



Impact of Glass Ceiling Effect on Women's Career Success with the Mediating Role of Women Empowerment: Perspective from Sri Lankan Hospitality Industry

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Abstract

This research explores the gender equality in the hospitality sector with the support of the Glass Ceiling Effect and how it applies to Women's Career Progress. Women's Career Progress. Women's career progress and women's empowerment being the dependent variable and mediator respectively, this study employed five independent variables as the key predictors of glass ceilings. Simple random sampling procedure was applied to select 123 respondents and SPSS and Smart PLS software were used to analyze the data. Research findings revealed that there is no impact of internal job mobility and organizational culture on women empowerment at 3 and above-star hotels in the Sri Lankan context due to having less P-Values than 0.05. Female representation in hotels was lower (7.40%) than male representation. By delegation of authority, fair performance reviews, training and incentives, scholarships, and flexible work arrangements are all ways to improve the qualification credentials of female employees.

Keywords: *Glass Ceiling Effect, Gendered Organization Theory (GOT), Hotels, Women Career Progress, Women Empowerment*

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Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) is one of the critical management areas in any company, which can be defined as the coordination of people and work to achieve organizational goals and objectives. HRM is an unavoidable outcome of building and operating a business, and its existence does not need to be extensively justified (Boxall, 2007). According to that statement, it proves HRM plays a significant role in any organization. And even though Boxall mentions HRM as a critical function of employing people in a firm, there is a Gendered Organizations Theory (GOT) that suggests that stereotyped roles regarding men and women will persist, regardless of the gender makeup of the workforce (Mastracci & Arreola, 2016). Joan Acker developed this theory after noting that current gender-based theories were unable to adequately analyze and explain the implications of gender in organizations. Organizations and professional interactions, according to the GOT, have gendered norms that benefit men and control women. Gender is important as an advanced analysis in conceptualizing, organizational culture, and process, according to Acker. The GOT framework is a systematic framework that examines the various gender-based characteristics and activities that contribute to the male-female discrepancy.

From this GOT several models have been drawn upon. The Glass Ceiling Effect (GCE) is also a branch of this GOT. This GCE was introduced by Marilyn Loden, who spoke as a panelist at the 1978 Women's Exhibition in New York, and she is the one who phrased the "Glass Ceiling Effect". Loden was invited to speak about how women were

to blame for the barriers that stopped her from rising in her employer's only female executive career. Cook, A., and Glass, C. (2014) have established occupational minorities defined as women consistent with the hypothesis of the glass cliff. Moreover, out of the gender basis, there is a high tendency to promote a male person as the CEO of weakly performing firms. Despite the fact that discovered no significant variations in retention duration between men and women, when firm performance suffers during the term of occupation due to the CEO's activities, these executives are likely to be replaced by men, even if they are not performing well at their work. Accordingly, it clearly shows that women are rarely getting the opportunity for the top managerial level positions though there are available opportunities.

As a result, analogous organizational experiences for women and professionals of color have received less attention. As a result, there are some research and practice-based resources accessible in higher education to address job discrimination issues. As a result, it shows that worker diversity in their research is extensive leans on glass ceiling effects studies undertaken in business forces. At the same time, social closure theory was introduced as an analytical framework for advancing organizational ownership of job discrimination in general and Glass Ceiling moment Effects in particular. Therefore, this research will be developed based on the GOT while addressing the gaps in GCE in women's career.

Research Problem(s)/Issue(s)

Human resource management (HRM) refers to the rules and practices that are used to organize work and hire

employees (Pareek et.al, 2007). According to D.M Daley (1998), the Glass Ceiling Effect is generally talking about a pattern that arises where long-term attributions are beyond the person's control. Some women's advantages, such as part-time work or job-sharing, may not be accessible to women in higher management roles at all, or using them may entail missing prospects for the career progress of women. (Woodall, 1996).

Correspondently The World Travel & Tourism Council (2014) claims that women make up approximately 70% of the tourism industry's workforce globally. On the other hand, Female representation in senior management, is extremely low. According to data from the World Travel & Tourism Council (2014), Women hold fewer than 40% of total managerial jobs, less than 20% of general management roles, and 5-8 % of board posts. Women's participation in the industry in Sri Lanka is extremely low, accounting for only 10% of the formal sector. Furthermore, the number of women in high managerial positions in the tourism industry is insignificant (Silva et al., 2017).

These statements evident that women empowerment towards the women career progress is critical in tourism and hospitality sector.

Objective(s)

The general objective of the research is to identify whether the glass ceiling effect hinder career progress of female employees in the hotel sector in Sri Lanka through the lenses of gendered organizational theory. As well this study was done to find the answers to the questions such as,

1. To identify the determinants that affect women's career progress in the 3, 4, and 5-star hotels sector

about all the levels of female employees.

2. To identify the impact of glass ceiling determinants on women's empowerment.
3. To identify the impact of the glass ceiling effect and women's career progress through women empowerment.

Theoretical Considerations and Empirical Evidence

According to the field survey done by the researcher, it was identified that the female employees at 3, 4, and 5-star hotels in lower than the male employees. Relevant documents have been attached under the appendix section. Correspondence to the data gathered regarding the male and female counts can be shown from table 1.

Confirming to the table 1, shows that in the Kandy district female employees are extremely lower than the male workers are at three, 4, and 5-star hotels in Kandy.

Methods

According to the Annual Statistical Report, 2019 – Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority shows that there are 23, five-star hotels, 21, 4 –star hotels, and there are 24, 3- star hotels in Sri Lanka. (SLTDA annual report, 2019). Correspondently a sample size of this research has been considered based on the Krejcie and Morgan, (1970) sample size scale. In addition, 123 female employees were taken as the sample size due to the 190 population. In addition, the Simple Random Sampling method has been used to approach the sample size. According to Tommy (1988). The data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire, including 42 questions.

And the data analysis has been done using Smart PLS, a computer-based statistical data analysis software. Descriptive analysis t-test, ANOVA, for analysis of the profile of respondents, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy test for the validation of samples sufficiently, and other quality criteria for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The proposed theoretical model has been tested using SEM in Smart PLS. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was run, finally, the structural model has been tested and hypotheses were tested using statistical techniques.

Based on the conceptual framework, eleven hypotheses were developed as follows,

- H1- There is an impact of Family and Social Commitment on Women Empowerment at 3 and above star hotels in Kandy.
- H2- There is an impact of Internal Job Mobility on Women Empowerment at 3 and above star hotels in Kandy.
- H3- There is an impact of Organizational Culture on Women Empowerment at 3 and above star hotels in Kandy.
- H4 - There is an impact of Level of Job Performances on Women Empowerment at 3 and above star hotels in Kandy.
- H5- There is an impact of Level of Educational and Professional Qualifications on Women Empowerment at 3 and above star hotels in Kandy.
- H6- There is an impact of Family and Social Commitment on Women Career Progress at 3 and above star hotels in Kandy.
- H7- There is an impact of Internal Job Mobility on Women Career

Progress at 3 and above star hotels in Kandy.

- H8- There is an impact of Organizational Culture on Women Career Progress at 3 and above star hotels in Kandy.
- H9- There is a relationship between Level of Job Performances with Women Career Progress at 3 and above star hotels in Kandy.
- H10- There is a relationship between Level of Educational and Professional Qualifications with Women Career Progress at 3 and above star hotels in Kandy.
- H11- There is a relationship between Women Empowerment and Women Career Progress at 3 and above star hotels in Kandy.

Results

Correspondently based on the above-analysis, the general and specific objectives of the study can be measured. Along with the findings of the structural equation model, there were negative and positive Glass ceiling impacts on Women's Career Progress through women's Empowerment. The hypothesis analysis was done from the H6, to make the discussion over the impact and about the strong glass ceiling determinant that affects women's career progress. According to the H6, the significant path coefficient was $\beta = 0.172$ (very weak positive impact), the t-value was 2.465 (significant); P-value was 0.014 (significant). It denoted that family and social commitment could be considered as a strong determinant under the glass ceiling effect which can positively affect women's career progress. H7 had a significant path coefficient was $\beta = 0.232$ (weak positive impact), the t-value was 2.594 (significant); the P-value was 0.001 (significant). It denoted that internal job mobility could

be considered as a strong determinant under the glass ceiling effect, which can positively affect women's career progress too.

Nevertheless, H8 did not perform well as a glass-ceiling determinant in the impact on women's career progress. Because its t -value was 0.874 (which did not exceed the significant level of 1.96). In addition, the p -value was 0.382. Accordingly, the researcher concluded that organizational culture was not a strong determinant under the glass ceiling effect and its only weakly effect on women's career progress than the other glass ceiling determinants. Job performance level could be considered a good determinant of the glass ceiling effect, which caused the women's career progress. Because the significant path coefficient was $\beta = -0.304$, the t -value was 3.474 and the P -value was 0.001. It denoted that the level of job performance could be considered a strong determinant under the glass ceiling effect, which can positively affect women's career progress as well.

Moreover, the level of educational and professional qualifications also had an impact on women's empowerment. So it could be, consider a determinant of the glass ceiling effect. Because the level of educational and professional qualifications had a significant path coefficient value of $\beta = 0.247$ which had a weak positive impact. Considering the t -value ($t=2.416$), this hypothesis had strong significance because the T value was greater than 1.96 (significance of the T value). Moreover, P -Value is also having strong significance. Because the P -value was 0.016, ($P < 0.05$). The above discussion explained there was an impact of the glass ceiling effect on women's career progress. In addition, a considerable amount of glass ceiling determinants had an impact on women's

career progress positively. So the first and second research questions have been achieved through this.

This discussion helps to provide an exact answer to the third research question of this research study. Hypothesis testing under the 4.7.2 section helped to develop this discussion. H1 hypothesis denoted Family and Social Commitment to Women Empowerment (mediator) was having a positive impact. H1 was supported with a significant path coefficient ($\beta = -0.318$), t -value ($t=3.902$), Moreover, P -Value was also having strong significant (0.000). It thus Family and Social commitment can be considered as the determinant that affects a mediator. H2 showed it did not have an impact on the mediator (women empowerment). Because it had a significant path coefficient of ($\beta = 0.105$) with a very weak positive impact. In addition, the t -value had a 1.083 value whereas the P -value had 0.297, which had a weak significance. It resulted in proving that internal job mobility did not have an impact on the mediator. Even though the organizational culture was having a negative impact on the women's career progress. It had a positive impact on the mediator of the research which was women empowerment. So H3 is supported with a significant path coefficient ($\beta = 0.473$) which had a moderately positive impact while having a significant value ($t=3.356$), with a strong P -Value. Because the P -value was 0.001, ($P < 0.05$). The level of job performance was also had a positive impact on the mediator. H4 is supported with a significant path coefficient ($\beta = 0.217$) which had a weak positive impact. With the value of 2.231. In addition, P -Value has a strong significance by having the value of 0.026, ($P < 0.05$). H5 proposed an

impact of the Level Educational and Professional Qualifications on Women Empowerment (mediator).

H5 is supported with a significant path coefficient ($\beta = 0.230$) which had a weak positive impact. Moreover, the t-value was $t=2.176$, which was greater than the 1.96 significance of the T value. Moreover, P-Value had a strong significance. Because the P-value was 0.030, ($P < 0.05$). It means the Level Educational and Professional Qualifications had a positive impact on the mediator. Except for internal job mobility, the other entire glass-ceiling determinant had a positive impact on the mediator (women empowerment). So, the third objective (specific objective) has been achieved through this discussion over the third research question.

According to the H11, it was supported with a significant path coefficient ($\beta = -0.372$) which had a weak negative impact. While the t-value ($t=4.706$) was at a significant level because this hypothesis had strong significance due to having the T value greater than the 1.96 (significance of the T value). Moreover, P-Value has also had a strong significance. Because the P-value was 0.000, ($P < 0.05$). It means that Women's Empowerment had a positive impact on Women's Career Progress. According to the mediator impact analysis under 4.8, shows that there was an influence of women's career progress on family and social commitment impact on women's career progress. Moreover, family and social commitment to women's career progress had a significant indirect impact. The indirect impact of internal job mobility on women's career progress through women empowerment (mediator variable) was found insignificant due to having the values of

($\beta = 0.024$, t value = 0.436 and P-value = 0.663 which was greater than 0.005 value. It means the independent variable did not have a clear significant direct impact on women's career progression through the mediator. However, there was a direct significant impact of internal job mobility on women's career progress.

There was an organizational culture-independent variable's significant direct impact on women career progress, similarly, it had a significant impact on the dependent variable through women's empowerment as well. Therefore, the researcher could conclude that the mediator was not acted as a threshold point here. Same as the organizational culture variable and level of job performance, the independent variable also had a significant direct impact on women's career progress with a p-value of 0.000. And the significant indirect impact on women's career progress through women empowerment (mediator). Nevertheless, the level of educational and professional qualifications had a significant direct impact on women's career progress rather than having a significant indirect impact through its mediator on women's career progress. Because according to table 4.25, it shows that $LEPQ > WCP = 0.000$ (p-value) and $LEPQ > WE > WCP = 0.457$ (p-value) which was insignificant.

Conclusion

Through this research study, the researcher wanted to evaluate the impact of Glass Ceiling Effect on Women's Career Progress with reference to Sri Lanka. To evaluate the research study researcher has developed four research questions and four research objectives. To gather data, self-administered questionnaire was

distributed among the 123-sample size from all the level female employees at 3 and above star hotels in Kandy district. From the literature review researcher identified what were the suitable independent variables towards the dependent variable (Women's Career progress). Such as Family and Social Commitment, Internal Job Mobility, Organizational Culture, Level of Job Performance, Level of Educational and Professional Qualifications. As well as the suitable mediator (Women Empowerment), that affected both independent and dependent variables. 11 hypotheses were developed and deployed through a conceptual framework. Gathered descriptive data were analyzed by SPSS and other results were taken through the Smart PLS software application. Therefore except Internal Job Mobility and organizational culture other variables are having the influential ability towards the women career progress.

Recommendations

To enhance the credibility of women career progress through women empowerment has become an essential part of the hotel sector. Hotels can give awareness campaigns about the range of work prospects in the hotel sector for females to improve the positive influence they have on them. Hotel management may make use of various social media channels, documentaries, and interviews with successful female hoteliers. Such professionals can share their knowledge with families and communities. In addition to colleagues, organizations must value women employees and distribute authority to them when and when required to promote women's empowerment and career advancement. To create a supportive working environment, the

hotel sector's HR department can provide employees training and development programs, motivation, and teamwork.

Strengthening internal job mobility has a favorable influence on women's empowerment and professional advancement. If there are any vacancies for female workers, the HR department must first do internal recruiting. HR managers must also provide a clear picture of the organizational structure and needed qualifications. Furthermore, clarify the application procedure for such higher-level roles and urge them to assume responsibility when it is required.

Various approaches may be used to enhance the organizational culture that is fair to women. Hotel managers might redesign the organizational structure with specialized job descriptions and job standards that allow female employees to fill select top-level roles. Providing a flexible working environment. Establishing diversity management initiatives within the hotel sector. Also, mentoring, coaching, and leadership activities help to develop their talents according to the organizational culture.

Hotel management, in partnership with the HR department, can conduct performance reviews to improve the level of the job performance of women in hotels. If they completed the provided assignment successfully, praise them, and it is critical to provide training if staff are unable to execute the supplied duties at the necessary level.

To enhance the educational and professional qualifications of the women employees hotel management sign contracts with relevant institutes and give opportunities for the female employees to add their educational and

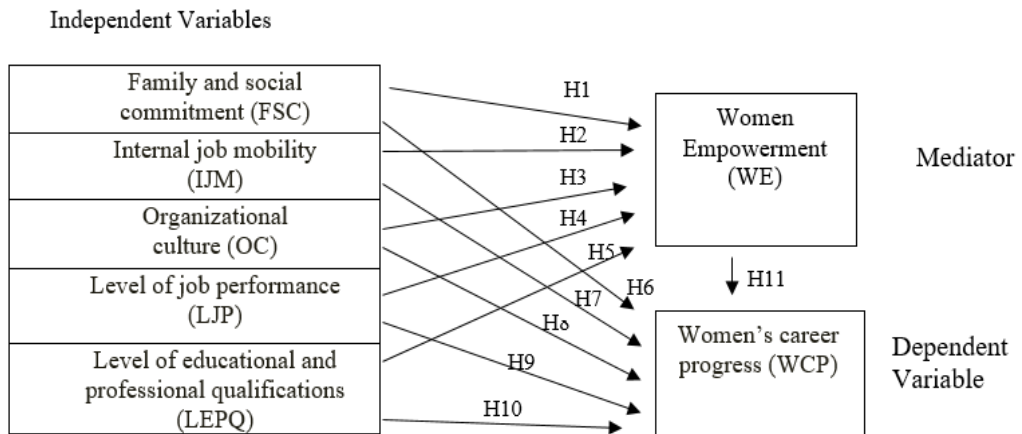
professional qualifications. As well as they can give scholarships and

allocating flexible working hours would be help to complete their qualifications.

Tables and Figures

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



Source: Developed by the researcher based on a literature review

Table 1

Male and Female Employee Count at 3, 4, and 5 Star Hotels in Kandy, Sri Lanka

	Hotel Classification	Name of the Hotel	Male Count	Female Count	Male Count %	Female Count %
1	3 star	Cinnamon Citadel	94	16	85.45%	14.55%
2	3 star	Hunas Falls	68	11	86.07%	23.93%
3	3 star	Earls' Regent	87	11	88.77%	11.23%
4	3 star	Ozo	58	7	89.23	10.77%
5	3 star	Golden Crown	200	25	88.88%	11.12%
6	4 star	Amaya Hills	78	29	72.89%	27.11%
7	5 star	Mahaweli Reach	233	42	84.11%	15.11%
8	5 star	Erals' Regency	167	21	88.82%	11.18%
9	5 star	Grand Kandyan	142	28	83.52%	16.28%
	Total		1127	190	92.60%	7.40%

Source: Developed by the Researcher Based on the Field Survey

Table 2
Table of Path Coefficient

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
FSC -> WCP	0.172	0.166	0.07	2.465	0.014
FSC -> WE	-0.318	-0.318	0.082	3.902	0.000
IJM -> WCP	0.232	0.233	0.089	2.594	0.01
IJM -> WE	0.105	0.076	0.097	1.083	*0.279
LEPQ -> WCP	0.247	0.254	0.102	2.416	0.016
LEPQ -> WE	0.230	0.233	0.106	2.176	0.03
LJP -> WCP	-0.304	-0.304	0.088	3.474	0.001
LJP -> WE	0.217	0.225	0.097	2.231	0.026
OC -> WCP	0.107	0.107	0.122	0.874	*0.382
OC -> WE	0.473	0.468	0.141	3.356	0.001
WE -> WCP	-0.372	-0.367	0.079	4.706	0.000

Source: Smart PLS Analysis, 2022

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