Role of Emotional Intelligence and Assertive Behavior in the destruction of the Ethical Dilemma associated with Glass Ceiling - Tamilnadu based study

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ABSTRACT
This research was conducted to find the solutions to conquer the ethical dilemma that created the Glass Ceiling effect in Women’s career life. This research seeks for the solution in behavioral science using selective emotional intelligence and assertive behavior competencies as the tools. These competencies were selected in Indian context, because this research was conducted as regional based one and we have to consider the socio cultural impact also. To find the influence of inner barriers during the dilemmatic situation, the participants selected were those experienced with the success or fail in the career life. The results of the research supported the contribution of ethical dilemma in constructing the glass ceiling effect. And women scored high in self awareness, emotional management, relationship management and assertiveness were successfully overcome the dilemmatic situation. Women shows high score in assertiveness only, somehow managed to continue their job with compromises. Women have non assertive attitude were dropped out of their career path. The percentage of working women those become the victim of the solid ethical dilemma between the age group of 40 to 50 years is noteworthy and ultimately resulted in less contribution of women in the higher level job cadre. So this research concludes as to reach higher in the job ladder women must practice assertive behavior with emotional competencies.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Ethical Dilemma, Glass Ceiling Effect, Emotional Intelligence, Assertive behavior.

Introduction
In the past three decades, researches were conducted to find the reasons for the low percentage of Women occupying the Top management jobs like senior managers, chief executives etc. While considering about the employment classes occupied by the women is gives the image of a cone which is flipped down. The percentage of women occupied in the lower level profiles are eventually reduced when reaching the Top position levels - when compared to the men. In today’s business world ethically it is considered as the management failure. To keep the gender equality in Top position is now turned as an ethically challenging problem for human resource department. The researchers identified several obstacles originated by the external environment and internal psychological factors. Accordingly steps were taken by all means to increase the women’s contribution in the top of the job ladder. While considering the current position the external barriers are reduced by taking the suitable actions like eliminating the gender discrimination, promoting the women’s education and encouraging the women to take part in social and business activities. Accordingly a hike is presented in the women’s contribution. But to move further we have to concentrate on conquering the inner barriers resides in the woman’s mind. The presence of ethical dilemma is identified as the reason behind the glass ceiling effect in the women’s career advancement. Women must learn to get rid of the ethical dilemma. So, this research sought for the help of behavioral science to find the solution for this problem.

Review of Literature
Researchers identified the external barriers as organizational policies, job ladder, personnel policies related to women and their family responsibilities (David A Cotter, John M Hermse, Seth Ovadia, Reeve Vanneman, 2001), the presence of gender discrimination in the organizations (Zahid Ali Channar, Zareen Abbassi, Imran Anwar Ujan, 2011), in the social perception...
women were treated as “second class citizens”- they must give their first preference to the family role only (Sophia J. Ali, 2011), the patriarchal behavior of the society particularly has more influence in North India than in South India (G. Radha Krishna Murthy, 2012). Some researchers identified the internal barriers as women employers have their internal battles like ethical conflicts (Indira J Parikh, Dr. Bharti Kollan, 2003), low level of self confidence, low emotional quotient that made difficulties (Bombuwela P. M., De Alwis A. Chamaru, 2013).

Several suggestions also given by the researchers such as maintaining the organizational climate, polices that justifies women’s career advancement, working conditions and procedures that put into practice to build up the women’s confidence (Brychen Thomas, Anthony Lewis, Isaiah Florence Uchenna, 2013), the awareness should be created by the organizations (Ambreen Wani, 2013), formation of networking, mentoring systems that supports women to improve their skills, Change in organizational policies which allow the women to go higher positions (Linda Writh, 2001).

Women find it difficult to handle the over responsibility of their career expectations and the contribution to be given to their family development, put women in a hard situation that they are unable to handle - the report published by the Centre for Social research in 2009, on the topic “Women Managers in India – Challenges and opportunities. If they decided to take a career break or to quit the job will be treated as unethical behavior in view of organizations – because organizations don’t want to lose their experienced employees (Somya Pandit, Shobha Upadhaya, 2012). The researches so far conducted to solve this problem - to overcome the psychological barriers, generally give the suggestions like women should be assertive towards their career path (Kalpana Maheshwari, 2012), they have to improve the human relations with the family and organizational level (Sunita Malhotra, Sapna Sachdeva, 2005).

The researches so far conducted were pointed out the reasons like women’s family responsibilities, difficulties in maintaining the long experience due to child care responsibilities and avoidance of promotions binding with transfers etc. They also talk about the women’s role conflicts and work life unbalancing, induces the negative mind settings within the women, create a solid ethical dilemma Shanthi B K and Dr. AL Malliga (2014) that created the obstruct in accepting the top managerial positions, which need high emotional intelligence and behavior (Nisha Agarwal, Nidhi Chaudhary, 2013), that supports them to play the decision making role fairly. It says that the woman needs strong internal competencies to move forward in her career path. If not, as per (Gani, Abdul, Ara, Roshan, 2010), this will be resulted in unethical happening such as taking a career break, changing the career profile, avoiding promotions, absenteeism, accidents, low efficiency in accomplishing the duties those may affect the career advancement. Also, it was revealed that the impact of ethical dilemma is significantly stronger in midlife women, particularly in the senior positions - prior to top managerial positions, because of the conflict aroused between their personal ethics and the professional ethics.

The ethical dilemma is the situation of conflict in making a choice between two or more options when they are having their own ethical values. In the ethical point of view choosing one of them as the choice will surely lead to the violation of the other one. To solve the ethical dilemma several ethical approaches were suggested to solve the problem, such as Consequentialist theory, Deontological theory and Integrity theory. But sometimes, when a person tends to be the victim of solid ethical dilemma, the emotional brain takes over the rational mind Daniel Goleman (2006), will make the decision making process more awful.

It shows that our problem cannot be solved by using traditional methods like applying ethical theory approaches, using ethical decision making solutions and counseling techniques. As per the suggestions given by (Bazerman and Francesca Gino, 2012), behavioral ethics to be used to understand the real reasons behind the occurrence of ethical dilemma.

In Indian perception as stated in Bhagavad-Gita to solve the problematic situation one must take a comprehensive view of the problem, find the causes behind it, predict the consequences and then encounter the problem with suitable solutions. It also says that during the dilemmatic situation one must need to be an emotionally intelligent person – must have the abilities to be open to feelings, monitor and reflect on the emotions, detach from the emotional state, manage the emotions.
in oneself, manage the emotions of others (Gayathri N and Meenakshi K, 2013). This refers the applications of emotional intelligence and assertive behavior. First one represents the inner traits needed and the other one defines how we have to behave in problematic situations.

The behavior of women in certain situation will be revealed only by understanding the impact of the social cultural environment that built up the women model, particularly belongs to that region. So, we have to consider the women psychology in Indian ethical perception also. It is not possible to define the personal ethics that have driven the women as a single entity like men – mostly liable deontological ethics only. But a typical woman model is influenced by family moral, cultural values, ethics based on her own beliefs and religious ethics. From the childhood they were brought up as the future care taker of the fundamental unit of the society – the family according to Atharvana Veda Sanjeev (n.d). While considering the career model of the man, he will play black and white role only. But in the case of the woman she has to play multiple gray shaded roles. During the ethical dilemmatic situation man can be easily compromised because of the simple duality role, but it is not so easy in the case of a woman. A woman has to evaluate her decision using utilitarianism - the benefit for more people rather the herself, consequential theory- about the consequence of the decision and deontological theory – with all these forces she has to stick with her ‘dharma’, which makes them inclined towards the family role. Even though she has the passion towards her job because of the emotional turmoil coined by the ethical dilemma she choose to go back to her safe mode – like the tortoise withdraw its head into the shell. Emotionally they closed themselves. Somehow they moved away from their career model will be resulted in unethical happenings in their organizational life. Also (Pablo Fernández-Berrocal and Natalio Extremera, 2006) highlighted the emotional intelligence as the coherent approach to find the relationship between the emotions and reasoning. According to (Adam Grant 2014), we have to think about the danger that the emotionally intelligent people can be able to manipulate other as per their of own script. To avoid this as integrity and honesty is necessary.

From the above discussions, several points related to the problem are identified. To solve the ethical dilemma that obstacles the women’s career life, they must have significant emotional competencies. Since this research is related to Indian culture, the emotional competencies are selected suitably in Indian perception. Those traits are Self awareness, emotional resilience, self motivation, interpersonal skills, integrity and honest and assertive.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is limited to the midlife working Women in three major cities in Tamilnadu – Chennai, Trichy and Madurai. To identify the genuine reason behind the problem the participants are so selected from the standardized organizations – having well framed policies that supports the women employees, ethical climate and good working conditions. The participants are in the middle level, senior level and top level managerial posts belong to both successful and failed in their career life. No of participants were 61, working in various job cadre and they are working in Government, Public and Private Organizations.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find the influence of emotional intelligence and assertive behavior on the ethical dilemma allied with glass ceiling effect.
2. To confirm the role of emotional competencies and assertive behavior in solving the ethical dilemma.

Research Methodology

Since, the factors behind the research problem are having personal values in the perception of the woman’s mind. This study is conducted as a direct study by conducting face to face interview method. The participants are working in senior and top managerial positions. They are working in Government, Public and Private Organizations. A sample of 61 participants between the age group of 36 to 55 years was included in this survey.
Data collection

To collect the general information in the ordered format an open ended questionnaire was used by the researcher. To assess the emotional competencies and assertiveness of the participants a structured 4 point Likert scale type questionnaire was used. The questionnaire was so designed with the help of the online test questions from official psychological web resources.

Data analysis and Interpretations

As per the data collected by the oral interview, 92% of the participants met the ethical dilemma at least once in their career life. 8% of the participants did not realize the occurrence of ethical dilemma and also they did not find any obstacles in their career life. 61% of the senior level women were undergoing a stall or break in their career. 56% of the midlife participants in age between 40 to 55 years met career break or setbacks. 69% of the women in the middle level occupation faced the career break, setbacks or stall in their career life. Among them 30% of the participants selected career break. 58% of the participants met the ethical conflicts because of their family problems.

Table No 1  Mean score of Emotional Intelligence and Assertiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Max. Score</th>
<th>Setbacks</th>
<th>Career break</th>
<th>Overcome the dilemma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self Awareness</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.684211</td>
<td>7.3125</td>
<td>16.52381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Resilience</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.315789</td>
<td>8.375</td>
<td>13.80952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.105263</td>
<td>9.9375</td>
<td>16.52381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Management</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.894737</td>
<td>11.6875</td>
<td>15.04762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.31579</td>
<td>16.0625</td>
<td>16.19048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total score Emotional Competencies</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>49.31579</td>
<td>53.375</td>
<td>78.09524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>52.63158</td>
<td>37.9375</td>
<td>58.71429</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the Table No.1, participants having a comparatively low score in self awareness, motivation, relationship management and assertiveness experienced the solid ethical dilemma. Participants having a high score in assertive behavior did not choose career break and continued their career life with setbacks. Those scored high in emotional competencies and assertive behavior were positioned in the top level job cadre. It shows that the emotional competencies help to dissolve the ethical dilemma. While considering the results the assertive behavior gives the support to live with the ethical dilemma. Since most of the ethical dilemmas are having a solid impact on short duration only women can slowly go high. Assertive behavior gives the strength to overcome the emotional turmoil - which may end with dropped out. The participants never experience the ethical dilemma showed inconsistency in the scores. The reason behind may be their family support, having the knowledge of dealing with ethical issues and playing the role with safe mode. Since the participants were selected from the middle, senior and top level job cadre their scores in Conscientiousness – basic ethical element- shows no difference. Anyhow, in the case working women this competency plays indirectly an important role in relationship management.
From the chart No. 1, the impact of ethical dilemma is mild and can be made inactive when we have high emotional competencies and assertive in behavior. The mean values of assertive behavior scored high in the case of women successfully solved the dilemma and in the case of women facing career break with dilemma. It shows that the assertive behavior have no control on solving ethical dilemma, but it acts as a shield to product the career life of the victimized one. Women got high score, more than 60 in emotional intelligence having the ability to solve the dilemma.

Chart No.2

While interpreting the chart No 2, it revealed that the emotional competencies contributed more in the existance of glass ceiling in women career life. Participants scored less than 60 percentage met with solid ethical dilemma.

Conclusion

According to the facts revealed by this research, it is confirmed that the ethical dilemma is presented in woman’s career life resulted in glass ceiling effect. Apart from the managerial skills,
woman needs significant emotional competencies and assertive behavior to conquer the dilemma. In the dilemmatic situation assertiveness act like shield and give protection from the ill effect of ethical dilemma. But the emotional competencies give support to overcome the problem. So, along with the skill development training the human resource department should arrange for the self development behavioral training also. As the research shows that the mid life women between 40 to 50 years experience solid ethical dilemma resulted in career break or a stall in the position. As a prevention measure, instead of employing training arrangement for the victimized women’s group, it is better to employ a behavioral training system in the organization for the women in the Middle level occupation.. So that the percentage of women in higher level job will be hiked to appreciable value in the future.

Reference


