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Cultural barriers of women's job promotion

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Abstract

Regarding that women form half of world's active population, but they aren't applied equally to manage organizations' affairs. Of course presence of women in work environment have been highly increasing in recent years and it is continuing everyday but their development rate in high level jobs isn't appropriate to numbers of them in organizations. Women face some problems in work environment such as job discrimination and pre-judgment about them is resulted from cultural attitudes of society. Women are of important and valuable capitals in the world countries especially in developing countries. Leaders of organizations should know (that) responding customers' changing market and international competition need to use talent of expert women and men in all levels.This paper explains some problems about women's employment in development manner, cultural space governing women's employment, cultural barriers and attitude present in women's employment and also presents some suggestions to smooth background of women's employment.

Keywords: Barriers cultural”upgrade careers”women

Introduction

There has been never an agreement in history except present days that the most important origin of development is corporation among all humans and a long way has been passed to get this point. As organizational valuable resources then women play role as important as men to develop their society. Men and women are together able to develop and grow society and country; and increasing each other forces work for the benefit of their society. Some societies have developed more than others which could successfully compile some rules to profit creative thoughts and useful power of women by a strategic thought and consider merit and capability of men and women equally (Alvani, Zarghamifard, 2, 2001) because women form half of world's active population. In new millennium providing new grounds to employ and apply women more than their power of thinking, innovation and creativeness should be the title of modern management programs (Jazani, 94:2009).

As today, planners in high and low levels are more informed about the importance of women's role to achieve goals of society (Zahedi, 71:2007). However women aren't still considered as capable as men in work place. In organizations women have usually lower roles and places (Qadamnejad, 2002).

According to statistics obtained in 1991 and 1996, lack of balance and appropriateness between employed men and employed women is observed in all job groups. Women form only 13% of statistics obtained from total employed in high degree managers and employees that shows a low level. This is 33% in other departments such as scientific, technical expert jobs and 17% in official department (Jazani, 101:2009).

From 1970 presence of women in executive, official and managerial jobs has increased highly but ratio of women employed in job's high levels is still low.

According to statistics obtained in Iran through 1976, rate of women's participation has been 13.9%. this rate has decreased by 8.2% in 1986 and increased to 9.1% in 1996. High level female managers and employees in organizations were 1533 people in 1991 increased to 41420 people in 1996. As this shows increasing numbers of women in management places but is much less than numbers of employed women (Jazani, 70:2001).

Women's employment in development manner

In human development reports of United Nations it is written that women have less productivity of development profits. As women form half of world's population, but their share in economic active population is about thirty percent and in some countries less than this rate. It also added that in developing countries women have less job opportunities and often are unpaid employing informal job department. Employing in formal departments, women are paid less than men; and possibility of women's self-employment is limited for inaccessibility to needed systems. They work for longer hours than men but result of their job isn't accounted and in fact women have been lost in statistics of national countries (Ebadollahi, 188:2002)

in two recent decades increasing transitions have occurred and decreasing sex inequalities belong to development process and one of the most important transitions is changing view governing women in this process. In recent years from 1975 most of welfare problems have been presented to help women population and it was tried to provide facilities to support them by conducting small projects and meeting their most important basic needs. This view has changed to newer attitudes in recent years. In this vie woman is not only receiving help but is producing, participating and also consuming manufactured facilities in development process (Shadi talab, 175:2002).

Cultural space governing women's employment

Experiences of recent decades in low-developed countries have approved that in development process preparing cultural space is not only necessary to accept exogenous changes but also is the most important factor to make the field for endogenous changes in all social and economic departments.

Cultural factors may be ignored in some superficial and short term changes but certainly cultural space governing women's employment plays a basic and important role in long term perspective and main multi-aspect transitions in social-economic base of women. (Shaditalab, 176:2002)

Studies and evaluations conducted about women's employment by Center of measuring programs in Iran Mass Media Organization in 1993-1995 showed that 66.5% of people believed that the most important

duty of woman is housekeeping. About employing women in the field of ministry 33% of people were disagree or completely disagree because they believed that women aren't suitable for ministry because of some special problems and properties. In this regard men were disagreeing more than women to employ women for ministry. Research findings about advantages of employing for women and their families showed that economic problem shares highly to provide a part of family's expenditures equal to 81% and financial independence for women equal to 57%; and almost 34% points to improve their social base in society and 8% points to ts effect on family's cultural and social affairs.

Problem explanation

Problem studied in present research is why presence of women in managerial jobs of society is negligible (totally 8.2% in 2000) but they form half of society's human forces and have potential ability to increase productivity level of society. Also inserting main places for women is so complicated and compromises many variables (Hosseinian, 15, 2005). Presence of women in managerial area faces some challenges and problems and it is increasingly necessary to study this field. Also regarding increasing manner of women's education and high presence of them in several areas of society, there are some challenges and problems to process women in researches. So this research seeks for barriers of promoting women in management area; in other words this research aims to find an answer to this question: "what are barriers to promote women in management area?"

In summary, economic factor in women's employment has the most importance but current accepted culture in society has special ideas about women's employment and according to presented answers it believes if a man opposes his wife's work, she must ignore his work even if she tends to continue it (Shadi talab, 179:2002). Reviewing conducted studies and studying theories present in this field, the most important barriers to promote women's job include economic, social, cultural, political and biological areas. These barriers include:

a)economic barriers

Economic recession of war and revolution periods

Emphasizing on uneconomic properties and roles of women

Avoiding private section from investing in over-employed jobs

Lack of or low severity of job opportunities for women

High costs of women workforces for employers

Lack of capitals for women

b) Social barriers

Illiteracy and semi-literacy

Discriminating presence of woman in many educational books

Discriminating presence of woman in movies and cinema

Discriminating and differing socialization process of man and woman in society

Getting married in low ages

Heavy housekeeping duties

c) Cultural and attitude barriers

Society's view and attitude on women's duties

Emphasizing on housekeeping and women's social isolation

Presence of special traditions and beliefs in family

Presence of patriarchal culture

Low chance of women to get governmental places

d)political barriers

Absence of cooperative political systems

Structure of power and political roles

e) Biological barriers

tall or short height of female managers

shyness of female managers

it is worth to note that one of important cultural barriers presented for the first time by Wall Street Magazine in 1986 is phrase of "Glass Ceiling". This phrase was constituted to explain invisible barriers resulted from authorities and organizations' prejudices against women; some barriers which avoided women to get opportunities to be employed and paid. According to U.S Labor Office, Glass ceiling indicates attitudes combined with prejudice which prevent women to get high degrees in an organization.

Glass Ceiling is result of common myths and perceptions. Some of these publicly accepted perceptions include:

Woman isn't enough able to work.

Men have some properties proportionate to insert them in leadership places.

Women aren't enough experienced to accept leadership places.

Women aren't able to do difficult technical job (united Nation – women;1955,45)

It is also emphasized in Iran to have equal opportunities for employment in programs of economic, social and cultural development but practically some discriminative attitudes and based on it discriminative decisions to women are observed. Although "Glass Ceiling was first formed in the U.S, in present time this fact is understandable in all positions faced women to get practically high level jobs. There are some assumptions such as "women are sensitive to decisions in critical conditions and they aren't national" are predictable problems avoiding fair attention to individual conditions (Jazani, 71:2001).

Attitude barriers

Women aren't serious about their job's path like men and family is in priority for them. If one woman fails in high place, it doesn't mean all women are similar. Organizations don't want women to fail, so they don't accept risk of employing them (resource: Internet).

Suggestions to smooth conditions of employing women

1-breaking Glass Ceiling: the best way to break Glass Ceiling is training and breaking framework of traditional beliefs relating to women's jobs and reinforcing women's self-belief. Labor International Organization presents some suggestions to break Glass Ceiling as following:

-training, making communication networks, making policies accordant with family interests, reforming employment rules, equal payments for similar jobs, increasing public awareness about women's developing economic role and share (resource: Internet)

2. Increasing women's participation in society by establishing private organizations (NGO)

3- One measure considered through the world to provide a suitable field for women's activities is "Friendly Organization".

Structure of this organization is in the same way where employed women can keep their family. Considering some facilities such as floated work hours, decentralized workplace, providing kindergarten facilities are suggested in these organizations.

Conclusion

Numbers of women in workplace has been increased in recent years But there are still many barriers for women's employment in our society such as cultural and attitude barriers. Increasing research has been conducted in the area of women's employment and their participation in several social fields. But it is still asked why presence of women in management area is ever intangible but they are actively present in society. So this research is designed to meet measured barriers by recognizing them.

Studying research theoretical literatures barriers of promoting women and their parameters such as economic, social, cultural, political and biological barriers were recognized which totally form ultra-organization barriers.

As a result achieving goals of every organization and finally getting economic and social development of a country need optimal application of human force. Organizations should use expert men and women correctly and without cultural prejudices; and Glass Ceiling should be removed.Women's employment needs changing behaviors and attitudes; in addition women should be present in society and organizations self-confidently and ever increase their abilities.

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