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**What is glass ceiling?**

Glass ceiling means the impenetrable barriers that prevents women in reaching higher or serious position in organisation. The United States Federal Glass Ceiling Commission defines the glass ceiling as "the unseen, yet unbreachable barrier that keeps minorities and women from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements."

The Glass Ceiling (GC) is a popular metaphor for explaining the inability of many women to advance past a certain point in their occupations and professions, regardless of their qualifications or achievements (Purcell et al, 2010). Glass ceiling or what Tlaiss and Kauser (2010) called, ‘Glass Wall’ (cited in Osondu-Oti, 2016) is a form of gender discrimination in workplace. There exist subconscious discrimination and stereotyping that see leadership as men’s domain, and places women in the care for families at homes and doing domestic chores.

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.

"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.[

**Is breaking glass ceiling possible in Africa?**

According to research from the University of Chicago, School of Business, there are factors beyond gender discrimination in the workplace that are holding women back. Although women have surpassed men in educational attainment, they are vastly underrepresented in top-paying jobs. Women with college degrees often choose to work in fields that offer lower incomes.

The Nigerian Constitution provides for equal rights, so from a policy point of view, there is no discrimination. However, the glass ceiling, that invisible barrier to advancement that women face at the top levels of the workplace, remains a big problem and a challenge to society. Psychological differences between men and women could account for up to 10 percent of the pay gap. Much of the existing research concludes that women are more risk-averse than men are. The willingness to take risks helps employees compete for higher paying jobs and negotiate higher salaries. Whether men and women are born with different attitudes toward risk or the differences are taught, understanding the role of nature versus nurture is key to closing the gap.

**What are the challenges of glass ceiling?**

The major challenges of glass ceiling are three which are:

1. **Social road theory:** which argues that men and women act according to the roles that are given to them by the society and these roles are stereotypes.
2. **Gender stereotyping and sub-cautious discrimination:** which is attributed to the saying ‘think leadership think men’.
3. **Family and work conflicts:** which is maintaining both the family effectively.

The challenges women face are well-documented, less understood are the factors that shape the experience and success of women who, against significant odds, rise above the glass ceiling. This paper analyze the conditions under which women are promoted to top leadership positions and exploring the opportunities and challenges they face post-promotion. We draw on two data sources: comparison of the career trajectories of all women who have ever served as CEO in the Fortune 500 with a matched sample of men CEOs as well as in-depth interviews with women executives across a variety of sectors. Our analysis reveals that women are more likely than men to be promoted to high risk leadership positions and often lack the support or authority to accomplish their strategic goals. As a result, women leaders often experience shorter tenures compared to male peers. We consider the implication of our findings for theory, research and practice.