Surmounting the Glass Ceiling at the Workplace

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INTRODUCTION

In India, the proportion of women in the workforce has been growing significantly. Women have proven themselves to be perfect homemakers and business persons alike. Many even regard women as trendsetters across various aspects of social life. Women are believed to have become an important part of our country's socio-economic wellbeing. In depth research on glass ceiling reveals that there are invisible obstacles that thwart people of colour or certain ethnic races, and women to progress into senior management positions. These hindrances often consist of structural/organizational discrimination, low human capital, poor incorporation, and low social capital among others. According to Barnes (2017), pioneering women of race consistently break the 'strained glass ceiling', using qualities such as fearlessness, honesty with oneself, and an unwillingness to compromise on personal values. Burkinshaw, & White (2017) are of the opinion that women aspiring to senior managerial roles have to conduct themselves in a manner that is acceptable for the role and the organization.

SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

The concept of the glass ceiling includes racism in terms of colour as well as gender. However, for the purpose of this research, the detailed study has concentrated only on gender in the Indian context, with respect to senior managerial roles or roles requiring an identified form of leadership. Examples have been drawn on the basis of a review of related literature from the last three decades. Literature from studies conducted in the West, the Far East, and in India has been reviewed in order to ensure that the context of the research remains as global as possible. The presence of the glass ceiling differs from organization to organization and it depends on the organizational culture, climate, and structure. The dominance of a patriarchal cultural or the lack of it determines the degree of the existence of the glass ceiling. The examples used to demonstrate the same are largely based in the Indian context.

WHAT IS A GLASS CEILING?

The term 'Glass Ceiling' is used to refer to the major hindrance that women and marginalized communities or people of different races face at the workplace. The United States Department of Labor has defined the concept of the 'Glass Ceiling' as fake obstacles founded upon 'attitudinal or organizational biases that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management level positions' (Sabharwal and Varma, 2017). Roberto Fernandez describes the glass ceiling as "the phenomenon in which women disappear as one looks up through the levels of the organizational hierarchy" (Fernandez, and Campero, 2017).

The glass elevator is almost comparable to the concept of the glass ceiling. It refers to the perception of the unfamiliar in the familiar (Clarke, 2013). According to Jenna Goudreau, "Men that enter female-dominated professions tend to be promoted at faster rates than women in those professions" (Goudreau, 2012). This phenomenon is more conspicuous at the senior managerial levels of most organizations.

FACTORS CAUSING GENDER-ORIENTED GLASS CEILING

Glass ceiling effect can be often seen in the patterns for women's promotions. It is a locus of external recruitment and selection process. Women friendly policies should be designed to have a vast pool of female candidates, if the organizations want to reap rich dividends in the future (Fernandez, and Campero, 2017).

1. According to Nandy, S., Bhaskar, A., and Ghosh, S. (2014), very few women occupy senior managerial roles due to barriers like mental blocks and biases. Psychological (emotional, soft, warmth), societal (bread-makers), and organizational (stereotype) barriers prevent women from reaching strategic decision-making roles. Organizations should even publish an invisible human resource balance-sheet in order to track whether or not women are ascending up the professional ladder.

2. Work organizations consist of gender politics, which stops women from reaching the top management. Also, gender politics explores the gender identities and role development, bullying and sexual harassment at the workplace, struggles faced by women at the workplace (Nicolson, 2015).

3. Stereotyping occurs when individuals are evaluated on generalized characteristics associated with the group to which they belong, instead of their unique characteristics or merits. Sex stereotypes show men and women as bipolar, with men judged as masculine and achievement-oriented while women are judged as being supportive and facilitative. Such portrayals can cause a biased evaluation of women's performance and qualifications. Sex stereotypes are unfavourable for women in selection, placement, and promotion decisions, especially for managerial jobs (Pichler, Simpson, Stroh, 2008).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Through this exploratory qualitative research an attempt has been made

- To analyse the intensity of the effect of the glass ceiling as being more visible in senior managerial roles

- To identify the possible measures to eliminate the repercussions of the same in the Indian context

- To identify characteristics of women who can demonstrate leadership qualities and can thereby shatter the barriers of the glass ceiling.

- To identify the proportion of women in the workforce facing the glass ceiling in India and beyond.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The effect of the glass ceiling in the workplace has received a great deal of popular and scholarly attention in recent years, probably due to its prevalence over a long period of time. A detailed literature review is not only necessary, but also of great importance, when it comes

to getting an aerial view of the opinions of academics and researchers. According to Sharma & Gupta, (2010), the 'Queen Bee Syndrome' has often been used to characterize and depict women who have courageously broken the glass ceiling and moved ahead to make a mark in their careers. These women then go further to adopt a 'counter militancy approach' based on their own personal and workplace successes.

Recent research on the dearth of women in senior management and the gap in gender pay indicates that women are inexplicably underrepresented. According to Sabharwal, (2013) women in senior executive positions face what is known as the 'Glass Cliff'. This term was coined by Ryan & Haslam, (2005). It refers to a scenario where women may be substituted in leadership roles; this scenario has increased the risk of negative consequences. Hunt Earle, (2012) believe that women encountering glass cliffs are more likely to leave the organization because of low job satisfaction. The glass cliff is a consequence of the glass ceiling. According to Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, (1995), gender based leadership has more overall effectiveness as compared to other kinds of leadership. There is a discrimination of compensation and promotion for no apparent organizational or job related reasons—wherein female workers are rewarded lower than their male counterparts for the same efforts and results. Erstwhile studies have acknowledged incongruities between men and women with regards to wages and career success. According to a recent study, women represent greater than 40% of the global workforce. Though highly qualified, they don't get to occupy senior positions, and suffer earning discrepancy and occupational categorization, which leads to gender inequality (Flippin, 2017). Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1994) say that high-involvement work teams, and empowerment along with consensus decision making makes women more successful managers than men. The rest of the studies have been categorized as below:

STUDIES IN THE WESTERN CONTEXT

As per Bartol, et al (2003), gender and ethnic differences exists in leadership behaviour; interpersonal skills (women rate higher than men), goals and tasks definitions (women rate higher than men), delegations and mutuality (women rate lower than men), feedback and reward (women rate lower than men). It was suggested that women be provided with more training to upscale the organization. The largest gender gap in senior positions is in financial sector due to a masculine culture, and the legal requirement to have a full time job, prevalent in Germany. Family work time benefits and improved childcare should be the steps for women reaching top management (Holst and Friedrich, M. 2016). According to Broadbridge, A. (2008), lack of childcare facilities, high family commitments, long working hours, and the company's corporate patriarchal culture are hindrances to women in senior positions in the retail sector. Women themselves are also responsible as they lack self-confidence and often stereotyped as less efficient. Some examples of women leaders given below, like Shahnaz

Hussain, illustrate this lack of confidence in the beginning of their career. Women have less chances of promotion as they experience very few developmental (challenging) job opportunities. Mentoring and coaching should be provided to women to scale up for senior roles (Ohlott, Ruderman, and McCauley, 1994).

Some broad-minded business places understand that there are advantages to hiring, retaining, and promoting women in the workplace. Studies have shown that businesses with a significant number of women in senior level job roles tend to perform better financially and organizationally than their counterparts with fewer or no women in senior roles. Many women face the glass ceiling in spite of substantial achievements in the workplace; this also comes in the way of achieving their career goals. Contrarily, men continue to achieve higher wages and quicker promotions. E.g. In 2005, in the US, women in full time employment earned 81 cents for every dollar earned by men for putting in the same amount of work. In 2001, seven women filed a class action suit on behalf of the women working at Walmart. They pressed charges against discrimination in pay and promotions. It took Walmart much struggle to bounce back after this incident; after this, the company began to offer a 15% manager's bonus to women and minority members. (Daft, 2012).

Hekman, Johnson, S. K., Foo, & Yang, (2017) commented that women leaders engaged in diversity-valuing behaviours are placed at a disadvantage with worse performance ratings than their male counterparts, due to traditional negative race and sex stereotypes, which still exist in society. Songini, & Gnan, (2009) find that in SMEs, few women occupy governance and managerial roles. They further add that women usually opt for operating and supporting roles in SMEs, because of the glass ceiling. Kephart, & Schumacher, (2005) observe that women often leave the corporate world due to the glass ceiling effect, coupled with a high stress environment, and instead start their own businesses.

The glass ceiling is an invisible barrier that separates women from top management positions.

STUDIES IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

Indians still perceive women as weak, unaggressive, and emotional for higher level management positions. Factors creating barriers include male dominated society, lack of leadership style, gender based pay, and work-life balance for working women; social norms and taboos cause gender discrimination (Barik, 2014). Factors like competence, knowledge, skills, performing in challenging environments, and support from family, colleagues, and superiors on a continuous basis enable women to progress to senior positions, while an absence of support and mobility of women are disablers of women when it comes to career

progression. Use of technology, flexible working hours, crèche services, and mentoring assist a lot of women in climbing the success ladder (Rath et al, 2015). Social values and a changing global focus have changed the Indian workforce. Indian women are successful in senior positions due to support from their organisations, their families, and their individual passion (Nath, 2000).

The number of Indian women in higher managerial designations at the workplace has plummeted significantly. Grant Thornton's study, titled 'International Business Report' revealed that the percentage of women in higher designations in the Indian workforce decreased from 19% in 2013 to 14% in 2014. Globally, this proportion formed by women in 2014 was 24%, with China at 38%, Eastern Europe at 37%, and Southeast Asia at 35% leading the way. For this research, more than 6,700 interviewees were questioned between November, 2013 and February, 2014 in India and globally across industries. The research reported that despite the widespread encouragement to improve women's contribution in the workforce and address the lack of women at the top, half the number of Indian businesses have no scope of mentoring or counselling women, and addressing their issues (Malhotra, March 7, 2014). Dinakaran, U. (2016) says that organisations should get women mentors on board by adopting strong leadership.

In Indian organizations, Human Resource Director (21%) is the most commonly occupied position by women in senior positions. 18% of women representatives occupied other leadership positions in companies. The report mentions that Indian businesses have negligible female representation in senior roles such as general/office manager, director and president/vice president. The survey triggered the formation of regulations to get women on corporate boards and executive committees, and to make way for their career paths. The research of McKinsey & Co, showed that women's representation on executive boards of Indian companies currently stands at a meagre 5%.

Fatema Hunaid, Partner, Transfer Pricing Services, Grant Thornton India, states that the Companies Act, 2013, is set to have extensive implications for business boardrooms across India. It makes it compulsory for every listed company to have at least one female director within a year, and other companies reporting minimum revenue of [1] 300 crores to have at least one female director within three years; this is set to create a wide career pipeline for women to rise up the corporate ladder, as well as open doors for more women candidates on company boards (Malhotra, March 7, 2014). Bloomberg reported that "nearly half of the top 100 companies traded on the Bombay Stock Exchange including the biggest two by market value, do not have even a single female member on their boards. The report also highlights that in an average year, just 14% of graduates hired at mid-level positions in Indian businesses are women, compared to the global figure of 21%. It calls on corporate India to

unpack the current male bias in hiring and promotion, saying that is key to increasing diversity". Sabharwal, M., & Varma, R. (2017) observe that Asian Indian Scientists need to be extraverted, assertive, individualistic, and confident to compete with western models of leadership to break the glass ceiling.

STUDIES IN THE EASTERN CONTEXT

The selection of senior executives depends upon individual competencies. Koreans have a positive attitude towards foreign born Koreans than their Chinese counterparts. Culture and traditions are resistant among the Chinese (Tung, 2008). Researchers have studied the effectiveness of male and female leaders. A research revealed that men and women are equally effective, but they are more effective in leadership roles that are seen to be congruent with their gender (Eagly, Karau, and Makhijani, 1995).

TYPES OF LEADERSHIP

A general categorization of the types of leadership is given below:

Types of Leadership	Description
Autocratic Leadership	The leader holds the authority and responsibility, and takes all the decisions.
Democratic Leadership	The leader considers the view of all the team members. It is most preferred.
Strategic	The leader is the head of the organization.
Transformational	The leader transforms the entire organization, motivates people, and has many followers
Team	The leader who focuses on team culture, working with the people.
Cross-Cultural	The leader who is efficient in international policies.
Facilitative	The leader who assists in tasks.
Laissez-faire	The leader who gives authority to the subordinates.
Transactional	The leader who engages in day to day activities.
Coaching	The leader who acts a coach and supervises.
Charismatic	The leader who influences people by their characters.
Visionary	The leader who see the future.

Source: (Sugwekar, March 10, 2017)

Among these types, transformational and transactional are commonly said to be perceived among women as senior managers.

BARRIERS FOR INDIAN WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

A model which highlights the relation of occupational segregation with respect to gender and wage gap was proposed by Becker, in 1975 According to Becker, an employer's tastes or preferences cause discrimination in the labour market. According to him, some companies hire women only if they are willing to work at low wages.

Barriers for Indian women at work take multiple forms as seen in Exhibit 2

	Socio-cultural, legal, personal and organizational forces	Affect a woman's rise to the upper echelons of an institution are for the most part, universal.
Societal Factors	Women – Primary Caretakers	Many women quit or drop out midway through their careers to take up responsibilities at home. In India, women are still considered to the primary caregivers, and socio-culturally it is expected that they will be the ones to sacrifice (their careers) if someone is needed to look after the family.
	Child Birth	The responsibility of child birth and child rearing are primarily a women's job, which results in lower experience at the workforce.
	Women - Emotional	Women are perceived to be more emotional because their management and leadership styles are different.
	Standards for Women	Women are not only held to higher standards than men but also because they are neither made aware of, nor given opportunities that would catapult them to the upper echelons.
Work Place	Gender Pay Gap	Presence of gender pay gap for the same job, and the pay gap widens with higher pay and responsibility.
	Career Break	It is very difficult for women to come to employment after a career break, because of marriage, pregnancy, child-birth, or change of job/location, which creates a loop in their career.
	Part Time Jobs	Women are required to compromise at the work place, where women comprise of majority of the part-time workforce, thereby gaining lower hourly rates and less accumulated superannuation.

Exhibit 2 Barriers for Indian Women at the Workplace

Source (Korde and Patel, 2017)

A model highlighting the racial discrimination followed by employers, employees, and customers was developed by Becker (1975). This model, however, has been used by Becker as well as other economists to explain gender discrimination in the workplace. Ragins, B. R., Townsend, B., & Mattis, M. (1998) believe that CEOs should bridge the gender gap to break the glass ceiling faced by women. This can be done through focus interviews, counselling women, and providing a positive organizational climate.

Examples of Successful Indian Senior Women Managers/Entrepreneurs in the Last Decade

The examples below demonstrate complex leadership issues faced by successful Indian women, and situations that required the attention and leadership of the decision maker. These examples show how they were able to overcome these invisible barriers.

Indra Nooyi has been an inspiration for many young women, particularly those from developing countries. She came from a simple, middle-class family in Chennai and tried to overcome barriers when women had limited choices in their professional careers. Indra Nooyi earned management degrees from IIM, Calcutta and the Yale School of Management. She joined the Boston Consulting Group and later PepsiCo, in 1994; since then, her rise has been phenomenal. She has been serving as the chair and CEO of PepsiCo Inc. Indra Nooyi joined PepsiCo as the chief strategist and made the most of the opportunity by helping to turn the company around. She has assisted PepsiCo in doubling net profits to more than 5.6 billion, by focusing on enhanced nutrition and promoting workplace diversity. According to former CEO Roger Enrico, Indra could drive deep and hard with a sense of fun. Indra often sings in her office and even goes barefoot to work. (Mary Coulter, 2010).

She became the organization's CFO and directed the strategic acquisition of Tropicana and the merger with the Quaker Oats Company. These initiatives added a line of health food products to a company that has traditionally been associated with fun food (Annapoorna, 2015). Attempting to propose her idea of work life balance she remarks, "There are times when the stress is so incredible between office and home, trying to be a wife, mother, daughter-in-law, and corporate executive". So for her, if her work was her religion, her family provided a pillar of support.

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Chairman and Managing Director, Biocon, observes that women are often limited by voluntary restrictions which they regret later. They tend to submit to "the absence of enabling factors, instead of viewing those as a challenge that need to be overcome in pursuit of our goals. The proverbial glass ceiling is a similar mental construct that women must shatter to fulfil their dreams" (Mazumdar-Shaw, 2012). Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw had faced such obstacles since 1978 when she started Biocon. She had to surpass numerous issues that cropped up and questioned her credibility, because of factors such as her gender, age, and perceived lack of exposure to the business of biotechnology. She braved the challenges boldly and in the process, also further built her self-confidence. She was gradually able to hold her own in a "predominantly male bastion". Ms Shaw also had to

handle her parents' concerns regarding her security when she travelled alone. Apart from her belief that the spirit wins all, Ms Shaw also believed in the importance of ethics in the workplace, and in the ability of women to compete with men. She believed that women were neither physically handicapped nor at a disadvantaged as compared to men. She feels these perceived disadvantages are simply in the mind. Ms Shaw believes that organisations should be built on differentiation strategies, and on the act of challenging status quos, according to Business Today (2009). At Biocon, an Indian style of management style is employed to deal with issues regarding gender sensitivity. Women in the organization are encouraged to not come to work at odd hours, and male escorts are provided for their security in transit, where needed. Creche services are also provided by the organisation for women with children that need taking care of.

Similarly, in the 1980s, a strong male bastion had formed their strong coterie of marketing directors. After her education at IIM-Kolkata and the Jamanalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai, Vinita Bali bagged a job at Voltas and never turned back. Her brief tenure at Voltas served as a wonderful opportunity. She launched Rasna, the fruit drink concentrate that became an instant success and is still doing well (Rediff, November 8, 2004). Vinita Bali was among the first to shatter the glass ceiling when she moved to chocolate-maker Cadbury as a young brand manager and was later promoted there as the marketing head. In the mid-1990s, she relocated to Atlanta, and ranked as the second Indian woman in the top strata of a global beverage giant. Her remarkable career culminated in an inspiring peak when she became the MD of Britannia Industries (Bali, 2013).

Kirthiga Reddy, M.D (CEO) of Facebook India, who is also India's first Facebook employee, is expanding the social media business across India. She states that her organization invests in women because women are the future. Facebook even hires women leaders when they are pregnant, according to Sharma, E. K. (2013). Born in a middle class family, Reddy graduated with Computer Science and Engineering in India, an MBA from Stanford University, and an MS from Syracuse University. She is associated with companies like Motorola and Silicon Graphics. According to her, the glass ceiling is a myth. She adds that it is much harder for women to get the same role or responsibility as men. However, women can aspire to any role (Sra, 2011). Reddy mentions that according to studies women are prone to self-doubt and often underestimate their capabilities. Women should set goals, go out, and implement things. Women should go beyond their job descriptions and play larger role to surpass the glass ceiling, according to Sharma E. K. (2011).

Shahnaz Hussain, is a prominent women entrepreneur, and CEO and MD of Shahnaz Husain Group of Companies. Coming from an orthodox family, Hussain had to conform to the prevailing customs in the family, and comply to its pressures. She was married when she was only fifteen years old, and became a mother at sixteen. She studied cosmetic therapy and cosmetic chemistry for ten years at premier institutions of the West, like Helena Rubinstein, Swarzkopf, Christine Valmy, Lancome, and Lean of Copenhagen. Founded upon the principle of "Care and Cure," she set up her own herbal clinic preparing Ayurvedic products and clinical treatments for skin, hair, and body care. These have become game-changers in natural beauty care. Initially, she did not manage to get good models as brand ambassadors for her advertisements. To overcome this challenge innovatively, she organised seminars, workshops, door to door campaigns, and word of mouth campaigns; she even went on to become the brand ambassador herself, for her products. While sharing her views on women entrepreneurship, the glass ceiling, women in family businesses, and the role of culture, she observes that entrepreneurship actually implies liberation and individuality. Women in India have begun to express self-reliance over the last two or three decades. Therefore, the ratio of women to the total number of entrepreneurs in India has started growing (Chowdary, 2007).

Arundhati Bhattacharya is the Chairman of SBI. She joined SBI at the age of twenty-two as a Probationary Officer (Sahney, March 8, 2018). Bhattacharya blames the challenge of changing attitudes in a society that still largely views women as primary caretakers and says having children leads many women to fall off the corporate ladder. To address the problem, in 2014 she brought in two-year sabbaticals to allow women to take career breaks without falling out of the workforce in banks. She wanted to ensure men assume their share of responsibilities during child care and women continue working from home, so they can prevent drawbacks or fall behind According to FRPT (2016), in order to have diversity in the firms, firms should recruit more women.

Neelam Dhawan is an Economic Graduate and MBA from FMS Delhi. She has worked with Microsoft, IBM, and HCL. Dhawan served as Managing Director of Hewlett-Packard Enterprise India from July 1, 2008 onwards, handling a diverse portfolio. She has been the Director of ICICI Bank Ltd., since January 12, 2018 (DataQuest 2005). According to Dhawan, the IT segment in India is quite new and she affirms the existence of the glass ceiling exists. Dhawan managed to become one of the first women leaders of an IT organization in the country, when she took up the post of India head of the world's largest software company, Microsoft, in 2005. She currently leads the operations in India for computer-maker Hewlett-Packard. One of Dhawan's great achievements has been the efficient handling of the services and offshoring division at HP. Before joining HP, Dhawan handled Microsoft's India operations from 2005 to 2008. (Prasad, 2018)

Organizations have started encouraging gender diversity in the workplace to drive productivity and boost performance. IBM India, for instance, set a milestone becoming an attractive employer for women and differently abled people. IBM has since taken many steps to promote inclusiveness in the workplace, while also laying a strong foundation for women and differently abled people to achieve success .

LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

For the purpose of this research cases and examples of women only in the Indian context have been considered. They largely belong to the urban areas and have not been closely categorized in terms of other demographic aspects like age or geographical locations. The selection of examples is generic and does not belong to any one particular industry. As a result of the convenient sampling, examples have been cited from a mixed class of women entrepreneurs, business persons, project heads, and senior managers. However, the observations made on the basis of these examples are exhaustive and might be partially representative of a larger population. This makes way for further research in the area, for advanced developments in research and policy making for the twentieth century workplace. Although only limited case studies have focused on studying women at the senior managerial level, this study can be extended to other industries like manufacturing, telecom, pharmaceuticals, and even retail.

OVERALL FINDINGS: CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL WOMEN

Women face many hurdles in their career development, but they can convert these hurdles into opportunities by mentoring, networking, and taking up career tracking approaches (Wirth, 2001). Despite the ongoing social awareness about gender equality, India is a still a male dominated society. According to a study done by Catalyst, women currently hold less than 5% (only 4.6%) CEO positions in S&P 500 companies. This is a very small .When it comes to holding leadership positions, less than 15% (only 14.2%) are held by women. This is probably because "stereotypes persist" (Stewart, October 10, 2015).

Only 3-6% women get to occupy senior positions, according to the studies mentioned above, in the Indian context. Most IT companies like ITC, Infotech, and SBI still follow gender elevators. While examining the various kinds of research that have been conducted so far on this all-pervasive malpractice, it was possible to identify some ways to shatter the glass ceiling.

METHODS TO SHATTER THE GLASS CEILING

1.   Success Planning: Women need to strategically plan for success. They need to be proactive and chase opportunities while highlighting their achievements (Stewart, October 10, 2015). Women should plan, think ahead, and be prepared for the future (Reynolds,1997).

2.   Aligning competencies with the Top Management: Women should equip themselves with all the necessary skills, qualifications, and experience required for the jobs that they want within organizations. They should take informed decisions while being action-oriented. Schreiber, C. T., Price, K. F., and Morrison, A. (1993) believe that the top rungs of management should use diversity to increase organizational effectiveness and reduce the barriers faced by women.

3.   Study the Career Paths of Successful Women as Examples: Women should take inspiration from other successful women and analyse which personality traits and achievements made them successful. This introspection can be very fruitful. Women should be firm, have a strong-will power, and be optimistic about pursuing new opportunities.

4.   Seeking out Mentoring Relationships: Women should consider sharing a mentor-mentee relationship with successful senior executive for assistance with breaking existing stereotypes. This could help women achieve professional growth and development. Women may also benefit from being empathetic, and understanding others' viewpoints in the workplace.   Being efficient people-readers and demonstrating measured emotion is also likely to be helpful in furthering career goals. According to Flippin, (2017), development activities like mentorship and coaching should be used for succession planning of Gen X women .

5.   Know the Rights: Women should know their rights. They should be aware of labour laws and employment discrimination. They should be able to stand up for their rights (Stewart, October 10, 2015).

6.   Most of the successful women discussed above embody many of these qualities. It may be difficult for one person to possess all these qualities, but a judicious blend of several features could assure greater effectiveness in combating a glass ceiling. Additional skills needed to become a CEO or an M.D. may include a strategic vision, a result oriented attitude, responsibilities towards business profits and losses, soft skills, organizational

intelligence competencies, and entrepreneurial skills. Women should involve themselves in participative decision making and have a balanced trust with different stakeholders (Reynolds, 1997).

7. There is always a glass ceiling at the top. Women should have an ignited passion and a lot of dedication. Women should demand their rights and make their impact felt in the organization. They should prioritize their tasks. They should also seek to receive a conducive ambience at work. They should try to gain support from their organization, family, and society. A society where there is equality has always prospered. The role of women can never be underestimated.

CONCLUSION

The glass ceiling still remains a crucial emotional and pivotal aspect of the job market in any workplace in the present time and age (Korde and Patel, 2017). While sex discrimination is one of the reasons for the slow rate at which women have been promoted to middle and upper levels of management and corporate boards women's decisions pertaining to career and job selection have also been responsible for the slow progress. Men's careers and job opportunities are usually motivated by their motivation for higher rewards and promotions; women on the other hand often choose careers that provide them a greater sense of accomplishment, more control over their work schedules, and higher mobility during work hours (Williams 2013). As companies have started understanding this, they have started promoting the growth of women in the workplace. E.g. on November 22, 2010, IBM was recognized by NASSCOM for excellence in gender inclusivity. IBM in India won an award in the best IT services and products category. IBM also received an award for being the best BPO company category. IBM India was also awarded for having the most innovative programme in gender inclusivity from 2007 to 2009. (Robbins, Judge, & Vohra, 2013).

In the new era of modernization, the presence of the glass ceiling is still strongly experienced by many successful women. According to Sharma& Sehrawat, (2014) the "glass ceiling still exists and age, education, designation, and income have no impact in the modern Indian society.As opportunities have grown, the scope of gender inequality has also burgeoned. Many women have been able of overcome its strong and stubborn repercussions, but such women are few as compared to their male counterparts. The adverse effects of this glass ceiling are largely observed among the educated masses and the organized sector; they are also prominently noticed in white collared jobs. As a result of women getting higher academic qualifications, enhanced skills, and more technical knowhow, they are able to

successfully secure their place at the helm of the organization, but, the unseen forces of the glass ceiling make many ladders of success crumble under them. This research observed the qualities that may help women to overcome the hindrances. However, by identifying more closely the organizational and societal factors that cause this glass ceiling, it may be possible to crack this phenomenon and remove it from the face of any workforce a woman may choose to be a part of.

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