



Research Paper

The Corporate Woman: Myth or Reality

Dr. Parveen Kaur Khanna

Professor, Department of Management and Humanities, Sant Longowal Institute of Engineering and Technology(Deemed to be University), Longowal, Sangrur, Punjab,

ABSTRACT: *Shedding her cocoon, woman of today seems to have broken the 'glass ceiling'. New education has not only awakened the 'self' but has also helped her enter the Corporate World. Though equal opportunity bills along with Funds have helped her a lot, but still gender disparity makes it difficult for her to gain a foothold in the Corporate World. However, this can be solved by changing the view of the Patriarch and above all women's own realization of their 'potential'.*

KEY WORDS : *Corporate culture, Feminine, Masculine*

*Received 25 May, 2021; Revised: 06 June, 2021; Accepted 08 June, 2021 © The author(s) 2021.
Published with open access at www.questjournals.org*

*I was that woman at whom the Vedas, the Avesta
the Bible and the Quran were flung;
their God was the bogeyman
who kindly sent male prophets
to keep me humble in my place.*

Debjani Chatterjee (I was that Woman)

I. INTRODUCTION

Men by nature wants to conquer, to dominate and history tells us they always have, but, shedding her cocoon, her 'purdah' behind, the woman of today seems to have broken the 'glass ceiling'. Few decades ago, the roles were clear; women gather and nest and men hunt and fight, however, "now the new education has awakened the self. As a result of this she has started thinking of independent and self-reliant life. And in order to translate this thinking into reality, she has started fighting against her own timid self as well as man's protectoral shell."(Borche, 1995)

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A history of woman's social roles has always been full of constraints, but new in this global world it seems to be transcended into opportunities. With an increased importance of education, changing societal norms, rapidly growing inflation rate, women have been motivated to pave the way into the corporate world so much so that the corporate gurus know for certain that it is the woman who has got the right stuff. A brief look at the world history reveals her gains and losses in the field of science and technology. She gained ground in this field with a rise of suffrage movement and lost it when the movement waned. During the World War II, when men were called to military service, the number of women increased though again the proportion decreased when men returned from war. The fields of engineering and technology did not gain ground until the emergence of feminist activism in the late 60's /early 70's, when women working in ignorance of the barred history of their foremothers viz. Phaenarete (midwife, mathematician), Hypatia of Alexandria (the most revered woman mathematician and scientist of the ancient world), Trotula (medical doctor and lecturer at the university of Slaerno, considered to be the mother of gynecology), astronomer Caroline Herschel, Ellen Swallow (the founder of scientific discipline of ecology), Emily Roebling (who took over the design and construction of Brooklyn Bridge when her husband was incapacitated), Marie Curie and her daughter Irene etc.,(Boulding, 1976) seemed to take ground.

THE PRESENT SCENARIO

Today, the participation of women in the fields of science, engineering and technology remains varied; from an improved one in mathematics and physical **science**, same as the male counterparts in the **computer science**, becomes lowest in engineering fields. The past few decades have seen the introduction of many programmes which have helped in the initiation of girls into the fields of Science and Technology. A number of these programmes have been funded by the Central and State Governments and research studies have shown them to be successful. Women's studies have also played an important role in bringing changes in the male-centered curricula and hence encouraging girls to opt for technical fields. Moreover, equal opportunity Bills have helped to ensure that there is no discrimination if female applicant is more suitable than her male counterparts.

THE CORPORATE WORLD

Studies show that women executives when voted by their peers, subordinates and superiors, score higher than their male counterparts in not only the production of **high-quality** work but in goal setting and monitoring of the employees also. Companies with the highest representation of women on their managerial teams have shown better financial performance than those with the less women representatives. Being open in learning about technological trends, keeping up with the latest ways that have been developed in all areas, having patience in dealing with problems and having habit of reaching solutions through negotiations, women are more successful in giving successful business.

Further, the growth rate of women in business is strong because women have learned to manage their money. They keep their commercial credit rating secreted away like a savings account and manage their business budgets with the same skills they show at home. So much so that a woman is no longer afraid to apply for business loan and even the lenders tend to approve these loans because of an amazing successful rate of women owned business. They have learned the value of protecting equity because it is one of the mainstays that support a business structure. Hierarchy at present is being replaced by team work and feminine energy is slowly forcing masculine towards the middle.

Women value their ability to develop their relationship and nurturing skills and often these qualities along with feminine attributes such as consensus building, sensitivity and intuition help them not in corporate sector but also in becoming successful entrepreneurs. A desire for self fulfillment and job satisfaction become the primary drives in starting a business venture and hence becoming their own boss.

GENDER DISPARITY

However, the path is not so smooth. Though women have ventured outside their homes to enter the corporate world, still they find it difficult to gain a foothold in this male-dominated world. A working woman struggles physically, intellectually and emotionally in a corporate world which has a strong bias against all women, at the same time she has to face an internal conflict, i.e., how to be successful in the business world. Much of this is based on gender socialization. The world conflicts, constant comparisons with the male colleagues, **gender-based** disparity in appraisals and promotions are a few attributes that often force female executives to "opt out". Business culture scoffs at woman intuition and pooh poohs their insights.

Moreover, culture of the **high-tech** industry is highly competitive- suitable for men. It is generally believed that the **high-tech** world has an ultra-libertarian culture, with pornography and sex industry, unequal lab space, salary discrepancies and the woman of today is well aware that her participation in the male-dominated field is conditional on man's approval and this knowledge enforces a kind of self-censoring.

NEED OF THE HOUR – THE CONCLUSION

Hence there is a need to analyze the environment, both at the corporate and societal levels and create a work place that not only supports women but helps them explore and harness the potential and the opportunities to grow and succeed in the corporate world. Companies should have clear and unambiguous idea of where their glass ceiling is and work to remove the obstacles that are inherent within their business, providing men and women with genuine equal opportunity.

Corporate culture must blend the feminine with the masculine. Boundaries should be dissolved and decisions should be respected. Learning to celebrate the differences may help to stave off the frustrations. Women have done much and can do more if they get support from the opposite sex and learn a few things viz. they should look outward for support and inward for guidance, should always surround themselves with those who support their vision, get rid of hesitations before entering into job or entrepreneurship, have confidence in their communication skills and back their thoughts with focused, definitive action in the direction of what they most want to be, do and have. This can be done by making efforts to have a support system. They can have the greatest access to the male-dominated fields when they gain power to force upon doors, challenge discriminating practices and change a hostile atmosphere to a cooperative one.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Borche, G. "Facets of feminism in Indian English Fiction", *Feminism and Literature*. ed. Veena Noble Das. New Delhi: Prestige Books. 1995.
- [2]. Boulding, Elise. *The Underside of History: A View of Women through Time*. Boulder Colorado: Westview Press. 1976.