

Relationship between Social Factors with Promotion of Women to Management Position in Sports Organizations

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Abstract

Background: The aim of this study has been to investigate the relationship between social factors and the promotion of women to management position in sport organizations in Iran. **Method:** Regarding the objective, this study is practical and regarding the method of implementation, it is descriptive, the population of this research in 2021, includes all the staff of the Youth and Sports Office of West Azerbaijan of Iran up to 216 people. Using Morgan's tables 136 subjects were selected through stratified random sampling as the sample. In order to collect data, the questionnaires of social factors of the promotion of women to management positions were used, the validity of which was confirmed by experts and its reliability was obtained to be 0.86 through Cronbach's alpha test. **Results:** The results indicate that there is a positive significant relationship between gender and gender discrimination and women's promotion to the position of management in sport organizations. In addition, there is also a positive significant relationship between the elimination of conflict between work and family and also family support and women's promotion to management positions in sports organizations. **Conclusions:** However, it appears that women are still faced with gender equity issues in sports governance, athletic media representation, and perception in sports. Therefore, the field of sport management should continue to work towards a level of quality that truly treats women as equals, offers them equal opportunity, and permits them to feel equal in sport management and athletic participation.

Keywords: Social Factors, Promotion, Women, Sports Organizations

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INTRODUCTION

Role in the dynamics of human life is inevitable and can be considered as the centre of human and social relations. To these dynamics, as half the population of women is undoubtedly a direct impact on the sustainable development of any society because the goal is to maximize social welfare (Tavakoli Vala, 2008). Women in management is a popular subject nowadays and their presence in managerial positions has increased during the last decade. Such presence is shown through firms' structure. Day by day, the world of business is recognising women's efforts and their ability to drive firms' performance to a better level. In the USA, diversity in human resources employment is considered by firms to offer a competitive advantage; therefore, investors and customers are attracted to such firms. Companies that are increasing the diversity in their structure are seen as engaged in social responsibility (Boffa-Comby, 2007). Also, achieving sustainable development and improved quality of life concerns of the community leaders and planners of the requirements for achieving sustainable development, considering the problems of women. Without the participation of women in various areas of social, sustainable development does not occur in any community (Khaje Nouri, 2007). In many countries, a large number of people are working in social and health care sector, even in these occupations women are employed at lower levels. While men still account for the higher levels (Alawioun, 2005).

Meetings, seminars, and several congresses about the place of women and their role in development highlight this critical issue. With a little attention it can be understood that holding such programs is the subject of another harsh issue, that is so far or at least in recent centuries, the role of women as half the population of developing world has been ignored, this is an indication of gender discrimination and inequality in various political, economic and social fields, and so on. Human society has faced irreparable damage because of the lack of real presence of women in various areas and that's why has been raised to compensate for this defect for the past two decades. To achieve balance, equality and anti-discrimination, and consequently better and more perfect development of society, it is required that women could participate in decision-making processes at various levels of society. Fortunately, in many countries these efforts have seen notable successes. For example,

countries such as Norway, Denmark and Finland can be mentioned that over 40% of decision making positions in these countries are designated for women. Unfortunately, in many developing countries it is not so noteworthy and only a limited number of women are working in management and decision making positions. In other words, only 2.8 percent of managerial jobs in the country are dedicated to women (Fathi et al., 2016). According to statistics provided and from another perspective, the presence of women in managerial positions could improve the performance of management and organization (Salloum et al., 2016). Because management capabilities are somewhat evenly distributed between men and women or in other words, this gift from God is almost identical in both groups. Hence, the lack of providing conditions with appropriate opportunities to promote susceptible women to managerial positions, causes us not to use half of the available capacities and talents. From this perspective, women have special abilities and have "soft" skills in human resource management, which, in today's conditions, are needed by the organizations more than before. In fact, today's conditions of the organizations require the democratic leadership style and sensitive to the needs of the individuals. In addition, the presence of women in organizations provides the development of Islamic culture and ethics. Also, by the presence of women in management occupations, the development of organizations is facilitated regarding improvement of the organizational communications and promoting innovation (Mohammadi Asl, 2002).

Therefore, we can say that from among the most important criterion for measuring the degree of development of society is the importance, prestige and presence that women have in those countries; it is obvious that we mean real importance and not an apparent one and an effective presence but not a symbolic presence (Qareh Yazy, 2002). In women's sports, on the one hand, the population of female athletes has been increasing every day, and on the other hand, lack of facilities and also the problem of compliance with the prevailing culture in Islamic society with providing the needs of sports community of women, put additional difficulties toward Iranian women's sport organization. In the study which was conducted in Tehran in 1997, on the organization of women's sports management 39 sport halls in Tehran were studied. The results showed that only five percent of the halls is dedicated to women.

The remaining 25 percent to males and 70 percent were common for both (Sedaqat Zadegan, 2006).

Further, it has done little to help establish equal opportunities in sport governance and the pressures women face in a hegemonic masculinized sport organization. It is necessary to reduce the stereotype that women are not equal to men in sports and sports governance because although women are mostly given an equal opportunity, they are still less likely to participate in sports or to be given equal opportunities in sports governance because of gender discrimination and gender stereotypes. Even with the advancements that women have made throughout history, very few women have risen to the top of sports organizations. Regarding the necessity of explaining the relationship between the social factors with the promotion of women to management in sports organizations, this has been raised as a concern that whether there is a relationship between social factors, including the elimination of gender stereotyping, gender discrimination, and the conflict between work and family and family support with the advancement of women in the field of management? It is hoped that the findings of the study would benefit sport administrator, society at large as regards involvement of women in sports.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the past, management opportunities for women were limited to supervisory jobs. Several studies show that women should endure more challenges than men to gain management jobs. These challenges are actually considered to be barriers of job promotion of women to managerial positions that are classified into three general categories: Personal barriers, organizational barriers, cultural and social barriers (Maddock, 2002; Zahedi, 2001). Although each of these barriers can be used as an opportunity and contribute to the promotion of women to management, about the social barriers, we can say that these restraints are related to the position of women in society. Some authors link the women's lack of influence in groups and organizations to their social role. This issue relatively exists in all societies, and thus reduces the influence of women's leadership. For example, a study of 360 male and female managers in America's state welfare agencies showed that those people were of equal ability and motivation, but men were evaluated based on future expectations and women were evaluated based on their

past performance. This study concludes that judgment in selecting managers is subjective rather than objective (Cordano et al., 2002). In the USA and in some other European countries, the number of women who are being recruited onto the board of directors or into senior managerial positions has improved. This number is still low, but the remarkable thing is that more than 100 million females are now represented as independent workers, and this number has increased during the last ten years (Carter & Shaw, 2006). In family businesses, customs are incurring key changes in gender equality, where it is noticeable that women are taking over the business, and, more and more, they are being considered as entrepreneurs and are holding high managerial positions (Minniti, 2009). Studies have shown that women have a higher success rate than men in managing companies. Furthermore, during the past few years, family businesses owned by women increased by 37% (Mandl, 2010). Globally women occupy 21% of senior management positions. Table 1 provides more details of the percentage of senior management positions occupied by women across the world.

Table 1: Presence of women in senior management positions across the world Country

Country	Percentage
Russia	46%
Turkey	31%
South Africa	28%
China	25%
Australia	24%
Europe	24%
India	14%
Japan	5%

Source: Mackenzie and King (2012)

The studies indicate that the probability of being in a leadership position, especially for women in the situation of the first child is of a special importance. Family environment, discipline and more intimate relationships helps the development of skills and the

performance of the daughter in the society. If the mother of the family enjoys authority, it will be more likely. Father's encouragement and the way the parents treat training the daughter is another important factor (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). Also, the existence of patriarchal societies helps the development of masculine culture in organizations, because the organizations is composed of individuals and groups that come forth from the heart of society, and when a society has a patriarchal culture, the organizations would certainly be patriarchal. Patriarchal culture has family, social, ideological and political effects. In this culture, men can coercively or by using the traditions, rituals and ceremonies, laws and regulations, etiquette, education, and the division of labor, and even the language determine what roles women can or cannot play (Ahmadi, 2004). (Goudarzvand Chegini & Haggi, 2010) have pointed out that guiding beliefs and everyday beliefs as the components of organizational culture are of great importance in attracting women in managerial positions in the governmental level of the organization in Gilan province. (Babai Zekliky, 2006) in a research entitled as the challenges of women for the promotion to managerial positions in governmental organizations, achieved some results such that the problems of women managers, traditional prevailing attitudes in the society, lack of equal benefits and facilities and denial of women's management by the subordinates. Promotion barriers are mainly the prejudice and traditional attitudes of decision makers. In other words, based on the factor analysis conducted, the socio-cultural barriers have been referred more than the individual and organizational factors. (Bahrami Nasab, 1999) studied the issue of the impact of managers' attitude on the job promotion of women to higher managerial levels in higher education through survey from 240 chancellors and their assistants in one hundred faculties in Tehran and concluded that the main barriers for women's job promotion are social and cultural factors influencing the attitude of managers.

Zahedi, (2001) in his study, considers the cultural factors, such as cover and sociocultural norms in the lack of women's access to managerial positions to be important. He also considers family responsibilities, organizational factors, such as human resource policies and regulations to achieve managerial position, and personal factors such as individual skills and interests as important obstacles in promoting women's promotion. Hassanzadeh (2011) in a research study entitled as

the barriers to the acceptance of women in management positions of the department of education in Mazandaran province, concluded that organizational, family and social barriers are considered as the barriers of women's acceptance in managerial positions. (Seyyedan, 2008) examining the factors affecting promotion of women working in public administrations of Oskou with an emphasis on family, indicated that the promotion of women's working in this city was average and that family factors are more effective than other factors in women's lack of promotion. The promotion of accountable women is directly affected by the quality of the role, role strain, gendered division of household activities, family structure demands, anxiety, management features, and is indirectly affected by the variables of depression, stress, job exhaustion, energy depletion of the individual, transmission of tension from one role to another, family stressors and stimuli through pressure. Organizational factors have no role meanwhile. (Yazd khasti, 2009) indicated that the acceptance of beliefs and stereotypes related to physical and sexual characteristics of women and family responsibilities in East Azarbaijan governmental organizations are among the most important factors related to the attitude of the statistical community toward achieving managerial positions by women. (Kazemi, 2013) in a study found that men and women both believe in prioritizing social and cultural barriers in the oil industry. (Hossein Poor, 2012) indicated that socio-cultural barriers affect women's lack of promotion in international company of the oil-rich southern areas, hence his highest factor loading is on the items related to "dictating the girls that the duty of every housewife is to do household activities and to take care of the husband and children". (Hassanzadeh, 2009) in a research entitled as "women's tendency to promote among the women teachers in Mazandaran province indicated that there is no relationship between conformity and the willingness of women teachers to the development of organization, there is no relationship between social stereotypes and the tendency of women teachers to organizational development, the contribution of each of the sociological factors (social conformity and stereotyping) is different in the willingness of women teachers to the achievement of organizational culture, and there is no relationship between the two groups of women (with high and low tendency to advance) in the abovementioned variables. The results of the research indicated that

women have a high tendency towards organizational development, and it is recommended that women be given the right to act more and their participation field be provided. And meritocracy be as the selection criteria instead of gender. (Kohnaly, 2013) found four general categories of barriers to women's access to managerial positions from their perspective and these four general categories can be divided into several components based on deeper and multiple analysis of data. Regarding the importance these barriers are respectively as: personal barriers along with four components including marital status and children, lack of support by the family and spouse, women's distrust to their own empowerment and etc.

The results of the study by (Stangl & Kane, 1991) in a study entitles as "the study of the variables explaining women coaches' power indicated that time constraint due to family obligations cannot affect the competence of managers and women coaches as much as their male counterparts. (Show, 2003) in a study entitled as the examining power factors of women and men revealed that women who reach higher levels of management in sport organizations had no relationship with their family, and they are mostly single or divorced women. If a woman has a baby and family or some family relationships in these organizations, it is said that she cannot be successful in the job that has masculine characteristics. (Krishnan, 2009), studying the turnover among women on top management teams showed that women should have enough opportunities to work at lower and middle levels to reach the top levels of management and acquire the necessary competence and skills. In another study, success barriers of female managers were determined in three categories, organizational, social, and individual elements. Sub components of organizational elements include senior manager's perspectives, negative situations and conditions, and university rules and procedures and negative vision of society, the components of individual elements include personal problems, family problems and job problems. (Chugh & Sahgal, 2007) with studying the progressing factors of women's toward management came to the conclusion that gender role, attitudes and molds of gender, Glass ceiling and leadership of women in management are among major barriers of progressing women in management. Shallow understanding and prejudice about the emotional and behavioral characteristics of women,

cause women not to go above a certain level in the hierarchy of organization.

Therefore, it can be said that society needs women in the field of sports management. (Tepper & Pfister, 2004) in their article on the necessity of increasing women leaders and decision makers at the top level of the sport in Germany write: "Without women leaders and women decision makers, and women who are models in these fields, equitable opportunities for women and girls in sports participation cannot be achieved. Women's Sports Foundation in an article on why women managers in the higher levels of sport management are needed writes: 1. to play their roles. 2. Another perspective come into the decision. 3. Decisions that are made be a real reflection of their community. 4 The absence of women does not mean that there are barriers to their high position in the sport (UK, 2004).

METHOD

Regarding the theoretical practical principles and purpose, this study is included in practical researches and regarding the manner of data collection, it is a descriptive research. The population of the research in 2021 is, comprised of all the 216 employees of the General Administration of Youth and Sport in West Azerbaijan Province who are working in 19 cities in the field of sports and youth. Using Morgan's table, the sample size is 136. The selection of these subjects was conducted through stratified random sampling from 19 departments of Youth and Sport. We applied the questionnaire of women's promotion to management positions; Moghimi's (2011) social factors section was used. The validity of the questionnaire was reviewed and approved by the experts. Also the reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed through executing it in a smaller sample prior to the original implementation, and its' alpha coefficient we obtained to be 0.86. The statistical method applied is the descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient.

The tools of this study include:

RESULTS

In this study, the application of Kolmogorov -Smirnov Test indicates that the obtained scores are normal. In order to study the relationship between social factors and the promotion of women to management in

sports organizations from the perspective of the employees of the General Administration of Sports and Youth in Western Azerbaijan province, Pearson correlation coefficient was used and is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Relationship between social factors with promotion of women

Variables	Number	Correlation Coefficient	Level of significance
Elimination of gender stereotyping	Women's promotion to management	136	0.541
Elimination of gender discrimination		136	0.561
Elimination of the conflict between work and family		136	0.606
Family support		136	0.603

Table 2 indicates that the calculated correlation coefficient between the elimination of gender stereotyping and women's promotion to management is equal to 0.541. Therefore, the correlation between the two variables is significant and positive at the level 0.01 and the higher the gender stereotyping is insignificant the more is the opportunity to promote women to sport management. According to Table 2, the correlation between the elimination of gender discrimination and the promotion of women to management is obtained as 0.561 which is significant at the level of 0.01. Therefore, increasing the lack of gender discrimination can lead to the promotion of women to management. The above table also indicated that there is a positive significant relationship between the elimination of conflict between work and family and the promotion of women to management with a correlation coefficient of 0.606 at the level of 0.01. The relationship between family support, skills and abilities at the level of 0.01 with a correlation of 0.603 was observed to be significant and positive and indicates that higher family support may lead to the opportunity of promotion to managerial positions in sports.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research paper was to expose the inequalities that women face as they enter a male dominated industry, such as the

Sport Industry. In attempt to uncover these inequalities, research was conducted and results proved to be more promising than expected:

The positive and significant correlation between the elimination of gender stereotyping and women's promotion to sport management indicates that, the more the personnel of an organization lack competency, lack being emotional and commitment, women are able to show their ability in managerial levels. The results of the research are consistent with the researchers conducted by (Al- Oqalaei, 1998; Babai Zekliky, 2006; Chugh & Sahgal, 2007; Ezami, 2020; Hassanzadeh, 2009; Hossein Poor, 2012).

In addition, the significant and positive relationship between the elimination of gender discrimination and the promotion of women to sport management indicate that when there is a difference and discrimination in the salary, opportunities of promotion, the amount of feedback received from senior the manager, participation in decision making between male and female employees, women are able to ascend to the organization management levels. The above result is consistent with the research conducted by (Ezami, 2020; Kohnaly, 2013; Stangl & Kane, 1991; Yazd khasti, 2009).

A significant positive correlation was also observed in the variables of eliminating the conflicts between work and promotion of women to sport management. This means that when there is a conflict between work and family, women are not able to progress to the position of sport management, in other words, the coordination between work and family is difficult and women do not feel well because of the lack of time for their family and they do not enjoy family life to progress in their careers. The results of the study by (Hassanzadeh, 2009; Hossein Poor, 2012; Krishnan, 2009), are consistent with these results.

The positive and significant relationship between the variables of family support and promotion of women to sports management also suggests that when the family is supporting a woman working in an organizational environment, be proud of it and help the woman in household chores, she is more likely to attain managerial positions .In confirmation of these results (Ezami, 2020; Hassanzadeh R., 2011; Kohnaly, 2013), reached the same results.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study show that women are overcoming the barriers that were set in the past and more women today are successful in management roles in the Sport Industry. However, it appears that women are still faced with gender equity issues in sports governance, athletic media representation, and perception in sports. In line with the obtained results from the study concerning the relationship between social factors with the promotion of women to management in sports organizations from the perspectives of the employees of the departments of Youth and Sports of West Azerbaijan Province, it is recommended to: the field of sport management should continue to work towards a level of quality that truly treats women as equals, offers them equal opportunity, and permits them to feel equal in sport management and athletic participation and trust women in assigning difficult tasks to them and respecting their decisions. No discrimination should be set between males and females in any way such as the salary and reward, participation in decision-making and training opportunities and dedicate much time and more opportunities for women to participate in the family, in other words, their working time should be reduced without reducing salary and rewards. The organization should be pioneer in providing women with various vacations so that they endure less pressure by the family. With continuous research this study may be able to help break down the barriers and stereotypes of the past and give women the proper knowledge to continue to succeed at the top level of the Sport Industry. In summary, the results collected from this research support a promising future for women who have the desire to work in the Sport Industry. The “glass ceiling” may not be as high as we once thought. Arising from findings of this study, the following are recommended:

- # Government at all levels should create enabling environment for unfettered participation of women in sports and its management.
- # Mass media should organize enlightenment programmer that will eliminate all socio-cultural biases against female participation in sporting activities.

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