Existence of Glass Ceiling in Public Universities of Lahore (Pakistan)

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Abstract: Glass ceiling is a set of unseen factors which adversely affect females upward career growth and prevent them to get to top positions. This study is meant to explore existence of glass ceiling in public universities of Lahore (Pakistan); and factors responsible for creating this glass ceiling effect. The respondents of this study are females heading different departments in their respective universities. The results of this study show that different cultural and social, family and organizational barriers adversely affect females' career growth and make them work in lower subordinate positions despite having suitable qualifications and experiences. The significance of this study comes from the fact that it investigates this issue by taking empirical evidence of those females who personally faced glass ceiling and managed to make their ways to occupy top positions in their respective departments.

Keywords: Career growth, gender discrimination, glass ceiling, women leadership

INTRODUCTION

Changing economic landscape has substantially changed male dominating nature of world's workforce over past two decades and now females have been accepted as a diversified part of the workforce. The rise of education and prevailing economic conditions are thought to be main drivers triggering this change. With the effect, societal and organizational structures are also undergoing a change to keep up with entrance of females in the work force. The significance of women's economic contribution is evident from the fact they make up 31% of the official labour force in developing countries and 46.7% worldwide (United Nations Report, 2010).

Despite active participation of females in workforce, their number in decision making positions is well below their male counterparts. Females make about half of the workforce in developed countries yet only 5% of them occupy leading roles (Tharenou, 1999). Consequently, top decision making positions are covered by men leaving women with subordinate managerial positions (Wirth, 2004). There are certain factors which are thought to restrict females to get to top decision making positions. These factors are often un-written and off the record policy, generally are termed as glass ceiling.

This study is designed to empirically investigate existence of glass ceiling in public universities of Lahore. The study provided important insight about the issue of glass ceiling by involving those who personally faced and broke such barriers to get to top positions. All respondents of this study are working women holding leadership positions in various public universities located in Lahore. The study contributed to existing literature by finding out factors which may help upward career movement; the result of this research work also highlights factors which may create glass ceiling for women working in public sector universities of Lahore (Pakistan).

This study aims to explore existence of glass ceiling in public universities located in Lahore. Specifically this research work has following two objectives:

- To explore the prevalence of glass ceiling effect for working women in public sector universities in Lahore.
- To develop insights about the barriers contributing to the glass ceiling effect for working women in public sector universities in Lahore.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Glass ceiling is a metaphor which refers to barriers hindering women progress to top positions (Hymowitz and Schellhardt, 1986). The glass ceiling serves as a fence which prevents upward career movement of women and minority groups. These hindrances are unofficial but still they are strong enough to keep women and minority groups to lower positions (Afza and Newaz, 2008). Glass ceiling is transparent but offers real and strong hindrances that foil women growth, consequently they only cover 5% leading roles despite they make half of the workforce in most of the developed countries (Tharenou, 1999). It is a common observation that most of the top positions are held by men and women are restricted to subordinate positions (Wirth, 2004). Same is true about Pakistan where women constitute 53% of population and they make 26.19% of labour force (Labor Force Survey, 2010). In

spite of noticeable rise in number of professional women in all most every sector of the economy, they are still away from decision making and leadership positions (Qureshi and Rarieya, 2007). The highest number of females is working in education sector still only few females are heading their departments. This low representation of women in leading positions gives an indication that possibly glass ceiling has produced this distortion and prevent women advancement to top slots.

The possible barriers which give rise to glass ceiling to restrict females in education sector of Pakistan can be categorised into three types; family barrier, society and cultural barriers and organizational barriers (Ismail and Ibrahim, 2007). There is variety of family related issues which obstruct females to get to top slots. With entrance of females into formal labour force their traditional role of family caretaker has changed to bread winner. This duality of role to maintain balance among family and professional life is very challenging and make working females struggle. It is thought, probably, females are disadvantaged compared to their male counterparts due to their dual nature of responsibilities which hinders their progress and restrict them to lower positions (Wirth, 2004). Another affect of this duality of role makes females to make a choice between family and professional life. Usually family is top priority for women therefore they are not ready to sacrifice family time to work long hours.

The other factors which make females disadvantageous include lack of spouse support, spouses' career priority over females' careers and negative attitude of working mothers of small children towards transfer (Tharenou *et al.*, 1994). To summarise, all these factors make it too demanding and tiring to maintain balance between family and professional lives, consequently females hardly try to compete for top leadership positions.

Baldridge *et al.* (2006) investigated the children effect on the career advancement and choices. The results of their research indicate that having children made a positive effect on the men career and push them to make the career choices as they have to support their family and perform the role of a provider, so they make decisions accordingly. While the women with children are less likely to seek their career as they have to fulfill the extra responsibilities which the children place on them.

Cultural and traditional practices hinder the professional progress of women; they don't get equal opportunities as compared to their male counterparts even when they meet all requirements of a particular position (Uzma, 2004). In Pakistani society, females' role is that of a family manager. The traditional norms of Pakistani society and religious beliefs discourage women to leave their homes for work. Consequently,

many capable and professionally sound women don't pursue their careers in order to avoid cultural disapproval (Uzma, 2004). Usually, females who pursue careers do it out of economic necessity or they join work as an alternative while they waiting to get married. Another prevailing perception which discourages women to continue their professional careers is the notion that working women can't be good mothers. Usually it is thought that working women can't give sufficient time to their families due to their professional responsibilities (Uzma, 2004). Above all, in case of Pakistani females, most of the decisions affecting their lives are usually made by others like fathers, brothers or husbands. This lack of independence in decision making deprive them from opting careers of their choice (Uzma, 2004).

There are several organizational factors which adversely affect females' career progress. Women have to face loneliness at male dominated workplace which makes them feel stressed and cause a decline in their performance (Davidson and Cooper, 1983). Another organizational barrier to women career progress is lack of proper training to affectively perform a job and women usually don't get recognition of their achievements by their managers as compared to their male counterparts. The gender discrimination at workplace also keeps women away from top positions (Oakley, 2000). The negative perception and evaluation about women leadership give rise to gender leadership difference (Stelter, 2002). Susan *et al.* (1998) have tried to explain gender discrimination using theory of work place gender discrimination rational bias. They are of the view that top position males are more biased against females than those who are in lower positions. They concluded that management supports gender biasness due to organization's internal cultural pressure.

Oakley (2000) found that gender behaviors at work place are responsible for the existence of glass ceiling instead of the organizational policies and practices. Davidson and Burke (1994) observed that femininity bias can take several forms like official and nonofficial set ups, trade and industry, community and human being practices and behaviors.

Davidson and Cooper (1992) pointed out two important factors responsible for restricting women to subordinate positions. Firstly, leading positions in organizations are occupied by males where females are supposed to follow. Secondly, females working under such environment hardly imagine themselves in leading roles and consequently they don't contest for such positions. Schein (2001) studied the behaviour of men and women in organizations and argued majority of men still consider themselves having higher skills and characteristics necessary for leadership positions than females. However, working women think both genders have equal abilities to serve on executive roles. Dambisya (2004) studied the glass ceiling effect in

hospitals across various countries. He concluded that inadequate career paths and destinations for females are common both in developed and developing countries. Bickel and Clark (2000) found two reasons for glass ceiling, firstly, women don't get adequate mentoring and encouragement in their career development and secondly, women have different approach towards career, relationships and situations. Therefore, gender biasness is thought to be responsible for glass ceiling and organizations should take initiatives to address gender biasness in order to curb barriers affecting females' career advancement (Thomas, 2001).

METHODOLOGY

In order to empirically investigate the existence of glass ceiling in public universities of Lahore both primary and secondary data sources have been used. The secondary data consists of faculty members' list belonging to seven public universities of Lahore. The primary data of the study is gathered using questionnaires. The public universities of Lahore form the population for this research. Seven public universities are selected from Higher Education Commission of Pakistan's (HEC) website as shown in Appendix A. The positions like Head of department, Dean and Vice chancellor are considered as leadership positions in public sector universities. Faculty lists of each university are downloaded from their respective websites and, verified and updated by contacting their respective offices. A list of female faculty members is made by their name, designation, department and university name. Finally, 28 female faculty members who are serving in leading positions in various public universities of Lahore are selected (Appendix B).

All respondents were initially contacted to get meeting time. Later, all respondents were contacted in person to collect primary data on mutually pre-decided time. Out of 28 faculty members, 20 responded, one member didn't return back questionnaire while rest 7 didn't cooperate and refused to give time to fill in the questionnaire. This makes 71% overall response rate for this study.

Questionnaire of this study consists of three parts. First part includes questions aimed to gather personal information like marital status, no. of children etc about respondents of the study. Second parts consists of closed ended structured questions where respondents are asked to rate their response using a five point Likert-scale ranging from *Not at All Helpful* to *Greatly Helpful*. Third part consists of open ended semi-structured questions designed to gain insight into respondents experience about glass ceiling.

Descriptive statistics are used to analyze the data by calculating frequencies and percentages. The response in frequencies is converted into overall rating percentage for the purpose of making comparisons and making data more understandable. The significance level for this study is 65%; below that level response is considered insignificant.

DISCUSSION ON FINDINGS

This study is meant to explore the existence of glass ceiling for women working in public universities of Lahore. The respondents of this study include women occupying leadership positions in public universities of Lahore; the study provides an important insight about glass ceiling from the point of view of those who have get past such barriers to assume leading positions. The study investigated those barriers at organizational, societal, cultural and family levels. The demographic description of this study's respondents show that majority of them (70%) have got work experience of more than 20 years as shown in Table 1, however the period since they assumed their current roles is less than 5 years as shown in Table 2. In terms of marital status, according to Table 3, 80% respondents of this study are married and 71% of them have two or more children as shown in Table 4. This shows respondents of this study can better explain about the cultural, organizational and family issues which they have overcome to get to top leading positions.

First this study empirically identified factors which may affect women career advancement to leadership roles as shown in Table 5. A large number of respondents think that advanced education (99%), willingness to take risks (81%), specialized training (91%) and having a diversified work experience (90%) can help women to advance their careers to get to leadership positions. The respondents also emphasized the importance of having right social networking (85%); 77% of respondents consider spending time with superiors and influential individuals at workplace is critical while 72% also think spending off job time with high-ups can help to get growth opportunities. The family responsibilities of women and cultural barriers which discourage Pakistani women to socialize with

Table 1: Total work experiences of respondents

	Less than 10 years	10 to 20 years	21 to 30 years	Above 30 years
Work experience in total	(4) 20%	(2) 10%	(11) 55%	(3) 15%

Table 2: Work experience in current job

	Less than 5 years	5 to 10 years	11 to 15 years	Above 15 years
Work experience in current job	(11) 55%	(6) 30%	(3) 15%	--

Table 3: Marital status of respondents

	Single	Married	Divorced	Widow
Marital status	(3) 15%	(16) 80%	1(1) 5%	

Table 4: No. of children

	None	Less than 2	2 or more than 2
No. of children Frequency	(1) 5%	(4) 24%	(12) 71%

Table 5: Factors affecting women career advancement

Statements	Weighted Averages
Advanced education	99%
Willingness to take risks	81%
Specialized training	91%
Greater variety of work experience	90%
Having the "right" social networking.	85%
Having a proven record of accomplishments	80%
Being a woman	44%
Being a younger woman (rather than an older woman).	52%
Being a single woman (rather than married).	49%
Being physically attractive (being good looking).	59%
Accepting high challenging assignments.	80%
Taking initiatives	87%
Balancing work-home demands more effectively	85%
Spending time (e.g., socializing) in the workplace with superiors and influential individuals	77%
Socializing with superior and influential individuals outside of the workplace	72%
Having a cooperative and non-threatening style	74%
Retaining femininity but performing against stereotypes	78%

Table 6: University is committed to anti-discrimination practices

Statements	Weighted avg.
Having a non-supportive spouse	92%
Women's reluctance to shift to another city if the job requires it	96%
Perceptions that women may eventually leave the workplace to raise a family	87%
Women's conflicting work and family demands	89%
Women not being willing work for longer hours.	87%
Performance appraisal and incentive systems favor male instead of female.	71%
Male domination of senior positions	78%
Insufficient organizational resources in support of women's requirement of job	85%
Lack of sufficient encouragement, and training opportunities, for women to gain experience	82%
Lack of sufficient number of women role models in highest levels in Public universities	71%
Management's tendency NOT to assign challenging projects to women.	82%
Perceptions that women are less interested in challenging responsibilities	72%
Males' tendency to be threatened by women leaders	74%
Male subordinates' discomfort with having female superiors	79%
Perception that women should not be in a position of authority over men	73%
Perceptions that women are not sufficiently competitive	67%
Perception that women are not sufficiently ambitious.	62%
Perceptions that women are too indecisive to be effective leaders	82%
Perceptions that women's judgments are too weak to be effective leaders	60%
Perceptions that women are too emotional to be effective leaders	79%
Women's lack of sufficient self-confidence.	77%
Perceptions that woman's careers are not as important because they are not the primary source of the income for the family.	83%

males other than their family members make them disadvantageous in pursuit of top positions. A vast majority of respondents (85%) consider ability to balance home-work requirements effectively is key to make professional progress for working women. Achieving this balance between home-work requirements is not an easy task and therefore, it makes harder for female workers to compete for top positions. Accepting challenging assignments and taking initiatives are considered by 80% and 87% respondents, respectively among factors which can affect women's career growth positively. Further the respondents of this study think that having a cooperative style (74%) and ability to perform against stereotypic notions (78%) may help women to advance their careers. It is interesting to note that majority of respondents (66%) think being a woman can't help to make career progress.

The second contribution of this study is to empirically finding out factors which create glass ceiling for working women and prevent them to move upward on career ladder. The study found that apparently all universities are committed to anti-discrimination policies (Table 13a and 16) and 90% of respondents think that there exists sufficient opportunities for their career advancement (Table 9a, b). According to Table 11a, 65% respondents think that a female can assume a leadership position. The respondents also believe that men and women are equally respected in their institutions (Table 8a, b). An important issue for females has been sparing time for their family. This study reports that respondents don't have any problem in taking time off (Table 17a) and further they describe that it doesn't damage their progress prospects (Table 18a). Majority of respondents (60%) of this study share the belief that competitiveness in women is not viewed as a negative trait as mentioned in Table 10a. The rest of 40% respondents who think competitiveness in women is considered a negative trait held cultural issues responsible for this perception as appeared in Table 10b. Despite all of these, however, there are some unseen and off the record practices which is responsible for under-representation of

females in leading positions. These findings are important as all the respondents of this study hold leading positions in their respective universities and departments; so they can better explain barriers which they have faced and overcome to get to their current positions. These factors consist of a set of family, organizational and culture related issues which damage females' upward career movement as shown in Table 6. A variety of family related factors play a role in creating glass ceiling for working women. First of all, 89% of respondents think that dual nature of women's role imposes conflicting demands upon them and make it harder for them to maintain a balance between family and work responsibilities which consequently hurt their efforts to compete for top slots with their male counterparts. It highlights the fact how vital family support especially that of spouse is for women career growth. It is of no surprise that 92% of respondents consider having a non-supportive spouse creates an obstacle for their professional growth. Of respondents 85% report that they are not thinking to leave their jobs due to work family imbalance (Table 12a) mainly because of family support (35%) and better time management (41%) as shown in Table 12b. Further, this study found out that females' reluctance to work for long hours (89%) and shift to another city to fulfill their job requirements (96%) damage their prospects to get to top position contributing to form glass ceiling. There is a common perception about working women that they would eventually leave jobs to raise their families (87%), consequently they are seen as part timers and who don't have any future in the organization. Therefore, they are ignored and considered unsuitable for top slots.

A second set of factors which this study found out is a list of work related issues which restrict working women to lower managerial positions despite their qualifications, abilities and skills as shown in Table 6. The work related factors include biased appraisal and incentive systems (71%) which favor males over their female counterparts. The results of this study (78%) support the notion that male domination of senior positions damages females' career progress. Probably, they formulate policies and rules which favor male workers. This male domination also has some psychological consequences for working women, the lack of female role models at highest positions discourage them and hurt their pursuit to assume a leading role (71%). In this way, females have to come across various challenges and obstacles to advance their carriers to get to top positions which their male counterparts don't face. The problems female workers face are multifaceted, therefore it is of no surprise that no. of women in top slots is not proportionate to female workforce. They are deliberately denied to gain useful experience necessary to help them to get promotions. Of respondents 85% believe that females don't get sufficient organizational resources to fulfill their job requirements consequently the quality of their output suffers. Being a female, one has to perform better than

male workers to get promoted for same position (Table 15a) and above it women have to perform dual role for work and home which further adds up to the amount of hard work required to get promoted (Table 15b). Further, 82% hold that they don't get sufficient encouragement and training opportunities to gain necessary experience. The respondents (65%) report that they have no female mentor as shown in Table 22. As far as mentoring is concerned 55% respondents report that there are no mentorship programs in their universities as mentioned in Table 21. The respondents further point out that they have both male and female mentors in senior positions as shown in Table 22 and 23. However, when respondents are asked who is better at mentoring, 45% declare females, 35% think both male and female, only 20% believe male are better mentors as shown in Table 24.

Table 7: Beliefs about capability of men and women

	Yes	No
I believe women are as capable as men of serving in senior executive positions.	(20) 100%	---

Table 8a: Equal respect for men and women

	Yes	No
Women and men are respected equally in my University	(13) 65%	(7) 35%

Table 8b: Why women and men are not respected equally in my university

Comments for No (35%)	%
It cannot be gauged	(2)28.57%
Male dominated society	(4)57.14%
I feel women are thought to be too emotional and that hinder them respect.	(1)14.28%

Table 9a: Existence of equal opportunities

	Yes	No
Sufficient opportunities exist in my organization for women to advance into senior management positions.	(18)90%	(2)10%

Table 9b: Reasons for existence of unequal opportunities

Comments for No (10%)	%
First of all number of women in the university is less than the number of male and family obligations make women unable to completely focus on their careers.	(1)50%
Males are given preference.	(1)50%

Table 10a: Competitiveness in women is viewed as negative trait

	Yes	No
In my University, competitiveness in women is viewed as a negative trait.	(8)40%	(12)60%

Table 10b: Reason for competitiveness in women is viewed as a negative trait

Comments for Yes (40%)	%
Chauvinistic Males (they consider it a threat.)	(1)12.50%
Cultural issue(6) 75%	(6) 75%

Table 11a: A woman could be head of department, pro chancellor or vice chancellor

The way my University	Yes	No
Operates, a woman could be Head of Department, Pro chancellor or Vice Chancellor on their turn.	(13)65%	(7)35%

Table 11b: A woman could not be head of department, pro chancellor or vice chancellor

Comments for No (35%)	%
Women cannot handle well.	(1)14.28%
HOD may be but VC post is decided by political influence.	(6) 85.71%

Table 12a: Imbalance of work family pressure

	Yes	No
I think of leaving the work due to imbalance of work family pressure.	(3)15%	(17)85%

Table 12b: Why women have to perform better than their male counterparts to get promoted

Comments for No (17%)	%
Because of family support	(6)35.29%
I did not find imbalance	(4)23.53%
I think its all about time management	(7)41.17%

There exists a wrong perception that females are not interested in challenging jobs (72%) and management hesitation to assign challenging projects to female workers (82%) make them suffer while contesting for leadership positions. On other hand, 60% respondents report that female workers are quite enthusiastic and willing to taking on challenging jobs as mentioned in Table 19a and b. Despite all odds and unfavorable conditions that female workers are facing. They don't give up and trying to break all barriers to let their presence felt at upper echelon. This study's respondents unanimously turn down the idea of leaving their current jobs as shown in Table 14. Another issue which this study found out is political influence to decide about leadership positions. Majority of this study's respondents think a female can not be vice chancellor (VC) of any university because this post is usually decided by political influence (Table 11a and b).

The third set of factors which create glass ceiling and prevent females to get leaderships positions is cultural issues. Generally, cultural issues consist of various negative perceptions about females' role and abilities which diminish their growth prospects and create an unseen hurdle for their professional progress. A common prevailing perception in Pakistani society which this study's findings have empirically verified is women should not be in position of authority over men (73%) as shown in Table 6, 20a and b. It is thought that females are neither sufficiently competitive nor they are ambitious therefore, it is appropriate for them to work in subordinate positions and roles. Males feel threatened (74%) and discomfort (79%) to have a female superior; consequently, they may hesitate to cooperate with females leaders which can make it harder for working women to produce required level of output. All these negative cultural notions are based on few perceptions about females capabilities like women are not sufficiently competitive (67%), women are too indecisive (82%), too emotional (79%) and females

lack self-confidence (77%) as shown in Table 6. The respondents of this study reject all negative stereotypic notions about females' leadership abilities and all of them think that females are equally capable of serving at senior executive levels as do men (Table 7). Generally, in Pakistani society, males are thought to be responsible for financial requirements of family and females are supposed to stay at home and look after the family members. Therefore, females' careers are thought to be less important than men. This study's data shows that 83% respondents hold this perception responsible as one of the reasons creating glass ceiling for females' careers.

Table 13a: Practices favor male employees

	Yes	No
My University structures and practices favor male employees.	(7)35%	(13)65%

Table 13b: Why male employees are not favoured

Comments for No (65%)	%
Both genders are treated equally in administrative.	(4)30.77%
I have not noticed yet	(4)30.77%
Statutory bodies never let it happen.	(3)23.08%
Women are equally doing well and have never been hindered by any such practice.	(2)15.38%

Table 14: Chances of leaving current job

If I had the choice, I would leave my current	Yes	No
University as soon as I can.	------	(20)100%

Table 15a: Women have to perform better than their male counterparts to be promoted

In my University, women have to perform better than their male	Yes	No
Counterparts to be promoted to the same position.	(12)60%	(8)40%

Table 15b: Why women have to perform better than their male counterparts to get promoted

Comments for No (60%)	%
Women have to be exceptional to achieve any position as the selection process is dominated by males.	(6)35.29%
Because women have to prove themselves excellent among their male colleagues.	(2)16.66%
Especially as working women as they are playing dual role for work and home.	(6)50%

Table 16: University is committed to anti-discrimination practices

Management of my University is committed to	Yes	No
Anti-discrimination practices.	(17)85%	(3)15%

Table 17a: Response while taking time off from your job for family responsibilities

	Yes	No
Did you feel any problem while taking time off from your job for family responsibilities?	(2)10%	(18)90%

Table 17b: Problem while taking time off from your job for family responsibilities

Comments for No (10%)	%
Leave was delayed due to secession in progress.	(1)50%
The boss is never happy with leave even in case of urgency.	(1)50%

Table 18a: Consequences of leave on career advancement

	Yes	No
If you have taken time off work for family responsibilities as mentioned above, do you feel it has harmed your chances of career advancement?	(5)25%	(15)75%

Table 18b: Effect of leave on career advancement

Comments for Yes (25%)	%
Because it delayed my studies and due to that my seniority.	(2) 40%
Traded off	(3) 60%

Table 19a: Women's lack of enthusiasm in taking challenging assignments

	Yes	No
Women's lack of enthusiasm in taking challenging assignments is one reason for not advancing in their career.	(8) 80%	(12) 60%

Table 19b: Women do not lack enthusiasm in taking challenging assignments

Comments for No (60%)	%
Women also work hard	(3)25%
Women are willing to take challenging assignment.	(5)41.67%
Lack of family support is the main reason.	(4)33.33%

Table 20a: Woman should not be in a position of authority over men

	Yes	No
A general society's perception is that a woman should not be in a position of authority over men.	(16) 80%	(4) 20%

Table 20b: Woman could be in a position of authority over men

Comments for No (20%)	%
It's a wrong perception	(1) 12.50%
No comments	(6) 75.00%

Table 21: Mentorship program

	Yes	No
Is there a mentorship program in your University?	(9)45%	(11)55%

Table 22: Male mentors

	Yes	No
Do you have (or have had) a MALE mentor in a senior position in your University?	(13)65%	(7)35%

Table 23: Female mentors

	Yes	No
Do you have (or have had) a FEMALE mentor in a senior position in your University?	(13)65%	(7)35%

Table 24: Who is better at mentoring?

	Male	Female	Both
Who is a better mentor?	(4)20%	(9)45%	(7)35%

CONCLUSION

This study has made significant contributions to existing literature on glass ceiling. This study is first empirical investigation in Pakistan which includes account of those who break glass ceiling to get to leadership positions; therefore, findings of this research

work are significant to understand this issue in Pakistan.

The Constitution of Pakistan (1973) declares equal rights to all individuals without gender discrimination and defends women's participation in all sections of society. All universities, the respondents of this study belong to, follow anti-discrimination practices and offer equal opportunities for both genders. They offer sufficient opportunities to their female workers to advance their careers and get to leadership positions. Even then there are certain factors which obstruct females' career growth and deny them opportunities for which they have suitable qualifications and skills. These unseen factors which restrict females to lower subordinate levels are termed as glass ceiling. This study found that glass ceiling exists in public universities of Lahore.

There are two important points to keep in mind before considering the results of this study. First is the respondents of this study, as mentioned earlier, are holding leadership positions in different public universities of Lahore. Secondly, the population of this study comes from education sector, which drives high social approval and is considered very suitable for females to work in Pakistani society. This implies that females working in public universities of Lahore face glass ceiling which is created by cultural, family and work factors despite high social approval that education sector enjoys.

Firstly study verified the previous research that factors which damage females' career prospects are unseen and off the record (Afza and Newaz, 2008). The study first contributed by empirically providing a list of factors which may helpful in promoting working women's careers. Secondly, it investigated factors which responsible for creating glass ceiling for women in education sector of Pakistan. Thirdly, study provides important insight about various glass ceiling issues by determining possible reason which create them using semi-structured questions.

The results of this study indicate existence of glass ceiling in public universities of Lahore. The number of females working at top positions is not proportionate to the total number of females working in subordinate roles. Despite existence of equal opportunities and anti-discrimination policies followed by these universities; the number of females working in leadership positions and subordinate roles is quite disproportionate (Appendix A), this clearly indicates the existence of glass ceiling. This outcome is in line with previous findings that despite making a significant portion of workforce; still few females can get to leadership positions (Farah and Shera, 2007; Ismail and Ibrahim, 2007; Weyer, 2006). Above discussion concludes that

obstacles to female career growth are often un-written and usually carried as off the record policy which is in line with existing literature (Afza and Newaz, 2008).

The results reinforce Jamali *et al.* (2006) that education is most important dynamic factor which helped females to increase their participation in workforce. The findings of study support Wirth (2004) who describe male dominance at top positions responsible for obstructing females upward career growth. The study identified different factors which may create glass ceiling and restrict females upward career growth. This includes lack of necessary social networking, negative perceptions' about females' capabilities and dedication, orthodox attitudes, lack of mentoring etc. These findings are in line with Safieddine and Daouk, (2006). The respondents of this study describe dual nature of working women's role as

a family care giver and professional retard their progress to top slots. The findings show that respondents of this study maintain a good balance between their family and work life which help them to get to their current roles. This supports findings of Ismail and Ibrahim (2007) who hold that dual nature of females restrict their way to strategic organizational positions.

To summarize, female workers face multi-faceted issues deeply rooted in socio-cultural environment of the country restricting them to lower managerial positions. It is also important to note that females have to work harder than their male counterparts to get promotions. The results of this study show that females despite all odds are successfully addressing those challenges and surpassing the obstacles to get to top decision making positions.

Appendix A: Women in Public Universities of Lahore

Public Universities in Lahore	Total Faculty	Males	Female	Females at leading positions	Female (%)	Females at leading position (%)
Government College University	376	203	173	2	46	1
University of Engineering and Technology	454	353	101	1	22	1
University of the Punjab	767	497	270	14	35	5
University of Health sciences	30	21	9	1	30	0.1
University of Education	96	30	66	1	69	0.02
University of Veterinary and Animal Science	149	128	21	1	14	4.8
King Edward Medical University	165	126	39	8	24	21

Appendix B: Women working at leadership position in public universities of Lahore

Sr.	University	Position	Name
1	University of the Punjab	Dean	Prof. Dr. Shahida Hasnain
2	University of the Punjab	Head of the Department Department of Gender Studies	Prof. Dr. Samar Fatima
3	University of the Punjab	Head of the Department English Language and Literature	Ms. Shaista Sonnu Sirajuddin
4	University of the Punjab	Head of the Department Department of French	Miss Saleha Nazeer
5	University of the Punjab	Head of the department library and information science	Dr. Kanwal Ameen
6	University of the Punjab	Head of the Department Department of Political Science	Dr. Umbreen Javed
7	University of the Punjab	Head of the Department Department of Special Education	Ms.Humara Bano
8	University of the Punjab	Head of the Department Department of Hindi	Mrs. Shabnam Riaz
9	University of the Punjab	Head of the Department Department of Applied Psychology	Prof. Dr. Rukhsana Kausar
10	University of the Punjab	Head of the Department Institute of Languages	Ms. Maria Isabel Maldonado Garcia
11	University of the Punjab	Head of the Department Department of Law (Gujranwala Campus)	Mrs. Farhana Aziz
12	University of the Punjab	Institute of Administrative Sciences	Prof. Dr. Nasira Jabeen
13	University of the Punjab	Head of the Department Department of Technology Education	Dr. Tahseen Mahmood
14	University of the Punjab	Head of the Department Centre For Integrated Mountain Research (CIMR)	Mrs. Khalida Khan
15	The University of Education	Vice Chancellor	Prof. Ms. Farhat Saleem
16	University of Health Sciences	Head of the Department Department of Human Genetics	Dr.Shahida Mohsin
17	King Edward Medical University	Head of the Department Department of Anatomy	Prof. Dr. Attiya Khalid
18	King Edward Medical University	Head of the Department Dermatology	Prof. Sabrina Suhail Pal
19	King Edward Medical University	Head of the Department Medicine	Prof. Tahira Murtaza Cheema

Appendix B: Continued			
20	King Edward Medical University	Head of the Department Preventive Paediatrics	Prof. Nosheen Aziz
21	King Edward Medical University	Head of the Department Pathology	Prof. Samina Naeem
22	King Edward Medical University	Head of the Department Gynaecology I	Prof. Samia Malik
23	King Edward Medical University	Head of the Department Gynaecology II	Prof. Farah Asghar
24	King Edward Medical University	Head of the Department Gynaecology III	Prof. Tabinda Rana
25	Government College University	Head of the Department Psychology	Dr. Farah Malik
26	Government College University	Head of the Department English	Prof. Dr. Nosheen Khan
27	University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore	Head of the Department Humanities and Social Sciences	Prof. Dr. Fazeelat Tahira
28	University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Lahore	Head of the Department Deans	Prof. Dr. Naureen Aziz Qureshi

This research has important implications for institutions and policy makers who want to provide females a level playing field. Firstly, policies should direct to societal level to change negative perceptions about females capabilities by educating people. Secondly, efforts should be directed to provide females with better work environment. Especially, they need support to maintain a balance between their work and family related responsibilities. In this regard, flexible working hours and day care facilities can be of great help to them. Institutions should allow their females workers to access appropriate resources and mentoring.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This research work has certain limitations which may have implications for the results of this study. Therefore it is appropriate to consider them before extending this research work to other contexts. First, this study includes respondents from education sector; second, only females occupying leading position make the sample of this study. Inclusion of other sectors and taking view of females in subordinate positions may result in reaching different conclusions.

Maintaining a balance between work and family responsibilities is crucial for working women; future research can investigate the relationship between daycare facilities and flexible working hours on glass ceiling.

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