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## **Effects of Glass Ceiling on Women Career Blooming in Sri Lankan Academic Sector**

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### **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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### **ABSTRACT**

The term Glass Ceiling (GC) refers to an invisible barrier that hinders and blocks women from being promoted to higher managerial level positions. This study is wholly focused on the central problem of the effects of Glass Ceiling on Women Career Blooming. The research problem marked under the study is to find out the effects of Glass Ceiling on women Career Blooming, in the Sri Lankan academic sector. The structure of this study was entirely designed according to the conceptual framework, created using information from past literature. Level analysis is used to discover whether there is an effect of Family Factors, Organizational Factors, Individual Factors and Educational Factors on Women Career Blooming. The sample of the study consists of 214 women lecturers from two selected universities. Data were collected in the form of a structured questionnaire and six interviews were conducted. Regression and level analysis were used to analyze the gathered data. Research findings reveal that Glass Ceiling and Women Career

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Blooming have a negative relationship. Furthermore, the findings reveal that family and organizational factors have a significant effect on women Career Blooming and individual and educational factors have a moderate effect on women Career Blooming. By taking into consideration the research findings of the study, suggestions for future studies, limitations of the study and future recommendations have been made.

*Keywords: Glass ceiling; women career blooming; organizational factors; family factors; educational factors.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

In today's corporate world, human resources can regard as the most precious asset and women labour force is extremely vital for the success of an organization. Glass Ceilings are day-to-day barriers for women labour force in their workplaces. Based on overall observations in the Sri Lankan and the international context, the researchers have identified that there is a major issue where women are blocked from being promoted to higher-level positions. These obstacles have created complications that continuously stop women from promoting to higher-level positions in the workplace.

Glass Ceiling in women Career Blooming is still a problem in both the local and international context. The impact of Glass Ceiling may differ from country to country. When considering the international context, according to Omotayo, et al. [1] the female work force at the Nigeria Police Force is limited, compared to their male work force. Furthermore, there is a social belief in Nigeria that female children should get involved in household work, meaning that they do not have any opportunity to continue their higher education. Studies done in Malaysia demonstrated that there is an increase in the participation of women at higher-level positions. The major challenge is to tempt and preserve educated and qualified women in the workforce. The female population of Malaysia has drastically increased from 2002 to 2012. The findings reveal that the female population in Malaysia consists of 51.11% and the male population consists of 48.15% in 2014, but it illustrates that the female labour force participation rate in Malaysia is low compared to the female participation in other ASEAN countries [2].

When considering the Sri Lankan context there was and still is a situation where women were not empowered to sustain the top level positions as much as the opposite gender were. Today in

Sri Lanka, Glass Ceiling is still a problem in the Academic Sector as it was in the past. As per the conclusions of the research done by Bombuwela and Alwis [3], the researcher discovered the above-mentioned issue in the private sector organizations. Furthermore, according to this study, some elements, which affect Glass Ceiling, are namely; individual factors, family factors, organizational factors and cultural factors etc. which tend to have a considerable impact on female career development. The study reveals that Individual factors such as lack of self-confidence, negative beliefs and attitudes will have the highest effect when compared to the other three factors. According to Victor and Shamila [4], the financial sector in the Kandy district specifically stresses on the misrepresentation of women in higher-level positions. Hence, the failure of women enrolment in higher level positions has become a major area of concern. The study disclosed that there is a lower level of Glass Ceiling and significant advancements in the career of the executive level female workers. In addition to that, providing more opportunities to women such as training and development, mentoring, networking and flexible working hours will reinforce the women enrolment in higher-level positions, especially in branch management at state owned commercial banks in Sri Lanka. (Keenawinna and Sajeevanie, 2015). The total labour force of Sri Lanka is 8,566, 686 and out of which 63.4% are male labourers whereas 36.5% are female labourers. Considering this statistic it can be further understood that there is a deficiency in female involvement in the Sri Lankan labour force.

Through the analysis of Table 1 it can be identified that the male employee population ratio has drastically increased from 2012-2017, when compared to the female employment population. In 2012, the male employment population ratio was 72.8% and female employment population ratio 30.8%. In 2017, male employment population ratio is 72.4% and female employment population ratio is 34.3%. It clearly

**Table 1. Employment population ratio (2012-2017)**

Year	Employment population ratio		
	Total	Male	Female
2012	50.4%	72.8%	30.8%
2013	51.3%	72.5%	33.1%
2014	50.9%	72.2%	32.4%
2015	51.2%	72.4%	33.1%
2016	51.4%	72.9%	33.4%
2017	51.8%	72.4%	34.3%

Source: Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey Data – Annual Report 2017

**Table 2. Reasons for being economically inactive by gender – 2017**

Reason	Total	Gender	
		Male	Female
All economically inactive	100%	100%	100%
Engaged in studies	21.6%	39.6%	15.4%
Engaged in housework	46.3%	4.9%	60.5%
Retired/ Old age	20.3%	32.9%	16%
Physically illness/ Disabled	8%	15.9%	5.3%
Other	3.8%	6.7%	2.8%

Source: Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey Data – Annual Report 2017

**Table 3. Employment status by gender – 2017**

	Male	Female
Total	64.3%	35.7%
Employee	65.5%	34.5%
Employer	87.3%	12.7%
Own account worker	70.9%	29.1%
Contributing family worker	21.1%	78.9%

Source: Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey Data – Annual Report 2017

shows that female employment population has increased from 30.8% to 34.3%. Although the female employment population has increased from 30.8% to 34.3%, the longstanding gap exists even after 5 years.

As shown in Table 2, female engagement in housework (60.5%) is higher than the male engagement in housework (4.9%), which is very low compared to the female engagement. It clearly shows the male female disparity in contribution to housework.

Table 3 shows the percentage distribution of employment by gender in 2017. The data reveals a remarkable difference in employment estimation among males and females. According to Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey data it clearly shows that family work contribution is more common among female employees and while being extremely rare among males.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The “Glass Ceiling” is a metaphor that is used to characterize what women encounter when they attempt to advance in managerial hierarchies [5]. Career blooming can be defined as the process that continuously balances the academic activities, work life and leisure time of an individual while enabling movement up the career ladder [6].

Based on the view point of Sri Lankans, this study accentuates the accessible gap in the factual mastery on Glass Ceiling. It also discovered that there is a requirement for the presence of female representatives in the creation of decisions, advancement of strategies and enhancement of existing policies in order to prevent Glass Ceiling. With the smashing of the Glass Ceiling, the benefits from the higher involvement of female workers can be reaped by the wealthiest in Sri Lanka. It identified that there is a higher percentage of female employees in lower level and middle level positions when compared to top levels. Aside from this, there is a high participation of female experts such as teachers, nurses, doctors than the involvement of them in operational fields, due to their somatic inabilities [3].

There is a gap between common methods of advancement of women Career Blooming, and

household engagement in female career advancement. In order to expand their capabilities and retain them, there should be a contingency for them to obtain training and induction, development, company help, transport and flexible working hours.

The most important factors to be considered in the promotion of workers to top level positions, should be performance, experience and academic certifications instead of gender discrimination (Keenawinna and Sajeevanie, 2015). There is a high percentage in the female community rather than male, in Sri Lanka. However, the workforce engagement of men is higher than women. As per the findings of the study, it was identified that there is a direct effect of Glass Ceiling on female career advancement, in the top level workers of the department of finance in the Kandy district [4].

The investigation into Glass Ceiling and female career advancement, divulged that there is a detectable effect of Glass Ceiling on Women Career Advancement with specific reference to the Nigeria Police Force. In addition, to be of note is the social belief of settling the female girls in marriages at premature ages and forcing them to do household work, instead of allowing them to continue their higher education. In addition to that, this research study also emphasizes the negative exploration of female employees to Nigeria Police Force [1]. The most specific and current challenge for Malaysia is the captivation and retention of professional female employees with the aim of improving their engagement in the Malaysian labour force. Research has identified the obstacles, which they face in the improvement of work life. The main importance of this research is to scrutinize the obstacles such as academic level, family consideration, organization structure and culture, work life imbalance and Glass Ceiling effect towards women career advancement, using the methods of convenience sampling, correlation and regression analysis [2].

Addressing the problem of Glass Ceiling, which drastically affects the gender discrimination in the top-level executives, it was identified based on the survey results, that there is a distinct growth from 6%-39% of females, mostly in the operational level management from 1960–1988. Admittedly the investigation has explored that there is a low movement for female higher level positions due to lack of adequate experience and not engaging in the same position for a longer period of time [7].

The fundamental foundation of the study is to observe how the alteration of gender discrimination affects the higher-level academics. The research considers preceding reports of institutions around the world and divulges the fact that academic institutions have a conservative, patriarchal culture (Shackleton, 2007). The major barrier for women in accomplishing the successes of the work force is Glass Ceiling. Specifically, the gaps are social, political, cultural, and economical and attitude based. This highlights the gender gap index and the way of splitting the overall resources among the community [8]. In accordance with the findings of Pearson's tests, correlation tests etc. it was discovered that there is a gap between the dimensions of Glass Ceiling and the Career Blooming ability of female executive level employees (JMSSK and TL, 2015).

In this era, there is a high percentage of women who have failed to enter into the workforce due to gender discrimination and most of the higher level positions are handled by the males. Further, this study illustrates that obstacles faced to enter female employees to higher-level positions due to their personal attitudes [9]. The major determination of this research is to explore the causes of deficiency in the advancement of job positions of women to the highest levels in any organization. In conclusion, this study investigated that females are productive in performing their roles [10]. The basic identification of this survey was to interpret the bond between the beliefs of Glass Ceiling and Job Gratification. This study generally discovered the barriers that may be faced by females when moving towards executive level positions [11].

Gender discrimination has become one of the primary reasons for not moving females to higher job positions in an organization [12]. In accordance with this, the research emphasized whether or not there was an existing effect of Glass Ceiling in Sweden. According to the observations from the study, the answer is yes. It has identified that there is a high economic gap between the wage administration of the males and females who are at the top-level management [13].

In order to fortify the legitimacy of the attempt, tasks should implement to determine the Career Blooming and courage for females. Particularly gender reactivity evaluations needed to navigate, coach and help the existing procedures and the females in an organization [14].

Through the investigation of various past research articles, it realized that almost all the articles illustrated the impact of Glass Ceiling on women career advancement in an organizational field rather than the academic sector. Through evaluating past research articles, there was a lack of evidence to prove "The Effect of Glass Ceiling on Women Career Blooming in the Academic sector". Therefore, through all the conclusions obtained by reading the past research articles, the authors came into a conclusion to conduct the study based on recommendations of Omotayo, et al. [1], on conducting investigations into the problem of Glass Ceiling in educational industries for future researches.

## 2.1 Problem Statement

The explorations in the previous research articles, provides conclusions that there is a lack of evidence to prove that there is an effect of Glass Ceiling on women Career Blooming in the academic sector. However, some of the researchers have recommended conducting this study in the academic sector [1]. This can create major problems in labour force participation and create barriers that stop women from being promoted to higher level positions in academic sector. In addition to that, the study has focused on the women engagement in higher level positions in the Sri Lankan academic sector and discovered that there is an absolute deficiency of women's participation. Therefore, by considering all these investigations, it decided to continue the study on the academic sector.

## 2.2 Research Questions

1. What are the barriers that stop women from being promoted to higher positions in the administration?
2. What is the level of Glass Ceiling on women Career Blooming?
3. How to recommend solutions for overcoming Glass Ceiling on women Career Blooming of female lecturers?

## 2.3 Research Objectives

### 2.3.1 General objective

- To find out the effect of Glass Ceiling on women Career Blooming, for academic employees who are working in both private and state universities.

### 2.3.2 Specific objectives

- To identify the barriers that stop women from being promoted to higher positions in the academic sector.
- To find the level of Glass Ceiling on women Career Blooming.
- To provide recommendations to overcome Glass Ceiling among Career Blooming for female lecturers.

## 2.4 Significance of the Study

Currently with the competition, almost all of the people have a high awareness of the idea of Glass Ceiling of Career Blooming. Through many inspections, it has identified that a significant number of studies has been conducted on Glass Ceiling and on the various issues related to the career of women. With keen observations, the researcher identified that there is a gap in genuine understanding of Glass Ceiling, in the context of a Sri Lankan perspective.

Most importantly, conducting this survey will be beneficial for the female lecturers, universities, future researchers and researchers of the present study. Generally, this study will show significance to the lecturers in several paths. Female lecturers can identify the reasons for the blocking of progress to higher level positions in the universities. Additionally the female lecturers also can minimize their weaknesses and develop strengths, attitudes and motivation. Furthermore as the women who are aiming to move towards higher positions, they can improve on their current educational qualifications and seek for more.

In comparison, universities will be able to identify the gender ratios and prioritize choosing female lecturers for the higher-level positions. Furthermore, universities can recognize how other universities shatter the Glass Ceiling effect. Overall, future researchers can expand and look into the areas where this study does not touch.

Consequently, the study will be very essential to distinguish the core issues of the academics and the decision makers and will assist them to grow the strategies strongly in order to address and enhance the policies to block such circumstances. The conclusions of this study will also be essential to Sri Lanka financially, since through smashing the Glass Ceiling, the Sri Lankan economy will be able to thrive with more

contribution from working females to the academic sector.

Finally, through the exploration of this study, the researchers' will attempt to make the females appreciate that all of them are capable of involving and contributing to any field confidently while carrying out their other responsibilities successfully. Also more significantly, it would be able to make the women realize that, instead of limiting themselves to household work and taking care of the children, they should be able to identify their skills and hold higher-level positions in the academic sector.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Conceptual Framework

The key idea highlighted by this conceptual framework is that there is an effect of Glass Ceiling on women Career Blooming. The major intention of conducting this study is to identify the impact of Glass Ceiling on the advancement of women career. By means of the research, it can be emphasized that women Career Blooming is the dependent variable, whereas the Glass Ceiling factors (F); Education (E), Organizational (O), Individual (I), and Family (F) are influenced as independent variables.

Besides the above-mentioned categories of independent variables there can be diverse intermediary factors and also moderating variables such as cultural factors, norms, beliefs, age, environmental factors etc. present in the research study. These factors are not taken into account with the aim of sidestepping the needless intricacies at this stage. The overall base of the study is that women Career Blooming depends on the factors affecting Glass Ceiling.

Women Career Blooming (WCB) = Factors Affecting Glass Ceiling (f)

$$WCB = f(E, O, I, F)$$

Educational factors (E): This benchmark will discuss to which level the educational factors such as qualifications and experience will affect the results.

Organizational factors (O): These criteria will consider to which extent organizational factors such as work place happiness, policies and flexible working hours effect on the outcome.

Individual factors (I): this paradigm will consider to which extent the individual factors such as personality, motivation, communication, and age influence the outcome.

Family factors (F): this basis will identify to which extent the family factors such as work life balance and family support impact the result.

#### 3.2 Study Design

Both the authors Sekaran and Bougie have recognized that there are three basic types of study designs: minimal, moderate and excessive interferences (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). As per the current study researchers initially built the related conceptual framework. Then the researchers collected the data from the planned sample and analysed them in order to obtain successful and meaningful results. Concordantly, the interferences of this study will be minimal. Furthermore, the researchers did not use any of the artificial environments available, for the creation of this study and always prioritized the flow of the natural study.

#### 3.3 Methodological Choice

The research study will apply both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The research type will be descriptive since this will launch an investigation and provide explanations on the aspects of the variable factors at different stages. The general objective of the study is to find out the effect of Glass Ceiling on women Career Blooming for academic employees who are working in both private and state universities. The study has used a quantitative approach and conducted regression analysis on the data collected.

In order to continue the research study and to gather data, survey methods such as questionnaire based surveys and interview-based surveys used in the collection of primary data. Primarily a questionnaire based survey will be conducted in order to gather information to achieve research objectives. Questionnaires will be submitted based on the knowledge built up from the past literature. The research questionnaire will consist of closed ended questions and Likert-type scale questions. The sample population of this research is female lecturers who are employed in the Sri Lankan Academic Sector (in both private and government sectors).

### 3.4 Population, Sample and Sample Selection Method

The selected sample for the study was 214 female lecturers from both the considered universities; 107 from each. Researchers collected questionnaires from the sample of 214 respondents. A lottery method of sampling was used to select the respondents. The Lottery method is a technique that researchers use to randomly pick the respondents in order to select the target sample population.

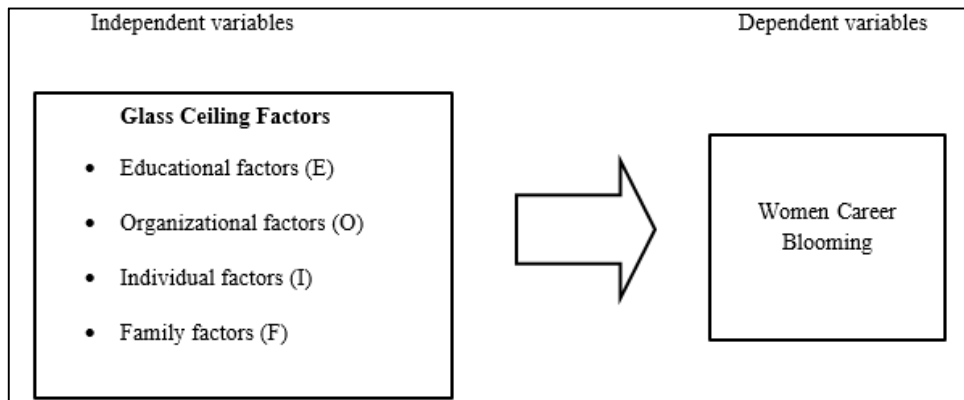
### 3.5 The Instrument Used for Data Collection

The research is comprised of both primary and secondary data. The researchers pay more focus on the primary data in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the study. Preliminary data required for the study were gathered mainly from the distribution of a structured questionnaire via a Google form and printed questionnaire. The main reason for the selection of a Google form and printed questionnaire is since the time consumption in preparing, dispatching these forms is limited, and the scholars can dispense them directly to the respondents. It assists in receiving the feedback of the respondents according to the research objectives. Apart from the questionnaire, the researchers also conducted face-to-face interviews. The Secondary data were gathering mainly through base article, related research articles, web sites, newspapers and books.

The survey questionnaire was composed in the English language, thus the questionnaire was distributed within the academic sector and the main language used for academic purposes is

English. The research questionnaire was consisted of two sections, section A and section B. Section A consisted of demographic factor variables, which are related to the respondent from the university. This section contains five closed ended questions. Section B of the questionnaire is based on the general information related to the components of the independent variables and the dependent variable of the research. Section B contains 62 Likert scale type questions. Interviews were used in order to explain the results and findings that were gained through responses from the designed questionnaire. This methodology plays a role of a qualitative approach in the collection of data. Additionally this aids to intensify the findings and releases a standard and precise outcome at the end of the survey. The researchers conducted six main face-to-face, in-depth interviews from both the universities; three from each. The interviews were carried out in a semi-structured way where the interviewee answers according to the objectives of the study and they demonstrate profound ideas and perceptions regarding the module.

The questionnaires were issued to respondents in the universities based on a simple random sampling method. This sampling method can be defined as a basic sampling tool where the researchers select a set of respondents for their survey from a large population. There is an equal chance to be selected to the sample. The reasons for selecting simple random sampling as the selected sampling technique of the study, is since it is obviously lacks bias and complications. Convenience sampling can be exemplified as a non-probability technique, in which respondents are chosen due to the appropriate accessibility and proximity to the researcher. The researchers



**Fig. 1. Conceptual framework**

Source: Authors' compilation



did not use convenience sampling because of the recognition of several biases in collecting data using convenience sampling. Bias is where the key person that the researchers have contacted always focuses on a particular set of the population, hence this will impact the quality of the data collected. Therefore, under convenience sampling, biased sampling errors may be incurred.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Under demographic analysis, data was collected from five aspects. Demographic data was collected on age, working experience, marital status, highest level of education completed and number of children.

Age is categorized into five labels such as 20-30, 31-40, 41-50 and above 51 years old. According to the frequency percentage, the highest number of respondents was from the age category of 20 to 30 years old covering 50.97% of the sample. When compared with the other age categories, small amount (12.14%) of respondents were from the age category of above 51 years old.

The working experience of female lecturers were categorized into 04 aspects. 63 respondents have one to two years of working experience and the majority of the sample was having two years of working experience, representing highest percentage of 30.58%. Only 18.45% of the respondents are in between 6 to 10 years of working experience and 23.30% of the respondents have more than 11 years of working experience. The lowest percentage of 18.45% has 6 to 10 years of working experience.

A majority of the respondents are married. Out of 206 respondents, 128 respondents are married and it gets 62.14% of the sample, while 37.86% of respondents are unmarried.

According to results, it is seen that more than half of the respondents do not have children. The responses prove that majority of the sample did not have children, representing highest percentage of 53.88%. A lower percentage (9.71%) of respondents had more than three children and the second lowest percentage (12.14%) of the respondents has 2 children.

Most of the respondents have completed a Bachelor's Degree - 48.54% of the sample. 2.43% of respondents are in the Diploma or

Certificate category. A considerable percentage have completed a Master's Degree and it gets 29.13% of the sample and 19.90% of the respondents completed their highest level of education up to Doctorate.

The researchers have conducted six interviews with female lecturers, three from each university, in order to accomplish the first specific objective. The achieved objective is, the identification of the barriers that restrict women from being promoted to higher positions in administration. "Word Cloud" is the tool that the researchers used to analyse the data gathered from the conducted interviews. The most highlighted words of the received responses are "Glass Ceiling", "Family", "Educational", "Experience", "Qualifications", "Organizational", "Opinions", "Skills" and "Career". The respondents mentioned organizational, educational, family and individual factors as the key barriers, which prevent women from being promoted. Out of all the responses that were gathered, the researchers noted and concluded that "Organizational" and "Family" factors have the highest impact on Glass Ceiling of women Career Blooming in the Sri Lankan academic sector.

### 4.2 Impact of Glass Ceiling and Women Career Blooming

As per the illustration of Table 4, the R value of the Glass Ceiling factors is significantly low, where it explores a lower degree of correlation. At the same time, the value of  $R^2$  is interpreted as 60.6% of the variation of the dependent variable Career Blooming being explained by the independent variable: Glass Ceiling.

As the researchers have mentioned, "ANOVA" predicts that the regression model explores the dependent variable significantly, which is predicted via sig. value (p-value). In any case if the sig. value is less than alpha (.05) then it can conclude that the model is significant. According to the prediction of all the independent variables the current researchers have used, the sig. value is .000 and it can be concluded that the model is significant.

### 4.3 Level Analysis between Glass Ceiling and Women Career Blooming

The second objective of the research study is "to find the level of Glass Ceiling on women Career Blooming". With the aim of interpreting the achievement of the second objective,

researchers use a descriptive statistics method. researchers used a comparison between state In order to achieve the second objective universities and private universities.

**Table 4. Model summary**

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	.779 <sup>a</sup>	.606	.598	.43289

a) Predictors: (Constant), familyfactors, educationalfactors, individualfactors, organizationalfactors

**Table 5. ANOVA Table**

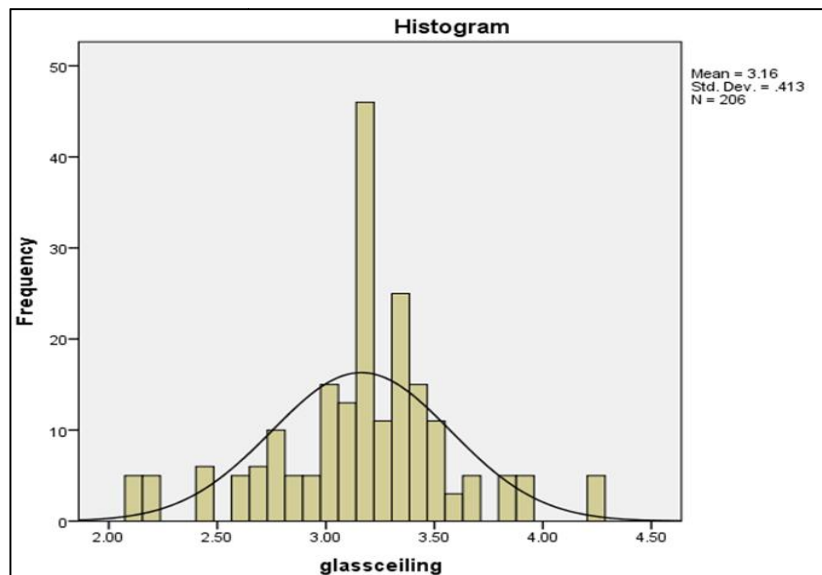
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	57.955	4	14.489	77.318	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	37.666	201	.187		
	Total	95.621	205			

a. Dependent Variable: careerblooming

b. Predictors: (Constant), familyfactors, educationalfactors, individualfactors, organizationalfactors

**Table 6. Statistics of the entire sample statistics: Glass ceiling**

N	Valid	Missing
	206	0
Mean	3.1629	
Median	3.1967	
Mode	3.00 <sup>a</sup>	
Std. Deviation	.41289	
Variance	.170	
Skewness	-.254	
Std. Error of Skewness	.169	
Kurtosis	1.003	
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.337	
Range	2.11	
Minimum	2.11	
Maximum	4.23	
Sum	651.56	



**Fig. 2. Distribution of glass ceiling statistics**

Table interprets the level of Glass Ceiling of the entire sample with 206 respondents. The mean value is 3.16 of the sample. According to the results, the level of Glass Ceiling is at a moderate level and with a mode of 3. That means that the most recurring answer is "Agree". Fig. shows the histogram related to the results that researchers obtained and it illustrates the distribution of the data set and the standard deviation.

The illustration of Career Blooming factor is represented Table . The mean value is 3.05 and with that value it can be concluded that Career Blooming factor is at a moderate level. Through the histogram (Fig. ) it indicates the distribution of the data set.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The first chapter of this study emphasizes the background knowledge of the study and highlighted most of the related information related to the Sri Lankan academic sector. This further describes the research objectives, research questions, problem statement, research gap and the significance of conducting this study. Mentioned below are the discussion points on the accomplishment of the research objectives.

- To find out the effect of Glass Ceiling on women Career Blooming for academic employees, who are working in both private and state universities.
- This is the general objective of the study, which was to investigate the factors that affect Glass Ceiling of women Career Blooming in the academic sector of Sri Lanka. In order to explore this primary objective, the researchers have used both questionnaires and interviews and measured the relationship using regression analysis. The sub objectives, which are described below, will provide a broad understanding on the measures used in order to analyse the results gained through questionnaires and interviews.
- To identify the barriers that stop women from being promoted to higher positions in administration.
- This is the first specific objective that the researchers came up with. This is mainly to recognize the barriers that the female lecturers have faced when advancing to higher-level positions in administration. The researchers used interviews as well as the designed questionnaire in order to

gather the data. The data gathered from interviews from both of the selected universities were analysed through "Word Cloud" technique and further analysed as mentioned in the major objective, regression analysis was used to explore the results and findings of the data collected.

- To find the level of Glass Ceiling and women Career Blooming.
- This is the second specific objective of the study and the level analysis was used in order to be able to analyse the gathered data. The level was measured using the mean value of the Glass Ceiling factors.
- To endorse solutions for overcoming Glass Ceiling on women Career blooming, of female lecturers.
- Through the gathered data from both the questionnaires and interviews, the researchers were able to point out those family factors and organizational factors that highly influence women Career Blooming. Besides these two factors, educational and individual factors also do effect women Career Blooming.

At first, when considering the family factors, the researchers have identified that a majority of the female lecturers faced various difficulties in balancing their job and at the same time, family commitments. With those difficulties, they sometimes fail to manage their time and achieve their targets efficiently and effectively. As per the Sri Lankan context, females are considered as the ones who are responsible for the entire household activities. With the above-mentioned issue, time management was the key objection that they faced when advancing to the higher-level positions. In order to conquer the challenges from family factors, universities can support the female lecturers by affording day care centres with better play rooms and offering flexible working hours. Apart from that, the universities can arrange a discussion with a female role model who has successfully accomplished the target of a functional work life balance. Apart of hiring a role model, the administration of the universities could hire a consultant for counselling the female lecturers about work life balance.

Secondly, organizational factors also do affect women Career Blooming.

According to the collected responses, most of the female lecturers were not satisfied with the current procedure of climbing the career ladder. Hence, the administration of the universities should held responsible to being fair in making promotion related decisions. In order to avoid these barriers, universities can carry out awareness programs with the intention of changing the perception towards the female lecturers. Furthermore, the universities can provide better working environment conditions in order to engage in their academic work and higher studies with a relaxed mind. In addition to that, to increase the amount of female lecturers in the administrative positions the universities can provide scholarships. Individual factors were the last ranked factor from the four Glass Ceiling factors. Female lecturers should engage in their work in order to overcome the barriers such as lack of self-confidence and getting too stressed in academic matters. As a solution the universities can implement leadership programs for female lecturers.

When illustrating the literature of the study, the researchers were able to find that different types of studies were conducted based on effects of Glass Ceiling on advancement of women in different organizations. Among the referred studies, according to the guiding article used, the independent variable was Glass Ceiling whereas the dependent variable was women career development. Furthermore, the independent variable was divided into four main factors as individual, family, organizational and cultural factors. The conceptual framework of the current study was designed and developed based on the guiding study of Bombuwela and Alwis [3].

As per the generated results and findings of the present study, the researchers were able to arrive at a conclusion that the Glass Ceiling still exists in both the state and non-state universities. According to the gathered responses, the researchers found that family and organizational factors are prioritized in influencing women lecturers when moving to higher levels of administration. The researchers of the ongoing study found that there wasn't any difference between the results gathered from both the universities, which means the respondents from both the universities provided similar responses.

The study was carried out based on four factors; family, organizational, educational and individual factors that come under the independent variable of Glass Ceiling. Chapter 5 emphasized the discussion of the entire thesis and provided the summary of each chapter. As per the results generated, the researchers concluded that Glass Ceiling still exists and there are barriers for women to move to higher levels in administration.

## **6. STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The past literature the researchers went through were conducted on Glass Ceiling on Women career advancement in various organizations. The dimensions that affect the concept of Glass Ceiling were highlighted in most of the referred studies carried out by previous researchers and this was of great assistance for the researchers of the current study. Through the observation of various research articles, the current researchers decided to remain with four major dimensions. Organizational factors, Family factors and individual factors were found in most of the referred articles and this was the major strength for the researchers as mentioned earlier. However, since this study is conducted with focus on the academic sector, the researchers concluded to add educational factors as the fourth dimension. There were no published research articles carried out focusing on the academic sector and this was identified as a limitation for the researchers of the current study.

The measures the researchers of the current study used have been validated in past scientific studies done by several researchers. Based on further confirmations, these researchers have conducted a reliability test on the Pilot survey in order to judge the reliability factor of the designed questionnaire before distributing the questionnaires to the selected sample of the female lecturers of the two selected universities. The Cronbach's Alpha was satisfying for each of the factors that the researchers used to emphasize the effects of Glass Ceiling.

In addition to that, the limitations that the researchers faced in conducting this research should consider. The researchers have distributed the questionnaire among the permanent carder female lecturers and the newly hired instructors too. The limitation the researchers come across in this type of distribution is that, the newly hired instructors

have no experience on the blooming of women in the academic sector, so there is an issue regarding the reliability of their responses.

With the consideration of the above-mentioned limitations, this study can provide plenty of recommendations for future researchers. In order to get the reliable responses from the respondents it is feasible to consider only the permanent carder lecturers, which means avoiding the newly hired instructors. Furthermore, conducting the same research in other state and private universities could possibly help to verify the current results. Apart from that, the future researchers could take an opportunity to test the effects of Glass Ceiling on women Career Blooming the in Sri Lankan academic sector with the use of various moderating variables. There was a scarcity of individual factors explored in the previous research articles. The researchers would like to recommend that future researchers focus more on individual factors compared to other factors. Further, it is very important to focus on the opinions of both female and male respondents, in not only the academic sector but also the other sectors as well.

### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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