Perceptions of the Glass Ceiling and the Importance of Choosing the Right Role Model

How do individuals choose the best role model to overcome the Glass Ceiling?

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Abstract

This research centers around the importance of correct role models as a contingent for optimum effects on those seeking meaningful examples of determining success. Specifically, the research asks the question: how people choose specific role models when factoring in the possibility of an eventual "glass ceiling", with an emphasis on women. The objective of this study proposes that there are good and bad role models, and the ability to choose wisely will have a positive impact for the career of the candidate, particularly in preparation of potential obstacles to success, such as the ceremonious glass ceiling. The research will explore factors individuals consider when choosing a role model; these include personal and professional ethics, skills, and codes of behavior. Once the data is evaluated, the conclusion intends to demonstrate that choosing a good role model lies first in evaluating and, if necessary, correcting the core criteria, meaning where codes of behavior, qualifications, and ethics must be established. The researcher will also have a subordinate claim of incorporating perceptions of the Glass Ceiling as a possible obstacle that the right role model can help navigate in her argument. The "Glass Ceiling" as an artificial barrier designed to thwart advancement, is a very problematic topic that can be perpetuated by a distorted reality held by certain role models—but not all. For example, if women had more knowledge of non-stereotypical women or innovators, the Glass Ceiling itself might be revealed as a stereotypical construct and would not seem as menacing. Consequently, if role models spoke less of the Glass Ceiling as a perceived barrier, and more of ways to overcome it women would be more successful. Instead, we have too many women and men with negative experiences driving the problem while providing no real solution. The research, therefore, will consider the different role model types, the traits that make a role model who they are, and the history of the Glass Ceiling as it determines good and bad role models.

The new knowledge that this project will bring is a better understanding of what motivates individuals to want to be like their role models, what defining attributes attract individuals to emulate the person they aspire to become, and how the barriers of the Glass Ceiling alter women's perception of themselves and their role models. Many times, individuals confuse emulating their role model as emulating their career. This is a false analogy because a role model does not become a role model by what they do but by who they are. If we understood how people think and who they look up to, or aspire to be, we would be able to better understand each other. And such an understanding would necessarily mean we ought to choose substance over style; together we could break barriers, become our own trailblazers, and establish a sense of identity. Sorting out the meaning of the Glass Ceiling must take account of the way it is perceived by various role models good and bad, since both impose their perceptions on others.

Current Research/Knowledge

The Glass Ceiling is an unofficial but acknowledged barrier to advancement in a profession, especially affecting women and members of minorities. However, this is only the surface definition. The Glass Ceiling is a cruel oracle of possibilities, a mere perception of transparent success, yet likely impossible to attain. Glass, although transparent, also reflects, therefore, it allows us to see through it, but also exposes our gaze back onto our selves. It is a metaphor used to represent obstacles—real or perceived—when insurmountable odds appear impossible to overcome. This is the dominant understanding of the construct that endures in significant part to those role models whom it profits to sustain. This Glass Ceiling identifies the intersection of two historically isolated groups: the "reflected" on the bottom, and the "role models" on top. But the pre-existing consensus that defends the Glass Ceiling is very narrow because it focuses only on one aspect: gender. Sadly, many people relate the Glass Ceiling

strictly regarding gender when there are deeper issues that encompass this barrier. However, while gender serves as a material in the construction of the Glass Ceiling so does the presence of minorities. Gender is just a narrow facet of the Glass Ceiling that is stereotypically placed above the other overarching barriers of race, class, status, demographic, and role models

According to (Burke, 1996) sex differences in interpersonal networks and development roles intensifies the continuation of the glass ceiling. Burke explains that although many women may be qualified for certain positions, they are denied because of their gender. This is a prime example of how gender and the Glass Ceiling appear to co-exist without other prominent factors. Gender was the easiest scapegoat for denying someone a position The Glass Ceiling first identified the problem in so doing, it became the default reason for anyone who failed to advance. In other words, when women were not advancing, the phrase was coined to explain why. But now the implication seems to be that if you are a woman, there will necessarily be a Glass Ceiling. This is a post hoc fallacy. Post hoc fallacy is a logical fallacy in which one event is said to be the cause of a later event simply because it occurred earlier. Educated people should be aware of the fallacy the Glass Ceiling portrays when used in this context. The Glass Ceiling began and continues to be used and sustained as a casual event that If you are a woman, a ceiling exists. However, one can demystify the ceiling, and build stairs. The stairs are equated to education, experience, and imagination.

Most of the research that surrounds this topic focuses on gender and the Glass Ceiling as it relates to the business world. Kwesiga (2004), explains that women cannot surpass the Glass Ceiling because they are not aware as men are in business, or leadership development. He continues to explain that women are not as skilled as men are, and that they lack key ingredients that are important for career success. Although Burke depicts examples and details about what

women lack that leads to the progression of the glass ceiling, it still comes back to one primary factor: gender.

For years, people have always analyzed the "reflected" the ones on the opposing side of the glass but not many people look at the so-called "role-models." The "reflected" suffer from a term I like to call "ceiling gazing." Gazing refers to the notion that one is preoccupied or focused on their problems, or an issue that they see nothing else. The "reflected ones" see the ceiling as not only a barrier in their professional career but personal life as well. They gaze at the ceiling so much that they are not aware of anything aside from their issue, therefore preventing them from creating their own stairs. "Ceiling Gazing" offers an explanation to why the "reflected ones" cannot get ahead because their focus is on what's preventing them instead of what can promote them. Conversely, the "bad role model" would be guilty of "floor gazing" making their issue all about the obstacle. Floor Gazers are too busy concerned with what is on the bottom, they miss access to the stop or even stairs that may or may not be provided. Gazing is blinding and is a barrier in itself.

Those beneath the Glass Ceiling such as the "reflected" have limited solutions that are out of reach, or worse, misguided, thus magnifying the obstacle even more. An article reviewed by (Bower,2009) analyzed mentorship and what characteristics attract mentors to women. This idea fostered the concept of role models and how they are chosen. This study specifically examines women and their role in the Glass Ceiling. Bower (2009), explains that women are under-reported in sports and other leadership positions. This misconception leads readers to believe that the lack of social, economic, and political influence women has in society leads to the negative persistence of the Glass Ceiling. Bower's claim is supported by the idea that women are not as influential, simply because they are not represented. The number of successful women

in sports are not reported as such, therefore we get the idea that there are not enough women in sports because of the Glass Ceiling. The Glass Ceiling, once an explanation for lack of advancement has now become a myth that some narrow-minded people cling to.

The Glass Ceiling, although an invisible barrier, has had very visible affects for years. However, it is encouraging that changes have addressed this injustice. A study by (John, 2013) shows that companies that have the best records for promoting women outstrip their competition on every measure of profitability. So why are women disproportionately failing to attain high-level positions? It would suggest, predictably that women are qualified for higher positions, but are denied because of their gender. But this feeds the myth that gender is the sole basis for the glass ceiling; it isn't. Why do people want to believe there is a glass ceiling? Why does the myth appeal so much? The Glass Ceiling is not insurmountable; it is an obstacle that once understood, can be challenged by any male or female when it is revealed that advancement and success are grounded in values, morals, beliefs, and characteristics far-outweighing issues of gender.

The Glass Ceiling is philosophical, psychological, and social in nature. According to (Isaac, 2012), who seeks to explain through her research, the gap of leadership positions granted to qualified women as opposed to men. She focuses on leadership, gender, and the Glass Ceiling in relation to the barrier that exists in the workplace. She explains "as leadership is stereotypically a masculine dimension, women who emulate agentic characteristics will rise into leadership. However, empirical evidence overwhelmingly illustrates the consequences to agentic women whose competence is simultaneously expected and minimized." Agentic refers to a person who is highly respected and who demonstrates assertiveness, competiveness, and independence. Agentic individuals are masters at achieving their tasks.

Advancement in sports journalism was once impossible for women since many interviews take place in a men's locker room. But there are countless other disciplines that do not impinge on gender. This project will inform most disciplines; however, the primary goal will be to expose how poor role models seduce many women and minorities. The gap I am trying to close is any example of glorifying poor role models, while suppressing good ones. This gap is commonly encouraged by marketing and media. Not surprisingly, current knowledge on this topic is very biased and fails to define the complexities of the Glass Ceiling aside from gender. The Glass Ceiling is situated in a corporation which can be described as a building bounded together by many layers and the ways to climb this building can best be understood by the symbolic use of stairs, ladders, and tables to access advancement. In reality, there are other factors that make a poor role model so desirable; this researcher wants to understand this enduring practice. However, it is easier to blame the ceiling than oneself. Does our culture promote fragility as sensitivity? In other words, are we teaching people that ceiling gazing hurts but climbing stairs is harder? Or even bad role models exploit the ceiling because it makes them exclusive and important; it serves them to sustain the myth because where they were once ceiling gazers, they have become floor gazers. This would suggest that the concept of Glass Ceilings is entirely psychological first. Even certain corporations will promote women and challenge the myth. According to "The Women's Leadership Gap" Women are just 5 percent of Fortune 500 CEOs (Boesch, 2018). So why are the bad role models still promoting the myth?

My research will look at all dimensions of the glass ceiling—literally and figuratively-- and compare it to the current research that exists. The intention is to break the stereotype of the Glass Ceiling, which like all other stereotypes that become so routine, are no longer questioned. The researcher suggests that you must understand the Glass Ceiling in order to disrupt or

overcome it. The project will also seek to clearly distinguish beneficial role models from those

that aren't. Notwithstanding recent progress in greater opportunities for women and minorities,

gender remains a stereotypical casualty of any barrier to success. The implication of a Glass

Ceiling as much a floor as it is a ceiling is an ineffective stereotype; this researcher is suggesting

that discrimination based on gender may also be a stereotype and needs a fresh perspective, with

a clear criterion for inspiring better role models. The benefits of this thesis will be that if you can

understand who someone looks up to, you can understand who they are. On the flip side of that

bad role models are those who overcome glass ceilings by hypocrisy or unethical means. An

example of this is seen through the "MeToo Movement" in which women traded sexual favors

for advancement. What are the boundaries or parameters to advancement and how far is too far

to achieve success? These women advanced at the cost of sacrificing their morals. These women

are depicted in society as well as in the media as role models for using their voice as well as

bodies as a means to an end. "Why would a woman sacrifice morals and ethics to overcome a

glass ceiling?" The only answer can be because success at any cost drives her. And this obviates

morals and ethics, —no one should sell out just to succeed—right?

        These types of role models are repeatedly presented to us which furthers the notion of

how role models rather bad or good can perpetuate the Glass Ceiling.

Introduction

        It is not exclusively about breaking through the glass ceiling; it is precisely about

building your own path; it is about discovery; it is about making a journey that leads to success

without destroying everything in your path. It is also about ways of seeing things and imagining

solutions for best outcomes. The problem with this invisible barrier is it ultimately acts as an

excuse used to create limits on women and minorities. This obstacle is not invincible, but it is

still inexcusable because it artificially keeps those below, while emboldening those above as a result of the symbolic meaning of the stumbling block: it is as much a Glass Ceiling as a glass floor because there are two sides to it. The problem is not shattering the ceiling or floor since this too has consequences. For example, in terms of the structural metaphor in question, removing a barrier can also act as a floodgate that no longer enforces an order, for order's sake. Put another way, when a ceiling comes down, many other things that may be critically needed come down too. Removing the gender barrier should not result in the axiom that all women must automatically rise above the glass ceiling; skill, aptitude, preparations, and experience must factor into the equation. Happily, skill, aptitude, preparations, and experience are precisely what is required for an individual to create their own way to success. Another way to think about this is the people topside had access to stairs put in place for their ascent, leaving the people at the bottom trapped. Two options remain: build your own stairs to ascend or leave the structure ("casting couch"), business, field, organization altogether. The best role models are those who reveal the secret stairs to ascension or inspire ways to build one's own.

Aims and Objectives

Aims:

1. To define the multifaceted layers of the glass ceiling, aside from "gender"
2. To analyze how women, choose their role models and how that has altered the way they perceive themselves. (through the idea of transparency)
3. To identify attributes that make women "valuable" as a role model.
4. To discover who the real "role-models" are based upon the Glass Ceiling or floor.

5. To suggest that beneficial role models can provide better insight to achieving success.

6. To understand why any role model would persist in perpetuating a stereotype like the Glass Ceiling by clearly defining "valuable" role models and their impact on dismantling the glass ceiling.

Objectives:

1. Identifying other aspects of the Glass Ceiling aside from gender will help eliminate any bias and will rid narrowing this broad concept to one idea. Gender can be a distraction. Hence, this is like gender-gazing. In other words, using the word "gender" becomes a self-imposed "glass" ceiling. In terms of the model, the floor or ceiling can be identified as "gender or minority" and the stairs as "skills or qualifications." You will find that ultimately virtue and integrity are worth more than gender. This is the real litmus test between role models who are posers and those who truly represent inspiration and insight.

2. Discovering why women choose specific role models will redirect aspiring candidates away from the stereotype trap, and towards a new criterion possessed of a proper role model. Many women who profess to champion the underclass are part of that "Glass Ceiling or floor." In keeping with the metaphor, they "appear" transparent, but they are also the obstacle. They look at you through the ceiling or floor, instead of meeting you on the stairwell.

3. Rather than perpetuating artificial myths about why certain obstacles exist, we may restore powerful attributes of successful women who do not rely on ineffective strategies.

4. All "role-models" are not beneficial role models. This project will assist in reviewing role models on both sides of the spectrum. The ones on the bottom and on the top. In addition, attention to demographic variances will also be key in understanding why people choose poorly.

5. Introducing the correlation between "role-models" and the Glass Ceiling will assist in presenting new ways to overcome the glass ceiling, not by shattering it but by finding or creating new ways to get to the other side.

6. Worthwhile role models are individuals who embody virtue, integrity, humility, respect, confidence in identity, and morals while demonstrating a skill set and the experience behind it. These role models are those who lead by example. Role models are not defined merely by who they are, but by what they do. Their works, actions, and wonders. This research will attempt to prove that worthwhile role models remain the same despite their demographic. The definition of a role model should be based on an individual's demonstrable philosophical, political, cultural, and personal ethics.

Methodology

This project will include mixed methods research starting with a collection of data, reviewed and analyzed by integrating quantitative and qualitative methods. The qualitative research will focus on how individuals choose role models based upon their age group. For example, a college student's role model could be different than a forty-year old's role model. Furthermore, it will conceptualize the idea that people choose role models based upon similarities and familiar attributes. The quantitative research will consist of gender, class, geography, and culture. These components will help identify why and how role models are chosen, essentially distinguishing between beneficial role model types, and the lesser "marketed"

type which targets culture and demographics. Case studies on the Glass Ceiling will be consulted

through scholarly databases for putting the Glass Ceiling in historical, cultural, psychological

and even political contexts. This will help unmask those unforeseen layers in addition to gender.

All aspects of the Glass Ceiling will be examined from all four contexts.

Statistical results will reveal the influence of the Glass Ceiling on progress, but also

question how many women are successful despite the ceiling. This is the logical point that gives

way to a study of role models in the ways discussed previously, how they are chosen, why they

are chosen, what makes a role mode a role model, and the attributes that appear "valuable" when

choosing a role model. Articles, journals, documentaries, and interviews will be open to

assessment, after which the research will evaluate a correspondence the importance of role

models as it relates to the Glass Ceiling. The data presented should prove that the barriers of the

Glass Ceiling have altered women's perception of their "role-models" and who they are

themselves. Lastly, the researcher will be modelling a Glass Ceiling as a 3-d representation of

the merits of the thesis that will help structure the argument, research, and solutions of the

problem described.

Outcomes

Specific Outcomes:

- There are at least two aspects to the Glass Ceiling whose original metaphoric value

  accurately describe barriers to gender but has also become a tired and ineffective

  stereotype itself as something that can be used, or weaponized, for the advantage of

  floor gazers/bad role models.

- The Glass Ceiling is as much a floor as it is a ceiling Therefore, it has become

  structurally included in many business models. Rather than destroying the outdated

stereotype, more effort should go to building more stairways, or other points of access,

rendering the perception of Glass Ceiling obsolete.

The researcher will distinguish here the difference between the standard (and imprecise) definition of the "glass ceiling." The specific outcome is to "re-evaluate" the meaning and perception of the Glass Ceiling when reappraised. This means that it is not, by definition (glass floor or ceiling) the obstacle it once was. Once the term is re-evaluated different strategies for overcoming it as an obstacle may be revealed. If, for example, we accept that floors and ceilings are structurally necessary to the metaphor of a building, we do not have to demolish the floor or ceiling, since that would collapse the building. Instead, we add stairs. This is what VALUBALE role models provide: How to build or find stairs.

Speculative outcomes:

- The real role models are those who create their own stairs

- The glass-ceiling may be artificially sustained by questionable role-models

For example, less ideal role models demand that ceilings or floors be demolished for access. Why do people want to destroy without thought to collateral damage? Disingenuous role models seek a status or badge that earns them sympathy or selective outrage from those whom they seek to represent as a role model. This tells us that such disingenuous role models are still self-involved and not really committed to helping others find the stairs. One who wants to succeed does not want to destroy the structure, but rather access what is above. Therefore, the proper role model is the one who understands that the Glass Ceiling, when properly re-evaluated and re-defined is surmountable without demolition precisely because it is irrelevant**.** A good representation of this would be lawsuits that destroy a company to prove a point. If they win the lawsuit, they have financial victory in place of the job, and no one else will benefit. Therefore,

the structure is demolished. The only one who wins is the ceiling gazer who is not guided by ethics or logic, but merely by self-serving methods.

Personal Outcomes:

I am doing this project to further understand people and who they aspire to be. I believe this is important because in all areas of life and in every field an individual must understand others to further gain knowledge on how to overcome the glass ceiling. The Glass Ceiling represents the excuses we ourselves put on one another, ourselves included. These excuses limit our perception and further create a distorted image of a VALUABLE role model. Myths are perpetuated to offer post hoc reasoning that always sees the outcome as victimization, and nothing else.

We all have role models and this will influence my field because by being a lawyer (gender is irrelevant), my goal is to safeguard those who are not held down by the glass ceiling, but rather to fight for those who want to build stairs. My argument is better served by not focusing on gender as a tactic, but as exposing gender as a weak argument. In other words, I want access NOT because I am a woman; I want access NOT because I am entitled; I want access BECAUSE I have what it takes to succeed. Here is an example: I have a client who is a woman and claims that she was not given a promotion because the Glass Ceiling prevents promotions because of gender. I can sue and make money for my client but what am I supposedly committed to? If I discover that the client lacks qualifications, then my lawsuit is frivolous. If I really want to empower women and anyone who is denied access, I must show that the client is deserving of a promotion, and simply needs access to the stairs; if not, I guide the client to "building their stairs". The question then is "what are the stairs?" They are built out of competence, qualification, imagination, problem solving, critical thinking, and various other skill

sets. In fact, in my model I want to label the steps (literally and figuratively) accordingly, to

reflect those individual moves that allow the client, or protégé, or whomever is being denied, to

ascend. Of course, there are time when a lawsuit such as wrongful termination or discrimination

is obvious, but this shouldn't be a one-size-fits all. Instead, to be a good and effective legal

champion, I am simultaneously building myself into a good role model. They are inseparable

events.

Legend

The research presents a substantial amount of terms that will be applied throughout the

analysis to understand role models as well as the glass ceiling. The terms used will have

empirical as well as theoretical meaning. When the Glass Ceiling is mentioned it refers to a

corporation which is identified as a building. The solution to advancing the Glass Ceiling is

described by using stairs or a latter to create one's own ascension up. Stereotypes are mentioned

regarding the layers of the Glass Ceiling such as gender, social norms, experience, demographic

etc. A stereotype is a fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a person or thing. Getting a seat

at the table is symbolic to using the stairs or ladders to ascension to reach beyond the glass

ceiling. "Reflected" is a term that depicts the people on the outside of the glass ceiling. They see

ways to ascend but do not have access to them. However, an alternative for "reflected" is ceiling

gazer/ floor refers to how you see a reflection of yourself as both one who is below as well as

those above. Using this alternative term signifies that one gazes at the ceiling and see only their

self. Good and bad role models are addressed. The good role models are referred to as those who

created their own way, they essentially paved their own path once they were denied access. The

bad role models are those who have advanced the Glass Ceiling but have failed to show others the way or teach them alternative ways to ascend.

What is the glass ceiling?

The Glass Ceiling is an unofficially acknowledged barrier to advancement in a profession, especially affecting women and members of minorities. The U.S. Department of Labor's 1991 definition of the Glass Ceiling is "those artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management-level positions." (Lewis, 2019). Glass ceilings exist even in organizations with explicit policies around equality of advancement when there is implicit bias at work or even behavior within the organization that ignores or undermines the explicit policy. The Glass Ceiling is presented as a metaphor that by design makes it unsolvable. What does that mean? Many individuals know what the Glass Ceiling is and can identify it when it is appears as a reason for lack of access or advancement, but when we analyze the history behind it, we may find better ways to understand the way this metaphor actually functions. Is the Glass Ceiling only supported by gender and just minorities? Can it sometimes apply to minorities such as middle age men? It is artificially put in place by biases that exist in the world of management above it, but also perceived by those below it with a different, but equally powerful bias: some think they are naturally entitled because of gender or minority status, despite lack of competitive qualifications, or simply defeatist attitudes based on personal experience or personality type.

The higher the perception of the glass ceiling, the more work and effort required to get to the interface, such as education, internships, or recommendations earned. The lower the ceiling, the faster one appears to reach a qualified height, when really, their skills are still lacking. An

example is a high school diploma as education you get with a low glass ceiling. You cannot

break through the surface/barrier to better jobs. The college diploma raises that height, giving the

perception that you have broken a barrier, when you might only have misjudged the height of the

ceiling. In other words, not only is the Glass Ceiling an unnatural obstacle to those qualified to

advance, it is also a movable barrier, and one could argue, necessarily so. Yet another example

might be the minimum wage: there is an economic rationale for NOT raising the minimum wage

so as to provide experience and motivation to increase knowledge or skill. Put another way, if

you use the Glass Ceiling in economic terms, you could argue that the economic Glass Ceiling

has a role but is not impenetrable or permanent.

The Glass Ceiling is in opposition to the popular motivational phrase "the sky's the

limit." The ceiling is said to be *glass* because, while it allows everyone to see "the sky" (elite

professional, glamorous opportunities), some are still prohibited from ever reaching it, through

no fault of their own. The term was invented to apply to major economic organizations, like

corporations, but later began to be applied to invisible limits above which women had not risen

in other fields, especially electoral politics.

What happens, however when people have increased knowledge and experience but still face the Glass Ceiling when advancement stalls?

The Glass Ceiling in its entirety can be described as a problematic as well as popular

metaphor. In other words, it's not always an explicit practice of discriminating against

women — indeed, specific policies, practices, and attitudes have historically existed that produce

this barrier. That intentional discrimination is the only explanation is disingenuous. This barrier

is representative-- not limited, however, to all gender types, but may include race, politics,

religion, ethnicity, lifestyle, and physical issues (obesity, Down's, and other disabilities). This is

similar to political correctness as an invention to avoid unfavorable speech. The Ceiling exist

regardless of if advancement is plausible. The Glass Ceiling does not depend on knowledge and

or experiences it disregards the presence of being qualified.

How does the Glass Ceiling function?

The Glass Ceiling only functions if an individual allows it to. The functionality of the

Glass Ceiling is dependent on the individual it affects. Does the Glass Ceiling place limits on an

individual or prevent advancement? Sure, but so does life, death, and mistakes. Just because one

may be given a set of unfortunate circumstances does that mean one should give up. Everyone

will not receive a handbook or be offered a seat at the table. What table? A quote by Shirley

Chisholm said, "If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair."
In other words, if the Glass Ceiling does not let you in advance your own way, make your own

path, create your own stairs. Invent your own route of advancement. Barriers are designed to stop

you but are not definite factors of your success. The only barrier that can stop any individual

from succeeding is the misplaced conviction that a detour is not within one's own grasp. People

have two choices: accept the barrier as is or define it, embrace what it could be and overcome it.

If we observed the Glass Ceiling as a metaphor what would we be acknowledging? A metaphor

is a figure of speech that for rhetorical effect directly refers to one thing by mentioning another.

It may provide clarity or identify hidden similarities between two ideas. In this case the metaphor

analyzes "glass" and a "ceiling." In retrospect these are the two groups that people fall under

when analyzing how advancement may be limited. The glass allows you to see your success but

from the outside looking in. The glass represents the people who avoid the existence of the

ceiling. It is a construct designed to deceive by disavowing the barrier exists at all, but once, they

know what they want and can visualize achieving their highest level of accomplishment. The

"glass" embodies a sense of hope, creativity, and individualism because it shows a vision of what can be achieved. Metonymy is a special class of metaphor where a part represents the whole. The Glass Ceiling as a metaphor, can offer metonymy as it represents all instances of failure to advance, regardless of any other factor.

The successful individuals do not let others determine their success or put a limit on their advancement. The Ceiling however represents the group of people who have accepted this metaphorical barrier as an all-encompassing metonymic obstruction to success They have given the Glass Ceiling power to place limitations on their future and advancement. The Glass Ceiling also functions as a continuation of power. The Glass Ceiling is an enabler to help those in power and who have a seat at the table the ability to maintain those seats without offering or creating another seat for those who are trying to obtain a position at the table.

Who does the Glass Ceiling protect?

`The Glass Ceiling protects those who for various reasons of maintaining control and power raise or lower it but maintain its illusion. It can also protect those who for the same reasons—maintaining control and power—perpetuate the hopelessness of overcoming it. For example, speakers (often celebrities) who focus energy on making the barrier a monolithic construct of political theory, rather than devoting energy to suggesting a metaphorical set of stairs, or alternate route. Those in power" maintain their power by: constantly increasing their power (more money, and more political influence that in turn brings in more money and more political influence), preventing those without power from gaining power (reduce the competition and increase the pool of cheap labor, narrowing the circle of power (the 1% becomes the 0.5%,

which becomes the 0.2%. By building a connection between their power and a divine force or

plan (It's clearly God's will, so how can you go against God's will and not give me more power),

crushing those who may oppose their power (best done through the media, in the courts and

through legislation). "Those in power" may or may not be individuals, they can be corporations,

political parties, religious groups, etc.(Zaleznik, 2014)

How is access granted?

Policy and laws have improved nefarious or simply ignorant practices. Great strides have

been made toward equality in the workplace but even today, many people find themselves

unfairly blocked from advancing in their careers. They may be ideal candidates for promotion,

with relevant qualifications, experience, and "can-do" attitudes – but time and again they see less

competent co-workers overtake them or are overlooked for senior positions. The answer is quite

simple identifying the barrier and demanding for more. An example of this world be cronyism

which is fear of legal action. Some employers are held hostage by policies such as political

correctness, quotas, or reverse discrimination. The people on the top didn't get they're by being

quiet. They got their because they weren't afraid of letting their voice be heard, of shaking up the

foundation of the ceiling. People above the ceiling continued to knock and push until one's

denial turned into another's pre-trial--a pre-trial of persistence and innovation creating new ways

to exceed the barrier. These are considered the good role models as distinguished from the less

qualified who might have advanced. Access is also granted to those who prove their mettle in the

arena of knowledge, experience, talent, skill, and even innovation. Being qualified is also

defining factor of being able to overcome the Glass Ceiling. For example, an individual can't ask

for more or demand a promotion if they don't have the credibility of knowledge to support the

level of advancement they seek to achieve.

How do you advance?

Advancement is sometimes—and critically so—relative to the person. Advancement recognizes a need for growth. However, if no one ever showed you the way how do you find your way? The answer is simple: you don't find a way you create one. As previously stated, characteristics such as imagination, stamina, courage, industriousness, ethics, morals— are key ingredients to creating your own path, consequently those are not traits that all people possess. Some of it is because negative role models dismiss these aspects in favor of victimhood, or some other agenda. The preconceived notion that women and minorities face is the acceptance of the Glass Ceiling and not the advancement of the Glass Ceiling. This refers to role models. How? If your role model accepts the Glass Ceiling for all the mythical reasons it perpetuates, that individual has just reinforced the problem. The perpetuated myth of the Glass Ceiling by role models is the foundation to why advancement is limited within these groups.

The Glass Ceiling is a barrier that was created as a mind game to place limitations on those who were already seen as less than human. Advancement is limited because we ourselves are also limited. The key to advancement is not accepting the Glass Ceiling but acknowledging its existence and refusing to be a part of the imprudence. Successful women do not buy into the myth of the Glass Ceiling and because of that they succeed. Their voices and advice are not included in the narrative. James 4:2 "Ye have not because ye ask not." This scripture verse can be applied to Heraclitus quote "The way up and the way down are one and the same." Advancement is about knowing what you want and how to achieve it. In both quotes' success comes from taking action, creating movement, and putting yourself in a position to demand what you deem you are qualified to have. Networking is critical to climbing the leadership ladder. So,

I say all this to say, as professional women and or men we already know what is evidently out there hindering us from advancing to the executive suite; and, sometimes they cannot be controlled. Nevertheless, they can be changed, and change starts with us. Gaining additional skills through professional development and building strategic networks in the workplace are all variables we can control to assist us in our journey up the leadership ladder. Let's shatter our own Glass Ceiling and break through to the top.

If the Glass Ceiling was eliminated would all women and minorities get ahead?

Perhaps, but this would have disastrous consequences. A good example would be quotas, which really means that a lot of unqualified people would advance along with those who are truly competent. In actuality, if one barrier is eliminated another one will be created. One must remember that this barrier is a metaphor and is created internally first, then structurally. The ceiling is man-made so whether or not women and minorities would get ahead if it was taken away is totally dependent on the individual. If the ceiling was eliminated, and an individual didn't have access to success how would women and minorities get ahead? Has anyone ever got ahead without facing some sort of obstacles? The barrier is not the problem, the continuation of accepting this barrier is the problem. Embracing the Glass Ceiling as an obstacle begins to disarm it.

If you identify the glass as a gender-based obstacle how would you eliminate it?

What would you have to do to overcome it? I realized that there are some good examples in the military. I recall Sarah Zorn the first female regimental commander of the Corps of Cadets. Zorn faced much adversity, but she climbed to the top through resilience and determination (Citadel. 2018). The point is that the first woman had the backing of feminists and politics to

force "a seat at the table" simply because she was a woman. In the end, she couldn't pass muster, but others have gone a long way since then by focusing on skill, knowledge, experience and sheer drive and determination. For example, Christine Mau who was the first women selected to fly an F-35 single seat aircraft. Mau broke barriers being a female jet pilot in a man dominated career. Mau explains that "a combination of forces poses barriers to women becoming pilots including societal norms, a scarcity of role models, and the perception that flying while raising a family may be untenable." (Jagannathan, 2019) Similarly to Mau the same barriers exist regarding the Glass Ceiling. Mau did not face obstacles only because she was a woman but because society told her she wasn't qualified enough, that she should tend to her motherly duties, that because it hasn't been done, a woman couldn't do it. Mau directly depicts a woman who faced obstacles that were bigger than her gender but based in societal differences. If the Glass Ceiling was only constructed based on gender how would one justify the fact that discrimination continues to affect women more than men, however, that does not necessarily mean that men cannot be the targets of gender bias in evaluation. Although empirical research has focused almost exclusively on women, most psychological theories of the antecedents and consequences of gender discrimination are not meant to be gender specific. Rather, many of these theories are posited as explanations of gender bias more generally and therefore should also be able to account for patterns of discrimination against men, should they exist.

Though these social psychological theories about gender discrimination have shown themselves to be useful in explaining why, when, and how women encounter barriers in traditionally male roles and occupations, whether they can also explain the potential limitations men encounter when seeking entry into traditionally female domains remains to be seen. Thus, examining whether and under which circumstances men are discriminated against based on their

gender has important theoretical implications. Exploring whether men can be the targets of

gender-based bias is important not only from a theoretical perspective, but also from a practical

one. While women's entry and participation in traditionally male domains have increased

dramatically in the past decades, men's participation in traditionally female domains has

remained stubbornly stagnant (Blau et al., 2013).

Given that occupations in which women outnumber men are typically devalued (Cohen

and Huffman, 2003; Hegewisch and Hartmann, 2014), increasing male participation in these

areas may help decrease gender segregation and, in turn, help balance the prestige and economic

rewards that are allocated to both male- and female-dominated occupations. Importantly, if

men's under-representation in feminine roles can be explained, even in part, by traditional

models of gender discrimination, then the knowledge we have gained from decades of research

on women in traditionally male-settings should be helpful in identifying strategies to combat

anti-male bias. If, on the other hand, men's lack of participation in female roles and occupations

is not due to gender discrimination, or if the processes underlying bias are not analogous for

women and men, then there may be a need for both theoretical revision, as well as new ways to

address the persistent gender imbalance in the workplace.

Although the penalties for violating gender norms are mostly informal (e.g., dislike,

derogation, avoidance), they may still result in discrimination against men in communal roles

and occupations by promoting the exclusion – and self-exclusion – of men from these domains.

Thus, even if men and women are selected at equal rates, or if they climb the organizational

ladder more quickly, men may still be deterred from pursuing a career in female-typed areas

because of the harsh social penalties that such a decision might entail. Field research supports

this idea, describing how men in traditionally female occupations often express fear about how

they will be perceived by others. For example, male nurses and early childhood educators report being afraid of having their masculinity questioned and, in particular, of being seen as socially and sexually deviant (Williams, 1995a; Cameron, 2001; Harding, 2007). These fears are likely to play an important role in men's job pursuits and aspirations, including their decision to enter and remain in female-typed occupations.

Presenting the Glass Ceiling as a gender-based construct further perpetuates an ineffective and reckless stereotype. Gender used to describe the Glass Ceiling is an excuse to avoid the underlining issues of discrimination, inequality, and cultural differences. Similarly, to the Glass Ceiling, stereotypes create a falsified illusion of a popular problem. These illusions also create inadequate role models. If our role models are based on defective stereotypes what chance do, we have to advance? Stereotypes and ineffective role models maintain the existence of the Glass Ceiling.

How do people choose their role models?

Our brains are wired to connect and mirror the behavior of others. Role models provide a vision, and visual proof, for who we aspire to be. When you see desirable values, traits, language, and behavior in others, your brain instinctively wants to copy it. The question becomes, are you consciously and strategically choosing models that level up your life and contribute to your growth? Are your role models breaking the Glass Ceiling or building a new path in? The most successful people in sports and life are those who find lessons and inspiration in the success/failure of others. Role models can drastically impact our world view, behavior, and growth. Not only is it important to realize that our behavior can inspire others, but that we have a choice in who we want to model our behavior after. In our pursuit of excellence and our goals, we can rapidly accelerate learning by modelling those we admire. What excuse do we

have not to overcome the Glass Ceiling if we had role models who showed us how? The issue

with role models as it relates to the Glass Ceiling is that role models aren't transparent. In society

our role models aren't necessarily people who have created their own foundation to exceeding

the Glass Ceiling but are ultimately individuals who were handed a seat at the table and forgot

about those who were still climbing to gain access.

It is easy to look at celebrities, athletes, anyone famous really and say, I want to be like

them. Often, we look to those who are well known and look up to them to be role models, but are

they really the best examples for us to follow? While athletes do spectacular things on the

athletic field, and celebrities may be talented actors or actresses, does that mean they are the ones

who should become the role models in our own lives or our children's lives? Often the answer is

no, or ought to be.

While this is a generalization and there are always exceptions to the rule, though in most

cases, athletes and celebrities are self-absorbed and focused on a singular goal: success. Little

gets in the way as they hone their craft, working diligently, over and over to become better.

Though a strong work ethic is more than admirable, and developing discipline is a necessary part

of growing older, holding celebrities and athletes to this high standard of being a role model is

not practical. More than that, it raises the question of why we choose those who are famous to be

role models. Is it because they are celebrated, have reached a higher social status, or is it because

they have qualities, and character attributes that we want to emulate?

The problem for us is that those we most often aspire to be like are usually from a

different socio-economic level. Unfortunately, the wealth that we observe among well-known

athletes and Hollywood idols has significant influence on who we would most like to be. Those

role models that achieve wealth and status become a disservice to ceiling gazers. Someone who

is wealthy, or is well known, does not by default mean they are people after whom we should model our lives. In fact, when our definition becomes mostly about what we aspire to have and not who we ultimately want to be, the role model we have set before us is ourselves. As humans it is in our nature to want what others have. We aspire to emulate all the things we want that we do not see in ourselves. We all want success, but success requires hard work, education, striving for excellence, a refusal to fear failure, ethics, morality—in short, a code of honor and honesty in all we pursue.

The real "Role Models" are those who create their own stairs.

Often when analyzing the structure of the Glass Ceiling we rarely conclude that the Glass Ceiling is frequently sustained by insufficient role-models; insufficient role models are the basis to why this barrier exists. When ascertaining role models, one must first identify what and how a role model operates. In relation to the Glass Ceiling the best role models are not those who claim to have shattered the Glass Ceiling but are those who created their own stairs which ultimately exceeded the ceiling. Stair builders are role models because they symbolize individuals who were not given a hand- out, but who stood below the glass, in self-reflection and coming up with other ways to not only gain a seat but pave a way for more stair builders to climb up. Insufficient role models perpetuate the Glass Ceiling because it disillusions individuals to idolize people who are at the top placing a mental limit on those who are on the bottom. A person looking through the glass strives to be on the receiving end, however their role models never showed them how so therefore they do not advance. Insufficient role models believe that promotion and advancement are only for those who have achieved success. Those types of role models say, "yeah they did it, but that doesn't mean you can." Insufficient role models limit an individual's capabilities to create their own stairs. Stair builders however, view denial as a pre-trial. During

the denial period a stair builder is accessing the barrier for what it is and refusing to accept they

cannot succeed. The stair builder is using the pre-trial to become their own real "role model" by

creating another platform of accessing advancement. A stair builder recognizes that the Glass

Ceiling isn't meant to be broken but built and reconstructed as a foundation for other stair

builders to build upon. The purpose is not to break the ceiling; but to build another way in to

access what is above. The real role models are those who reveal the secret stairs to ascension or

inspire ways to build one's own.

Corporate ladder comes before the glass ceiling. All about movement up or down.

The Corporate Ladder comes before the glass Ceiling. The term "corporate ladder" is a

conceptualized view of a company's employment hierarchy in which career advancement is

considered to follow higher rungs on a ladder, with entry-level positions on the bottom rungs and

executive level, upper management, positions at the top. "Climbing the corporate ladder" is an

expression used to describe one's advancement within a company through promotions The

Corporate Ladder similar to the Glass Ceiling, is all about movement up or down. The higher an

employee's position on the corporate ladder, the more difficult advancing becomes. An

organization typically has many lower, or entry-level, positions than it does management or

executive positions. For the Glass Ceiling this theory has been altered. The lower one is, the

more difficult advancing becomes. This correlates with the height of the Glass Ceiling as a way

of requiring more work with less advancement. According to (Hargrave, 2019) The pace at

which one gets promoted in and of itself may be used by others to assess their talent and

capability. Under such a perspective, the faster one climbs the corporate ladder is seen as a

measure of the effort the individual is expected to put into their next position. The corporate

ladder is a privileged kind of staircase. This is usual in examples of cronyism, or casting

couches, or fear of litigation, etc.

The role a person fills at a company can limit or increase the potential to rise higher on

the corporate ladder. For instance, a worker who primarily handles administrative and clerical

duties may not have an opportunity to take on the type of work that would merit consideration

for an executive position. Furthermore, companies may be structured in such a way that only

certain elements of the business even offer the possibility of advancement.

Glass Ceiling Goes Beyond Gender

According to Mind Tools (Onomen, n.d.) "the Glass Ceiling is a subtle but damaging

form of discrimination where you cannot attain the opportunities you see in front of you, despite

your suitability and your best efforts. Crucially, this "failure" is not the result of a lack of skills

and experience, or because you haven't tried hard enough. The Glass Ceiling is most often

associated with women at work- research suggests that women are 18 percent less likely to be

promoted than their male co-workers." Therefore, it is real.

The term is applied to minority groups, too, but it goes beyond issues of gender and

ethnicity. It can affect people from all walks of life for a range of reasons. Let's consider these

examples:

- The knowledgeable and skilled female executive who is denied a promotion because of

  her gender, because men in her organization are traditionally viewed as more "suitable"

  leaders.

- The highly experienced software developer who is rejected for a role by a start-up

  business because, at 52, he's far older than the mostly Millennial workforce, and bosses

  feel that he might not "fit in."

- The bright law graduate who is refused an internship at a prestigious law firm because she doesn't have the "right upbringing."

- Glass ceilings can also be of the quota variety, where an ideal candidate must be denied in favor of someone less so, but a necessary number to funding or law.

All seem to be ideal candidates, but they are held back by long-standing traditions, biases, and beliefs about what the "right" candidate looks like – the glass ceiling.

Chances are, having their career progressions blocked like this could leave them feeling confused, disorientated, depressed, or isolated. They may feel mistrust, anger or resentment, and start to doubt themselves. But glass ceilings negatively impact organizations, too. Studies have shown that diversity is often the key to innovation, growth and higher revenue.

Why Do Glass Ceilings Exist?

Glass ceilings are often the result of unconscious bias – instinctive, underlying beliefs about ethnicity, gender, age, sexuality, social class, religion, and so on. This may be largely unintentional. In these instances, people "at the top" may deny that a Glass Ceiling exists, simply because they haven't experienced it themselves. Or, they fear that acknowledging it would threaten their positions. Either way, they'll likely want to preserve the status quo. Change can be a scary thing for many people, which is perhaps why many tend to prefer that things simply stay the way they are. In psychology, this tendency is known as the status quo bias, a type of cognitive bias in which people exhibit a preference for the way things are currently. When changes do occur, people tend to perceive them as a loss or detriment. The status quo bias can make people resistant to change, but it can also have a powerful effect on the decisions they make as well. In a series of controlled experiments, (Samuelson and Zeckhauser, 1988) found that people show a disproportionate preference for choices that maintain the status quo.

Participants were asked a variety of questions, for example, in which they had to take the role

of the decision-maker in situations faced by individuals, managers, and government officials.

Based on the results, the researchers noted a strong status quo bias in the responses. When

making an important choice, people are more likely to pick the option that maintains things as

they are currently.

A status quo bias minimizes the risks associated with change, but it also causes people to

miss out on potential benefits that might even outweigh the risks. Mere exposure, or the tendency

to prefer things simply because they are familiar, may also play a role. Researchers have found

that people prefer a wide variety of things simply because they are familiar with them, including

words, faces, pictures, and even sounds. Quite often, the things we think we prefer only to

become favored because we are more familiar with them. The status quo is one of the reasons the

Glass Ceiling is preserved, people above prefer what is familiar never offering or presenting an

opportunity to those beneath. The status quo bias can have a serious impact on a wide variety of

everyday decisions.

For example, you may find yourself only maintaining relationships with other elites,

therefore the people above stay in power. Some of the new lower individuals on the bottom

look tempting, but you already know that you will be satisfied with your familiar associates.

Instead of trying something new and running the risk that you will not like it, you'd rather stick

to your tried-and-true favorite. This minimizes the risk of any potential losses (being unhappy

with what chanced, but you also miss out on the possible benefits such as finding a new

favorite or exploring new opportunities. Of course, like many other cognitive biases, the status

quo bias does have benefits. Because it prevents people from taking risks, the bias offers a

certain degree of protection. However, this risk-avoidance can also have negative effects if the alternatives provide greater safety and benefits than the current state of affairs. The Glass Ceiling is not invincible, but it is still inexcusable because it artificially keeps those below, while emboldening those above as a result of the symbolic meaning of the stumbling block. The Glass Ceiling is personal and distinctive and is founded on a psychological premise composed of insufficient role models who maintain this faulty structure and are influenced by the status quo and fear of the risk outweighing the benefits. The true nature of the best role models who outsmart the Glass Ceiling are those who build their own stairs and create a new path that offers those at the bottom to advance.

This paper is not about disarming the Glass Ceiling but getting individuals to understand the structure that the Glass Ceiling is instituted on. In order to disrupt the structure, one must be able to define it. However, in closing the researcher wanted to review the Glass Ceiling as an alternate of a ceiling of Glass. The Ceiling of Glass is fortified in the poem described below, summing up the true nature of this paper as well as offering some very thought-provoking facts that qualify much of the information previously stated. The Ceiling of Glass reiterates the barrier but also encourages all to find their own path and create their own stairs. The poem inspires all to not let what you see define who you are. This poem gives the "reflected" ones an outlet, chance, and vision to surpass. The moral of this story is that life gives us nothing but opportunity, and it is our choice as to whether we take it. Sometimes opportunity only knocks once, and sometimes it doesn't knock at all, and we must seek it out. We are all capable of greatness if we are willing to visualize the goal and work for it. The researcher challenges everyone to find those valuable characteristics such as determination, imagination, and ambition to create their own stairs.

The Ceiling of Glass

The Ceiling of Glass often times used to define women and minorities
I said ceiling because that's where many people look to place their priorities
Successful people do not succeed based on limitations
But rather a different mind and higher expectations
Generations after generations
We have used this barrier to define us
Trying to fit in with people who try to minus us
Extending beyond previous set ceilings
You can be successful if you look past their feelings
Pushed aside historically
Dehumanized categorically
Role models were rare
So, you had to look elsewhere
When your role models are no longer your role models and you want to succeed
where do you look? You create your own story and write your own book
The solution is not shattering the Glass Ceiling but finding a new way in, realizing
winning is a mentality you have to search within.
You see Hilary Clinton she made history
Oprah showed us against all odds you can still win the victory
Sandra Day O Connor was the first woman to serve on the Supreme court,
Madam C. J. Walker was the richest self-made woman in America who had no
support
Stacy Cunningham was the first female president of the New York Stock Exchange
Aretha franklin taught us you can go anywhere all you need is a little RESPECT
and you too can make the hall of fame.
Junko Tabei was the first woman to reach Mount Everest she taught us climbing
was the name of the game
Climbing for what climbing for who
Climbing for those who could not see the view
The ceiling locked us out
The glass showed us ourselves because ultimately that is what it is all about.
You push me down
I came around
You shut the door
I found another floor
They call It a cage
I see it as an opportunity
They said less than minimum wage

I said I fight for unity
A better community less impunity
My access was denied
Because they said I was unqualified
I put aside my pride, I had no guide
Soujourner Truth said truth is powerful it prevails
Through her journey she taught me to make my own trail
When one door closes another one doesn't always open
But beautiful things still come from what was broken.
It started as a corporate ladder
Those at the top never made room for those at the bottom
But years later drake said started from the bottom now we here
Here is relative to those who were overlooked, who paved their own way and who
were not caught up in the ceiling, still a myth today.
For those who had lots to say but never had a voice
This barrier all started with a choice
A choice of success and acceptance even when it was not present
It's one thing to hear it and another to do it
I am more than words, I am my actions
They throw distractions
But I don't entertain them with reactions
They throw stereotypes
But I say don't get caught up in the hype
You have yet to meet my type
This barrier only prevents those who refuse to challenge it
Limitations are mere obstacles that seem impossible but defy our psychological
It is our responsibility we are responsible.
For success, it is not optional.

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