, like Britton and Williams (2018), argue that the former is a better definition of glass ceiling. In contrast, researchers like Ferre and Purkayastha (2018) argue that a combination of both these definitions captures the essence of glass ceiling more accurately because in the real corporate world, glass ceiling encompasses both marginal and cumulative discrimination faced by women at all levels.

Cross-sectional evidence collected by researchers globally has proven quite useful because it has laid foundation for further research in the future. Baxter and Wright (2017) remarked that accurate data on the glass ceiling phenomenon can be collected only if the right people are asked the right questions at the right time. An appropriate sample would consist entirely of working women in the corporate sector, or those who are working other jobs, where they have had an opportunity for promotion, but were deprived through rejection repeatedly. Despite sharing the gender, women who do not work, i.e., housewives, are not an appropriate sample. The few men who were interviewed by researchers during surveys held prejudiced notions about women's promotions. Furthermore, they often had no idea of how far glass ceiling has transgressed.

Another conundrum explored by Hibbs & Locking (2021) when surveying women on this topic was the possibility of a mightier glass ceiling at the upper levels of hierarchy than the lower, and that if this is the case, is this phenomenon consistent throughout developed and developing countries? An interesting question that arises here is: are men aware of the ascending glass ceiling and the unfair distribution of promotional opportunities? Such questions form basis for further research. Consequently, the problem of glass ceiling can be resolved only when this phenomenon is recognized by both men and women across the globe.

The disparity in the income levels of men and women is another indicator of glass ceiling. Women who work in the same positions as men are paid lesser for doing same amount of work; sometimes, in spite of a longer or superior work experience. A shocking finding ensued from

Susan (2020)'s research: this income difference existed not just in the corporate sector, but in other fields as well i.e., teaching; male professors were paid more than the female lecturers in similar positions. The multi-faceted nature of glass ceiling is not limited to just promotional decisions because even at corporations where a fair share of women are promoted to a higher position, there may still be discrepancies in the salaries of the two genders. Glass ceiling exists in different corporations in varying forms; it is not a singular, fixed dimension of inequality, but rather one characterized by a complicated network of dynamic strands.

## 2.2. Gender Discrimination and Its Effects

James et.al (2019) explained that the different forms of gender discrimination can be categorized into the following: pay glass ceilings, managerial promotion glass ceilings, and prestige glass ceilings. Other forms of gender bias may also be classified into broad categories to achieve a deeper understanding of the causes and effects of each unique type of glass ceiling. If considered in its metaphorical sense, glass ceiling refers to a barrier at higher levels that cannot be transcended by women; even so, women may get promoted up until the ceiling. This metaphorical definition fails to incorporate the fact that women also encounter gender discrimination at lower levels of corporations.

Besides the glass ceiling, it was found that the biggest obstacle faced by women in their work-lives is sexual harassment at the hands of senior managers and CEOs. This evil runs rampant in the majority of organizations across the world. In addition to this, women are forced to deal with stereotypes everyday as well as other issues related to gender-bias. Studies conducted by Anders Bjorklund (2018) in the US show that on average, men had a higher chance of promotion than women at all levels of the hierarchy, denoting a glass ceiling at every corporation. During this study, a sample comprising women was asked about the negative effects of gender discrimination on their professional lives, and predictably, 80% of them had similar answers.

The gender pay gap only worsens as we move up the business hierarchy. For instance, a woman working both as a floor manager and CEO will be paid less compared to her male counterpart (e.g., Arulampalam, Booth, & Bryan, 2007; Gardeazabal & Ugidos, 2005; Morgan, 1998). If we take into account the probability that a female employee will be promoted instead of a male employee, the probability decreases regardless of the number of years that they have worked at a particular company (e.g., Elliot & Smith, 2004; McDowell, Singell, & Ziliak, 1999; Zeng, 2011; Olson & Becker, 1983; Maume, 1999; Gjerde, 2002).

As for the other problems in the organization, a mathematical analysis was conducted to analyse the issue of gender discrimination at organizations. A ratio of promotions of male employees to female employees was calculated and inferences were drawn from the results. The ratio of men being promoted was significantly higher (Baxter & Wright, 2000). A lower proportion of women at the top level were identified when different organizations were compared (e.g., Bain & Cummings, 2000). Based on the empirical evidence collected, it was established that the adverse effects of gender discrimination remain more or less constant even in dissimilar occupational settings (Purcell, MacArthur, and Samblanet, 2010).

Gender and racial discrimination are one of the leading causes contributing to the existence of glass ceiling in the corporate sector, despite it being a well-known phenomenon now than ever before (Wirth, 2017). Another important, yet undermined, factor is that teams in large corporations are mostly male dominated. During the selection and recruitment of team members for major tasks, top-level managers primarily select men to run the projects and operations in the company, especially focal tasks related to HR, marketing, and finance departments, that embody the cornerstone of any business (Powell, 2020). The belief rooted deep within the minds of managers is that men are better at performing these tasks, and that their brains are more adept at organizational problem solving; this prejudiced mentality subconsciously invokes bias. Another

preconceived notion which prevails among the top-management is that men, more often than women, are the brains behind the business (Cinamon & Rich, 2021).

This belief is rests on the following statistics: majority of businesses are set up by men, majority of CEOs are men, and even top-management consists mainly of men. Corporate culture has let this belief become so widespread that bias seeps its way into an overwhelming count of hiring decisions (Powell, 2019).

The term gender discrimination has remained ambiguous allowing corporate companies to self-ascribe different meanings to it. As a result, several studies cannot be compared with each other (Purcell, MacArthur, and Samblanet, 2010). The labour market is supposed to determine the wages of all workers based on productivity, yet studies indicate that this has not been the case (Purcell, MacArthur, and Samblanet, 2010). In certain cases, employers are willing to forgo huge sums of profits just to maintain the status quo i.e., promoting male employees instead of female employees (Becker 1957).

Similarly, in defiance of the procedures and policies outlined in the company's code of conduct, decisions regarding pay and promotion are based on the race and gender of employees in cases where the productivity levels of both men and women are equal (Arrow, 1972, 1973; Phelps, 1972). In some corporations, it is difficult to differentiate between gender and racial inequality, and the extent of glass ceiling that exists therein (Milgrom and Oster 1987). The human resource of a company is one of the most important investment decisions and discrimination pertaining to gender may increase costs (Coate & Loury, 1993a; Lundberg & Startz, 1983).

### 2.3. Obstacles Faced By Women

Hull and Nelson (2015) conducted a number of studies that talk about the obstacles faced by women, these studies confirm that even when women do make partner, they are paid less compared to the male employees designated in similar roles. In a study conducted by Reskin and Padavic (2015), the term 'sticky floor' has been

employed to describe a common phenomenon faced by women in their workplaces; it describes a situation where women are offered low management jobs while all the white-collar jobs are primarily given to their male counterparts.

Over and above that, Fernandez and Sosa (2016) stated that the obstacles women face take different forms in various corporations: the most influential clients are assigned to male employees owing to the prejudice that women should work only with the clients that contribute relatively insignificantly to the company's revenue. This practice undermines female employees' abilities. In a study conducted by Gorman (2016), legal profession is a prominent example of a corporation where women are treated differently than men in terms of pay, promotion, and workload. Half of the law students in universities, particularly in recent years, have been women but only 17% of the partners that head law firms are women, thus indicating the huge gap that is caused by gender discrimination.

Goodman (2016) outlined that when a "Sexual Experiences Questionnaire" was handed out to several women employees at different workplaces, it was discovered that over 50% of women had been subject to sexual harassment during their employment at these workplaces. Noonan et. Al (2016) stated that the strength of the glass ceiling can be gauged from the fact that even though women are accepted into law schools on the basis of standards set by society, they are not given positions of power and prestige when they actually try to put their qualifications to use.

Elliot and Smith (2017) found that a common result in all studies conducted on this particular topic is that gender discrimination is more prominent at the higher levels of hierarchy than the lower ones. Kanter (2017) explained that gender inequality and other obstacles faced by the women are present in all kinds of business organizations such as science institutions, law firms, social work agencies, state-level bureaucracies, manufacturing companies, and even in clerical jobs. Kay and Hagan (2017) mentioned a list of factors in their study; among

these factors, they mentioned that there is minimal public awareness regarding this phenomenon, and even in countries with a certain degree of awareness, no significant measures have been taken to eradicate these obstacles.

According to Dencker (2017), despite introducing a number of measures to minimize the extent of these obstacles that exist due to gender discrimination, like Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, the anti-discriminatory measures taken by most companies are only surface level with no substantial improvement in the number of female workers in the company. In research conducted by Beckman and Phillips (2017), they found that among problems other than sexual harassment, and the adverse effects of the glass ceiling that women face in their workplaces, are instances where they are given less priority in workplace meetings, not taken seriously on specific issues characterizing the workplace, and generally perceived as the other gender, regardless of work experience and qualification.

According to Hagan (2017), studies kept other factors such as current labour hours and qualifications constant to gauge the impact of glass ceiling on women. Regardless however, it was discovered that the glass ceiling effect is indeed present in almost every organization. Gibelman and Schervish (2017) showed that male workers reached higher career roles in social work managerial positions because they were given the ideal opportunities. Tomaskovic-Devey et.al (2017) discovered that the magnitude of gender discrimination as well as the incidences of sexual harassment increased as one moved up the corporation ladder according to several researchers.

Cotter et al. (2018) stated that a few researchers have questioned the credibility of this statement by asking if these obstacles are artificially created or if they have existed for several years because of inadequate efforts to overcome them. Rosser (2018) emphasized that the reason why this discovery is shocking is that the number of women joining the workforce has increased dramatically in recent years, yet they are deprived of any top-level positions in corporations, thus proving that the same obstacles are faced by

women in all organizations.

Maume (2018) demonstrated that a popular belief that holds back women from progressing towards the top-level is that women are not capable of working in positions of power. Beckman and Phillips (2018) signified that the probability of men making partner in law firms was calculated by several researchers, all arriving at a similar result: men had 50% probability of making partners regardless of their qualifications and skill set.

Curran (2018) explained that when conducting studies to establish whether glass ceiling was the biggest issue that women faced at work, it was revealed that sexual harassment and gender inequality that contributed towards the glass ceiling were the top two obstacles that women struggle with in their work life. Tabak (2018) stressed that the under representation of women in the board of directors are one of the many serious consequences women face in their work-lives. According to Addi-Racah (2018), more men were found to be in leadership positions even in schools.

On the other hand, Elliot and Smith (2018) stated that women of colour, Latinas, and women from other ethnic minority groups also tend to face the effects of gender inequality at every step of their way in a business corporation. Huffman and Cohen (2018) outlined that studies conducted in different countries found that the existence of these obstacles is not limited to developing countries alone but is a global issue that needs to be tackled acutely in order to ensure fair working conditions for women everywhere.

Meyer (2019) conducted a study on women subjects to ascertain the root cause of the gender discrimination and found that gender discrimination that occurs in every aspect of society explains why women, despite their achievements and abilities, are unable to move above a certain level in their organizations. Kornblut (2019) stated that glass ceiling is one of the biggest obstacles faced by women and is a topic as complicated that it has prompted many to publish newspaper articles, exploring various angles into the issue; 'Does a Glass Ceiling

Persist in Politics?' published in the Washington post being a prime example of this.

### 3. THE SURVEY

#### 3.1. Aim of The Study

The aim of the survey is to find out whether women are discriminated against on the sole basis of their gender and to find out whether the extent of glass ceiling is the same in developing and developed countries.

#### 3.2. Research Questions

The survey consisted of the following 10 questions. 10 questions were used to find data because respondents often find it easier to fill surveys if they are short and close-ended.

RQ1. Do you believe that equal salaries are given to men and women in your country?

RQ2. Is the CEO of the company you work at a:

RQ3. Do you believe the workplace laws in your country provide enough support for women?

RQ4. Do you believe that women have to work harder to achieve a senior position in an organization than men?

RQ5. Do you agree with the following statement: My gender affects my chances of receiving a promotion at my workplace?

RQ6. Do you believe women can perform better in some tasks than men in a workplace in some capacities?

RQ7. Do you believe women in developed countries face less obstacles in their workplace than women in developing countries?

RQ8. Have you heard of women facing sexual harassment in their workplaces?

RQ9. Do you agree with the following statement: The viewpoint of a woman is often not heard at a meeting until it is repeated by a man?

RQ10. Do you believe that gender inequality has reduced over the years?

### 3.3. The Sample Used in The Study

The survey allowed women from Turkey, Pakistan, and Lebanon, to provide me with their opinion in form of their answers to these questions. The sample consisted only of the women who are currently working in different companies, because only working women will be able to accurately grasp the meaning of what gender discrimination really means, and this will enable them to compare it with the other obstacles they face in their respective workplaces.

The demographic distribution of the respondents consists of various demographics. Women from the age of 22-45 were asked to fill out a survey related to gender discrimination. The selected sample consisted of women who are currently working in the corporate sector to ensure that the deductions derived about gender discrimination are accurate. These women belonged to either Pakistan, Lebanon, or Turkey. There was a total of 350 respondents to this survey conducted for the thesis.

All the questions were written in simple English language and all the respondents could easily understand English and were able to fill out the surveys easily.

### 3.4. Instrument For Data Collection

A Likert scale was used to determine the results of the surveys. A Likert scale is essentially a type of rating that helps researchers understand what the respondents to the surveys feel about a certain topic. The sample's opinions and objections to a certain topic can be calculated using a Likert scale when conducting surveys. There are different types of Likert scales, such as 5-point and 7-point Likert scales.

A 5-point Likert scale was used in this research when the surveys were conducted. The answers on the 5-point Likert scale ranged across strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. This scale helped determine the opinions of the sample on different aspects of the glass ceiling.

A systematic sampling technique was used to select a sample of 350 people from a population

of 500. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was then used on the surveys collected to run descriptive and co-relation tests.

### 3.5. Limitations of The Research

The limitations of the methods are that women from other countries, like the US, could also have been included in the sample. Some recommendations that can be made here are that this topic is not as well researched as it should be, so researchers should definitely dedicate more attention and resources to this topic; the relevance of gender discrimination and other problems faced by women in their work lives has only increased over the years, and these are issues that will retain the same level of, if not more, relevance in the future.

## 4. FINDINGS

The analysis of results indicates the effect of gender discrimination in women's lives with respect to the job employment circumstances. Analytical results denoted the response values from 350 employees in co-working scenarios.

#### 4.1. Results of The Survey Conducted

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Categories</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Do you believe that equal salaries given to men and women in your country?			
	Yes	68	19.4
	No	282	80.6
Is the CEO of the company you work at a:			
	Male	297	84.9
	Female	53	15.1
Do you believe the workplace laws in your country provide enough support for women?			
	Yes	81	23.1
	No	269	76.9
Do you believe that women have to work harder to achieve a senior position in an organization than men?			
	Yes	293	83.7
	No	57	16.3
Do you agree with the following statement: My gender affects my chances of receiving a promotion at my workplace?			
	Strongly agree	120	34.3
	Agree	132	37.7
	Neutral	35	10.0
	Disagree	31	8.9
	Strongly disagree	32	9.1
Do you believe women can perform better in some tasks than men in a workplace in some capacities?			
	Yes	324	92.6
	No	26	7.4
Do you believe women in developed countries face less obstacles in their workplace than women in developing countries?			
	Yes	288	82.3
	No	62	17.7
Have you heard of women facing sexual harassment in their workplaces?			
	Yes	207	59.1
	No	143	40.9
Do you agree with the following statement: The viewpoint of a woman often not heard at a meeting until it repeated by a man.			
	Strongly agree	38	10.9
	Agree	130	37.1
	Neutral	91	26.0
	Disagree	76	21.7
	Strongly disagree	15	4.3
Do you believe that gender inequality has reduced over the years?			
	Yes	302	86.3
	No	48	13.7



## 4.2 Inferences Drawn From These Results

There exist some differences between studies that have been conducted by researchers. This is due to a plethora of reasons such as the differences that are present in different countries. Every country, whether it is Pakistan or Turkey has its own set of cultural values.

For instance, the cultural and societal values of Pakistan do not allow women to work as freely as they want to because of male domination in society. Women are believed to be better suited at home, with their household duties to attend to. These cultural beliefs contribute a lot to the existence of a glass ceiling in Pakistan. When a researcher tends to conduct surveys on a glass ceiling in Pakistan, women who face these obstacles will explain them in their own way.

Likewise, in countries like USA, Germany and Canada, gender discrimination does exist but it may exist due to slightly different factors such as men being given higher leverage and salaries at work based solely on their gender. The surveys conducted in these countries thus will bring forth different results and findings that are very unlike the findings in undeveloped countries.

Even the consequences faced by women in these countries due to gender discrimination are different in intensity and nature. Women in undeveloped countries may face problems such as minimum rights at work due to a glass ceiling at their workplace. Whereas, the major issue faced by women in developed countries might be the amount of salary they receive, as compared to their male counterpart.

## 4.3. The Relation Between The Obstacles Faced By Women

The obstacles encountered by women in their professional journeys have persisted throughout history, transcending time and cultural boundaries. Whether in the realms of finance, marketing, human resources, or procurement, women often find themselves navigating through deeply male-dominated environments. This systemic gender disparity can be attributed to a complex interplay of social, cultural, and institutional factors. The concept of the glass

ceiling is also symbolic of the invisible barriers that limit women's upward mobility, and it manifests differently across countries and businesses all over the world. Despite significant promotion of diversity in companies, as well as legislation for equal opportunities for women and men, it must be noted that women still remain largely in the minority in decision-making positions. This observation reflects the gender discrimination that contributes to various obstacles for women within companies. Although the problem of gender discrimination has generated research interest, some authors have pointed out that theoretical models have made little attempt to develop an understanding of this phenomenon and its implications. However, despite these initiatives and the increasing number of qualified and trained women, it is clear that they are still largely underrepresented in the decision-making process in most sectors. Indeed, despite the current enthusiasm for diversity in companies and regulations for equal opportunities for both genders (e.g., the anti-discrimination law of May 10, 2007, and by extension, the gender law), the numbers have not changed much in the last decade. Women constitute fewer leadership positions. In 2018, women occupied 16% of positions on the executive committees of large Belgian companies: 2 better than ten years ago, when the rate hovered between 9 and 10%, but still low compared to the overall employment rate of women and their share of the population of university graduates (60%).

## 4.4. Solutions To Reduce Gender Discrimination And Other Obstacles Faced By Women

1. *Proper value should be given to the work done by women*

The contribution that women make to their organizations should be given the same importance that their male counterparts are given without asking for it.

2. *Give women a voice in making decisions*

Women and men both should be judged on the merit of their work and not their genders as is in the case in most organizations. Women should be allowed to be more vocal and their opinions should be taken into consideration when making

decisions regarding the future of the company they work at.

### *3. Promotion processes should be unbiased*

The procedures that are undertaken by the Human Resources Departments at businesses should be free of any pre-determined biases about all the employees. Women should not be discriminated against and not given a promotion due to their gender.

### *4. Stereotypes must be eradicated*

The common stereotypes that women do not work well under pressure and that men are born leaders and managers should be eradicated from an organization completely by providing all employees an opportunity to attend workshops that talk on these issues and address them effectively.

### *5. Proper laws should be put in place to reduce sexual harassment in workplaces*

More laws should be introduced within the company to ensure a safe and sound environment for women to work in and punitive measures should be taken against managers who act inappropriately towards women immediately.

### *6. Contribute towards reducing the glass ceiling effect*

Organizations should try their best to spread awareness about the phenomena of glass ceiling and how to eradicate it at its root level.

## **5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The aim of the survey was to find out whether women are discriminated against on the sole basis of their gender and the conclusion that we can derive from the results is that yes, women are discriminated against only on the basis of their gender.

The second question that we aimed to answer through this survey was whether the extent of glass ceiling is the same in developing and developed countries. The conclusion that can be inferred from these results is that the extent of glass ceiling is indeed different in developed and developing countries due to the difference in education and several other factors that exist.

Other than these two major points, other obstacles faced by women such as sexual harassment and discrimination based on their pregnancy were also uncovered as part of this survey.

All things considered, it is not far-fetched to claim that gender discrimination has been and will continue to be a huge problem for women in the workplace, and that it is just one out of the many obstacles faced by women at their workplaces. Researchers in all of these studies have found that even in countries like Sweden, where there is supposedly more gender equality, there is a huge discrimination against women when it comes to placing them in positions at the top-level in a business.

Out of the unexpected findings that this research uncovered, one is the fact that insecurities of the people in power comprise one of the main reasons for the existence of the gender discrimination, because they do not want to alter the hierarchy and power balance in their businesses at all. The research questions that were asked at the beginning have been answered to a certain extent by this survey. It has been established that gender discrimination does indeed exist in almost every business. The question, as to whether gender discrimination is the only obstacle faced by women, has been answered clearly, the answer being no; it is not the only obstacle faced by women because other obstacles like sexual harassment and pregnancy discrimination also hold women back in their work lives.

As for the phenomenon of glass ceiling, more studies and research are being conducted on this topic, because women are becoming more aware of the existence of glass ceiling; they are more negatively affected by it nowadays, since they are entitled to more rights according to the claims made on important political and social platforms. The most significant results that have come to light are that even when factors such as age and race of the two genders are controlled, gender discrimination perseveres as not much is being done about it.

An interpretation that may be derived from these results is that more needs to be done to

overcome gender inequality and to revolutionize the systems of organizations, so that women can have an equal representation at the top-levels of businesses. An important implication of these studies is that the issue of glass ceiling is influential in every sphere of life. Now more than ever before, women should be given equal opportunities at their workplaces, since feminism is on the rise.

The main arguments brought forward regarding this topic are that gender discrimination exists in every country, and that more in-depth research needs to be conducted to overcome this obstacle. Some recommendations made by researchers are as follows: women and men, who are in positions of high authority, should be taught how to push back against gender discrimination on an individual level. Companies can also play a major role in diminishing this inequality in gender by educating their employees about it and making sure that their work culture supports women, and that a fair decision is made during promotion processes to higher levels in the business, one that is free from gender bias. The skill set of the employee rather than their gender should be considered when trying to determine the person who is to be promoted. The respective employee's pay should be accounted for as well. A major step that a company can take, that may reduce gender discrimination significantly, is paying their female employees the same as their male employees for the same job designation.

As for the other obstacles mentioned in this research, such as sexual harassment faced by women, more safety laws need to be thoroughly and strictly enforced by corporations. Men should be provided adequate training on the appropriate treatment of their female co-workers and bosses. Another obstacle constitutes the racial and ethnic biases against women, especially against women of colour. Suitable sensitivity training should be provided to the staff hired, by the Human Resources Professionals. This training should be provided as soon as the hiring process ceases so that there is no discrimination bias based on the races and ethnicities of people. Pregnancy biases can also be dealt with by making the work force more aware of their innate biases and providing

training on overcoming them.

A very important interpretation that can be made from the finding of this survey is that problems such as gender discrimination, glass ceiling and other major obstacles faced by women such as sexual harassment and not being given the same opportunities as their male counterparts exist because they are very deep-rooted in society.

It is society that teaches men that they are a superior gender when this is not the case at all. The stereotypes concerning both genders should be tackled outside organizations because a more equal society would automatically mean more gender equality inside organisations.

Another important point to discuss here would be that especially in developing countries, there is a huge bias against women in every aspect of their lives. The government of these countries especially should introduce laws that ensure a safe and equal environment for women both inside and outside their workplaces.

In conclusion, the persistent challenges of gender discrimination, the existence of glass ceilings, and various other obstacles faced by women in society underscore the urgent need for collective efforts to foster gender equality. Recognizing that these issues not only impede individual growth but also hinder societal progress, it is imperative for communities, organizations, and governments to implement comprehensive strategies that promote inclusivity and dismantle systemic barriers.

Addressing deeply ingrained stereotypes, fostering equal opportunities in education and employment, and cultivating a culture of respect and understanding are pivotal steps towards creating a more equitable society. Empowering women to break through glass ceilings requires a commitment to dismantling discriminatory practices and promoting leadership diversity. Moreover, fostering an environment that encourages open dialogue and supports work-life balance is essential for dismantling obstacles that disproportionately affect women.

As we move forward, it is crucial to emphasize that gender equality benefits everyone in society.

By dismantling barriers and embracing the diverse talents and perspectives of women, we pave the way for a more just, innovative, and thriving world. It is a collective responsibility to challenge and reshape societal norms, ensuring that every individual, regardless of gender, has the opportunity to reach their full potential. In doing so, we contribute to a future where equality is not just an aspiration, but a lived reality for all.

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