

Effects of the Corporate Glass Ceiling Factors on Female Employees Organizational Commitment: An Empirical of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

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Abstract — “Glass ceiling” is used to describe as invisible or artificial barriers that stop women from ascending the corporate ladder to senior positions. As the concept exists in more and more contexts, should the underrepresentation of female executives in the boardrooms in Vietnamese corporations be the consequence of it? This study concentrates on analyzing the impediments women facing in their workplace with respect to corporate culture, corporate practices, corporate climate and internal motivation. Specifically, the research would investigate the relationship between those glass ceiling related factors and the commitment of female executives in organizations. The research is measured by quantitative method. The findings reveal that glass ceiling does exist in the Vietnamese corporations. The impediments to women career development emerge in three main dimensions: Management Perception, Career Progression and Growth, Work Environment. Besides, the other factors such as Discrimination and Prejudice or Family Support also have significant effects on women in workplace. Moreover, this study has discovered the close relationships between the above glass ceiling related factors and the organizational commitment of female employees which the higher levels of corporate glass ceiling effects lead to the lower level of organizational commitment of female employees.

Index Terms corporate factors, female employees, glass ceiling, organizational commitment

I. INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, women contributed to more than 50% of the graduates as they found out education is the easiest way that can support them in doing the same things men do and achieving the same success men achieve. However, the opportunities for women to make progress still remain slow and uneven. Facing various difficulties at each step of the career ladder leads to the effect that the presence of women at the upper levels in corporations will be diminished. Only half of the female population participates actively in the workforce. Women make up 40% of the average company's workforce. Globally, they represent only 33% of managers, 26% of senior managers, and 20% of executives [1]. In comparison with the United

States/Canada and Europe, the percentage of women at the helm in Asian corporations is extremely lower.

The question “what prevents women from reaching the highest positions” has become a great concern for researchers. Reference [2] proved that gender differences in promotion and pay rates to senior positions exist worldwide. Focusing on gender differences in leadership, women remain underrepresented at the top of the corporations as they may face a lot of barriers in their career progression when working with men. Some barriers still persist ingrainedly in organizations, which maintain workplace inequalities through institutional practices. These types of barriers operate both internally, in form of “glass ceiling” making it harder for women to progress to the highest levels, and externally, as a deterrent that prevents women from entering male-dominated, higher paid, and higher status occupations [3].

It is necessary that corporations would enhance fairness and equity in gender management and diversity environment in their workplace since companies in the top quartile for gender diversity are 15% more likely to have financial returns above their respective national industry medians [4]. Alternatively, the presence of gender biases in labour markets makes women work in a narrow range of areas and their earnings not fully reflect their efforts and contributions. This is not only the break of labor rights but it also harms the economy since it is harder for a country to improve the productivity of its workforce. Many researches have been conducted to discover the methods to increase the commitment of employees in the organization as the more the employees are committed, the more they will improve the productivity and the profits of the organizations. Evidently, if every country matches a good progress towards gender parity of its fastest-moving neighbor, global GDP would increase by up to \$12 trillion in 2025 [5].

Vietnam now is one of the most dynamic emerging countries in Asia with the fastest GDP growth is 6.7%. In 2015, Vietnam joined the Trans-pacific Partnership (TPP), EU Free Trade Agreement (EU FTA) and ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). Beside many opportunities to develop, the country will face with lots of challenges. To beat this competition, Vietnam needs more talented people, including both men and women. Nevertheless, the country ranked 83rd among 145 countries in the Global Gender

Gap Index 2015, which signifies that gender equality has still not been accomplished. The gender gap in labor force participation of the country was 8% as a whole but with wide differences among cities [6].

Although Vietnam has made noticeable breakthroughs to overcome the gender inequality in the workplace, especially in narrowing gender gaps and expanding job opportunities for women, the glass ceiling effect in Vietnam is still stronger than in many other Asia countries. There are still vital dissimilarities in employment options and career opportunities between men and women. Reference [7] highlighted continual gender segmentation in the labor market with women concentrated in fewer fields and occupations than men. It also discovered that female workers have the greater vulnerability in working conditions and pay in comparison with male workers. It also presented evidence suggesting that the financial crisis in 2008 might have hit women harder than men in terms of higher rates of unemployment and under-employment.

In Vietnam, gender inequality has been received reasonable attention in recent years. However, most of the research has principally concentrated on practical socio-economic topics such as poverty, illiteracy and intimate partner violence [8]. Gender inequality in organizations, especially the effect of glass ceiling on organizational commitment, has not been the topic for any study published in Vietnam up to date.

The research continues with this concept and contributes to the concentration on the glass ceiling in corporations. This research, therefore, aims to analyze the impediments women facing in organizations to advance their career success with respect to corporate culture, corporate practices, corporate climate and internal motivation. Thereby, the study would evaluate the effects of glass ceiling on the commitment of female executives in organizations for the reason that the organizational performance is dependent upon the organizational commitment [9].

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Glass Ceiling

According to [10], the word “Glass Ceiling” refers to “barriers within a hierarchy that prevent women from obtaining upper-level positions”. Those barriers may be tangible or intangible, actual or imagined by the recipient [11]. Prejudices, glass ceiling effect or gender diversity barriers are such impediments which are invisible and affect a lot on businesswomen so that corporations should pay attention to retain them. Glass ceiling effect is instigated by the issues of gender differentiation, gender perceptions and gender stereotyping which affect women continuously.

The term “Glass Ceiling” was firstly discovered by [12] in 1948. Subsequently, it appeared once again in March 1986 by [13]. Due to this article, the word “ceiling” means upper limits that women facing when climbing up to the corporate ladder while “glass” implies to the transparency and subtlety of this barrier. The phrase has been shattered

among the world of corporate women at that time. This term has been widely used since then and may be best defined by [14]. The glass ceiling is a set of invisible, real or perceived barriers that appear to stymie the executive advancement opportunities of women. It is stated that the sex of an individual may avert her from reaching the ranks of top, or even middle, management. Women encounter various obstacles that restrict their potential to achieve fulfilling careers with chances to develop and promote to higher levels.

The United Nations has published the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to protect the gender equality. For instance, Article 1 states that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” and Article 2 presents that any person should not be discriminated because her race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Therefore, gender equality is a basic human right of each person that cannot be dismissed.

While more women have the desire to reach the higher position in the corporate hierarchy, their presence in high level and high salary positions does not approach that of their male colleagues. In fact, [15] found that only 50% of the world’s working-age women are in the labor force, compared to 77% of that of men. In most countries, women earn only between 60 to 75% of their male counterparts’ earnings for the same job. [16], released in June 2016, stated that there are only 21 women holding a paltry of CEO positions.

B. Corporate Culture

Corporate culture, or organizational culture, is a subtle concept because there are multiple perspectives that come under investigation in different academic literatures. According to [17], corporate culture indicates the standards, values, attitudes and beliefs characterizing members of an organization and determining its nature. Corporate culture is defined as a pattern of shared values and beliefs, helping individuals to understand organizational functioning [18].

For years, researchers have studied the link between corporate culture and the performance of the organization. One of the significant role of corporate culture in organizations is its impact on employees’ attitudes and behaviors [19]. The organizational culture provides boundaries and guidelines to help the employees know the appropriate way to perform jobs. Based on its culture, an organization can decide the vision, goals, structure, strategies and how to communicate with its stakeholders such as employees, customers, investors and the society. As stated by [20], corporate culture affects what employees can do and how they conceptualize, define, analyze and address issues. Therefore, corporate culture can be considered as one of the fundamental elements in the success or failure of a business.

A study by [21] indicated that judgements about effective management continue to be based on an adherence to a purely masculine gender stereotype. Negative attitudes permeate the workplace, as regards

questioning women's professional capabilities, inviting them in turn to work harder in order to prove their credentials and commitment [22]. Another explanation is based on the prevalence of sexist stereotype that men are more suitable for leadership positions than women [23]. Hence, this mismatch in roles often leads to discrimination against women when it comes to top management positions.

C. Corporate Practices

The word "practice" has many different definitions. Reference [24] defined practice as "embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organized around shared practical understanding", while [25] stated that practices "are linked and implicit ways of understanding, saying, and doing things". The term "corporate practices" is widely used in research articles but is scarcely defined accurately. The most clearly and well-known definition of the term is an organization's routine use of knowledge for conducting a particular function that has evolved over time under the influence of the organization's history, people, interests and actions [26].

According to [27], corporate practices include training and development, networking, mentoring, flexible working hours and other family-friendly initiatives such as the provision of nursery services and day care centers, flex-time and family support services, which can be helpful in regard to allow the effective reconciliation of employees' multiple roles. [28] further signified that training and development are organizationally directed experiences designed to improve employee competency levels and enhance organizational performance [3].

In organizations, a lack of clear job descriptions for higher echelon jobs and a lack of formal systems for recruitment, in some instances, tend to create obstacles to advancement. Furthermore, the existence of informal male networks, sometimes referred to as 'old boy networks,' also tends to exclude women from top positions [29].

D. Corporate Climate

As stated in the [30], corporate climate means the properties of the business environment in a workplace observed by staff that strongly influence their actions and job performance. For instance, a perceptive business manager might take the trouble to survey employees about the organizational climate to identify and promote those aspects that are most conducive to achieving corporate objectives.

According to [31], corporate climate is the factor which is perceived by the individuals who constitute the organization and affect their behaviors. Organizational climate is the subjective perceptions of studies regarding the physical, objective environment, applications and conditions of the organization. It will reveal the expectations of employees and the difference, if any, between those which are required and the existing situation.

[32] Indicated that organizational climate refers to the prevailing corporate perceptions of women's professional

capabilities and commitment to their careers. It also includes attitudes towards women that could result in unsupportive and discouraging work environments [33]. [34] Further indicated that in most organizations that are male-led, the male network still exists, and studies show that women have been largely excluded from these networks. They are not only excluded from informal networks, but also from important meetings where decisions are made.

A study by [35] found that in male dominated organizations, female employees often feel under-utilized and devalued. They tend to be given lower level projects with less visibility [32]. Furthermore, women's ideas are frequently discounted or ignored, creating the 'invisible-woman syndrome', and their actions are highly scrutinized and seen as a test case for women in common in the future.

E. Internal Motivation

The word "motivation" itself means the factors that stimulate desire and energy in people to be continually interested and committed to a job, role, subject or to make an effort to attain a goal [31]. From [36], "internal motivation" means the incentive that accrues from within an individual, the inducement to act or change based on an inherent or intrinsic desire. Thereby, it is a substantial stream of motivation that will cause that person to take action. Conforming to [17], "employee motivation" is the level of energy, commitment, and creativity that a company's workers bring to their jobs. Motivation of employees describes the level of desire they feel to perform. Hence, employees who are sufficiently motivated to perform will be more productive, more engaged and invest more in their work.

A recent study indicated that 55% of women not in management positions have the ambition to join the higher levels in organizations. [37] found that many female employees lose their drives to advance due to the many obstacles such as discrimination, prejudice, and family demands along the path of becoming a manager.

For many women, beside the roles they hold in their companies, they remain as the primary caretakers for their families [38]. As the time constraints and demands of a job become more important upon, promotion forces many women to choose between family and career. Many female employees have voluntarily left their jobs due to family decisions [39]. Also, once a woman has children, she tends to be less willing to relocate further and work long hours than men. That unwillingness is considered as performing a lack of commitment. Thus, it would interrupt her promotion probabilities [40].

F. Organizational Commitment

Employees organizational commitment, or sometimes called workers' organizational commitment or just organizational commitment, is a business management concept. The word "committed" itself means "one bound or obligated to a particular, cause, action or attitude". Some experts define the word "commitment" as both a willingness to persist in a course of action and reluctance to

change plans, often owing to a sense of obligation to stay the course [41].

Organizational commitment is generally considered as the employees' identification, emotional attachment and their strong desire to maintain membership towards the organization. Research suggested that organizational commitment has favourable impacts on organizational performance by lowering lateness, absenteeism and turnover. Hence, owning committed employees has imaginably positive effects for organizational performance.

Recently, employees organizational commitment has gain lots of attention in business management. The Employees Commitment Index is seen as a critical prognosticator of employee loyalty and the performance of an organization. Committed employees deliver potential values to the organization through their determination, proactiveness, comparatively high productivity and an awareness of quality. They are also less likely to call in sick or to leave the organization [42]. High committed employees display beneficial behaviours within organizations. In contrast, employees with low commitment can work against the organization and limit its prosperity.

As found by [43], glass ceiling affects employee's commitment towards the organization negatively. This type of barrier decreases organizational commitment on part of an employee and also decreases job satisfaction level. In particular, data collected in Pakistan obviously proved that employees displayed greater commitment with a decrease in the organizational glass ceiling. Similarly, female employees show decreasing organizational commitment when they work in the environment which is highly dominated by the gender bias and men stereotypes [44].

Regarding to the above literature review, this study hypothesized that:

- H₁: Corporate culture directly affects employee organizational commitment.
- H₂: Corporate practices directly affect employee organizational commitment.
- H₃: Corporate climate directly affect employee organizational commitment.
- H₄: Internal motivation directly affects employee organizational commitment.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Questionnaire Design and Data Collection

Questionnaire Design: The contents of the questionnaire were built based on the model "Women Workplace Culture Questionnaire" developed by [45] and the model "Organizational Commitment Measurement" created by [46], together with previous related researches and the suggestions of the participants during the preliminary interview. The structure of the questionnaire was divided into 3 sections with 57 questions in total. Most of the questions was constructed by the form of Five-point Likert Scale Matrix in which 1 = "Strongly

Disagree", 2 = "Disagree", 3 = "Neutral", 4 = "Agree", 5 = "Strongly Agree".

Data Collection: The survey was focused on female employees from different groups of age, marital status and working experience. Questionnaires were contributed in industrial zones, office parks and via email. This research were collected from 308 female employees from different corporations in Ho Chi Minh City. The questionnaires were delivered to those respondents both via email and in direct form in on November 15 and collected on November 30, leaving a period of two weeks for them to complete and return their responses.

B. Factor Analysis and Reliability

The exploratory factor analysis procedure was applied twice: once for the independent variables, including 52 items; and once for the group of dependent variable, including 9 items. After various rounds of processing, the independent variables remained 25 items and the dependent variables remained 9 items. The final results will be presented below. Shown in Table I, the KMO index is at .925 > .5 and the Sig. of Bartlett's test is at .000 < .05. This indicates that the data of independent variables is appropriate for factor analysis.

There are 5 components extracted components extracted which respectively corresponded to the concepts of Corporate Practices, Internal Motivation (IMO1 – IMO5), Corporate Climate, Internal Motivation (IMO6 – IMO10) and Corporate Culture in the research model. All items in those extracted components have high factor loadings which are greater than .5 illustrating the high correlation between each item and the corresponding extracted component. The Eigenvalues of all extracted components are greater than 1 and the total variance explained is 64.55% of the total variance satisfying the requirement of being greater than 50%. Moreover, each factor generated from the exploratory analysis has the high value of Cronbach's Alpha which implies the high reliability of the measurement scale for assessing the independent variables.

TABLE I. SUMMARY OF THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE WITH RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT

Given Names	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Rename Factors	Encode
Corporate Culture (CCU8, CCU9, CCU10)	.819	3*	Management Perception	MANAPER
Corporate Practices (CPR1, CPR2, CPR3, CPR4, CPR5, CPR6, CPR9)	.898	7*	Career Progression and Growth	CAPROGRO
Corporate Climate (CCL6 – CCL10)	.856	5*	Work Environment	WORENVI
Internal Motivation (IMO1 – IMO5)	.866	5*	Family Support	FAMISUP
Internal Motivation (IMO6 – IMO10)	.796	5*	Discrimination and Prejudice	DISPRE

* All items have factor loadings >.5
KMO index = .925 and Sig. of Bartlett's test = .000
Total variance explained = 64.55%

TABLE II. SUMMARY OF THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE WITH RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT

Given Name	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Rename Factors	Encode
Organizational Commitment (EC1 – EC9)	.913	9*	Employee Organizational Commitment	EMORCOM

* All items have factor loadings >.5

KMO index = .881 and Sig. of Bartlett's test = .000

Total variance explained = 60.24%

As shown in Table II, the KMO index is at .881 > .5 and the Sig. of Bartlett's test is at .000 < .05. This shows that the data of dependent variable is appropriate for factor analysis.

There is only one component extracted which corresponds to the concept of organizational commitment. All 9 items in this component have high factor loadings which are greater than .5 reflecting the high correlation between each item and the corresponding extracted component. The Eigenvalues of the extracted component is at 5.422 satisfying the requirements of being greater than 1 and the total variance explained equals 60.24% of the total variance satisfying the requirement of being greater than 50%. Moreover, the high value of Cronbach's Alpha of .913 indicates good reliability of the measurement scale for assessing the dependent variable.

Regarding to the above results, this study would be re-hypothesized that:

H₁: Management perception affects female employees' organizational commitment.

H₂: Career progression and growth affects female employees' organizational commitment.

H₃: Work environment affects female employees' organizational commitment.

H₄: Family support affects female employees' organizational commitment.

H₅: Discrimination and prejudice affects female employees' organizational commitment.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

A. Sample Descriptions

As in Table III, most of the respondents are from the group of age from 25 to 34 years old with 42.2%. The percentage of Bachelor Degree is the dominant group in the Education category (86.7% of 308 respondents). Single respondents take the proportion of 31.5%. In addition, those who have children and have no child have almost the same percentage which is 48.7% and 51.3% respectively. Moreover, the majority of the respondents are executives (51.5%). Finally, most of the employees participating in answering the questionnaire are experienced from 4 to 7 years of working in the observed organization, accounting for 48.4% of the total.

TABLE III. SUMMARY OF SAMPLE DESCRIPTIONS

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Age	18-24	37	12.0
	25-34	130	42.2
	35-44	107	34.7
	45-54	25	8.1
	>55	9	2.9
	Total	308	100.0
Highest Education	Vocational School	4	1.3
	College degree	24	7.8
	Bachelor degree	267	86.7
	Post University	13	4.2
	Total	308	100.0
Marital Status	Single	97	31.5
	Married	211	68.5
	Total	308	100.0
Children Number	No Children	158	51.3
	Have Children	150	48.7
	Total	308	100.0
Employment Status	Executive	236	76.6
	Low Level Manager	45	14.6
	Mid Level Manager	21	6.8
	High Level Manager	6	1.9
	Total	308	100.0
Working Years	<2	34	11.0
	2-4	53	17.2
	4-7	149	48.4
	7-10	49	15.9
	>10	23	7.5
	Total	308	100.0

B. Factors Correlating with Employee Engagement

TABLE IV. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN VARIABLES

		1	2	3	4	5	6
Pearson Correlation	1. EMORCOM	1.000					
	2. CAPROGRO	-.648**	1.000				
	3. FAMISUP	-.498**	.645**	1.000			
	4. WORENVI	-.509**	.637**	.459**	1.000		
	5. DISPRE	-.435**	.602**	.457**	.526**	1.000	
	6. MANAPER	-.533**	.593**	.495**	.435**	.429**	1.000

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

According to Table IV, all of the corporate glass ceiling factors statistically have negative correlations with

employee organizational commitment. In these significant relationships, the most substantially negative correlation

with employee organizational commitment belongs to Career Progression and Growth ($r = -.648$, $p = .000$). Moreover, both Management Perception ($r = -.533$, $p = .000$) and Work Environment ($r = -.509$, $p = .000$) have moderately negative correlations with employee organizational commitment. The remaining factors, namely Family Support ($r = -.498$, $p = .000$) and Discrimination and Prejudice ($r = -.435$, $p = .000$), have the lowest negative correlations with employee organizational commitment.

Those results indicate that the high levels of glass ceiling effects occurring in Career Progression and Growth, Management Perception, Work Environment, Family Support and Discrimination and Prejudice are associated with the low level of organizational commitment of female employees.

C. Factors Affecting on Employee Engagement

TABLE V. COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Model	Standardized Coefficients	Sig.	Correlations	Collinearity Statistics	
	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)		.000			
CAPROGRO	-.384**	.000	-.230	.358	2.792
FAMISUP	-.085	.129	-.064	.558	1.791
WORENVI	-.133**	.018	-.099	.559	1.789
DISPRE	-.008	.887	-.006	.594	1.684
MANAPER	-.202**	.000	-.159	.619	1.616

a. Dependent Variable: EMORCOM: Employees Organizational Commitment

- *. Coefficient is significant at the .05
- ANOVA: $F = 53.641$, Sig. = .000
- Model summary: Adjusted R Square = .462

Having the largest value of β ($-.384$) and the p -values $< .05$, the independent variable Career Progression and Growth makes the strongest unique negative contribution to explaining the dependent variable Employee Organizational Commitment as illustrating in Table V. Similarly, the other independent variables (namely Working Environment, Management Perception), with the slightly lower β (equal $-.133$ and $-.202$ respectively) and the p -values $< .05$, make a less contribution. Besides, the tolerance value for each independent variable is not less than .10 and the VIF value is well below the cut-off of 10. This means that the research model has not violated the multi-collinearity assumption.

This means that every 1-standard deviation increase in Career Progression and Growth, Working Environment and Management Perception would lead to the decrease in the level of Employee Organizational Commitment by .384, .133 and .202 standard deviation units respectively. Thus, the three hypotheses (H_1 , H_2 and H_3) of this study are supported at 95% level of confidence. Based on those results, the regression equation illustrated the relationship between corporate glass ceiling factors and employee organizational commitment is stated as:

$$\text{EMORCOM} = -.384\text{CAPROGRO} + -.133\text{WORENVI} + -.202\text{MANAPER}$$

Based on the ANOVA Test results with $F = 52.641$ and Sig. $< .05$, the entire regression equation is statically significant at the confidence level of 95%. This indicates that the regression equation above accurately predicts the level of organizational commitment of female employees at workplace. In addition, the value of Adjusted R Square = .462 means that 46% of the variation in female employee organizational commitment could be explained by corporate glass ceiling factors in terms of career progression and growth, working environment and management perception; whereas the remaining proportion of the variation could be measured by other factors. With only three final factors, the model can explain nearly 50% of the variation in the organizational commitment. Thus, the above regression equation is significant and useful for further research or implication.

V. DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Discussions

On the basis of previous researches, the empirical results generated from this study supports for the assumption about the potential relationship between the glass ceiling and employee organizational commitment. Data analysis from the survey confirms that women in Vietnamese corporations have to face various barriers in their career progression. In addition, there are evidences proving that most of the corporate glass ceiling factors have adverse impacts on the organizational commitment of female employees. Those results will be explained as follows:

With the highest value of Beta ($\beta = -.384$), the “Career Progression and Growth”, developed from “Corporate Practices”, is the most influential factor which has the adverse effect on the level of employee organizational commitment. Because when employees believe that their corporation provides them benefit, they reciprocate with stronger commitment to the corporation. This benefit involves not only opportunities within the corporation but also potential future opportunities with other employers. Higher organizational commitment, in turn, may lead to lower turnover and a number of other positive outcomes such as greater employee effort and performance [47].

The “Management Perception” – one of the components of “Corporate Culture” – is the second influential factor ($\beta = -.202$), which had a relative strong impact on the level of employee organizational commitment. This is one type of the discrimination women facing when reaching higher positions in workplace. Researches in the United States, Beijing, and Hong Kong shows that the more that women employees believed they had experienced gender discrimination, the less satisfied they reported being with their jobs, the less affectively committed they were to their organizations, and the stronger was their intention to leave their jobs [48].

The third influential factor ($\beta = -.133$) “Working Environment”, which is the “Corporate Climate”, has a relative strong influence on the level of employee organizational commitment. Because work environment is the atmosphere where employees execute their tasks, it is one of the critical factors impacts its employee commitment toward the organization. A study by [49] discovered that there is a relationship between work environment and organizational commitment. Thus, employees who feel comfortable about their working environment are likely to work more effectively and enjoy the working process as compared to those who feel uncomfortable.

The remaining factors – “Family Support” ($\beta = -.085$) and “Discrimination and Prejudice” ($\beta = -.008$), deprived from “Internal Motivation”, does not have influence on the level of employee organizational commitment in the Vietnamese context. However, they may have impacts in other environment which need to be research further.

B. Recommendations

1) Recommendation for women

Women should not over-focus on the gender barrier before doing anything like “Because I am female, I can not...” as they are equal to men and thus deserve equal rights. Women should improve the level of confidence by believing in themselves as women are “not better, wiser, stronger, more intelligent, more creative, or more responsible than a man” but they are “never less” (Vera Nazarian). Women should understand themselves clearly in terms of needs, abilities, desires, etc. It is critical for women to know themselves, to be more aware of their own strengths to build and weaknesses to fix. Hence, they can unlock their potential to pursuit of their goals.

Women should improve their leadership skills, knowledge, abilities and know how to prove their potentials to prepare for the opportunities to advance their career. Women should improve their time management skill to avoid work-life conflicts. An effective worker can avoid long working hours with greater performance and receive more chances to success. When their time is managed properly, they can spend more time with family and improve work-life balance as well as reduce stress.

2) Recommendations for organizations

Organizations should realize the benefits of removing the glass ceiling and innovate the way to change their organizational culture to create a biased and discrimination free environment. Organizations should also provide programs and activities to raise employees’ awareness on the gender inequalities and the glass ceiling issues. At the same time, corporation must ensure that their recruitment, appraisal and career management systems do not hold women back in their professional development. Organizations should provide flexible working hours for women, especially those who have young kids because the time they spend on child rearing are greater than those who have grown up kids, do not have kids or are still single.

One way for corporations to reduce glass ceiling effects to increase employees organizational commitment and reduce turnover of employees is to focus on their career development. Results also suggest that corporations could influence employee perceptions of career growth opportunities through creating effective training framework or coaching, network-building and mentoring programs and providing organizational sufficient supports in networking, mentoring, flexible working hours, and family friendly initiatives. Another way to reduce glass ceiling effects is creating and monitoring gender diversity indicators. The main indicators include: the proportion of women in the company’s various business lines, at each level of management, and among new recruits; pay levels and attrition rates between men and women in similar functions; the ratio of women promoted to women eligible for promotion.

C. Practical Implications

Although the sample size was small and selective, the results provide valuable insights because the findings collected and analyzed reflects actual female executives opinions.

This study responds to the need for theory development and empirical work on gender diversity as they relate to important organizational outcomes (particularly employees organizational commitment in this research). Practical implications of the study relate to providing a basis for discussions between women and men who are working together and are faced with finding solutions to this managerial dilemmas together. Future implications for gender equality indicate that the number of women CEOs will increase. Therefore, the profits of the corporations would increase and the comparative advantages of the country would enhance.

D. Limitations

1) Limitations

In interpreting the results of this study, certain limitations need to be considered.

Firstly, this study is primarily limited by its sample size. The sample size could be expanded by including female executives from both the North and Central regions in Vietnam instead of only the South. Furthermore, the sample is drawn from one country only. There would happen differences in different context.

Secondly, the survey’s target is women. Thus, there is a possibility of gender influences on the responses. In addition, some women might be more sensitive to the glass ceiling than the others or they might be more attached to the organizations than others so some biased results might be generated. If there are responses from both male and female, the validity and credibility of the study may increase and the findings can be generalized to a larger population.

Lastly, the researcher used cross sectional method which means that research will conduct once a time. However, Longitudinal Method could be used for better

results by making comparison of previous research with the current research.

2) Recommendations for further studies

During this research, the researcher found various factors may influence on employees organizational commitment. However, as the research was concentrated on the Vietnamese context, those factors may not be appropriate or need further studies.

Moreover, the size of this research was small within the corporations in the South of the country. Future researchers could explore with the same topic but in two other regions in Vietnam as North and Central to discover the differences.

Importantly, the main target respondents of the research were female employees, which could lead to one-way perspective due to gender biases. It is necessary to have more researches with the target diverse in gender.

In addition, there is the scope for similar research with the focus on the specific industry. Hence, the key factors affecting the glass ceiling effect could be discovered. As a result, it might become a light for indicating the driven for the organizational commitment within the industrial level.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

All the research objectives have been fully achieved. Firstly, the study has comprehensively determined the effects of corporate culture, corporate climate, corporate practices and internal motivation on the existence of a glass ceiling from the perspective of female employees in Vietnamese organizations. Secondly, the study has successfully found out the regression equation illustrating the relationship between those corporate glass ceiling factors and the female employees organizational commitment. Finally, basing on the empirical research findings, the study has provided the directions for the organizations to reduce the critical factors in order to promote the level of workforce commitment at workplace.

Although extensive studies have been done on women employees in different professions, few researches have been conducted to investigate the glass ceiling effects on organizational outcomes in Vietnam. This area is still an unexplored area in the field of business management studies in the country. However, further research in this field is expected to develop more complete questionnaires and with larger sample sizes. Getting the more relevant respondents to participate in the research was the major problem that this study faced. When approached, many of them refused to participate. This problem and other issues have contributed to the limitations of the study. While the number of respondents who participates in the increases, the results of the data analysis may be more considerable and the contribution of the research could be more valuable. This suggests opportunities for successors interested in further exploring the glass ceiling and its effects in organizations. More empirical research is needed and would be particularly useful in providing more empirical evidence to support the findings.

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