EVALUATION OF GLASS CEILING PERCEPTION IN TERMS OF DIFFERENT GENERATIONS: GENERATİONS X, Y AND Z

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to examine the glass ceiling perceptions of individuals from different generations in relation to socio-demographic variables. The research was conducted using a quantitative method and a relational survey model with a sample of 356 employees working in the public and private sectors in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Data were collected using a 56-item questionnaire adapted from three validated sources and culturally tailored for the study. The questionnaire included demographic questions and sub-dimensions related to glass ceiling perceptions. Data were analyzed using SPSS 26.0. The findings show that participants' overall glass ceiling perception is moderate but pronounced in certain areas. While the perception of gender equality is generally positive, perceptions of discrimination against women in leadership positions remain significant. Female employees emphasized individual effort and performance as key to advancement. Gender differences were significant only in perceptions related to women's perceived inadequacy, while single individuals exhibited more egalitarian attitudes compared to married participants. Higher education levels were associated with stronger perceptions of equality and lower perceptions of discrimination. Although no significant differences were found between generations overall, Generation Y showed greater sensitivity to discrimination issues. The strong correlations among sub-dimensions indicate that the glass ceiling is perceived as a multidimensional but interrelated phenomenon. Overall, the results highlight the continuing need for policies that promote gender equality in the workplace.

Keywords: Glass Ceiling, Generational Differences, Gender, Gender Equality

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Problem

The glass ceiling perception refers to the invisible yet powerful social, cultural, and institutional barriers that prevent individuals—particularly women and minority groups—from advancing beyond a certain point in their careers, regardless of their abilities and achievements (Tükeltürk & Perçin, 2008). This phenomenon emerges as a result of structural factors such as discrimination, prejudice, and traditional gender roles, and it limits individuals' opportunities to realize their full potential (Demir & Kartal, 2018; Kobal, 2021). The impact of the glass ceiling in professional life not only restricts women's opportunities for promotion but also reduces their visibility within organizational structures and their representation in decision-making processes (Tahtalıoğlu & Özgür, 2020).

In contrast to the glass ceiling, Williams (1992) introduced the concept of the "glass escalator", demonstrating that men tend to be promoted more rapidly in professions traditionally dominated by women. Similarly, Wilson-Kovacs et al. (2006) found that women face significant barriers in advancing to higher positions, particularly in male-dominated sectors, highlighting the persistent influence of the glass ceiling. Research by Yamagata et al. (1997) further shows that women's representation at senior levels in the public sector remains low, indicating an ongoing structural inequality.

The perception of the glass ceiling is closely linked to the sense of career stagnation that individuals may feel within corporate environments; however, how this perception is shaped and how it varies across generations has not been sufficiently explored. Considering the differing values and career expectations of distinct generations, it is essential to examine how the perception of the glass ceiling is experienced in a generational context.

Generation X comprises individuals who grew up during times of social change and economic uncertainty, often valuing independence and work-life balance (Keleş, 2011). Generation Y (Millennials) came of age immersed in digital technologies and tend to prioritize meaningful work and flexible working conditions (Özdemir, 2020). Generation Z, the youngest cohort, has grown up fully integrated with technology, shows strong tendencies toward individuality and entrepreneurship, and embraces a flexible, value-driven approach to careers (Sönmez, 2022).

These generational differences contribute to a diverse workplace but also influence how structural barriers like the glass ceiling are perceived. The social, cultural, and technological environments in which these generations were raised have shaped their attitudes toward corporate hierarchies, promotion processes, and career development. For instance, the Baby Boomer generation values corporate loyalty and long-term stability (Kupperschmidt, 2000), whereas Generation X places more emphasis on individual success, and Generation Y prioritizes meaningful work and flexibility. Generation Z, meanwhile, values independence and innovation (İraz, 2020). These varying perspectives can lead to generational differences in how the glass ceiling is perceived and experienced.

The way the glass ceiling is viewed by different generations is closely connected to the changing expectations and experiences shaped by each generation's unique social, economic, and cultural context. For example, the Baby Boomer generation (1946–1964) built their careers in more traditional, hierarchical work environments at a time when the glass ceiling was particularly pronounced for women. Generation X (1965–1980) developed a more conscious approach to challenging these barriers and supported the integration of more egalitarian policies in the workplace. Generation Y (1981–1996) and Generation Z (born after 1997) display higher awareness of the glass ceiling phenomenon, driven by an emphasis on individual success and a preference for flexible working conditions. Nevertheless, despite this increased awareness, the glass ceiling persists in many sectors, and generational differences in experiences highlight the importance of collective efforts to address this issue (Çelik, 2020). This study aims to uncover both individual differences in perception and the ways in which generational values shape these perceptions by analyzing how the glass ceiling is experienced across Generations X, Y, and Z. In doing so, it seeks to contribute to the development of strategic approaches that promote equal opportunities within a multigenerational workforce.

1.2. Purpose of the Research
The purpose of this research is to examine the glass ceiling perceptions of individuals from different generations and to reveal the effects of demographic variables such as gender, marital status, education level, income level and professional seniority on this perception. In this context, the level and dimensions of the glass ceiling perception are compared between generations X, Y and Z; the effect of the socio-demographic differences of employees on this perception is evaluated with statistical analyses.

1.2.1 Sub-Objectives
- Is there a significant difference in the perception of the glass ceiling among generations X, Y and Z?
- Does the gender variable make a significant difference in the perception of the glass ceiling?
- Do the variables of marital status, education level, income level and length of service show a significant relationship with the sub-dimensions of the glass ceiling perception?
- Is there a significant correlation between the sub-dimensions of the glass ceiling perception?
- What is the predictive power of demographic variables that affect the glass ceiling perception?

1.3. Importance of the Research
The glass ceiling phenomenon, as an invisible but systematic obstacle that continues to exist in business life, especially for women employees and minority groups, directly affects the principles of organizational equality and justice. This study not only reveals how these structural obstacles are experienced at the individual perception level, but also makes an original contribution in terms of evaluating them from an intergenerational perspective. Because today's workforce consists of multi-generational structures where more than one generation is simultaneously in the work environment, this situation can create managerial difficulties due to values, expectations and perceptions specific to generations.

The importance of the research in this context is that it addresses in a multifaceted way how the glass ceiling perception is shaped not only by gender but also by other demographic factors such as age, seniority, education, income level and marital status. The findings obtained can guide the production of egalitarian and inclusive policies in workplaces. For example, determining the generations or socio-demographic groups where the glass ceiling perception is concentrated will enable the development of awareness and intervention strategies for these groups. This study has the potential to contribute theoretically and practically to fields such as human resources management, organizational behavior, sociology of work and gender studies. Presenting the differences in the perception of glass ceiling among generations with concrete data has the potential to add a new dimension to the literature in this field. Finally, the research findings are also important in terms of expanding the limited empirical data on working life in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
2.1. Women's Labor Force and the "Glass Metaphor"
Women's participation in the workforce is an indispensable element of social and economic development. Women face not only structural, symbolic, and cultural barriers as they try to advance in the business world. "Glass

metaphors" are a conceptualization frequently used in the literature to explain the invisible, abstract, and effective barriers that women face in business life. The most well-known of these metaphors is the "glass ceiling". The glass ceiling refers to the invisible limitations that prevent women from reaching senior management positions, despite being talented and competent (Erdem, 2021).

Glass metaphors are not limited to the glass ceiling. The glass cliff reveals that women are often assigned to risky leadership positions with a high probability of failure, and in these cases, they are identified with failure and suffer more institutional damage (Binns, 2020). The glass labyrinth emphasizes that women's advancement in business life is a winding, complex and obstacle-filled path. These metaphors show that women struggle to get a job, stay in that job, be promoted and have access to decision-making mechanisms. These obstacles to the female workforce often do not occur in the form of direct and overt discrimination, but indirectly through prejudices, stereotyped gender roles, social expectations and organizational cultures. For example, social judgments that women have inadequate leadership skills can lead to their exclusion from managerial roles. The fact that home and care responsibilities are largely assigned to women causes women to experience interruptions in their careers and to be disadvantaged in inflexible working conditions (Küçük, 2019).

Although the female labor force participation rate in Türkiye has increased in recent years, female representation rates are still quite low, especially in the upper management levels of the private sector. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK) data, the rate of women reaching senior management positions is quite low compared to men. Not only gender equality poses a problem in terms of organizational efficiency and decision quality. Because research shows that diversity increases management performance, encourages innovation and strengthens employee loyalty (Aycan & Kan, 2021).

Glass metaphors are not only an analysis tool for understanding the position of women in business life; they also provide an important conceptual framework for developing social policies. Institutions need to recognize these invisible barriers, develop institutional strategies to ensure gender equality, and create inclusive leadership policies. Individual awareness and cultural transformation are as critical to this process as organizational arrangements.

2.2. Glass Ceiling

The concept of the "glass ceiling" is a sociological term used to describe the invisible and highly effective barriers that prevent women from reaching senior positions in business life. While this concept refers to the systematic and structural barriers that women face in reaching managerial positions in particular, it has a "glass" quality because these barriers are not clearly stated or do not officially exist. While women can rise to certain levels in corporate structures, they face gender-based discrimination in reaching higher-level leadership positions (Yıldırım & Aytaç, 2022).

The glass ceiling phenomenon is not only a product of deeply rooted norms at the individual, organizational and societal levels. Gender roles, traditional family structures and care responsibilities attributed to women make women's career paths more complex and limited compared to their male counterparts. It prevents many talented and experienced women from reaching managerial positions, leading to inefficient use of the workforce potential (Kalaycı & Özdemir, 2021). Male-dominated structures at management levels do not sufficiently recognize women's leadership styles and often evaluate them with prejudices such as "insufficient" or "too emotional".

One of the most basic symptoms of the glass ceiling syndrome is the low rate of women advancing in organizations. While women are heavily involved in entry-level positions in most sectors, senior management rates are shaped in favor of men. For example, in Türkiye, the representation of women in public and private sector management positions is still quite limited. According to TÜİK (2022) data, the rate of women managers is only around 17.5% and this rate has increased very little over the years.

The causes of the glass ceiling include gender-based prejudices, work-family conflict, lack of mentoring, lack of role models, and male-dominated network structures (Acar & Göçer, 2020). The perception that women need to make more efforts, prove themselves, and often adopt masculine behavioral patterns in order to reach higher positions in the workplace also reinforces the glass ceiling (Yınal, 2025). On the other hand, women often internalize the reason why they are not promoted, thinking that it is due to their own inadequacies, and this brings about a lack of self-confidence. In order to break the glass ceiling, it is of great importance to adopt policies based on gender equality at the institutional level. In this context, regulations such as flexible working hours, parental leave practices, determining objective criteria in promotion processes, and developing mentoring programs for women can be effective in helping women reach higher-level positions (Akın & Kalkan, 2023).

Sticky floor is a concept used to describe the concentration of women in low-income, low-status positions with limited opportunities for advancement in business life. It causes women to remain in less prestigious, insecure and limited-range jobs from the beginning of their careers. Sticky floor, unlike the glass ceiling syndrome, refers to being forced to remain fixed at a lower level rather than being prevented from advancing to the upper levels of the career (Ecevit, 2021).

It is observed that women's participation in the workforce is particularly concentrated in the service, care and retail sectors; these areas are generally low-wage and have limited promotion opportunities. The intensive employment

of women in these areas, on the one hand, leads to the reproduction of gender roles, and on the other hand, restricts their economic independence and condemns them to sticky ground (Kahraman & Çetin, 2022). Women are forced to prefer flexible and low-profile jobs due to their domestic responsibilities and social expectations, and these preferences limit their advancement in business life in the long term. The basis of the sticky ground phenomenon is women's invisible labor in business life, family obligations and exclusion in decision-making mechanisms. Since the responsibility of establishing a balance between family and work life is mostly placed on them, women tend to turn to jobs that require less time and energy and have less income. This is especially evident for married women with children (Toksöz, 2021). The fact that women cannot break out of this vicious circle limits their professional development and reinforces gender inequality.

Another dimension of sticky ground is that organizational structures indirectly perpetuate this type of discrimination. Promotion and career development opportunities are mostly offered to male employees, while female employees are encouraged to remain in low-responsibility positions "voluntarily". Over time, this reduces women's organizational visibility and reduces their chances of becoming candidates for leadership positions (Yıldız & Aksu, 2022). The fact that women are more likely to be employed in low-wage jobs also deepens the phenomenon of women's poverty; this economic vulnerability limits their attempts to change jobs or get promoted. Various measures need to be taken at individual, institutional and public levels to reduce the sticky ground effect. At the individual level, it is important for women to invest in their professional development and to have access to mentoring and support networks that are suitable for them. At the institutional level, human resources policies need to consider gender equality, promotion systems need to be made transparent and career development opportunities need to be offered equally to female employees (Akyol & Tuncer, 2023).

2.3. Generation Concept and Classification

The concept of generation describes a group of individuals born in a specific historical period and influenced by the socio-economic, cultural and political conditions of that period. Members of a generation are shaped by similar social experiences and interactions, which makes their perceptions of the world and value systems similar. Generations are usually defined by a ten-year interval, and the most obvious difference between different generations is the dynamics of the period in which they live. In social sciences, the concept of generation is widely used, especially to understand the effects of social changes on individuals' attitudes, behaviors and beliefs (Kupperschmidt, 2000).

The concept of generation is an important way to understand the historical process of a society and to analyze the psychological, social and cultural development of individuals. Each generation is shaped by the social structures, economic conditions, technological developments and political environments in which it grows. For example, economic crises such as the Great Depression can significantly affect the values and outlook of individuals in a generation. On the other hand, factors such as rapid technological developments and globalization can also cause new generations to emerge. The concept of generation is only a biological, social and cultural phenomenon (Strauss & Howe, 1991).

Generational differences help us understand the effects of changes in social structure on individuals. These differences are especially evident in the workforce, education and family life. For example, the Baby Boomer generation grew up in an environment where post-war prosperity and institutional structures were strong, and they adopted more traditional and hierarchical structures. Generation X, on the other hand, adopted a more individualistic and independent lifestyle due to the impact of economic crises and social changes. Generation Y, under the influence of the digital revolution, has adopted more technological innovations and prioritized flexibility and work-life balance. Generation Z consists of individuals who have grown up in a completely digital world and are integrated with this world (Özdemir, 2020).

The concept of generations allows for the analysis of different aspects of the social structure. This allows us to examine not only the values and attitudes of one generation but also their contributions to society and the challenges they face. Differences between generations are often evident in areas such as cultural norms, attitudes towards business, family structures, education levels and even approaches to technology. Intergenerational interaction is critical for social harmony and development because each generation transmits knowledge, values and experiences to the next generation. These interactions contribute to the continuous evolution of the social structure (Yıldız & Kızıldağ, 2022).

Generation classifications help us understand the common characteristics and value systems of different generations that emerged as a result of historical, cultural and social changes. Members of a generation are greatly influenced by the social, economic and political conditions of the period in which they live, and these influences play a determining role in the generation's worldview and lifestyle. Therefore, generation classifications do not only describe those born in the same biological period, but also include groups shaped by social, cultural and economic factors. Some generally accepted generation classifications are:

Baby Boomer Generation (1946-1964)

The Baby Boomer generation was shaped by the increase in prosperity and economic growth experienced after World War II. This generation was born with the economic stability and the reestablishment of families after the

war. Baby Boomers were raised with values such as strong work ethic, loyalty and job security. They are known for their commitment to traditional work order and institutional structures. Members of this generation are closely tied to social norms and traditional values. Baby Boomers generally prefer to work in the same workplace for a long time and remain loyal to a single workplace until they retire (Kupperschmidt, 2000).

Generation X (1965-1980)
Generation X is a generation that has grown up under the influence of social changes, economic crises and technological transformation. Members of this generation have grown up especially in periods of economic stagnation. Generation X has been shaped by economic uncertainties, job insecurity and changes in family structure. Changes in family structure, especially increasing divorce rates and increasing participation of women in the workforce, have led Generation X to develop values such as independence, entrepreneurship and flexibility. This generation generally has a more individualistic approach, values corporate hierarchy and personal success. is careful to maintain work-life balance and seeks more flexibility in work life (Keleş, 2011).

Generation Y (1981-1996)
Generation Y is a generation shaped by the influence of the digital revolution and globalization. This generation grew up in a period when the internet and mobile technologies were becoming widespread. Generation Y can communicate quickly in the business world and perform multiple tasks at the same time by using technology effectively. Members of Generation Y generally value factors such as meaningful work, rapid career advancement, and flexible working hours. They prefer more collaborative work environments instead of hierarchical structures. They have values such as social responsibility and environmental awareness, and they prioritize these values in business life (Özdemir, 2020).

Generation Z (1997 and later)
Generation Z is a generation that was born and raised with digital technology. The internet, social media and mobile devices have completely shaped the lifestyle of Generation Z. This generation is known for their ability to quickly access information and communicate instantly. Generation Z has a more independent and freer understanding of business than previous generations. They may prefer to work freelance and take part in project-based jobs. Generation Z attaches great importance to issues such as sustainability, environmental awareness and diversity. Members of this generation work in a way that is fully integrated with technology and are looking for rapid advancement in their careers (Sönmez, 2022).

Differences between generations are important, especially in terms of workforce management, education, marketing and social structures. Each generation brings a different perspective to the world of work and social norms. These differences play a critical role, especially in managers' management of intergenerational interactions, in resolving intergenerational conflicts and in creating a more productive work environment. The fact that each generation has a different understanding of business leads organizations to reshape their leadership approaches and corporate cultures. Therefore, understanding the differences between generations is of great importance in terms of ensuring social harmony and creating a productive work environment (İraz, 2020).

3. METHOD
3.1. Research Model
This study was conducted based on the quantitative research method. Quantitative studies are research types that are based on an objective and systematic approach, where observable phenomena are examined through measurable data (Büyüköztürk et al., 2022). Such studies aim to analyze the relationships between variables with numerical data and to reach generalizable results from the findings obtained. The relational screening model was used in the study. The relational screening model is a screening type that aims to reveal the current relationship level between two or more variables (Karasar, 2022). This model allows variables to be measured in their natural environments and the correlations between them to be determined. In this context, the relationships between the glass ceiling perception and the demographic and generational characteristics of generations X, Y and Z were examined with statistical analysis techniques. The relational screening model is a model that is frequently used in determining the factors affecting the attitudes, perceptions and behaviors of individuals, especially in social sciences. In this study, the differences and relationships between the glass ceiling perception levels of individuals belonging to different generations were examined, and the effects of generational dynamics on the perception in question were tried to be revealed.

3.2. Universe and Sample
The universe of this research consists of individuals working in private sector and public institutions operating throughout the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Based on the assumption that the glass ceiling perception, which is the subject of the research, can be experienced differently in different sectoral structures, the study group was designed to include private sector and public employees. Due to the heterogeneous structure of the universe, the stratified sampling method was preferred. Stratified sampling is a probability sampling method that increases the representativeness of the sample by ensuring that a proportionate and significant number of individuals are selected from each of the subgroups (e.g. sectors, institution types) in the universe (Büyüköztürk

et al., 2022; Karasar, 2022). With this method, two main layers were created as private sector and public sector, and the sample was determined by taking into account the size of the sector and the employee profile from each layer. The sample of the research consists of a total of 356 employees from both sectors. This sample size was kept at a level that would ensure the reliability of the analyses and data diversity was preserved by ensuring adequate representation from each layer. Thus, it has become possible to comparatively analyze the views of both private sector and public employees regarding the glass ceiling perception.

3.3. Data Collection Tools

The survey method was used to collect data in the study. The prepared survey form was adapted from a form developed by Çelik (2020) and based on scales that had previously undergone validity-reliability analyses. The scale in Çelik's study was created by blending subject-specific measurement tools that are widely used in the literature and has a structure that is frequently preferred in the field of application.

The questionnaire form used in this study was created by combining questions from three different sources and consists of a total of 56 items.

In the first section, the demographic information form used in Bayram Sezen's (2008) study titled "The Glass Ceiling Barrier Faced by Female Employees in Hotel Businesses" was adapted. The questions in this section are aimed at determining the demographic and professional characteristics of employees such as age, gender, marital status, education level, sector, position and service period. In addition, the interaction between women's family life and work life and the relationship of this situation with the glass ceiling perception were also questioned.

The second section includes questions adapted from Umut Haydar Üçyıldız's (2017) study titled "Perceptions of Glass Ceiling Syndrome of Female Employees". This section focuses on the invisible barriers that women employees in the private sector and public sector encounter in institutional structures, the difficulties they face in promotion processes, and the factors affecting their career advancement.

The third section includes questions taken from Thi Thu Thao Tran's (2014) study that evaluate the social stereotypes, gender-based prejudices and obstacles to women's visibility in leadership roles that they encounter in business life.

This comprehensive scale, which was created by compiling three studies, allows for a multidimensional examination of the glass ceiling perception. All questions in the scale have undergone linguistic and cultural adaptations that can be applied to employees working in the public and private sectors throughout the TRNC. The questionnaire form was structured in accordance with the purpose of the study and aims to measure the glass ceiling perception levels of the participants objectively and reliably.

3.4. Analysis of Data

The research data were analyzed with SPSS 26.00 Program. In this context, first of all, normality test was performed. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied in order to test the normality assumption and the significance value of $p<.05$ in all subscales revealed that the data statistically deviated from normal distribution. However, in large samples ($n>300$), this test is quite sensitive and even small deviations can produce significant results (Field, 2013). Therefore, not only Kolmogorov-Smirnov test but also skewness and kurtosis values were examined. The fact that skewness and kurtosis values are between -1 and +1 indicates that the data are close to normal distribution (George & Mallery, 2010). According to the values in the table, skewness and kurtosis values for all four subscales remain in this range. This shows that the data are approximately normally distributed and parametric tests can be applied.

4. FINDINGS

Table 1. Socio-Demographic Distribution of Participants

Gender	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Woman	199	55.90
Male	157	44.10
Generation		
Generation X (1965–1979)	113	31.74
Generation Y (1980–1999)	162	45.51
Generation Z (2000–2010)	81	22.75
Marital status		
Married	218	61.24
Single	138	38.76

Gender	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Educational Status		
Primary School / Secondary School	18	5.06
High school	57	16.01
Associate Degree	81	22.75
Licence	125	35.11
Masters / PhD	75	21.07
Income Level		
Too bad	17	4.78
Bad	53	14.89
Middle	141	39.61
Good	107	30.06
Very good	38	10.67
Seniority Period		
0–1 year	35	9.83
2–5 years	107	30.06
6–10 years	90	25.28
11–15 years	73	20.51
16 years and above	51	14.33
Total	356	100

Within the scope of the research, data was obtained from a total of 356 participants working in private sector and public institutions in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. 55.90% of the participants are female and 44.10% are male. When the generational distribution is examined, 45.51% of the participants belong to Generation Y (1980–1999), 31.74% to Generation X (1965–1979) and 22.75% to Generation Z (2000–2010). In terms of marital status, 61.24% of the participants are married and 38.76% are single. When the level of education is examined, the largest group consists of bachelor's degree graduates with 35.11%, followed by associate degree (22.75%), master's/doctorate (21.07%), high school (16.01%) and primary/secondary school graduates (5.06%). In the distribution regarding monthly income level, 39.61% of the participants stated their income level as "medium"; 30.06% answered "good", 14.89% "bad", 10.67% "very good" and 4.78% "very bad". When evaluated in terms of professional seniority, 30.06% of the participants have 2–5 years of experience, 25.28% have 6–10 years, 20.51% have 11–15 years, 14.33% have 16 years and above, and 9.83% have 0–1 year. This demographic distribution shows that the sample represents various groups in terms of sector, age, education, and experience, and allows for multi-faceted analyses of the glass ceiling perception.

3.2.2. Descriptive Analyses

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics Regarding Scales

Scale / Sub-Dimension	Min.	Max.	$\bar{X}$	P.S.
Thoughts on the Inadequacy of Women in Leadership	1.00	5.00	2.80	0.57
Discrimination Against Women in Leadership Positions	1.21	5.00	3.08	0.72
Perception of Equality between Men and Women in Business Life	1.98	4.72	3.46	0.48
The Effect of Women's Family Life and Preferences on Leadership Level	1.16	4.45	2.94	0.60
General Scale (Glass Ceiling Perception)	2.27	4.02	3.07	0.31

According to the descriptive statistics regarding the scale and sub-dimensions used in the study, the glass ceiling perception of the participants is generally at a medium level. The general scale mean is $\bar{X}$=3.07 (SD=0.31), and it is seen that the glass ceiling perception of the participants is significant but not extremely high. When the sub-dimensions are examined, the sub-dimension with the highest mean, "The perception that women and men are equal in business life", stands out ($\bar{X}$=3.46, SD=0.48). This finding shows that the participants partially believe in the principle of gender-based equality. On the other hand, while the dimension of "Discrimination against women in leadership positions" indicates a higher perception with an average of $\bar{X}$=3.08 (Sd.=0.72), "The impact

of women's family life and preferences on the leadership level" (X^-=2.94, Sd.=0.60) and "Thoughts about women's inadequacy in leadership" (X^-=2.80, Sd.=0.57) are expressed with relatively lower averages. This situation reveals that the participants are more distant from the prejudices about women's inadequacy in leadership, but their perceptions of structural discrimination are more pronounced. When evaluated in general, the glass ceiling perception of the individuals participating in the study varies over different dimensions, but it is seen that the perception of gender equality in particular is above the medium level.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Questions About Female Employees

Scale / Sub-Dimension	Min.	Max.	X^-	P.S.
The level of education I received is an important factor in reaching this position.	2.13	5.00	3.68	0.55
The information I received from my superiors contributed to my promotion.	1.23	5.00	3.55	0.67
My social relationships outside of work played a role in my promotion.	1.00	5.00	2.74	0.79
Career development programs have helped with promotion.	1.31	5.00	3.20	0.71
It was effective that I worked harder than my colleagues.	2.69	5.00	3.96	0.47
It has had an impact on my higher performance.	2.39	5.00	4.01	0.48

According to the evaluation made in line with the statements answered only by female employees in the research, the perceptions of the participants regarding the promotion process show a significant diversity. Female employees stated that "showing higher performance" (X^-=4.01, SD=0.48) and "working harder than your colleagues" (X^-=3.96, SD=0.47) were the most effective factors in the promotion process. These findings reveal that individual effort and performance are seen as important career advancement criteria by women. The role of education level in promotion was also evaluated with a relatively high average (X^-=3.68, SD=0.55), and the effect of information obtained from superiors (X^-=3.55, SD=0.67) was found to be moderately significant. On the other hand, the effect of social relations outside of work on promotion (X^-=2.74, SD=0.79) and the contribution of the company's career development programs (X^-=3.20, SD=0.71) were evaluated with lower means. These results show that female employees think that personal performance and effort are more decisive than institutional support or social environment in the promotion process.

Table 4. T-Test Results Regarding the Glass Ceiling Perception Sub-Dimensions According to the Gender Variable

Sub Dimension	Group	n	X^-	P.S.	t	df (df)	p
Inadequacy Thoughts	Woman	199	2.73	0.51	-4.69	354	.000
	Male	157	2.99	0.51			
Perception of Discrimination	Woman	199	3.20	0.68	1.58	354	.115
	Male	157	3.08	0.70			
Perception of Equality	Woman	199	3.46	0.50	0.52	354	.600
	Male	157	3.40	0.48			
Family Influence	Woman	199	2.91	0.58	-1.65	354	.099
	Male	157	3.03	0.58			

In the study, an independent samples t-test was applied to determine whether there were significant differences in four sub-dimensions according to the gender variable. In the sub-dimension of "Thoughts on the Inadequacy of Women in Leadership", a statistically significant difference was found between female (X^-=2.73, SD=0.51) and male (X^-=2.99, SD=0.51) participants (t=-4.69, SD=354, p<.001). This finding shows that men agree more with the inadequacy of women in leadership compared to women. No significant differences were found in the other sub-dimensions. Although it was observed that women (X^-=3.20, SD=0.68) received higher average scores than men (X^-=3.08, SD=0.70) in the sub-dimension of "Discrimination Against Women in Leadership Positions", this difference was not statistically significant (t=1.58, p=.115). Similarly, no significant difference was found between male and female participants in the sub-dimensions of "Perception of Equality between Women and Men in Business Life" (t=0.52, p=.600) and "Impact of Women's Family Life and Preferences on Leadership Level" (t=-1.65, p=.099). These results show that significant differences in the perception of the glass ceiling based on gender emerge only in the context of prejudices towards women's inadequacy.

Table 5. ANOVA Test Results for Glass Ceiling Perception Sub-Dimensions According to Generation Variable

Dimension	Generation Group	n	Avg.	P.S.	f	p
Inadequacy Thoughts	Generation X	113	2.79	0.50	2.91	.056
	Generation Y	162	2.78	0.58		
	Generation Z	81	2.94	0.44		
Perception of Discrimination	Generation X	113	3.12	0.70	3.29	.039
	Generation Y	162	3.18	0.71		
	Generation Z	81	2.97	0.68		
Perception of Equality	Generation X	113	3.39	0.53	1.02	.362
	Generation Y	162	3.46	0.49		
	Generation Z	81	3.50	0.43		
Family Influence	Generation X	113	3.01	0.64	1.35	.260
	Generation Y	162	2.96	0.56		
	Generation Z	81	2.86	0.56		

According to the results of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted in order to determine the differences in glass ceiling perception between generations in the study, a statistically significant difference was found between generations only in the sub-dimension of "Discrimination Against Women in Leadership Positions" (f=3.29, p<.05). In this sub-dimension, the highest mean belongs to Generation Y ($\bar{X}$=3.18, SD=0.71), and the lowest mean belongs to Generation Z ($\bar{X}$=2.97, SD=0.68). This finding shows that Generation Y individuals are more sensitive to discrimination in women's access to leadership positions. No significant difference was observed in the other sub-dimensions. Although the p value approached the significance limit in the sub-dimension of "Thoughts About the Inadequacy of Women in Leadership" (f=2.91, p=.056), it was not considered statistically significant. However, it is seen that Generation Z individuals ($\bar{X}$=2.94) carry this perception at a higher level, while Generation Y has the lowest average ($\bar{X}$=2.78). No significant difference was found between generations in the sub-dimensions of "Perception of Equality between Women and Men in Business Life" and "Impact of Women's Family Life and Preferences on Leadership Level" (p>.05). These results reveal that some dimensions of the glass ceiling perception show relative differences between generations, but there is no significant and consistent generational effect in all dimensions.

Table 6. T -Test Results for Glass Ceiling Perception Sub-Dimensions According to Marital Status Variable

Sub Dimension	Group	n	$\bar{X}$	P.S.	t	df (df)	p
Inadequacy Thoughts	Married	218	2.85	0.52	0.31	354	.760
	Single	138	2.83	0.52			
Perception of Discrimination	Married	218	3.14	0.68	-1.69	354	.092
	Single	138	3.27	0.69			
Perception of Equality	Married	218	3.38	0.51	-2.33	354	.020
	Single	138	3.52	0.47			
Family Influence	Married	218	3.04	0.59	2.63	354	.009
	Single	138	2.85	0.60			

According to the results of the independent samples t-test conducted to determine whether the glass ceiling perception differs according to the marital status variable, statistically significant differences were found in some sub-dimensions. In the sub-dimension of "Perception of Equality between Women and Men in Business Life", the average score of married individuals ($\bar{X}$=3.38, SD=0.51) was found to be significantly lower than single individuals ($\bar{X}$=3.52, SD=0.47) (t=-2.33, SD=354, p<.05). This result shows that single individuals have a higher perception of gender equality compared to married individuals. Similarly, in the sub-dimension of "The Effect of Women's Family Life and Preferences on the Level of Leadership", it was determined that single individuals ($\bar{X}$=2.85, SD=0.60) scored lower than married individuals ($\bar{X}$=3.04, SD=0.59) and this difference was statistically significant (t=2.63, p<.01). This finding reveals that married individuals believe that family life is more effective at the level of leadership. In terms of the other sub-dimensions, "Thoughts About the Inadequacy of Women in Leadership" (t=0.31, p=.760) and "Discrimination Against Women in Leadership Positions" (t=-1.69, p=.092), no significant difference was found between married and single individuals. The results show that marital status can

be a determining variable especially in terms of the perception of gender equality and the effect of family life on leadership.

Table 7. ANOVA Test Results Regarding the Sub-Dimensions of Glass Ceiling Perception According to the Educational Status Variable

Dimension	Education Group	n	Avg.	P.S.	f	p
Inadequacy Thoughts	Primary School/Secondary School	18	2.91	0.55	0.61	.656
	High school	57	2.83	0.53		
	Associate Degree	81	2.82	0.49		
	Licence	125	2.78	0.52		
	Masters/Doctorate	75	2.74	0.41		
Perception of Discrimination	Primary School/Secondary School	18	3.31	0.75	2.45	.045
	High school	57	3.27	0.63		
	Associate Degree	81	3.23	0.61		
	Licence	125	3.13	0.58		
	Masters/Doctorate	75	3.01	0.60		
Perception of Equality	Primary School/Secondary School	18	3.18	0.41	4.37	.002
	High school	57	3.36	0.49		
	Associate Degree	81	3.47	0.52		
	Licence	125	3.51	0.47		
	Masters/Doctorate	75	3.58	0.50		
Family Influence	Primary School/Secondary School	18	3.07	0.63	1.78	.133
	High school	57	3.01	0.62		
	Associate Degree	81	2.99	0.55		
	Licence	125	2.93	0.58		
	Masters/Doctorate	75	2.86	0.59		

In the study, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied in order to determine whether there was a significant difference in the glass ceiling perception sub-dimensions according to the educational background of the participants. According to the results, a significant difference was found in the "Perception of Discrimination Against Women in Leadership" sub-dimension according to the level of education (f=2.45, p<.05). The mean score in this sub-dimension increases as the level of education decreases; the highest mean is observed in primary/secondary school graduates ($\bar{X}$=3.31) and the lowest mean is observed in master's/doctoral graduates ($\bar{X}$=3.01). This can be interpreted as the perception of discrimination decreases as the level of education increases. In addition, a significant difference emerged in the "Perception of Equality between Women and Men in Business Life" sub-dimension (f=4.37, p<.01). In this sub-dimension, the perception of equality increases as the level of education increases; The lowest mean is seen in primary/secondary school graduates ($\bar{X}$=3.18), and the highest mean is seen in those with a master's/doctorate degree ($\bar{X}$=3.58). On the other hand, no statistically significant difference was found in the sub-dimensions of "Thoughts on the Inadequacy of Women in Leadership" (f=0.61, p=.656) and "The Effect of Women's Family Life and Preferences on the Leadership Level" (f=1.78, p=.133) according to the level of education. These results show that some dimensions of the glass ceiling perception differ depending on the level of education of individuals, and especially the perceptions of gender equality and discrimination are positively associated with education .

Table 8. Correlation Matrix Between Sub-Dimensions

	Inadequacy Thoughts	Perception of Discrimination	Perception of Equality	Family Influence
Inadequacy Thoughts	1.00	0.88	0.08	0.76
Perception of Discrimination	0.88	1.00	0.06	0.86
Perception of Equality	0.08	0.06	1.00	0.07
Family Influence	0.76	0.86	0.07	1.00

In order to examine the relationships between the sub-dimensions that constitute the glass ceiling perception, Pearson correlation analysis was applied. As a result of the analysis, a positive and highly significant relationship was found between "Inadequacy Thoughts" and "Discrimination Perception" (r=0.88). Similarly, the "Family Influence" variable also showed a highly positive relationship with both "Inadequacy Thoughts" (r=0.76) and "Discrimination Perception" (r=0.86). These findings show that the perceived inadequacy thoughts and discrimination perception in women reaching leadership positions tend to be evaluated in connection with the effects of family life. On the other hand, the "Perception of Equality between Women and Men in Business Life" sub-dimension showed a very low level of relationship with the other sub-dimensions (Inadequacy with r=0.08; Discrimination with r=0.06; Family Influence with r=0.07). This situation reveals that the perception of equality is evaluated relatively independently from the other dimensions of the glass ceiling perception. In general, high correlations between sub-dimensions support that the glass ceiling perception is shaped by multi-dimensional but inter-related structures.

Table 9. The Effect of Generations on Glass Ceiling Perception (Regression Analysis Results)

Variable	B (Coefficient)	Std. Error	t	p	Bottom 95%	Top 95%
Fixed (Millennials)	3,016	0.039	76,904	.000	2,939	3,094
Generation X	0.002	0.061	0.034	.973	-0.118	0.122
Generation Z	0.058	0.067	0.874	.383	-0.073	0.189

According to this model, the average glass ceiling perception level of Generation Y is 3.016. The average difference of Generation X is +0.002 (insignificant difference) and Generation Z is +0.058 units; however, these differences are not statistically significant (p>.05). As a result, there is no significant difference in the glass ceiling perception levels between generations. Especially when compared to Generation Y, both Generations X and Z have similar perception levels.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings obtained in the study, it is seen that the perceptions of the participants regarding the glass ceiling phenomenon are generally at a medium level, but these perceptions become more evident in some sub-dimensions. Positive attitudes towards gender equality indicate that the participants partially believe in gender-based equality of opportunity; on the other hand, the perception of discrimination against women in leadership positions indicates the existence of structural obstacles. The fact that individual effort and performance are at the forefront in the evaluations of female employees regarding the promotion process in particular creates an impression that institutional support mechanisms are inadequate. Analyses conducted according to the gender variable reveal that they agree less with the prejudices that women are inadequate in leadership, while male participants adopt this judgment more. Although intergenerational comparisons show that the perception of the glass ceiling differs in some dimensions, no significant difference is found between generations at the general level. However, it is striking that Generation Y exhibits a higher sensitivity in the perception of discrimination. The results obtained in terms of the marital status variable show that single individuals have more positive attitudes towards gender equality. Married individuals, on the other hand, have a more pronounced perception regarding the impact of family life on leadership roles. It is understood that as the level of education increases, more positive attitudes are displayed towards gender equality and discrimination, while perceptions of structural inequalities are stronger in individuals with lower levels of education. When the relationships between the sub-dimensions are examined, it is seen that the perception of inadequacy regarding women's leadership roles and the perception of discrimination are mutually reinforcing structures. The effects on family life also show a strong relationship with these two dimensions. In contrast, the perception of gender equality has a relatively independent structure from the other sub-dimensions.

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