

**SRIWIJAYA INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF DYNAMIC
ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS**

<http://ejournal.unsri.ac.id/index.php/sijdeb>

**Explorative Study of Glass Ceiling Phenomenon as Causal
Factors to Female Leader Deficit in Indonesia**

**Muhammad Irfan Syaebani¹, Dian Rezky Catur Pitaloka²,
Harryanto Suhardjo³ and Maria Ulpah⁴**

^{1,2,3,4} Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Indonesia

Corresponding author: irfan.syaebani@gmail.com

Abstract: Women are under-represented in top management positions, with their participation declining as positions increase. This study investigates the role of the 'glass ceiling' in contributing to the deficit of female leadership in Indonesia. This study adopted a qualitative methodology using a phenomenological approach. The research data was collected using semi-structured, in-depth interviews. The data were analysed using four stages of coding: open coding, axial coding, selective coding, and process coding. The findings show that the glass ceiling phenomenon results from several barriers faced by female employees. These barriers are categorised into five types: situational/organisational, social role, person-centred, interactional, and human capital. In conclusion, women workers in Indonesia face invisible barriers in various situations. These include organisational and socio-cultural factors as well as gender issues. This phenomenon creates a glass ceiling which prevents the advancement of women into leadership roles, leading to a deficit of female leaders in Indonesia.

Keywords: Female Leader, Leadership, Gender Equality, Glass Ceiling, Qualitative

Introduction

Research has shown that having women in strategic positions can positively impact a company's Return on Assets and Equity. Moreno-Gómez, Lafuente, & Vaillant (2018) found that women in top management positions can be particularly beneficial. Gender diversity in board of directors has positive correlation with firm's performance because diversity can enhance the quality of decision making process due to availability of various perspective in the board. Desvaux et al. (2017) suggest that closing the gender gap between males and females could lead to a global GDP growth of \$12 trillion by 2025. Indonesia can potentially increase its GDP to \$135 billion by involving more women in the productive sector.

One advantage of having women in strategic positions is the 'female advantage'. Female leaders are generally considered to possess certain advantages that male leaders do not, such as greater competence and a different leadership style. Women tend to exhibit higher levels of emotional intelligence, including emotional self-awareness, interpersonal relationships, self-regard, and empathy, compared to men (Meshkat & Nejati, 2017). In addition to competence, women's leadership style can be an advantage companies can utilise. Research has shown that female leaders possess more leadership qualities than male counterparts. These qualities include people development, expressing expectations and rewarding success, role-modelling, inspiration, and participatory decision-making. The presence of women in strategic roles enables women at lower ranks to overcome career challenges (Powell & Butterfield, 2015).

Despite the benefits of having women in leadership positions, research shows that women make up only 47% of entry-level professional staff, 20% of middle-level management positions, and a mere 5% of leadership-level (c-level) positions (Huang, Krivkovich, Starikova, Yee, & Zanoschi, 2019). Women often encounter a glass ceiling, limiting their career advancement. This term refers to barriers that hinder female professionals from accessing higher roles and promotions. Women are frequently assigned to operational tasks and have less access to management positions (Oakley, 2000). Many leading companies have implemented gender diversity initiatives, increasing opportunities for female middle- and top-level management employees. However, women still face barriers to reaching the top of their careers. Research has shown that executives tend to choose successors who share similar characteristics with them, such as leadership style, age, and gender, which is known as the 'Homophily' syndrome (Tharenou, 1997) or 'Mini-me' phenomenon (Ryan & Haslam, 2006). Another opinion says the female leadership deficit stems from a promotion system that favours men. Since women are promoted less, there will always be a gender disparity in management. This is known as the "broken rung of the corporate ladder" (Huang et al., 2019).

Selective perception contributes to the glass ceiling, which creates stereotypes of women and gender-based discrimination (Ryan & Haslam, 2006). Women often face obstacles due to their self-doubt, feeling incompetent, too emotional, or comfortable with being a companion. These obstacles can lead to a lack of confidence (Kiaye & Singh, 2013). In addition to the challenges faced by women in the workplace, the dual role of women as mothers and wives can also lead to work-life conflict and social pressure. It includes societal expectations of how a mother or wife should behave according to certain norms and values (Saleem, Rafiq, & Yusaf, 2017). These factors contribute to the existence of an invisible glass ceiling. This study explores how the glass ceiling is involved in the female leadership deficit, what factors contribute to it, and how this phenomenon can be overcome so that all parties can benefit from more female leaders in the company's strategic position. The present study has the capacity to contribute factual information, findings, and theoretical concepts. It is imperative to provide support and explanation regarding the rarity and necessity of women's leadership in Indonesia, particularly in the context of economic factors.

Literature Review

Female Leadership

Leadership can be distinguished and classified according to personal, organisational, and cultural context. Regarding gender, there are differences between the leadership styles of men and women based on genetically inherited traits. Women are often associated with a transformational or feminine leadership style (Buss & Schmitt, 2011; Carless, 1998). However, women are often underrepresented in more diverse workplaces (Eagly & Karau, 1991). In addition, women tend to be evaluated more harshly when their work is challenged for effectiveness (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992). Ridgeway (2011) points out a difference in the evaluation, treatment and consideration of females compared to males, which leads to differences in opportunity, access, and outcomes.

Ridgeway (2011) indicates that women exhibit a lower propensity to assume leadership roles in environments comprising both male and female individuals (Eagly & Karau, 1991). They encounter challenges in attaining perceived legitimacy (Ritter & Yoder, 2004) and are subject to more critical assessments when their effectiveness is contested (Eagly et al., 1992). Furthermore, Correll, (2004) contend that the motherhood penalty, which is defined as the adverse effects of motherhood on the professional and social lives of working women, results in women being perceived as less competent and less capable of becoming leaders. Women who achieve success in their professional endeavours exhibit more stringent conditions and standards. This observation suggests that success may be perceived as abstract and unpredictable. Consequently, a significant proportion of women opt to leave or withdraw from the workforce.

Gender inequality often leads to unjust differences in assessments, treatments, and perceptions, resulting in women being disadvantaged in terms of opportunities, access, and outcomes compared to men. This issue relates to the theory of distributive justice, which demands equal treatment of all individuals in the same situation. Women in leadership positions have fought for gender equality in the corporate world. Gender equality is the idea that access to opportunities and changes in life are not limited by gender; it is not the idea that women are the same as men.

Glass Ceiling

'Glass Ceiling' refers to the transparent barrier preventing competent women from reaching the top of the corporate hierarchy (Dowling, 2017). Kiaye & Singh (2013) explained theories that could cause obstacles leading to the Glass Ceiling, including situation/organisation, social role, person-centred, interaction centre, and human capital theories.

The situational/organisational theory focuses on the work environment faced by women who aspire to be in a managerial position. According to Powell & Butterfield (2015), group dynamics in the workplace can make women feel unwanted due to negative attitudes towards women in managerial positions. Based on situation-centred theory, the workplace and work environment can hinder women's progress (April, Dreyer, & Blass, 2007). Terjesen & Singh (2008) identified seven obstacles to progress in the organisational situation adapted from the work of women: women's work performance is not valued

relatively, there are no career opportunities for women, there is gender discrimination in the workplace, women are not given tasks in high visibility positions, women need extra effort to be recognised, women are not given support to balance multiple roles, and male colleagues do not respect women.

Social role theory suggests that social roles and stereotypes play a significant role in hindering women's progress. According to Terjesen & Singh (2008), the existence of glass ceilings is a result of a social system that designs work based on gender, leading to gender discrimination and stereotypes. Kiaye & Singh (2013) argue that promotion systems that are biased towards men make career paths for male leaders in the company uninterrupted. According to Terjesen & Singh (2008), the system may exclude women who take maternity leave, work part-time, or move due to their partner's career path. Hoobler, Wayne, & Lemmon (2009) argue that gender-specific roles, such as breadwinners versus housewives, shape behavioural expectations and beliefs about talents and skills. In contrast, Lewis (2001) disagrees that women are primarily caregivers or housekeepers. Lewis (2001) argues that professional women who focus on their careers tend not to marry and have children, while those who do marry tend to have fewer children.

According to person-centred theory, women lack qualities such as ambition and self-confidence, as well as decisiveness and the ability to influence, compared to their male counterparts. Contrary to this view, Morrison & Von Glinow (1990) argue that women's nature, behaviour, socialisation practices and attitudes do not make them inherently inadequate or inappropriate for leadership. They also reject the idea that women are risk-averse and afraid of success, making them unsuitable for leadership roles. Terjesen & Singh (2008) concluded that male and female leaders are similar in personality, motivation, and skills.

According to interaction-centred theory, women may hinder their progress by not actively promoting themselves through networking (Singh, Kumra, & Vinnicombe, 2002). Additionally, women may not communicate their career ambitions to those who make promotion decisions, leading management to assume they prefer to maintain the status quo. In contrast, according to interaction-centre theory, male colleagues indicate their career ambitions, success, and readiness for the next step to the same parties. The theory suggests that the limited accessibility imposed by female employees through networking creates barriers to advancing their careers (Kiaye & Singh, 2013).

Finally, human capital theory suggests that women's representation in management results from their own free choices and decisions to invest in their education and training (Hede & Ralston, 1993). Women often prioritise household responsibilities, leading to different choices in professional work than men (Hede & Ralston, 1993). The weakness of this theory, according to Powell (2000), lies in the assumption of 'women's free choice', and the failure of this theory is that it does not recognise the power differential between supervisors and employees who may also be able to hinder the progress of female employees. Additionally, the theory does not explain why women with uninterrupted careers, often due to family care responsibilities, still do not reach top management positions (Broadbridge and Hearn, 2008).

Methods

This study employs the phenomenology approach in qualitative research. This approach focuses on deriving meaning from individual experiences related to a phenomenon. This approach has proven effective in facilitating a comprehensive understanding of subjective experiences, fostering a deeper level of insight into the motivations and actions of individuals, and challenging prevailing assumptions and entrenched beliefs. This research then interprets the social actions of individuals as something that has meaning and is related to the phenomenon under study. Individual social actions are then interpreted as having meaning and relevance to the phenomenon being investigated (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). This approach makes use of an in-depth, semi-structured interview. A semi-structured interview involves more flexible and open questioning. The research subjects were selected using both purposive and snowball sampling. In total, 24 interviews were conducted with female business leaders and managers (see Table I). The respondents came from a variety of industries. The interview method was conducted via telephone and face-to-face either directly or indirectly via video call.

Four stages can be used to capture the findings/essence of the research: open coding, axial coding, selective coding, and process coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). These stages are not a rigid and linear arrangement but rather a process that can be repeated. In the open coding stage, the researcher identifies the relevant 'categories' or 'dimensions' related to the research topic. This study categorises leadership into three categories: 'What is leadership', 'women's leadership', and 'glass ceiling'. The first two categories, "what is leadership" and "women's leadership", use template analysis from previous research by Sidani, Konrad, & Karam (2015), while the third category, "glass ceiling", is developed by the researchers.

The axial coding phase then involves identifying the states, actions/interactions and interests associated with the categories/dimensions identified. The first category, 'what is leadership', includes the conception of leadership, traits, behaviour, and the relationship between gender and leadership. The second category, 'women's leadership', pertains to factors that both promote and hinder the development of female leaders. This category focuses on the perceptions of research subjects regarding female leadership. The third category, 'glass ceiling', refers to female employees' obstacles in their professional lives, as perceived and observed by research subjects.

Nespor (2006) describes selective coding as the stage in which researchers search for relationships between categories and sub-categories through sentences that indicate a relationship. At this stage, a pattern of research subject answers is also identified. Finally, process coding is the advanced stage encompassing the three previous stages, describing a series of actions and interactions that develop over time and space. During this stage, the focus is identifying potential relationships between categories or topics based on clues or other indicators. Any new categories or topics that arise from the interview results will be further developed in the findings section.

The researchers used source and investigator triangulation to ensure the internal validity of this study. Source triangulation involves using sources from different journals and research that external parties have evaluated. Researchers provided a 'thick description' to strengthen the data for external validity. The thick description provides a detailed explanation of the questions that will be asked to the research subjects, ensuring a

thorough understanding. The reliability of research can be measured using the inquiry audit technique, where an auditor checks the information obtained and the methods used in the study. Conformability in research refers to the extent to which research results can be confirmed and corroborated by other parties (Wahyuni, 2015).

Table 1. Respondent's Profiles

R	Age (years)	Status	Position	Industry	Tenure (years)
R1	38	Married, 2 kids	CEO	Technology	19
R2	30	Single	Dive Centre Manager	Tourism	6
R3	27	Married	Professional Health and Hygiene Coordinator	Mine	7
R4	36	Single	Branch Manager	Beauty	13
R5	30	Single	Executive Editor	Media	10
R6	24	Single	Founder and CEO	Mental Health	4
R7	30	Single	Program Coordinator	Social	5
R8	24	Single	CEO and Founder	Garment Technology	4
R9	29	Single	Operational Head	Basic Needs	10
R10	38	Married, 1 kid	General Manager	Digital Agency	17
R11	43	Married	VP of Strategic Planning and Corporate Management	Oil and Gas	20
R12	37	Single	Construction Director	Public Transportation	12
R13	51	Married	HR Lead	Food	25
R14	28	Single	Assistant Manager	Tourism	6
R15	29	Single	Head of Digital	Media	7
R16	45	Married, 4 kids	Executive Director	Social	22
R17	45	Divorce, 2 kids	Head of Human Capital Policy	Mine	20
R18	47	Single	Executive Director	Business Coalition	27
R19	41	Married	Director of Fundraising	Social	17
R20	26	Single	Business Development	Micro Finance	8
R21	29	Married	HR Manager	FMCG	6
R22	32	Married, 1 kid	HR Leader	Fintech	10
R23	26	Single	HR Executive	Insurance	3
R24	30	Single	HR Business Partner	FMCG	7

Findings

Female Leadership

Based on the interview results, the respondent positively evaluated female leadership. Most respondents (14 out of 24) believe that women can be influential leaders because of specific unique characteristics, such as their nurturing abilities as mothers.

One advantage women have over men is their ability to multitask, as women are often trained from childhood to take care of both family and work responsibilities and can juggle family and work responsibilities simultaneously (Respondent 11)

In discussing what it means to be a good leader, researchers have referred to several theories that divide the nature of leaders into feminine and masculine traits (Williams & Best, 1990). Respondents in this study identified feminine traits such as listening, empathy, protecting subordinates and being service-oriented. The respondents also identified masculine traits such as responsibility, clear direction, and strong time management skills.

Respondents are more likely to mention the neutral nature of leadership (apart from the feminine and masculine nature). These include being able to set an example for subordinates, being able to create other leaders, being able to motivate others to achieve common goals, and being able to influence everyone wherever he/she is. The neutral attitude of the respondents is reflected in the answer to the question, "Can a woman be a good leader?" respondents believe that good leaders have nothing to do with their gender.

A total of 11 respondents in this study identified the woman's figure as a leader who had a tremendous personal influence on them. A total of 6 of them identified the figure of their mother as a true leader who became a role model and gave many lessons. The figure of a man also becomes a leader and role model that influences the respondents. Six respondents mentioned men as leaders with a personal influence, and 3 of them mentioned the father figure as a natural leader. While attitudes towards women in leadership are progressive, some attitudes still create barriers to women in leadership, including the view that leaders cannot be women. Stereotypes about female leaders arise because leadership is often associated with men (Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011). According to Al-Manasra (2013), male culture perpetuates the belief that men are more competent than women in higher positions, leading to the exclusion of women pursuing higher positions.

The view of women as leaders cannot be separated from women's roles as mothers or wives in certain places or contexts in society. Female leaders are also judged poorly if it is shown that they do not keep their personal and professional affairs separate, where the female leader, in this case, has a dual role as a leader and as a wife/mother. They are also judged poorly because of the system through which they have come to lead, and if they perform poorly, they are judged harshly.

People still think that men should lead, but if you are a woman who wants to be a leader, people will always ask (Respondent 9)

Glass Ceiling

The 'Glass Ceiling' is a term used to describe the transparent barrier that prevents capable women from reaching the top of the corporate hierarchy (Dowling, 2017). This phenomenon explains women's career stagnation. Women's career stagnation can be attributed to this phenomenon and other factors hindering their career progression. The barriers perceived and observed by the respondents in this study were divided into two categories: those perceived by a female manager and those perceived by female employees. An unsupportive work environment is the most common barrier experienced by women leaders. It includes working harder than their male counterparts to get the same recognition and not feeling valued.

Hoobler et al., (2009) posited that the metaphorical ceiling represents the obstacles confronting women in regard to their professional advancement within organizations. The metaphor of glass, according to Hoobler et al. (2009), underscores the imperceptible and understated nature of these barriers. In their 2013 research, Kiaye and Singh present a comprehensive overview of theories that can contribute to the formation of barriers that result in the phenomenon of the glass ceiling. These theories encompass a range of perspectives, including situation/organization theory, social role theory, person-centred theory, interaction-centred theory, and human capital theory (Kiaye & Singh, 2013).

Being a female leader is like being held to a higher standard than male leaders. We cannot make mistakes. So, to be recognised as a leader, we must work three times as hard to get the same recognition (Respondent 3)

Female leaders also still have a sense of underestimation from those around them, such as their subordinates and peers. Two respondents from the same industry (technology) had been underestimated by their male colleagues. Mansplaining is the name given to this phenomenon, defined in the Cambridge Dictionary as explaining something to someone condescending or patronisingly, mainly when a man explains something to a woman who already understands. The gender discrimination that women face in the workplace can be explained by the patriarchal theory that male decision-makers may restrict women's access to top management positions in order to maintain their power and authority over them (Strober, 1984).

So there is another big brand talking about integration, and there is a platform that's quite well known, and then he explains the problem of networking and integration, and then he says,

Do you understand what I mean? and then I repeat, Yes, you mean like this, right? and then he says, Oh, yes, that is what I mean, and he was a bit shocked. I might be a woman, but I am not stupid, and I say: I have been working on this thing for 13 years; I know what you are explaining, thank you for asking me (Respondent 10)

Lack of respect for female leaders is also felt and becomes another barrier, which is often referred to as 'boy talk' or 'man talk' in a predominantly male environment. According to Kanter (1993), women may also face sexual harassment when they are in the minority, and some of the interviewees who work in remote areas stated that they are subject to sexual and verbal abuse in their work environment. Women leaders also face stereotyping based

on gender, which can lead to further discrimination. Maternity leave is the most reported obstacle for women employees and can be a barrier to their career progression. The 'maternal wall' concept illustrates the perceived barriers women face in their careers due to their need to take time off for motherhood, such as maternity leave (Crosby, Williams, & Biernat, 2004).

You will be judged on your marital status; your grades will go down if you are married. If you are going to have children, you are considered difficult to work overtime, not to mention when you are on maternity leave. When you go on maternity leave, you must be ready for your job to be taken away from you because a man is ready because he is not going on maternity leave. Maybe he lacks skills, but the company will think that is OK; he has time to learn (Respondent 5)

Gendered social systems that require women to fulfil multiple roles are closely linked to the obstacle of women reaching top positions in the organisation. Women's obstacles concerning multiple roles also apply to single women, per the normative institutional belief theory proposed by Scott (2014). Indonesian culture is characterised by collectivism, high power distance and low gender equality, indicating a conservative approach to gender roles. In Indonesia, women are traditionally expected to care for the family, including housework, husband, and children.

Various factors, including societal expectations, self-doubt, and personal priorities, can hinder women's career progression. Kiaye & Singh (2013) found that many women who have the opportunity to pursue education and training still prioritise their family and other responsibilities over their careers. Perceptions of the primacy of family responsibilities are among the barriers to women's career advancement, which can affect career choices. Although women are granted social freedom and the right to education, there is still a prevalent mentality that their primary role is related to domestic affairs (Jamali, Sidani, & Safieddine, 2005). Hoobler et al. (2009) explain that men and women are often ascribed gender-specific roles, such as breadwinners or housewives, which can shape their behavioural expectations and beliefs about their talents and skills.

There is still considerable stigma attached to women, who are often expected to juggle both a professional career and domestic responsibilities. The greater a woman's responsibilities, the more demanding her workload becomes. It is important to manage our time effectively to balance these responsibilities (Respondent 2)

Female employees may face barriers to career progression due to the perception that male colleagues are better suited to leadership roles. In addition, self-doubt and feelings of inadequacy may be experienced by women who have already attained leadership positions. This phenomenon is commonly called 'Impostor Syndrome', in which someone experiences self-doubt (Sandberg, 2013). Adding to their already heavy burden, women often feel the need to 'fit in' with their environment. These self-imposed barriers address entrenched social discrimination (Anker, Melkas, & Korten, 2003).

Female employees are often reluctant to promote themselves and clearly articulate what they want to achieve, which can lead to the perception that they are not actively managing their careers and limiting their progress. Singh et al. (2002) proposed an interaction theory which suggests that women may limit their progress due to a reluctance to self-promote, highlighting the importance of considering the impact of gender on career development.

I also feel that I am not good. I was lucky to get this. Female employees often prefer to let their work speak for itself, while male employees tend to be more confident in promoting themselves
(Respondent 12)

According to Terjesen & Singh (2008), there is a perception that women lack the necessary qualities such as ambition, self-confidence, firmness, and ability to be influential when compared to their male counterparts, even though these qualities are essential for leadership. This perception was accurate for respondents who tended not to speak up about their ideas in meetings or projects. How women interact with their working environment is an internal factor contributing to their work performance. Not all women experience feelings of self-doubt, but there is a tendency for women to be less proactive in presenting their work than their male counterparts, relying on the quality of their work to speak for itself.

Cultural and social factors and organisational situations contribute to the phenomenon of the female leader deficit. Norms believed by Indonesian people, such as the belief that women have a natural inclination towards motherhood and being a wife, have proven to be an obstacle that creates discriminatory behaviour, gender stereotypes, and burdens for women who have multiple roles. Olmsted (2003) notes that some researchers frequently link religion with patriarchal systems. There is an expectation that women should only fulfil domestic roles (Sidani et al., 2015).

The organisational culture perpetuates a patriarchal structure, leading both men and women to associate leadership with men (i.e. managers are male). This results in unfair judgments and increased scrutiny of women in the workplace. The maternal wall effect is a phenomenon where women who have multiple roles and receive various forms of relief, such as maternity leave, experience a negative impact on their career advancement due to their role as mothers (Crosby et al., 2004). Indonesia's socio-cultural system is patriarchal, with rules and power predominantly coming from men. It has resulted in discriminatory behaviour towards women, who are often viewed as unsuitable for leadership roles and expected to focus on domestic duties. Even for women who work, there is an assumption that the ideal female leader can balance career and household responsibilities. Women face challenging social norms as they balance their roles as successful wives, mothers, and managers (Jain & Mukherji, 1998).

To support women, it is important to consider their environment. Obstacles may arise from those closest to them, such as husbands or family members who embrace patriarchal beliefs and religious rules that restrict women. If women are convinced of their ability and right to obtain equality, then the community, especially husbands, must realise that women have the right to equal opportunities and treatment if they actively participate in various fields outside domestic affairs.

Companies committed to achieving gender equality and increasing women's participation in managerial positions must create equal opportunities and justice for all employees. Fairness and equal opportunities should apply to all company activities, programs, and policies. It includes non-gender-biased recruitment and non-discriminatory promotion processes.

Women with multiple roles often struggle to balance their responsibilities, hindering their ability to pursue top managerial positions. In Indonesia, women are still largely expected to take on domestic responsibilities, making it difficult to break free from patriarchal norms. It is essential to recognise and address these challenges to promote gender equality in the workplace. Therefore, the company's role is to provide flexible work policies, such as results-oriented hours, to facilitate employees with multiple roles, including women, fathers, and husbands. It is important to avoid gender bias and ensure equal opportunities for all employees. Additionally, the company should aim to ease the domestic burden that has traditionally fallen solely on women. Finally, the company must provide convenience and ensure that there is no negative impact from female employees using the facility, commonly called the 'Maternal Wall'.

Creating a healthy and respectful environment and culture in society is challenging, and companies can change their values and norms to attain a healthy and respectful company environment and culture. Companies committed to gender equality and increasing the participation of women in top managerial positions must recognise the significance of a supportive environment in retaining female employees and reducing opt-outs. Companies can implement socialisation programs to increase employee awareness of gender equality and inclusiveness, creating a corporate environment and culture that supports these values.

Conclusion

The obstacles women face are the main reason for the scarcity of women in management positions. These obstacles arise from various sources, including the organisational context, social environment, and personal factors. They are intertwined and interconnected, creating a causal relationship between them. Barriers to women's career progression can take many forms, including gender discrimination, stereotypes, social cultures with patriarchal systems, women's dual roles, lack of self-confidence and motivation, and self-doubting behaviours. These factors can hinder a woman's career development due to other priorities, whether by force or choice.

Internal factors such as low motivation, confidence, and ambition can hinder women's career progress. Companies may wrongly assume that women are not interested in career advancement or are content with their current positions. However, the respondents in this study have shown that women can achieve great things if they are determined, but unfortunately, many women still struggle to overcome internal barriers.

External factors contribute to the lack of female leaders in the company. Indonesia's socio-cultural state remains strongly patriarchal, supported by religious beliefs that both glorify and hinder women. Discriminatory behaviour, ranging from gender stereotypes to sexual harassment, is prevalent in both the community and the company. Both obstacles hinder career progression to top managerial positions. To overcome these obstacles, a supportive social culture must encourage women's participation. It includes starting with those closest to women who influence their professional decisions, such as their husbands, families, and society.

The female leader deficit in top managerial positions can be attributed to the various barriers that women encounter. These barriers are present from all directions. The factors under consideration include the organisational situation, the social environment, and the

self. These elements combine and interrelate, thereby creating a complex causal relationship. It creates a barrier known as glass ceiling which needs to be broken.

References

- Al-Manasra, E. A. (2013). What Are the “Glass Ceiling” Barriers Effects on Women Career Progress in Jordan? *International Journal of Business and Management*, 8(6), 40–46.
<https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v8n6p40>
- Anker, R., Melkas, H., & Korten, A. (2003). Gender-based occupational segregation in the 1990's. Work in Freedom. Geneva.
- April, K., Dreyer, S., & Blass, E. (2007). Gender impediments to the South African executive boardroom. *South African Journal of Labour Relations*, 31(2), 51–67.
- Broadbridge, A., & Hearn, J. (2008). Gender and management: New directions in research and continuing patterns in practice. *British Journal of Management*, 19, 38–49.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8551.2008.00570.x>
- Buss, D. M., & Schmitt, D. P. (2011). Evolutionary Psychology and Feminism. *Sex Roles*, 64(9), 768–787. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-011-9987-3>
- Carless, S. A. (1998). Gender differences in transformational leadership: An examination of superior, leader, and subordinate perspectives. *Sex Roles*, 39(11–12), 887–902.
<https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1018880706172>
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2015). Basics of Qualitative Research Fourth Edition. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Correll, S. J. (2004). Constraints into preferences: Gender, status, and emerging career aspirations. *American Sociological Review*, 69(1), 93–113.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240406900106>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2023). Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches Sixth Edition. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Crosby, F. J., Williams, J. C., & Biernat, M. (2004). The Maternal Wall. *Journal of Social Issues*, 60(4), 675–682.
- Desvaux, G., Devillard, S., Zelicourt, A., Kossoff, C., Labaye, E., & Sancier-Sultan, S. (2017). *Women Matter: Time to accelerate - Ten years of insights on gender diversity*. San Francisco: McKinsey & Company.
- Dowling, G. (2017). The glass ceiling: fact or a misguided metaphor? *Annals in Social Responsibility*, 3(1), 23–41. <https://doi.org/10.1108/asr-05-2017-0002>
- Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (1991). Gender and the Emergence of Leaders: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60(5), 685–710.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.60.5.685>
- Eagly, A. H., Makhijani, M. G., & Klonsky, B. G. (1992). Gender and the Evaluation of Leaders : A Meta-Analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 111(1), 3–22.
- Hede, A., & Ralston, D. (1993). Managerial career progression and aspiration: Evidence of a “glass ceiling”? *International Journal of Employment Studies*, 1(2), 253–282.
- Hoobler, J. M., Wayne, S. J., & Lemmon, G. (2009). Bosses’ Perceptions of Family-Work Conflict and Women’s Promotability: Glass Ceiling Effects. *Academy of Management Journal*, 52(5), 939–957.
- Huang, J., Krivkovich, A., Starikova, I., Yee, L., & Zanoschi, D. (2019). *Women In The Workplace 2019*. San Francisco. Retrieved from
[https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/McKinsey/Featured Insights/Gender Equality/Women in the Workplace 2019/Women-in-the-workplace-2019.ashx](https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/McKinsey/Featured%20Insights/Gender%20Equality/Women%20in%20the%20workplace-2019.ashx)
- Jain, N., & Mukherji, S. (1998). The perception of “galss ceiling” in Indian organizations:

- An exploratory study. *South Asian Journal of Management*, 17(1), 23–42. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jaci.2012.05.050>
- Jamali, D., Sidani, Y., & Safieddine, A. (2005). Constraints facing working women in Lebanon: An insider view. *Women in Management Review*, 20(8), 581–594. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09649420510635213>
- Kanter, R. M. (1993). *Men and women of the corporation*. New York: BasicBooks.
- Kiaie, R. E., & Singh, A. M. (2013). The glass ceiling: A perspective of women working in Durban. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 28(1), 28–42. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17542411311301556>
- Koenig, A. M., Eagly, A. H., Mitchell, A. A., & Ristikari, T. (2011). Are leader stereotypes masculine? A meta-analysis of three research paradigms. *Psychological Bulletin*, 137(4), 616–642. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023557>
- Lewis, S. (2001). Restructuring workplace cultures: The ultimate work-family challenge? *Women in Management Review*, 16(1), 21–29. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09649420110380256>
- Meshkat, M., & Nejati, R. (2017). Does Emotional Intelligence Depend on Gender? A Study on Undergraduate English Majors of Three Iranian Universities. *SAGE Open*, 7(3), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244017725796>
- Moreno-Gómez, J., Lafuente, E., & Vaillant, Y. (2018). Gender diversity in the board, women's leadership and business performance. *Gender in Management*, 33(2), 104–122. <https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-05-2017-0058>
- Morrison, A. M., & Von Glinow, M. A. (1990). Women and minorities in management. *American Psychologist*, 45(2), 200–208. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.45.2.200>
- Nespor, J. (2006). Finding patterns with field notes. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, P. B. Elmore, A. Skukauskaiti, & E. Grace (Eds.), *Handbook of Complementary Methods in Education Research* (pp. 297–308). Washington D.C.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203874769-22>
- Oakley, J. G. (2000). Gender-based Barriers to Senior Management Positions: Understanding the Scarcity of Female CEOs. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 27, 321–334.
- Olmsted, J. (2003). Reexamining the fertility puzzle in MENA. In E. A. Doumato & M. P. Posusney (Eds.), *Women and globalization in the Arab Middle East: Gender, economy, society* (pp. 73–92). London: Lynne Rienner Publisher.
- Powell, G. N. (2000). The Glass Ceiling: Explaining the Good and Bad News. In M. J. Davidson & R. J. Burke (Eds.), *Women in Management Current Research Issues Volume II* (Vol. II, pp. 236–249). London: Sage Publications.
- Powell, G. N., & Butterfield, D. A. (2015). The glass ceiling: what have we learned 20 years on? *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness*, 2(4), 306–326. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-09-2015-0032>
- Ridgeway, C. L. (2011). *Framed by Gender: How Gender Inequality Persists in the Modern World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ritter, B. A., & Yoder, J. D. (2004). Gender differences in leader emergence persist even for dominant women: An updated confirmation of role congruity theory. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 28(3), 187–193. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.2004.00135.x>
- Ryan, M., & Haslam, A. (2006). What lies beyond the glass ceiling?: The glass cliff and the potential precariousness of women's leadership positions. *Human Resource Management International Digest*, 14(3), 3–5. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09670730610663150>
- Saleem, S., Rafiq, A., & Yusaf, S. (2017). Investigating the glass ceiling phenomenon: An empirical study of glass ceiling's effects on selection-promotion and female effectiveness. *South Asian Journal of Business Studies*, 6(3), 297–313.

- <https://doi.org/10.1108/SAJBS-04-2016-0028>
- Sandberg, S. (2013). *Lean in: Women, work, and the will to lead*. New York: Alfred A Knopf.
- Scott, W. R. (2014). *Institutions and organizations: ideas, interests, and identities* (4th editio). Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Sidani, Y. M., Konrad, A., & Karam, C. M. (2015). From female leadership advantage to female leadership deficit: A developing country perspective. *Career Development International*, 20(3), 273–292. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-01-2014-0009>
- Singh, V., Kumra, S., & Vinnicombe, S. (2002). Gender and Impression Management: Playing the Promotion Game. *Journal of Business Ethics* , 37, 77–89. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A>
- Strober, M. H. (1984). Toward a General Theory of Occupational Sex Segregation. In B. F. Reskin (Ed.), *Sex Segregation in the Workplace: Trends, Explanations, Remedies* (pp. 144–156). Washington D.C.: National Academy Press.
- Terjesen, S., & Singh, V. (2008). Female presence on corporate boards: A multi-country study of environmental context. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 83(1), 55–63. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-007-9656-1>
- Tharenou, P. (1997). Explanations of managerial career advancement. *Australian Psychologist*, 32(1), 19–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00050069708259614>
- Wahyuni, S. (2015). *Qualitative Research Method: Theory and Practice* 2nd Edition. Jakarta: Salemba Empat.
- Williams, J. E., & Best, D. L. (1990). *Measuring Sex Stereotypes : A Multination Study*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Appendix

Interview Guidelines:

What is Leadership	1. The definition of leader
	2. Criteria of leadership
	3. Leader who becomes a role model
	4. Characteristic of good leader
Women Leadership	1. Possibility of women to be a leader
	2. The perception of society regarding female leader
Glass Ceiling	1. Barriers that women face in their career
	2. Barriers that make women hard to be a leader
	3. The availability of women leader in current workplace
	4. Promotion system in current workplace
	5. Policy about gender in the workplace

