


GLASS CEILING TO STICKY FLOOR: ANALOGIES OF WOMEN LEADERSHIP

Nidhi Srivastava^A, Rishikesh Nalawade^B



ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history:</p> <p>Received 31 January 2023</p> <p>Accepted 10 April 2023</p>	<p>Purpose: This study intended to investigate the issues associated with the rise of women to senior leadership positions. There have been diverse metaphors or analogies used to describe these barriers. The purpose of the study was to review the major barriers that restricted the growth of woman at senior leadership positions.</p>
<p>Keywords:</p> <p>Barriers of Women Leadership; Glass Ceiling; Glass Cliff; Queen Bee; Sticky Floor; Women Leadership.</p>	<p>Theoretical framework: Women leadership has been an area of discussion since women started holding powerful positions in the corporate and to do so they face enormous challenges. There have been diverse metaphors used to describe these barriers. These metaphors viz. Glass ceiling, Glass cliff, Queen Bee and Sticky floor shall be considered as major barriers that restrict women to be at top position. (Smith, Caputi, & Crittenden, 2012)</p> <p>Design/Methodology/Approach: The study reviewed the different metaphors viz. Glass ceiling, Glass cliff, Queen Bee, Sticky floor, and other analogies used to describe the barriers for women in power. The study also described various issues and challenges related to woman’s leadership.</p>
	<p>Findings: There is a lack of awareness amongst corporate leaders regarding the diverse metaphors used to describe the barriers to women’s leadership and which also means that they are knowingly or unknowingly enhancing the hurdles for women at their workplaces. These challenges and situations exist around us, but people are not vigilant and are reluctant to take efforts to tackle or overcome these barriers for women.</p> <p>Research, Practical and Social implications: This research suggests that there is a strong urge to sensitize our corporate leaders regarding these widely used metaphors and reasons for using them, especially in a country like India. By understanding these barriers, organizations can take steps to address them and create a more inclusive and equitable workplace for women leaders.</p> <p>Originality/Value: The research contributed to describing the various issues and challenges related to women leadership. The study adds value by presenting the review of the major barriers that restricted the growth of women at senior leadership positions. The analogies express the role and intention of women to hold the strong position they acquire. Research reviewed articles related to analogies used for barriers of women leadership in different scenarios at the workplace/organization.</p> <p>Doi: https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i4.1300</p>

^A Ph.D., Assistant Professor. MEASI Institute of Management, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

E-mail: srivastava.nidhi86@gmail.com Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8397-7957>

^B Ph.D., Assistant professor. Indira School of Business Studies PGDM, Pune, Maharashtra, India.

E-mail: nalawade.rishikesh@gmail.com Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2840-8297>

TETO DE VIDRO PARA CHÃO PEGAJOSO: ANALOGIAS DA LIDERANÇA FEMININA

RESUMO

Objetivo: Este estudo pretendeu investigar as questões associadas à ascensão das mulheres a altos cargos de liderança. Tem havido diversas metáforas ou analogias usadas para descrever essas barreiras. O objetivo do estudo foi revisar as principais barreiras que restringiram o crescimento da mulher em cargos de alta liderança.

Quadro teórico: A liderança feminina tem sido tema de discussão desde que as mulheres passaram a ocupar cargos de poder nas empresas e para isso enfrentam enormes desafios. Tem havido diversas metáforas usadas para descrever essas barreiras. Essas metáforas viz. Teto de vidro, Penhasco de vidro, Abelha rainha e Piso pegajoso devem ser considerados como as principais barreiras que restringem as mulheres a ocupar posições de topo. (Smith, Caputi e Crittenden, 2012)

Desenho/Metodologia/Abordagem: O estudo revisou as diferentes metáforas viz. Teto de vidro, penhasco de vidro, abelha rainha, piso pegajoso e outras analogias usadas para descrever as barreiras para as mulheres no poder. O estudo também descreveu várias questões e desafios relacionados à liderança feminina.

Descobertas: Há uma falta de conscientização entre os líderes corporativos em relação às diversas metáforas usadas para descrever as barreiras à liderança feminina e o que também significa que eles estão, consciente ou inconscientemente, aumentando os obstáculos para as mulheres em seus locais de trabalho. Esses desafios e situações existem ao nosso redor, mas as pessoas não estão vigilantes e relutam em fazer esforços para enfrentar ou superar essas barreiras para as mulheres.

Pesquisa, implicações práticas e sociais: Esta pesquisa sugere que há um forte desejo de sensibilizar nossos líderes corporativos sobre essas metáforas amplamente usadas e as razões para usá-las, especialmente em um país como a Índia.

Ao compreender essas barreiras, as organizações podem tomar medidas para enfrentá-las e criar um local de trabalho mais inclusivo e igualitário para mulheres líderes.

Originalidade/Valor: A pesquisa contribuiu para descrever as várias questões e desafios relacionados à liderança feminina. O estudo agrega valor ao apresentar a revisão das principais barreiras que restringiram o crescimento de mulheres em cargos de alta liderança. As analogias expressam o papel e a intenção das mulheres em ocupar a posição forte que adquirem. A pesquisa revisou artigos relacionados a analogias usadas para barreiras da liderança feminina em diferentes cenários no local de trabalho/organização.

Palavras-chave: Barreiras da Liderança Feminina, Teto de Vidro, Penhasco de Vidro, Abelha Rainha, Piso Pegajoso, Liderança Feminina.

TECHO DE CRISTAL A SUELO PEGAJOSO: ANALOGÍAS DEL LIDERAZGO FEMENINO

RESUMEN

Propósito: Este estudio pretendía investigar los problemas asociados con el ascenso de las mujeres a puestos de liderazgo senior. Se han utilizado diversas metáforas o analogías para describir estas barreras. El propósito del estudio fue revisar las principales barreras que restringieron el crecimiento de la mujer en puestos de liderazgo senior.

Marco teórico: El liderazgo de las mujeres ha sido un área de discusión desde que las mujeres comenzaron a ocupar posiciones de poder en la empresa y para hacerlo enfrentan enormes desafíos. Se han utilizado diversas metáforas para describir estas barreras. Estas metáforas a saber. El techo de cristal, el acantilado de cristal, la abeja reina y el suelo pegajoso se considerarán las principales barreras que restringen a las mujeres para ocupar los puestos más altos. (Smith, Caputi y Crittenden, 2012)

Diseño/Metodología/Enfoque: El estudio revisó las diferentes metáforas a saber. Techo de cristal, acantilado de cristal, abeja reina, suelo pegajoso y otras analogías utilizadas para describir las barreras para las mujeres en el poder. El estudio también describió varios problemas y desafíos relacionados con el liderazgo de la mujer.

Recomendaciones: Hay una falta de conciencia entre los líderes corporativos con respecto a las diversas metáforas utilizadas para describir las barreras para el liderazgo de las mujeres y lo que también significa que, a sabiendas o sin saberlo, están mejorando los obstáculos para las mujeres en sus lugares de trabajo. Estos desafíos y situaciones existen a nuestro alrededor, pero las personas no están atentas y se resisten a hacer esfuerzos para abordar o superar estas barreras para las mujeres.

Investigación, implicaciones prácticas y sociales: Esta investigación sugiere que existe una gran necesidad de sensibilizar a nuestros líderes corporativos con respecto a estas metáforas ampliamente utilizadas y las razones para usarlas, especialmente en un país como India.

Al comprender estas barreras, las organizaciones pueden tomar medidas para abordarlas y crear un lugar de trabajo más inclusivo y equitativo para las mujeres líderes.

Originalidad/Valor: La investigación contribuyó a describir los diversos problemas y desafíos relacionados con el liderazgo femenino. El estudio agrega valor al presentar la revisión de las principales barreras que restringieron el crecimiento de las mujeres en puestos de liderazgo senior. Las analogías expresan el papel y la intención de las mujeres de ocupar la posición de fuerza que adquieren. La investigación revisó artículos relacionados con las analogías utilizadas para las barreras del liderazgo femenino en diferentes escenarios en el lugar de trabajo/organización.

Palabras clave: Barreras del Liderazgo Femenino, Techo de Cristal, Acantilado de Cristal, Abeja Reina, Suelo Pegajoso, Liderazgo Femenino.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership has been the centre of discussion for the past many years. Researchers have discussed leadership styles, leadership process, successful leaders and many such areas because a leader's contribution shows an immense role in the development of the organization.

The work culture and organizational behaviour are greatly impacted by leadership. For inclusive growth of the organization and the performance of employees, leadership plays vital role. Obedience, and discipline in receiving orders and directions play important roles in work culture which improves the performance of employees. (Ni Made Yeni Widayani, 2022)

The study conducted by (Nik Syuhailah Nik Hussin, 2021) tried to uncover the decisive aspects regarding the socio-economic development of poverty alleviation of women entrepreneurship and reported that problems associated with women's leadership are also to be studied. Some researchers have also attempted to establish the relationship between leaders and their genders. Both men and women can become leaders in an organization as they both have the abilities and skill sets to execute the same. But there is a steep disparity amongst the gender ratio of leadership positions especially at senior levels (Cangemi, Kowalski, & Khan, Leadership Behavior. Lanham, MD, 1998); (Payne, 2001)(Cangemi, Kowalski, Miller, & Hollopeter, 2005). India has witnessed strong women leaders in the past, Pandita Ramabai, Swarnakumari devi, Sarala Debi Chaudhurani, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, Aruna Asaf Ali, Queen Elizabeth, Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher, Kiran Bedi, Indira Nooyi, Chitra Ramakishna, Pratibha Patil to name a few. They have proved their capabilities and leadership skills in their respective areas (Hewlett & Rashid, 2011).

Although the research indicates that when women hold the CEO position the performance of the board is much more effective but still the overall ratio of men is more than women in senior leadership positions (Dan & Sharon, 2022). This gender disparity continues to grow even now post-pandemic. In fact, it has increased and the issues of job losses and biases at work continue to grow exponentially. And women's leadership is still under

discussion and not much research has been conducted in this area (Gardner, Lowe, Moss, & Mahoney, 2010).

There are various issues or barriers that restrict the growth of women in senior leadership positions. The issues are needed to be deeply investigated and reviewed. Hence, the research intended to investigate the issues associated with women's leadership and the rise of women to senior leadership. The purpose of this research is to review the major barriers to women's leadership and to discuss in length various analogies used for women's leadership. By understanding these barriers, organizations can take steps to address them and create a more inclusive and equitable workplace for women leaders.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are various issues that restrict the growth of women's leadership. Right from the issue of gender bias to where women are reaching today, is a journey worth studying. Women face stereotypes and prejudices that they are less competent, less assertive, and less effective as leaders than men. This bias can manifest in many ways, such as being overlooked for promotions or being excluded from leadership opportunities. Women face the issue of lack of access to education and training. Women may not have the same access to education and training opportunities as men, which can limit their ability to develop the skills and knowledge needed for leadership roles.

Being homemakers, they face the issue of work-life balance. Women often face greater pressure to balance work and family responsibilities, which can make it difficult to take on leadership roles that require long hours or extensive travel. They also lack mentorship and sponsorship. Women may not have access to mentors or sponsors who can provide guidance and support as they navigate their careers and seek out leadership opportunities. They face the issue of pay inequity. Women may be paid less than men for the same job, which can limit their ability to advance to leadership positions or take on more responsibility in their current roles. Women has always been superimposed with stereotypical roles. The stereotypical roles such as being the primary caregiver or nurturer, may not be viewed as compatible with leadership roles, which can lead to discrimination or bias against women in leadership positions. The unconscious bias can affect how people perceive women in leadership roles, leading to assumptions and judgments that may limit their opportunities for advancement.

There are many theories associated with women's leadership and barriers to women's leadership. Some of the key theories are as discussed below.

Transformational Leadership was first introduced by Burns, (1978) in his book "Leadership". Later on, Bernard Bass is credited with further developing and popularizing the theory through his extensive research and writing on the topic. This theory is about the ability of leaders to inspire and motivate their followers to achieve their goals. Women are believed to have a natural inclination towards this type of leadership as they are more empathetic, collaborative, and focused on building relationships.

Transformational leadership theory emphasizes the importance of leaders inspiring, motivating, and empowering their followers to achieve their full potential. This theory has been studied extensively in the context of women's leadership, as women have historically faced barriers and discrimination in leadership positions.

Research has shown that women who exhibit transformational leadership behaviors are viewed as more effective and competent leaders by their followers. Additionally, women who lead with a transformational style tend to create more supportive and inclusive work environments, which can lead to increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment among employees.

However, women leaders may face unique challenges when practicing transformational leadership, such as gender bias and stereotypes that can make it more difficult for them to be seen as effective leaders. Women may also face barriers to developing the networks and relationships that are necessary to lead transformational change.

Despite these challenges, many women have successfully implemented transformational leadership strategies and have made significant contributions to their organizations and communities. As more women are given the opportunity to lead, it is likely that we will continue to see the positive impact of transformational leadership in women's leadership.

The other theory on social role of women was developed by American social psychologists Alice Eagly and Valerie Steffen (Eagly & Steffen, 1984). This theory suggests that gender differences in leadership styles are due to societal expectations and norms. Women are expected to be communal and nurturing, which can lead to a more collaborative leadership style. Men, on the other hand, are expected to be dominant and assertive, which can lead to a more autocratic leadership style.

The Glass Cliff Theory was first introduced by Michelle K. Ryan and S. Alexander Haslam (2007). This theory suggests that women are more likely to be appointed to leadership positions during times of crisis, when the probability of failure is high. This is because women

are seen as more capable of managing difficult situations and are often called upon to "clean up" after a male leader has failed.

Glass Ceiling term was coined by management consultant Marilyn Loden, it was popularized by (Hymowitz, 1986). This theory suggests that there is an invisible barrier that prevents women from reaching the highest levels of leadership in organizations. This barrier is often rooted in gender stereotypes and biases that prevent women from being seen as capable leaders.

The theory of implicit bias was first introduced by (BRIAN A. NOSEK et al., 2007). They developed the Implicit Association Test (IAT), which is a tool used to measure implicit bias. This theory suggests that people hold unconscious biases that affect their perceptions of women in leadership roles. For example, people may perceive women as less competent or less qualified than men, even when there is no evidence to support these beliefs.

Overall, these theories highlight the complex and multifaceted nature of the barriers that women face in attaining leadership positions. By understanding these barriers, organizations can take steps to address them and create a more inclusive and equitable workplace for women leaders.

METHODOLOGY

The article is of narrative-type of review. The researcher used different combinations of keywords for searching the articles through Google Scholar and Publish or Perish software.

The keywords used to find the articles were “Barriers of Women leadership, Women leadership, Metaphors in women leadership, Glass Ceiling, Queen bees, Glass Cliff, Sticky Floor, Glass Wall, Glass Escalator, Glass Floor, Glass Door” etc.

There are many articles related to women’s leadership but there were only approximately 90 articles associated with barriers to women’s leadership. Figure 1 gives the citation matrix of the keyword ‘barriers to women’s leadership’.

Figure 1: Citation metrics associated with 'barriers of women leadership'.

Citation metrics		Help
Publication years:	1978-2023	
Citation years:	45 (1978-2023)	
Papers:	90	
Citations:	714	
Cites/year:	15.87	
Cites/paper:	7.93	
Authors/paper:	1.49	
h-index:	11	
g-index:	25	
hI,norm:	10	
hI,annual:	0.22	
hA-index:	3	
Papers with ACC >= 1,2,5,10,20:	14,7,2,2,1	

Source: (Publish or Perish)

Out of these 90 articles, relevant 50 articles were screened, reviewed, and included in the article.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After reviewing the articles, the metaphors used for women leadership are as narrated and discussed below.

This study has witnessed various research papers and has realized that women's leadership problems have been described strongly with the help of metaphors. There are diverse metaphors that are used for problems in women's leadership in different aspects, for example, the glass ceiling is used to explain the hurdles confronted by them at the senior leadership positions, a sticky floor is used to elaborate on the restriction of not getting advancement in their career beyond entry-level, labyrinth describes various obstacle that women encounter throughout their career, queen bee elaborates the phenomenon wherein other women at senior position hinders the growth of their junior female staff and glass cliff is used for the situations wherein the women are given access to senior leadership position only when it is risky to handle or when they do not have any other choice. (Carli & Eagly, 2003); (Smith, Caputi, & Crittenden, 2012), and there are more such metaphors used to describe problems in women's leadership (Alice, 2016).

Metaphors play a crucial role in identifying social contexts and also, and they help people to recognize and undertake the information about metaphors by connecting it with

uncomplicated simple concepts (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). So whether these metaphors are able to describe the current state of women's leadership or not is still a question because there have been so many metaphors that are used to describe women's leadership in different concerns. The present study has reviewed articles that used metaphors for women's leadership positions. These metaphors broadly described the powerful, influential, and dominating positions led by women and the challenges faced by them (Landau, Robinson, & Meier, 2014). Metaphors can affect the perceptions, attitudes, and behavior of individuals hence, it becomes a critical area to study the use of diverse metaphors for women's leadership.

Metaphors used for Women Leadership

Glass Ceiling

Glass Ceiling was described as invisible hurdle in women growth and hence they are not given the opportunity to grow. As part of civil rights movement in 1960s these biases, partial approach towards women and restriction in attaining the top leadership positions were seen as a result of organizational prejudices (O'Connor, 2001). Initially "glass ceiling" was used to pronounce the extent to which women can grow up to their highest capacities but lately this term is frequently used to define the barrier in women's growth especially in senior leadership positions (Morrison & von Glinow, 1990). So, the hurdles that women encounter in order to reach the senior leadership position is labelled as glass ceiling. Women need to breakdown the ceiling if they want to have career advancements. These ceilings are invisible as these are the obstacles or challenges faced by them in their career progressions and sometimes it is their feelings, exhaustion, frustration which cannot be felt by anyone except herself (Alice, 2016). The metaphor glass ceiling was coined by Catherine White Berheide where she wanted to highlight the issues faced by women at their workplaces like pay disparities and only entry level offerings in various government positions (Noble, 1992). Later the term was used in every field wherever women were not allowed to seek higher managerial hierarchies (Spaid, 1993).

Many researchers elaborated the glass ceiling as "blame-the-victim" approach, (Barnett, 2004) some researchers indirectly mentioned that women do not carry the required talent or skill to hold the high leadership positions as leaders require to have the "right stuff" in them which is certainly not there in women (Bernet-Verzat & Wolff, 2008). There is one more term which is used in this regard wherein women are restricted to make critical decisions even if they are at a senior hierarchical position, known as labyrinth (Northouse, 2012). Studies

have attempted to identify reasons due to which women are still trapped in glass ceilings for years. Men have been authorized to take senior positions as their rights, they had opportunities, they were part of critical decisions and were found to be brilliant with networking, however this scenario was exactly opposite for women and they were just not good enough with networking and hence were given the reason for fall. This theory was emphasized by the Wall Street Journal in the year 1986 and since then the term “glass ceiling” became more popular in use (Baxter & Wright, 2000). Some studies have identified factors responsible for the glass ceiling and why women still face it at various levels in their workplaces. These factors are individual (self-perceptions), organization (policies, culture) and social (preconceived notions and judgments)(Baumgartner & Schneider, 2010)(Boone, Veller, Nikolaeva, Keith, & Houran, 2013). The issue of glass ceiling is witnessed globally be it a developing nation or developed. Many studies were conducted in this regard (Reynolds, 1999)(Schein, 2007)(Arulampalam, Booth, & Bryan, 2007)(Javalgi, et al., 2011).

Some researchers mentioned the criteria of genuine presence of glass ceiling in the organization which included reflection of job inequality with respect to their qualification, gender or racial disparities, gender or racial disparities in the career advancements and presence of inequality in all over the career (Cotter, Hermsen, Ovadia, & Vanneman, 2001). Past researchers have also shown the women have inhibiting personality of not being ambitious, low Machiavellianism, and less aggressive (Hewlett S. &., 2005).

Queen Bees

The queen bee phenomenon was first defined by (Staines, Tavis, & Jayaratne, 1974). The term queen bee is designated to women who climb their success ladders with the help of male presence and isolating themselves from other women. Queen bees are women leaders who have advanced the hierarchical ladder but in the process of reaching there, they have become extremely rational and highly competitive which does not relate with their traditional image of being soft and empathetic towards people (Ellemers, Henriette, Gilder, Maass, & Alessandra, 2004), (Arvate, 2018). The research revealed that there are different ways by which women represent themselves more like men. Some of them follow the practice of physical and psychological distancing themselves from other women while some support the existing gender hierarchy in the organization. (Derks, Laar, & Ellemers, 2016)

Researchers have established parameters for measuring Queen Bee Phenomenon as men self-description; robust commitment towards career; perception of sacrifices made in order to favor one's career; renunciation of gender discrimination in organization; adherence to the meritocratic discourse; and very low support for favourable action policies for quantitative gender parity (Grangeiro, Teixeira Rezende, Bastos Gomes Neto, Carneiro, & Esnard, 2022). Some studies have revealed a very interesting fact that although it is expected that females at senior leadership positions will support and will become mentors to the female new joiners but it is not the case. It is observed that females prefer and support young and dynamic male budding managers instead of females (Faniko, 2016). Many studies have supported this and generalized the preference of male employees instead of female (Eagly, 2002). However, both males and females believe that females are better and effective managers but they do not want to work for a female boss (Warning, 2009)

Glass Cliff

Glass Cliff indicates the propensity of women to be more likely than men while being appointed to leadership positions that are dicey. It describes the gender disparity encountered by women who have already crossed the glass ceiling and who are designated to handle riskier situation and positions than men. (Bruckmuller, Ryan, Rink, & Haslam, 2014)

(Ryan & Haslam, The Glass Cliff: Evidence that Women are Over-Represented in Precarious Leadership Positions, 2005) anticipated the notion of a glass cliff, denoting to engagements to senior management profiles under hostile circumstances, to be the reason of adverse organizational performance. The glass cliff proposes that women are expected to access leadership positions when organizations experience crisis situations.

Many studies have confirmed that during the crisis, interpersonally oriented leadership capabilities are most relevant such as being vicarious, sympathetic, supporting work relations, or clearly affirming an interest in helping other employees etc. Since these leadership capabilities accord with stereotypically womanly roles and behaviours, it has been anticipated that a “think crisis–think female” connotation may be real. (Ryan M. K., Haslam, Hersby, & Bongiorno, 2011)

The three studies done by (Ryan M. K., Haslam, Hersby, & Bongiorno, 2011) which examined the relationship between gender and managerial stereotypes in the context of companies performance. First study found that ‘think manager think men’ association for descriptions of managers of successful companies but demonstrated a reversal for managers

of unsuccessful companies. Second study found that there is no 'think manager think men' relationship for ideal managers of successful companies however, there was a strong association of female stereotype with ideal managers of unsuccessful companies. The third study found that organizations have biased approach towards women leaders as they are good people managers and generally take blame even for organization failure at the time of poor performance of companies.

The recent research carried out by conducting the three experimental studies (Ns = 319, 384, 385) found that communal leaders were least associated with financial crisis and strongly associated with relational crisis, with the no crisis context situated in-between. In contrast, female leaders were least associated with no crisis context and strongly associated with relational crisis, with the financial crisis situated in-between. The further study is required to understand the implicit motivations for valuing feminine/communal leadership and atypical leaders in crisis situations. (Kulich, Gartzia, Komarraju, & Aelenei, 2021)

Sticky floor

In 1992, the sticky floor was quoted by Catherine Berheide in a report for the Centre for Women in Government. The sticky floor metaphor is used to designate the inequitable employment pattern that allows a certain group of people to remain at bottom of the job scale. The women who hold clerical and administrative assistants, mental health care, child care workers, service jobs etc. are associated with sticky floor. The sticky floor happens when the gap widens at the bottom of wage distribution. The identical men and women who are to be appointed to a particular job, should be appointed at the same pay scale or rank, but women are found to be appointed at bottom of scale and men at higher scale.

There is similarity and also differences in sticky floor and glass ceiling. The glass ceiling is used to indicate an artificial unfair hurdle which does not allow the further progression of women who already hold strong positions in senior level management. Women who are either glass ceiling or sticky floor, both have low upward mobility and are limited to improve their situation. Whereas, women who run into glass ceiling are found to be more educated and privileged than that of sticky floor. The sticky floor is generally observed in under developed or developing countries. Developed countries are more likely to face the glass ceiling. (Faruk, 2019)

The sticky floor metaphor addresses an element which is related with managing professional and family concerns. The responsibility of managing family front acts as sticky floor to women which holds them at lower management levels. (Olidi, Parejo, & Padilla, 2013) The issues like maternity and handing children also contributes problems for women in employment.(Booth, Francesconi, & Frank, 2003)

Other metaphors used in Women Leadership:

There are few more metaphors used to describe the barriers in career advancement of women and their leadership. These barriers are glass wall, glass escalator, glass floor, glass door etc. These are briefly mentioned as below.

Glass Wall

Metaphor “glass wall” refers to restriction of women’s promotion, lateral movement within the organization or to the other organization. Organizations have identified positions and profiles that are suitable for women (“female-appropriate”) and they are expected to be confined in it (Galloway, 2012), (Browne & Giampetro, 2003), (Xiang, Ingram, & Cangemi, 2017)

Glass Escalator

Since early days the profession of male and female are distributed with respect to their skills and capabilities. When males started entering the female profession like nursing, library positions which are comparatively confined to working in controlled, closed and safe workplaces, it is referred to Glass Escalator (Williams C. , 1992); (Williams C. L., 2013). It also explains the fast promotion of men at traditionally women dominated occupations, so even if the workplace was traditionally female dominated still the males have better prospects and future career advancements (Xiang, Ingram, & Cangemi, 2017).

Glass Floor

Glass floor referred the extent to which the gender discrimination takes place at levels where the organization has very little educational requirements and minimal or no growth (Bernet-Verzat & Wolff, 2008).

Glass Door

The challenge faced by females at the initial entry in an organization. The main reason for the existence of this metaphor is the high ratio of female employment already existing in the organizations (Cohen, Broschak, & Haveman, 1998).

CONCLUSION

The buzz around the metaphors of women leadership started when women started working along with working at home. Since early days women in India, were expected to take care of home and things within home while men were expected to handle things outside the home. It was also because women were more humble, empathetic, soft spoken and subtle by nature. On the other hand, men were given privilege of being strong and harsh at times as they were the “head of the house”. When women started doing things which men were doing and that too with greater efficiency, it was the big deal for the society to accept and this acceptance is still a question mark. Now, women are thriving hard to achieve everything i.e. financial independence and happy family. To manage both is difficult task in itself and these discriminations, disparities, biased behaviour makes their journey more difficult.

Glass Ceiling, Labyrinth, Glass wall, Glass door, Glass cliff, Sticky floor, queen bees and what not is being said and practiced at the workplaces which not only makes the working difficult but also disturbs her mentally and emotionally. Sometimes the supervisors or the bosses are not even aware of the issues faced by women and make faulty judgements. There is a lack of awareness amongst the corporate leaders regarding the diverse metaphors used for women leadership and which also means that they are knowingly or unknowingly enhancing the hurdles for women at their workplaces. These challenges and situations exist around us, but people are not vigilant and are reluctant to take efforts to tackle or overcome these barriers for women.

In India, gender discrimination happens right from the birth of child and continues throughout the life. Recent research conducted in the IT and ITES sector in India, found that women were always in a state of balancing career and family or prioritizing the career demands over the responsibilities. The women were giving credits for success to organizational culture like support from supervisors, management, and informal opportunities to interact, network and showcase their work to senior colleagues. (Bhattacharya, Mohapatra, & Bhattacharya, 2018) Similarly, a recent study done by (Rastogi, Baral, & Banu, 2022) of women entrepreneurship in India, have reported that in urban India the societal attitudes are

transforming and are getting inspiration and encouragement to women to pursue their passion and become a successful strong leader. Issues like equal opportunities, pay disparities, promotions, unequal salary increments are there since years. It has improved but still long way to go. Leadership positions should not be given to women because they are bounded to but they must be given because they deserve it. If women are expected to excel and outperform every field they work in, they must be given inducing ambience to achieve the same.

The research contributed to describing the various issues and challenges related to women leadership. The study adds value by presenting the review of the major barriers that restricted the growth of women at senior leadership positions. The analogies express the role and intention of women to hold the strong position they acquire. This research suggests that there is a strong urge to sensitize our corporate leaders regarding these widely used metaphors and reasons for using them especially in a country like India. The clear understanding of the barriers will certainly help in identifying the various variables associated with the consequences to barriers. By understanding these barriers, organizations can take steps to address them and create a more inclusive and equitable workplace for women leaders.

LIMITATION OF RESEARCH

The article has been limited to define and investigate the metaphors associated with barriers to women leadership. The article does not cover the various variables associated with the women leadership and barriers associated with women leadership.

FUTURE SCOPE FOR RESEARCH

The further research can be made on systematic review of literature on barriers of women leadership. The methodological review and the relationship between various barriers and variables can be established. The models of relationship between barriers and variables associated with women's leadership can be built.

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