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Perceptions of a Glass Ceiling at Top Management Positions in Croatian Organizations

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Abstract

Being successful and competitive in the market today is the challenge of every business. Successfully managing and leading a company to set goals is one of the key tasks of company management. The manager is the one who needs to know fully and understand the functioning of the business system of the company and be able to respond to market challenges. Whether a manager is a man or a woman, he or she needs to have skills, knowledge needed to manage a business. People, their intellectual capital, abilities, and competencies are the key to effective management and management of a company regardless of gender. In today's business environment and the managerial world, men are those who dominate in higher (leading) management positions, and women managers have difficulty to advance into higher and leading managerial positions. Various prejudices and discrimination are visible in the area of involvement of women in higher hierarchical managerial positions, so their progress and piercing are difficult. For this reason, we can talk about the existence of phenomena of so-called "Glass ceiling". Glass ceiling in the economic sense refers to the invisible "ceiling", referring to the barrier encountered by women who want to move to higher managerial positions. In the Republic of Croatia, there is still a gap and prejudice while on the global level, more and more companies recognize the importance of women's involvement in company management and higher managerial positions.

Keywords: management, managerial positions, man in management, women in management, glass ceiling phenomenon

JEL classification: M10, M12

Introduction

Today's global market and contemporary trends that dictate the pace of business have become unimaginably dynamic and require adjustment to keep the business on the market. Business operation and its success and recognition are largely driven by leadership and quality management. Today it is unthinkable that businesses exist and achieve positive business results without adequate and quality management, which aims to guide the organization to meet the set goals. Management is also expected to manage human resources and direct this potential to achieve a successful collaboration of all employees, ensure teamwork, and improve organization. Most managerial positions are still dominated by men while for women

today is difficult to succeed to higher managerial and executive positions. Today woman al also very good in doing business in a leading company, and companies that have high-ranking women in employment achieve better business and financial results. There is still gap and discrimination in the Republic of Croatia regarding the possibility and success of women in higher managerial positions.

The aim of this paper is to provide a theoretical review of the role of women in management, reflecting their representation on senior managerial and top managerial positions. The "Glass Ceiling" phenomenon is still present and proven throughout the world and also by Croatian research and proves the under-representation of women in managerial positions in the field of management and the difficult to progress and reach the leading positions.

Methodology

For the purposes of writing this article, new Croatian and world literature has been used and analyzed, and authors can be considered as representative authors in the field of interest of this topic. The papers were selected by searching various databaes, such as Web of Science, Scopus, and Google Scholar, using the search phrase ("women" OR "female") AND ("glass ceiling" OR "top management"). The papers were analysed in order to review the representation of women in the management of contemporary (modern) organizations and associated with the existence of so-called " phenomenon of the glass ceiling.

Results

The aim of this paper was to: (1) analyze and investigate the importance of managerial function and women's involvement in top managerial functions; (2) explore the difference between leadership styles and the existence of a glass ceiling; (3) and to provide literature review from these areas. In order to achieve the objectives, set, a number of Croatian and international literature were analyzed in the field of management and women's involvement in management, ie leadership positions, i.e. existence of a glass ceiling phenomenon. Numerous world-wide and Croatian researches deal and study the themes and areas of management, i.e. involvement of women in managerial positions. It is exactly the area of management that is the area of numerous researches and topics of many authors in various fields. Numerous researches that have tackled these issues have proven the existence of a glass ceiling effect and the existence of discrimination and the difficult for women to progress in top management positions.

Table 1
Literature Review

Author(s), year	Description of work	Paper title	Main results
Nidogon Višnjić, Begičević Ređep, Vidaček-Hainš, 2018.	Professional work - survey on a sample of 112 female respondents performing managerial positions in business organizations in Croatia	Attitudes and perceptions of women in managerial positions about their position in the workplace	The research shows that gender equality has not been achieved. Results of this study showed that the perception of a woman in a leadership position is on the unequal position of women, and the perception of the respondents who consider women for the same work have lower wages compared to male colleagues
Jalšenjak, Krkač, 2016	A book discussing the glass ceiling phenomenon in Croatia	Business Ethics, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Sustainability	Authors demonstrate the existence of a glass ceiling phenomenon in business organizations of the Republic of Croatia describing the obstacles faced by employees, linked to gender discrimination
Napasri, Yukongdi, 2015	Article - research by semi-structured interviews with 30 female executives in senior management positions.	A Study of Thai Female Executives: Perceived Barriers to Career Advancement	The results indicated that career barriers are ranged from individual to interpersonal, organizational and societal factors, the major barriers for female professionals climbing to be corporate ladder are those at the organizational and societal levels (gender stereotyping)
Ružić, Perušić 2014	Professional work - Survey was conducted on a representative sample of 33 students of the University of Nikola Tesla Gospić - the direction of Economics of Entrepreneurship.	The position of women in management - new trends in the phenomenon of the glass ceiling,	They prove that women in managerial positions are still absent due to rooted social, cultural, and psychological mechanisms that cause the effect of the "glass ceiling" effect.
Smith, Caputi, Crittenden, 2012a	Article - Literature review	Amaze of metaphors around glass ceilings. Gender in Management	They demonstrate the existence of a glass ceiling phenomenon, which makes it difficult for women to progress or reach top managerial positions
Smith, Caputi, Crittenden, 2012b	Article - Regression analysis on a sample of 258 women employed in Australian organizations	How are women's glass ceiling beliefs related to career success?	They exploring how women's glass ceiling beliefs are related to five major indicators of subjective career success: career satisfaction, happiness, psychological wellbeing, physical health, and work engagement (WE). Regression analyses showed denial was positively associated with career satisfaction and WE; resignation was negatively related to happiness and both emotional and physical wellbeing; resilience had positive relationships with happiness and WE; acceptance was negatively related to WE.

Bedeković, Ravlić, 2011	Preliminary communication	The position of women in the managerial structures of the units of local government and regional self-government units in the example of Virovitica's Podravina County	They point to the still-present influence of tradition as well as to the existence of prejudice that women are still not the "right choice" for managerial positions and jobs at various hierarchical levels of management, especially at its highest, supreme level.
Vranješ-Radovanović, Šurina Henzl, Selanec, 2016.	Empirical Research, Gender Equality Ombudsperson of the Republic of Croatia - sample of the 500 largest and most successful companies in the Republic of Croatia	Research on the representation of women and men in managerial positions in business entities in the Republic of Croatia - top 500	Collected data proves: women make up only 35% of all management positions, in 91% of all management at the head of the administration is a man, only 9% of them headed are women, in 89% of supervisory boards are headed by a man, and only 11% of them are head by women in board
Prijić-Samaržija, Holjevac, Turk, 2008.	Preliminary communication - The research registers the situation in the academic year 2006/2007, University of Rijeka.	Women in science: a glass ceiling	They investigate and prove the existence of a "glass ceiling", i.e. the under-representation of women in managerial positions in institutions of science and higher education in the Republic of Croatia.
Penava, Šehić, 2007.	Preliminary Press Release - Survey on the sample of the 100 largest companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina; interviews with 19 managers, of which five were women	Women in Management of Bosnian Companies	The results of the research gathered through surveys, interviews and available data from other sources indicate the existence of a "glass ceiling" in Bosnian companies, that is, women are underrepresented in management and other positions
Schein, 2007	Article - review	Women in management: reflections and projections	Continued research of first research in 1970, where article explores gender stereotypes and the necessary features for managed, which comes to the knowledge that corporate males in the USA continue to see women as less qualified than men for managerial positions.
Galičić, Ivanović, 2006	Preliminary communication	Women's Managers In Croatian Hotel Management	They claim that there is no equal relationship between men and women in managerial positions. Within the hotel industry, when women become managers, they mostly remain in the middle management level, within business functions such as marketing, sales, finance, accounting, etc. The Croatian hotel industry notes the increasing representation of women in leadership positions, which is a very positive tendency
Yukongdi Benson, 2005.	Article - review	Women in Asian Management:	Deals with a holistic approach to investigate whether women think if they have been more receptive to

		Cracking the Glass Ceiling?	their participation in the world of management and if there are significant barriers to their participation, where the influence of culture and tradition still poses the challenges in front of the women in the business environment
Yukongdi, 2005	Article- review	Women in management in Thailand: advancement and prospects	His research identified obstacles to women's promotion and addresses the problem of social class as another key element for women's career advancement
Puhalo, Puhalo, 2004	Article -review	Managers in Bosnia and Herzegovina - Some characteristics of female managers in relation to managers and women non-managers	Research proves that women managers in Bosnia and Herzegovina have to and need to do more; they need to make more effort than their male colleagues to succeed.

Source: Authors' work

Discussion

The concept and importance of the managerial function

Today's organizations and their business in a turbulent and dynamic market demand fast and proactive reaction to survive on the market. Companies today create future value through investing and maintaining good relationships with customers, customers, suppliers, employees, processes, technology, and innovation. All of this is a prerequisite for creating a successful management strategy that is a prerequisite for organizational performance as a whole. Such a strategy must be guided by management in which all managerial functions are adapted to the conditions in a global environment (Bedeković, Golub, 2011, p. 59). Changes in the environment impose a constant need for change and adaptation, the necessity for implementing different strategic directions precisely because of the development and securing of its own competitiveness on the market and the achievement of efficiency and effectiveness of the business. Great roles and importance today have been placed on management positions and managers that manage and lead the company. It is precisely on them to identify key criteria and guidelines for enhancing key competencies of the organization itself and its employees for the purpose of long-term competitive advantage of the organization on the market. From the very beginning of the development of management, various authors gave different definitions of management and tried to provide a unique solution for managing different organizations. Throughout history, different management theories (classical, neoclassical, modern) developed and accordingly gave different definitions of management and managers. Scientists, researchers, have for decades been concerned with whether management is science, skill, or a specific skill. There are therefore, numerous authors and numerous management definitions. From the first management theories that focused on the issues of the organization as a whole and the motivation of employees to today's modern theories that emphasize the importance of quality in all business segments, management or managers manage the organization to the maximum using organization resources to achieve goals and achieve competitive advantage on the market. The very difference between an

unsuccessful and successful organization is the ability of its management to lead it, and there is no successful management without skilled and talented managers (Sikavica et al., 2004, p. 5). In keeping with all of the above-mentioned goal of management and managers is to manage the organization, to possess certain skills and characteristics, and that their ability is measured by their knowledge, skills, and ability to overcome the challenges posed to them, and for that very reason no matter what business we are talking and position it is essential business ability of an individual rather than a gender. The task of management is to train people to work together and turn their forces into something effective and the weaknesses into something unimportant (Drucker, 2005, p. 20). Each management level and its members must constantly grow and develop, depending on the needs and opportunities (Drucker, 2005, p. 21).

Women in Management of Contemporary Organizations

New trends in society and markets, new technologies, and adaptation, prompt organizations to adapt their business to the same but also to change their organizational structures by emphasizing team work. Today's main managerial competence is that a manager must know "everything about everything". The success of a manager at an organizational level depends on the ability of a manager to combine the knowledge and skills required to successfully perform a job at exactly the exact level (Bahtijarević-Šiber et al., 2008, p. 3). But regardless of whether a manager is a man or a woman, he or she is expected to have the necessary competencies, knowledge, and skills. But despite the fact that the management function needs certain attributes and skills, it is still a managerial function that is tailored to the gender criterion. Nowadays, men are those who dominate in top management positions and to women managers is difficult to advance up to leading managerial positions, but today the labor market highlights the so-called "female" style of leadership (Pološki, 2003, p. 38). Pejić Bach et al. (2016; 2018) are also investigating and talking about gender and women in entrepreneurship

Numerous prejudices and significant discrimination on the role of women and involvement in society are still hindering and hampering women's involvement in the labor market and managerial and managerial positions. Because of that as it has been already said, men are the ones that have top managers positions and women are the one who is on the level of middle or lower managerial positions. The development of the organizations themselves, the types of organizations, the way of managing the organizations changes through the years so today they are flexible and prone and subject to change and are characterized by teamwork which precisely attributes women to a successful job performance and where the inadequate number of male professionals with the required qualities for a particular managerial position today contributes to greater involvement of women in management. Greater and faster involvement of women in management (especially at higher levels) achieves the required diversity of approaches and styles in management, which leads to increased flexibility and ability to implement changes, which is necessary for the growth, development, and survival of modern organizations (Bahtijarević-Šiber et al., 2008 p. 605). But still, due to various prejudices and gender discrimination, are harder to break through and succeed in higher managerial and managerial positions.

There are some indications on the market that are favoring women because of its benefits that they gave in the business world, which is actually a characteristic of globalization and countries in which globalization is put out. (Pološki, 2001). Society is the one which should be the main driver of change, tradition, and culture and by that

having the role of more engagement and participating women in the top management positions (mixed management). Bedeković, Ravlić, (2011) claims that involving a woman in management, especially at top managerial positions, is economically viable.

"Female and men" style of leadership

Women today are neglected as staff and as women managers. The development of society and the development of today's organizations have developed the so-called. "Female and male " style of leadership. "Female" or "male style" of leadership popular are so called because it is characterized by behaviors that are considered typically male or typically female. (Pološki, 2003, p. 40). The characteristics of a "female" style of leadership are associated with traditional female qualities as empathy, sensitivity, openness, flexibility, and understanding while the characteristics of a "male" style of leadership are competition, aggression and rationality. The "woman's" style of leadership is in co-operation and immediate communication with employees. Women managers can more easily detect problems and have more understanding and ideas for their solution, better access to additional education, more tolerant towards cultural, social, racial and other specialties, and create a pleasant, friendly atmosphere (Pološki, 2003, p. 44-45). By comparing the ways of leadership, we can say that women are more prone to so-called mentoring and coaching while men are more prone to so-called ordering and control. In research on the "female style" of leadership, Pološki (2003) claims that it is a name for a modern style of leadership, a style that is still called "emotional", friendly, collegial, transformational or interactive, and also democratic or participatory leadership style. Pološki (2003) by conducted research claims that the best managers become those who possess both skills groups, both male and female, and adapt to the situation and that organizations employing such managers are the best to pass on the market.

Phenomenon glass ceiling

How important it is to involve women in the world of management and leadership positions proves the fact that companies that have a high-ranking women employee in a high-level position earn better business and financial results. Very significant research carried out in the Republic of Croatia regarding the representation of women and men in managerial and top management functions was conducted by the Gender Equality Ombudsperson in 2011 on a sample of the 500 largest and most successful companies in the Republic of Croatia, which provided information and the fact that only 35% of all leading positions in the Republic of Croatia are women. As already mentioned in the Republic of Croatia are still prejudices and discrimination regarding the involvement of women in top managerial positions, and for this reason, we can talk about the existence of the so-called phenomenon "Glass Ceiling". The term "glass ceiling" was created in the seventies of the last century with the purpose of describing the obstacles encountered by women who want to thrive in a managerial environment, and all conditioned by prejudice in positions and prejudice in companies, where to women is close the way to the highest managerial positions (Wirth, 1998, p. 93). Glass ceiling is term used to describe a discrimination in the workplace and to describe the situation in which a qualified and competent woman disables advancement to higher positions. Sometimes women are not aware of this discrimination, but it is something that is present in a very large number of companies all over the world and also in Croatian companies. It is an invisible barrier that disenables women the right to equal treatment in the business world. Because of the

society and the influence of culture and tradition, the main task and care for a woman is care for its family, and also, they are one who payed less for the same job as a man.

Conclusion

Today's society is defined as a male society, a society where men are still dominant in managerial positions. Discrimination and gap are still present in the Republic of Croatia and makes it difficult for women to advance up to top managerial positions. For this reason, we can talk about the existence of the glass ceiling phenomenon. Regardless of the increasing presence of highly educated and qualified women in the labor market, women continue to be at low paid jobs and lower positions with fewer responsibilities. Research shows that companies with high-ranking women in employment achieve better business and financial results, which should make a difference between the current gap so that the difference between so-called " male and female managers could be minimized.

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