A Study on Glass Ceiling and its Impact on the Career Development of Women at Workplace

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Abstract - **Increasing opportunities for women are less when compared to men which implicates significant gender favouritism for growing opportunities in organizations. The study is aimed at attaining the facts and guidelines in organizations that assures the equal employment opportunity for the employees' especially for the women. There are so many women who are very talented, expressive, problem solving, foster, critical analyser, stress managing as compare to men but unfortunately not able to prove themselves. For the decades, it has been seen that the presence of women in senior managerial positions is very low in spite of having good scholastics, plethora of knowledge, quality and efficiency and this happens only due to the barriers like mental blockage or prejudices and glass ceiling phenomenon. 'The glass ceiling is a strong narrow hindrance of transparent nature intercepts women from hiking up the corporate ladder. The paper attempts to identify factors which contribute to the glass ceiling in turn affect women career advancement and targets at finding out which factor contribute more hindrance to the career advancement opportunity for women.**

Index Terms – **Glass ceiling, good scholastics, women career advancement.**

INTRODUCTION

Women constitute half of the world's population; more women are entering into organization every year. Regardless of the discussions about diversity and inclusion in organizations, women in leadership roles are still in the lesser and they are getting less opportunity than their male counterparts to depict their full potential. In order to prove themselves women constantly strive hard to achieve senior positions in organisation. It is evident that there occurs a gender bias with respect to career advancement in women. The word "Glass ceiling" refers to an intangible barrier within a hierarchy that restrains qualified women or minorities from obtaining higher level positions at their workplace.

Society has purposefully preserved the tradition: "a woman's place is at home" (Jacob, 1999; Moore, 1995). Most of the women still believe that their responsibilities are only reserved to homework and looking after their children. To speak the reality, our society is compelling women not to think beyond that. But with the summary and improvement of education and changing mind set of 'generation-Y' have forced women to think differently on-going social values and ethics. Today, women are trying to contribute in the public domain and going ahead towards supervisory levels of management in organization. But the career path does not invite women with red carpet. In spite of these advanced changes, women still have to face insubstantial barriers in mounting up the corporate ladder. Along with "glass ceiling", women, in the leadership position, may have to face the representations like "glass elevators" and "glass cliffs" which refer to greater enquiry and disapproval (Ryan and Haslam, 2005).

Glass ceiling effect is originated by the issues of gender disparity and gender stereotyping which affect women continuously. There are some barriers e.g. psychological barriers, organizational barriers, societal-related barriers, against which women are still struggling to reinforce their presence in the higher level of management of organizations.

1.Psychological barriers: From the childhood women are likely to tolerate by social rules which are severely enrooted in their mind and they cannot even ignore the influence of those rules in their matured age. Personality characters like expressiveness, sensitiveness, cordiality found in women which are not suitable for managerial roles. Women are also risk averse. In the era of globalization and increased competition, organizations demand assertiveness, competitiveness and risk bearing ability to develop and tolerate. And the society determined psychology

of gender discrimination has a great influence on organization.

2.Work life balance barriers: Marriage is social obligation and once a woman is married, it is their prime duty to take care of her husband, in laws and child. It has been seen that male members are the main breadwinners of their families and women, either married or not, do their domestic or household works including elder care and if married, neonatal and child care. As women have long been considered as household or domestic workers so 'education for women' got the least or no priority in the society.

Now, the mentality of the society has been changed, Women are also started doing jobs equal to men and as employees still have to face problems as they have to play dual roles like an employee of an organization and household worker. Due to the improvement of thought and need for financial security, husband also wants a working wife. Nowadays many organizations have started Flexible Working Arrangements (FWA) for women by the means of job sharing, flexi-time, telecommunicating etc. to give them relaxation. Whereas, male employees can focus solely on their assigned work as they have stay-at-home wives who are taking dual responsibilities as of office and home and children.

3.Organizational barriers: Due to stereotyping predominant in the society, male employees cannot accept women for their upward movement in the organization and try to create barriers in any form. Therefore by preventing women from strategic decision making process male employees intentionally creates a barrier for promotion. This kind of situation sometimes causes losing of enthusiasm and it also affects their personal lives.

Glass ceiling block the career progression of employees in the organization and it must be eliminated or reduced to ensure the work engagement of employees and their commitment towards the organization.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Zafarullaha (2000) mentioned in his article that women are revealed as weak, unassertive, passive, feminine, and dependent. In the workplace, discriminatory attitudes include women are physically, mentally and emotionally less capable in certain challenges; they are unpredictable and lack

motivation. They have health problems, sickness-prone and therefore frequently remain absent, pregnancies interrupt their regular work and their career is disrupted by family interest. Merida L. Johns (2013) opined that breaking the glass ceiling is complex and requires action on several fronts. Federal and State governments, employers, academic institutions and women themselves are essential players in cracking down the barriers which holding women back. He strongly suggested that educational institutions must create and implement leadership development programs that include issues concerning gender diversity and transformational leadership in order to change preconceived ideas, bias, and assumptions about women's leadership abilities.

Career development is arising with self-realization and self-assessment. Employee need to be trained in order to acquire the skills which they are lacking to excel in their career. Several studies now revealed that there exists "Glass ceiling" or feminization in every industry and due to this effect more women are at the lower level of job in every organization. Some studies illustrate that there has been an increase in the number of women at entry and middle-level management positions.

Eddy S. Ng and Greg J. Se, 2017, they examined the macro-level organisational determinants of women in management are firm foreign ownership, chief executive officer gender and the active recruitment of women, as predictors of an organisation's level of representation of women in management. Cotter, Hermsen, Ovadia, and Vanneman (2001) in their research stated that gender or other demerits are stronger at the top of the organizational hierarchy than at lower levels and it indirectly affects badly in the career of an individual. They arrived at a conclusion that a glass ceiling was a diverse gender phenomenon. The main objective of (KHEMANI, 2013) is to find out the solutions to overcome the concept of glass ceiling which affects the women career and development by developing good HR policies and by creating good environment and positive outlook with the women employees. The author works on these areas Career Progression, Equal Employment Opportunity and Glass Ceiling for his research.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the factors that causes the "Glass Ceiling" effect.
- To suggest measures to break the glass ceiling.

Conceptual framework underlines that glass ceiling influence career progression of women:
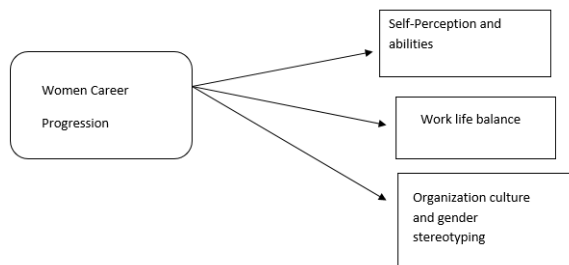
Self-Perception and abilities: Self-Perception is an image we hold about our self and our traits and the judgements we make about those traits. Self-perception includes two, core perceptual processes: our self-concept, or the picture we have in our heads of who we are; and our self-esteem, or how we judge and evaluate those traits.

Work life balance: Women's greatest struggle is balancing the responsibilities of family and employment. Career progress, Work Stress, Career aspiration, Work-Family Conflict and Family Work Conflict, Child care with Work-Life Balance. To attain WLB, every woman must set a goal and accomplish success in her job and her family. Planning, organizing, and setting limits are some of the tactics and abilities employed at home and at work to achieve a rewarding and fulfilling well-balanced existence both professionally and personally. To meet the family's needs, women employees should take care of their families physically and financially. Work on achieving corporate goals as well as personal development to meet career requirements.

Organization culture and gender stereotyping: Men and women also differ in their depiction in work conditions. Most common depictions of women were women working in administrative occupations and in services, while men were mostly depicted as craftsmen, workmen, businessman and managers. The sum of stereotypes ascribed to men- and women-managers differs substantially. Not surprisingly there is also a difference between the perception of managers by men and women. The most common characteristics of woman-manager were: ability to motivate others, decisive, competent, pragmatic and organized.

DATA ANALYSIS THROUGH CASE STUDIES

Source: https://www.tribuneindia.com

The research revealed that at women in sectors of organisation - health, banking and hospitality. The findings demonstrate that most women were confronted on their jobs with male egos, which led to loss of opportunities.

1. In the health sector, women candidates are preferred in physiotherapy and client relationship due to their caring nature. Glass ceilings exist with 30 per cent women admitting to men being preferred over them for several job assignments.
2. In the hospitality sector, Women mark up just 9.1 per cent of the workforce; 82 per cent women managers confessed there were no gender policies.
3. In the banking sector the most suitable for women's growth among the surveyed sectors. Only 5 per cent women are in managerial positions in public banks today as against 30 per cent in private banks.

Komal Mangtani, senior director at app-based cab aggregator Uber

Komal Mangtani, a graduate of Gujarat's Dharamsinh Desai Institute of Technology, is one of the world's most influential female software engineers. As the head of app-based cab aggregator Uber's Business Intelligence team, her team provides the technology that helps the business grow and 'ensures that the rides are physically safe, that communications between riders and drivers are as efficient as possible, that their

drivers get there on time.' One of her main tasks is to live track and prevent financial fraud on the platform. She is an active campaigner for women in engineering as proved by the positions she holds: advisory board member for Women Who Code and head of the #LadyEng group at Uber. The University of California, Berkeley alumnus led Uber to make a 2 million dollar donation to Girls Who Code to close the gender gap for young women.

Komal Mangtani battle over Glass Ceiling: Mangtani and other women employees at Uber have been taking pains to reflect a new culture for women at their workplace, in 2017 a 'very very strange year' for Uber, as put by whistleblower Susan Fowler. In 2017, the former Uber employee wrote a scathing post on the multiple instances of sexual assault at the company. Komal Mangtani blow off the assaults in the company and ensures the women employees and passengers safety issues to mistreatment of the employees.
Source:
https://www.newindianexpress.com/specials/2018/dec/29/indian-women-in-powerful-posts-who-made-headlines-in-2018-1918090.html

MEASURES TO BREAK THE GLASS CEILING

1. The employment of women and their evaluation in the organization should be based on the merit rather than gender disparity.
2. Companies should be transparent about polices relating to employment, training and promotion.
3. Promotion should always be linked to employee performance not on based on gender.
4. Companies should assure its women employees to participate in programs that would enhance their personality for development.

CONCLUSION

Organizations need to accept the statement that diversity at the top implicates to better decision making and business outcomes. In effect, women should break the glass ceilings in their mind set, maintain self-confidence, and make open communication with their employees. Progression of equality in women is increasing gradually that similarity could take more number of years at current

pace. Organizations will need to implement new HR processes and accountability targets to change behaviour in case of training, career development programs, promotion etc. Men and women should be on equivalent track in all areas of workplace, Apart from extremely gender obstacles in work place, Indian women also have to battle against social and cultural barriers as there exists a deep-rooted internal belief system which prevents most female employees from exploring their potential in their career paths.

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