NAME: BENJAMIN BEN EGWUH

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QUESTION: WHAT IS GLASS CEILING? IS BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING POSSIBLE IN AFRICA AND WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES

A glass ceiling is a metaphor used to represent an invisible barrier that keeps a given demographic (typically applied to minorities) from rising beyond a certain level in a hierarchy.

The metaphor was first coined by feminists in reference to barriers in the careers of high-achieving women. In the US, the concept is sometimes extended to refer to obstacles hindering the advancement of minority women, as well as minority men. Minority women often find the most difficulty in "breaking the glass ceiling" because they lie at the intersection of two historically marginalized groups: women and people of color. East Asian and East Asian American news outlets have coined the term "bamboo ceiling" to refer to the obstacles that all East Asian Americans face in advancing their careers. Similarly, a set of invisible obstacles posed against refugees' efforts to workforce integration is coined "canvas ceiling”. Within the same concepts of the other terms surrounding the workplace, there are similar terms for restrictions and barriers concerning women and their roles within organizations and how they coincide with their maternal duties. These "Invisible Barriers" function as metaphors to describe the extra circumstances that women undergo, usually when trying to advance within areas of their careers and often while trying to advance within their lives outside their work spaces. “A glass ceiling" represents a barrier that prohibits women from advancing toward the top of a hierarchical corporation. Women in the workforce are faced with "the glass ceiling." Those women are prevented from receiving promotion, especially to the executive rankings, within their corporation. Within the last twenty years, the women who are becoming more involved and pertinent in industries and organizations have rarely been in the executive ranks. Women in most corporations encompass below five percent of board of directors and corporate officer positions. Another set-back in the African journey towards women empowerment has been cultural indoctrination. Women are taught from a tender age that success scares men away and they might not have families if they are successful. Men who are threatened by women’s success further perpetuate this belief. Marriage is essentially a luxury that ironically only the unsuccessful woman can afford. Many ladies are being pushed to give up on their lofty dreams of grandeur. The pressure cannot be underestimated as many girls are taught to value marital success over all else and they are falsely made to believe successful women do not get married. Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, women have continued to be underrepresented in politics. Women tend to be limited by various factors, which are found in the system of the society such as patriarchy, structure of production and reproduction, among others. There are perspectives in literature that there exist impermeable and impenetrable barriers that prevent women from reaching top positions in offices. Although women in many parts of the world have made strides into politics in the 21ST century but a remarkable breaking of the glass ceiling is yet to be witnessed.