

## **A Study On Glass Ceiling Effect In Banking: Perceptions Of Women Employees Across Job Levels In Hyderabad**

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### **Abstract:**

Despite the implementation of gender equity policies in the banking sector, a persistent glass ceiling continues to affect women bank employees. This study investigates the attitudes of women working in public and private banks in Hyderabad District toward the glass ceiling and explores how these attitudes impact their career development. A structured questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale was distributed among 120 women bank employees. The study employed quantitative analysis, including descriptive statistics and chi-square tests, to understand the relationship between job level and the perception of the glass ceiling. Results indicated significant associations between job level and the perceived existence of the glass ceiling. The findings highlight the importance of addressing systemic barriers to foster a more equitable workplace environment for women in banking.

**Keywords:** Glass Ceiling, Women Employees, Career Development, Banking Sector.

### **1. Introduction:**

Gender equality in the workplace remains a key issue across industries, particularly in the banking sector, where leadership roles are often male-dominated. The concept of the "glass ceiling" represents the invisible barriers that prevent women from advancing to higher positions despite having the required qualifications and experience. This study focuses on Hyderabad District, where the banking industry includes both private and public sector banks with a sizable female workforce. While several initiatives have been introduced to promote gender diversity, anecdotal and empirical evidence suggests that women continue to face obstacles to career progression.

The objective of this research is to analyze how women perceive the glass ceiling and how these perceptions vary based on their job level, ultimately affecting their career development. The study is crucial in understanding the complex interplay of organizational structures, cultural norms, and individual attitudes that contribute to the perpetuation of gender-based barriers.

### **2. Review of literature:**

**Ms. S. Abinaya & Dr. K. Alamelu (2022)** in their article glass ceiling issues in the Indian banking sector Examined and found out that there is existing of the glass ceiling and are same for all the women irrespective

of their position and location. they felt like measures should be taken by the higher level authorities of the banking sector to work on that and see that no existing of glass ceiling.

**Hussin et al. (2021)** in the article titled "Decisive factors of "glass ceiling" on women career development in Malaysia" aimed to identify the factors that contribute to the "glass ceiling" phenomenon experienced by women in Malaysia. The study uses a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews conducted with 10 female employees who hold management positions in various industries. The study findings indicate that the "glass ceiling" phenomenon is still prevalent in Malaysia, and the factors that contribute to it include the perception of male superiority, gender stereotypes, lack of work-life balance, and lack of access to leadership positions. The study also found that organizational support, self-confidence, and educational background are crucial factors that can enable women to overcome the "glass ceiling" barrier. The study concludes that there is a need for organizations to implement policies and practices that promote gender diversity, provide equal opportunities for women, and create a supportive work environment. The study also suggests that women need to build self-confidence, pursue higher education, and develop professional skills to overcome the "glass ceiling" phenomenon.

**Sunaryo et al. (2021)** in the article "Gender Discrimination and Unfair Treatment: Investigation of The Perceived Glass Ceiling and Women Reactions in The Workplace—Evidence from Indonesia" aims to investigate gender discrimination and the perceived glass ceiling in the workplace in Indonesia. The study uses a mixed-method approach, combining a survey questionnaire and focus group discussions, to collect data from 161 female employees working in various industries in Indonesia. The study finds that gender discrimination is prevalent in the workplace in Indonesia, and women perceive a glass ceiling that limits their career advancement. Women reported experiencing unequal treatment in terms of pay, job promotion, and training opportunities. The study also finds that women react to gender discrimination by either leaving the organization or staying and attempting to negotiate with their supervisors.

**Khosla (2021)** The objective of this study was to investigate variations in gender-related perspectives regarding the glass ceiling and affective commitment within the Indian banking sector. The study used a questionnaire survey of 200 employees (100 males and 100 females) working in various public and private sector banks in India. The study found that both male and female employees perceived the existence of a glass ceiling in the banking sector, but female employees reported higher levels of barriers to their career advancement compared to male employees. The study also found that female employees reported lower levels of affective commitment than male employees. The study concluded that the existence of the glass ceiling negatively impacts female employees' career advancement opportunities and affects their affective commitment to the organization.

**Kapoor et al. (2021)** in the article "Women as leaders: A systematic review of glass ceiling and organizational development" examines the concept of glass ceiling and its impact on women leaders in organizational development. The authors conducted a systematic review of literature on glass ceiling and organizational development and analyzed 33 research studies published between 2000 and 2019. The study identifies various factors that contribute to the glass ceiling phenomenon, such as stereotyping, bias, discrimination, and cultural norms. The authors argue that the glass ceiling is a complex and multifaceted issue that requires a systemic approach to address it. The study also highlights the importance of organizational development in overcoming the glass ceiling. The authors suggest that promoting a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace, providing mentoring and networking opportunities, and offering leadership development programs for women can help break down the barriers to women's advancement in the workplace.

**Thiranagama (2021)** in the literature review article titled "Is gender plays a role in workplace?: Review of Glass-Ceiling Effect on Women Employees" attempts to explore the concept of the glass ceiling and its impact on women employees. The article reviews various studies on the glass ceiling phenomenon, its causes, and its effects on the careers of women employees. The author notes that gender plays a crucial role in the workplace, and the glass ceiling represents one of the most significant barriers to women's career

progression. The article provides an overview of the various causes of the glass ceiling, including gender stereotypes, organizational culture, and structural barriers. It also reviews the effects of the glass ceiling on women employees, such as reduced career satisfaction, lower salaries, and restricted career advancement opportunities. Additionally, the author discusses some strategies that organizations can adopt to overcome the glass ceiling and promote gender equality in the workplace.

**Dastidar and Kalita (2020)** in the article "Cracking of the glass ceiling in the Indian Banking Sector" explores the progress made by women in the Indian banking sector in breaking the glass ceiling. The authors conducted a survey to analyze the attitudes of male and female employees towards the participation of women in higher-level jobs in the banking sector. They found that although women are being promoted to higher-level jobs, they still face challenges such as gender discrimination and lack of family support. However, the authors also found that the younger generation of male employees in the banking sector have a more positive attitude towards gender equality and are supportive of women's career progression.

**Jikky P Shaji & Jojo K Joseph (2020)** worked to understand the presence of Glass ceiling effects. They investigated, the representation of women employees in the banking sector is very low at all the levels like entry positions to the higher designations.

**Uduwella and Jayatilaka (2019)** investigated the impact of the glass ceiling on women's career development in the non-state banking sector in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The study found that women employees faced significant barriers in career progression due to the glass ceiling phenomenon. The study identified several factors that contribute to the glass ceiling, including gender stereotyping, bias in promotion, and a lack of support for work-life balance. The study recommended that organizations should take proactive steps to address the issue, including promoting diversity and inclusion, providing leadership training for women, and implementing flexible work policies. The study also suggested that more research is needed to better understand the challenges faced by women in the banking sector and to develop effective strategies to overcome them. Overall, the study highlights the need for organizations to create more equitable opportunities for women to advance their careers and break through the glass ceiling.

**Sharma and Kaur (2019)** investigated the impact of the glass ceiling on women's career progression in the Indian service sector, focusing on the moderating role of family structure. The authors employed a survey method to collect data from 202 women employees of Indian service sector organizations, and the data was analyzed using structural equation modeling. The findings of the study revealed that the glass ceiling was a significant barrier to women's career progression in the Indian service sector. However, the impact of the glass ceiling was found to be more severe for women with joint family structures compared to women with nuclear family structures. The study suggests that organizations need to recognize and address the impact of family structure on the glass ceiling's effect on women's career progression in the Indian service sector.

### **3. Research Objective:**

To examine the association between women bank employees' perceptions of the existence of the glass ceiling and their job level within banking organizations in Hyderabad District.

### **4. Hypothesis:**

H0: There is no significant association between women bank employees' perception of the existence of the glass ceiling and their job level.

### **5. Research Methodology Overview:**

The research employed a quantitative, descriptive, and empirical design. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed to a stratified non-random sample of 120 women working in both public and private sector banks. Stratified sampling ensured adequate representation across job levels. The survey included items measuring perceptions of the glass ceiling, career development factors, and demographic variables.

- Research Design: Descriptive and analytical
- Data Collection Method: Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire rated on a 5-point Likert scale.
- Population: 4000 Aprox. Women Employees from Banking Sector
- Sample Size: 120 employees
- Sampling Technique: Simple random sampling
- Data Analysis Tools: Descriptive Analytics, Chi-square Test using SPSS

## 6. Data Analysis and Interpretation:

### 6.1 Frequencies and Descriptive Statistics:

**Table 6.1.1: Age Distribution of Respondents**

Age Group	Frequency	Percent (%)
18–30 years	23	19.2
31–40 years	39	32.5
41–50 years	41	34.2
Above 50 years	17	14.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Among the 120 respondents, the majority (34.2%) fall within the 41–50 age group, followed closely by 31–40 years (32.5%). Respondents aged 18–30 account for 19.2%, while those above 50 make up the smallest group at 14.1%. This indicates that mid-career professionals (ages 31–50) dominate the respondent base.

**Table 6.1.2: Marital Status of Respondents**

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent (%)
Married	97	80.8
Unmarried	23	19.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Out of 120 respondents, 80.8% are married, and only 19.2% are unmarried. This suggests that the sample is predominantly composed of individuals who may have family responsibilities, which can influence work attitudes and expectations from performance appraisals.

**Table 6.1.3: Qualification of Respondents**

Qualification	Frequency	Percent (%)
Intermediate	5	4.2
Bachelor's Degree	90	75.0

<b>Master's Degree</b>	25	20.8
<b>Total</b>	120	100.0

Most respondents (75%) hold a bachelor's degree, indicating a relatively well-qualified workforce. Master's degree holders make up 20.8%, while only 4.2% have intermediate-level education. This education profile reflects a knowledge-based sample, likely capable of understanding and engaging with formal performance appraisal systems.

The study analyzed responses from 120 women bank employees. In terms of job level distribution: 13.5% were at entry-level, 31% at junior-level, 19.1% at mid-level, 24.5% at senior-level, and 11.8% at executive-level. Regarding their perception of the glass ceiling:

- Mean perception score of the existence of a glass ceiling: 3.47
- Mean perception score for personally experiencing the glass ceiling: 3.47
- Standard deviation for these items indicated a moderate variation in responses.

### 6.2 Crosstab Analysis: Table: Crosstab of Perceived Existence of Glass Ceiling and Job Level

Job Level	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Entry-level	0	2	2	9	2	15
Junior-level	3	7	3	13	10	36
Mid-level	0	1	3	12	7	23
Senior-level	3	8	8	7	4	30
Executive-level	1	3	5	3	1	13
Total	7	21	22	44	23	120

### 6.3. Table: Pearson Chi-Square Test Results (Job Level × Glass Ceiling Dimensions)

S. No.	Association	Pearson Chi-Square Value	df	Significance (p-value)
1	Existence of Glass Ceiling × Job Level	145.858	16	0.000
2	Personally Experienced Effects of Glass Ceiling × Job Level	141.281	16	0.000
3	Glass Ceiling Hinders Career Growth × Job Level	209.790	16	0.000

Existence of Glass Ceiling × Job Level: The significant result ( $\chi^2 = 145.858$ ) indicates that respondents at different job levels perceive the existence of a glass ceiling differently. Perceptions vary as individuals move up the organizational hierarchy.

Personally Experienced Effects × Job Level: The test result ( $\chi^2 = 141.281$ ) suggests that the degree to which respondents have personally experienced the effects of the glass ceiling differs significantly by job level, implying that the barrier is felt more acutely by certain levels, especially junior and mid-level professionals.

Glass Ceiling Hinders Career Growth × Job Level: The strongest association ( $\chi^2 = 209.790$ ) was found here, indicating that employees at different job levels significantly differ in how much they believe the glass ceiling hinders career advancement. This reinforces the conclusion that perceptions of inequality in career progression are not uniformly felt across levels.

## **7. Findings:**

### **Significant Association Between Job Level and Perception of the Glass Ceiling:**

The chi-square test revealed a statistically significant relationship between job level and the perception of the glass ceiling ( $p < 0.001$ ). Women in junior and mid-level roles perceived the glass ceiling more acutely than those in executive positions.

### **Moderate Agreement on the Existence of the Glass Ceiling:**

The average score (mean = 3.47) on the perception of the glass ceiling indicates a moderate to high level of agreement among respondents that such a barrier exists within the banking sector in Hyderabad.

### **Consistency in Personal Experience of the Glass Ceiling:**

The mean response (3.47) for personally experiencing the effects of the glass ceiling suggests that a substantial portion of women not only perceive its existence but have also felt its direct impact on their career growth.

### **Variation Across Job Levels in Agreement Levels:**

Entry- and junior-level employees showed higher levels of agreement with the existence of the glass ceiling, while executive-level employees exhibited more neutral or disagreeing responses, indicating a disparity in experience across hierarchical roles.

## **8. Conclusion:**

This study highlights the enduring presence of the glass ceiling within the banking sector of Hyderabad District, particularly as perceived by women employees at various job levels. The analysis revealed a statistically significant association between job level and the perception of the glass ceiling, with junior and mid-level employees reporting a greater awareness and experience of gender-based barriers to advancement. Despite the existence of institutional policies aimed at promoting gender equity, the findings suggest that these measures have not fully translated into perceived or actual opportunities for career growth among women.

The results underscore the necessity for more robust organizational reforms that go beyond policy statements. Practical interventions—such as transparent promotion procedures, gender-sensitive performance appraisals, structured mentorship, and inclusive leadership pathways—are essential to dismantle systemic biases. By addressing these issues, the banking sector can move toward a more equitable and inclusive professional environment where women are empowered to reach their full potential.

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