

Gender Inequalities in Eye Care

DR MARIA SAMPALIS



Dr Maria Sampalis

- ▶ NECO 2007
- ▶ Founder of Corporate Optometry of Facebook
- ▶ Social media network extends to over 60k eye care professionals
- ▶ Young OD of the Year RI 2016
- ▶ Most Influential Women in Optical 2019
- ▶ Practice in RI: private practice and sublease with Warby Parker.

Financial disclosures

Allergan- consultant and speaker

Essilor –consultant

Zeiss- Consultant

Tarsus-consultant

Xenox VR- advisory board

AI Optics-advisory board

Healthy Eyes Advantage-advisory board

A white ceramic mug with a handle on the right side. The mug is placed on a wooden surface. The text "THE FUTURE IS FEMALE" is printed in bold, black, uppercase letters on the front of the mug. Above the text, there is a faint, pinkish-red graphic of lips. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a desk or table with some items on it.

**THE FUTURE
IS FEMALE**

“I raise up my voice not so I shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard. We cannot succeed when half of us are held back.”

MALALA YOUSAFZAI

Women in Optometry Facts

The first woman optometrist was Gertrude Stanton in 1899.



Our Modern Optical Department



Dr. Gertrude Stanton

An Eye Glass Talk

When an eye glass feels right, holds the lenses rigidly and perfectly before the eyes, and looks neat and dainty, **then the eye glass is right.**

"Peerless" Eye Glasses Are Always Right.

Made of one piece—no screws to work loose—clean and comfortable.

We guarantee "Peerless" one piece mountings against breakage.

Dr. Gertrude Stanton

THE ONLY WOMAN OPTICIAN practicing in the "Twin Cities" is in charge, and is an expert. She guarantees all her work.

Your glasses tightened and adjusted FREE. Bring your repairs.

Hundreds of Minneapolis references.

Dayton Dry Goods Co.

Women in Eye Care Facts

In 1976 there were only 2% women and has increased to 44% as of 2020

5 women have now become members of the Board of Trustees out of 11 in the American Optometric Association

In academic leadership, 43% of chief academic officers are female, and 21.4% of the members of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of the Association of Schools and College of Optometry (ASCO) are female.

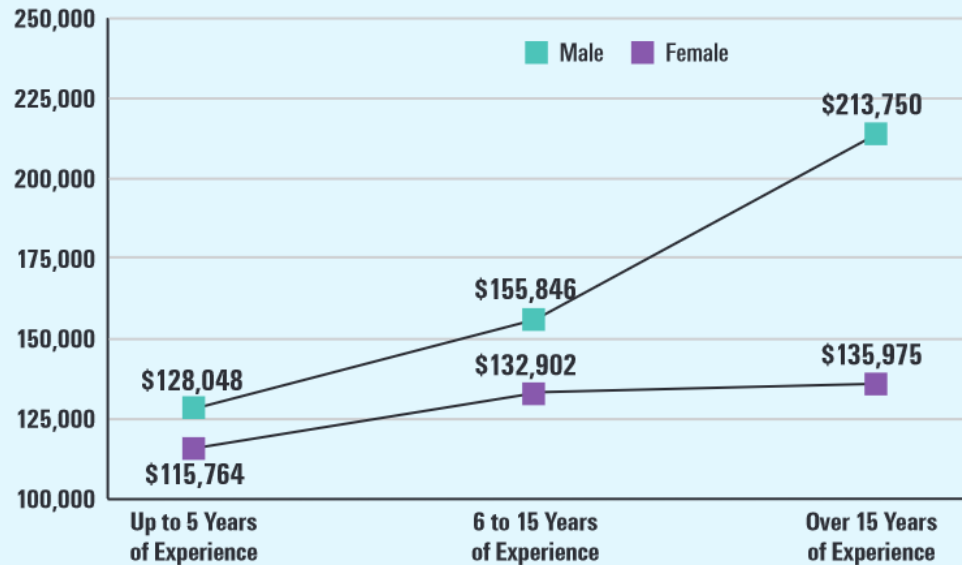
- ▶ Dr. Joan Exford became the first female president of the AAO in 1993.
- ▶ Dr. Dori Carlson became the first female president of the American Optometric Association in 2011.
- ▶ Dr. Jennifer Smythe Coyle became the first female president of ASCO in 2013.
- ▶ Dr. Elizabeth Hoppe became the first female editor of the ASCO journal *Optometric Education* in 2005.
- ▶ The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists appointed their first female president in 2020
- ▶ American Academy of Ophthalmology first female President Susan H. Day, MD in 2005

Gender Pay Gap

Poll Question

Gender Pay Gap in Optometry

Average Incomes by Experience



Source: Jobson Optical Research, 2020 Compensation Survey

AVERAGE INCOMES OVERALL

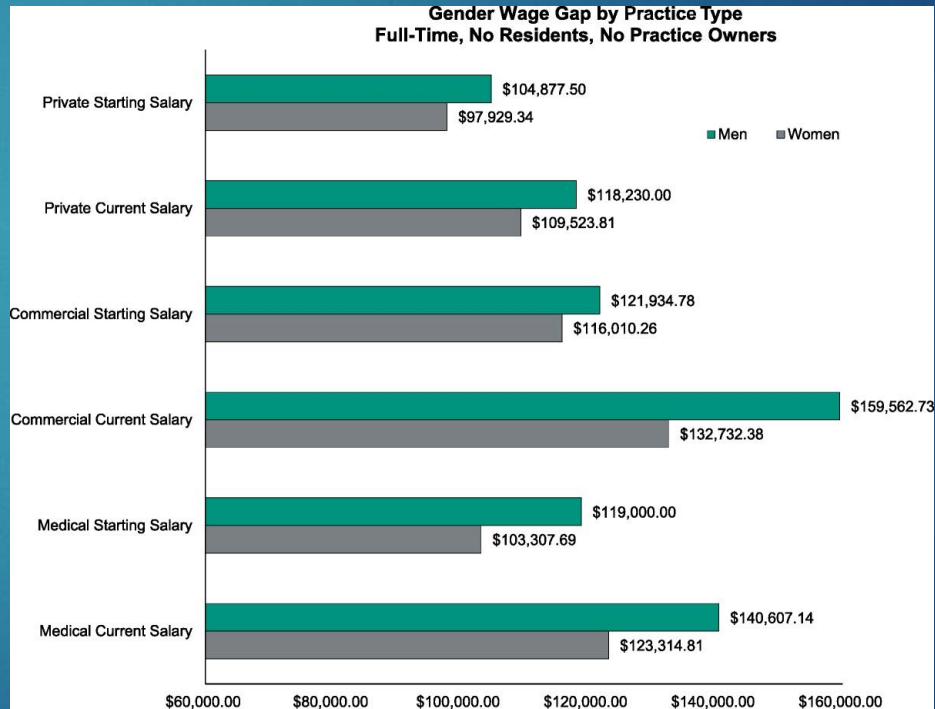
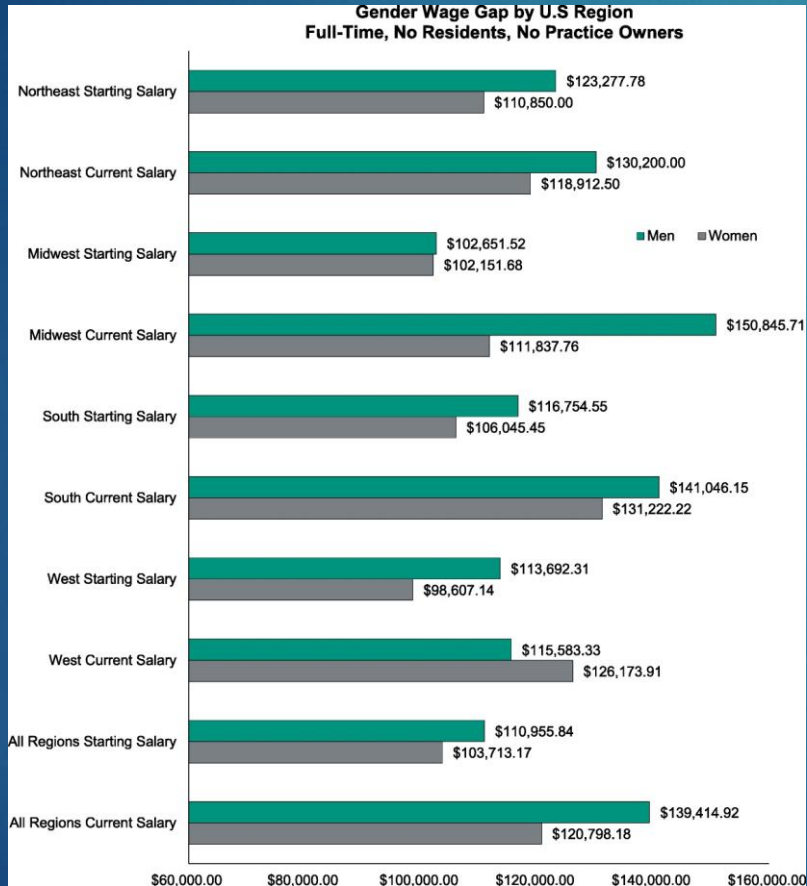
ALL	MALE	FEMALE
\$147,624	\$168,258	\$117,196

Data from the report highlights income averages by a variety of factors. In every category, men reported higher earnings than women.



Poll Question

Gender Wage Gaps by Region and Practice Type.



Female OMD

- ▶ Women account for 25%-30% of all ophthalmologists
- ▶ According to American Academy of Ophthalmology, a 10.3% (\$27,273.89) pay gap in starting salaries.
- ▶ Female OMD chose lower paying subspecialties and chose academic mode instead of private practice.

Opticians: Gender Pay Gap

- ▶ Depending on the state, there needs to be a licensed optician in every corporate optical.
- ▶ According to [Glassdoor](#), “Women opticians make 17.3 percent less than their male colleagues.
- ▶ Bonuses can be much less.

Secondary Wage Gap

401k Matching

Social Security

Sign on bonus

Wage Gap the Self Employed?

- ▶ Small volume sublease opportunities
 - One corporate location – Not having the opportunities to expand and take on multiple locations

The survey taken in the [Corporate Optometry Facebook](#) group found that a majority of ODs including females work five to six days a week.
- ▶ Are female Ods offered partnerships in private practice or opportunity to purchase a practice?

Private Practice Owners

- ▶ Jobson Optical Research's and Local Eye Site's 2011 ECP Compensation Study reveal that male optometrists who are owners/partners showed average income of \$159,449 vs. \$117,611 for women.

Why is there a huge differential?

- ▶ Peak earning years are 12-25 years.
- ▶ Huge gender demographic shift in the numbers of female optometry school graduates over the past 20 years.
- ▶ Peak earning years for private practice doctors tend to coincide with peak family responsibility years.
- ▶ Female practice owners might find they will hit their income peaks at a later age than men.
- ▶ Females may have a lower net income because they may be more willing to hire additional staff to reduce practice responsibilities because of family responsibilities.

- ▶ Females may locate their practices closer to home, or choose a partnership closer to home, to accommodate family responsibilities.
- ▶ It's possible that women may encounter subtle discrimination when negotiating a partnership contract or negotiating with contractors. Senior partners and contractors are more likely to be male.

Gender Pay Gap Legislation in the UK

- ▶ Gender pay gap legislation requires employers in the UK with 250 employees or more to calculate and publish gender pay gap data every year.

The information needs to include:

- Mean and median gender pay gap (based on a hourly rate of pay at 5 April 2020)
- Mean and median bonus gender pay gap (considers bonus pay received in the 12 months leading up to 5th April 2020)
- Proportion on men and women receiving a bonus payment
- Proportion of men and women in each quartile pay band

LUXOTTICA UK BONUS PAY GAP

Using the calculations set out in the gender bonus pay gap reporting regulations, the **median Luxottica Retail UK gender bonus pay gap is 12.78%**, and the **mean Luxottica Retail UK gender bonus pay gap is 22.51%**

Our gender bonus gap is primarily driven by having more men than women on our leadership team, and these employees attract a higher level of bonus.



LUXOTTICA UK GENDER PAY GAP

Using the calculations set out in the gender pay gap reporting regulations, the **median Luxottica Retail UK gender pay gap is 5.26%**, and the **mean Luxottica Retail UK gender gap is 8.48%**



The median national gender pay across the UK (2019) is 17.3%

Vision Express UK 2020 Report

Gender Pay Gap Report | 2020

The key facts



5606
colleagues
across the uk



4250
UK Operated Stores
and Store Support
Centre only



253
Tech Centre (RFH)

78% On our future game changer academy are female

72% of our Pre-registration Optometrists are female

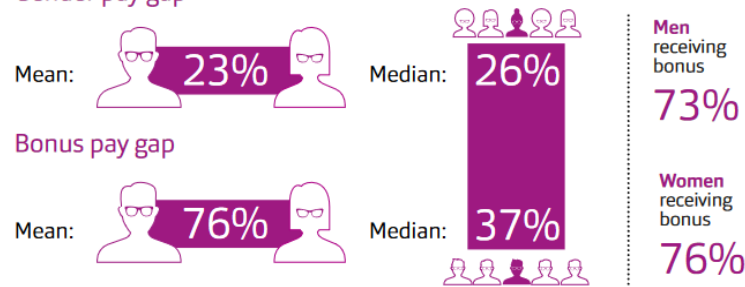
68% of our Trainee dispensing opticians are female

60% of our Optical Apprentices are female

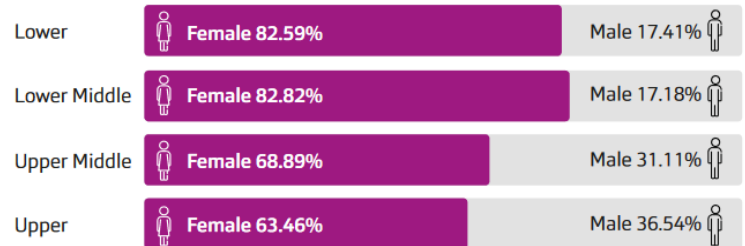
Gender Pay Gap Report | 2020

Understanding the pay gap at Vision Express

Gender pay gap



Gender split by quartile



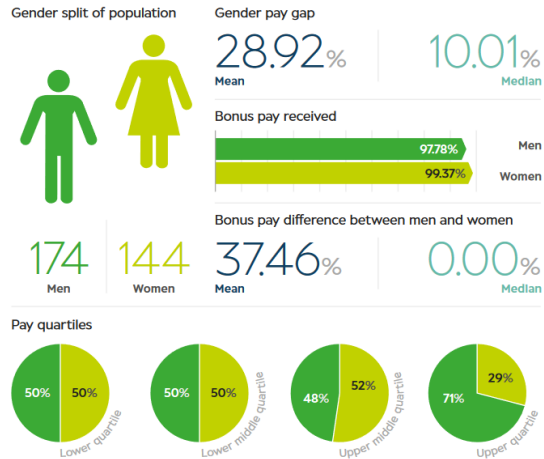
Specsavers Reports

5 Gender pay gap report 2020

Our results 2020

Vision Labs

The information on this page relates specifically to Vision Labs, one of Specsavers' manufacturing and distribution sites.

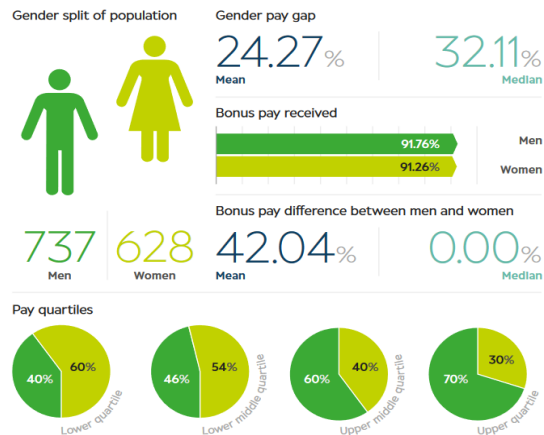


4 Gender pay gap report 2020

Our results 2020

Specsavers Optical Superstores

The information on this page relates specifically to Specsavers Optical Superstores, our UK support office network.



- ▶ The data reported by Specsavers does not relate to its optical stores, as each practice is an individually owned business.

What can account for this gap?

- ▶ Working less hours/part time
- ▶ Not Negotiating
- ▶ Stereotypes about having a family.
- ▶ Work life balance
- ▶ Less leadership positions.



Consequences from the Gap



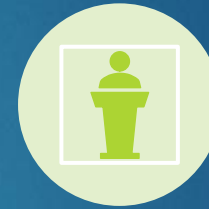
STUDENT LOANS



RETIREMENT



LESS LIKELY TO
TAKE RISKS



SEEK LEADERSHIP
POSITIONS



PRACTICE
OWNERSHIP



Overcome the Wage Gap

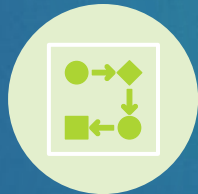
Continuous Improvement.



ALWAYS TAKE THE TIME TO IMPROVE UPON YOUR KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE, AND SKILLSETS.



KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THE LATEST TRENDS IN OPTOMETRY AND STAY COMMUNICATED ABOUT IMPORTANT TOPICS.



IF THERE IS A SPECIALTY THAT YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO EXPLORE THEN TAKE THE TIME TO DO SO.

- ▶ You need to market these constantly to make sure that opportunities are always available to you.
- ▶ LinkedIn can be an incredible medium on which to display your expertise. More people than we think check LinkedIn to find information about professionals including potential employers, coworkers, competitors, and students.

Negotiate!

- ▶ Understand your capabilities, your successes, and your skillset. Don't be afraid to ask for a raise based on your skills
- ▶ Make sure to understand the data and be prepared with facts and statistics on competitive pay for your services.
- ▶ Understand what value your skillset brings to the company and its growth.
- ▶ Trends- area of practice and shortage of ODs
- ▶ With a positive attitude and the clear desire to help the company benefit from what you bring to the table you can get one step closer to closing the gap.



What Employers can do to Fix the Wage Gap

1

**Pay
Transparency**

2

**Publish Yearly
Gender Pay
Reports**

3

**Open
communication**

Paycheck Fairness Act (Proposal)

- ▶ It bans employers from asking job applicants how much they made in previous jobs.
- ▶ It prevents employers from banning salary conversations with coworkers.
- ▶ It requires employers to be more transparent about pay and to share that information with the Department of Labor and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission



▶ Private Equity and Eye Care



Private Equity Trends

- ▶ Private Equity Firms are male-dominated.
- ▶ According to a [2020 study by Investec](#), women only make up 9.4% of senior positions in private equity, and only about 18% of the industry's workforce.
- ▶ Woman start 40% of the businesses in the country, but 98% of venture capital goes to males.

Challenges Working in Male-Dominated Workplace Cultures

- Social expectations and beliefs about women's leadership abilities.
- Stereotypes
- Higher stress and anxiety compared to women.
- Lack of mentoring and career development opportunities.
- Sexual harassment.

Mechanisms to Cope



- Distancing themselves from colleagues, especially other women.
- Accepting masculine cultural norms and acting like “one of the boys,” which exacerbates the problem by contributing to the normalization of this culture.
- Leave the practice or even the sector of the industry.
- **Occupational Segregation Contributes to the Gender Pay Gap**

Poll Question



Women's Leadership Gap



Numbers
don't lie.
Women are
not the
decision
makers.

Globally, women hold just 24% of senior leadership positions. The U.S. lags behind the global average at 21%, compared to China where women hold 51% of senior leadership slots.

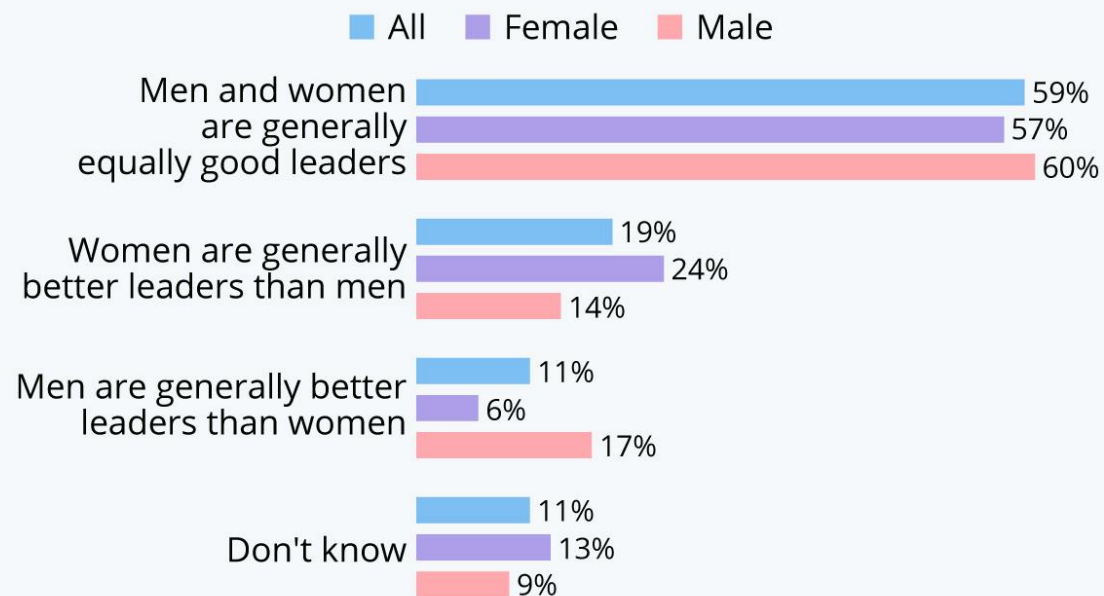
Women represent 45% of the S&P 500 workforce, but only 4% of the CEOs.

66% of Federal Judges are Male.

In a study of nearly 22,000 publicly traded organizations worldwide, 60% have no female board members!

U.S. Adults Say Leadership Is Not a Question of Gender

Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?



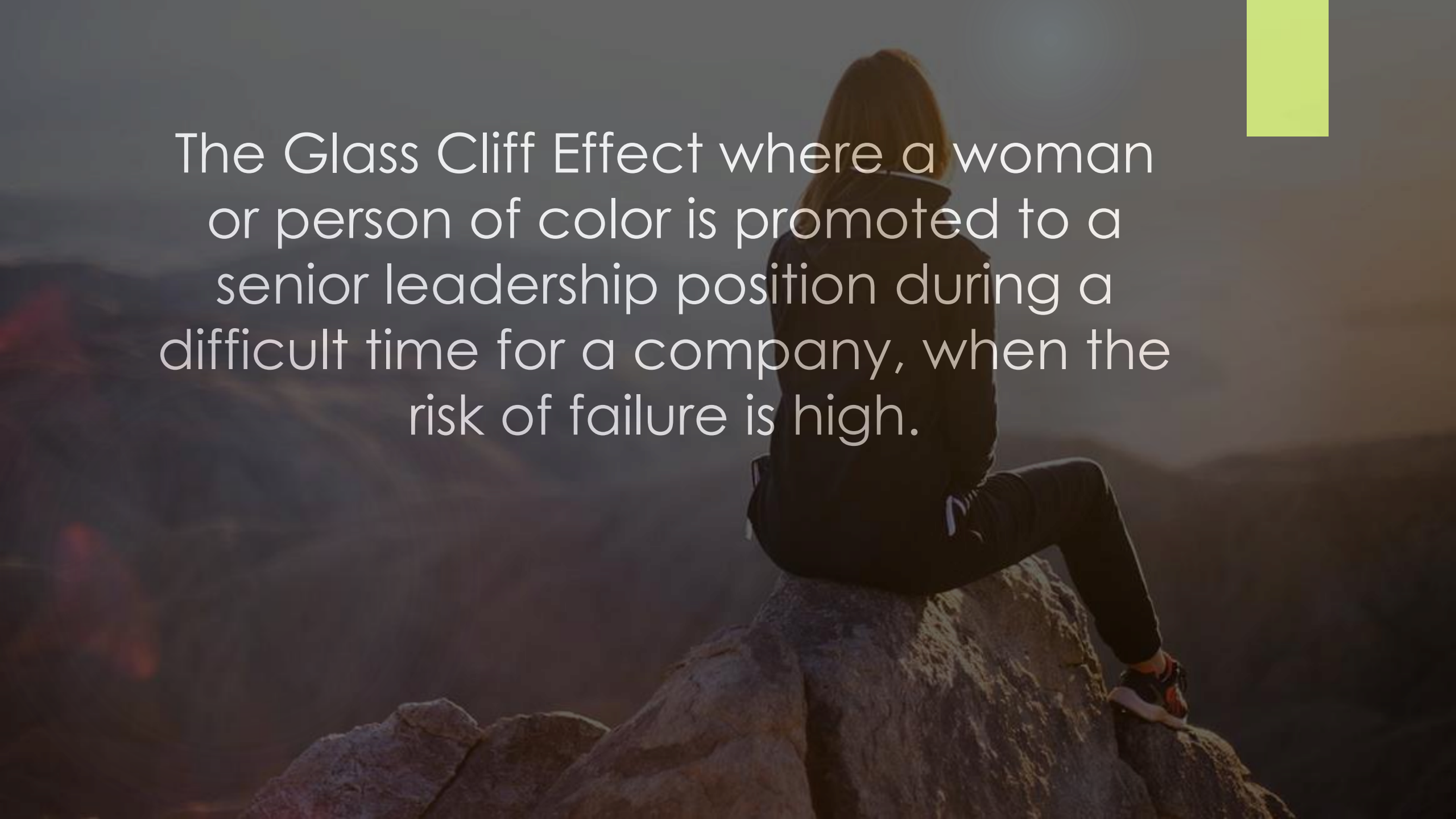
n=1,619, survey conducted December 16, 2019
Source: YouGov



Glass Ceiling

- ▶ The United States Federal Glass Ceiling Commission defines the glass ceiling as "the unseen, yet unbreachable barrier that keeps minorities and women from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements."




A person with long hair, wearing a dark jacket and pants, is sitting on a large rock, looking out over a vast valley. The scene is set during sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden glow. The background shows rolling hills and a valley with some buildings. A bright yellow rectangular shape is visible in the top right corner of the image.

The Glass Cliff Effect where a woman or person of color is promoted to a senior leadership position during a difficult time for a company, when the risk of failure is high.



▶ **Leadership Positions in
Optometry**

- 
- ▶ 70% of the graduating classes are female over the last few years, yet women reflect a small majority in of leadership roles.
 - ▶ Leadership roles are beyond just top management positions, but president of professional associations, speaker positions, editorial positions, Dean positions at the optometry schools, multiple sublease locations and private practice purchases.
 - ▶ Information can be extracted from the sunshine act, many KOLs, speakers, and consultants in the industry are males. Furthermore, male OD honorarium exceed female payments based on more speaking opportunities.
 - ▶ Crunchbase data – Women start 40% of the businesses Only 2% of venture funded are for female companies.. Optometry has low funding.

- ▶ A study from 2014 in the US, women main investigators were less likely to receive grants than men in their early careers.
- ▶ Women ophthalmologists also formed fewer industry connections and received less industry support, according to Reddy and colleagues.



Identifying the Barriers to the Leadership Gap

WOMEN TARGETING LEADERSHIP ROLES

BIGGEST BARRIERS



Family Responsibilities

Limited Access to Established Networks.

Less Assertive Tactics When Seeking Promotions

Gender Stereotypes and bias

Less Developed Female Leadership Networks

Lack of Female Role Models

Barriers

- ▶ Training programs or policies that 'aim' to support women at work aren't sufficient.
 - ▶ To add to the problem, companies rely on outdated solutions
 - ▶ Many optometry managers are aware of gender inequity in their organizations. Yet, they fail to understand the way it works.
-
- ▶ Female optometrists cannot thrive in the field when the workplace is male dominated or leadership is mainly male.
 - ▶ Gender-bias views, sexual harassment, inappropriate jokes or comments, and negative feedback frequently hinder growth.

- 
- ▶ Females also face less growth after having children.
 - ▶ The maternal bias in the industry has been you can't have it all.
 - ▶ Can't have a successful career and be the mother you want to be.
 - ▶ The notion that a young female might be too busy at home to get a promotion or expand their horizons in the industry is created by gender bias.
 - ▶ Having females in a leadership positions can help management understand and approach bias differently.

Tips for Succeeding

Stay Positive

Growth Mindset

Tackling pre conceived notions about your gender can be a great way to building a powerful image.

Be assertive

Succeeding as a woman will require cultivating confidence, and being assertive is the first step to achieving that.

Insisting on having your say is important in a male-dominated world.

Ask for a seat at the table.

Stay up to date

Be an aggressive learner and good to conferences

Staying up to date with knowledge will help you be more confident and make you a relevant resource to your organization.

Changing Misconceptions

- ▶ Supportive Environment

Careful analysis and evaluation of the organizational rules and structure should be the first step towards achieving gender equity.


- ▶ Boasting an open-door policy alone won't cut it unless you actively try to hear out whether your staff members have anything to say.
- ▶ From company-wide surveys to one-on-one meetings, take feedback from the employees.
- ▶ Seek to understand their thoughts and experiences in relation to gender discrimination and female marginalization.

What else can be done?

1. Mentorship: Develop more mentorship programs to help female ODs grow and develop leadership skills.
2. Promote females to help have a different prescriptive on the industry and culture.
3. Sponsorship- Large organizations with optometry should work together to sponsor programs to empower females in the industry.
4. Conferences- Expand speaker panels in the industry. With the pandemic and everything being virtual all qualified speakers should be considered.
5. Encourage Change- If it hasn't been done in the past doesn't mean it can't be done. Help pave the path for future female ODs in the industry.

Mentor is good but a Sponsor is better!

- ▶ The simplest way to distinguish the two is that while a mentor provides feedback and guidance to you to create more opportunities for yourself, **a sponsor is someone in a powerful position who creates opportunities for you.**
- ▶ While a mentor helps you map out your career trajectory, providing constant feedback about where you can improve, a sponsor directly advocates for you, helping you reach more visibility among your organization's leaders, advocating for you to have a seat at the table, providing a voice for you when your ideas differ and helping you move up in your career trajectory.
- ▶ **Sponsors give you opportunities that mentors can't because of their authority.**

- 
- ▶ While the grown awareness about women's empowerment has put them on the receiving end of great mentorship, they still seriously lack a sponsor's safety net compared to their male colleagues.
 - ▶ Without Female Leadership in Optometry we are not able have diverse ideas to enhance our profession.
 - ▶ Sponsors do not only enhance one's career satisfaction but often transfer power to other female ODs to continue to build and grow optometry.
 - ▶ We need a culture in optometry that applauds ODs questioning the norm, and thinking outside the box!

Support Each Other!



Resources for Female ODs

- ▶ Women in Optometry
- ▶ Optical Women's Association
- ▶ Optometry Divas
- ▶ OD Divas Facebook group.
- ▶ Different levels of support from social media, personal development resources, articles and events to help you grow!

Female recognition in the industry

- ▶ Optometry Divas Award
- ▶ Women in Optometry Theia Award
- ▶ Vision Monday Most Influential women in optical
- ▶ Optical Women's Association Awards
- ▶ **GLOW-Global Ophthalmic Women**
- ▶ Ophthalmic World Leaders- OWL



PROGRESS HAS
BEEN MADE
OVER THE YEARS,
BUT PROGRESS
DOES NOT MEAN
PARITY.



Thank you!

Feel free to email me at
msampalis@hotmail.com

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Women in optometry Magazine

Corporateoptometrycareers.com

Machiavelli for Women.

<https://www.aao.org/eyenet/article/the-gender-pay-gap-in-ophthalmology>