

A Study on Glass Ceiling in Private Banks, Coimbatore: An Exploratory Study



Management

KEYWORDS : Glass ceiling, employee's job satisfaction, working condition

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ABSTRACT

The research team has selected the topic of "Glass ceiling" for the research project. It has been observed that during the last few years a lot of women are going in management field but not a lot of them are getting an opportunity to get into the top management positions. This has got nothing to do with their abilities and dedication to their work, it is clear that glass ceiling is affecting and stopping the women from reaching the top management positions. This is because despite the boom in education sector, the society still remains conservative and negative feelings and stereotypes do exist against women employees. As a result of the glass ceiling, the performance of women employees is also being affected. The research was conducted in private sector banks in Coimbatore city. The researcher has selected ten private sectors banks out of ten banks the researcher has selected 150 samples through convenient sampling method. From this study it was found that the working condition was the top most problem for the work conflicts among the banking employees. It also found that the bank should take steps to improve its employee's job satisfaction.

This study is efforts to not only identify the factors responsible for affecting the performance of women managers through glass ceiling but also to give solutions to overcome from this problem.

INTRODUCTION

The world had just celebrated the century year of International Women's day (2010), which is meant to celebrate the women in workforce. On the other hand, the unfortunate fact is that women are still facing the same world which celebrate her, also discriminates her. This discrimination is referred to as "glass ceiling". The term refers to the seen, yet unreachable barriers. That keeps women from rising to the upper ranks in the ladder. The very fact of women being adequately represented in the workforce, but hardly present in the managerial positions got labeled "the glass ceiling", Morrison & Glinow (1990) "a barrier so subtle that it is transparent, yet so strong that it prevents women and minorities from moving up in the management hierarchy". As appears from the extant literature, the glass ceiling comes in many forms: women's under-representation at the corporate hierarchy, gendered wage gap, occupational segregation, discriminative corporate policies, lack of attention to the specific needs women have, sexual harassment, exclusion of women from informal networks.

DEFINITION FOR GLASS CEILING

The term "glass ceiling" was coined in a 1986 Wall Street Journal report on corporate women by Hymowitz and Schellhardt. The glass ceiling is a concept that most frequently refers to barriers faced by women who attempt, or aspire, to attain senior positions (as well as higher salary levels) in corporations, government, education and nonprofit organizations. It can also refer to racial and ethnic minorities and men when they experience barriers to advancement. For the purpose of this article, the glass ceiling is discussed regarding women in business with a focus on advancement to senior positions.

In economics, the term glass ceiling refers to "the unseen, yet unbreakable barrier that keeps minorities and women from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements."

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

- "A gender or racial difference that is not explained by other job-relevant characteristics of the employee."
- "A gender or racial difference that is greater at higher levels of an outcome than at lower levels of an outcome."
- "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."

- "A gender or racial inequality that increases over the course of a career."

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In 1997, Tokunaga & Graham looked at employees in the technical division at one large Fortune 500 corporation and found that female engineers could not advance as far up the corporate hierarchy as did the male engineers, thereby providing evidence for the existence of a "glass ceiling" against women.

The minority of women in senior management has led many researchers to investigate whether "glass ceiling barriers such as sexual discrimination, gender wage gap, gender stereotype, harassment and lack of family-friendly workplace policies in the organizations are at play and how these barriers affect the performance of female employees in the organizations". (Jeavons & Sevastos, 2002).

Buttner (2001) Fletcher (1998) hooks (2000) have stated that gender related attributes also play their role. An appropriate theoretical foundation for explaining differences between male and female service providers originates in the sociology literature and is referred to as feminist theory. This theory proffers two perspectives regarding gender-related differences in performance. One argues that there are a wide variety of issues that are impacted by society's attitudes towards women. These attitudes are based in the history and institutional structure of society. As a result, women are treated differently than men, so that the performance of businesses owned by women suffers. Another stream of literature argues that there are innate differences between male and female approaches to issues. These differences lead women to take different actions than males in similar situations.

Burke (2002) observes that both women and men prefer working in organizations that support work-life balance. Men appeared to benefit more than women. Men feel more satisfied when they achieve more on the job even at the cost of ignoring the family. On the other hand, women stress that work and family are both equally important and both are the sources of their satisfaction. For them the former is more important. When work does not permit women to take care of their family, they feel unhappy, disappointed and frustrated. They draw tight boundaries between work and family and they do not like one crossing the others.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the reason for work conflict related to women em-

ployees in banking sector.

- To examine the job satisfaction of women employees in banking sector.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The process of drawing a sample from a larger population is called sampling. Sampling is a part of population, which is studied in order to make inferences about the whole population. The total population in ten selected private banks was 503, in which the researcher has collected data from 170 respondents of out it 20 questionnaires were rejected due to its data Sufficiency and inaccuracy therefore the researcher has selected 150 respondents through convenient sampling method for this study.

TOOLS USED

Henry Garret Ranking

This method is used to find out the most important factor from the given factors based on their ranks. As per this method, respondents have been asked to assign the rank for all the factors and out of such ranking have been converted into score value with the help of the following formula:

$$\text{Percent position} = 100(R_{ij} - 0.5) / N_j$$

R_{ij} – Rank given for the i^{th} factor by the j^{th} respondents.

N_j – Number of factors ranked by the j^{th} respondents.

The percentage position of each rank thus obtained is converted into scores by referring to the table given by Hendry Garret. Then for each factor the scores of individual respondents are added together and divided by the total number of respondents for whom the scores were added. Ranks are given on the basis of the mean score values and most important factors are identified.

In the present study the Henry garret ranking is used to find out the reason for the work conflicts faced by the women employee in the banking sector. The various factors which are considered in the study are

Amount of Responsibility

Close supervision.

Work safety

Working condition

Multi instructions/communication

Execution of work

Priority of jobs

Scope for improvement/job prospects

Importance of decision making

High salary

Seniority based promotion

Personal development/learning

A stable and secure future

Balanced work and family life.

Opportunity for advancement

Social status/prestige

Fringe benefits

Relaxed working environment

Benefits after retirement.

SCORE VALUE ANALYSIS:

In this score value analysis used to find out the percentage of the agreed level or satisfaction level from the many variables which are concerned to similar thing or event. In this method the qualitative data converted to quantitative data through giving scores. After giving the scores the total score will be calculated based on the response given by the respondents. After that the maximum score of each factor should be calculated. $(N \times S)$ Number of respondents is multiplied by High score given to the factor is used to calculate maximum score of each factor. After that the following formula is used to find out the Percentage of agreed level in each factor.

This gives the percentage of agreed level in one factor. After computing all the factors agreed level, the all over agreed level to be calculated by using the following formula

Through this analysis we can get the percentage of Agreed level to each factor as well as all over agreed percentage. In this study the respondents opinion about the job satisfaction level in banking sector are identified which is obtained through a five point scaling techniques similar to likert scale. The data's are properly consolidated and presented in different tables with suitable interpretations.

Limitations of the study

The result and findings are based on the opinion of the respondents in private banking sector and it cannot be generalized.

Interpretation:

It could be seen from the above table that Working Condition was ranked first with a Mean score of 39.86. Amount of responsibility was the second conflict with a mean score of 36.17. Execution of work was ranked as the third and Work safety was ranked as the fourth with a score of 35.34 and 34.87 points respectively. Fifth rank was obtained by Close supervision with the mean score of 33.22. Sixth rank was obtained by Multi instructions/communication with the mean score of 26.76. Scope for improvement/job prospects and priority of jobs was obtained seventh and eight ranks with the mean score of 26.29 and 25.88 respectively. Work targets get ninth rank with the mean score of 21.39 and Importance of decision making was got tenth rank with the mean score 17.61.

From this it was found that the working conditions was the top most conflicting problem to the banking employees and the importance of decision making was the least problem to the employees. An effective working condition is vital for every women employee to carry out their task in an Efficient way. A positive working environment includes flexible working time, balance between work and life,

HENNY GARRET RANKING-TABLE 1

	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
X	150	1	3	3	4	5	7	11	14	15	18	19	14	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
IX	150	2	4	0	1	7	3	18	19	41	54	85	95	29	18						
VIII	150	2	0	8	14	13	7	58	27	17	2	75	36								
VII	150	1	3	11	77	10	14	14	11	5	8	65	42								
VI	150	2	44	17	10	14	22	8	16	7	10	55	47								
V	150	22	24	16	3	12	9	2	36	8	18	45	52								
IV	150	54	31	15	8	4	4	18	0	0	7	35	57								
III	150	23	14	45	4	14	23	14	0	2	11	25	63								
II	150	36	13	22	12	2	45	11	4	5	3	15	70								

I	Conflicts	81
7	Amount of Responsibility	530
14	Close supervision.	485
13	Work safety	472
83	Working condition	586
2	Multi instructions/communication	598
20	Execution of work	2671
6	Priority of jobs	71.23
5	Scope for improvement/job prospects	
0	Importance of decision making	
0	Work Targets	
5	Garrett Percentage	
81	Garrett Score	

HENRY GARRET RANKING TABLE
TABLE 1.CONFLICTS FACED BY WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN BANKS

Conflicts	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	Total
Amount of Responsibility	7	36	23	54	22	2	1	2	2	1	150
Close supervision.	14	13	14	31	24	44	3	0	4	3	150
Work safety	13	22	45	15	16	17	11	8	0	3	150
Working condition	83	12	4	8	3	10	11	14	1	4	150
Multi instructions/communication	2	2	14	4	12	14	77	13	7	5	150
Execution of work	20	45	23	4	9	22	10	7	3	7	150
Priority of jobs	6	11	14	8	2	8	14	58	18	11	150
Scope for improvement/job prospects	5	4	0	18	36	16	11	27	19	14	150
Importance of decision making	0	5	2	0	8	7	5	17	41	65	150
Work Targets	0	3	11	7	18	10	8	2	54	37	150
Garrett Percentage	5	15	25	35	45	55	65	75	85	95	
Garrett Score	81	70	63	57	52	47	42	36	29	18	

Adequate training, skills and employability, safety and well being for its employee so that will result in facilitating a feeling of cooperation, teamwork and joy among the staff will be the best solution to resolve the conflicts. In view of the fact that women occupy the middle level management roles in their workplace they are not provided with an opportunity to take decision thus the decisions are derived by the top echelons which are occupied by men, so the importance of decision making was considered as the least factor for the work conflicts in the organization.

Table 2- Interpretation:
Happy with my present salary

The total score value is 2671. Regarding the 'Happy with my present salary' the score value is 530, which is 70.67%. It indicates that the employees are satisfied with their present salary structure which results in increased job satisfaction level.

According to Cable and Judge (1994) pointed out that Salary satisfaction has a

Significant effect on the job satisfaction and it coincides with present study also. However, pay satisfaction is also an important variable that is linked to some rather significant organizational outcomes. For example, some evidence suggests that

dissatisfaction with pay may lead to decreased job satisfaction, decreased motivation and performance, increased absenteeism and turnover intensions, and more pay related grievances and lawsuits. Pay satisfaction has been shown to influence overall job satisfaction, result in high motivation sprit and performance, reduces the absenteeism and turnover intensions.

SCORE VALUE ANALYSIS
TABLE-2- JOB SATISFACTION LEVEL IN BANKING SECTOR

Particulars						Total	Score	Percentage
	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree			
Happy with my present salary	10	74	55	8	3	150	530	70.67
Superior Support	12	37	80	16	5	150	485	64.67
Improved Job Satisfaction	9	38	71	30	2	150	472	62.93
No Physical stress in the job	63	40	26	12	9	150	586	78.13
No Mental Pressure in the job	68	43	17	13	9	150	598	79.73
Grand Total						2671	71.23	

Superior Support

The total score value is 2671. Regarding the Superior Support the score value is 485, which is 64.67%. It reveals that the superior supports are also necessary for the overall job satisfaction of the employees.

The present study also coincides with the previous study done by Mahoney and Jones (1957) stated that the effective leader motivates employee to achieve the goal through reward and making clear employee's path to the organization's objectives which increase both employee satisfaction and organization's productivity.

Improved job satisfaction

The total score value is 2671.Regarding the 'Improved Job Satisfaction' the score value is 472, which is 62.93%. It indicates that the overall job satisfaction levels of the employee are to be improved.

The current research correlates with the study by Opara (2002) examines that various determinates such as pay, work itself, relationships with coworkers, supervision and opportunities for promotion had been found to be the important aspects which contribute to the improved job satisfaction.

No Physical stress in the job

The total score value is 2671.Regarding the 'No Physical stress in the job' the score value is 586, which is 78.13%. It is revealed that the employees are free from the physical stress in the job performed by them which results in increasing the job satisfaction level.

The present study coincides with the previous study conducted by Accord Group (India) Pvt. Ltd's director Sonal Agarwal: "Banking was traditionally viewed as a safe 9 to 5, low-stress job with good perks and comfortable working conditions. It had attractive perks such as housing, soft loans, structured work-

ing hours, maternity policies. There are no “plant” jobs and the environment is women-friendly. Also, men would traditionally opt for engineering, sciences and CA qualifications, while many women were drawn to and fared well at the probationary officer exams. Hence, many of these women would have risen to the top now.” Thus the present finding also states that there is no physical stress in the job which are performing by the women employees in the banking sector.

No Mental Pressure in the job

The total score value is 2671. Regarding the ‘No Mental Pressure in the job’ the score value is 598, which is 79.73%. It indicates that the employees are working without job stress and mental pressure as a result it leads to achieve the job satisfaction level in banking sector.

The past study conducted by (Savery and Luks, 2000b) varies with the present findings. Performance in Relation to Job Stress is a mental and physical condition, which affects an individual’s productivity, effectiveness, personal health and quality of work. Job stress and mental pressures are the victims experience lowered quality of work life and job satisfaction. The harmful and costly consequences of stress demonstrate the need for strategies to limit stressors within the organization. Organizations that do not adopt strategies to alleviate stress may find their employees looking elsewhere for better opportunities. The impact of stress from overwork, long hours at work and work intensification has had a major and often devastating effect on organizations of developed nations. Japan, where Karoshi – death by overwork – is officially recognized as a fatal illness, America where job stress and mental pressure alone costs American business an estimated \$200 billion annually, the UK £63 billion and Australia \$15 billion. This is the cost for compensation claims, reduced productivity, absenteeism, added health insurance costs and direct medical expenses for stress related illnesses.

The total score value is 2671, which is 71.23% and hence the employees agreed level in various aspects of job satisfaction is interpreted as Average. In all aspects the percentage is above 60% but the same time it is below 80% so the bank should take

steps to improve its employee’s job satisfaction.

SUGGESTIONS

The underrepresentation of women in senior positions calls for a sizeable shift in organizational culture and attitudes. Sustainable change needs to come from the top echos in order to take advantage of the highly talented women currently prevented or discouraged from reaching senior level. Thus to make a sustainable changes, all managers need to be more aware of particular challenges and needs for developing women. They need to be able to put into practice the coaching and mentoring relationship, providing women employees with female role models, transparent performance management, understanding the flexible working practices, and motivating the women employee to realize their potentials which are to be required for enhancing the women to crack the glass ceiling in the workplace .

CONCLUSION

Both domestically and globally, women represent a relatively untapped source of talent for leadership in the workplace. While progress has been made across the globe, barriers to women’s advancement continue to exist, including cultural norms, stereotypes, and employer policies and practices. As the renowned economist Lester Thurow, Lemelson Professor of Management and Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, recently said, “Great challenges lay ahead and our economic future is at stake. Organizations cannot compete in a global environment without using women.” From the research it has found that the working condition was the top most problem for the conflicts faced by the women employees in the workplace. The superior support and guidance are needed for the women employees to carry out their task efficiently. It is also noted that women employees have to balance their work and family which are most typical thing were women place a double role. Human resource professionals have a significant part to play through organizational culture, workplace policies and practices, change management and workforce education to develop women leaders at workplace.

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