Factors Affecting Glass Ceiling in the Sri Lanka Administrative Service

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Abstract

The glass ceiling represents the invisible barriers preventing women from reaching top leadership positions. In the Sri Lanka Administrative Service (SLAS) there is a stark gender disparity at higher executive levels. Although women increasingly fill entry-level positions, their representation sharply declines in senior roles. This study examines factors affecting glass ceiling in the Sri Lanka Administrative Service. By employing in-depth interviews with 15 female top executive officers, data was collected and Deductive Thematic Analysis was used to analysis the data. This study identified six main barriers women face namely, political, personal, organizational, psychological, social-cultural and stereotyped barriers. These obstacles hinder women's career advancement despite their qualifications and experience. The research offers policy measures for organizations, individuals, and society to better support the development of women in leadership.

The significance of this study lies in its comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted barriers women encounter within the Sri Lanka Administrative Service (SLAS), highlighting the urgent need for systemic change in a historically male-dominated sector. By focusing on the experiences of female top executive officers, the research provides nuanced insights into how these barriers intersect and create a complex web that stifles women's career progression. This study emphasizes the importance of understanding these barriers not just in isolation but also as part of a broader societal context, thereby enriching the discourse on gender equality in leadership.

Keywords: Career Advancement, Glass Ceiling, Sri Lanka Administrative Service

1. Introduction

The term "glass ceiling", introduced by Marilyn Loden in 1978, refers to the invisible barriers preventing women and marginalized groups from achieving professional

success, particularly in middle and senior leadership roles. Despite global advances in women's workforce participation, significant disparities persist, particularly in terms of leadership opportunities and equal pay. As regards political administrations over the past 20 years, although women have held a number of executive functions such as head of state or government were limited opportunities to occupy a political position in the government and had diverse calls to fulfill his duties as a sensitive administrative official (Damousi et. al., 2014)

In the global context, many countries still impose restrictions on women's economic participation, and gender inequalities in governance remain widespread. In East Asia, countries like Japan and South Korea exhibit significant gender gaps in management, with traditional roles deeply influencing workplace dynamics. These challenges are also reflected in Sri Lanka, where women constitute 53% of the population but face substantial barriers to economic and political participation (Department of Census and Statistics, 2021). Although the literacy rate for women in Sri Lanka is high at 91.71%, their participation in the workforce remains low, at 34.3% and representation in parliament is alarmingly low at just 5.3%, with minimal female presence in local governance despite gender quotas (Department of Census and Statistics, 2021).

In the SLAS, there is a stark gender disparity at higher executive levels. Although women increasingly fill entry-level positions, their representation sharply declines in senior roles (Krivkovich, 2024). For example, in the SLAS Special Grade, only 31.4% are women, and among district secretaries, only 20% are women. Promotion rates are also skewed, with men three times more likely to reach top positions (Department of Census and Statistics, 2021). These disparities are largely driven by socio-cultural expectations and institutional barriers that favor men, reinforcing a gendered division of labor (Department of Census and Statistics, 2021).

In this context, this paper attempts to address the following research question:

What factors contribute to the glass ceiling in the SLAS?

The study aims to fill a research gap by providing contemporary insights into the barriers women face in public administration in Sri Lanka. The research suggests various future directions, including comparative studies with other regions to understand how different cultural and organizational contexts influence the glass ceiling. Longitudinal studies tracking the career progression of women in the SLAS, and exploring the intersection of gender with ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and age, would provide a more nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by women.

The paper emphasizes the importance of assessing existing policies and identifying gaps to better support women's career advancement. Training and professional development programs, mentorship, networking opportunities, and work-life balance policies are crucial in helping women manage both their professional and personal responsibilities. However, the research notes that time constraints and the need for ethical considerations during qualitative data collection may limit the depth of investigation. Overall, the study seeks to address systemic inequalities and explore strategies to empower women in leadership roles in Sri Lanka.

2. Literature Review

The literature review discusses the barriers women face in career advancement, particularly focusing on the 'glass ceiling' (Hymowitz & Schellhardt, 1986). This concept refers to invisible, systemic barriers that prevent women, especially in male-dominated fields, from reaching higher managerial and executive roles. These barriers, often rooted in organizational culture and societal norms, are implicit rather than formal, making them difficult to address (Desai et al., 2021).

There are three key concepts and theories, which are emphsized in this research paper. They are Glass Ceiling Theory, Feminism Theory and Women Empowerment Theory. They are discussed as follows in detail.

Glass Ceiling Theory was coined by Marilyn Loden in 1978. The glass ceiling refers to the systemic challenges women face in advancing their careers. While women are often blamed for their lack of progress, the systemic barriers that exist, such as biases within organizational hierarchies, are largely ignored (Rudman, 2007).

Feminism Theory is also discussed to have a proper idea of the Glass Ceiling. Feminism has evolved over four distinct waves, from advocating for women's suffrage to addressing workplace discrimination, and more recently, promoting gender equality with a focus on intersectionality (Favre, 2020). The fourth wave, starting in 2012, emphasizes empowerment for marginalized women, including women of color and transgender women.

Women Empowerment Theory is key to improving women's ability to control resources, make strategic life decisions, and enhance their well-being. Empowered women contribute significantly to economic growth, offering diverse perspectives and skills (Barreto, 2009).

2.1. Empirical Research

Apart from that several empirical studies identified six main factors, namely, political, social and cultural, psychological, personal, stereotyped, and organizational barriers that affect women's career development.

As organizational culture inclusive cultures that promote gender equality enable women to break the glass ceiling (Thomas, 2013). The structural challenges like lack of mentorship, networking, and gender-biased promotion practices as organizational barriers hinder women's progress (Blau, 2024). Work culture affects what "employees can do and how they conceptualize, define, and analyze problems" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). Emphasizing the strong connection between organizational commitment and corporate culture, they argued that a strong corporate culture allows employees to gain a better insight into the goals and objectives of the organization, which also defined the mechanism of holding power (Gregory, 1983).

Societal expectations often restrict women's career ambitions. For instance, women are often pressured to prioritize family responsibilities over professional growth, limiting their opportunities for career advancement (Johns, 2013). Traditional gender roles and societal norms in Sri Lanka limit women's career opportunities, with expectations that they prioritize family over professional aspirations as social and cultural barriers hamper women's advancement (Sung, 2022).

Broader economic and political landscape also affects women's career progression. Political loyalty is often crucial for higher-level appointments in the government. Political favoritism influences decisions, and women, in particular, face biases, especially when it comes to being appointed to roles such as Secretary to the Ministry or Director General. Thus, political power and favoritism play a significant role in appointing individuals to top positions, which can lead to favoritism towards male candidates due to their perceived flexibility and willingness to follow instructions without strict adherence to rules.

Male-dominated industries tend to lack mentorship and networking opportunities for women, further hampering their ability to rise in leadership ranks (World Economic Forum, 2024). Reynolds (2011) surveyed women in leadership positions around the world to study the factors preventing women from accessing political representation tested using multivariate regression models on a cocktail of political institutional, cultural and socio-economic variables and found that socio-economic development has an effect on women in parliament but not in the cabinet.

The issues such as self-doubt, lack of confidence, and the struggle to balance work-life responsibilities often impede women's careers as personal barriers hinder women's progress (Van Vianen, 2002).

Thus, glass ceiling remains a significant challenge for women in their career progress. Garment industry in Sri Lanka also focused in this Women Glass Ceiling Area. Research in Sri Lanka's garment industry highlights the achievements of women in management roles, suggesting that such accomplishments could inspire changes in

organizational hierarchies, improving both performance and representation of women in leadership. Banking field in Sri Lanka also focused on the Glass Ceiling (Kuruppuarachchi, 2019). Despite high female participation in the banking sector, women remain underrepresented in top-level roles and women hold only a small percentage of executive positions, underscoring the need for initiatives to support women's career progression in the banking sector (Dissanayake, 2022).

2.2. Analytical Framework

This study-explores the glass ceiling faced by women in the Sri Lanka Administrative Service (SLAS) based on interviews with top-level executives in public sector organizations. Six key barriers have been identified from the related theories and empirical research namely political, social and cultural, psychological, personal, stereotyped, and organizational barriers. Thus, these barriers were used as six themes for developing the interview guides for data collection and also to present the data analysis.

3. Methodology

The methodology section focuses on the glass ceiling phenomenon impacting women in the Sri Lankan Administrative Service (SLAS). The study employs a qualitative approach. A convivence sampling, with in-depth interviews were employed to gather insights from 15 senior female officers, who hold top positions, with one Additional Secretary in the Public Service Commission, two Additional Director Generals in the Ministry of Finance, two Deputy Secretaries in the Ministry of Finance, four Divisional Secretaries, two Principals of schools in the Panadura Area, two Assistant Directors of the Department of Disaster Management, one Additional Director of the Registrar General's Department and one Additional Director of the Department of National Budget. Using the Deductive Thematic Analysis, this study followed a step-by-step approach to analyze the collected data, starting with reading and re-reading transcripts of audio recordings, followed by a line-by-line analysis. This analysis sought to uncover significant sentences, statements, or quotes that reveal the participants' experiences of the glass ceiling. These findings were then categorized into themes reflecting the above to better underset and the broader meanings and patterns of the participants' experiences. This study is grounded in feminist theory, glass ceiling theory, and women empowerment theory. The research aims to identify the barriers women face in advancing to top positions in the SLAS. The interviews included both open-ended and semi-structured questions, which allowed participants to express their experiences in their own words while also providing some consistency in the types of questions asked. The ethical consideration is highly maintained. The average time for one interview is around 45 minutes.

The paper also addresses the persistent gender wage gap, influenced by women's disproportionate involvement in domestic responsibilities. This limits their availability for career advancement, exacerbating inequality. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore themes like opportunities for advancement, family support, and experiences of gender discrimination. Thematic analysis (Braun, 2012) was applied to the data, revealing recurring patterns and insights into the glass ceiling's impact on women's careers.

4. Analysis and Discussion

A deductive thematic approach was used to analyze data obtained through telephone interviews. This is appropriate where there is a pre-established framework and theory (Lai et al., 2024). Based on deductive method of analysis initial codes were developed after familiarization with the data to identify common responses based on established themes (Clarke, 2017). This is important because interview notes only describe situations but do not provide interpretations and explanations (Lai et al., 2024). As a result, six themes were identified.
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4.1. Factors Affecting Glass Ceiling of the SLAS

Concerning the research question, it is hoped to align the data under the six themes of barriers; political, social and cultural, psychological, personal, stereotyped and organizational.

4.1.1. Political Barrier

Political Barrier is one of the main factors that prevent the female officers' career progress, which was identified from the discussion. The political dynamics in Sri Lanka play a crucial role in the career advancement of female SLAS officers, particularly in high-ranking positions. Political favoritism, corruption, and gendered expectations influence women's ability to progress. Many female officers expressed that political connections or proximity to politicians were essential for securing promotions or top positions and Ministers tend to prefer appointing individuals who are loyal or have established relationships with them, often at the expense of merit-based appointments. This is especially true for senior roles like Secretary to the Minister or Director General, where women are often overlooked in favor of male candidates who are perceived as more flexible or willing to engage in corrupt practices.

Political loyalty is often crucial for higher-level appointments in the government. Political favoritism influences decisions, and women, in particular, face biases, especially when it comes to being appointed to roles such as Secretary to the Ministry or Director General. Thus, political power and favoritism play a significant role in appointing individuals to top positions, which can lead to favoritism towards male

candidates due to their perceived flexibility and willingness to follow instructions without strict adherence to rules. "Male candidates are preferred for higher ranks because they are perceived as more adaptable and willing to engage in corrupt practices, whereas women are seen as more rule-abiding" (A Respondent, Field Data, 2023).

Under the Political barrier, discrimination and favoritism are also prevalent. "Female officers face overt discrimination when seeking higher ranks, especially if they are perceived as adhering to ethical or non-corrupt practices. Female leaders are often expected to maintain strict guidelines and resist corrupt activities, which creates a barrier to their advancement" (A Respondent, Field Data, 2023). The preference for male candidates in positions of power is often rooted in the belief that men are more willing to comply with the political agendas and are less likely to challenge unethical practices. Under such situation, officers are subjected to threats and pressures from the higher political authority. "We have to face threats or pressure from male colleagues and political figures, particularly when their ethical stance conflicted with the prevailing political practices and we felt our careers were at risk if they did not conform to the political expectations, and this added stress further compounded the difficulty of advancing in their careers" (A Respondent, Field Data, 2023).

Corruption is another cause. Corruption, particularly in high-level ministries like the Ministry of Finance, was another major barrier. Women who attempted to avoid participating in corrupt practices felt constrained, knowing that their non-compliance could lead to transfers, job losses, or other professional setbacks. Sexual harassment is also a key point. Several women also faced unwanted sexual advances from male superiors or political figures, creating an uncomfortable environment where their career progression was contingent not only on performance but also on their ability to navigate these inappropriate advances. These barriers are proven by Liberal Feminism Theory. Liberal feminism is a prominent branch of feminism that aims to advocate for the legal and political rights of women. Born in Western countries, it emphasizes the value of freedom that can be achieved through political and legal reform. The ideas of liberal feminism are rooted in liberalism, a political philosophy that promotes the development of freedom, especially in the political and economic realms. These key ideas of liberalism include individual freedom, democracy, equal opportunity, and equal rights (Bailey, 2016).

4.1.2. Social and Cultural Barriers

The social and cultural landscape of Sri Lanka, including religion, ethnicity, and traditional gender roles, presents additional barriers to the professional advancement of women in the SLAS. Religion and family expectations are mainly influence the glass ceiling. Religious norms, particularly within Muslim and Tamil communities,

can create tension for women aspiring to hold higher positions. Women in these communities often face resistance from family members, who may believe that a woman's role is primarily in the home, not in high-ranking government positions. This conflict between career aspirations and family or cultural expectations can lead to psychological stress and a lack of support for career growth.

Ethnic and language barriers are another cause**.** Women from minority ethnic groups, particularly Tamil-speaking women, often encounter discrimination in the workplace due to language barriers. This makes it difficult for them to integrate fully into the work environment, limits their ability to communicate effectively with colleagues, and potentially isolates them from opportunities for collaboration and mentorship.

Gendered attitudes and negative stereotypes also caused that. Cultural attitudes towards gender roles, particularly in the context of marriage, often limit women's opportunities for career advancement. Married women, especially those from conservative backgrounds, may face ridicule or negative assumptions about their professional capabilities. These biases often manifest in gossip, exclusion, or overt discrimination, undermining women's confidence and career growth.

Cultural expectations on women's behavior are also a root case**.** Women in leadership roles also face societal expectations to behave according to traditional gender roles. For example, female principals in schools may be expected to conform to specific moral or behavioral standards, with deviations often leading to stigmatization. Such cultural pressures can undermine a woman's authority and ability to make independent decisions.

The research draws on several studies that highlight the systemic nature of the glass ceiling, both globally and in Sri Lanka.

4.1.3. Psychological Barriers

Depression and stress can be taken as key main points. "I am experiencing intense stress due to my workload and personal circumstances, notably the expectation of a baby and my health deteriorated because of the stress, and doctors advised me to get a rest from my position that might help to manage the physical and emotional strain" (A Respondent, Field Data, 2023). Another respondent described a feeling of wanting to "give up all the things" due to overwhelming work stress and she reported aggressive behaviors and a desire for solitude, indicating symptoms of depression. However, she was unaware that she was experiencing this mental health issue. Another respondent reported feeling additional pressure due to societal expectations of female leaders. She worried that her image, often under scrutiny, could be tarnished

by incidents beyond her control, further exacerbating her stress. Giving up opportunities is another kind of reason. A person wanting to quite due to work stress is an indication of depression, leading her to easily give up opportunities.

Literature on self-esteem supports this, with studies showing that individuals with higher self-esteem are more likely to persevere and succeed, while low self-esteem is associated with depression and anger, which can hinder productivity and goal achievement. These barriers are confirmed by glass ceiling theory. Work motivation has always been a major concern for companies. From this point of view, motivation is an important factor to benefit from employees at maximum level in achieving performance outcomes of organization (Imadoğlu, 2020). Psychoanalytic feminism applies Freudian theories to gender inequality. It seeks to correct the male bias in psychoanalytic theory and creates theories that explore women's experiences of their emotions, bodies and sexuality (Zakin & Leeb, 2023).

4.1.4. Personal Barriers

Family issues are one of the main barriers as several respondents are concerned about balancing work and family responsibilities. "My demanding job left me unable to spend enough time with my children or attend to their educational needs" (A Respondent, Field Data, 2023). She felt torn between work duties and family obligations. "My intense work hours left me with little time for my family, especially my children" (A Respondent, Field Data, 2023). Her sense of guilt about not being present for them added to her stress. A female principal, noted that her demanding job meant she had to sacrifice family time, and her parents had to step in to care for her children. Another officer, who worked in disaster management, shared how her role required her to focus entirely on work, leaving her little time or energy for family responsibilities.

Health problems also affect the glass ceiling. Health issues, including leg pain from standing for long hours and pregnancy-related stress, were cited as physical barriers that compounded the psychological and emotional strain of balancing work and personal life. These physical health problems often led to further exhaustion, contributing to burnout and a reduced ability to perform.

4.1.5. Stereotyped Barriers

Lack of innovation is also another root cause for glass ceiling. An additional director at the Department of the National Budget found the repetitive nature of her work to be demotivating, as the budgeting system was outdated and did not allow for innovation or improvement. Another respondent also expressed frustration about the lack of opportunities for innovation. She tried to introduce new systems to reduce corruption in her department but was met with resistance from higher-ups, demonstrating the impact of institutional stereotypes that stifle female leadership.

Lethargy also affected the glass ceiling. A person who worked in the Registrar General's Department, described a lack of stimulating work, which led to lethargy and a lack of drive to climb the career ladder. Without challenging goals or opportunities for advancement, there was no incentive to push forward. Gender bias in promotions is another aspect. A Deputy Divisional Secretariat shared how male officials were given more responsibility and higher expectations than their female counterparts. Despite her qualifications, she was often overlooked in favor of male colleagues who were presumed to be more capable, reflecting a deeply ingrained gender bias within the organization. Structured workload and gender is also another cause. During election periods, women often found themselves burdened with extra tasks, such as carrying election boxes, due to the lack of staff in key roles. This not only reflects poor planning but also a gendered approach to responsibility distribution that places additional strain on women, forcing them to sacrifice their personal time and well-being. These issues are further reflected in literature, which highlights how family responsibilities, stereotypes, and organizational structures often limit women's potential in the workplace, leading to barriers in leadership and career advancement. These barriers are proven by Liberal Feminism theory. *Being free of violence and the threat:* Violence and the threat of violence violate women's dignity; they make women do what others want or reduce women's sphere of activity to avoiding harm. In some cases, violence fractures the self and takes from women their sense of self-respect (Bodescot & Brison, 1997).

4.2. Theoretical and Practical Implications

By addressing these barriers, a more inclusive and equitable environment can be achieved. Empowering women in leadership not only benefits individuals but also enhances organizational performance and contributes to broader societal progress.

Organizational initiatives: Companies should implement mentorship programs, leadership training, and work-life balance policies to create opportunities for women. Diversity and inclusion training can also help address unconscious biases and foster a supportive environment for female employees (Okatta, 2024).

Individual empowerment: Women are encouraged to develop a proactive mindset, take risks, and seek professional development opportunities to break through career barriers. Networking and career-building resources are critical for empowering women to overcome these challenges (Okatta, 2024). Awareness and advocacy can also be taken to solve the barriers. Raising awareness of the barriers women face and advocating for gender equality through policy changes (e.g., equal pay, parental leave) is crucial in promoting a more equitable workplace (Okatta, 2024). To address these challenges, this research suggests policy measures such as reducing political favoritism, restructuring workloads to better manage responsibilities, implementing

new systems like electronic elections, and changing the recruitment policy to ensure a balanced representation of men and women in SLAS. Additionally, it calls for changing public attitudes toward women in government service.

This research highlights that political independence, improved workload management, and reforms in recruitment policies are essential in breaking the glass ceiling for women in the SLAS. The findings emphasize the need for systemic change to address both personal and professional struggles that women face in the public sector in Sri Lanka.

These findings are proven by some theoretical background. Liberal feminism emphasizes the rights of individual women and aims to ensure access to equal rights and representation through legislation. Liberal feminists believe that women have the right to be as active in society as men and to be equally represented in the workplace, politics and media. They would also like to be equally represented in political roles, such as having more women as world leaders (Bailey, 2016).

Political independence is one of the main strategies as the influence of political connections is one of the main barriers.

Need for independent decision-making: Decision-making bodies, such as boards within ministries, should function independently from political pressure. The focus should be on qualifications and experiences rather than political connections. It needs to reduce favoritism and prioritize professional qualifications for higher positions.

Collaboration between politicians and executives: While recognizing the need for political input, top executives and politicians should work together more positively to achieve common goals, especially in times of crisis like the country's current financial situation.

Workload restructuring: It needs to manage workload effectively. The workload in top positions is overwhelming that should be distributed more efficiently. A Divisional Secretariat suggested that the tasks at top levels should be divided among lower-level staff to reduce stress, and the workload during election periods is disproportionately demanding for women, who sometimes are required to take on additional responsibilities due to the lack of female staff in certain roles.

Introducing new systems: Introduction of reforms, such as transitioning to an electronic election system, which would reduce the heavy manual burden placed on top executives during elections.

Gender balance in recruitment: There was a call for changes in the recruitment policy for the Sri Lanka Administrative Service (SLAS), with the suggestion that

policymakers should determine the necessary gender balance in recruitment. Female qualifications are often well-suited for the roles, but there is a need to identify where males are required to meet the demands of the government. A director at the Public Service Commission, suggested that the general public's perception of SLAS officers should shift to focus more on their professional qualifications and less on stereotypes related to gender.

Changing attitudes towards government service: The overall attitudes towards both women in government service and the SLAS system need to be transformed, with a focus on fairness, efficiency, and capability rather than gender-based expectations. These findings are proven by some theoretical background. Liberal feminism emphasizes the rights of individual women and aims to ensure access to equal rights and representation through legislation. Liberal feminists believe that women have the right to be as active in society as men and to be equally represented in the workplace, politics and media. They would also like to be equally represented in political roles, such as having more women as world leaders (Bailey, 2016).

In summary, these insights reflect the ongoing challenges faced by women in the Sri Lankan government, particularly the political and organizational barriers that hinder career progression and the implementation of reforms. The need for a more structured, unbiased recruitment process and a shift towards gender-neutral, merit-based decision-making is emphasized throughout.

5. Conclusion and Policy Implications

The study focuses on the challenges faced by women in administrative positions within the Sri Lanka Administrative Service (SLAS), highlighting the significant socio-cultural and organizational obstacles these women encounter due to their gender. Societal perceptions and gender roles heavily affect women in senior positions. These women face discrimination, lack of respect from employees, and negative public attitudes, with the obedience of staff members being noticeably different when compared to male counterparts. Glass Ceiling Theory also explained this issue. Politicians also pose a challenge, with many women reporting criticism and character attacks. Furthermore, women in these positions often struggle to balance their roles as both top managers and mothers, which results in conflicts within their personal lives.

Key challenges include societal expectations for women to maintain traditional roles within the family, which creates immense pressure. Women administrators, especially in top positions, frequently find it difficult to manage household duties and childcare, with the lack of reliable support for childcare being a prominent issue. These difficulties often result in strained family dynamics, particularly with in-laws.

Moreover, there is a strong perception that women lack the authority and courage to manage staff effectively, which impacts their professional standing.

This paper recommends several measures to alleviate these issues. Firstly, the government should adopt policies that provide flexible working hours for women and offer support in emergencies, such as appointing male assistants. Additionally, self-defense training and awareness programs should be implemented to change societal mindsets regarding women in leadership roles. Moreover, the government should ensure security measures like CCTV installations in workplaces and arrange transportation services for female workers.

Women Empowerment Theory supports the idea of balancing work and family responsibilities. Setting up daycare centers near offices and creating supportive work environments are suggested. The recruitment policies for entry-level positions in the SLAS also need restructuring to address these challenges.

In conclusion, while women in senior administrative positions in the SLAS are capable and willing to progress further in their careers, they face significant personal and professional dilemmas due to the socio-cultural and organizational pressures placed upon them. To foster a more gender-inclusive environment, the government must initiate motivational training programs, gender-sensitivity campaigns, and policy reforms to reduce the barriers faced by women in top management positions.

6. Limitations and Further Research

The main difficulties that have been faced is to make an appointment from their busy time schedules. Then protecting privacy is key to ensuring human dignity, safety and self-determination. There are very few studies that have been conducted on the women glass ceiling in the SLAS in selected public sector organizations. Therefore, many findings may be identified by directing future studies in that direction. In addition to that, women glass ceiling related to accounting profession, tourism and hospitality can also be focused on. Also, this study can be undertaken especially on the academics in both public and private universities of Sri Lanka.

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Annexure

Research questions, themes and codes.

A- What are the factors affecting for the women glass ceiling in Sri Lanka Administrative Service officers in selected public sector organizations?

1. Political barriers
   - Political favors
   - Threatened for the officials
   - Corruptions of the politicians
   - Influence for the higher-level positions
   - Sexual harassments

2. Social and cultural barriers
   - Negative attitudes of the people
   - Religion barriers
   - Ethnic problems

3. Psychological barriers
   - Depression
   - Stress
   - Give-up all the things

4. Personal barriers
   - Family issues
   - Health problems
   - Verbal harassments

5. Stereotyped barriers
   - Same work
   - Cannot do innovations
   - Lethargy

6. Organizational barriers
   - Give priority for male
   - Structured the work load difficult to manage females

B- What can be done to address that women glass ceiling in Sri Lanka Administrative Service?

7. Political independency
   - The influence for the activities should be reduced
   - The decision-making process should be independent
   - Both top level executives and the politicians work together to achieve the common target

8. The work load should be restructured
   - The work has to be done should be properly identified, managed and distributed among the top executives

9. New system should be implemented
   - New reforms can be introduced for the government system

10. Recruitment policy for the entrance level of SLAS should be changed
    - Identify the percentage of female and male then recruited
    - Not only consider the educational qualifications but also consider the other abilities specially relating to decision making, analytical thinking