THE GLASS CEILING AND WOMEN’S CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Fapohunda, Tinuke. M.
Department of Industrial Relations and Personnel Management
Lagos State University Ojo. Nigeria
E mail: tkfap@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: The last few decades have witnessed an augmented amount of women in the place of work. Over 50 percent of adult females now work; a situation that has possibly consequence in gender roles alteration. However, although there is new candidness to women participation in the workforce gender disparities still persist in the workplace. The glass ceiling is a pattern that hampers women attraction and development particularly when evaluated against the overall figure of females in the labour force. It scrutinizes gender disparities between men and women in the workplace. There are discriminations against women, generating a gender gap that checks the advancement of women into top-level managerial positions. This study focuses on the effect of the glass ceiling on women career advancement. Five hypotheses were tested on the influences of personal dynamics, relational dynamics, organizational dynamics and cultural dynamics on women career advancement. The sample size was 480 and a self-administered questionnaire was employed. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in data analysis. The results depict a moderate negative relationship between the glass ceiling and women career advancement, and also confirm that personal dynamics, organizational dynamics and cultural dynamics significantly influence women career advancement. This study thus concludes that there are significant effects of the glass ceiling on women career advancement.

Keywords: Exploration, Effect, Glass Ceiling, Women, Career Advancement.

1. Introduction

Women and gender concerns have become a foremost area of worry in modern times owing to the fact that in the second half of the last century further boosting women participation has constituted one of the most important aspects of the global labour market. Globally, discourses continue to argue women issues and women evolution in all spheres of life. While several studies like Baxter & Wright (2010), Cunningham (2014) and Oniosa (2015) demonstrate a swell in the percentage of women at entry and middle-level management positions in recent times, owing mainly to the activities of the women’s movement, government policies as well as corporate equal opportunity schemes. Other studies like Tomori (2013) affirm that a woman at the highest echelons of business is still uncommon. Coakley (2014) indicates that they constitute a mere 10% of senior managers in Fortune 500 organizations, below 4% of the topmost levels of CEO and COO; and under 3% of apex business earners. Globally, strong indications abound with respect to the under-representation of women in leadership positions as studies like Thomson et al., (2014), Davidson (2012), Jones (2014) and Peterson & Smith (2015) affirm. Women have only a token existence in management positions. While mind-sets about the position of women as homemakers is transforming to being professionals, only a few women have been able to steadily ascend the management and leadership hierarchies. The Hamilton Reports (2015) indicates that women constitute less than 3% of boardroom seats in Nigeria. The report adds that albeit women in Nigeria constitute over 50% of the population, their labour force participation rate is significantly below that of men. The participation of men in the labour force doubles that of women. ILO (2014) argues that a good deal of deliberation and efforts have been dedicated by governments, workers unions, women’s groups and activists to surmounting those attitudinal and institutional discriminations that hinder the career advancement of women. Nonetheless, several of the outcomes are below prospects. In contemporary times, there has certainly been considerable advancement in promoting the foundations of gender equality in the labour market with more women shifting progressively in the direction of jobs, vocations and professions formerly held in reserve for men. The United Nations (2015) affirms an upgrading in women access to education and training and their consequent acquisition of needed qualifications to aim for top management posts. The amplified figures of women in both conventional
and non-conventional occupations prove this. Notwithstanding this giant strides made by women in Nigeria, they remain in the minority and represent minute percentage of the top management posts not only in certain industries such as the military, construction and security services where men dominate, but also in women dominated occupations like teaching and nursing where though most of the rank and file and support staff are women, the top management is male dominated. Studies like Abdullahi, (2007) and Mordi et al., (2011) observe, there is the indication that managers are starting to promote women more steadily and to initiate work-life balance policies with the aim of attraction and retention of women. Notwithstanding though, Ling & Leow (2008), Okafor et al.(2012) and Northouse (2012) affirm that women still have challenges in cracking through the “glass ceiling”. The glass ceiling is a pattern that hampers women attraction and development particularly when evaluated against the overall figure of females in the labour force.

Windero (2014) indicates that women managers outclass their male equivalents on thirty two of forty two vital management abilities. Sharpe (2013) found that in particular, in a 3600 evaluation (by their associates, peers, superiors, and subordinates) female administrators, achieved superior ratings than their male associates on measures like production of high-quality work, goals setting, and mentoring in addition to being extra collaborative, superior motivators, and additionally enthusiastic about sharing information with others than many men . A 2012 study by Insight International also affirms that corporations boasting elevated representation of women in top management positions financially achieve more than those with less women at the top. Sadly, women still struggle to come out of male domination and progress to upper levels notwithstanding these attainments.

More so, ILO (2004) observes that women who opt for non-conventional professions can countenance extraordinary limitations in the place of work some of which include: sexual harassment, segregation, isolation, restricted opportunities for mentoring and female role models. Globally, this is manifested by little women representation in the military, paramilitary and security services. The glass ceiling is still securely in position and constitutes a regrettable reality that is often not usually recognized by young desiring women pursuing careers as professionals.

Notwithstanding the significant role women need play in all economic activities, they remain under-represented in top management positions. Consequently, the need arises for further studies on women involvement, experience, constraints and tests. This study decisively scrutinizes the challenges countenanced by Nigerian women in entry and making career advancement in the hospitality industry. Contained in the new multidimensional approach to human and national development is the acknowledgment that a gendered approach is vital to sufficiently answer to the requirements of women, men, boys and girls in every society. An aspect of the gender dimension of human and national development is the effective top management positions. Human resource professionals are frequently in management positions that permit them enormous effects on organizations, so it is vital that, they are conversant with the possible direct or indirectly effects of the glass ceiling reality on organization reputation, client loyalty, and assortment of skill sets, growth prospects and for its outcomes.

2. The Problem

In contemporary competitive environment significant attention is generally paid to issues of the glass ceiling. Recognizing the effect of the glass ceiling on women workers is very crucial to policy makers in spotting important workplace subjects to facilitate the development of schemes to tackle and advance the policies for averting them. However, there seems to be is a gap in the knowledge available on the challenges countenanced by Nigerian women in entry and making career advancement in the hospitality industry.

Gender mainstreaming necessitates the integration of gender analysis in all decision-making, planning and implementation. It attempts to increase the number of women leading and serving in organizations and to provide gender awareness training. This paper focuses on developing interest and advocating for increased access for women in the hospitality industry. It examines various factors relevant to women's participation and career advancement in the hospitality industry. Gender disparities in promotion in the workplace has long been a concern for researchers. Women appear to be under-represented in top positions, implying that they may countenance a “glass ceiling”. Although women work as hard as the men employees they countenance several
obstacles in their career development. The study seeks to evaluate the effect of glass ceiling (GC) on Women Career Advancement (WCA) of top management female employees in the hospitality industry. The study assesses the correlation between the glass ceiling (GC) and Women Career Advancement (WCA) of top management female workers. It also determines the consequences of the glass ceiling (GC) and Women Career Advancement (WCA) and proposes solutions for cracking the glass ceiling. The findings of this study offer significant directives for managers; to recognize managerial women’s challenges, the approaches to breaking those obstacles. Again, policy makers will find it helpful in formulating and improving on organizational policies relating to the glass ceiling and WCA. Also, women workers in the hospitality industry will more clearly recognize the hindrances to their career advancements and techniques for overcoming them.

3. Literature Review

3.1 The Glass Ceiling

Akande (2012) describes the glass ceiling as incidences in the workplace that trap women at lower ranks. Maxwell (2007) notes that the Wall Street Journal created the “glass ceiling” syndrome to denote an organizational imperceptible, implicit but impassable obstacles that stop women from attaining equality with their male counterparts at the uppermost levels of the business hierarchy. The “glass ceiling “constitutes an imperceptible barricade which women countenance as they endeavour to either attain advancement to the upper heights of organizations or look for jobs in some industries. Molisa (2014) depicts it as situations where women start their careers on an equivalent footing with men, and after a while, either slowly revert, or keep advancing at the same level as their male counterpart until, someday, their advancement is obstructed. Government in Nigeria provides for the participation of women in both conventional and non-conventional careers, and lately women representation in management and governance is slowly rising. Government is campaigning for (35%) of women involvement in strategic or managerial spots. This has resulted in considerable variations both in the entry of women to the labour force and the progress attained. Moreover, as Lapchick (2015) emphasizes important transformations have transpired in gender-roles and in better gender-based division of labour. In contrast to men, regarding advancement women are frequently left over even though they boast equivalent education and work experiences. Ojurongbe (2014) contends that the glass ceiling nevertheless subsists regardless of studies like Schein (2011) and Hanis-Martín (2006) indicating that women frequently outpace their male associates in several areas of leadership and management. The study delineates that women and minorities meet substantial glass ceiling obstacles in their careers; which are incidented earlier in their professions than formerly considered. FGCC (1995) established diverse types of glass ceiling barriers like diverse pay for similar work, sexual, ethnic, racial, religious discrimination or harassment in the workplace, prevailing culture of many companies, lack of family-friendly workplace policies and even policies demonstrating unfairness to people.

The glass ceiling constitutes an obstacle to career progression. It involves an informal although genuine hindrance to a person’s progression to higher-level management posts owing to diffusion founded on the person’s gender. International Labour Office (2004) contends that it is a forceful figure of speech for scrutinizing disparities between men and women in the workplace. Burton & Parker (2010) describes it as the transparent obstacles that stop women from rising to top management positions and past a certain point in big corporations. Weyer (2007) connects the dearth of female leaders to continuous discrimination and bias against women in the workplace. While women now possess the competence of progress to higher levels, they are stopped by an imperceptible barricade at certain points. It pertains to women as a group who are stopped from progressing higher since they are women. Okuneye (2015) affirms, that instead of the glass ceiling being a ceiling or wall in one place, it comprises several diverse and enveloping types of gender bias that transpire regularly in equally overt and covert methods.

It must be noted however that in spite of the foregoing, some scholars like Harris (2012) contend that the glass ceiling does not exist but rather suggest that women get poorer incomes because they quit the jobs halfway, work for smaller periods and seek low-risk occupations. Moreover, they assert that presently organizations worldwide function a number of prospects for carrier advancement. He therefore submits that the glass ceiling is simply a myth and self created issue. The two
contentions are consequently that women have the capability of holding elevated positions founded on their proficiencies by hard work and ambitions. Also those family duties occur in the centre of the career development.

3.2 Dynamics of the Glass Ceiling Effect

Afza and Newaz (2008) put forward five key dynamics that manipulate the glass ceiling effects in organizations to include: Work environment, Organizational Policy, Management Perception, Work-life conflict and Sexual harassment. Maheshwari (2012) separates the glass ceiling obstacles into three wide groups specifically, individual, societal and organization associated obstacles.

This study employs the five dynamics of Garry and Quinn (2013) which influence WCA. This implies that for women career life and advancement is a function of numerous independent unpredictable dynamics some of which include Personal Dynamics (PD), Cultural Dynamics (CD), Organizational Dynamics (OD) and Relational Dynamics (RD) and Sexual Harassment (SH). The CD are the beliefs and typecasts. The PD involves issues of (poor confidence, personal characteristics and failure to sell oneself. SH addresses sexual harassment. The OD encompasses organizational policies and leadership styles while the RD has to do with issues of childcare and house work. Garry and Quinn (2013) submits that women perform 65-85 per cent of childcare work and over 70 per cent of elderly care work. Career success is enormously affected by the relational structures. Oyibo and Salako (2014) found in their study that the majority of females believed that though their male colleagues had no liabilities of housework and childcare all through their work life, they individually persistently had such liabilities which amplified their stress levels. The study also found that the most career accomplishment in terms of salary increase was by married men with kids and stay-at-home wives. After that was the group of married men with working wives. Again, married men with stay at home wives had the utmost career satisfaction, especially in contrast to single men. Spouses provided supplementary supplies for job performance. Executive women were found not to gain to the extent of men from spousal support. The central suggestion underlined by the theoretical outline above is the glass ceiling manipulates the career advancement of women.

The model employed in the study is as follows: WCA = r (GC) WCA = r (C, R, P, O, SH) where: WCA = Woman Carrier Advancement C = Cultural Dynamics R = Relational Dynamics, P = Personal Dynamics, O = Organizational Dynamics and SH = Sexual Harassment.
3.3 Statement of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1** - H1: Personal Dynamics do not have any significant effect on WCA.

**Hypothesis 2** - H2: Relational Dynamics do not have any significant effect on WCA.

**Hypothesis 3** - H3: Cultural Dynamics do not have any significant effect on WCA.

**Hypothesis 4** - H4: Organizational Dynamics do not have any significant effect on WCA.

**Hypothesis 5** - H5: Sexual Harassment Dynamics do not have any significant effect on WCA.

The study utilizes five dimensions of CD = Cultural Dynamics, RD = Relational Dynamics, PD = Personal Dynamics and OD = Organizational Dynamics and Sexual Harassment = SH as measures of the glass ceiling. While the Personal Dynamics reveal the degrees of control of personal barricades emanating from oneself on the result; Relational Dynamics is concerned with the level to which relational reasons influence employee performance. Organizational Dynamics reveals the degree to which workers perceive the organization as being liable for deficiency in workers performance or the level to which organizational obstacles emanating from organizational structures and practices affect employee advancement. The degree of influence of beliefs and customs on employee advancement is captured by cultural dynamics. O’Neil (2012) offers three elements of WCA which this study adopts. They include: Career Focus, Relational Support and Organizational Attitude. Career Focus has to do with worker’s concern for career advancement or achievements. Workers demonstrating high career focus endeavour to develop their profession. The support provided by relatives towards the persistent success of one’s profession is signified by Relational Support (RS). Those with superior or elevated relations support attain work-family life balance plus advancement in their professions. Worker’s view as to the work organization is depicted by Attitudes towards Organization (AO). Individuals boasting positive attitudes regarding the organization tend to continue with the organization and develop their careers in it.

The foregoing indicates that there are numerous obstacles countenanced by women in striving to ascend the corporate ladder. These obstacles generally referred to as the glass ceiling are often imperceptible but they nevertheless stop their ascension to top management positions. Basically the term “glass ceiling” denotes imperceptible or simulated obstacles stopping women from progressing beyond a particular level. This study is to discover the effect of this glass ceiling (GC) on Woman Career Advancement (WCA)

4. Methodology

The study is descriptive in nature with the objective of spotting the consequence of the glass ceiling on WCA of top managerial level female workers. The survey method was employed. The population consisted of managerial rank male and female workers. 360 respondents were randomly selected as the sample consisting of male and female from six selected hospitality organizations located in Lagos. The instrument for data collection was a self-administered questionnaire consisting of two parts. While the first part dealt with the biographical details of the respondents, the second had 18 questions derived from the five dynamics of the glass ceiling and the three WCA elements. The questionnaire had a five point Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. A pilot study was conducted and the reliability score of the pilot survey (Cronbach Alpha) was 0.75 while the reliability score was 0.82.

5. Data Analysis and Discussion

The results indicate that 53% of the respondents were males and 47% were females. 86% are married and 14% single. 48% of the respondents are aged between 30-39, 44% between 40-49, and 8% were above 50 years of age. As regards education, 14% of the respondents have the O/L certificate, 22% of the respondents have the OND diploma, and 42% of them have first Degrees, while 22% had post graduate degrees. 46% of them are junior executives, 32% are senior Executives, 15.5% were managers and only 6.5% senior managers. 24% of them have between 1-5 years working experience, 35% of the respondents have between 6-10 years working experience, 28% of the respondents have between 11-15 years working experience, and 15% of the respondents have above 15 years working experience.
5.1 The Glass Ceiling and Dimensions of WCA

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)**

Table 1 presents the results of Multiple Regression Analysis of the glass ceiling GC and Women Career Advancement WCA. After all the inter correlations have been considered the Multiple Correlation Coefficient R is .634. R Square .385 constitutes the elucidated variance in WCA through the permutation of these variables. F value 11.637 is significant at .000 level. This implies that 38.5% of the variance of WCA is significantly clarified by Glass Ceiling. It is consequently clear that other dynamics are responsible for 61.5% influences on WCA. Personal Dynamic is the variable with the most influence on WCA and it is significant at .000 level. Of all the variables only PD, OD and CD demonstrate significant correlation with WCA when they are controlled. The P value for RD is indicates .437 which is greater than .05; therefore it does not significantly predict WCA. Aside from RD, other dynamics significantly predict WCA.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.634</td>
<td>.385</td>
<td>.358</td>
<td>.37218</td>
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</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)**

Table 1 indicates a correlation coefficient of \( r = -.354 \) between GC and CF at a significant value .007. With the r value below -.25, there is obviously a frail negative correlation between the two with the correlation being significant at the 0.01 level. For GS and RS, the correlation coefficient is, \( r = -.573 \) with the significant value .000. The r value being above -.25 and below -.75 suggests a modest negative relationship between the GC and WCA. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. Furthermore the correlation coefficient of GC and AO is, \( r = -.442 \) at a significant value of .000. The r value is above -.25 and below -.75 also indicating a moderate negative connection between the GC and AO. The Correlation is also significant at the 0.01 level. The Correlation coefficient of GC and WCA is \( r = -.575 \) at the significant value of .000. The r value is above -.25 and below -.75 pointing to a modest negative correlation between the GC and WCA. The correlation is also significant at the 0.01.
Table 2b - Results of Multiple Regression Analysis of GC and WCA

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
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<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
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<th>Sig</th>
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<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Constant</td>
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<td>.333</td>
<td>24.616</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Personal Dynamic</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relational Dynamic</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>.076</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural Dynamic</td>
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<td>.076</td>
<td>-.234</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizational Dynamic</td>
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<td>.048</td>
<td>-.164</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sexual Harassment</td>
<td>-.072</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.078</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 Test of Hypotheses

Multiple regression analysis was employed in testing the hypotheses of the study. For the first hypothesis Personal Dynamics had a significant effect on WCA. P < 0.05, depicting a considerable effect of PD on WCA. Consequently the null hypothesis of ‘no significant effect’ of PD on WCA is rejected at the 95% confidence level. The second null Hypothesis of no significant effect of Relational Dynamics on WCA was accepted. P > 0.05, designating a non significant effect of RD on WCA.

For Hypothesis 3, OD had a significant influence on WCA. P < 0.05, showing a significant effect of OD on WCA. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis of ‘significant effect’ of OD on WCA is accepted at the 5% significance of level. For Hypothesis 4 CD had a significant effect on WCA, P < 0.05, depicting a considerable effect of CD on WCA. The alternative hypothesis of ‘significant effect’ of OD on WCA is accepted at the 5% significance level. The null Hypothesis 5 of ‘no significant effect’ of SH on WCA was accepted. P > 0.05, depicting a non considerable effect of SH on WCA. The null hypothesis of ‘no significant effect’ of SH on WCA was accepted at the 5% significance level. The results corroborate a modest negative connection between GC and WCA among the female managerial workers. The correlation coefficient value is r = -.575 and the significant value is .000. The connection is significant at 1% significant level. This implies that the boost in GC results in modest reduction in WCA given that the correlation designates negative modest association.

The relationship between each of the five dynamics of the glass ceiling GC and WCA was explored. A modest negative relationship was observed between PD and WCA. The correlation value is -.462 and the significant value is .000 which means that there is a significant relationship between the two variables. Correlation coefficient between RD and WCA is r = -.343 with the significant value .015 depicting an obviously weak negative correlation between the PD and WCA though there is a significant relationship between them. The correlation value for OD and WCA is r = -.264 with the significant value .005 symbolising a moderate negative but significant relationship between the OD and WCA.
Linking CD and WCA is also a moderate weak but significant correlation. \( r = -0.372 \) and the significant value .000. The results indicate that the glass ceiling has 32.5% control over the WCA among female managerial level employees and the other dynamics have 67.5% control on WCA. The regression analysis exposes that only PD, OD and CD confirm significant relationship with WCA.

This study designates specific dynamics that generate the glass ceiling outcomes and causes that add to the improvement of WCA. The five dynamics including Personal dynamics, relational dynamics, organizational dynamics, and cultural dynamics, aid in the descent of women’s career progression. The personal dynamics involve issues relating to poor self confidence and pessimistic attitudes. The Relational dynamics entail hindrances like childcare, home and filial duties. The organizational obstacles comprise the diverse leadership styles and unjust workplace practices. The study found that increases in the glass ceiling hindrances consequences in the decrease of WCA at moderate levels.

In the same vein, boosting PD, CD and OD also consequence in decline in WCA at modest levels, but RD would consequence in a decline in WCA at low levels. Career Focus, Relational Support and Attitude towards Organization were also found to influence the career advancement of women. The Career Focus of Women depends on having the career path, commitment to the work duties and building relationships. Relational Support depends on enjoyment of support from relatives and work-life balance while Attitude towards Organization is a function of team work and employee perceptions.

In sum, the results of this study demonstrate that most of the respondents showed satisfactory levels of career advancement. A modest negative relationship was found between GC and WCA among the respondents. A weak negative relationship was affirmed between RD and WCA. A modest negative association was confirmed between each of OD, PD, CD and WCA. Moreover, PD, OD and CD were found to significantly influence WCA. This study classified various dynamics accountable for producing glass ceiling effects and exposed several dynamics that facilitate women advancement and career growth. The results indicate that of the glass ceiling dynamics, PD constitutes the most controlling. Therefore female employees have to labour to circumvent the personal obstacles like, deficiency in self confidence, excessive emotions in addition to modifying the view of women employees as posy, poignant and scheming. As many of the respondents in this study indicated, women often face challenges in balancing work and family owing to enormous work and family duties and occasionally not having adequate time to carry out the lot efficiently.

To this end organizations can assist by providing work-life balance options like child care facilities, flexible work hours, job sharing, hotelling, tele-commuting etc. Organization management must ensure fair labour practices at all times especially on issues relating to employee promotions, work tasks and salaries. Equal rights and responsibilities must be offered to both male and female employees in the organization. 67.4% of the respondents indicated that male employees often feel embarrassed about having women as their managers. Organizations can assist in this regard by setting up awareness schemes to alter this poor view of women managers. Attention must also be paid to the cultural dynamics that have dominant effects on the glass ceiling.

Gender stereotyping constitutes a very potent obstacle in this regard. To alter the mind-sets of others about the conventional falsehood that women are home makers who are unable to perform as well as males, women workers need to demonstrate their ability to perform at optimal levels as anticipated by the organization. For the organization, unofficial traditions, beliefs and standards that may possibly oppose women must be scrutinized and followed by awareness programmes aimed at eradicating them. This could be supported by training and other developmental activities for working women who aim to advance their careers that will transform their attitudes about organizations to become positive. By doing this the identified dynamics affecting the glass ceiling can be surmounted and WCA can be enhanced.

6. Conclusion

This paper centered on increasing concern for and sponsoring enhanced access for women by scrutinizing diverse dynamics pertinent to women's involvement and career advancement in the hospitality industry. While women work as hard as the men employees they face numerous impediments in their career development. The
study evaluated the effect of the glass ceiling (GC) on Women Career Advancement (WCA) of top management female employees in the hospitality industry and evaluates the connection between the glass ceiling (GC) and Women Career Advancement (WCA) of top management female workers in addition to establishing the corollaries of the glass ceiling (GC) and Women Career Advancement (WCA) and offers resolutions for cracking the glass ceiling. Regardless of the reality that women hold the requisite knowledge, skills, capabilities, training and know-how to present successfully and competently in the workplace, they incident career advancement hurdles. The study categorizes diverse dynamics liable for producing glass ceiling effects and depicts numerous dynamics that impede women advancement and career growth. The results display satisfactory level of career advancement. A modest negative relationship was found between GC and WCA among the respondents. A weak negative relationship was affirmed between RD and WCA. A modest negative association was confirmed between each of OD, PD, CD and WCA. PD, OD and CD were found to significantly influence WCA. The findings present important instructions for identifying managerial women’s challenges and the avenues for removing the impediments. Policy makers will also find it helpful in formulating and improving on organizational policies in this area and there will be a clearer recognition of the encumbrances and techniques for overcoming them for women workers especially in the hospitality industry.

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