

WOMEN MANAGERS IN INDIA

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



CSR



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Contents

Table of Contents	Page No
Acknowledgement	
Chapter 1: <u>Introduction</u>	1
1.1- Introduction	
1.2- Situational analysis	
1.3- The study	
1.4- Methodology	
1.5- Execution of Study	
Chapter 2: <u>Review of Literature</u>	20
2.1- Literature from across the countries	
2.2- Literature from India	
2.3- Conclusion	
Chapter 3: <u>Sector-wise Analysis</u>	30
3.1- Hospitality and Tourism	
3.2- Media	
3.3- Healthcare	
3.4- Finance and Banking	
3.5- Discussion	
Chapter 4: <u>Situation of Women in Entry, Middle and Senior Management</u>	57
4.1- Entry Level	
4.2- Middle Level	
4.3- Senior Level	
4.4- Discussion	
Chapter 5: <u>Conclusion and Recommendations</u>	109
<i>Bibliography</i>	

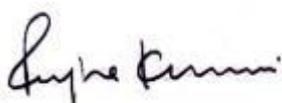
Acknowledgement

There is a general consensus that despite the existing legal provisions women are often deprived from their basic rights, subjected to sexual harassment, given low-paid marginal jobs, excluded from the decision making in both politics and economy, not acknowledged as contributors to the family and society as a whole. While gender inequality in many arenas has been on the agenda of social research and activism for decades, gender inequality in organizational leadership has been sadly overlooked. As the preliminary search in the secondary sources reveal, data on Indian female managers is almost non-existent. The very lack of statistical data reflects the lack of attention to the issue of women in leadership in the present agenda of the Indian society. According to one study, 2 women per 100 economically active men take administrative and managerial positions in India.

The very fact of women being adequately represented in the work-force, but hardly present in the managerial positions got labeled “the glass ceiling”, “a barrier so subtle that it is transparent, yet so strong that it prevents women and minorities from moving up in the management hierarchy”. As appears from the extant literature, the glass ceiling comes in many forms: women’s under-representation at the corporate hierarchy, gendered wage gap, occupational segregation, discriminative corporate policies, lack of attention to the specific needs women have, sexual harassment, exclusion of women from informal networks. Hence, Centre for Social Research (CSR) thought it is necessary to conduct a study on the women managers in India and the problems and challenges they face because there are not many studies in this issue; it is necessary to identify the barriers that women managers faces and recommend strategies to overcome and to create a platform as to what should the employer and society do to break the glass ceiling.

CSR conducted the study on four sectors i.e Hospitality & Tourism, Banking and Finance, Media and Healthcare and in three cities i.e. Delhi, Bangalore and Kolkata. The present report in its chapter 1 highlights the present scenario of women work participation, chapter 2 presents a review of the available literature, chapter 3 throws light on the sectors, chapter 4 provides an in-depth analysis of the collected data and chapter 5 provides conclusion and recommendations.

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CHAPTER-1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

It goes without saying that despite the existing legal provisions women are often deprived of their basic rights, subjected to sexual harassment, given low-paid marginal jobs, excluded from the decision making process in both politics and economy, not acknowledged as contributors to the family and society as a whole. Women have faced discrimination both at home and at the societal level. While gender inequalities in many arenas have been on the agenda of social research and activism for decades, gender inequality in organizational leadership has been sadly overlooked.

Women have attained remarkable success in what was once considered the “male domain”, of the working world. Worldwide the number of women in the workforce has increased over the years with a corresponding increase in the number of highly educated women equipped with technical know-how. However, discrimination against women in the workplace has impacted their advancement in jobs that acquire higher societal recognition among men. Gender inequality in the workplace is exhibited in various forms, such as occupational segregation, gender-based wage gap and discrimination. Working women have constantly battled against not only horizontal segregation, but also, the separation of women and men into gender specific jobs.

Advancement of women in management jobs has not kept pace with the correspondence increase in the number of working women. Their presence in senior management level is negligible. Women are graduating and entering management positions, yet there is a bottleneck at middle management levels¹ While entry is easier, progression slows down after the middle level and in most situations, regardless of their technical and professional qualifications or achievements, women are prevented from climbing up in the corporate ladder to reach the top. In India, research and surveys reveal that men out-number women in terms of attaining top managerial positions. Review of secondary sources shows that data on Indian female managers is almost non-existent.

¹ Current Population Survey, 2001



The very lack of statistical data signifies the lack of attention paid to the persistent issue of women in leadership positions in the Indian context.

A few studies that have been conducted on the issue of women representation in management jobs reveal that women are lagging far behind men in managerial jobs. Globally women comprise around 10 percent of senior management positions in Fortune 500 companies (Chadha, 2002).² In India their presence is known to range between a high of 5.8 percent (Kulkarni, 2000, p.11)³ to a low of roughly 3 percent (see Chadha 2002, Mehra 2002, and Singh 2003)⁴ of all administrative positions. According to the study by Koshal, et al (2006)⁵, 2 women per 100 economically active men take administrative and managerial positions in India. Recently the Confederation of Indian Industry released a study “Understanding the Levels of Empowerment of Women in the Workplace in India” covering 149 large and medium size companies across regions. The report highlights that women comprise 16 percent at junior management level, 4 percent each at middle and senior levels, and only 1 percent in organizational leadership positions (CEOs)⁶.

The worldwide statistics shows that in 2000-2002 women’s overall share of managerial jobs was between 20 percent and 40 percent in 48 countries⁷. As far as senior management positions are concerned female representation is much less. Women take 20 percent of senior managerial positions in the US and 19 percent in the world on an average⁸. In US and Europe⁹ 25 percent of companies do not have women in senior management at all. Female representation is even less as far as board membership is concerned. According to European Board Women Monitor (2004) conducted by the European Professional Women’s Network (EPWN) an average proportion of women board directors in 11 European countries were reported to be 8 percent varying from 2

² Chadha, R, 2002. Of Mars and Venus, Businessline, Available at <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?DID=0000000270062871&Fmt>

³ Kulkarni, S.S. 2002. Women and Professional Competency- A Survey Report, Indian Journal of Training and Development. 32(2) April- June

⁴ Mehra, P. 2002, Women Managers: To the top and Beyond, Hindu Businessline, Saturday, 27 April and Singh, K. 2003. Women managers: perception vs performance analysis, Journal of Management Research, 3 (1), pp 31-42

⁵ Koshal, Manjulika, Koshal, Rajindar K. & Gupta, Ashok (2006). *Women managers in India: challenges and opportunities*. In *Management in India: Trends and Transition*/edited by Herbert J. Davis, Samir R. Chatterjee and Mark Heuer. New Delhi, Response Books, 2006.

⁶ *Women cry bias at work*. The Telegraph, Calcutta. Saturday, April 15, 2006

⁷ *Breaking through the glass ceiling: Women in management*. Updated 2004, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2004.

⁸ Grant Thornton (2004). ‘International Business Owners Survey’. (IBOS). Available at www.grantthornton.ca/surveys/GT_IBOS_2004_.pdf

⁹ Grant Thornton (2002). European Business Survey.



percent in Italy and up to 22 percent in Norway. This indicator is reported as 13.6 percent for US.¹⁰ The International Business Owners Survey (IBOS) 2004¹¹ conducted by Grand Thornton outlines that 42 percent (59% globally) of business in India include women in senior management positions, but women occupy 12 percent (19% globally) of the senior management posts available.

As evident from the data above, India is lagging far behind world's average in female representation in management. Indeed, it is hard to imagine that women constituting 48 percent of population (Census 2001), 48 percent of the marginal and 17 percent of the main workers (Census 2001), they take only 2-3 percent administrative and managerial positions. This discrepancy clearly sheds light on the solid "glass ceiling" that Indian women face in their professional careers.

Glass Ceiling

The very fact of women being adequately represented in the work-force, but hardly present in the senior managerial positions has been labeled "the glass ceiling", "a barrier so subtle that it is transparent, yet so strong that it prevents women from moving up in the management hierarchy" (Morrison & Von Glinow (1990; p. 200) {The term "glass ceiling" was coined by Hymowitz and Schellhardt in a report on corporate women published in 1986 edition of Wall Street Journal.}.

As appears from extant literature, the "glass ceiling" comes in many forms: women's under-representation at the corporate hierarchy, gendered wage gap, occupational segregation, discriminative corporate policies, lack of attention to the specific needs women have, sexual harassment at the workplace, exclusion of women from informal networks. A tremendous amount of research has been undertaken in this area with "Breaking through the Glass Ceiling" by International Labour Organization (2004) being one of the most comprehensive international studies. Yet, India's sample was not included in the latter. Research reveals that the attainment of top executive positions for females in the world in general and India in particular is complex and involves many variables. Understanding those variables is important to formulate strategies to

¹⁰ Catalyst 2003

¹¹ Ibid, n.8



overcome such forms of gender inequality in organizational leadership. The key research problem remains to identify the factors that contribute slow progress of women in the management.

1.2 Situational Analysis

(i) Situation of Women in Management in Global Context

Today women are entering into global labour force in record members. Higher educational levels, falling fertility rates and sectoral changes have contributed to women's increasing participation in the labour force. Women constitute over 40 percent of the global labour force, approximately 70 percent in developed countries and 60 percent in developing countries.¹² At present more and more women are becoming graduates, post graduates, earning professional and technical degrees and entering corporate life. With the rising education levels and social acceptance of gender equality women are moving into management jobs. However, cultural and social attitudes still prevail upon women choices of jobs. They are more concentrated in traditional "feminine professions" like nursing and teaching. Nevertheless, women are making inroads into the management sectors. In fact, their participation has increased with the expansion of the management sector opening up more employment opportunities to women.

However, when we look at women's representation in the managerial jobs it is very less compared to men. Their rate of progress is also slow and uneven. Women are still concentrated in the most precarious forms of work throughout the world and breaking the 'glass ceiling' still appears elusive for all but select few. Men are in the majority among managers, top executives, and higher levels of professional workers whilst women are still concentrated in the lower categories of managerial positions.¹³ Although a few women have made it to the very top in the world of work, yet largely their presence in senior management level is negligible. According to Linda Wirth, the Director of ILO, "women continue to face more difficulty obtaining top jobs than they do lower down the hierarchy. A handful of women are making headlines here and there as they break through, but statistically they represent a only a few percent of top management jobs. The rule of thumb is still: the higher up an organization's hierarchy, the fewer the women.

¹² ILO, 2003, Global Employment Trends

¹³ ILO: *Beyond the "glass ceiling": Women in the world of work progress, but slowly: 2001*



Women hold a mere 1 to 3 percent of top executive jobs in the largest corporations around the world.¹⁴ (ILO: *Beyond the “glass ceiling”: Women in the world of work progress, but slowly: 2001*, originally published in World of work, No. 39, June 2001, Geneva ILO, 2007)

- **Women’s Share in Management**

With regard to share of women in management jobs data shows that, in general, countries in North America, South America and Eastern Europe have a higher share of women in management jobs than countries in East Asia, South Asia and the Middle East. Nevertheless, the report indicates, "in female-dominated sectors where there are more women managers, a disproportionate number of men rise to the more senior positions and in those professions normally reserved for men, women managers are few and far between". According to Grant Thornton, the global figure for businesses with "no women" in senior management positions has remained unchanged at 38 percent since 2004, while countries like the United States, Mexico, Russia, Poland, Italy and New Zealand have witnessed a fall in businesses with women senior managers.

In the United States, despite women comprising more than two-thirds of the U.S. population and more than 45 percent of the U.S. labor force women were underrepresented at upper levels of management. They represent only 12% of all corporate officers (Catalyst, 1999). Contrary to their presence at middle management; women comprise only 5 percent of executive suites. (Current Population Survey, 2001).¹⁵

In the United Kingdom, the total number of managers and administrators was 4,306,000 in 1999. Of these, women constituted almost 33 percent. But there was still a glass ceiling apparent at the highest levels. A 1998 survey of over 584 different companies in the United Kingdom found that only 3.6 percent of directors were women.¹⁶

In Canada, 43.6 percent of companies had no female corporate officers and only 26.6 had multiple female officers in corporate positions by 1999. In 1995, the proportion of women as senior

¹⁴ ILO: *Beyond the “glass ceiling”: Women in the world of work progress, but slowly: 2001*, originally published in World of work, No. 39, June 2001, Geneva ILO, 2007

¹⁵ *ibid* www.ilo.org/public/libdoc/ilo/2001/101B09_102_engl.pdf

¹⁶ *ibid*



executives and board directors in the 70,000 largest German companies was between 1 percent and 3 percent, while their share of senior and middle management was 6 percent and 12 percent respectively¹⁷.

A recent French government report cited a 1997 study of the 5,000 leading enterprises in France, which found that women comprised 1,680 of the 26,700 managers (6.3 percent). The same study showed that women represented 2 percent of the chief executive officers of these companies, 4.7 percent of executive managers and 7.6 percent of managers overall.¹⁸

In Brazil, a 1991 survey of major corporations found that women comprised only around 3 percent of top executives: 3.5 percent in the 300 largest national private groups, 0.9 percent in the 40 largest state-owned groups, and 0.5 percent in the 40 largest foreign-owned companies.¹⁹

The situation is more encouraging in certain countries. A study in Jamaica found an eleven-to-one ratio of women to men at boardroom level, while in Chile, women held 8 percent of director and high-level executive positions in 1996. A survey of private-sector boards in Australia reported an increase in the number of women on these boards from 7.6 percent in 1998 to 8.3 percent in 1999. This compares with a figure of 4 percent in 1996. Surveys focusing on senior management (not just the very top jobs) report higher proportions of women holding management positions. In the Netherlands, women increased their participation in senior management from 10 percent in 1979 to 18 percent in 1990²⁰

In Finland, female managers most often work below board level as personnel, marketing or financial managers and women's share in these positions reached 11 percent in 1994. They fared best in industries employing large numbers of women, such as health and community services and the hotel and catering industry.²¹ In Argentina, women occupied close to 7 percent of senior management jobs according to a 1995 survey.²²

¹⁷ ILO: *Beyond the "glass ceiling": Women in the world of work progress, but slowly: 2001*, originally published in World of work, No. 39, June 2001, Geneva ILO, 2007

¹⁸ *ibid*

¹⁹ *ibid*

²⁰ *ibid*

²¹ Linda Wirth, *Breaking through the glass ceiling*, chapter: *Women at the top*, ILO, Geneva, (2001), p. 38-41

²² *ibid*



Given the situation that women's progress is very slow owing to factors that are complex and varied. If we look at the attempts that have been done so far to overcome this glass ceiling, we find that one strategy which some of the countries have opted is the imposition of the Norwegian model. Effective from January 1, 2006, Norway's government has imposed quotas under which the top 500 publicly traded firms until 2008 have to fill 40 percent of their boardroom seats with women, or be out-listed. France is imposing a 20 percent quota, while Spain has decided to give preferential treatment to companies who appoint more women on their boards.²³ But could such a move be implemented in the Indian situation is a question that needs to be explored and find out only by understanding the situation of Indian women in management.

(ii) Situation of Women in Management in Indian Context

Rise of women work participation			
<i>Women's Work Participation Finally on the Rise</i> [employed women as a share of women aged 15-60]			
%	Total	Self-Employed	Regular Wage/Salary Workers
1994	27.7	24.9	2.9
2000	25.6	22.5	3.1
2005	30.6	26.7	3.9

Source: National School of Government

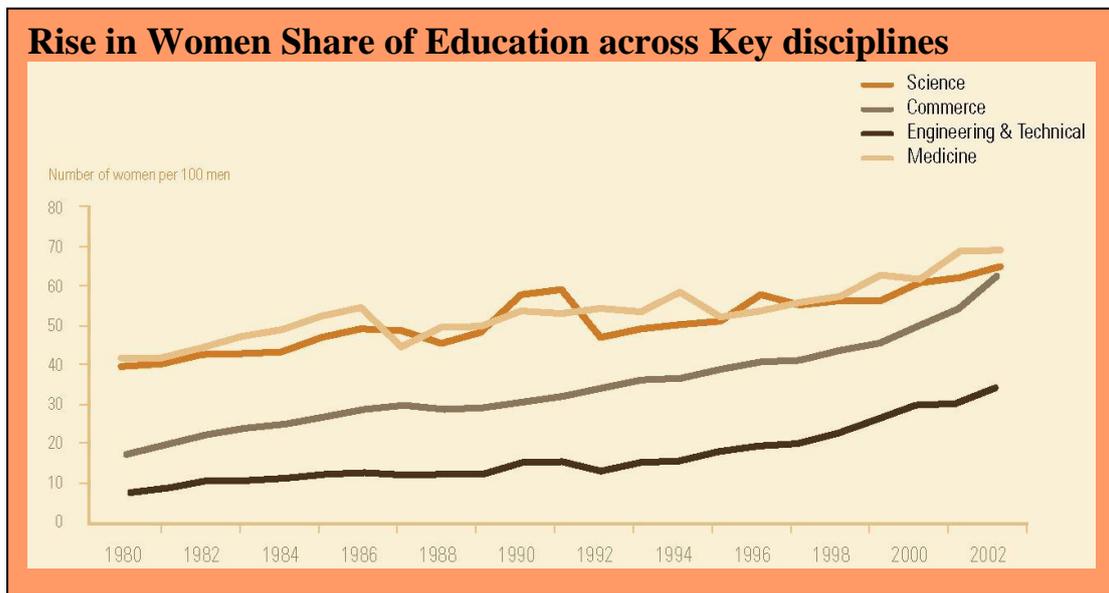
In India, the situation of women is changing with more and more women getting educated not only in general streams but also in technical and professional courses. Along with their increasing level of education in various streams there has been sizeable increase in their workforce participation. The graph below reveals that in the supply side there has been an increase in the pool of educated women as resources for increase in work force participation.

A recent study by *Catalyst*, a leading researcher of women in the workplace showed that the Fortune 500 companies with the highest percentages of women corporate officers yielded, on an

²³ *ibid*



average, 35.1 percent higher return on equity than those with the lower/lowest percentages. Even more encouraging is Fortune's conclusion that the list of brand-name firms with women chief executives is longer and more impressive than ever. Undoubtedly these are encouraging phenomenon which are witnessed in India but the question is how diverse and widespread is this phenomenon in the Indian Management sector? The graph in the next page reveals that in the demand side there has been an increase in the share of women participation in the labour force.



Source: National School of Government

The success stories of few women making it to the top are 'feel good factor' providing an impression that position and status of women is changing in Indian management sector. But in the true sense how many of these breakthroughs are really happening? Barring a handful like ICICI Bank, HSBC and Biocon, an overwhelming majority of Indian boardrooms are still 'no-go' areas for women.

Women today comprise only 2 percent of the total managerial strength in the Indian Management sector.²⁴ However, India is among the countries witnessing an increased participation of women in senior levels along with places like Taiwan, the Philippines, Hong Kong and Sweden. "India is seeing an increasing number of women occupying management positions in leading companies, both listed and privately held."²⁵ About 56 percent of businesses in India have women at senior levels, as against the global average of 59 percent. India's performance is well below the global

²⁴ 'Why there are so few women managers in India' [http:// www.rediff.com](http://www.rediff.com), October 06, 2006 10:35 IST

²⁵ Pallavi Bhakru, Partner and Director, International Business, Grand Thornton



average 24 percent with Indian women holding only 15 percent of top managerial positions in private firms in the country.²⁶

Being one of the fastest growing economies in the region clearly does not translate into bigger and more powerful roles for women in India who land far fewer top jobs than women in BRIC countries and India's Asian neighbors. Among the BRIC countries, 42 percent of top managerial positions in Russia are held by women, 31 percent in Mainland China and 29 percent in Brazil. The Philippines leads where 47 percent of all top jobs go to women. Apart from Japan, India's position on the list is better than only 2 other countries - Denmark (13 percent) and Belgium (12 percent). The Indian metros do emerge better than the national average with Chennai closest to the global average at 22 percent followed by Delhi at 18 percent and Bangalore at 16 percent. According to Grant Thornton, India partner Karishma R Phatarphekar; despite an increasing number of women reaching senior management positions, the top levels are still male-dominated.²⁷

The reasons for this are many, ranging from individual constraints, mindsets, stereotypes and organizational and structural impediments. There is an increasing feeling that a majority of Indian companies still have a kind of institutionalised sexism that tries to prove women are less able than men and hence, don't allow women to move up in their career. Not only this is visible in the Indian corporate sector, but also observed in the civil services in India where women IAS and IFS officers have been victim of gender bias. There are cases where women IFS officers have been denied assignments compatible with seniority by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), for the simple reason that they had challenged the system. In a democracy like India, merit, fairness and transparency should be the hall mark of career growth for any individual whether male or female. But regrettably those who seek to question the government are further punished. There is bitter competition in the senior level civil services. Male officers feel threatened when there a strong independent minded women officer as a competitor. And that's when they start blaming women for being concerned about family or for being emotional and their achievements are not recognized.

²⁶ n.23

²⁷ Grand Thornton 5 March 2009 'Women still hold less than a quarter of senior management positions in privately held businesses'



Women in corporate India are aware of the constraints they work under and obviously try to make the best of the bargain. They typically bear a disproportionate amount of responsibility for home and family and thus have more demands on their time outside the office. And when they do reach the managerial level, they bring with them both silver lining and dark clouds. But they flourish, if they are allowed to flourish, despite all the obstacles, which are mainly societal, perceptual and organizational.

(iii) Glass Ceiling Effect: Factors contributing to it

What is evident from the above discussion is that women in India experience a slower progression compared to their male counterparts. While entry is easier, growth slows and in most situations regardless of their qualifications, performances or achievements, women are prevented from climbing the corporate ladder to the top. Although a few women have made it to the very top in the world of work, the phenomenon of glass ceiling is still very much prevalent in India as well as in other countries. The glass ceiling has proved resistant to affirmative action, sensitization of senior managers and human resources staff, measures to promote work-family balance and a broad recognition that investing in the talents and qualities of both women and men at all organizational levels makes good business sense. The existence of the glass ceiling that retards the progress of women is a prime example of discrimination against women at work through vertical segregation by sex.

There are many overt and covert glass-ceiling factors that impede women's career growth in the management sector. These can be categorized under organizational, social and individual level.

Organizational: The organization-centered paradigm advances the view that it is the disadvantageous position of women in the organizational structure such as few numbers, limited decision making power, which influences women's career growth and progress, shapes and defines the behaviour of women. The underlying principle of this perspective is that men and women are equally capable and committed to assuming positions of leadership. The problem lies in the organizational policies and structures and the remedy is a fundamental change to eliminate inappropriate discrimination in institutional policies and practices. Among structural factors that hinders women's career growth may be listed as: discriminatory appointment and promotion practices; male resistance to women in senior/top level management positions; absence of policies and legislation to ensure participation of women; absence of women in boardroom decision-



making process to ensure pro-women measures of companies/establishments, absence/non-existence/non-participation of women managers in forums/unions/bodies within and outside the organizational structure due to various factors, limited opportunities for leadership training and for demonstrating competence as a result of the power structure in the workplace.

Social : Societal approach .links gender-centered and organizational structure perspective. Here the analysis is concerned with the social construction of gender and the assignment of specific roles, responsibilities, and expectations to women and to men. These gender-based roles, irrelevant to the work place, are carried into the workplace via their internal structures and everyday practices. The socio-cultural perceptions which .determine the attitudes and behaviors of individual men and women form barriers to the equal participation of women in senior management. Gender relations are kept in place because the actors involved, both dominant and subordinate, subscribe to social and organizational reality, the clustering of women in the lower ranks, and wage gap.

Individual : Individual-centered perspective in which the paucity of women is attributed to the psycho-social attributes, including personality, characteristics, attitudes and behavioural skills of women themselves. The problem is vested in the individual and she is called upon to adapt herself to the traditional, male concept of management within the academy. Focus is on the need for women to adapt to compensate for their socialization deficits. Among personal factors are lack of self-esteem and self-confidence, limited aspirations in the field of management, lack of motivation and ambition to accept challenges to go up the ladder.; women's orientation to interpersonal relations with peers which could impede their upward mobility; promoted myths regarding women's low potential for leadership, being less assertive, less emotionally stable and lacking ability to handle a crisis. It also include: male managerial styles, discourse and language that shut women out; informal organizational cultures also referred to as the old boys club; women's reluctance to self-promote their achievements and capabilities making them institutionally invisible; the persistence of cultural values and attitudes that strongly support women's childcare, family and domestic responsibilities as priority over career aspirations.

The above discussion shows that there are various reasons contributing to the existence of glass ceiling in Management profession which is extremely complex and varied. They are as follows:



- ❁ The stereotypes and preconceptions towards women that they are fragile and lacking in the qualities that are considered useful to be effective managers. Traditional masculine traits having higher value than feminine traits in management world also prevents women managers in climbing the ladder to the top. Top posts are generally characterized by masculine aggressive values and suitability for them is decided mostly according to male criteria;
- ❁ The position which an individual hold within the organization shapes the traits and the behavior they develop or possess. Women often secure positions that have titles with little real power or supervisory authority.
- ❁ Women are primarily placed in non-strategic sectors rather than in the so-called “line” positions that involve financial decision-making or revenue-generating
- ❁ Responsibilities, like sales and production positions that are critical for advancement to the top are considered ‘no-woman’ areas
- ❁ Mentoring plays an important role in the advancement of managers in any establishment into responsible and senior management positions. However, mentoring is often limited to women, which in turn results in a lack of access and training and career development activities.
- ❁ Women’s career paths tend to be more circuitous and interrupted than those of men which are typically linear, and this impedes women’s progress to top positions. Women often have to deal with the complexities of the dual role as working women and mother. Many times they have to make compromises, prioritizing family life over work life which slow down their careers. Hence, women managers with children are often looked upon as less favorable than those without children as the former are viewed as being less committed.
- ❁ Women workers still bear more of the main burden of family responsibilities than men and so have less time for the “extracurricular” formal and informal networking essential for advancement in enterprises.
- ❁ Inability to stay late at work and a disinclination for jobs involving travel, transfers has been identified as other major factor for women not achieving top positions.
- ❁ Lastly, women managers also have their own inner battles, which need to be fought and overcome. Many women do not aspire for higher management positions as that would burden them with greater responsibilities, demand more work time and commitment and on



the other hand disrupt family life. Therefore, women managers need to establish their career goals, aspirations and acquire determination to overcome the obstacles that exist. Women need to develop the confidence, attitude and skills needed to succeed in business and enterprising activities.

1.3. The study

(i) Need of the Study

It is observed that in India despite increase in women's education and participation in labor force, representation of women in management jobs is significantly low as compared to men. The few women, who do make it to the top, make us believe that there is a sustainable change in the gender equations within corporations and businesses, which is not true. A few studies that have been carried out so far provide a very dismal outlook about women representation in management jobs in India. Those studies though have tried to understand the reasons behind it yet they do not provide a comprehensive understanding of the barriers that retard their progress. They either have focused on individual and societal factors or organizational factors that act as impediments in their growth. So the questions why many women in the corporate sector in India do not make it to the top needs to be understood and examined in a greater depth. In addition those few women who have made it to the top, about whom is very little known should also be examined in order to recommend strategies to overcome such barriers.

This study is, therefore, significant as it will not only be looking into the reasons that contribute to such unequal gender representation in organizational leadership but also will recommend strategies for employer and society in order to break the glass ceiling. It is believed that, on a macro level, the study will help to contribute to the wider gamut of achieving gender parity, and address the problems and barriers encountered by millions of working women in industries. Moreover, it will also add to the knowledge (both quantitative as well as qualitative) about women managers in India by providing a timely and reliable statistics on the situation of women in management this will have an important role to play in the elimination of stereotypes and movement towards equality in the management and administrative sector and by introduction of



strategies, rules or policies it will contribute to make the world of work a more egalitarian place for women.

(ii) Objectives of the study

The aim of the study is to identify the solid and resistant ‘glass ceiling’ that Indian women face during their career paths.

The key objectives of the study are:

- ◆ Conduct situational analysis of the managerial positions held by women in the target sectors. The idea was not only to make quantitative analysis but also qualitative research by speaking to the women in different sectors to find out what they personally feel as the hardest barrier to overcome and what they would like to improve
- ◆ Identify the factors that create barriers for career growth for women and see whether they are gender specific. To reveal why there are so few women in top positions when there are quite many in entry level.
- ◆ Recommend strategies to overcome the barriers through discussion with the various stakeholders

(iii) Universe of the study

Target Sectors

To have a comparative analysis of various sectors, focus would be given to the sectors where women comprise a significant portion of the workforce:

- ◆ **Hospitality and Tourism**
- ◆ **Finance and Banking**
- ◆ **Media**
- ◆ **Healthcare**



Target Area

One centre in each region of the country

- ◆ **National Capital Region (NCR)**
- ◆ **Bangalore**
- ◆ **Kolkata**

1.4 Methodology

The study has approached the issue from demand and supply angles:

- **Supply side:** Availability of trained female human power for top management position, number of women studying in higher management institutions, kind of courses they choose and the subsequent career choices they make.
- **Demand side:** What the industry/employer has to offer, the barriers within the industry, gender bias if any.

This is to see the percentage of women opting for managerial positions and getting qualified and out of that what proportion of them reaches the top positions in organizations.

The data has been collected at three levels:

- **Entry point** – availability of trained women managers in selected sectors and the career path offered by the company
- **Middle level** – available opportunities or barriers limiting growth beyond a certain level
- **Top management** – percentage of women in comparison to men, and percentage of women in top management positions when compared to the percentage of women at the entry level

(i) Data Sources

The study depends on two main sources of data:

- **Secondary sources:** A temporal analysis of data based on secondary sources and existing macro/micro studies, literature has been done to assess the situation.



- **Primary data** gathered from the four regions and the selected sectors includes interviews with
 - ❖ Female Managers
 - ❖ CEO/HR managers
 - ❖ Sector specific employer's and employee's associations
 - ❖ Case Studies of best practices, one of the successful woman manager having reached the senior managerial position, one from each sector

Tools: For secondary data collection a framework and a list of sources and materials were developed which was used for the analysis. For primary data collection sector specific and stakeholder specific questionnaire and interview schedule were developed.

(ii) Selection of Sample

Sample 1: Indian and International companies (public and private) from the selected sectors.

Sample 2: Women Managers representing entry level, middle and top management level.

(ii) Sample Size

	Target Sectors				Total
	Hospitality	Finance	Media	Healthcare	
Companies	10 Companies from each sector and city (10 Managers*4 sector*3 cities)				120
Female Managers	In each of sector 10 managers will be interviewed in each city i.e. managers at three levels will be interviewed (10 managers*4 sectors*3 cities)				120
CEO/HR managers	From Each sector and each city 2 CEO/HR managers will be interviewed. (2 CEO*4 sectors*3 cities)				24
Total					264

In addition questionnaires will be sent to 40 companies in each sector (40x4x3=480) in each city to elicit information about HR/gender policies and employee database from companies.

(iii) Stakeholders

The various stakeholders and key partners who form part of this project are:



- (i) Selected Women Managers
- (ii) Government
- (iii) Private and Public Sector Employers
- (iv) Employee's and professional associations
- (v) Management Education Institutions
- (vi) Civil Society Organizations

(iv) Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed by using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis tools. The collected quantitative statistical information has been processed through different software like SPSS and Microsoft Excel for analyzing and presenting the data in the form of graphs, pie charts and maps to illustrate the major findings of the study.

(v) Expected Output of the Study

Opportunities available and Constraints faced by Women Managers in the selected Sectors, identified.

- Information on correlation, if any between career choices made by women and growth pattern
- Information on corporate HR policies, whether they are conducive or obstructive for women

Framework and long-term strategies for synergizing the efforts of various stakeholders, developed. A comprehensive data based research study made available on the subject for the selected sectors.

1.5. Execution of the study

To execute the project the research team was identified and constituted followed by training and orientation of the team. The whole process took two months time. The research team constituted for the project included Dr. Manasi Mishra, Ms. Debanjana, Dr, Nivedita Ray, Ms.Simona and Ms. Imke Senger. Dr. Ranjana Kumari, Director CSR guided and steered the team.



For developing the detailed framework and guidelines for collecting and analyzing primary and secondary data a Research Advisory Committee (RAC) was formed. The RAC constituted experts from different fields Banks/ Media/ Representatives of Associations, HR heads/ and Management Institutions. The RAC Committee included Prof. Vimala Veeraraghavan, Amity Business School, Prof. Sunita Pathania, Kurukh University, Ms. Nandita Mishra, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Dr. Hamsa, Women Power Connect, Mr. B.J. Pnayat (FICCI), Dr. Chandralekha, (AIIMS), Ms. Raka Verma (RBI), Ms. Leela Tegma Reddy (ILO), Mr. R.K. Bhatia (ITDC) and Dr. Sudha Chandran (Ashok Institute of Hospitality and Tourism Mnagement). Two brain- storming session with the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) was conducted. First was for preparing the framework of the study and for preparation of questionnaires and tools for data collection. The second session was held to ensure that the questionnaire was suitable and that critical aspects were addressed.

For Secondary data collection libraries, government offices, and research institution were visited. Top-level organizations working in the field of women and corporate world like ILO, SCOPE Offices, WIPS, ASSOCHAM, ICCI, ITDC, FICCI, Piloni Women Study Centre, Management Institutes, and Hospital were visited to collect secondary data. The secondary data was collated and analyzed and inferences were drawn based on that.

The Field Investigators deputed for data collections were first given orientation. The Primary data was collected from three cities (Bangalore, Calcutta and Delhi and NCR). Field Investigators visited four regions to conduct interviews of the target groups. Apart from the Research team the field investigators deputed for data collection included Debrati Mukherjee, Sreetama Datta, Anyasha Chowdahry, Sarmishta Mukherjee, Nandana Das, Sohini Sen, and Sucharita Pradhan.

The target groups interviewed were:

- Women Managers at three levels –Entry, Middle and Senior level – from four sectors, were interviewed to get information on corporate policies, whether they are conducive or obstructive for career growth and on the challenges and opportunities they are facing. 60 women Managers from four sectors and from four regions were interviewed.
- Interactions with HR Managers and CEOs of Companies were held to find out the existing policy measures, wage structure and welfare measures available for female mangers.



- Various Management institutions and female management students were approached and interviewed to get information on correlation, if any between career choices made by women and growth pattern. The information collected from management institutions were regarding enrolment of women for various courses and choice of subjects.

For the data collection some key institutions were approached such as ICCI , HDFC , Axis, SBI, RBI, Doordarshan, NDTV, Sahara TV, Zee TV, Park Hotel, JAYPEE Hotel, LA.Suite, Grand Hyatt, ITDC, Hotel Association of India, Travel Tourism companies, AIIMS, Safdarjung Rockland, Fortis Hospital and Management institutes such as Apeejay, Amity, BIMTEC, IIPM etc., were approached and some key individuals were interviewed..

The women managers were contacted and approached personally to fill up the questionnaires. Due to the large sample size and lack of time and space sometimes interviews were either done one to one basis or questionnaires were left with the respondents to fill up and were collected personally. While conducting interviews a rapport was established with the respondents to gain their confidence and to get free and frank responses. Data collection through questionnaires and interview was done simultaneously.

(vii) Problems in Data Collection

Data collection which is the most important and interesting part of the research was the most arduous as well. To conduct interview of women of managerial rank at metro cities was not an easy task, given the constraints they had in time and availability. While majority of respondents were cooperative, some of them were reluctant. A few persons directly refused that they are too busy to fill up the questionnaires. Many respondents misplaced the questionnaires and second copy was given. A few respondents denied to fill up said that the questionnaires asked for personal information. Many respondents in the media sector refused to write their names and designations in the questionnaires. As most of the respondents did not return in time the research got delayed. Nevertheless with relentless effort we could successfully complete our data collection on the basis of which analyses was conducted and this report was churned out.



CHAPTER- 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Women comprise a large segment of the available managerial talent across the globe, but their representation at top level managerial positions in business and public administration, is very low. The leadership prospect for women managers is a critical issue in gender equality and remains a researchable proposition. This review provides background information on issues pertaining to women representation and challenges faced by them in management jobs in India as well as a reference point for issues central to the findings of the Women Manager's project. It should be noted that, as a literary review, this work is to be seen as a critical response to the literature that has hitherto been produced on the issue of challenges faced by women in Management. While the chosen literature will be assessed, evaluated, and critiqued, this review should by no means be taken as an argumentative piece wherein there is an ascertained thesis or a determined conclusion. Instead each author's work employed in the review is examined, compared and contrasted with others, in an attempt to provide an in depth investigation into the factors contributing to low representation of women in management and the challenges faced by them.

This literary review encompasses all the issues and concerns that are both fundamental to and inextricable from the topic challenges and opportunities faced by women managers in India including the information on correlation, if any between career choices made by women and growth pattern, their representation and information on corporate HR policies, whether they are conducive or obstructive for women. It should be noted that, in line with the goals of the project itself, which seeks to identify the barriers that curtail women's career growth and recommend strategies for employer and society in order to break the glass ceiling the present review of literature will approach the theme of women's low representation with a special emphasis on the barriers or challenges they face in the world-wide context and in the Indian context. The following literature has laid the foundation of this study that examines the opportunities and challenges faced by women managers in India. The review of literature mainly includes research



relevant to the existence of 'glass ceiling' phenomenon, and barrier to women's advancement in the management jobs across the countries in general and in India in particular.

2.1 Literature from across the countries

Existence of Glass Ceiling

The 'glass ceiling' faced by women exists across all countries and is most evident at higher executive levels, particularly at the most senior level where female chief executives are very rare (Oakley 2000). A.P. Kottis's study conducted on women in management in shows that despite the increase in the number of women intake in business schools only a small percentage of women are found in managerial positions and their entry into the managerial ranks is much lower compared to that of their male counterparts. Even when we look at an advanced country like UK, there is gender discrimination in the workplace. According to A. Eyring and B. A. Stead (1988) in the Metropolitan District Council situated in Yorkshire, UK where 66 percent of the workforces were women, majority of them occupied the lower range of the white collar posts. Margaret Gibelman's (2000) in his work on employees of 74 non-profit agencies throughout the United States indicates that females are overrepresented in direct-service positions. His studies "substantiate the existence of the glass ceiling phenomenon among the agencies .He states that men are disproportionately represented in management, particularly upper-level management, and they earn higher salaries than women at all hierarchical levels of the organization."

Connell (1987) and Sinclair (1998) state that it's the gendered structures and practices operating within organizations which result in very different career experiences and outcomes for women and men, and the most senior organizational positions is considered as sites of hegemonic masculinity. Adler (1999) and Sinclair (1999) mention that in the USA and Australia there continues to be a significant difference in the numbers of men and women who reach senior management positions. However it is not the case in the junior and middle management position. Talmud and Izraeli 1999 opine that the number of women is increasing at junior and middle management positions, According to Tharenou (1999), women in most countries plateau at lower to mid level management positions. Catalyst (1990) a consultant firm in women's employment surveyed CEOs and personnel officers at 1000 leading companies and found that women hold a



quarter to half of management jobs at 22 percent companies but they have less than 5 percent of top management spots. A recent update of a classic ILO study '*Breaking through the glass ceiling: Women in management*' shows, that women's share of top positions remains low and the rate of progress discouraging. What the update revealed is that the number of women in top management jobs has only increased by between 1 and 5 percent over the past five years in some 33 countries surveyed. Lind Wirth, Director of the ILO Bureau for Gender Equality states that only a handful of women are making headlines here and there as they break through, but statistically they represent a mere few percent of top management jobs.

Despite a few crack here and there these studies reveal that women's progress through managerial ranks is held back due to various factors. Various literatures have focused on the barriers that retard women's growth.

Barriers to Women's Advancement

Today although women's entry into management profession has increased yet their climb to the top, within various types of organizations, has not been smooth. The number of women that actually reach the top dwindles. But why is this? What happens to women as they begin to climb the corporate ladder to success? Why are they not making it to the top? They are confronted with very complicated challenges. The following sections of this literature review highlights several studies focused on the barriers women face in the in management jobs. These barriers could be individual and social or organizational .It could also be combination of all.

Individual or Societal Factors

Early research examining women's representation in senior management primarily focused on explaining the personal or the situation of the women managers. Riger and Galligan (1980) argue that the causal explanations for the lack of women in senior positions are either individual or the situational. Individual centered explanations suggest that the socialization processes experienced by women encouraged the development of personality traits, behaviours and attitudes that are contrary to the demands of a management role. And personality traits and behaviour differences are presented as a rationale for low representation. Accordingly women are seen to lack the confidence and assertiveness required for a management role, to be reluctant to apply for senior



roles and to have lower aspirations and inappropriate expectations, about their capacity to combine family and work successfully (Spero 1987).

Davidson and Cooper (1992) emphasize that men are viewed as leaders in organizations, while women are seen to be the followers. They argue that women who work in male-dominated environments are less inclined to see themselves as leaders or seek leadership roles. Davidson and Cooper found that managerial women experience greater strain, and feel more isolated at work, than do their male counterparts. This extra pressure manifests itself in issues such as lack of self-confidence and less obvious forms of discrimination causing these women to believe that they occupy minority status in their organizations and in society as a whole. This discrimination can be subtle, such as a lack of job advancement opportunities, a lack of mentors, or being presented with only stereotypical female worker challenges.

According to Morrison women often fail to career plan and to build networks and have effective mentoring relationships which affect their advancement, they have been socialized to subordinate their careers in favour of home life and family (Fagenson and Jackson 1993).

Tharenou (1999) agrees that one of the major explanations for women's lack of career advancement relates to the perceived lack of skill and knowledge. Tharenou believes that investments in the person and their skill development lead to increased remuneration and role status but because women make fewer investments than men they gain fewer rewards. In this context women are seen to lack the expertise and skill set required for senior management roles. Cooper Jackson (2001) emphasizes that organizations would still prefer a male-oriented management style where aggressive and direct behaviour is the norm. Schein (2001) suggests that men still believe that men are more likely than women to possess skills and characteristics required for management roles, whereas women perceive that women and men are equally likely to possess requisite

Research by Book (2000) found that few women, who climbed to the top rungs of the corporate ladder, did so at a heavy price to their perceived femininity. Often, women found that to be successful they had to adapt to male-inspired dress codes. Their rank, or position, within the organization became their primary source of respect just as it has been true for their male peers. Winning at any cost became the mantra of these women trying to fit into the "good old boy"



network, and females who wanted to advance up the corporate ladder had to assume male methods to excel because of the many negative stereotypes associated with their own gender (Book, 2000). Further, Book suggests that stereotypes still persist and female managers who employ a "feminine style" of management will have trouble succeeding in the workplace.

There are some others who believe that it is because of the balancing act that women struggle throughout their careers (Brown & Irby, 1998; Czaja, 1998). Women sometimes choose to take a break temporarily to begin a family or care for a family since these duties are still expected to be primary responsibility of women. When they return, after the break, they continuously try to catch-up to their counterparts, never quite reaching it; hence missing out on the promotion track. Women who also try to balance career and family eventually reach a point where they halt their climb on the ladder to success fearful of not being able to balance all of the pressures or in some cases, just decide juggling between work and home is no longer worth the additional stress to them..

Answering the question why women in management do not advance as quickly as men Asplund (1988) explains the following reasons : 1) Women did not receive the same training as available to men that was needed to lead to promotions and were not supported to attain the training; (2) Women started in positions that were not "promotion" tracks hence they were at a disadvantage from their time of entrance into the workplace; and, (3) Achievements of women managers were not recognized or appreciated to the same extent as men. In addition, (4) Women were not supported by their families to progress through their companies; (5) Women did not take risks like men did; and, (6) Women did not really want the promotion because of all the stress involved with the additional responsibility.

Organizational Factors

While the above literatures have emphasized upon individual factors being the reasons behind women manager's slow career growth, there are other studies that stress on organizational factors impacting women's career development. These studies argue that the organizational work environment, rather than individual characteristics, is the cause of women's low representation. One such study has been done by Kanter (1977) who argues that organizational policies and processes hamper career advancement for women and not their individual; reasons. Kanter



insists that women's positions in organizations can be understood in terms of organizational structures and the clustering of women in lower power roles rather than simply a function of individual gender difference. Kanter believes that had there been greater sharing of power within organizations, women would not have as much difficulty accessing management roles. Kanter suggests that the gender ratios at upper levels affect interactions between men and women. Men being the dominant group amplify the differences between them and women resulting in negative outcomes for women including performance pressures, exclusion from interaction with male peers, and stereotyping as women rather than as managers. There is also a suggestion that women may not necessarily help each other in breaking through the glass ceiling. The 'queen bee syndrome' is used to identify those women who have reached the top, usually in a male environment, and who then adopt a counter militancy approach that is based on their own professional and social success (Rindfleish 2000).

Davidson and Cooper (1986) and Harlan and Weiss (1982) also note that female managers report that they have to perform better than their male colleagues to prove themselves. Similarly Ragins (1998) report that women believe that they have to exceed performance targets and need to over-perform to counter negativity based on gender. As women are promoted and achieve senior executive roles, their visibility and profile increases and there is a perception of a greater requirement for them to perform better than their male counterparts (Klenke 1996).

Combination of Individual, Social and Organizational Factors

Fagenson (1986) argues that there is a third way of explaining women's low representation in management. This approach brings together the individual and organizational structural approaches. Davidson and Burke (1994) also suggest that there are a number of factors that maintain gender inequity in organizational leadership including formal and informal structures, economic, social and individual practices and behaviours. Tharenou (1999) holds a similar view on women's lack of career progression. She believes that specific but different factors move across both the individual and the organization which may facilitate or hinder advancement to higher management levels.



2.2 Literature from India

In India not many studies have been done on the challenges and opportunities faced by women in management jobs. However there are a set of literature which dwell on the aspect of glass ceiling faced by women managers in their career growth. These literatures reflect upon the low representation of women in management jobs and examine the factors that contribute such a state.

Women's Low Representation in Management jobs

The study by Koshal, et al (2006)²⁸, states that in India 2 women per 100 economically active men take administrative and managerial positions in India. The Confederation of Indian Industry released a study “Understanding the Levels of Empowerment of Women in the Workplace in India” covering 149 large and medium size companies across regions, which highlights that women comprise 16 percent at junior management level, 4 percent each at middle and senior levels and only 1 percent in organizational leadership positions (CEOs)²⁹. According to the International Business Owners Survey (IBOS) 2004 by Grant Thornton³⁰, 42% (59% globally) of business in India include women in senior management positions, but women occupy 12% (19% globally) of the senior management posts available.

The ASSOCHAM study reveals that educated metros and large town females are opting for self employment. Women are very well informed still denied promotions and better career prospects and amply face gender biases. It asserts that there is a need for a National Policy for promoting women in top levels of management. Only 3.3% of women are elevated to key positions while 78.9% continues to slog at humble positions and 17.7% of them despite working very hard are able to end up their career at middle management cadre.

²⁸ Koshal, Manjulika, Koshal, Rajindar K. & Gupta, Ashok (2006). *Women managers in India: challenges and opportunities*. In *Management in India: Trends and Transition*/edited by Herbert J. Davis, Samir R. Chatterjee and Mark Heuer. New Delhi, Response Books, 2006.

²⁹ *Women cry bias at work*. The Telegraph, Calcutta. Saturday, April 15, 2006

³⁰ Grant Thornton (2004). *International Business Owners Survey* (IBOS). Available at www.grantthornton.ca/surveys/GT_IBOS_2004_.pdf



Sanghamitra Buddhapriya in her study ‘Women in Management’ states that women in the senior management positions are highly underrepresented. In India, she says although women have entered management since decades yet it is surprising to know that there is no government sponsored systematic data ascertaining the number of women in management in India. She states that in the Public sector units where some data exists it is disheartening to know that women are grossly underrepresented.

Barriers Faced by women in Management Jobs in India

The ASSOCHAM study cites certain reasons as to why women lose out in their career. Those reasons are more to do with individual and societal factors that impinge on their career growth. It highlights that unlike men working women cannot stay on late at work and do networking and liaison, which helps in job promotions. Women resist mobility as they find it difficult to travel with home responsibilities and are not eager to take a transfer and job promotion for family reasons and remain satisfied with their current position. Health problems, gender discrimination and possessive husbands have been identified as other prominent factors obstructing growth prospects of career women. She emphasizes that low proportion of women in high ranks may be a reflection of prejudices, discriminatory recruitment policies, or lack of career orientation and lack of career commitment on the part of women in general.

Vimolwan Yukongdi and John Benson in the book ‘Women in Asian Management’ have spelled out the factors that inhibit women’s growth. They also attribute women’s slow growth to mainly individual and societal factors. They agree with Kulkarni (2002) who in his study ‘Women and Professional Competency’ states that it’s the traditional and cultural inhibitions acquired by women from childhood, nurtured by parents and reinforced by socialization which are the key hurdle that inhibited their urge to be in the executive or leadership position. This is further supplemented by lack of self direction, independence and self motivation.

Ashok Gupta and Koshal (2001) insist that the tussle created by motherhood and career ambition is known to affect women’s career. The inhibiting factors include reluctance to travel, getting transferred and living away from families remains a significant barrier. Added it is women’s exclusion from informal networks which also make them lose out opportunities for promotion.



Pawan S. Budhwar, Debi S. Saini, and Jyotsna Bhatnagar in their work ‘Women in Management in the New Economic Environment: The Case of India’ argue that historically, women in India have not enjoyed a good status in workplace settings whether in managerial or operative roles. The biggest challenge they face today is balancing dual role of organizational managers and housewives and the differential treatment meted out to them at work, which upholds the centrality and superiority of men. Due to stereotypes they are offered less challenging jobs and are often not involved in tackling crucial organizational issues.

2.3 Conclusion

The review of literature on women in management across the countries and in India shows that there are certain universal features apart from the cultural attributes and specificities for which there is so low representation of women in management jobs. The common features are:

There is a gradual increase in number of women in the managerial jobs across the countries. Increase in number in women’s education, changing socio-cultural values, increasing awareness and consciousness about women’s rights and need for supplementary incomes are some of the reasons. However there is still an under -representation of women in managerial jobs not only in India but also across countries world over. Most of the women managers hold lower and middle management positions and the number of women remains extremely small in top management positions. The major barriers which restrict women to enter into managerial jobs are at individual, societal and organizational levels. Factors that restrict women managers to reach the top echelon are blocked opportunity, lack of support of employers, limited access to information, restricted access to training , marriage and motherhood , conflict between career and family responsibilities, prioritization of family over career, immobility of women and stereotypical attitude towards women managers. In the organizational structures discrimination against women managers exist relating to remuneration, job allocation, performance appraisal, promotion, training opportunities and reward structures.



In the Indian context the fact that not much literature and data exists about women managers itself reflects the lack of attention paid to this subject. There is not much literature on ‘glass ceiling’ per se in India. Few studies that have been done in India explore women’s representation in management and cursorily draw attention to the factors contributing to their low representation. But there are few studies done in the Asian context which reflect upon the challenges faced by women managers particularly in India. Some of those challenges are common to what has been discussed above. However there are certain constraints faced by Indian women managers which are unique to Indian situation and are more to do with cultural and social factors which can be traced back to deep rooted images of traditional women’s role. Gender differences appear more deeply embedded in India than in Western societies which is very much apparent in the workplace. Therefore women’s advancement in management profession is very low as compared to that of global average.



CHAPTER 3 SECTORAL ANALYSIS

This chapter dwells on the analyses of the situation of women in the four sectors – Hospitality & Tourism, Media, Banking & Finance and Healthcare. The analysis is based on the primary data collected from three regions– Delhi & NCR, Bangalore and Kolkata. The sample chosen was 180 respondents from each sector, which include 60 respondents from each city. These four sectors were chosen for study as women constitute a significant number in these sectors.

In the context of overall organized sector in India, the participation of women has increased over the last three decades. The increase is spread across various sectors. The corporate sector management in particular has seen an overall increase in women participation. This is because of the increase in trained female human resource for top management positions. Management institutes now offer courses to increase employability. Women's enrolment in professional courses has increased including the general graduate courses. But, still the percentage of women enrolment is not very significant. The table below shows that women enrolment in various disciplines .In it we find that in management women enrolment is just 16.46 percent.

Table 3.1: Women Enrolment in Various Disciplines

S. No.	Discipline	Women Enrolment*	Percentage of total women enrolment
1.	Arts	2278286	51.01
2.	Science	901309	20.18
3.	Commerce/Management	735160	16.46
4.	Education	82627	1.85
5.	Engineering/Technology	185800	4.16
6.	Medicine	162575	3.64
7.	Agriculture	10719	0.24
8.	Veterinary Science	3573	0.08
9.	Law	73248	1.64
10.	Others	33051	0.74
Total		4466348	100.00



Indian women's work participation rate (WPR) has risen over the last decades: from 19.7% in 1981 to 25.7% in 2001, whereas male WPR has seen a slight decrease (census 2001). Within the organised sector the women participation is about 17%. The distribution of female workforce within this sector is distributed as follows: in 2005, 58.23% of women worked in the public sector and 41.33% worked in the private sector. In government itself women make up a mere 7.53% of the total employment in central government.³¹

If we look at the National Hiring Confidence (NHC) level it has increased to 85.36 percent in 2005. Across industries NHC was 82.04 percent, while across services, it stood at 89.62 percent. The top five states in terms of NHC are Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Goa, and Chattisgarh; the top five cities are New Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Chennai.³² The healthcare sector shared the top slot along with ITES with 100 percent NHC. The NHC in Media, Banking and hospitality sector has increased. The increase in NHC has also seen an increase in the growth of women workforce in these sectors.

To assess how women pursue their careers in different working environments, we did not only examine different region of this country, but also looked into four different sectors, namely those sectors which we believe to be particularly popular among female employees. These are: Hospitality and Tourism, Media, Health Care, and Banking and Finance.

In order to make visible women's opportunities of growth within their working environment, we wanted to find out how women are supported in their career development by their companies through HR policies and gender-friendly environment and so on: what chances and possibilities are offered to women for career growth on the one hand, and how are they handicapped in their growth or treated differently to men, if so; are there any difference in the wage structure or any sort of inequality persisting, on the other. This was done by asking respondents directly and also by interviewing HR managers on their organizations' culture and policies.

³¹ Census of Central Government Employees, 2001, A handbook of statistical indicators in Indian women.

³² *The Hindu*, 'IT Rules Job Scene' March 1. 2005



3.1 Hospitality and Tourism

Overall, more women are entering the job market. All HR managers that we approached confirm that the percentage of women managers in their company has increased over the past 5 years. Still, women make up 9,1% of the workforce in the Hotel and restaurant industry and men 90,9%. The female percentage share in this industry is a mere 0,9% (indiastat.com). According to the 2001 census, in India, 90,07% of employees in hotels and restaurants are male; women only fill 9,93% of the positions in this field. In Delhi 3370 women work in hotels and restaurants compared to 56780 males, thus with 5.6% female workers the representation of women in hotels and restaurants is barely significant in the capital. Out of our 3 regions of study, Karnataka shows the best result in this lot with 13.4% female and 86.6% male workers in this industry. West Bengal lies in the middle with 9.38% female and 90.62% male employees.

These figures give us an idea of the proportion of female to male workers in this sector. It should be no surprise that where there few females to start with, it will be more difficult and unlikely for women to reach high positions in such an environment.

Our study sample for the hospitality sector comprised 182 women. The mean age of the respondents in this sector is 31.4 years; 61.4% of the respondents are married and have on an average 1 child.

Most women that were interviewed in this sector work as executive or general manager; in sales, guest relations, flight reservation, customer service, housekeeping and accounting. Naturally, working in fields such as accounting or flight reservation, there is only so much growth potential, whereas in general managerial or sales positions, women can broaden their span of responsibilities and can pursue a top position in their field or organization.

One of the first questions that we asked women in our survey was what made them choose management courses/ their respective courses. Two thirds of respondents across the levels answered that their choice was based on personal preference, followed by the influence of the job

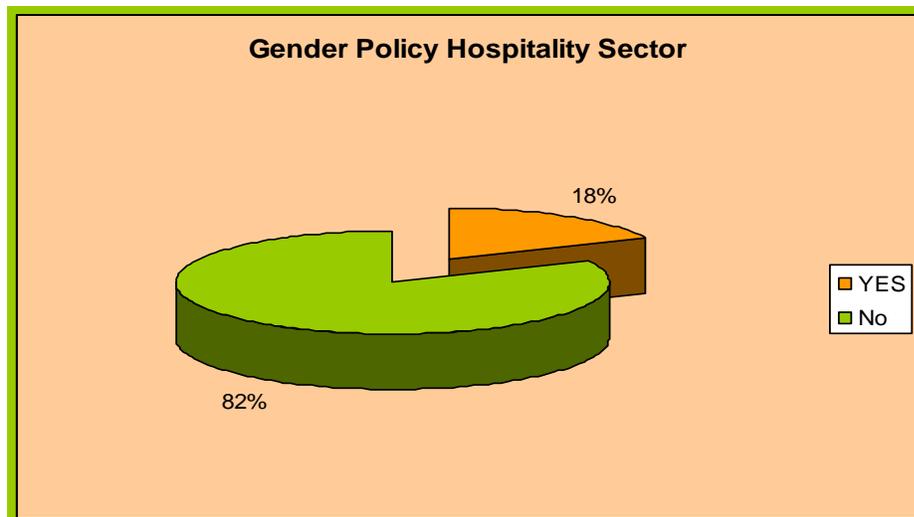


market. Commonly mentioned career aspirations are to be a successful top-level manager and acquiring status.

Taking a closer look at women's career path, we can observe in our data that women in hospitality work for approximately 2 to 3 years at entry level before being promoted to the middle level, and that it takes on average 5 to 8 years for women in this sector to be elevated to senior level.

Company policies:

Almost none of the respondents and only a quarter of the HR managers that we spoke to reported that their company has a gender policy. Nonetheless, most women said during interviews that they do consider their company to be sensitive to gender issues.



Irrespective of gender policies, companies do provide various support systems to their employees: The overall majority and also most respondents from Delhi report medical benefits and transport facilities. In Bangalore and Kolkata a vast majority of women state that they enjoy flexible working hours, whereas in Delhi not even 4% of the women have the opportunity to work in flexible hours. Compensatory leaves are common in Delhi and Bangalore. Sadly, a mere 3.5% of companies offer crèches for children. (here Delhi provides the highest amount with just 8%, while in Kolkata not a single company provides crèches.)



Many women would like to improve these systems, more flexible work timings are still required and a number of respondents also expressed the need for a special cell for gender issues within their company.

It is generally believed that absolving trainings and developing professional skills increase chances for promotion. Subsequently, we were interested in how companies encourage their female employees to take part in trainings (organised by the company). According to almost 80% of the respondents training participation is encouraged by organising trainings during working hours, although most HR managers informed us that women are not encouraged to participate in trainings in any special way; instead, trainings are generally compulsory and are simply seen as part of the job. In order to enable everyone to participate, trainings are held during work hours and with office exemption. Some HR managers mentioned that transport facilities to the site of training and leaves are provided during the training period.

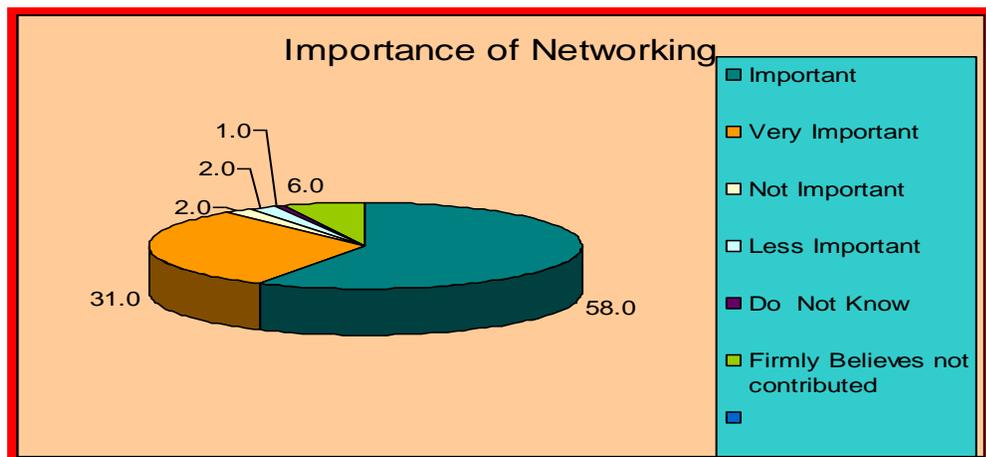
We were also interested to hear from our respondents whether they think that companies should provide special training for female employees and more than half of the women told us that they do not think this is necessary. Women feel they should not be treated differently from their male colleagues. If anything, they would like trainings to be held during duty hours and within a supportive work culture.



Many HR managers shared with us that trainings are especially given to employees at entry level. These are mostly in-house induction trainings, such as communication and orientation trainings, product knowledge, performance management and soft skill development.

Another company policy we were intrigued by is promotion. According to a vast majority of respondents, promotion in their companies is based on performance. Women do not feel that their male colleagues stand a better chance for promotion, although it is notable that about a quarter of our respondents felt that they could not say, yet did not give reason for their doubts. This hesitance to answer the query may be a result of preference shown to male counterparts in promotion in those companies.

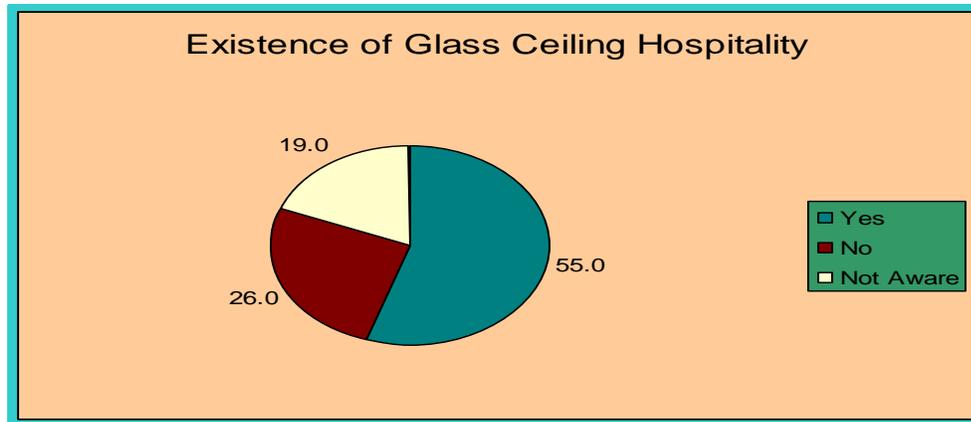
Not only training and promotion matter when pursuing a career, but women at all levels agree that networking is important or even very important for career development; most senior level respondents even claim that networking has significantly contributed to their success. Most women state that they are able to put extra hours into their work, though here we find a slight difference between the cities: while In Bangalore almost 100% of women are able to work extra hours, in Kolkata only a little more than half of the respondents are capable of this.



Generally it can be said about this sector that more than half of the women do not know about the glass ceiling, yet at the same time do not think they have ever faced it. A small majority believes that women can grow beyond a certain point, while more than 2/3 of the respondents answered that they do not know and in Delhi 40% of the respondents answered 'no', showing



that there is a certain amount of doubt concerning the possibilities of women reaching any given position.

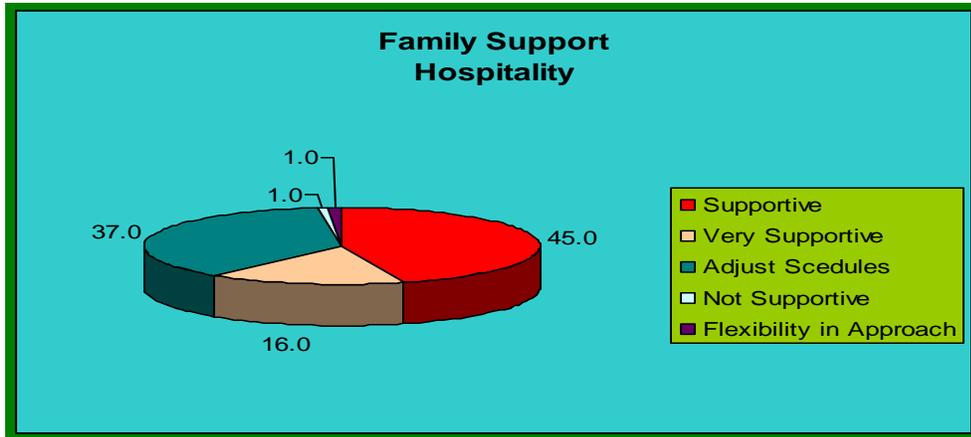


A positive finding of our study is that most women feel comfortable in their position, many even stressing that they are very comfortable in their job.

We asked women whether they have ever encountered a glass ceiling or gender-related difficulties or barriers in their working environment: All women in Kolkata and 50% of the women in Delhi shared with us that in their company travel assignments are generally given to men. This appears a security precaution to ensure female employees' safety, however it may limit the women in their professional development and career growth. In Delhi another 50% of the respondents mentioned barriers that are invisible; however, unfortunately they did not expand on this. A positive note is that not a single women in this sector mentioned that she faced difficulty in getting promotion.

Social aspects:

A small majority of respondents confirm that their family/husband are supportive; about a third even adjusts schedules for each other to help the working woman manage her double burden of work and household responsibilities.



Consequently, most women tell us that they manage work and family well: most women claim to manage well in Bangalore, whereas in Delhi almost a third of the respondents reveal that they have experienced conflicting issues during their efforts to manage the demands of household on the one, and work on the other side.



30% to 50% of the women working in (middle/senior position) in the hospitality sector report that they have compromised their career for their family. About 2/3 respondents explain that they have compromised by taking a break from work. But it was also mentioned by a number of women that they could not take a transfer because of their children.



3.2 Media

In the media sector, women have made great advances in the last two decades – their share of jobs in all sections of media: print, electronic, publishing and advertising, PR communications has increased. In fact, role of women in media has undergone transformation during the last decade. They are now shouldering managerial responsibilities of different divisions, let it be politics, economy, business, entertainment, advertising, marketing and communications. This is because over the last decade trained women workforce in media has increased. With the mushrooming of media management institutes more and more women are now opting for professional courses in media. The media institutes have seen growth in female enrolment. This has led to an increase in the intake of women in media house. But the increase in the intake of women has not led to an increase of women in the senior level. In this study we have tried to identify and analyze the barriers women face in their career growth.

Our sample for the media sector comprised 179 respondents, with a mean age of 30.74 years. 57% of women are married and have on average 1.17 children. The respondents mostly work as copy editor, customer service executive (entry level), correspondent or reporter (middle level). In media sector, as in hospitality sector, the main motivator for the respondents to choose their respective courses was personal preference, still in Delhi, the rational influence of the job market was considered almost as important as personal preference.

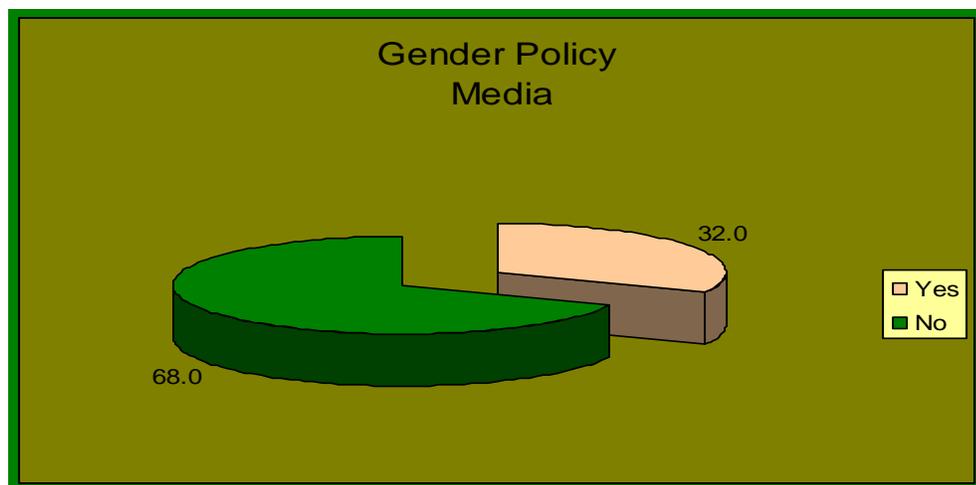
HR managers find that in Kolkata and Delhi the percentage of women (managers) in the media sector have increased over the past 5 years, while in Bangalore a few HR managers believe to have seen a decline. Nonetheless, it appears that more and more women are entering the labour market, and this is certainly also true for the media branch due to its glamour, attractiveness and visibility.

From our data it appears that in media 2 to 4 years of work experience at the entry level are required before being elevated to middle level and 5 to 8 years is how long the majority of senior women in our sample worked before being promoted to senior level.



Company policies:

Overall, few companies have gender policies in place. In Bangalore and Kolkata, a mere fifth of the women we asked could report that their company has a gender policy. This confirms the information provided by HR managers in this sector. However, regarding this aspect Delhi shows a positive trend as half of the companies follow a gender policy. Also, half of the HR managers believe their companies are gender sensitive, and the majority of our respondents feel the same way.

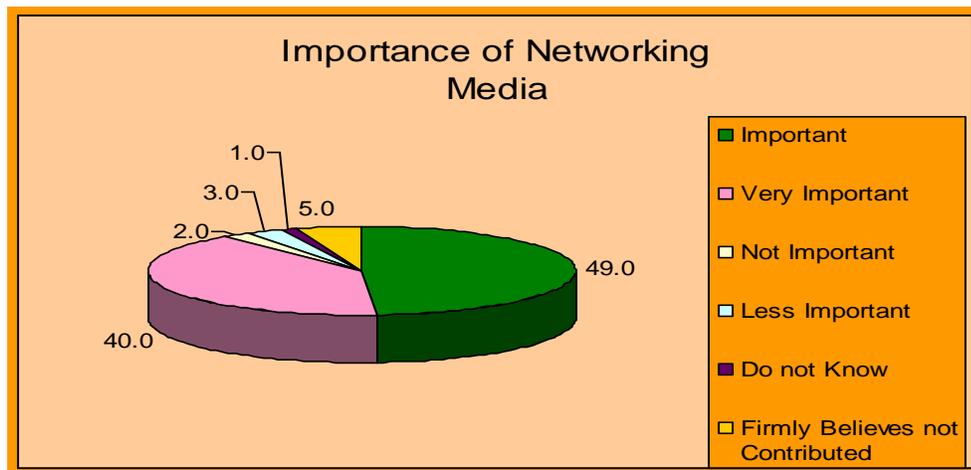


Across the 3 cities, women are encouraged to participate in trainings by organising them during office hours. In Delhi, almost all women report that trainings are encouraged through exemption from office work, and in more than half of the cases even door to door transportation is provided. Not surprisingly thus, Delhi respondents encounter most encouragement for trainings, while women from Bangalore are least encouraged. HR managers reveal though that women are not particularly encouraged to follow trainings; rather trainings are mandatory for all employees. Furthermore, receiving increments or promotions after training are not at all common in any of the cities (therefore it appears that trainings have only an indirect effect on career growth).

Networking is important or very important for professional development - almost all women agree on this point. A vast majority of 80% to 90% of our respondents are capable of putting extra hours into their work whenever needed, thus being in a position where they are able to



demonstrate their commitment to their work. This may be particularly so because of the age group they belong to (30+ age group on an average) as this sector witnessed a speedy growth during the last decade only with the entry of younger generation. Putting extra hours to work is important in the media sector, where many women tell us that their job frequently demands time for business meetings and events after working hours, or for example erratic work hours for reporters or editors of magazines and newspapers conducting field-duty.

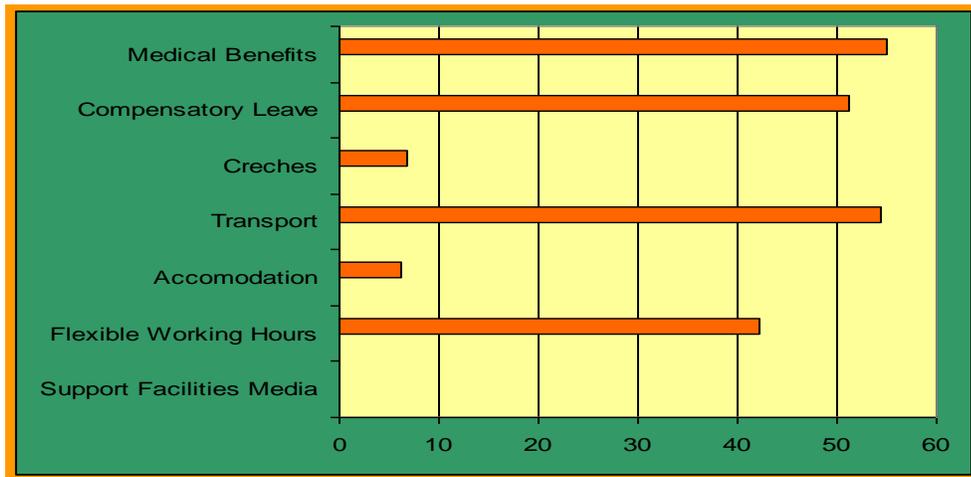


Promotion in media companies is mostly performance and merit-based. The majority of women do not feel that their male colleagues stand a better chance for promotion. However, almost a third of the women are not sure about this. While at senior level, in Delhi, a vast majority is convinced that men do not stand a better chance, at middle level more than 37% of the respondents believe men are preferred for promotions, thereby voicing a reasonable amount of criticism in this sector. Unfortunately not a single of these respondents shared with us what made her think this way.

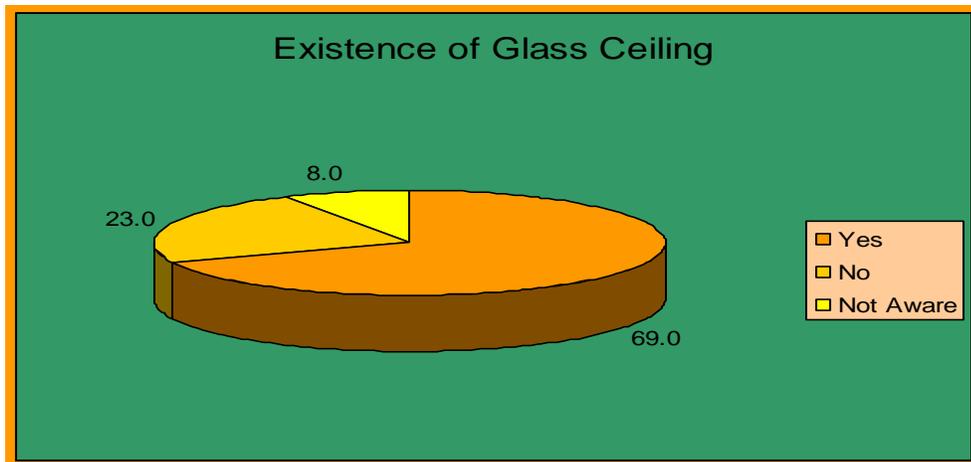
The support systems that most women are offered are medical benefits, transport facilities and compensatory leaves. A few differences can be observed between the 3 cities on this matter: Women in Bangalore enjoy the most flexible working hours, while in Delhi medical benefits and compensatory leaves are offered to most women, however, policies that actually give support to women in their struggle to manage work and family, such as flexible work hours and the provision of crèches are scarcely found in the capital.



Support Facilities Media

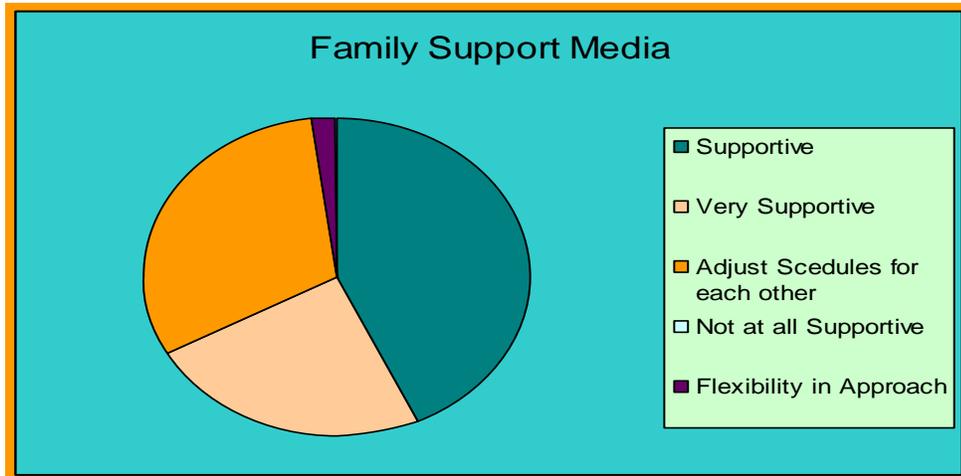


The concept of the glass ceiling is best known among respondents in Delhi, here almost 3/4 of the respondents had, at least, a vague idea of what it means. Women in Kolkata are least aware of this concept. Nonetheless, most women do not believe in this phenomenon and instead think it is possible for women to grow beyond a certain point in an organization.

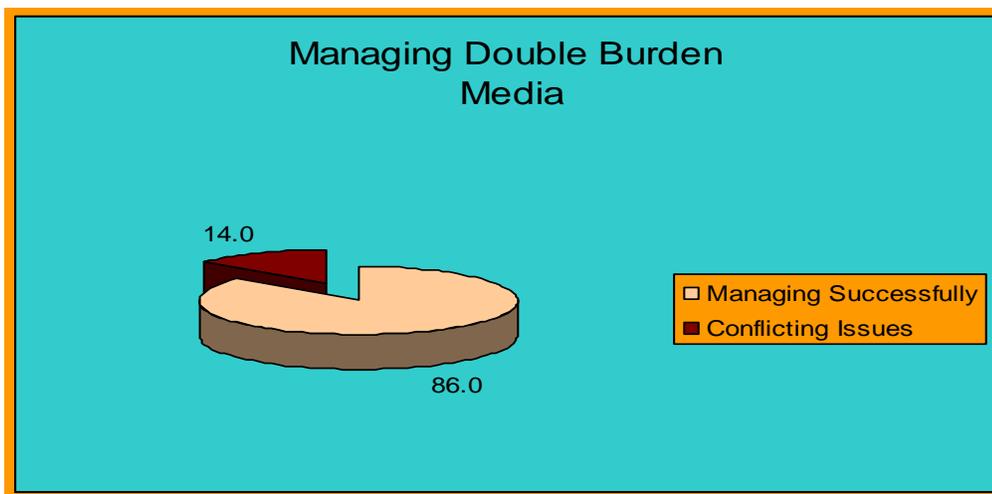


Social aspect:

Respondents find their families and husbands are supportive of their career ambitions; almost a third even adjust schedules for each other. In Kolkata, the majority of women consider their family to be very supportive.



From the study, it appears that women manage the double burden of family and career well. In Bangalore and Kolkata more than 90% of women tell us this.



However, in Delhi nearly one out of three respondents shares that she has experienced conflicting issues in managing family and work. 35% of our respondents have found themselves compromising their career for their family. This may be due to a lack of adequate number of crèches in Delhi for working mothers, both organizational and private, which we have already discussed earlier in this chapter. Hence, the importance of support facilities in terms of availability of crèches/babysitters facilitates better performance and early rejoining of working mothers after availing maternity leave. This benefits both the organization and the individual.



3.3 Healthcare

Today healthcare sector provides the highest, almost 100 percent hiring. It has greater presence of women which constitutes about 39 percent. But, the worrying part is despite a sizeable number of women participation in this sector there are not enough women in the higher management in this service, which undoubtedly raises question about their growth prospects.

In this sector, our sample is made up of 190 respondents with a mean age of 34.3 years, of which 82.3% are married and have on an average 1.52 children. As in the previous two sectors, hospitality and media, women in health care chose their courses due to personal preference. A deciding role, however, was also played by the job market and the family. The majority of the women that we met, work as general doctors, junior doctors, senior resident doctors, staff nurses, dentists and administrative persons within the healthcare. Respondents in the health care sector sample have worked on average for 5.2 years before being elevated to the middle level and 12.8 years before promotion to senior level followed.

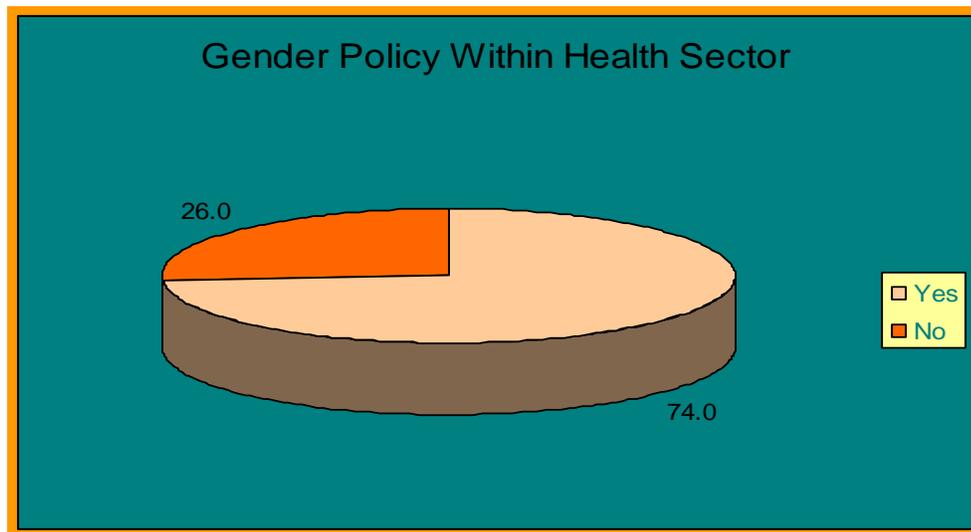
Within the middle level in this sector, 80% of the respondents feel they are able to realise what they aspired for, while women at higher level rate their success as a combination of hard labour and performance awarded. Yet, besides outstanding performance, a number of women also consider adjustment and support at the domestic front and rising opportunities as contributing factors to be successful in their careers. While half of the women in senior position state that they faced no obstacles en-route to the top, the other half reports clashes between family and work life, and a minority feels they often had to prove themselves as women in this field. It may be justified that women who have received support from their families could reach senior positions as they are able to contribute more working hours (night duties, late working hours due to emergencies, etc.) and better performance as they are tension-free from their family ground .

Company policies:

In health care as in the other sectors, gender policies are not common among companies. While in Bangalore and Kolkata roughly one quarter of the women report a gender policy within their



company, Delhi scores a little higher with about one third of companies following a gender policy. Nonetheless, the majority of our respondents consider their company to be gender sensitive. And indeed, about half of the companies our respondents are employed with, have a form of grievance cell for employees to turn to.



Most companies offer trainings to their employees to enable them for promotion, such as skill development and refresher training. Overall, promotions are based on performance and merit. While a majority i.e. 80% of our respondents do not think their male colleagues stand a better chance for promotion, almost 20% cannot say, and thus show a reasonable amount of scepticism.

Skill enhancement trainings are considered (very) helpful in mid-career by more than 90% of respondents. Furthermore, it is believed by about ½ of women that short term certificate/diplomas give skill recognition and also that better performance (stemming from such courses) result in better chances in career development. Approximately, 70% of our respondents have attended such trainings during their career.

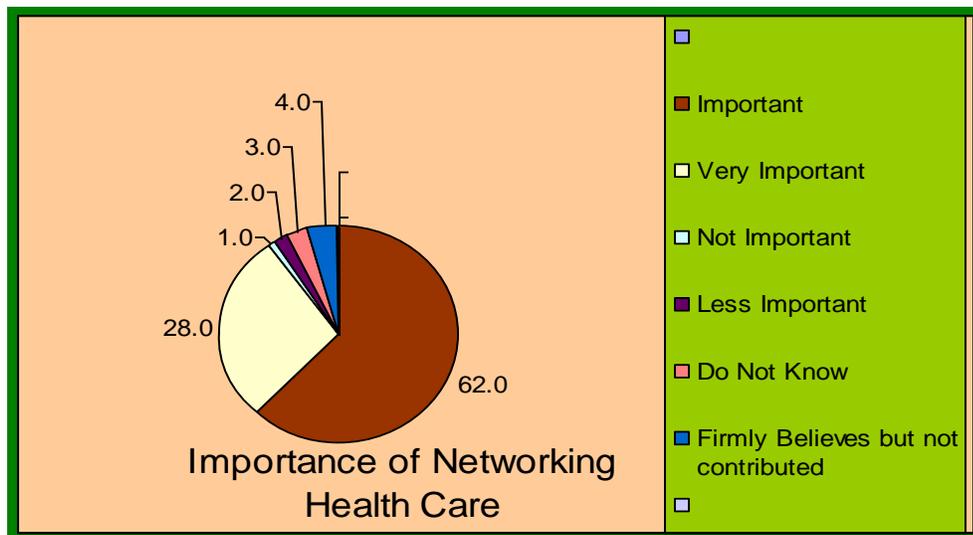
Women are encouraged to participate in trainings by holding these during work hours and through office exemption. Almost a quarter of the respondents also report door to door transportation during trainings.

Though not all women agree that trainings particularly for women are necessary, there is consent that consideration of time and space of the trainings are just as important as a supportive work



culture. At senior level respondents are aware of the needs of working women. Accordingly we were glad to hear from nearly 2/3 of senior level respondents that they try to support the career ambition of women at lower levels, by offering them flexible working hours and support like crèches.

Besides training, women across the cities agree that networking is (very) important for career development. More than 80% of senior women would say it significantly contributed to their career success. However, it is no secret that networking requires time. Most of the respondents say they can put in extra hours. However, in the health care sector only a minority of women tell us that late hours or after work meetings are required.

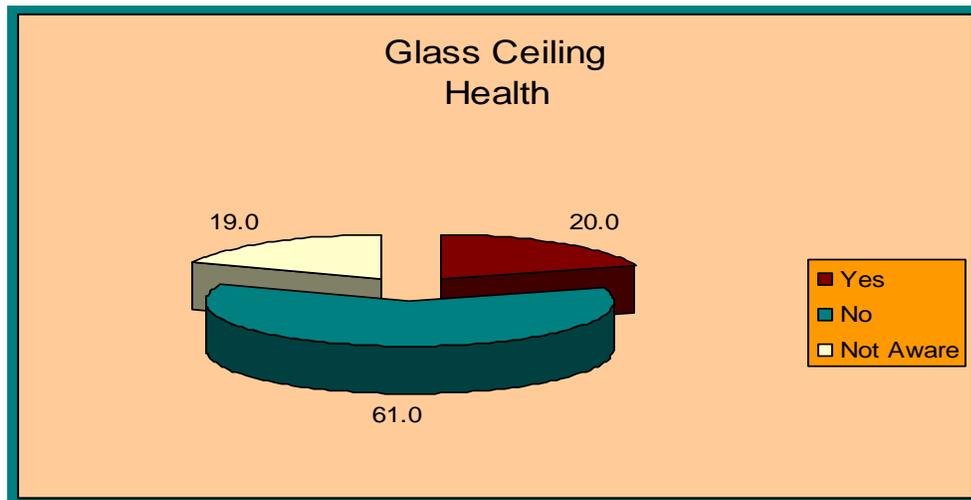


Health care is the first sector in which, in the overall sample, majority of women do not know what the concept of the glass ceiling means. Taking a look at the cities separately, we see that in Delhi and Kolkata most women indeed answered that they do not know, (50% of Delhi). Bangalore differentiates itself from the former, here most women are aware of the glass ceiling and has an idea about its meaning.

In this sector, women in the 3 different cities feel differently about whether women can grow beyond a certain point within an organization or not. While in Bangalore the vast majority believe women can reach high positions, Kolkata respondents are split, roughly half agree with the idea that women can grow beyond such points, however, more than 40% are unsure about



this. Finally, Delhi respondents take this doubt one step further: here the respondents who believe that women can reach high levels in an organization and those who do not believe this are almost equal in number! This makes the health sector, especially in Delhi, into the sector that voices most critics. This could have been a manifestation of facing discrimination again and again as women working in this sector as to why they are so unsure that a woman can achieve top-level position in this sector.



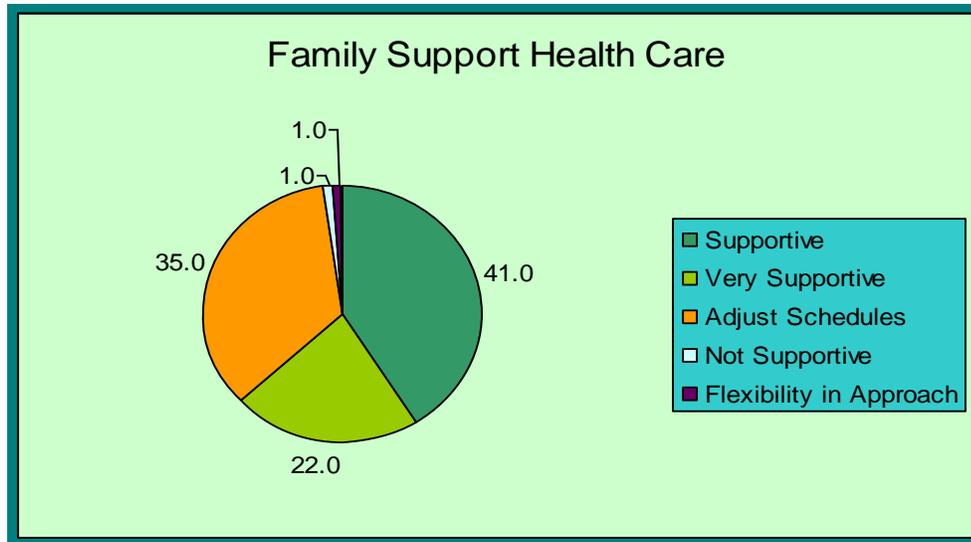
Three support systems are almost equally prominent in the health sector: flexible working hours, compensatory leaves and medical benefits. Looking at the support given to women in order to facilitate their management of work and family, a very positive trend can be observed in Bangalore: almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the women is given the possibility to work flexible hours, and 25% of the respondents is even offered crèches. In Kolkata still $\frac{2}{3}$ of the women are offered flexible working hours. But, there are only 1.7% of the respondents who are provided with crèches for kids. In Delhi a 49% of the respondents can work in flexible time and 23% of the respondents are provided with a crèche for children. Overall, 95% of working women in our sample of the health care sector are comfortable to very comfortable in their position as a woman.

Social aspects:

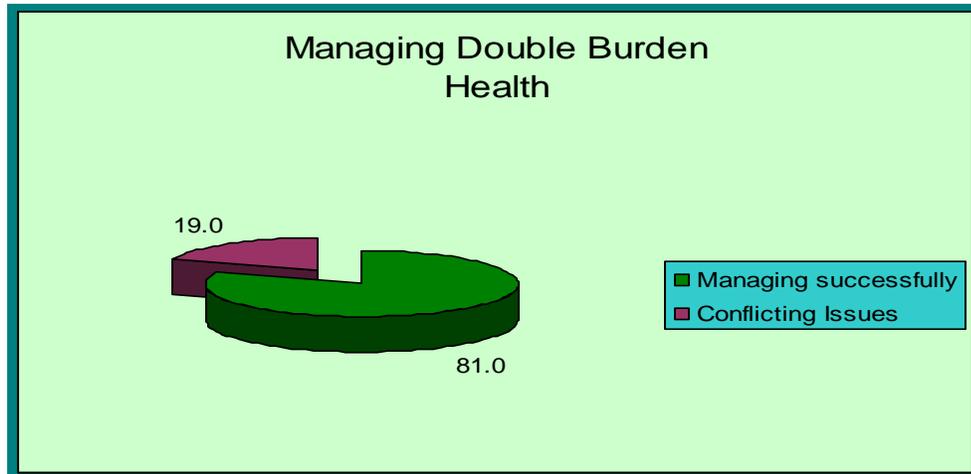
Again, our respondents consider their husbands/families supportive in their ambitions, 1/3 disclose that they adjust schedules according to each other's job demands. Most women tell us



that they manage the balancing act of work and family life well, yet, in Delhi almost one third of the women share that they have experienced conflicting issues.



While at entry level 95% of respondents feel they are managing the double burden of work life and family responsibilities successfully, the middle level shows a different picture, with 43% of the women sharing that they experience conflicting issues in their efforts to manage both job and family, and half of the respondents disclose that they have compromised their career for the sake of their family. This may be due to the responsibility of infants and kids in the family. If we look at the issue, women at the entry level are often of marriageable age or married and as women are becoming career conscious, they start their family late and by the time they reach the middle level position in their career either they are having one or two kids to take care of which make it difficult for them to balance between family and career without adequate family support as the cost of hiring outside help is way too high in Delhi in comparison to the two other cities under the present study.



At senior level 80% of our respondents state that they manage successfully, which gives room for the assumption that at senior level women have grown accustomed to the double burden and have found a way to handle both, job and family, whereas at middle level women are still trying to figure out a way to balance these two aspects of their lives. Moreover, while women reach top-level positions, their kids have grown up and more or less independent to manage their day-to-day affairs which throws ample time and pace for women to contribute to their own career demands.

3.4 Banking and Finance

Banking sector is a very attractive sector for women since it is one of the high paying jobs and carries some status. Besides, it is also a desk-bound job where women need not travel frequently in official work. Though foreign banks and private sector banks seem to employ higher percentage of women, their combined share in total banking sector is 3.91%. The State Bank of India and other public sector banks together comprise 25% of the employment to women. In the all India level, women officers/ managers constitute a mere 6.7 %.³³

This sector has seen some top level women managers in India. To name a few—Chanda Kochhar, CEO & MD, ICICI Bank, Naina Lal Kidwai, CEO, HSBC India, Usha Thorat, Shyamala

³³ RBI Banking Statistics , 2000



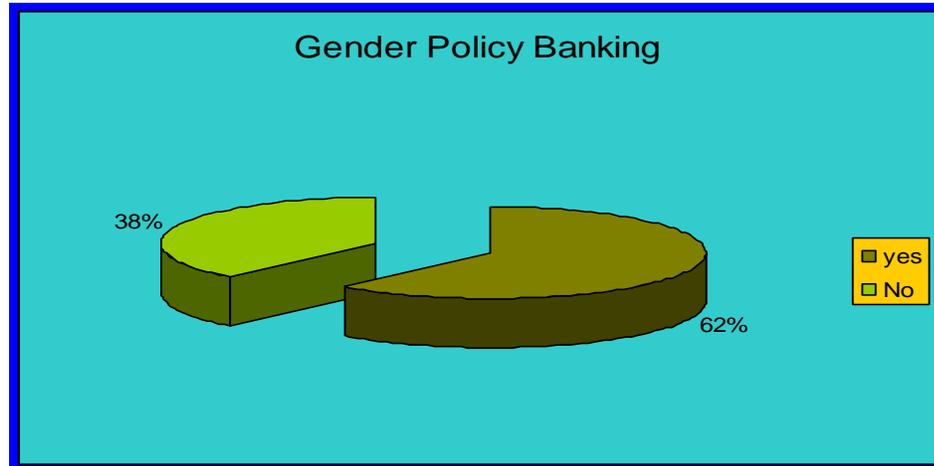
Gopinath, RBI Deputy Governors, Meera Sanyal, CEO, ABN Amro, Kalpana Morparia, CEO, JPMorgan Chase and Co, Manisha Girotra, Chairperson, UBS Warburg India, Falguni Nayar, Managing Director, Kotak Mahindra Capital. Majority of these success stories are from private sector banks than public sector banks. However, these success stories are only a few when compared with men. In this study, we have tried to see how favourable is this sector to women and what the invisible barriers that retard women's growth are.

Our sample from the banking sector comprised 178 women, with a mean age of 31,63 years and of whom 66,9% are married. As in the three other sectors, our respondents chose their courses primarily due to personal preference. However, a quarter of the women said to have been influenced by the job market in their choice, a more rational approach which we have not observed in the other sectors. In banking and finance women mostly function as (assistant) manager, sales manager, customer service executive or accounting. 90% of women feel they are able to realise their career aspiration. A chief contributing factor in achieving this is outstanding performance, yet also rising opportunities and adjustments at the domestic front were mentioned as contributory. However, especially at senior level, women also faced obstacles en-route to their position, saying that they often had to prove themselves and faced clashes between family and work life. In Bangalore, more than 40% of women state that they had difficulty in getting promotions.

Company policy:

Within the finance sector companies vary greatly in their formal approach towards gender matters: while in Bangalore only roughly a quarter and in Kolkata a third of the companies have a gender police, the Delhi sample gave a positive surprise with $\frac{3}{4}$ of the women reporting that their company follows a gender policy. This is the highest figure recorded in the entire sample across all sectors and cities and shows a positive trend that will ideally develop further.

Approximately half of the companies have a grievance system, which is available for women to approach on any gender and work related matters. These cells are usually taken care of by the HR department.



Even though formal gender policies are not as widespread as they ideally should be, about 2/3 of women still consider their company as gender sensitive and overall, women feel comfortable to very comfortable in their position as a woman manager. In Delhi 1/3 of women at entry level feel less comfortable. However, they did not disclose what made them uncomfortable.

The criteria mostly handled for promotion from entry to middle and then to senior level are performance and merit. In this sample of the banking sector, women at middle level have a mean of 5.15 years of work experience before being elevated to this level, while women holding a senior position have worked on average for 11.43 years before they were promoted to senior level. Though most women said that they do not believe that their male colleagues stand a better chance for promotion, about 40% think they do or feel they cannot say or judge. We find from our observation during the field study that women managers working in this sector feel so because they at times are not open to transfers and dislocations for the sake of their family and children which their male counterparts have no hesitation to do. In addition, they accept middle-level positions and forego of top-level positions to be closure to their homes.

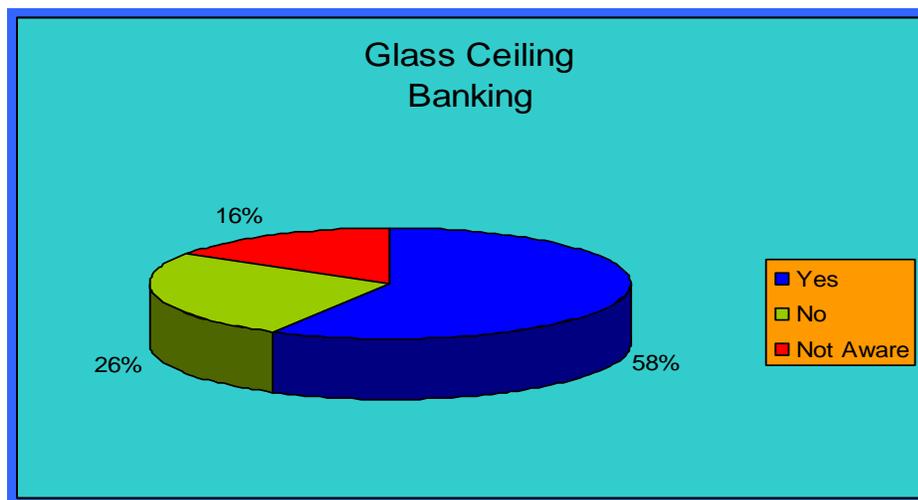
Majority of companies offer trainings for employees to enable them for promotion, such as refresher and (soft) skill development training at entry level. Respondents do find these trainings suitable in terms of time and location and most women have participated in such company-held trainings. Most women agree that skill enhancement trainings are (very) helpful in achieving success in management career, while another 50% of women believe that short-term certificates/



diplomas give your skill recognitions and result in better performance and subsequently in better chances for career growth, thus giving us the confirmation that trainings are an important aspect to consider when assessing women's career development.

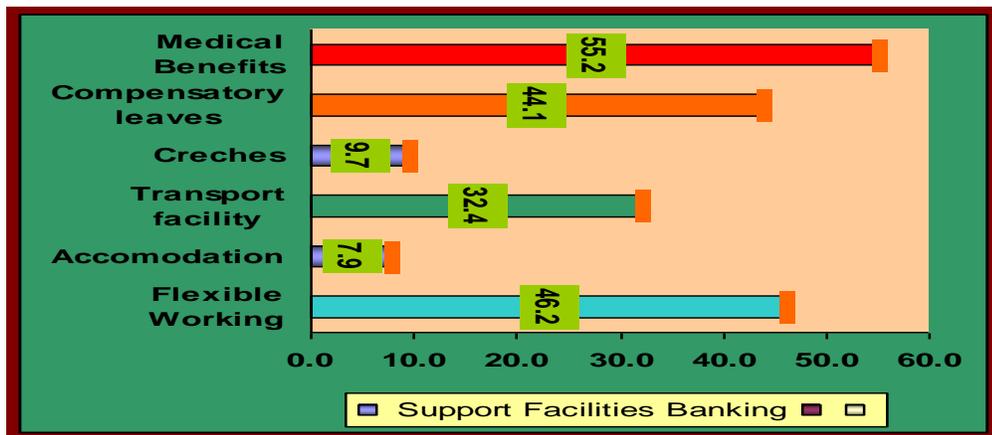
Companies encourage women to participate in trainings by organising these during duty hours and exempting participants from work. Among most senior level women in the banking sector, it appears to be regarded as a necessity for companies to offer special trainings for women. According to these respondents, such trainings should be designed considering time and space of the training, yet also require a supportive work culture. They themselves support women managers at lower levels in their career ambition, firstly by giving equal chances to male and female candidates, designing special trainings for women employees and providing support systems like flexible work hours, transport and crèches, showing us that they are aware of the difficulties women face in their career shaping, as they have probably faced the very same problems on their way up to the senior level.

Except for Delhi, the majority of women in this sector are not aware of the glass ceiling. A small majority of over 50% of our respondents believe that there is no such thing as a glass ceiling and that women can grow beyond a certain point within an organization, indicating to us that there is a reasonable amount of scepticism regarding women reaching very senior positions, however, also unwillingness to admit this or approach this issue.

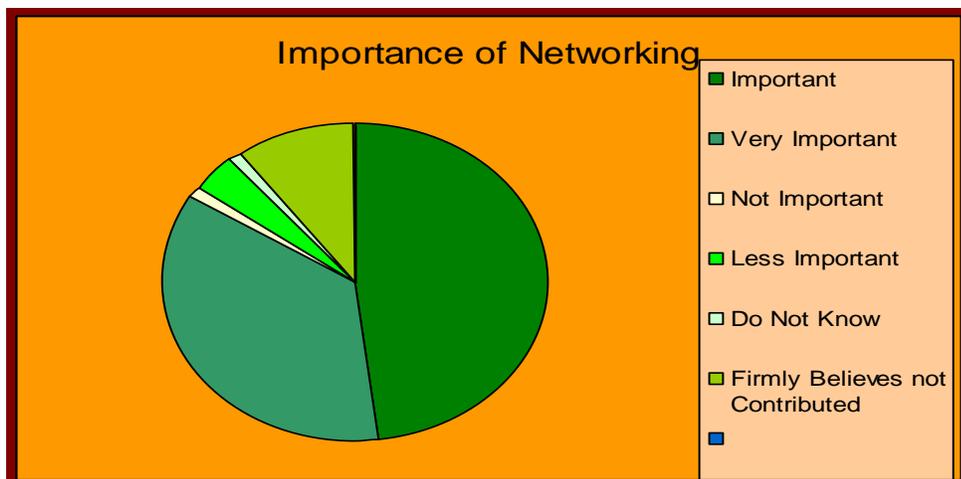




Overall, medical benefits, flexible working hours and compensatory leaves are the most common support systems. Again, the main type of support we are interested in is flexible working hours. In this matter, Bangalore stands out with nearly 70% of women being offered these. While in Kolkata, still 52% of the respondents can work flexible, Delhi companies appear not to support this way of work, as a meager 17% offer their employees flexible working hours.



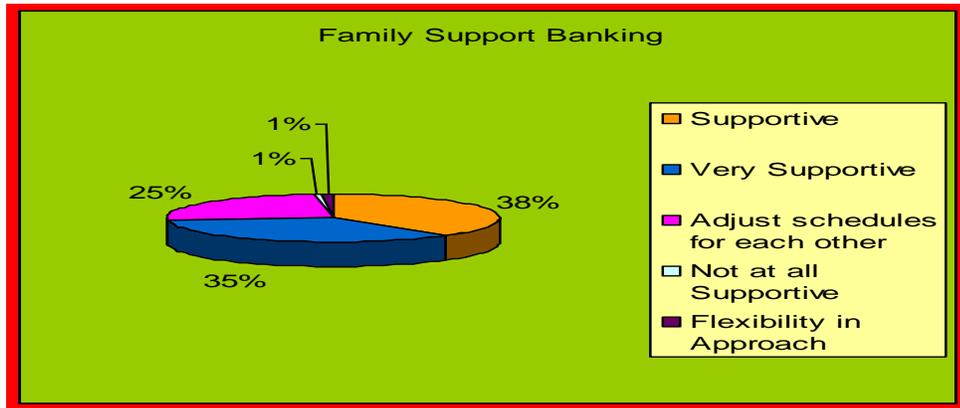
All women agree that networking is important or very important for professional career development and 3/4 of our respondents at senior level would even say that networking has significantly contributed to their career development. In the banking sector, 50% of our respondents find their work demanding business dinners, meetings, etc after working hours. The majority of women are able to put in extra hours of work when needed, certainly most of the time.



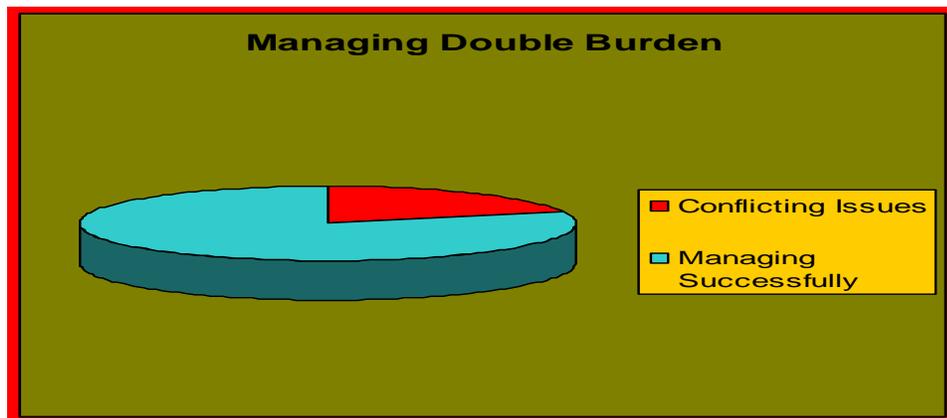


Social/ Individual aspects:

Nearly all women state that family/husband are (very) supportive, being understanding, flexible in approach, sharing domestic chores and even adjusting schedules for each other to meet the needs of the women's double task of managing both family and work responsibilities – and indeed, nearly ¾ of the respondents say they manage successful.



Still, 1/3 of women have found themselves compromising mid-level and more than 50% at senior level, especially in Delhi. Reasons for compromise included husband's transfer, giving up an opportunity to go abroad for training, not being able to take transfer due to children. It is also in Delhi that nearly 70% women report conflicting issues in their struggle to balance work and family life. This may be due to a lack of non-availability of adequate number of crèches/babysitters for working mothers in the metro and also non-supportive attitude of family members.





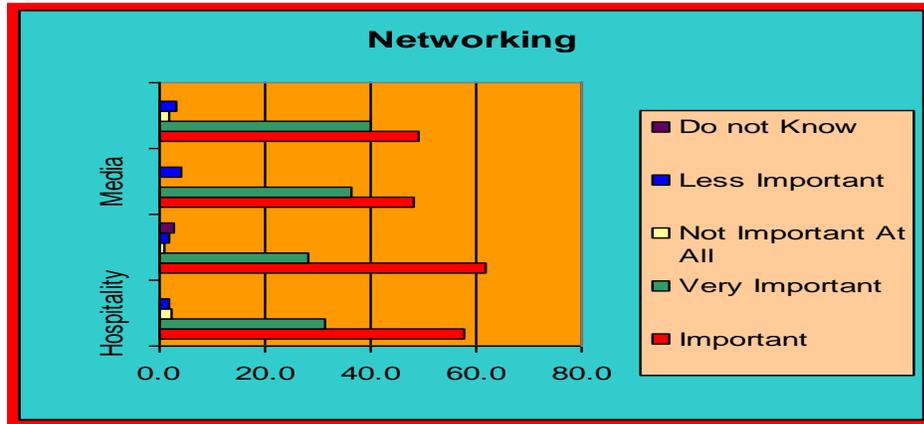
During interaction with respondents attached to public sector banks in Delhi, many women mentioned that they would prefer not taking promotions when these are connected to dislocation. Many women would thus rather risk career stagnation than unsettling and transferring.

In their suggestions to other women, respondents kept mentioning that performance must be consistently good and work sincerely. We wonder how you can show better performance if you have little time to network, train or do other work because of families.

3.5 Discussion

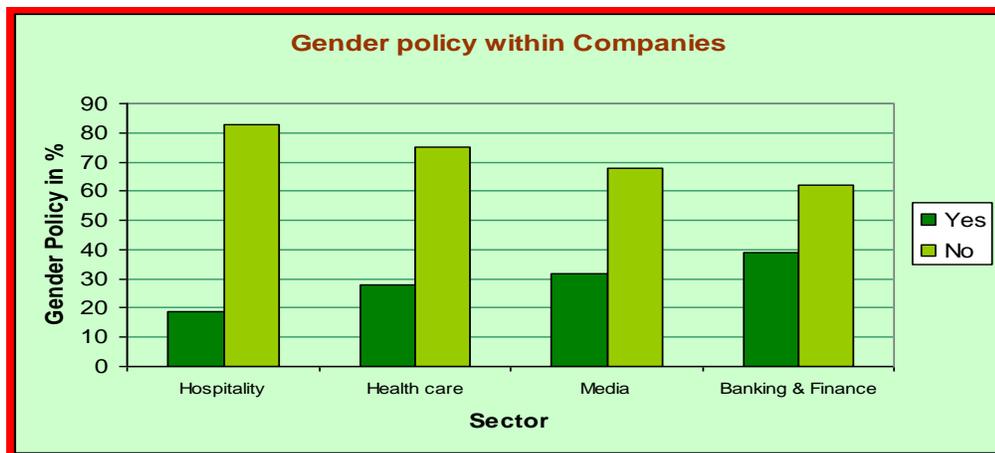
Majority of women managers interviewed across the sectors stated that they got a job in their chosen field. And their career choice has largely been determined by their own preferences, (66.1%) choices followed by job market (27.9%) demand. Family plays much lesser role in motivation which is about 16.6 % and still lesser motivation is successful peers (9.2%). In all sectors, majority of women felt that their company provides equal responsibility. However, a few women did say that companies should be more sensitive to their needs.

All of the respondents in the four sectors said training is important and 81.9 % stated that their companies organize training in duty hours in order to encourage women participants. Majority of women in banking sector are aware of training courses offered by management schools whereas in tourism and media sector nearly none women were aware of some courses. In the health care sector women said they keep abreast of training workshops and try to participate in those.



All women across the sectors find networking important (54.2%) or very important (33.8%) in their career development. But it has not helped in contributing to their career as they either not found time or inclination as they feel uncomfortable.

71.8% of the respondents stated that their companies did not have gender policies. Although there were variations in percentage among sectors which the graph shows. Banking was the sector where most of the respondents said that their companies had gender policies and the least was hospitality sector. In the media and health care there was not much differences in the positive responses. The graph shows the variations in percentage regarding gender policies among the sectors.

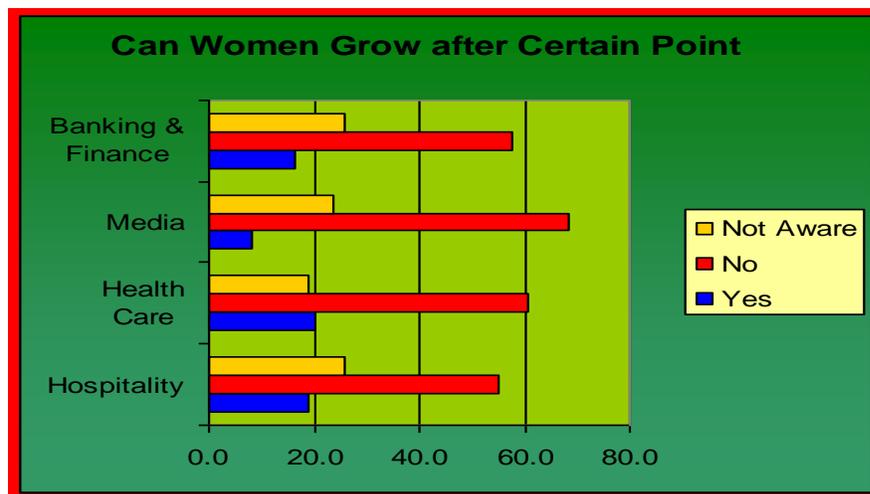


As far as company support facilities concerned majority of women across sectors stated that compensatory leave, medical benefits, transport facilities were provided by their companies. But out of the four sectors Hospitality and Banking was less flexible with working hours when is



compared to others. Many women managers in the media sector said that the shift duties help them to deftly juggle work and domestic duties.

Performance and merit are found to be the determining factors in promotion in the media, hospitality, health and private sector banks. But difference was noticed in the case of a public sector bank, Seniority and performance were the basis on which promotion was given. Performance was judged on the basis of written examination and interview in these banks. Most of the women managers stated that there is gender biasness in the interviews. On the question that can women grow after a certain point generally the answer was not positive. There were slight variations percentage-wise among the sectors. Media stood the least at 9.2 % only. The graph below shows the status of the responses within the sectors.



Across the sectors we found women managers stating that male are preferred in travelling assignments especially in the media and health care sector, for which the women feel men are more valued than women. This checks their growth. One aspect which majority of women in all these sectors complained is that there is no proper grievance redressal mechanism in their companies, for which women generally do not report any harassment cases. And many women said that reporting complaints to the higher management in absence of grievance cell is not looked favourably and it may sometimes not only restrict growth but may lead to losing job. Many women felt strongly about these structural limitations and recommended that this should be addressed.



CHAPTER IV SITUATION OF WOMEN IN ENTRY, MIDDLE AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT

It is evident from various studies that while the presence of women in senior management level is negligible, at the entry level their number is proportionately high. It is observed that women are graduating and entering management positions but there is a bottleneck at middle management levels (*Current Population Survey, 2001*). Women experience ‘glass-ceiling effects’ that prevent them from climbing corporate ladders to levels above middle management. As more women graduate with business and other professional degrees and enter corporate life, the problem becomes more urgent because they experience a slower progression compared to their male counterparts (*OECD Employment Outlook, 2002; U.S. Department of Education, 2002*).

While entry is easier, progression slows. Progression is dependent on a number of factors. The glass ceiling that women managers are confronted with in their career growth relates to various factors which could be categorized under individual, societal and organizational or broadly intrinsic and external factors. These factors both external and internal acquire different meaning and substance for women managers at different levels of management. These factors include performance findings, mentoring opportunities, skill development and training, leadership qualities, career commitment, networking, family support, flexibility and impediments created by sexual harassment. To have a deeper understanding about these factors that impact the progression of women, it will be worthwhile to examine the situation of women managers at different levels.

4.1 Entry Level

In this survey conducted by CSR, 253 women respondents at the entry level management were personally interviewed from three cities- Bangalore, Delhi, Kolkata. The objective was to understand the challenges and opportunities they experienced in their career path. From



Bangalore and Delhi 83 women managers were interviewed. From Kolkata 87 women managers were interviewed. Further, among these 80 women managers, 20 women managers were from each of the four sectors identified for the study: Hospitality, Health, Media, Banking and Finance. The interview was based on pre-designed questionnaire which was vetted and modified after a pilot field-study in Delhi.

4.1.1 Description of study participants/respondents

253 entry-level women managers who participated in this study, from the four sectors: – Hospitality, Health, Media, Banking and Finance sectors, included both private and public organizations. The age of the respondents ranged from 24-26 years averaging 25 years. On an average, 70% of the respondents were unmarried. The table below gives a complete picture of the single and married women managers in all the three cities sector-wise. Among the 30% who were married only 6 percent women who had children and out of them most had only one child. This may be so as women managers at the entry level are yet to feel settled in their job sector and then think of marriage and children.

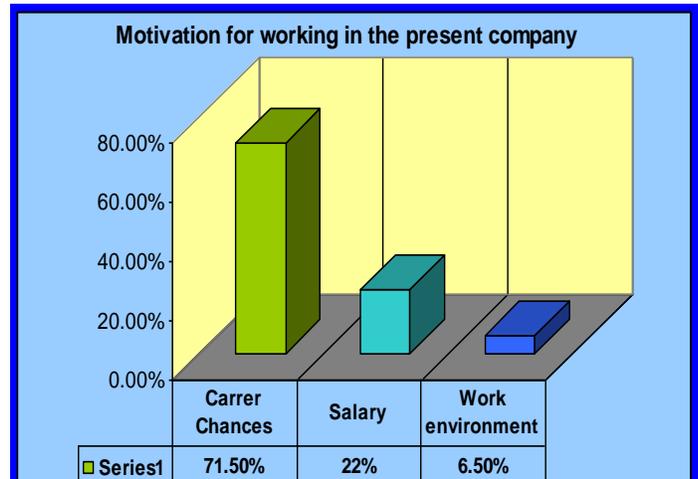
Table 4.1: Marital Status

	Delhi	Banglore	Kolkatta
Base : Total Respondents	83	83	87
Answering Base	76	78	68
Single	64.5	71.8	77.9
Married	35.5	28.2	22.1

These managers from different sectors held varying titles and positions which included Doctor, Junior Doctor, Dentist, Nursing Superintendent, Staff Nurse, Relationship Officer, Co. Executive, Copy Editor, Guest Relationship Executive(G.R.E), Asst. Supervisor, Customer Service Executive, Junior House Keeping Manager, Reservation On Domestic Air Ticketing, Assistant Sales Manager, Proof Reader, Business Development Executive, Executive Operations, Relationship Officer, Credit Officer, Accounts Officer, Domestic Executive, Tour Executive, Tourist Managers, Sales Co-Coordinator, etc.



Their work experience ranged from 1 to 6 years. Majority of women had about 2-3 years of experience while a few had 4-5 years of experience, averaging 3.10 years. As far as working in the present company is concerned about 65% of them have been engaged for only 2-3 years, 27 percent for 3-4 years and minimum of 0.6 percent have about 4-5 years.



For majority of the respondents the motivation for working in the present company was more to do with career chances and reputation of the company than to salary structure. Hence, less priority was given to salary. 53.8% of the respondents in Bangalore, 57.5% respondents in Kolkata and 96.1% respondents in Delhi voiced that its career chances for which they are working in the present companies. The next highest response was for the reputation of the company where 36.3% of the respondents in Bangalore, 40% respondents in Kolkata and 55.8% respondents said that they were the key motivational factors to work in the company. 21.3% of the respondents in Bangalore, 18.8% respondents in Kolkata and 22.1% respondents in Delhi said it was salary or for purely monetary benefits. 35% of the respondents in Bangalore, 16.5% respondents in Kolkata and 3.9% respondents in Delhi said the work environment motivates them to work in the present organization/company.

Table 4.2 Motivation to work for the company

Motivational Factors	Delhi	Bangalore	Kolkata
Total Respondents	83	83	87
Answering Base	77	80	85
Salary	22.1	21.3	18.8
Career chances	96.1	53.8	57.6
Reputation of the company	55.8	36.3	40
Working atmosphere	3.9	35	16.5
Relationship with colleagues	3.9	6.3	2.4
Growth	6.5	1.3	0
Opportunity		1.3	0



This may be due to the factor that in one's early career stage one tends to look for career chances and reputation of the company that one works in to gain access to recognition of skills and talents and speedy promotions accompanied with working experience of a good company which helps in career growth later on. Their average salary ranged from Rs. 10000 - Rs 20000 which is a minimum to start with.

4.1.2 Factors contributing to the career development of women managers

The women managers were administered with a questionnaire on factors that contributed to their career advancement. The major factors identified by them were education, training, career aspirations, competency on the job, hard work, mentors, interpersonal skills/ networking and family support.

4.1.2 (i) Education



All the entry level women managers interviewed earned a Bachelor's degree and 60% of the respondents had Master's degrees in Management courses. With regard to the motivational factor that led to their choice of professional courses, 67.9% of the respondent women managers were guided by their own preference, followed by 35.9% of the respondents who cited job market demand. While in Delhi maximum of women managers (78%) choose the management course out of their own preference, in Bangalore, it stands at 66.3% and in Kolkata, it is 59%. The next factor for choosing management course is to cater to the demand from the job market which stands at 57% respondents for Delhi, 28.9% from Kolkata and 20% from Bangalore.

**Table 4.3: Motivating factors to choose management courses**

	Delhi	Bangalore	Kolkata
Base : Total Respondents	83	83	87
Answering Base	79	80	83
Successful Peers	3.8	11.3	4.8
Family	8.9	16.3	10.8
Job Market	57	20	28.9
Own Preference	78.5	66.3	59

In Delhi, 61.3% of the respondents took the advice and guidance of elders in choosing their management courses and 37.5% of the respondents were influenced by peers. In Bangalore, 58.4% respondents took the advice and guidance of elders in choosing their management courses and 16.9% of the respondents were influenced by peers. The impact of institutional counselling comes next for choosing the course. In Kolkata, 38.5% of the respondents took the advice and guidance of elders in choosing their management courses and 25.6% respondents were influenced by success stories to join the course. This shows that elders in the family have a definite say and influence on the career path chosen by women managers, followed by influence from successful peers. A majority of the respondents have received additional training to further their knowledge in soft skills, leadership skills and other job-related areas. In Delhi 84% of the respondents said that the ratio of male/female students in the management schools is 60:40, in Bangalore, 38.2% of the respondents said that it is 70:30 and in Kolkata, 38.7% of the respondents said that the ratio is 60:40. The ratio of female management students was not on par with male students for the same course. When women are not educated on par with men, they cannot compete with them in the job market with an equal footing and it would be all the more difficult for the women managers to reach the top-level position. However, several of the respondent women managers indicated that earning a professional degree is very necessary to move up in their career.

4.1.2 (ii) Individual Aspirations

59.2% of the respondent women managers in Delhi opined that possessing a professional degree has made them more optimistic and extrovert and 26.5% respondents said they became more ambitious and aggressive in pursuing their career. In Bangalore and Kolkata 32.1% and 50% respondents respectively said they developed a growing sense of individuality by doing



professional courses. This behavioral change and change of prospective is going to build up their ambitions and aspirations for themselves for reaching top-level positions as managers in their careers.

Table 4.4: Career aspiration

Career Aspirations	Delhi	Bangalore	Kolkata
Base : Total Respondents	83	83	87
Answering Base	76	74	79
Successful top-level Manager	63	41.9	49.4
To have your own enterprise	5.3	23	12.7
More successful than peers	3.9	14.9	16.5
Money, Name and Fame	1.3	14.9	21.5
Ambition to became doctor	2.6	2.7	0
Status	6.6	1.4	0
Aspirations of a normal person	0	1.4	0
Determination	0	2.7	0
To build my identify	0	0	2.5
Don't know/Cann't answer	0	0	1.3
To be in the tourism industry	1.3	0	0
To get into career management	2.6	0	0
To get established in the media-Research segment	1.3	0	0
Successful top journalist / Editor	13.2	0	0

85.5% of the respondents in Bangalore, 94.4% respondents in Delhi and 92.9% respondents in Kolkata said their motivation to be in their chosen profession is related to their interest and the discipline they were engaged in. Across the cities where the study was conducted, the respondents in the entry level had the aspiration to become the top level managers. In Bangalore, 41.9% of the respondents, in Delhi 63% respondents and in Kolkata, 49.4% of the respondents had aspirations to become top-level managers in their careers. One of the most striking features of this level is that these managers are young, ambitious and as they belong to the modern generation, they are more career-oriented. They wanted respect, recognition and status. They all felt that the path ahead of achievement is not easy. But, they believed that their growing sense of individuality, aspirations and aggressiveness of pursuing their career would eventually lead them to be top-level managers.



More respondents in the entry-level are keen to take up HR management or financial management courses. In Bangalore 27.5% respondents, in Delhi 27.8% respondents and in Kolkata 50% respondents were eager to take up HR management while 31.4% respondents in Bangalore, 22.2% respondents in Delhi and 16% respondents in Kolkata were keen to pursue finance management courses. This in a way reflects their aspirations and well informed nature about the job-market demand.

While 59.5% respondents in Delhi faced 2-3 interviews before getting a job, the same is true for 74.4% respondents in Bangalore and 79.5% respondents in Kolkata. The ratio of male and female competitors in these interviews are 1:10 in 90% of cases in Delhi, 44.9% cases in Bangalore and 51.5% cases in Kolkata. 85.7% of the respondents in Delhi answered that only 20% women managers are taken in these interviews while in Bangalore 43.4% respondents and in Kolkata 44.1% respondents stand for the same. In Delhi, 83.3% respondents, in Bangalore, 81.9% respondents and in Kolkata 68.2% respondents said that the selection procedure was merit-based.

Almost all the respondents did express their view that within five years time they would like to see themselves placed in the upper middle level position (91.4% respondents in Delhi, 25.6% respondents in Bangalore and 20.5% respondents in Kolkata). In fact, there were few who were more ambitious and said they would like to see themselves at the senior level (7.4% respondents in Delhi, 41.5% respondents in Bangalore and 24.5% respondents in Kolkata). Again few believe that they would reach top-level positions in companies (1.2% respondents in Delhi, 20.7% respondents in Bangalore and 26.5% respondents in Kolkata). They also understood that there is a stiff competition and their male colleagues have greater chances to grow; further they gave in to the perception that men are more outgoing, mobile, serious, and dedicated. However, they all believed that it is their hard work, dedication, sincerity, up-gradation of skill, commitment, and good relationship besides family and company support which would help them to move up in the career.



4.1.2 (iii) Workplace Situation

To put to test the assumption of women managers facing discrimination mainly at the workplace, we administered a set of questions to the entry-level women managers that we interviewed. 92% of the respondents in Delhi, 97.4% respondents in Bangalore and 98.8% respondents in Kolkata had positive experience of placement as women in their companies/organizations. 85.7% respondents in Delhi, 87.7% respondents in Bangalore and 97.6% respondents in Kolkata said that they are comfortable and very comfortable in their position as women managers at the entry level. It shows a very positive outlook at the workplace.

89.5% of respondents in Delhi, 89% respondents in Bangalore and 84.3% respondents in Kolkata felt that they have been assigned equally responsibility and working in equally important area as of their male counterpart. This highlights a very positive situation at the workplace for women managers at the entry level. Because, if they have not been assigned equal responsibilities, they also stand to lose the scope for promotion on the ground that they are less competent to do the work at the middle level. In Bangalore 64.2% and in Kolkata 65.5% respondents have worked for the last 6 months to one year in contrast to Delhi respondents where a majority of respondents (58.8%) have worked in the same level for last one to two years. Similarly, while in Bangalore and Kolkata 51.9% and 52.8% respondents have one year experience, in Delhi majority of respondents (58.8%) have two to three years of working experience. In Bangalore, 67.5% respondents and in Kolkata, 65% respondents are working for the same company for last one year while in Delhi, 79% respondents are working for the same company for last two to three years. This shows that Delhi as a city has more competitive edge in employment scenario than the other two cities under the study.

While in Delhi and Kolkata all the respondents said their responsibilities have increased over the years, in Bangalore 5.6% respondents said that their responsibilities have decreased over the year. 97.1% respondents in Delhi, 87.7% respondents in Bangalore and 85.5% respondents in Kolkata replied that they are satisfied and more than satisfied in their present position, tasks and responsibilities. The average salary that a woman manager earns at this stage of her career is Rs. 19,672/- for Delhi and Rs. 16,258/- for Bangalore and Kolkata. While few respondents answered the question on pay rise, 50% respondents in Delhi, 86.8% respondents in Bangalore and 71.1%



respondents Kolkata said in affirmative that they have a pay rise during the last five years. It shows that either the respondents are mostly within their 2-3 years of employment that is why they have not been able to gain the advantage in salary rise or perhaps companies have fixed salaries for entry-level employees. 42.1% and 63.3% respondents from Bangalore and Kolkata respectively said the pay rise is parallel with market economy, while none of the respondents from Delhi gave a reply to this question.

Gender Policy:

Women employees feel more secure when the company/organization they are working in have a definite gender policy in place. Shockingly the present study finds out that 62.7% companies/organization in Delhi, the National Capital, does not have gender policy in place. 81% companies/organizations in Bangalore and 79.3% companies/organizations in Kolkata do not have a gender policy. Hence, a majority of companies/organizations do not have a gender policy.

Table 4.5: Sensitiveness of the company/organization to gender issues

	Delhi	Bangalore	Kolkata
Base : Total Respondents	83	83	87
Answering Base	79	80	83
Not Specified	4	3	4
Sensitive	74.7	48.8	51.8
Very Sensitive	17.7	18.8	14.5
Less Sensitive	1.3	7.5	7.2
Not At All Sensitive	0	10	10.8
Do not know	6.3	15	15.7
Top-2	92.4	67.5	66.3
Bot-2	1.3	17.5	18.1
Mean	3.78	3.25	3.27

From the table, it comes to light that 92.4% of respondents in Delhi, 67.5% of respondents in Bangalore and 66.3% of respondents in Kolkata felt their companies/organizations are sensitive to very sensitive regarding gender issues. It is a very positive situation for all the women managers at this level.



In Delhi, 97.6%, 68.3% and 89% of respondents respectively said that their companies support women issues and promotion of women employees by providing equal opportunity in employment, equal opportunity in promotion and equal opportunity in training. In Bangalore, 77.6%, 50% and 35.5% of respondents respectively said that their companies support women issues and promotion of women employees by providing equal opportunity in employment, equal opportunity in promotion and equal opportunity in training. In Kolkata, 76.3%, 39.5% and 19.7% of respondents respectively said that their companies support women issues and promotion of women employees by providing equal opportunity in employment, equal opportunity in promotion and equal opportunity in training. Hence, it may be drawn out from these facts that companies are fair to women employees.

When asked whether their companies have any policy to handle employees' grievances particularly in reference to women employees, while 83.3% of respondents in Delhi said 'no', 59.7% respondents in Bangalore and 69.3% respondents in Kolkata said 'yes' as answers. It means, the workplace situation in Bangalore and Kolkata is better than Delhi for women managers at entry level. Answering to the question of how do the system work, 75% respondents in Delhi and 34.6% respondents in Kolkata replied that the HR department look after these issues while 43.3% and 36.7% respondents in Bangalore replied that they are provided with maternity benefits and facility of transport respectively. 66.7% of the respondents in Delhi, 70.3% respondents in Bangalore and 91.9% respondents in Kolkata said that they are satisfied with the system. The respondents across cities under the study suggested certain improvements, the prominent among which included functioning in a corporate-way, assurance of safety and security, handling of grievances, transparency in policies, flexible working hours and provision of transport facility.

Table 4.6: Are you aware about harassment cases at your workplace?

Responses	Delhi	Bangalore	Kolkata
Yes	11.3	9.9	14.6
No	88.7	90.1	85.4

88.7% of the respondents in Delhi, 90.1% respondents in Bangalore and 85.4% respondents in Kolkata answered that they have not come across harassment cases at their workplaces. But,



from the above table it may be seen that few respondents in each city replied in affirmative also. When these respondents were asked about what action was taken against those persons by their company/organization who are found guilty, they remained silent and chose not to answer. Hence, it may be drawn from the above facts that though some respondents are aware about harassment cases happening at their workplaces they were reluctant to reply and divulge the details may be because of the apprehension of getting bad listed; gaining a bad name for the companies/organizations they are working with, etc.

Out of 83 respondents in Delhi, 6 women managers answered in affirmative to the question about their awareness of sexual harassment cases at their workplace while the same stands true for 10.3% respondents in Bangalore and 11.3% respondents in Kolkata.. While respondents in Delhi remained silent to what action was taken by their companies to punish the guilty, the respondents from Bangalore replied that was a policy decision and respondents from Kolkata said that the guilty was sacked.

4.1.2 (iv) Training

While 45.3% of the respondents in Bangalore replied that they would be achieving senior-level positions by undergoing special skill development programmes, 62.2% respondents in Kolkata said they would be achieving



that by promotion. 63.8% respondents in Delhi said that they would be achieving senior-level positions by attending special skill development trainings.

As discussed above, respondents particularly in Bangalore and Delhi voiced that acquiring necessary training is important to grow in one's career. It was indicated by respondents during interviews that it is extremely important for women to recognize their deficiencies and should be



willing to acquire training. 52% of the respondents believed that for getting promoted to middle level it is essential to attend special training programmes.

Training provided by companies

Table 4.7: Areas where company offers trainings

Training Areas	Delhi	Bangalore	Kolkata
Base : Total Respondents	83	83	87
Answering Base	79	69	76
Induction Training	48.1	59.4	48.7
Skill-development training	77.2	49.3	35.5
Soft-skill development training	40.5	30.4	7.9
Training for present job	7.6	27.5	35.5
Interview taking skills	1.3	0	0

Companies/organizations are offering training programmes to women managers at the entry level in the areas of induction, skill-development, soft-skill development training, trainings for undertaking assignments of the present job, interview-taking skills, etc., It appeared from the study that barring 2/3 respondents per city every women managers availed the training programmes given by their companies. The ratio of women managers in such trainings are: 1:2 in 66.7% cases in Delhi, 45.8% cases in Bangalore and 33.7% cases in Kolkata.

97.5% of the respondent women managers at the entry level in Delhi said their companies encourage them to participate in the training by organizing trainings in duty hours, 96.3% respondents in Delhi were encouraged by exemption from duties and 72.5% by providing door-to-door transport services.



Similarly, 72.9% respondents by organizing trainings in duty hours, 22.9% respondents by exemption from duties and 15.7% respondents by providing door-to-door transport services in



Bangalore. In Kolkata, 74% respondents were encouraged by organizing trainings during duty hours, 16.4% respondents by exemption from duties and 12.3% respondents by providing door-to-door transport services. Hence, it may be concluded that though all women managers at this level agreed that attending training programmes are necessary for career advancement, simultaneously it is the fact that if some sort of support services are provided to them by companies, they will attend these trainings more forthrightly. The respondents at this level are also aware about special training programmes offered by other management schools/chambers/institutions for women which shows that they are well-aware about their employment situation, the job market and are in general a progressive lot.

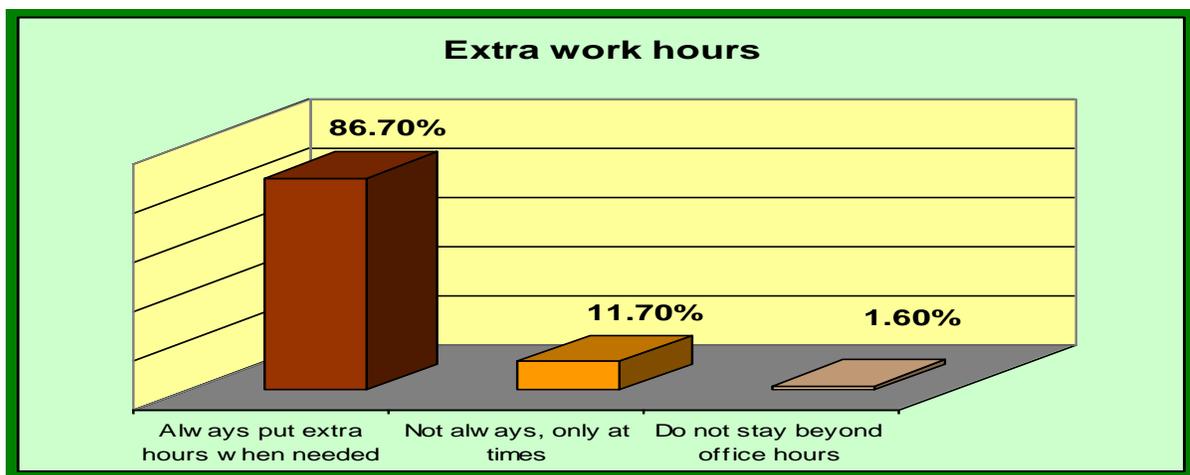
The respondents indicated that training has enhanced their careers. In Delhi, 51.3% respondents said that they have enjoyed better roles and responsibilities, 32.1% respondents said that it has helped in increasing their efficiency and performance after attending trainings. In Bangalore, 52.5% respondents voiced that they experience increase in their efficiency and performance and 37.3% respondents said that they enjoyed better role and responsibilities after attending trainings. In Kolkata, 52.9% respondents enjoyed better role and responsibilities and 51% respondents said that they have increased efficiency and performance after attending training programmes. Here, we observe that across cities the respondents have voiced that they have gained in terms of better roles and responsibilities or in increasing efficiency and performance after attaining training programmes which is also equipping them, in a way, to take up more additional roles and responsibilities in future facilitating their promotion to middle and senior levels. Hence, training is an important constituent in career advancement of women managers at the entry level.

4.1.2 (v) Hard Work

It is always said that hard work has no substitute to achieve success. The respondents in the entry level work an average of 53.6 hours per week, and most often do not take work home. While 75% respondent women managers in Delhi said that their work demands their presence at the office and meetings after working hours, 48.8% respondents in Bangalore and 56.1% respondents in Kolkata said that their work does not demand them to stay after office hours for business dinners, other meetings/exhibitions, etc. It shows that in Delhi, women managers face a different kind of situation which is not much friendly to their working condition while women



managers in Bangalore and Kolkata enjoy that consideration. They all indicated that they would like to accept more responsibility, work hard, and be more committed and dedicated. One women manager in Delhi declared that working beyond the standard work week and producing high quality work is viewed favorably by the higher management and also gives top management the assurance they need to invest in their development. 86.7% of respondent women managers in Delhi, 69.9% of respondents in Bangalore and 71.8% of respondents in Kolkata said that they put in extra hours when needed. It shows that women managers are hard working, responsible and committed to their work.



During the field visits, respondents stated that they have to work much harder than men to prove themselves to top management. Some of them remarked that women need to work much harder to earn credibility, and [that] they need to prove their ability to handle the next assignment, while men have instant credibility and are presumed capable of handling the next assignment. It is also being added by them that men spent much of the time talking and going out than working actually. They (male counterparts) are hardly in their seats, but they stay after office hours, which gives an impression to the senior management and decision-making bodies that they contribute more to the growth and development of the company.

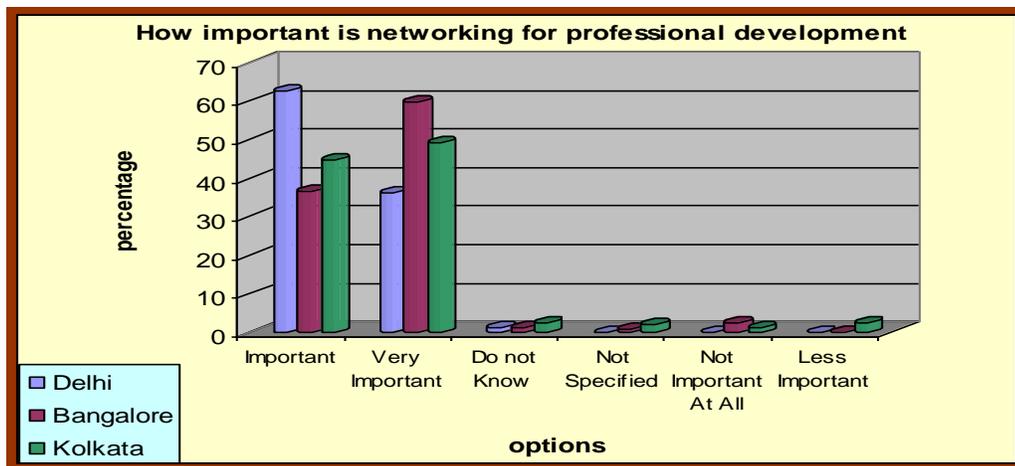
4.1.2 (vi) Mentors

By definition, a mentor is someone who is highly placed within an organization and holds a position of influence. A mentor has already gained the prerequisite experience and status needed



to support and promote the career of the less experienced individual i.e. new entrants. As there are more and more men to be found holding the senior positions, mentors are most often men rather than women. They offered feedback on their performance; provided them with job opportunities and challenges to demonstrate their skills and abilities; and gave them useful advice. 90% of respondent women managers indicated that they had mentors during their professional careers. But they were generally men who were top managers and in decision-making bodies.

4.1.2 (vii) Interpersonal skills/Networking



From the above table it may be seen that 98.8% of respondents in Delhi, 96.3% respondents in Bangalore and 94.1% respondents in Kolkata have said that networking is important for professional development. They added that networking and having a good interpersonal skill is important to develop and maintain smooth, cooperative working relationships with peers, subordinates, and superiors; treat people the way one wants to be treated and show awareness and consideration to their opinions and feelings and also to generate and maintain amiable relationships with people in the same field within and outside of your company and organization.

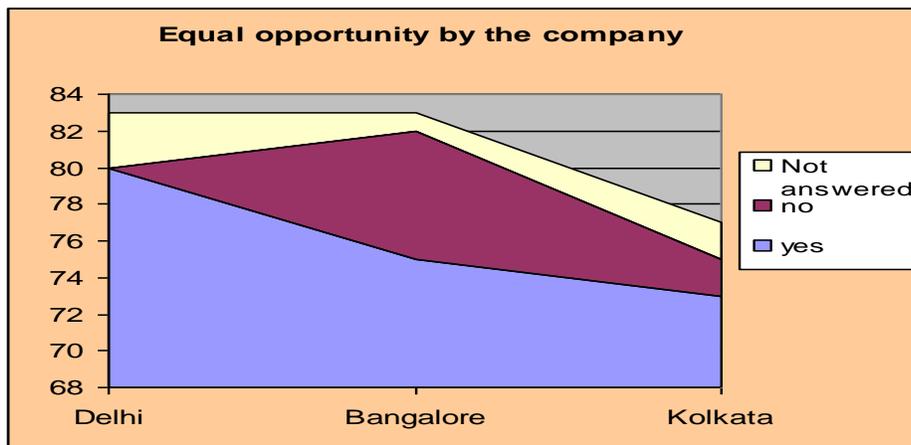
4.1.2 (viii) Company Facilities

Favorable work place environment and availability of facilities/support systems help employees in performing better and their retention also stands a better chance which in turn also facilitates the company/organization. Facilities provided by the company have helped many women



managers at entry level in contributing more and being productive. In Delhi, 82.5% of respondent women managers said that their companies provide them with facilities such as compensatory leaves and 80% respondents said that it is medical benefits that help them in enhancing attention and concentration in work thereby enhancing their chances of promotion. In Bangalore 75.3% respondents and in Kolkata 59% respondents said that it is flexible working hours that their companies provide as facilities which helps them to be more productive. 40.3% respondents in Bangalore and 44.9% respondents in Kolkata said that medical benefits are also provided to them by their companies/organizations.

During the field visits many of the respondents expressed that their companies do not make any discrimination based on sex. Equal opportunities for employment and promotion are provided to all. 93.7% of respondent women managers in the entry level said that their companies provided them with equal opportunity to grow.



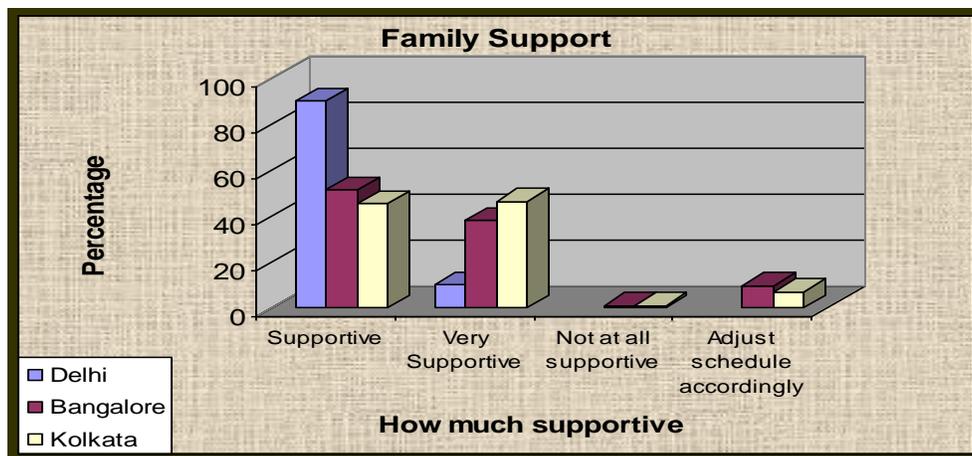
Out of the three cities, in Bangalore, more respondents felt that their companies are not providing them equal opportunities. However, 98.7% respondents in Delhi, 90% respondents in Bangalore and 96.5% respondents in Kolkata said that there are women in different levels of management in their companies. It is a favourable sign that companies are recruiting/promoting women managers to different levels and there is a fair chance of promotion of these women managers at the entry level in future. The respondents in all the three cities also answered that there are more women managers in HR/Personnel Management than men.



While 66.7% respondents in Delhi felt that their companies have made special efforts to help women managers grow in the organization, 58.4% respondents in Bangalore and 63.5% respondents in Kolkata said that no such efforts were made by their companies. If at all the companies have made any effort, according to the respondents it is the equal preference that they enjoy in selection procedures. In Delhi 97.3% of the respondents, 70.9% respondents in Bangalore and 70.1% respondents in Kolkata felt that there sector is more favorable to women because of comfortable working atmosphere with more women employees and also being more women in top decision-making bodies. Hence, it may be derived that women give much importance to a secured, supportive and encouraging working atmosphere than anything else while choosing their job placement where women are involved in decision-making process, where they are assured that their grievances may be heard with an empathetic ear. Anyway, respondents felt that promotion is mainly based on merit and performance but, nevertheless, networking, interpersonal relationship, and efficient team management also does matter while the appraisal is scrutinized for promotion.

4.1.2 (ix) Family Support

It is a well known fact that working women face multifarious difficulties in managing and balancing work and family without support from their families. Family is the backbone of Indian social structure. Hence, we wanted to know from our respondents, how they are managing work and family lives.





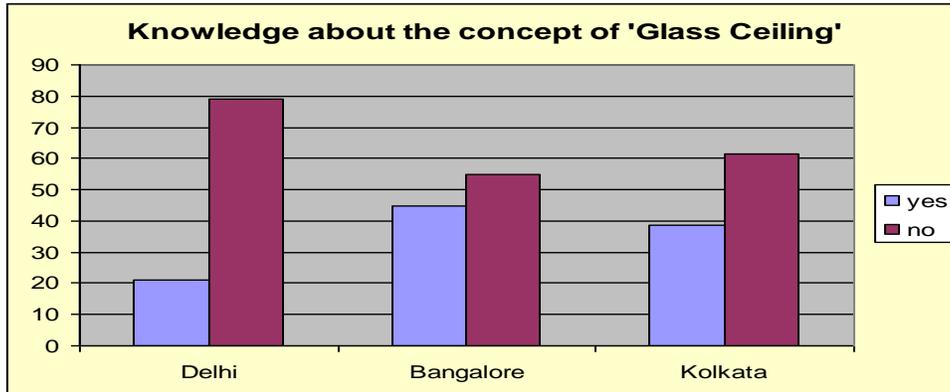
In total, 42.2% respondents or 90.1% respondents in Delhi, 51.2% respondents in Bangalore and 45.2% respondents in Kolkata said that their families are supportive. Interestingly, 46.2% respondents in Kolkata said that their families are very supportive. 8.4% respondents in total in Bangalore and Kolkata said that they adjust schedules according to each others needs. Hence, for all the respondents family has been a great support which has helped them in their careers, especially with regard to their career aspirations. Still there are 1.2% of the respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata who voiced that their family members are not supportive at all. Though respondents in Delhi did not mark it as their options, but during the field visits we came across respondents across levels who spoke about their difficulties when family members (particularly in-laws) are not supportive. Again, we should not ignore the fact that at the entry level 70% respondents are unmarried. 81.6% of the respondents said that they are managing professional and family live successfully. 20.6% of the respondents in total replied that the key to their successful balancing act lies in taking time out for each front. This may be due to the fact that they are single, so do not have many responsibilities to handle at the domestic front. The major suggestions of the women managers working in the entry level to the future generation of women was to be sincere and strive for perfection.

4.1.3 Factors hindering growth at entry level

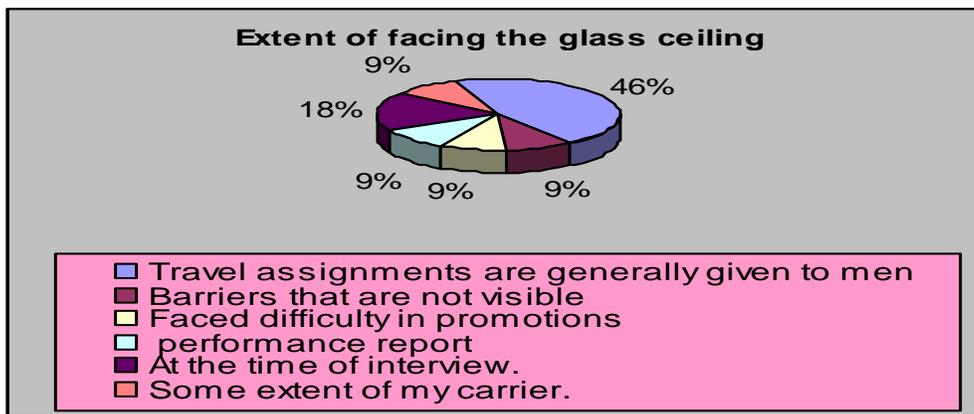
Since our study was directed towards finding out the barriers in career development of women managers at all the three levels, we identify certain factors which hinder the growth of women managers in the entry level by asking the respondents a set of questions on glass ceiling, gender policies, and discrimination in promotion, networking, mentoring, family–work balance, and company facilities to understand the hindrances which ultimately reflects in their not reaching to top-level positions. Five major barriers were mentioned most frequently: i) Facing the ‘Glass Ceiling’ effect, ii) Inadequacy of women mentors. iii) Lack of networking skills iv) Lack of involvement in office politics and v) Lack of career plan.



4.1.3(i) Facing the ‘Glass Ceiling’ effect



We have already discussed the concept of ‘Glass Ceiling’ in our introduction chapter. Less awareness among respondents is found on the concept of *glass ceiling*. While 79% of the respondents in Delhi, 55% respondents in Bangalore and 61.4% respondents in Kolkata said “no” to the question of their knowledge of ‘*glass ceiling*’ concept, 21% respondents in Delhi, 45% respondents in Bangalore and 38.6% respondents in Kolkata said “yes”. Upon further questioning, 35.7% respondents in total said that by ‘glass ceiling’ they meant that it is discrimination against women in promotion, training and reaching the top-level position and 37% respondents said that they do not know exactly what it means.





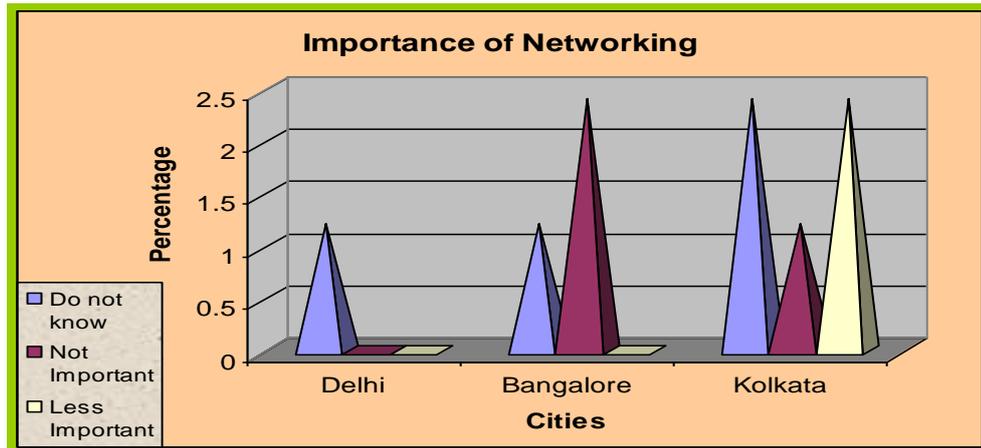
When the concept was explained however, they said that they personally did not experience it. But, during the interview process most of the respondents referred to subtle discrimination that operated in the organization. For instance, men were given more traveling and field assignments and women were discouraged even if they were willing to travel. Further, women were discriminated in the jobs which required frequent traveling on the assumption that women are less/not willing to travel. Men's contributions were more valued. Men get instant credibility while women do not. The companies although provided equal opportunities, yet, they were not sensitive to the situation and needs of women, which are very different from that of men. Needs of women managers should be addressed accordingly, so that their growth is not hampered.

4.1.3 (ii) Inadequacy of women mentors and seniors

Answering to the question of the belief that beyond a point women can not grow in an organization, 19.4% and 28.6% of the respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata said that it depends on the attitude of their female colleagues, while 2.8% of the respondents said that their head/chief is a lady and so they foresee their career growth with the empathy towards female employees from the Head of the organization. But, it is also true that many respondents felt that there are not enough women bosses who would be sensitive and understanding to their needs and situations and allocate work that would bring out their best. Also, majority did agree that there are not enough women role models whom one can look up to for guidance and advice for progress in their career paths. They lacked encouragement in handling responsibilities independently which further curtails their motivational levels.

4.1.3(iii) Lack of networking skills

Under the section 4.1.2(vii), we already discussed the importance of networking in today's world in every sphere of activity and analyzed the responses of our study participants who reiterated the importance of networking both inside and outside of the work place. But, there are a few participants who either voiced that they do not know the importance, not important at all or less important to networking.



From the field-level experience, we also track down that lack of networking on the part of women managers is one of the most important reasons of their not being promoted to senior level positions. Most of the networking activities take place after office hours and women managers being doubly burdened as career/working women and as home makers, mothers and wives have to rush to their homes after office hours and staying back options are really limited for them to participate in these after office hour parties. During office hours, due to work pressure they can hardly make any networking within and outside office/workplace. Hence, when promotion listing comes, they are not considered favorably and lack of networking proves as a hindrance in their career paths.

4.1.3(iv) Lack of involvement in office politics

During field visits, several respondents indicated that they are out of the political environment of the office, for which they do not have access to certain information such as who is the power-centre in office politics. They are not in the loop of the organization's informal structure which is generally the men's club. It's much to do with their cultural values. Some of the women managers at the entry level said that are clueless about what is happening in the workplace. They are not aware of the power centers in the organization who could support them in their new ideas and projects and recommend their good work for their promotion or hike in salary. This happens often in organizations as after-office hours are normally devoted to such kind of networking and politics and women rarely stay after-office hours for such partying. Hence, they miss out on promotions and better pay packets.



4.1.3(v) Lack of career planning and strategy

When respondents were asked about their career plans they said that they will put hard work and aim at promotion. None of the respondents were found to be articulated about specific career strategies. From the field visits it was observed that while some of the respondents had landed up with job without any professional course and without any realization that it was the career they really wanted to be in, on the other hand, majority of them although have done professional course and some skill acquisition training, yet, they lacked proper technical training and knowledge as to what is most important for their careers.

Moreover, making career plans by some of the respondents have invited lot of resistance from family members, as the latter thought that that would affect their marriage and other familial responsibilities. 5.3% of the married respondents in Delhi, 12.3% respondents in Bangalore and 11% respondents in Kolkata said that there are conflicting issues in their balancing act of work and family. During conversations, many married respondents expressed that though they had the support of the family, yet, it is the men's work in the family that is generally considered more important (primary) than hers (often treated as secondary). It was observed that there was lack of individuality and zeal to take more initiative, to think early about careers and to invest in getting returns on their capabilities.

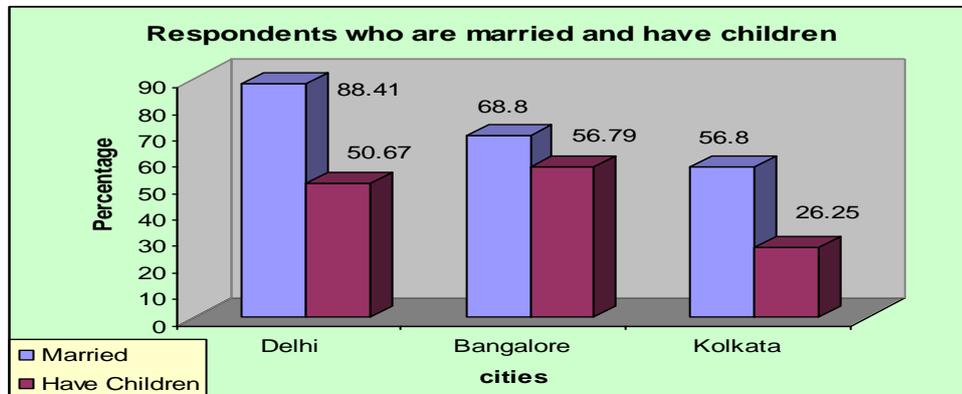
4.2 Middle Level

4.2.1 Description of study participants

In this study, 236 middle level women managers participated from three cities; Bangalore, Delhi and Kolkata and with further division of four sectors- Hospitality and Tourism, Health Care, Media, Banking and Finance. From Delhi, Bangalore and Kolkata there were 75, 81 and 80 respondents respectively, on an average of 20 respondents from each of the four sectors, which included both private and public sectors. The age of the respondents ranged from 30-32 years averaging 31 years. 88.41% of the respondents in Delhi, 68.8% respondents in Bangalore and 56.8% respondents in Kolkata are married. While 41.67% of the respondents in Bangalore (56.7%) and Kolkata (26.25%) have on an average 1.43% children; in Delhi 50.67% respondents have on an average 1.29% children and most of them who have children and who do not have



children, do not intend to have children in the future. So, it may be drawn that though more respondents in Delhi are married and have children than Bangalore and Kolkata, they have less number of children than their colleagues in the other two cities under the study.



Women managers in the middle level hold varying titles and positions in the field of human resources management, marketing & sales, accounting, house keeping management, public relations, production, resident doctors, editorship, communications, advertising, travel & tourism management and research. Their work experience ranged from 5 to 10 years, averaging 5.36 years for respondents in Delhi and 4.41 years for respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata. So, it takes more years for women managers in Delhi to be promoted to the middle level than the respondents in other two cities though respondents in Delhi have lesser number of children on an average. Another noteworthy fact is that among Kolkata respondents, very few (26.25%) have children.

As far as experience in the current company is concerned majority of them, 51.43% respondents in Delhi and 30.8% respondents in Kolkata have been working for 3–4 years with a mean of 3.57 and 3.33 years respectively; 32.9% respondents in Bangalore are working for 1-2 years with a mean of 2.91 years. It shows that while respondents in a company work for maximum time period in Delhi, it is the least in Bangalore. The motivation for working in the present company for the majority (57.5% respondents in Bangalore, 49.4% respondents in Kolkata and 86.15% respondents in Delhi) is career chances. Less priority has been given to working atmosphere. While the mean salary for Bangalore and Kolkata respondents are Rs. 49212.77; for



Delhi respondents it is much lesser at Rs. 29666.67. Hence, the middle-level women managers in Delhi get less paid than their Bangalore and Kolkata colleagues.

Table: 4.8 Motivation for working for the present company

Options	Centre		
	Bangalore	Kolkata	Delhi
Base : Total Respondents	81	80	75
Answering Base	80	77	65
Salary	16.3	29.9	66.15
Career chances	57.5	49.4	86.15
Reputation of the company	50.0	48.1	47.69
Working atmosphere	42.5	26.0	18.46
Relationship with colleagues	11.3	10.4	7.69
Education	1.3	0.0	
Exposure	1.3	0.0	
Job profile	0.0	1.3	
Possibility of personal growth / development			15.38
For part time work			1.54

4.2.2 Factors contributing to the career development

The middle level respondents were administered with a structured questionnaire (*Annexure I*) to assess the factors contributing to their professional career growth. The major factors identified by them were educational credentials, training, hard work, competency on the job, dedication, mentors, interpersonal skills/ networking, workplace situation and facilities provided by the company, family support, and willingness to take risks were cited most frequently.

4.2.2 (i) Education credentials

All the middle level women managers had either Bachelor's degrees or Masters Degrees in Social Sciences, Commerce, Medicine and Business Administration. 76% of the respondents in Delhi, 70.4% respondents in Bangalore and 63.6% respondents in Kolkata joined the management career due to their own preference while there was also number of other factors. The chart below reflects the different motivational factors.



47.8% of the respondents in Delhi, 39.7% respondents in Bangalore and 48.6% respondents in Kolkata said that they wanted to be successful top-level managers when they began their management study. 89.7% of the respondents in Delhi, 85.5% respondents in Bangalore and 79.3% respondents in Kolkata said that they are able to realize it. The chief contributing factor according to women managers in the middle level in the three cities under study for their success is training to family support. We will discuss more about it under the next point.

Above 84% women managers in middle level (89.86% respondents in Delhi, 80.3% respondents in Bangalore and 85.7% respondents in Kolkata) said that they would not have chosen different courses considering their present position. Among them who voiced that they would have taken separate courses than management, In Bangalore and Kolkata 25% respondents would be doing so to get better employment and 50% of Delhi respondents would be doing so to get better job opportunity in the finance sector. It could be assessed that majority of the women managers are confident and happy about choosing management as their career option.

To assess the demand and supply side of the employment situation, we asked them about the ratio of male and female students. For 50% respondents in Delhi the ratio of male: female student is either 50:50 or 80:20 which either shows a very ideal situation or very lop-sided. In Bangalore 37.8% respondents said that it is 60:40 and in Kolkata 26.9% respondents said it is 70:30. Hence, in majority of cases the ratio of female students is lower than that of male students in a class of a management institution. This trend is mainly because of attitudinal factor that defines work areas of man and woman and since management as a career option is always thought of as a man’s domain; women students are discouraged systematically by family,

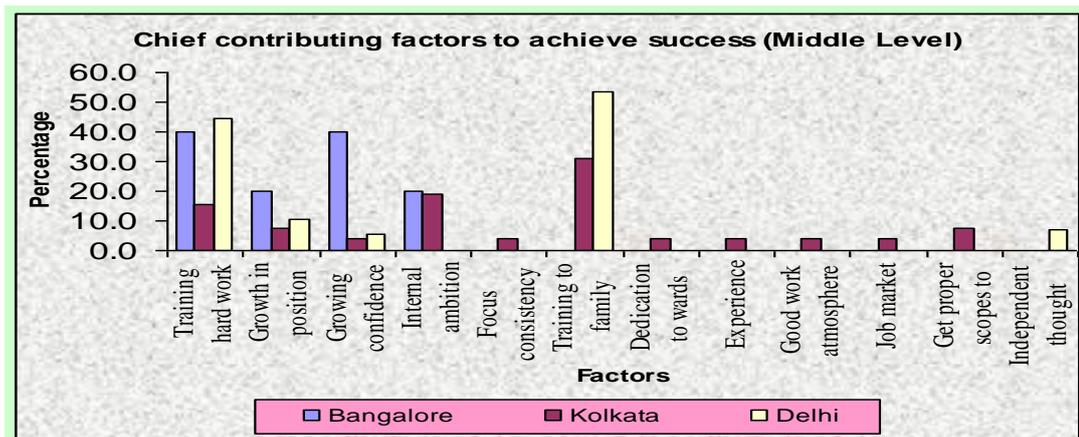


friends, neighbors, etc. to enter this profession. Another substantiate factor is the rise and growth of demand for management careers in India is dating back only to the early/middle years of 90's where management institutes mushroomed only in big/metro cities. Since, hostel facilities are less for female students and stepping out of the household and the opportunity to migrate to bigger cities to study is still restricted for many female students in India, the ratio of female students is obviously low in a class of management institute. When the supply side is low, few managed to reach the top-level positions.

Majority of them have received additional training in their career cycle to further their skills in their professional area such as trainings in soft skills and job-oriented skill enhancement trainings. Many also took up formal professional course even after getting job to enhance their career prospective. 73% declared that a professional course is needed to be more competitive and to have a greater opportunity for advancement in professional careers.

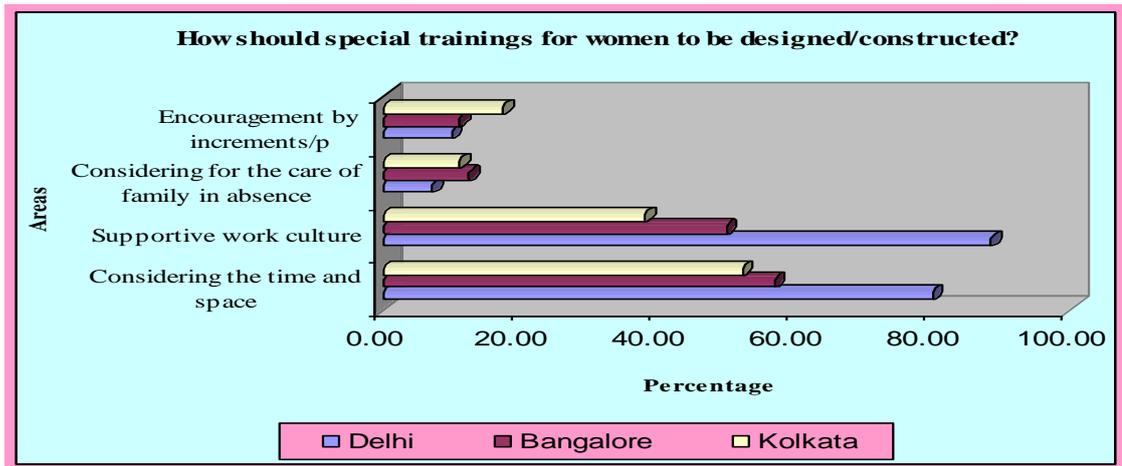
4.2.2 (ii) Trainings

53.5% and 44.6% respondents in Delhi said that training along with family support and training with hard work respectively is the chief contributing factor for success at the middle level. 40% respondents in Bangalore put training and hard work as the contributing factor while 30.8% respondents in Kolkata said so for training and family support. Hence, it is clear that training forms an inseparable component to achieve success in middle level management position. The chart below gives respondents value to each of the contributing factors across the three cities under the study.





76.81% respondents in Delhi, 58.4% respondents in Bangalore and 52.9% respondents in Kolkata said that their companies provide skill-development trainings which enabled them for promotion from entry level to the middle level. 77.27% respondents in Delhi, 58.4% respondents in Bangalore and 76.8% respondents in Kolkata said that they have received training. While 50% respondents in Delhi received skill enhancement training, 33.3% respondents in Bangalore received In-house training and 20% respondents each in Kolkata received management and communication training. Respondents indicated that it is extremely important to recognize one's own skill requirement and then work towards achieving that.



95.77% respondents in Delhi, 93.6% respondents in Bangalore and 92.1% respondents in Kolkata said that skill enhancement training in mid-career is helpful to very helpful in the mid-level. 94.3% respondents in Delhi, 75% respondents in Bangalore and 72.5% respondents in Kolkata said that the company encourages them to avail training by exempting them from office work and getting it organized in duty hours. The respondents confidently said that such trainings enable them to perform better in their jobs. But, 5.5% respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata and 16.67% respondents in Delhi who replied negatively regarding the suitability of such trainings voiced that it is not suitable to them because they expect you to come early and leave late in such trainings. Sometimes, office provides for transport or travelling allowance.

While 51.9% respondents in Bangalore are aware about special trainings for women offered by chambers/management schools, 94.03% respondents in Delhi and 74% respondents in Kolkata surprisingly are not aware about such trainings. Upon being asked as how should a training



programme be designed for women managers; 88.51% respondents in Delhi and 50% respondents in Bangalore said that supportive work culture help a lot in attending training by women managers while 56.9% respondents in Bangalore and 52.4% respondents in Kolkata said that training should be organized taking into consideration the time and space.

However, while 92.31% respondents in Delhi opined that it is necessary for companies to design special training programmes for women managers, the middle level women managers, 49.4% respondents in Bangalore and 52.7% respondents in Kolkata said that they do not want special training programmes particularly for women. They think that the as long as the time and space of training programmes are suitably arranged there is no need of special training programmes for women managers as they should not be treated differently than their male colleagues. The self-respect of women managers is admirable.

4.2.2 (iii) Hard Work

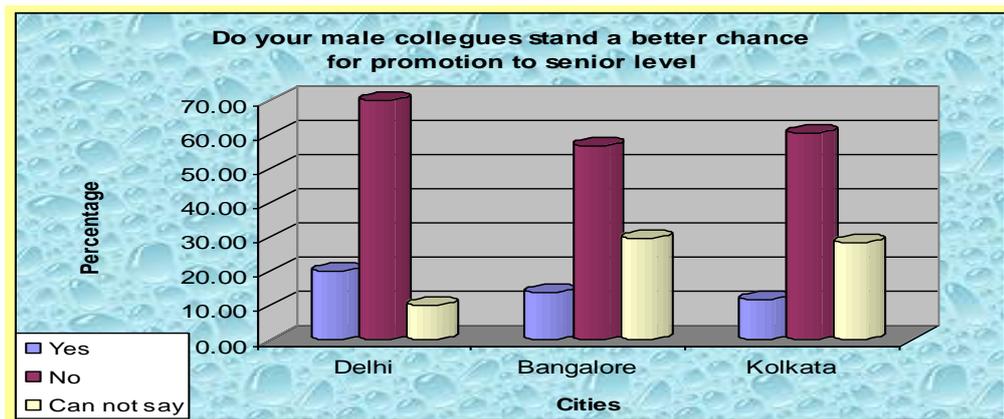
Respondents unanimously voiced that hard work and commitment apart from other requirements are yard sticks for professional growth. 90.77% respondents in Delhi, 81.7% respondents in Bangalore and 84.2% respondents in Kolkata voiced that performance is the basis of promotion to senior level. Some respondents also mentioned merit as a deciding factor also. However, most of them believed that to rise in career one must be willing to accept more responsibility, be more committed, have more dedication, and work harder. But, all of them seem to be aware that reaching the senior/top-level position is not that easy. When asked where they visualize themselves five years down the lines; 60.87% respondents in Delhi, 56.4% respondents in Bangalore and 52.7% respondents in Kolkata said that they visualize themselves to be in some senior level positions at the middle level. Very few (33.33% respondents in Delhi, 27% respondents in Bangalore and 24.4% respondents in Kolkata) said that they will be in the top level positions.

In Delhi, 40.28% of the respondents said that they always work beyond office hours whenever needed. 76.5% respondents in Bangalore and 70.5% respondents in Kolkata said they work beyond office hours whenever needed. Many of the managers believe they have to work much harder than men to prove themselves in this middle level if they want to reach to the top



management level. One manager remarked that women need to work much harder to earn credibility, and really need to prove that she is capable of handling the next project while for men it's not the case and it's always presumed that they are pre-disposed with that ability and quality enabling them to handle the next project successfully. Though 91.18% of the respondents in Delhi and 89.8% respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata said that they have been assigned equal responsible areas in comparison to their male colleagues, yet, rest 11.2% respondents said that sometimes women were not given additional responsibilities as it was assumed that women would not be able to give extra time if needed. Especially with married women managers having children this has been the case. Women managers at the middle level are found to be in the age group where the responsibilities towards family is abundant with small children to look after, ailing parents/in-laws to take care of, housing and transport problems cropping in and also the changes occurring in their psycho-physical level due to this work-home balancing act. In addition, at the work place, these presumptions that woman devote less time to work greatly hampers the career development of working women across sectors.

4.2.2 (iv) Competency on the job



Many of the respondents believed that to be successful, it is important to demonstrate a consistency in producing good quality work, being result-oriented, accountable, knowing the job/field well enough, and performing consistently. Most of the women managers indicated that at the middle level they are expected to show greater competence and commitment as well as proven skills to match their seniors' expectations and subordinates efficacy in an effective manner. However, 70% respondents in Delhi, 56.8% respondents in Bangalore and 60.3%



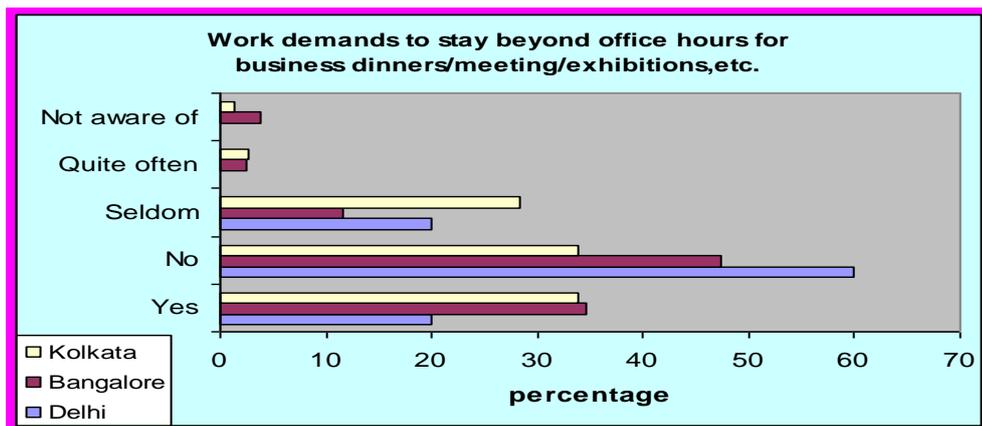
respondents in Kolkata were confident that their male colleagues do not stand a better chance for promotion to the senior level than them.

4.2.2 (v) Mentors

26.56% of the respondents in Delhi, 29.1% respondents in Bangalore and 16.3% respondents in Kolkata who had female bosses said that they were very much encouraged to take up new challenges and demonstrate their skills and abilities. Having women managers in higher positions found to be helping women managers in the lower levels as they turned out suitable mentors in the work area. Women managers in the middle level were even offered feedback on their performances and were given advices to maintain high performance standards. However, it's only in few cases that their mentors significantly influenced the career development of women managers in the middle level.

4.2.2 (vi) Interpersonal/networking skills

88.8% of the respondents in Delhi and 97.5% respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata voiced that networking is important to very important in to-days work situation. They also stressed the importance of interpersonal skills in becoming efficient managers. Most of them felt that it is very much required in the day-to-day functioning at the work place and even to get the work done. Working as a team, motivating juniors while maintaining amicable relationship with colleagues/ employees/ staff at all levels of the organization, understanding their feelings being accommodative, motivating employees to show better performance, maintaining good relations with clients, and establishing networks were all considered as important for career growth.



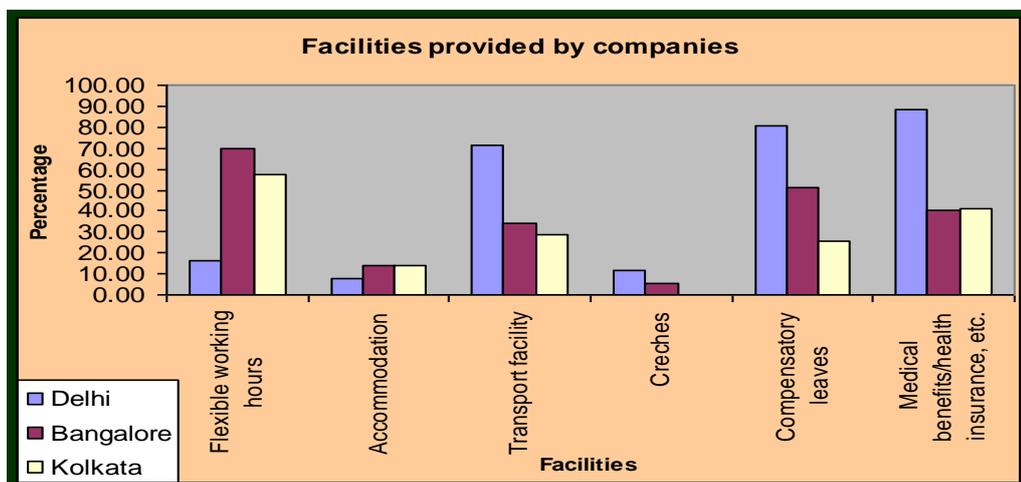


Though 60% respondents in Delhi, 47.4% respondents in Bangalore and 33.8% respondents in Kolkata said that their work do not need them to stay beyond office hours for business dinners/meetings/exhibitions, etc., yet, rest of the respondents expressed that they have to stay beyond office hours as most of the networking takes place during these hours and it becomes a handicap for women managers not being able to put these beyond office hours for networking which hinders their career prospects. If we look at the above graph, we will notice that while most of the respondents in Delhi said that they do not stay beyond office hours, a significant percentage among them are also stating that they seldom stay for these activities beyond office hours. Similarly, city-wise more respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata were saying that they stay beyond office hours and that too in the category of ‘quite often’.

During the field visits in all the three cities under the study, respondents said that one should have the ability to manage the subordinates as well as superiors well. Several women managers also highlighted the importance of obtaining good recommendations from senior managers one has worked with for future career growth.

4.2.2 (vii) Workplace situation and facilities provided by the company

Conducive workplace situation and support system from the company in terms of facilities sighted to be one of the major factors contributing to the career growth of women managers at the middle level. In Delhi, 97% respondents and in Bangalore and Kolkata, 95.5% respondents said that as women managers their experiences are positive.





The above graph shows the various facilities provided by companies in the three cities to the women managers in the middle level. While Bangalore and Kolkata tops the list in providing flexible working hours to the women managers, Delhi tops the list in providing medical benefits such as health insurances, maternity benefits, etc. and transport facilities to women managers in the middle level. However, crèche facility is non-existent in Kolkata and low in Delhi and Bangalore. Accommodation facility is also found to be low in all the three cities. 88.89% of the respondents in Delhi and 86.8% respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata expressed that better support system enhances the attention and concentration on work of women employees and their chances of promotion.

4.2.2 (viii) Family Support

57.1% respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata said that in achieving success and to realize their dreams regarding their career family is a stumbling block. Though respondents in Delhi chose not to answer this question, their silence speaks volumes. 45% of the respondents said that their families were supportive, 41% said that their families were very supportive, and only 14% respondents voiced that their families were less supportive. However, all the women managers said that their families have encouraged them always to pursue their careers. In addition, 82.5% of the respondents in Bangalore and 84.6% of the respondents in Kolkata indicated that balancing family and work well has also helped them to move up in their career ladder. This percentage for the Delhi area is lower (48.7%), mostly caused by the respondents those work in health care sector.

4.2.3 Factors that hinder career development

To analyse and derive the impact of the factors that have hindered the career development of women managers in the middle level, they were asked a set of questions related to the challenges faced by the respondents in the organizational, societal and individual level. Those were regarding career plans, discrimination faced (if any), relocation/transfer issues, gender policies of the organization, networking and its importance, and strategies for coping with family/social responsibilities.



4.2.3 (i) Lack of Career Planning

As we have already discussed in the beginning of the middle level women managers analysis, 48% of the respondents in Delhi, 40% respondents in Bangalore and 49% respondents in Kolkata spelt out that they have aspirations to become a successful top level manager but when they were asked how they would achieve it, none of them actually had clear cut career plans. However, they did say they would put in hard work, commitment and take up training to achieve their goals. But again, most of them could not identify what is most important for their careers. Some of them said they have taken break in their career either to pursue higher studies or for child birth while a few others said that they are planning to take break for family reasons which would definitely impact their careers. Probably, women could not draw out a career plan for themselves because their priorities change after they get married and support from in-laws family play an important role in pursuing their career plans

4.2.3 (ii) Gender policy in companies

Of all respondents, 62.9% in Delhi; 81.8% in Bangalore and 81.3% in Kolkata said that their companies do not have any specific policies to promote women and make the company gender inclusive. In total, 72% respondents said that their companies do not have a gender policy. In Bangalore, the percentage is the highest with 80% respondents saying that their companies do not have a gender policy at place. In Delhi, the respondents said that even in companies where there is gender policy at place, men get away with these policies over a smoke or a drink. This view was supported in Bangalore. In Kolkata, while 50% respondents said that their employer is gender-friendly, 50% respondents said that they have a 'Ladies' Committee' in place to take care of any gender issues at their work place.

What the companies provide at the best are benefits such as transport, medical, maternity and compensatory leaves which are statutory kind of benefits, but nothing very significant to promote women in their careers. Though 93% of the respondents in Delhi and 60% respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata voiced that their companies are sensitive to very sensitive towards gender issues, yet, few respondents during interview also said that lodging complaints time and



again in the women's grievance cells is not looked at favorably by the higher management and was noticed when promotion to the next level is due/considered.

When asked the measures taken by companies to promote and support women issues and policies in promotion of women employees, 95.45% respondents of Delhi said that their company support women employees in providing equal opportunities in employment. The same stands at 76% for respondents from Bangalore and Kolkata companies. 57% of the respondents in Delhi, 56% respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata answered in positive that their companies have some policy to handle employee's grievances in reference to women employees. On being asked as how this policy worked, the women managers in Delhi replied that one can approach them with serious issues and they deal with the person concerned. In Bangalore and Kolkata the answer was widely varied from functioning as per the labour law to sanctioning of maternity leave, loans, providing facilities, safety and security, different cells for women employees, etc. Some respondents also answered that company do not bother to have such policies and there is no such policy particularly for women employees. While respondents in Delhi said that they are satisfied with the system, 22% respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata said that they are not satisfied with the system.

In Delhi, 54% of the respondents and in Bangalore and Kolkata 56% respondents said that they are comfortable in their position as women managers in the middle level. Only 2.33% respondent from Delhi and 9.6% respondents from Bangalore and Kolkata reported that they are aware about harassment cases at their workplaces. The respondents from Bangalore only reported that the guilty persons were fired. Only one women manger in Delhi and 5.2% respondents from Bangalore and Kolkata answered in affirmative that they are aware of sexual harassment cases at the workplace. Here also we got the single response from the Bangalore respondent who said that the matter was immediately notified to the senior authorities and provision was made to online complain about such incidences.

4.2.3 (iii) Discrimination

About 78% (equally divided among the three areas) of respondents in the middle level indicated that there is no discrimination at the company level as far as opportunity, employment and



training is concerned. But, discrimination starts from the beginning as we noticed during our study like women-centric professions are chosen by parents and peers for studying which ultimately results in low-income generating occupations for women and a serial subjugation of women, even if in employment and earning capacity, to the patriarchal society where male earn more in the same profession. Though 95% respondents in Delhi, Bangalore and Kolkata said that women are there in different levels of management, but, 20% of the respondents in Delhi and 12.6% of the respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata voiced that their male colleagues stand a better chance for promotion to senior level. There are areas of management where women managers are found more in numbers like HR/Personnel management and hotel management. And when probed further, we found that within that profession, low-skill and low-wage areas are assigned to women managers, so that they could never reach an authoritative position in a company.

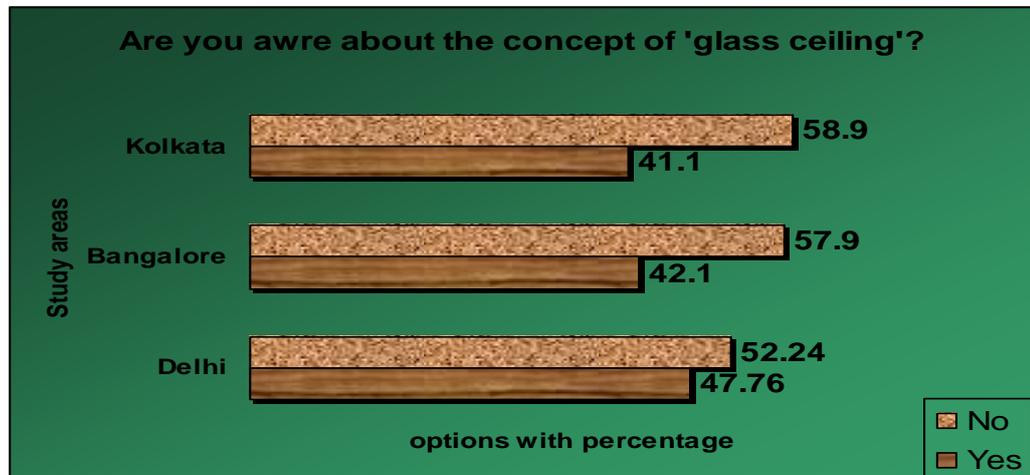
Similarly, 2% of the female middle managers from Delhi only indicated that their company is not much sensitive towards the situation of women. They are not given any special facilities. Though the percentages are small, but, we can not hide the fact that discrimination is there in the ground level for women managers. One of the women managers citing her example said that her company was very happy with her performance before she went for her maternity leave but after she availed maternity benefits and rejoined the company when she required flexi-timing arrangement, her boss started finding faults in her work. She had to quit the job and join another company after one year gap. Some of them felt that sex discrimination which women experience in the work situation is often very subtle in form. For instance, women are often excluded from meetings to which all male peers have been invited. Therefore, they are out of the informal loop which helps in ones career advancement.

4.2.3 ((iv) Glass Ceiling

This is the most crucial and significant level where the women managers face ‘glass ceiling’ and were not able to reach the top management level in companies. Hence, it is very important to know about the forms and patterns through which the invisible glass ceiling works at this stage which prevent the educated and trained women managers their deserving place at the top. Under the earlier discussion point, we read that majority of women managers feel that their companies



do not discriminate in terms of employment, opportunities for career advancement and training. But, then why so few women manage to reach the top lot?



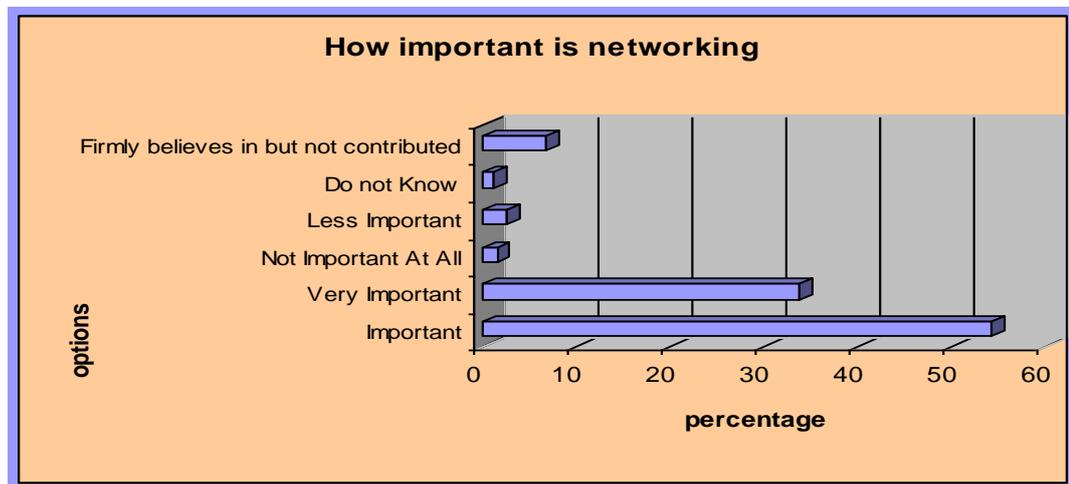
When the respondents were asked whether they are aware about the concept of glass ceiling or not, we received the responses mostly in negative as shown in the above bar graph. Even the respondents who voiced that they are aware about the concept of 'glass ceiling', 37% expressed that they do not know exactly what it means. 36% of the respondents in all the three study areas said that it means discrimination of women in reaching the top level position despite having the requisite qualification and experience and discrimination in promotion and training facilities. While the respondents in Delhi said that they have never faced 'glass ceiling' in their careers, 5% respondents from Bangalore and 3.4% respondents from Kolkata highlighted that they had faced it. 58% respondents in Delhi, 67% respondents in Bangalore and 51% respondents in Kolkata thought that it is not difficult for women managers to move to senior positions beyond a point. The reason they cited for it is the favorable work place atmosphere, attitude of male and female colleagues and non-reflection of 'glass ceiling'. May be the fact that the 'glass ceiling' factor moves so subtly within an organization that women managers at this level are not able to apprehend it and may be identifying it with the day-to-day office politics which they think exist more or less in every office/company/organization, etc. It is best explained in the fact that 84% respondents from Delhi, 58% respondents in Bangalore and 72% respondents in Kolkata expressed that their sector is suitable for women because more women are working in that



particular sector. It shows that women feel more secure in a position where more women are there.

4.2.3 (v) Lack of Networking

For career growth, 54.2% of the respondents said networking is important while 34% said networking is very important, and only 1.5 % said that networking is not important at all, 2.6% respondents said it is less important and 1.2% respondents said that they don't know. However, 7% respondents said that they firmly believe in networking but were not been able to contribute as they do not have the time to do networking. Some of them, during field visits also expressed that they are not comfortable at networking Although they knew and indicated that by being cut off from the informal group, they lose out in building connections and getting relevant information about organizations' which would have been useful for their career growth.



4.2.3 (vi) Relocation Issues/Transfer Policies

Relocation/Transfer also acts as a hindrance in the career growth of women managers particularly at the middle level. 3.8% of the respondents in Delhi and 4.8% of the respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata opined that transfer has been a bottleneck in their promotions. While the research team met the Women in Public Sector (WIPS) representative who is now in the top level position in management, she voiced that it's the reluctance and lacuna on the part of women managers to take up challenges such as relocation or transfer as a bargain for promotion.



She added that some years ago, when she was in a recruiting position, she offered lucrative promotions to deserving women managers which required some sort of relocation or the other, but to her dismay, only 25% of those women managers agreed for transfer and promotion while the most deserving among them compromised their ambition with their present job. The experience left her very skeptical. The reasons cited for not accepting promotion where relocation is involved in case of women managers are all personal and family related. As women managers in the middle level have small children and parents/parents-in-law to look after/taken care of, their absence was almost impossible from the family front. In addition, husbands of women managers found it difficult to adjust with transfers as they have to shift their base as well which was neither acceptable nor possible for them at times. In this case, the pressure builds up on middle-level women managers to forego promotion to senior/top level and to be satisfied where ever she has reached in her career with bleak chances of further opportunities in future. During our field work, we noticed that some of these women managers reconciled with this, while many carry on that regret afterwards. As a result, there is low motivation and zeal in their present work.

Several respondents in the banking sector particularly said that for them promotion means transfer and many respondents do not take promotions just because they do not want to get transferred. They said that they are happy compromising with their career and serving in the same post for more than 5-10 years!

4.2.3 (vii) Family Factor

66% of the respondents in Delhi, 46% respondents in Bangalore and 44% respondents in Kolkata said that their husbands and family are supportive to their careers and its demands. 52% respondents in Delhi, 83% in Bangalore and 85% respondents in Kolkata believed that they are successfully managing their career and family lives. What we witnessed in the field level while conducting the study is that although family has been more or less supportive; balancing both work and family has been a challenge for respondents. While they believed that they successfully managed both fronts by deftly juggling work and domestic responsibilities, nevertheless they experienced stress while managing both front because they are under double burden unlike a simple housewife. At the same time all believed that commitment to work is



important, but, they cannot neglect their families and 57% respondents in Delhi, 55% respondents in Bangalore and 69% respondents in Kolkata said that they never compromised their work because of family issues. This shows the honesty and sincerity of women managers towards their work. But, there are also cases who took break for raising children, looked for part time jobs to look after their families, etc. During field study, they also expressed that they would not like to be too much ambitious which would generate conflict in the family environment.

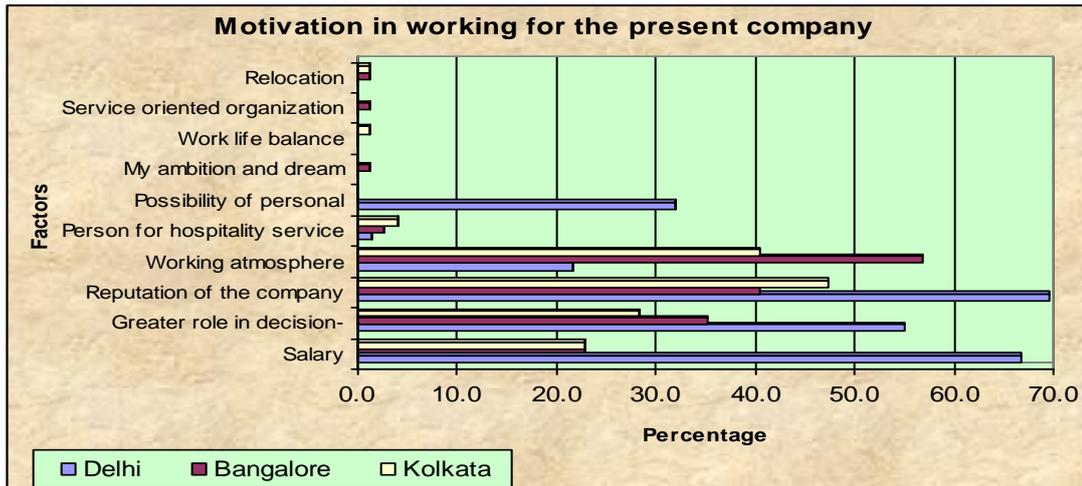
The suggestions of middle level women managers to the future generation included most prominently to work hard, work smart, be positive in life and to choose such a career path where there would be plenty of opportunities to grow.

4.3 Senior Level

4.3.1 Description of the Study Participants

In this study 240 senior level women managers participated from three cities i.e. Delhi, Bangalore and Kolkata, which included around 80 women managers from each city belonging to the selected four sectors; Health, media, banking & finance and hospitality with a division of around 20 women managers from each sector. The average age was 39+ years and 90% of them were married and 58% had children that ranged from 1-2 children per respondent. These senior managers from different sectors, hold varying titles and positions which include Senior Resident Doctor, Senior Nursing Superintendent, Accounts Manager, Vice President, Branch Manager, Deputy General Manager, Deputy Manager, Senior Editor, Senior Correspondent, Manager Productions, Manager Marketing and Communications, Manager Sales, Manager Reservation on Domestic Air Ticketing, Manager Business Development, etc.

While women managers in Bangalore and Kolkata got promoted to senior level more quickly at 9+ years of working, their counterparts in Delhi got elevated to senior level positions after 11+ years of experience. However, as far as working in the current company is concerned, women managers have at least 5+ years of working experience in the same company.



Respondents in the three cities under the study cited the motivational factor for joining their present companies in a preferential manner. In general the three biggest motivators for respondents in the Delhi area were: reputation of the company (70%), salary (67%) and greater role in the decision making process in the company (55%). This is in contrast to the other two areas in which salary is not regarded as important (Bangalore and Kolkata 23%). Besides the reputation of the company which considered to be most important for women managers of Kolkata (Bangalore 40.5% and Kolkata 47.3%) while the atmosphere at work is considered to be important for women managers in Bangalore (Bangalore 56.8%) Less priority was given to possibility of personal growth and development, ambition, work and life balance, relocation and organizational structure. Their average salary ranged from 35,000 - Rs 70000 as filled up in our study questionnaires. However, it is often reported by our field investigators during data collection that women managers especially in this category are a bit hesitant to answer this question.

4.3.2 Factors that contributed to the career development

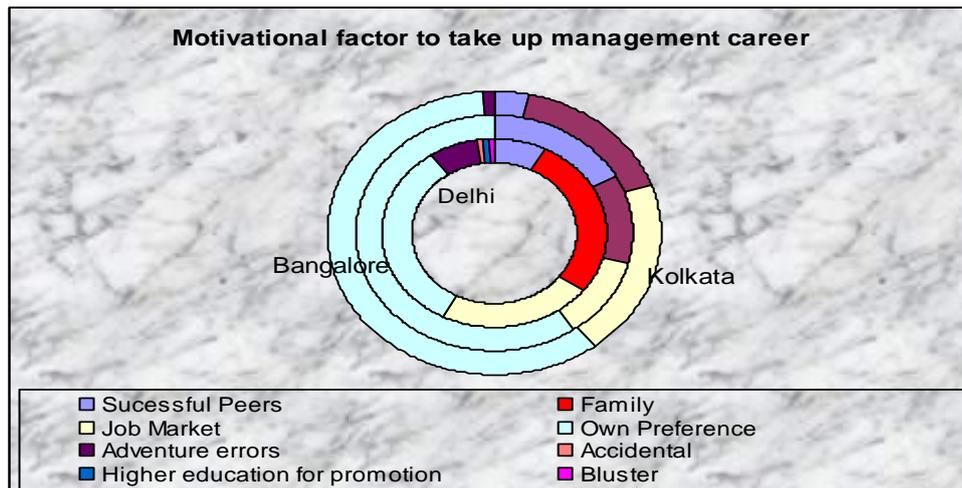
The senior level women managers were asked about the factors that contributed to their career development. 57% respondents of Delhi and 39% of respondents from Kolkata believed that it is their hard labour which have been rewarded, but, for 53% respondents of Bangalore it is their performance all trough which paved their way to success. However, there were various factors laid down by the respondents during the interview process which includes factors relating to



their education, training, employment scenario, hard work, performance, adjustments in the domestic front, etc.

4.3.2 (i) Education Credentials

All the senior level women managers had Post-Graduate degrees mostly in social sciences, commerce, journalism, medicine, management, and business administration..



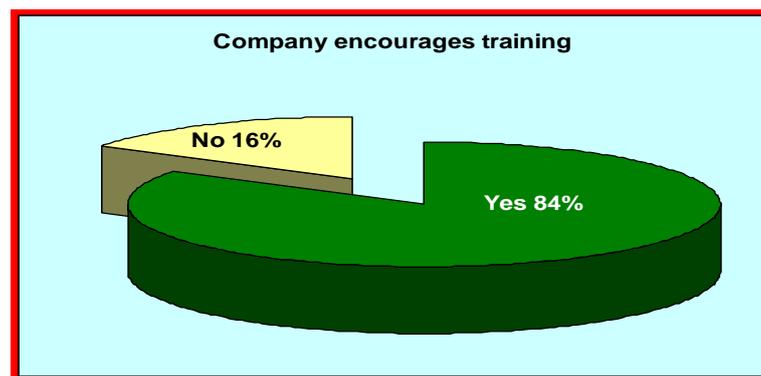
From the above graph, we can easily make out that they chose management as a career option out of their own preference (61%) and not under any pressure from family or friends. This proves the foundation stone of a successful career that women chose their own career path. The ratio of male: female in their classes were 60:40 for Delhi and 70:30 for Bangalore and Kolkata.

72% of the respondents in Delhi, 56% in Bangalore and 40% in Kolkata voiced that short term diploma and certificate courses if pursued after joining the job enhances the scope for promotion and gives recognition to one's skills. Some of them also had taken up formal professional courses after joining in their jobs to further their careers. Those who did not have a professional degree opined that at the current time having a professional degree is important to be in the competition and to have a greater opportunity for advancement. The majority of them, 61% of the respondents in Delhi were self-motivated as they wanted to pursue a career of their own.



4.3.2 (ii) Training

97% of the respondents in Delhi and 96% of the respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata each believed that skill enhancement/improvement trainings are helpful to very helpful in the progress of one's career. Similarly, 97% respondents in Delhi, 83% respondents in Bangalore and 66% respondents in Kolkata said that their company offered training for employees in the middle level to enable them for promotion to senior level.



96.3% indicated that it is (very) important to recognize one's own skills and should work towards that. About 84% of the respondents said that their company encourages them to participate in the training programmes by getting them arranged in office hours and exempting them from work. Sometimes, office provides for transport or traveling allowance. A few respondents also indicated that they encourage their subordinates to participate in the training, but some of them do not take them seriously and are generally in a hurry to leave for home.

4.3.2 (iii) Hard Work and Performance

When the women managers in the three study areas were asked to rate their success, 57% of the respondents in Delhi and 38.8% respondents in Kolkata attributed it to their hard work while 52.7% respondents in Bangalore credited it to their performance. But, while they were asked to choose the factor which contributed for their success, 83.3% of the respondents in Delhi believed that their outstanding performance has contributed greatly to their growth. In the other two areas this percentage hovers around 64.9% for Bangalore and 63% for Kolkata. Other important factors are rising opportunities (33.1% on average) and adjustment and support in the



domestic front (21.5%). While interviewing the senior level women managers, some of them said that to rise in career one must not compromise in their career and should be ready to handle more responsibilities, be more committed, and dedicated. A few respondents stated that they worked much harder than men to prove themselves to top management. Majority of them said that they have never hesitated in taking up additional responsibilities throughout their careers

4.3.2 (iv) Family Support and Adjustment

Support from family and friends proved to be very important. 80.8% (Delhi 77.8%; Bangalore 86.5%; Kolkata 78.5%) of the respondents stated that it was important for them to feel supported by these people and they understood what an impact a career has on one's life. Another 37.1% (Delhi 37%; Bangalore 43.2%; Kolkata 31.6%) found it vital that family members and friends helped out doing chores, because the respondent herself did not have sufficient time to take care of it all. Their family always encouraged them to pursue careers.

On a total, 19.9% of the respondents had problems to balance work and family life. 51.9% of the respondents in Delhi and 9.1% in Bangalore and Kolkata replied that they successfully balanced the work and home while 55.1% of the respondents in Bangalore said they successfully dealt with these problems with the help of their family and were therefore able to move up in their careers. 23.1% of the respondents in Kolkata said that there was always a problem of time and work pressure

4.3.3 Factors hindering their Growth

To analyse the factors that hindered the career development of the senior-level women managers, we administered a set of questions on the stumbling blocks that they encountered in their career path. The responses which we received during our field visits can be categorized into the organizational, societal and individual level. Those were factors regarding promotion/transfer, gender policies, discrimination, networking, and family responsibilities.



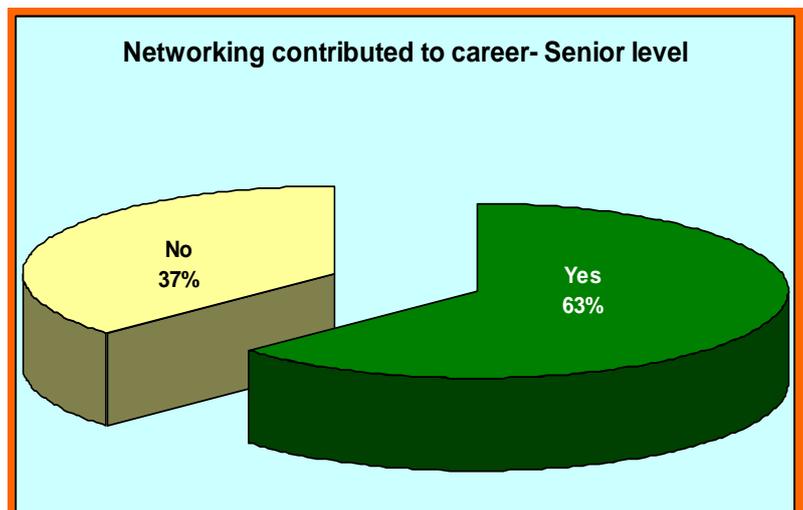
4.3.3 (i) Discrimination/ Glass ceiling factor

Of all the respondents, 91.9% indicated that there is no discrimination based on gender in the company with regard to opportunity, employment and training. But, simultaneously many respondents opined that the situation of women is not the same as it is for men at the work place. Sometimes women lose out in availing those opportunities to the maximum. 25% respondents from Delhi, 13.6% respondents in Bangalore and 2.9% respondents in Kolkata expressed that they faced the 'glass ceiling' at some point in their careers. 23.4% of the respondent senior women managers in Delhi, 57.4% in Bangalore and 39.7% in Kolkata voiced that time and again they have to prove their capabilities just because they are women.

7.7% of the respondents (4.9% in Kolkata; 8.4% in Bangalore and 8.8% in Delhi) said that they were often not given additional responsibilities of lower importance, in the assumption that they will not be able to fulfill their tasks satisfactory. During the interview process, a few respondents in the higher management of the banking sector indicated that they are often given back office management jobs which do not involve strategic decision-making and that makes women lose out on attaining a higher position. Many respondents also indicated about the ego clashes that occur with men in higher management and sometimes that has proved disadvantageous for them. Some of the respondents also said that though they are in the senior positions, men in the company/organization primarily view them as women rather than as a qualified senior person who holds a certain position.

4.3.3 (ii) Networking

The majority (66.3% on average) (Delhi 56.4%; Bangalore 77.5%; 65.8%) of the respondents said that networking is important. Moreover, 63% of the respondents said that it has contributed to their career advancement. 23% stated to





believe firmly in networking, but they neither have the time nor the inclination to act on this. Especially their familial responsibilities did not allow them to devote much time to it.

4.3.3 (iii) Transfer/relocation

5.7% of the respondents in Delhi, 2.8% in Bangalore and 6.3% in Kolkata opined that transfer or relocation have been a major hindrances in their career growth. This is despite the fact that their company provide all facilities for transfer like preference to women in providing cost of transportation/accommodation/crèche in office premises, etc. The problem women managers encountered in case of transfer or relocation in most cases as stated by respondents are: the education/schooling of their children, husband may or may not have their office branch in that other city, ailing in-laws who are reluctant to shift base, and own inhibition of staying all alone, etc. That's why they did not take transfers and lost out with promotions. In their opinion, transfers should not be linked with promotions and it should not be given to those only who are willing to relocate. In fact, some of the respondents also said that companies should facilitate the transfer of women employees when they ask for it, as many women desire for transfer to a particular location when their husband gets transferred to that location so that family life would not be disturbed.

4.3.3 (iv) Gender Policies

Interestingly enough, while majority of the respondents (53.8%) in Delhi reportedly said that their company does have a gender policy in place, majority of respondents from Bangalore and Kolkata, the other two cities under the study, said that their company does not have a gender policy. The companies who do not have gender policies in place find it difficult to be gender sensitive while undertaking major policy decisions and when a crisis situation unfolds within the work place.

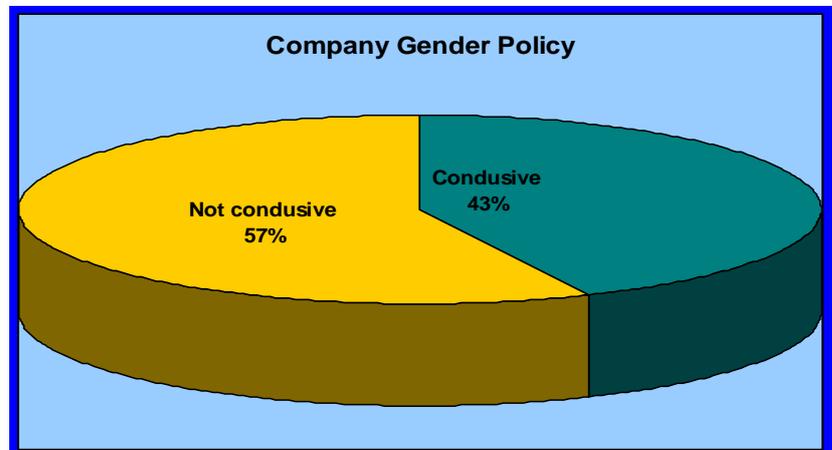
Table 4.9: Does your company have gender policy?

Options	Centre		
	Bangalore	Kolkata	Delhi
Yes	24.3	26.7	53.8
No	75.7	73.3	46.2



While 30.8% of the respondents in Bangalore and Kolkata told that they knew their company has gender policy, 75% of the respondents in Delhi told that they knew that their companies have gender policy as they get equal opportunities.

About 43% of the Delhi respondents said that their company's policies have been very conducive for a gender friendly environment while 57% said they are not. In case of Bangalore and Kolkata the gender friendly percentages are much higher (respectively



86% and 92.1%) Majority of them indicated that the company should bring in more women friendly policies such as flexible working hours and crèches so that women can focus on their job while shouldering other family responsibilities. According to them it would promote women as a working force and have a gender inclusive environment. All the senior level respondents said that their company should provide A few respondents during the interview said that they have made attempts in their companies to implement some women friendly policies but have not achieved much breakthrough.

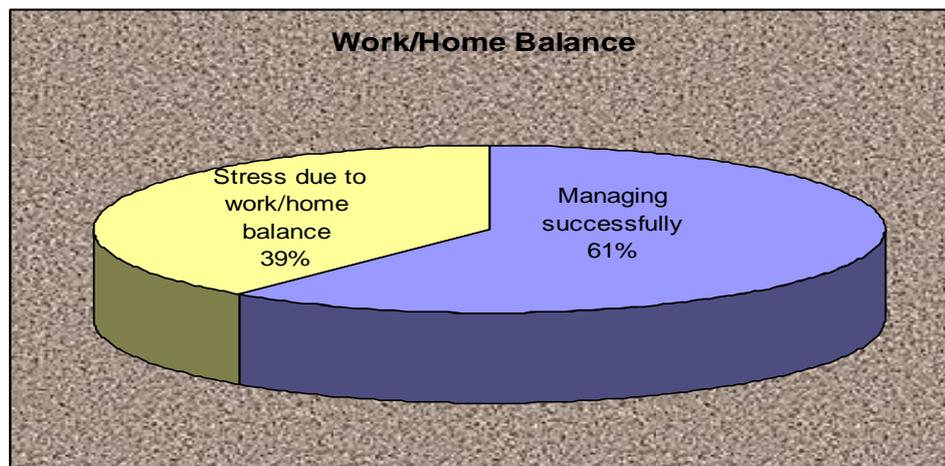
4.3.3 (v) Lack of Career Plans

During the interview process, many respondents, except those in the health sector, spelt out that when they ventured into their career, they did not have very specific career plans. But, over the years they acquired experience, training and developed the ambition to become a top level manager in their field. They were very much guided and motivated by their family. In fact, several respondents felt they would have advanced more quickly if they had taken control of their careers and developed career strategies much earlier. Even a majority of them stated that individually they did not invest much in their capabilities. All the things that they learnt were acquired through the organization. 69% of the respondents in Delhi, 55% respondents from Bangalore and 64% respondents from Kolkata expressed that they are not aware of training



programmes provided by different business Chambers and Management schools and they underwent only those training which were offered by their companies/institutions. 44% respondents from Delhi, 59% respondents from Bangalore and 36% respondents from Kolkata indicated that they encountered pressure from domestic duties that made their career plans more difficult. Even women managers, especially in the private sector, said that they had taken break in their careers for child-rearing and domestic responsibilities which impacted their career growth or progression.

4.3.3 (vi) Family Factor



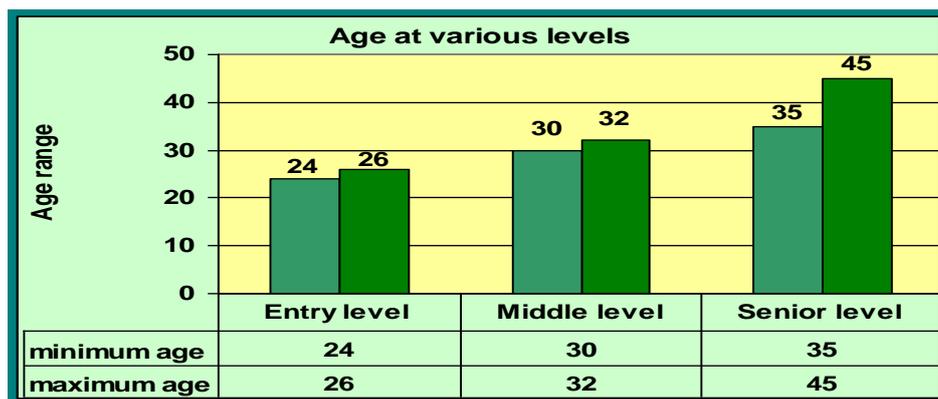
For many of the respondents adjusting family responsibilities with work has proven to be a challenge. 60.8% said that they have been successfully in managing both duties, while on an average 39.2% (26.2% respondents from Bangalore; 32.9% respondents from Kolkata and 53.2% respondents from Delhi) of respondents said that they experienced stress due to clashes between family responsibilities and work. As

4.4 Discussion

they have been haunted with guilt consciousness of neglecting their children.

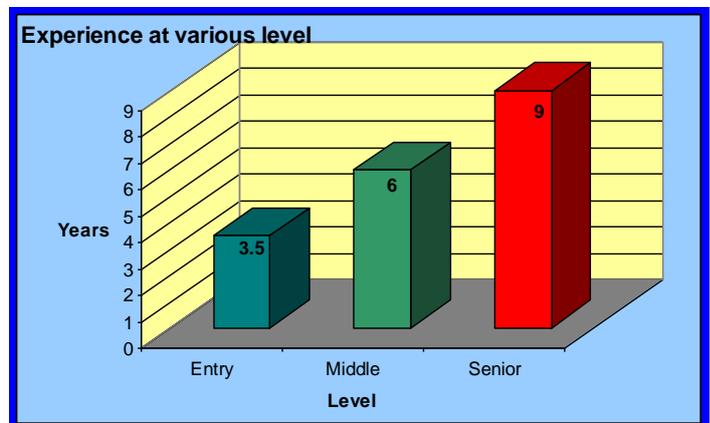


A comparative analysis of the situation of women managers at different levels, which has been examined above, revealed that they all share certain common characteristics and at the same time they also differ in various aspects. To begin with, the differences between the women managers who participated in this study, in terms of age, marital status and experience are discussed below.



The age of the respondents in the entry level ranged from 24-26 years, middle level women manager’s age ranged from 30-32 years and senior level women mangers age ranged from 35-45 years.

Among the entry level respondents only 29% were married and only 6% had children. With regard to middle level respondents, 70% were married with one or two children. Among the senior level mangers about 97% were married and 58% had one or two children.



The average years of experience of the entry level respondents was 3.5 years, while the average years of experience of a middle level women manager before being elevated from entry level was 6 years and for senior level the average years of experience was 9 years before they were



promoted to senior level positions. As is logical to expect, the higher the position a respondent in the organization has, the longer, on an average, the respondent has been engaged with the organization. 65% of the entry level respondents had worked with the organization for 2-3 years, while 51% of middle level managers had worked already 3 – 4 years for the organization. Senior level respondents, 40% said that they had been with the same organization for more than seven years.

From the demand side:

Career choices

The respondents in the entry level turn out to be independent in their career choices. For 67.9% entry level respondents, their career choices were based on their own decisions and for 35.9% respondents, on the job market demands. 55% of the entry level respondents believed that one should make clear career choices and should devote one's energy and talents to the domain in which one has interest and aptitude. In the middle level, own preferences are also regarded important (70%). Besides that, the respondents said that the job market, family support and successful peers determined their career choices as well. At the senior level, the majority of the respondents said it was their own decision (61%) to pursue a career. However, we should not keep our eyes off from the fact that today's generation who are entering the job market and are listed here as entry level have more career options and professional courses available than their peers in the senior level. Similarly, when a person enters into marriage and with children priorities change and that defines the middle level women managers situation, their hesitation, dilemma and confusion regarding relocation, shifting to better career options, better-paying jobs, etc.

Aspiration/Motivation

Both entry level and middle level women managers aspired to become top level managers. However, many of the respondents in the senior level said that initially when they joined the organization, they were more concerned about the job than about their own ambitions.

For respondents at the entry-level, the main reason for deciding to work for their current company is because they see the opportunity to pursue a career. The reputation of the company is also important. Salary appears to play a smaller role in this decision. At mid-level the



dominating motivating factor for the respondents was reputation of the company followed by career chances and salary. Conducive working atmosphere is considered to be a bonus point. The main motivational factor at a senior level is salary, to have a greater role in decision – making and the favorable working atmosphere.

Education / Skills

At all levels, most respondents successfully completed their bachelor degrees, however, several respondents were holding a professional degree too. All of them believed that professional courses are important for career growth. Although throughout the three levels respondents had undergone training programmes, the training programmes differed in terms of elaborateness. At the entry level, the training programmes mainly consisted of some kind of induction or were meant to refresh the trainees. At the middle and senior levels, it was regarded more important to provide on the job training and to have the managers acquire specific skills. All respondents in the three levels said that their company encouraged and facilitated women to undertake training. However, most respondents were not aware of the training programmes offered by the Chambers and Management institutions.

At entry and middle level all women agreed that their company provides equal opportunities to men and women. Although both sexes get the opportunity to grow in the organization, several respondents in the middle and senior level indicated that most of them cannot benefit from those opportunities because this would be too much of a burden given the fact that they are often already struggling to combine work with family life. The companies/organizations that are included in this study fail to acknowledge this problem. They should try to lesser this burden. This can be done by providing facilities like crèches/day care centres within the campus of the companies/organizations, especially given the high number of respondents who have children.

From the supply side:

Promotion

Women managers at all levels stated that promotion was based on performance and merit. They also said that their companies/organizations do not discriminate when it comes to promotion issues. However, respondents at different levels did notice more subtle discrimination exists at the workplace. While entry level women managers said that men are more often chosen for



assignments that involve traveling/kitchen work (hotel management where women are assigned housekeeping)/ more gainful tasks. The quality of the work that men deliver is also evaluated higher than that of women. Women managers at both the entry and middle level commented that it was often quoted by seniors that male colleagues are more flexible with less family/children's responsibilities and may therefore be given preference when it comes to get employment or a promotion. Several senior level managers said that even after they had reached the senior stage, most of their male colleagues treat them differently, and sometimes not according to the position they hold, because they are women. The majority of women managers said that women have to work much harder than men in order to prove themselves and get recognition.

Networking

Respondents at all levels felt that networking and interpersonal skills are important for professional growth. As most of the networking takes place during after office hours and it becomes a handicap for women managers not being able to put these beyond office hours for networking, it hinders their career prospects. The middle level managers often said that they cannot afford to devote much time to networking due to family responsibilities. Many of the senior level managers expressed their uncomfortable feelings toward networking, though 63% of the respondents stated that it has contributed in their career advancement.

Gender Policies

Most respondents felt that their efficiency and determination have been the guiding principles behind their achievement. In order to improve their performance further the women expressed the need of well equipped support structures and policies that promote them. In fact, support systems, both at the work place and at home helps reducing labour turnover and increases performance. Speaking about their organization, the majority of the respondents mentioned that such support systems are not provided; apart from the statutory transport facilities, medical benefits and compensatory leaves.. Facilities like accommodation, crèches and flexi-timing are non-existent in majority of the cases. Except for maternity leave, no other gender specific policies exist. Certain policies could promote women and make the organization more gender inclusive.



According to the respondents, the lack of gender sensitivity is still a problem in many organizations. Interestingly, companies who have female CEOs are generally more gender-friendly. Although women managers at the senior level have tried to introduce some gender-friendly policies, it has only been successful in a few cases. Several of the women managers at the middle level have stated that they had to take a break from work and their career for family reasons, because their companies were not sensitive enough to appreciate the situation.

Women managers at the middle and senior levels agreed that whether or not someone is being considered for a promotion should not depend on their willingness to transfer to a different city/office. Also, they said, women who want to be transferred should be provided the opportunity to do so.

Family Support

Almost all women managers, on all three levels, stated that their family has supported them throughout their careers. However, the majority of the respondents said that clashes between their domestic duties and professional commitments have impacted their career. This is in particular the case for women who work as middle level managers. For entry level women managers work generally did not interfere with family life. At the senior level, respondents said that they did experience clashes but they successfully tried to make adjustments. As a result work-home interference was no longer an issue.



CHAPTER- V

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

In the present chapter, we have highlighted the major outcomes of the study derived from the analysis of primary data relating to the challenges and opportunities faced by women managers in four sectors- Banking and Finance, Hospitality, Media, and Health, collected from three cities - Delhi, Bangalore and Kolkata. Notwithstanding the fact that women's education and participation in the workforce in India has increased yet their representation in higher management is very low compared to men. This has been elaborately discussed in the introduction chapter of this report. There are various studies which have been done on women's share in the Management. Globally, they comprise only 10 percent of senior managers in Fortune 500 companies, less than four percent are in the uppermost ranks of CEO, president, and executive vice president. In India too, it is no different. A few researches and surveys³⁴ conducted in the Asian and Indian context reveal that in India, men outnumber women in terms of attaining top managerial positions. If we look around, we will not find even a handful of companies headed by women or women at the helm of strategic departments and decision-making positions. But that does not mean that the situation is not improving. Women are being taken for jobs of responsibility, though it may be more on the HR, servicing, IT or finance side and much less in hardcore production or marketing jobs.

We have observed in the Introduction chapter that women make up only 2-3% of administrative and managerial positions in India. Over the years although women have made marginal gains in their share of professional and management positions, yet it is very low compared to men (97%). About 56 percent of businesses in India have women at senior levels, as against the global average of 59 percent. India's performance is well below the global average 24 percent with Indian women holding only 15 percent of top managerial positions in private firms in the country. The Indian metros do emerge better than the national average with Chennai closest to

³⁴ See Introduction chapter pg. 2-4



the global average at 22 percent followed by Delhi at 18 percent and Bangalore at 16 percent. If we look at the different levels of management women comprise 16 percent at junior management level, 4 percent each at middle and senior levels and only 1 percent in organizational leadership positions (CEOs). This shows that women's entry is proportionately large but their progression is very slow. The slow pace of progress can be mainly attributable to various factors that hinder women's growth in the career ladder. These factors as discussed below can be categorized under organizational, societal and individual level.

Factors hindering growth of women in management

The following are some of the major factors that hinder growth of women in Management.

- ◆ The stereotypes & pre-conceptions towards women that they are fragile & lacking in the qualities that are considered useful to be effective managers. Traditional masculine traits having higher value than feminine traits in management world. Top posts are generally characterized by masculine aggressive values and suitability for them is decided mostly according to male criteria and by male.
- ◆ The position which an individual hold within the organization shapes the traits and the behavior they develop or possess. Women often secure positions that have titles with little real power or supervisory authority.
- ◆ Women are primarily placed in non-strategic sectors rather than in the positions that involve financial decision-making or revenue-generating responsibilities, like sales and production positions that are critical for advancement to the top.
- ◆ Mentoring plays an important role in the advancement of women into management positions. However, mentoring is often limited for women, which in turn results in a lack of access and training and career development activities.
- ◆ Lack of information and knowledge regarding training and attainment of skills related to job area and leadership qualities impact advancement in career.
- ◆ Women workers still bear more of the main burden of family responsibilities than men and so have less time for the "extracurricular" formal and informal networking essential for advancement in enterprises.



- ◆ Women's career paths tend to be more circuitous and interrupted than those of men which are typically linear, and this impedes women's progress to top positions. Women often have to deal with the complexities of the dual role as working women and mother and sometimes have to make compromises, which slow down their careers.
- ◆ Women managers with children are often looked at as less favorable than those without children and they are viewed as being less committed. This is, however, not same in the case of men who have children.
- ◆ Inability to stay late at work and a disinclination for jobs involving travel and transfers have been identified as another major factors for women in not achieving top positions.
- ◆ Women managers also have their own inner battles, which need to be fought and overcome. Many women do not aspire for higher management posts which will automatically bring in loads of responsibilities including late hours and travel as that would disrupt family life.
- ◆ Women manager lack effective career planning. Unlike men they generally don't have fixed career goals and they lack determination to overcome the obstacles that exist to keep them from accomplishing their goals.
- ◆ There is lack of confidence and attitude needed on the part of the women managers to succeed in business

5.1 Key Findings of the Study

In this study, 240 women managers and 24 HR managers from each city - Delhi, Bangalore, and Kolkata –were interviewed. They were from four sectors Health, Media, Banking & Finance and Hospitality. Overall, despite the challenges the CSR team faced in terms of time and availability of these managers in getting interview done, the interactions with them was a positive experience. Many women managers articulated about the challenges that they faced and shared their views on various aspects relating to their career. We observed that there were differences in views and opinions both at level-wise and sector-wise with regard to challenges faced in the organization, societal and individual front. There were multiple viewpoints on issues like training, networking, and transfers, required for promotion and growth. The HR managers from different sectors provided us an insight into their company policies relating to gender



inclusiveness. They shared their views regarding employment criteria, promotions, leaves and other facilities.

5.1.1 Responses on Challenges Faced by Women Managers

Organizational Level

- ◆ Organizations provide equal opportunities to men and women to grow, in terms of employment, promotion, and training. But several respondents find that those are not enough, for the very fact that the situation of women is not similar to those of men in the private spaces; thus they lose out on opportunities due to various domestic compulsions. Many respondents felt that companies should be sensitive to their situation and needs.
- ◆ 72% of the companies that have been audited during the interview process of the women managers and HR managers do not have any specific gender policies to promote women to leadership positions and make the organization more gender inclusive. However, most of the respondents said their organizations are gender sensitive.
- ◆ Majority of the companies did not have any specific gender committee and cells where women can report their grievances. In most companies it is handled by the higher management. Several respondents said that it was difficult to vent out their grievances as repeatedly lodging complaints is not taken favorably by the senior management and might block one's chances of promotion. .
- ◆ Many respondents said that they are confronted with male ego especially in case of subordinates and colleagues. Assertiveness on the part of women is often not appreciated by men.
- ◆ Discrimination of women in the workplace is very subtle. Many women managers felt that men are more valued and have better chances for promotion than women as they are more flexible and mobile than women.
- ◆ Majority of the respondents said that support systems, both at the work place (58%) and at the family (42%) help to retain employment. And enable women to give their best.
- ◆ Facilities such as flexible working hours (49%), transport (48%), compensatory leaves (51%), and medical benefits (58%) are statutory kind of benefits offered by majority of



the companies and that form part of the company's concern regarding its employees. As such, no special support systems are provided to female workers.

- ◆ Facilities like crèches (only 9% companies have this facility) are non-existent in many of the companies. This was suggested as one of the main reasons why women in the private sector have to quit jobs. Majority of young married women managers expressed the desire that their companies should have facilities like crèche and a sensitive approach so that they can maintain a work-life balance.
- ◆ Maternity benefits remain an issue of anxiety mostly among the entry level and mid-level women managers, especially those in the private sector organizations. In public sector organizations women do not have any issues regarding it.
- ◆ In private sector companies several respondents complained that their companies provide maternity benefits but they are not sensitive to their needs especially when one joins office after availing maternity leave. A few managers lamented that they are not provided with flexi-timings and are perceived as less committed to their work. Unfavorable conditions compelled women to take a break in their career.
- ◆ Some of the women managers stated that having women bosses (26%) and more women in the same company (69%) has helped them to give their best in their work as they are treated with more understanding and empathy. They receive encouragement and advice regarding their work which has helped them to improve.
- ◆ Training programmes are conducted by companies for their employees to enhance their skills and women are encouraged to participate in the training. Several respondents (82%) were happy about the fact that the training programmes are conducted in duty hours and the participants are exempted from their work, which helps them to avail the training. Sometimes companies provide transport or transport allowances to encourage them to participate in the trainings. However, rest of the companies that made no concessions to the specific difficulties that women might face, specifically not very helpful in allowing them to avail training. Many respondents felt that training should be designed factoring the time and space of women.
- ◆ Women participation compared to men is less in-house trainings. The HR managers stated that the low participation ratio of women is because of less number of women employees at all levels.



- ◆ 54% of the respondents believed that networking is important for career growth. But due to their family obligations they did not have much time for networking. 7% of the respondents even said that they are not comfortable with it.
- ◆ 16% of the respondents said women cannot grow after a point. The reason that was cited most was at higher level there is stiff competition and there are subtle gender biases. Women are offered less challenging assignments. They are mostly out of the informal loop or networks.
- ◆ Most of the HR managers opined that women don't prioritize their work. The job on the top can involve putting in long and unpredictable hours besides the possibility of frequent relocation, which is often not possible and feasible for most women.

Societal Level Challenges

- ◆ Although many managers had the support of their family (42%) yet their obligation to domestic duties did not allow them to give 100% to their job. Several young married respondents said that they preferred not to take transfer and rather compromise in promotion, to keep a balance between home and office.
- ◆ Balancing home and work seemed hard for these women managers. 18% of the respondent women managers complained of conflicting roles, responsibilities and complaining in-laws, who wanted the daughter-in-law to quit their jobs
- ◆ Several respondents said that they took break in career for family reasons.
- ◆ Many respondents expressed angst regarding the prevailing mindset that women are perceived to be less committed to work, while men are not. In fact, many of the managers felt that men who are married with children are rather considered more committed to work.

Individual level Challenges

- ◆ HR managers said that women managers don't have the drive to move ahead. They are more complacent about their position. But they also said that those women managers who are assertive and focused would move up in their career.
- ◆ 63% in Delhi, 48% in Bangalore & Kolkata at the entry level, 47.8% of the respondents in Delhi, 39.7% respondents in Bangalore and 48.6% respondents in



Kolkata in the middle level although expressed their aspiration to attain the top level position, yet many of them failed to suggest how to achieve that. They did not have any clear cut career plans and strategies.

- ◆ Some of the respondents mentioned that they need to develop appropriate skills and confidence.

Sector- Specific Findings

Hospitality

- ◆ Women make up 9.1% of the workforce in the Hotel and restaurant industry and men 90.9%. The female percentage share in this industry is a mere 0.9% (indiastat.com).
- ◆ Women employability in this sector has increased with the growth in tourism sector in India. Majority of women managers stated that they are motivated to take up this career out of own preference and job market.
- ◆ 82% of women managers said there is no gender policy in this sector although 75% women managers said during interviews that they do consider their sector to be favourable to gender issues.
- ◆ In the job areas most of them are confined to guest relations, food and beverages and Housekeeping.
- ◆ The facilities provided by the company to support them are transport, medical benefits and compensatory leaves. But those are not exclusively for women.
- ◆ 55% of women managers in this sector believe that women cannot grow after a certain point.

Media Sector

- ◆ In the media sector travel and tours are an integral part of the job, and it becomes difficult for a woman considering safety issues. Shift duties in Media help women to adjust their schedules.
- ◆ About 50% of the respondents in Media said they faced glass ceiling in promotion. There are stiff competition and ego clashes. Achieving top position is not easy. Promotion beyond mid-level is difficult. One need to be very aggressive .Networking



is extremely important to be in the loop and many women managers lose out in this aspect for which their growth is impacted.

- ◆ One of the respondents said that the media industry aims at profit maximization, and men can be better entrepreneurs than women, because they are not carried away by emotion, but are more assertive and commercial minded.
- ◆ Maternity leaves and child care affects those women who are anchoring, and Correspondent jobs. Either they take up desk jobs or they quit.

Banking Sector

- ◆ Only two women have risen to the top position in public sector banks since they were nationalized. In Public sector banks only 5% are women managers. Private sector banks comprise 40 % women managers out of which 30% are women managers.
- ◆ In Banking sector transfer remains a major impediment in the career growth of most of the women managers. Many respondents have compromised promotion just not to take transfer. Majority of the managers felt that transfer should not be linked to promotion.
- ◆ Only 38.2 % respondents said their banks have gender policies. Most of them said their organizations are gender sensitive. Sexual harassment cases reported are rare. Major banks have grievance cell to deal with women problems.
- ◆ Trainings are most often conducted and women are encouraged to participate in the training programmes. The respondents in the banking sector felt that the sector is good for women because it is a source of respect, recognition, and a safer sector to work. Problem exists with the fixed working hours, but certain improvements in this regard will definitely make it a comfortable and women friendly place to work.
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- ◆ Banks provide facilities such as medical benefits, compensatory leaves and transport facilities to a few managers. Flexible working hours options are availed in private banks but not in public sector banks.



Health Sector

- ◆ There are no gender policies and companies are less sensitive to gender. Sexual harassment cases are reported and some companies have gender cells to address women grievances.
- ◆ Special efforts are not made for women to grow within the organization. Women candidates are preferred in the Physiotherapy sector, client relation ship, and. This may be due to their caring, empathetic nature
- ◆ The positive factor is there is scope for flexibility and independence within this sector. Due to these reasons, the sector is favorable and attracting more women.
- ◆ Several respondents said glass ceiling exists.33% said men are given more preference in several job areas like travel assignments, for which they lose out.
- ◆ Companies encourage women mangers to participate in trainings. Majority of them felt that consideration of time and space of the trainings are just as important as a supportive work culture.

Overall Sectors

- ◆ Promotion is based on performance and merit in the media, hospitality, Health and private sectors banks. In case of a public sector bank, seniority and performance were the determining criterion for promotion to higher levels. Performance is judged on the basis of written examination and interview in these banks.
- ◆ In the all the sectors women except most women (45%) said traveling assignments are generally given to men. This is primarily because of security reasons to ensure female employees' safety. Many feel it limits the women in their professional development and career growth
- ◆ Most of the companies in the four sectors do not have any proper grievance cells to address women complaints reports of sexual harassment. Most of the banks have grievance cells that address women complaints.
- ◆ Out of the four sectors media and Banking was less flexible with working hours which is 42.1%.
- ◆ Companies across sectors offer equal opportunity to grow. But majority do not any specific policies to promote women.



- ◆ Women managers often face conflicting issues in managing family and office. Only 14.3 % said they are managing comfortably.

Level wise Findings

- ◆ The average years of experience of the entry level respondents was 3.5 years while the average years of experience of a middle level manager before being elevated from entry level was 6 years and for senior level the average years of experience was 9 years before being elevated from middle level position.
- ◆ The respondents in the entry level are found to be more independent in their career choices. Their career choices were entirely based on their own decision and the job market demands. In the middle level the respondents said it was the job market, family support and advice of peers that determined their career choices. In the senior level majority of the respondents said it was family and individual factor that guided their career choices.
- ◆ Both entry level and middle level women managers aspired to be top level managers. In the senior level most of the respondents said that initially when they joined job they were more concerned with the immediate job and later on with experience they became more ambitious and aspired for higher position.
- ◆ At entry-level the main motivational factor for choosing the current company as employer is career chances, followed by reputation of the company. Salary plays a smaller role. At mid-level the dominating motivating factor for the respondents was reputation of the company followed by career chances and salary. And at senior level the main motivational factor is salary and greater role in decision –making and working atmosphere.
- ◆ All respondents in three levels said that their company encouraged and facilitated women to undertake training. Individually speaking most of the respondents in each level were not aware of training programmes offered by Chambers and Management institutions
- ◆ At all levels women agreed that their company provides equal opportunity to grow in the organization.



- ◆ Across all levels the respondents said their companies are not sensitive to the fact that situation of women is different and that they should be given facilities to promote them.
- ◆ A few respondents at different levels spoke about the subtle discrimination existing in the workplace. At entry and at middle level respondents commented that male colleagues are more flexible and may therefore be preferred in getting employed or promotion.
- ◆ Several of senior level women said that even after reaching senior stage most of the male treat them as women first than their position.
- ◆ Majority of women managers at all levels said that women have to work much harder than men to prove themselves.
- ◆ Across the levels majority of respondents felt networking is important. The middle level managers mostly said that they cannot afford to do networking as their family responsibilities do not allow them to devote much time to it. Most senior level women said they are not comfortable with it.
- ◆ With regard to transfer policies women at mid level and senior level said that it should not be linked to promotion and women who are willing to take transfer should be given. It should be more need oriented than a norm.
- ◆ Across all women found that their company is not women- friendly.
- ◆ Family has been a great support to the respondents at all levels. However clashes between their domestic duties and professional commitments have impacted the career of the women managers. It was mostly observed in the cases of respondents in the middle level. At entry level women managers did not experience conflicting situation so much. At the senior level women said that they did experience clashes but they have tried to make adjustments and manage successfully.

5.2. Recommendations

- ◆ Women intake ratio is less than men in almost all the companies/ organizations visited in the four sectors. Companies should orient their recruitment policies to recruit equal



number of male and female in the entry level in order to bring in gender diversity and inclusiveness.

- ◆ In the survey it was observed that policies of companies in the four sectors are not adequate to ensure growth and leadership development of women employees. Companies should be more sensitive to women situations and need as women generally have to look after family and work.
- ◆ Companies should be transparent about their policies relating to employment, promotion, training. Organizations should go in for gender audits.
- ◆ Need of male colleagues who are more sympathetic and understanding. Managers should be made more accountable for gender focused results and everyone should go through a gender sensitization process.
- ◆ More transparency among the staff and the HR department is needed, more employee-friendly HR. sensitive to women concerns and situation is needed.
- ◆ Lack of laws in the private sector, therefore there should be proper laws regarding pregnancies, maternity leaves etc. the Laws should be prescribed, so that no one manipulates it.
- ◆ Clear cut sexual harassment policy should be laid down by the companies. Proper grievance cells need to be formed for women to report about their grievances.
- ◆ Promotion should not be linked to transfer as has been the case in public sector banks. Transfer should be need based. Women who are willing to take transfer should be given transfers if the companies have a branch in the location where one wants to be transferred.
- ◆ Both family and work are fulfilling experiences in itself. Good support system at family and work place would enable women to fulfill both without being pressurized to prioritize one above the other. Companies should adopt best practices such as options to work in flexi-timings, work from home and transport facilities.
- ◆ Difficulty with child care arrangements was a major workplace issue. Companies should provide facilities like crèches to enable women to give their best in their profession.
- ◆ Companies should encourage its women employees to participate in programs that would hone personality development of women



- ◆ Woman should have clear cut aims and ambitions in life. Goals should be well defined in the start so that women do not lose focus in the midst of their career.
- ◆ Lack of mentoring is found to be one of the factors responsible for women slow development. Companies should create programs for mentoring entry and middle level managers. Mentoring not only inspires a sense of responsibility across levels but also and a sense of intergenerational connection and reciprocity.
- ◆ Companies should establish leadership training explicitly for newly recruited women managers in the recognition that promotion to middle- level and senior –level often entails appointment to leadership positions.

“The larger lessons that can be drawn from this study are:

Women representation at the top level of management is proportionately very low compared to men. There is a solid glass ceiling that is existing and that is resisting women’s movement in their upward ladder of career growth. This suggests that there needs to be systemic changes if companies are serious about bringing in greater diversity in their management and encouraging competent women to overcome the hurdles that society places in their career path”

The study concludes that the major barrier for promotion of women managers comes from insensitivity of the corporates towards women’s social roles and responsibilities.



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