

**A STUDY OF GLASS CEILING IN IT SECTOR OF MUMBAI CITY, MAHARASHTRA (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO WOMEN WORK-FORCE)**

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**ABSTRACT**

*"The Glass Ceiling" refers to an invisible barrier that limits the level to which a woman or another member of a demographic minority can advance within the hierarchy in an organization. In general, it is an attitudinal or organizational bias, which prevents women from occupying leadership positions in organizations. "Ceiling" stresses the limitation of upward progress of women is subjected to and "Glass" refers to the fact that through the limitation is apparently not written in any rule book, it is nevertheless a defeated fact understood by both the sexes. The glass ceiling metaphor has often been used to describe invisible barriers ("glass") through which women can see elite positions but cannot reach them ("ceiling"). These barriers prevent large numbers of women and ethnic minorities from obtaining and securing the most powerful, prestigious, and highest-grossing jobs in the workforce (wiki, 2015).*

*However looking at India's 113th rank out of 157 countries in terms of Gender Development Index (May 2010), it seems India has to go a long way to realize the dream of gender equality. While on one hand India has examples of Chanda Kochhar, Shikha Sharma, Naina Lal Kidwai and Kalpana Morparia who made it to the top in their fields; on other hand there's volumes of literature depicting Glass Ceiling in one form or another. The present study is an attempt to investigate the presence of Glass Ceiling in IT Sector of Mumbai City.*

**KEYWORDS:** Glass Ceiling, Gender Discrimination, Women Empowerment, Leadership, Barriers in Career Advancement, IT Sector, Mumbai city.

**Introduction:**

The term "Glass Ceiling" was coined in a 1986 Wall Street Journal Report on Corporate Women by Hymowitz and Schellhardt. The invisible barrier affects working women the most as it diminishes any chances of advancement for someone who is career conscious such discrimination leads women to have feelings of low self-esteem, decreased motivation and slowing down of interest in their jobs.

In 1991 The Glass Ceiling Commission was established and the U.S. Department of Labor defined "those artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management-level positions" as Glass Ceiling.

According to Wikipedia in Economics, the term **glass ceiling** refers to the scene, yet unbreakable barrier that keeps minorities and women from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements". Initially, the metaphor applied to barriers in the careers of women but was quickly extended to refer to obstacles hindering the advancement of minority men, as well as women.

David Cotter et al. defined four distinctive characteristics that must be met to conclude that a *glass ceiling* exists. A glass ceiling inequality represents:

1. "A gender or racial difference that is not explained by other job-relevant characteristics of the employee."
2. "A gender or racial difference that is greater at higher levels of an outcome than at lower levels of an outcome."
3. "A gender or racial inequality in the chances of advancement into higher levels, not merely the proportions of each gender or race currently at those higher levels."
4. "A gender or racial inequality that increases over the course of a career."

**Review of Literature**

The literature review is done with the help of various published paper on Glass Ceiling. The main objective behind the literature review is to consider the critical points of current knowledge including substantive findings, as well as theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular topic.

- **Carol Hymowitz and Timothy D. Schellhardt (March 24, 1986) Article in the Wall Street Journal.** “**The Glass Ceiling:** Why Women Can’t Seem to Break the Invisible Barrier That Blocks Them from the Top Job. They were the first to use this term. The term resonated with women around the world because it captured their frustrations and the term “glass ceiling” has now become commonplace.
- **Morrison and Von Glinow (1990):** They defined Glass Ceiling as a barrier so subtle that it is transparent, yet so strong that it prevents women and minorities from moving up in the management hierarchy.
- **Lyness and Thompson (1997):** Their studies reveal one consequence of sex stereotypes is that women's achievements tend to be devalued or attributed to luck or effort rather than ability or skill, and therefore this stereotype has the potential to reduce the organizational awards that they receive.
- **Cotter, Hermesen, Ovadia, & Vanneman,(2001);Maume,(2004):** It has been noted by these scholars that a glass ceiling occurs when discrimination increases in severity with movement up the occupational hierarchy. As a result inequality is observed after controlling for productivity-relevant factors. These afore mentioned studies provide confirming evidence that the glass ceiling is a unique form of inequality and that bias against women and people of color, may be more severe in the career.
- **Lyness and Heilman (2006):** They found that in a study conducted with 448 upper-level employees that women were less likely to be promoted than males, and if they were promoted they had stronger performance ratings than males. However, performance ratings were more strongly connected to promotions for women than men. This suggests that women had to be highly impressive to be considered eligible for leadership roles, whereas this was not the case for men.
- **Alice H. Eagly and Linda L. Carli (2007):** Article in the Harvard Business Review. “Is there really a Glass Ceiling for Women?” Many women have inquired about whether or not an invisible barrier

(or glass ceiling) exists just beneath the top of the corporate ladder that blocks successful women from achieving the highest rungs. According to them the answer is no, however, the sum of many obstacles along the way often hold women back from making it into the C-suite.

- **Ashok Gupta and Koshal (2001)** insist that the tussle created by motherhood and career ambition is known to affect women's career. The inhibiting factors include reluctance to travel, getting transferred and living away from families remains a significant barrier. Added it is women's exclusion from informal networks which also make them lose out opportunities for promotion.
- **Vimolwan Yukongdi and John Benson in the book "Women in Asian Management"** have spelled out the factors that inhibit women's growth. They also attribute women's slow growth to mainly individual and societal factors. They agree with Kulkarni (2002) who in his study "Women and Professional Competency" states that it is the traditional and cultural inhibitions acquired by women from childhood, nurtured by parents and reinforced by socialization which is the key hurdle that inhibited their urge to be in the executive or leadership position. This is further supplemented by lack of self direction, independence and self motivation.
- **Author Usha Kiran Rai in her research paper "Women Executives and the glass ceiling: Myths and Mysteries from Razia Sultana to Hillary Clinton"** concluded her views as under...

According to her research, in India the status of women has long been contradictory. Across the world, including the most developed nations; women are not to be seen in the top positions in the corporate sector. Despite the fact that 68 women have led their countries as presidents and prime minister, there still exist many barriers in the career path of women leading to leadership positions. Some of the barriers are related to the women themselves, and some to their organizations. They examined these barriers, and consider what can be done to facilitate a faster pace of change, in order to develop and utilize women's talents more for their mutual benefit. Gradually, women managers in India have been successful in rising to top positions in Indian organizations, despite a culture that might suggest otherwise. These women were successful because of the interplay of organizational and family support, coupled with the individual drive for success, each woman demonstrated. They concluded that there is a persistable scope for women to excel in the corporate sector, if they learn to balance several resources like time, ideas, finance and relationships.

**Objectives of the Proposed Study:**

- To find out if the Glass Ceiling exists in the IT Sector of Mumbai City.

**Hypothesis to be tested:**

- The impact of Glass Ceiling is significantly less in IT Sector of Mumbai city.

**Research Methodology:**

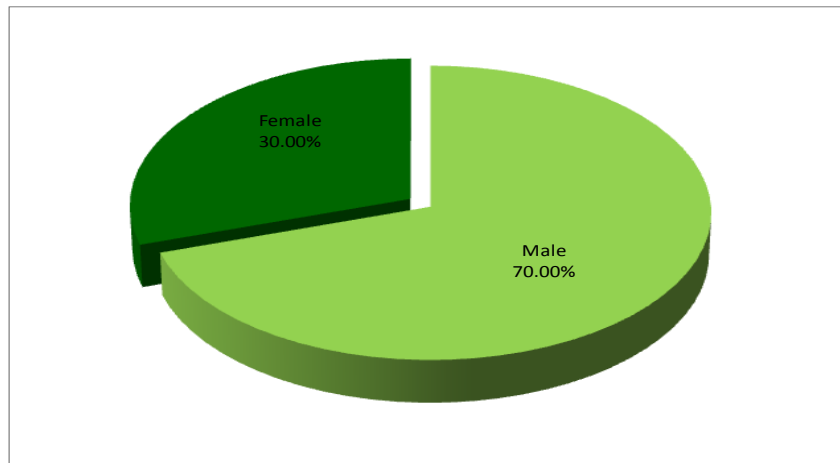
- A. The research design for the present study would be exploratory in nature.
- B. Tools and Techniques of Research:
- C. Various Statistical Tools like Non Parametric Test : Chi-square Test or can also apply ANOVA to derive conclusion .
- D. Sample Size and Sampling Design:
  - 1) Sample Size :30 ( Male and Female employees combined )
  - 2) Sampling Design: A non-probabilistic convenient and random sampling procedure will be followed in order to collect the data from the chosen sampl.
- E. Sources of Data Collection:

**Primary Sources:** It contains personal and online surveys or questionnaires containing questions relevant to the topic. A Likert Scale and open-ended questions could then be administered to a sample comprised of male and female employees at all levels and the responses could then be analyzed.

**Secondary Sources:** This approach would involve the use of publications, books, newspapers, magazines, websites, and various reports.

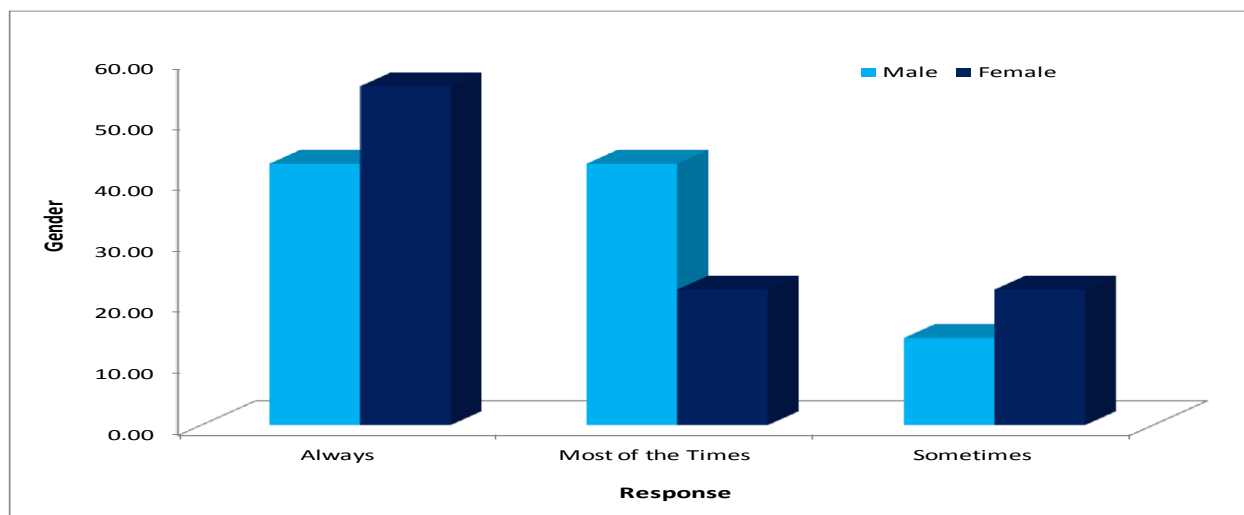
**Analysis Results****Table 1: Gender wise Distribution**

Gender	N	%
Male	21	70.00
Female	9	30.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.00</b>



**Table 2: Does Organization offer equal opportunities to grow and develop on the job to both the genders?**

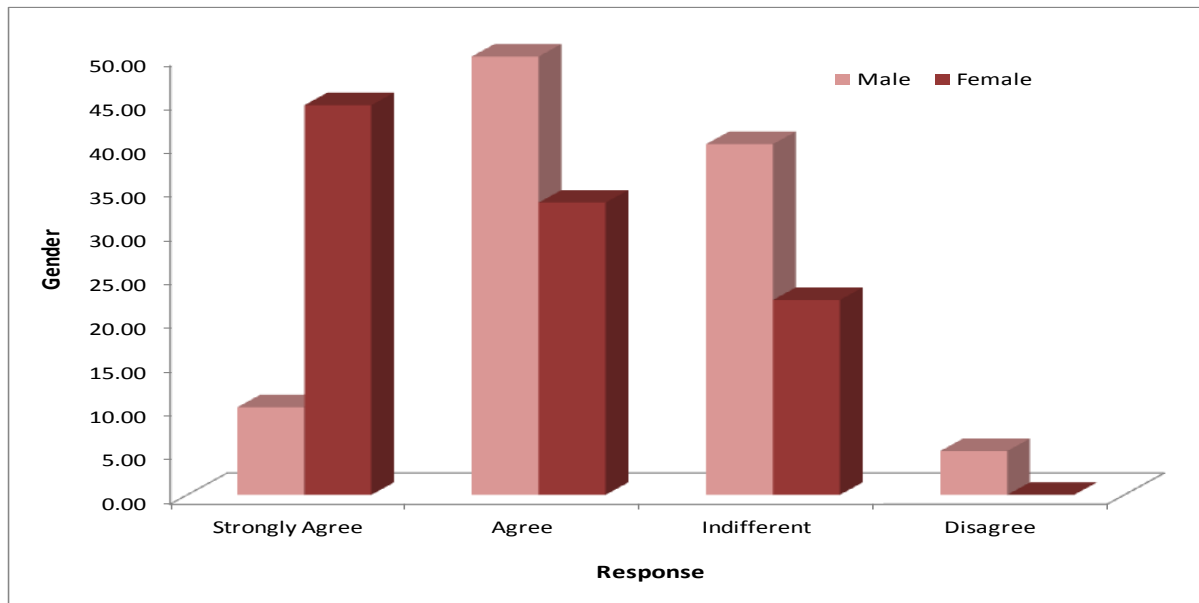
Response	Gender				$\chi^2$	df	Result
	Male		Female				
	N	%	N	%			
Always	9	42.86	5	55.56	1.187	2	NS
Most of the Times	9	42.86	2	22.22			
Sometimes	3	14.29	2	22.22			
Total	21	100.00	9	100.00			



**Inference:** The chi square test of association shows non-significant association between gender of respondent and their opinion ( $\chi^2 = 1.187$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) regarding “equal opportunities for male and female in their organization”. The analysis shows that the proportion of male and female respondents in the level of agreement with the said question do not differ significantly, hence it can be concluded that in the opinion of male and female respondents their respective organizations provide equal opportunities to grow and develop on the job for both male and female employees.

**Table 3: Have you ever felt that married life and motherhood are one of those reasons that prevent women to reach upper levels of executive management?**

Response	Gender				$\chi^2$	df	Result
	Male		Female				
	N	%	N	%			
Strongly Agree	2	9.52	4	44.44	5.043	3	NS
Agree	10	47.62	3	33.33			
Indifferent	8	38.10	2	22.22			
Disagree	1	4.76	0	0.00			
Total	21	100.00	9	100.00			

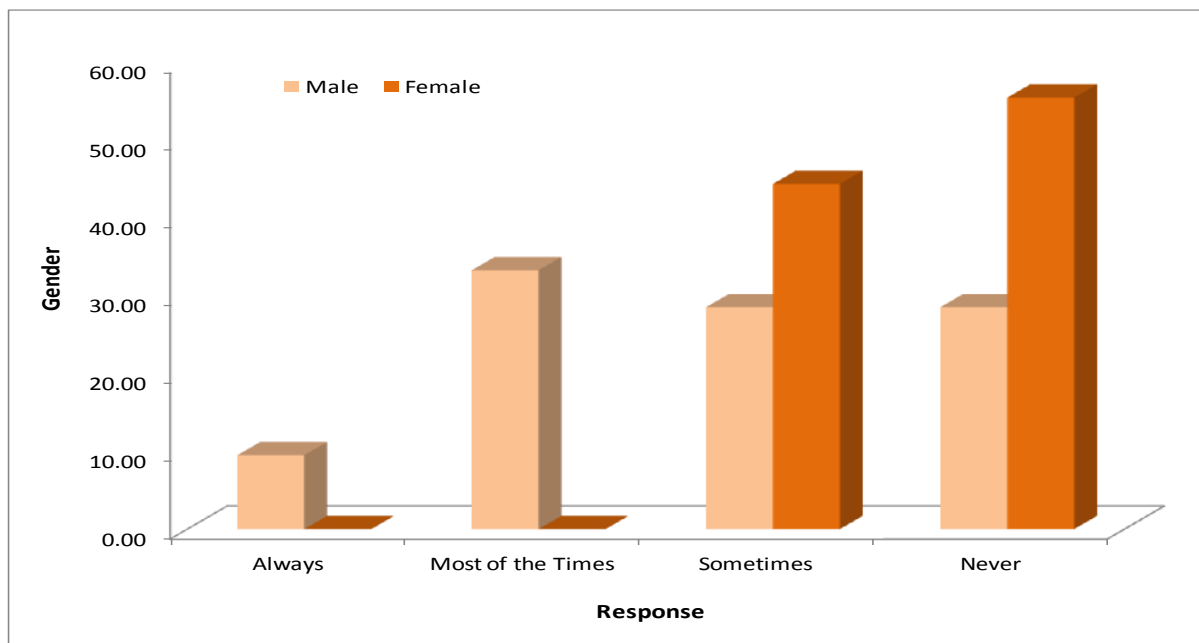


**Inference:** The chi square test of association shows non-significant association between gender of respondent and their opinion ( $\chi^2 = 5.043$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) regarding “married life and motherhood are one of those reasons that prevent women to reach upper levels of executive management”. The analysis shows that the proportion of male and female respondents in the level of agreement with the said question do

not differ significantly, hence it can be concluded that the opinion of male and female respondents, married life and motherhood are one of those reasons that prevent women to reach upper levels of executive management.

**Table 4: Have you ever come across instances regarding gender discrimination at work place?**

Response	Gender				$\chi^2$	df	Result
	Male		Female				
	N	%	N	%			
Always	2	9.52	0	0.00	5.584	3	NS
Most of the Times	7	33.33	0	0.00			
Sometimes	6	28.57	4	44.44			
Never	6	28.57	5	55.56			
Total	21	100.00	9	100.00			



**Inference-** The chi square test of association shows non-significant association between gender of respondent and their opinion ( $\chi^2 = 5.584$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) regarding “instances regarding gender discrimination at work place”. The analysis shows that the proportion of male and female respondents in the level of agreement with the said question do not differ significantly, hence it can be concluded that the opinion of male and female respondents with regards to instances of gender discrimination is not only for female employees but for male employees as well.



**Concluding Remarks:**

After carrying out a detailed analysis and interpretation of data collected from the IT Sector of Mumbai City we finally conclude that the impact of Glass Ceiling is significantly less in IT Sector of Mumbai city. Infact nowadays, IT Sector promotes women to grow within the organization and encourage them by providing equal chances of growth based on pure knowledge and expertise , conducive working environment, maternity leave ,work from home facility.Finally we conclude, personal factors such as married life , motherhood, commitment towards family, mindset of our Indian society towards working women and lack of family support are the major barriers in relation to the growth of women work force within the organisation.

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***Some of the portion of this paper is taken from various sites and articles. The broad objective of this paper is to spread the knowledge regarding particular subject, publication is one of the initiative taken for fulfillment of this objective. There is no any monitory intention behind the publication.***

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