

Factors affecting the limitations of empowering women working in governmental agencies of Iran

Dr. Sedigheh Tootian Esfahani ^{1,*}, Dr. Farideh Dehghanian ²

¹Assistant professor of Department of Accounting, College of Humanities, Tehran East Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

²Department of Accounting, College of Humanities, Tehran East Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Abstract: Empowerment is a fundamental principle in the management of today's organizations based on which authorities or power is delegated to the subordinates. Women encounter limitations in the movement towards management and decision making jobs in different levels. Therefore, researchers selected the present topic with the aim of identifying the limitations of women's empowerment in governmental agencies of Iran. The population of the study included 358 women working by contract or formally in governmental agencies in Iran. The research method in terms of collecting data was descriptive-survey research. The main instrument for collecting data is a questionnaire whose reliability was determined by Cronbach's alpha. In addition, its validity was determined by the Delphi technique. Research findings indicated that every three sets of limitations have effects on empowering women and in terms of the degree of importance, social and cultural limitations with weight as 0.37 is in the first rank, personal and behavioral limitations with the weight 0.33 is in the second rank, and structural and organizational limitations with the weight as 0.28 is in the third rank.

Key words: Structural and organizational limitations; Social and cultural limitations; Behavioral and personal behaviors; Empowerment

1. Introduction

In the far past, women were used only for founding a family and maintain its framework, but gradually, by passing time and advancing civilization and culture, women were able to have more effective roles in societies and by their presence in their societies, help advancement and development. Women constitute approximately a half of every society and have a determining role in personal, family and social lives (Asadi Araghi, 2000).

The studies conducted by social experts, it is indicated that access to sustainable development is not possible without women's active participation in all arenas including families, economy, and societies. In a lot of the Third World, some strategies have been applied (Mayoux, 2005).

One of these strategies is empowering women with emphasis on this issue that women's participation simply is not related to the issue of their utilization of advantages and results of development program, but they should have active participation in decision making and implementation of development plans and projects. On the other hand, the disbelief of some women in their abilities and competences along with inequality in job opportunities are among limitations which result in their inaccessibility to management positions particularly at macro levels (Asadi Araghi, 2000).

In the index of women's political empowerment, Iran does not enjoy an acceptable situation. In the sub-branch of years of presidency and premiership, Iran has obtained two zero scores, and in the sub-branch of the degree of the presence of women in parliaments, it has received the poor score of 4%. In the index of women's political empowerment, Iran has received the rank 109 among 115 countries in the world and obtained the score 310% (Bahramnejad, 2009).

The degree of women's presence in different management ranks including macro-management and micro-management in three countries of Malaysia, Turkey, and Iran is low. Women in these countries, not only they did not have equal opportunity with men for employment, but over time and attaining professional experiences, they do not enjoy much chance to get jobs easily. It should be accepted that a society which is inattentive to the force and power of a half of its own population, in addition to be indifference to the creation of required grounds for their spiritual and cultural development, has been indifference to one of the most fundamental issues regarding development and transcendent as well (Wee, 2006).

Morrison and Von Glinow (1990) count factors such as the lack of chances of advancement for women in organization, the dominance of male managers in organizations, the lack of models of female managers in organizations, and the male feeling of racism as main barriers on the path of

* Corresponding Author.

women in attaining management positions. In a study, between those managers who had been proposed to take the responsibility of all their tasks in their own authorities, about 20% of them took this responsibility and used it. About 50% of them cautiously tested the proposition and after 6 months, they started to it. An about 30% of them totally avoided to take the responsibility. Regarding the mentioned discussion, it can be said that one of the most important barriers of empowering in the three mentioned dimensions is the issue of managers' attitudes or approaches (Whetten and Cameron, 1992).

According to the investigations conducted in Michigan University, the characteristics of passivity, passiveness, reliance, and the lack of self-confidence, there are variables which regularly cause the differentiation between men and women. In general, women tend to do their tasks appropriately under their natural abilities (Dowling, 1994).

Gill (1997), in a research titled as "women's ability via outlooks of Philippian women in a non-governmental rural program" investigated the rural women's participation with low levels of income at the center of rural agricultural development. The study indicated that the mentioned program has made women reinforce and improve the conditions of their lives and families. This study referred to some gender issues and inequality in relation to intensity, work value, sharing situations, power and control of income of households which hinders women's complete participation in real development. In addition, unfair political, economic, and cultural structures causes gender roots and class limitations which per se prevent the realization of women's complete potentials in the process of development (Dehghanian, 2013).

Kung (1997), in a study, by reviewing women's freedom structure in Korea, declared employment and social activities of Korean women in 1996 as follows: 31.8% worked as employees, 13% as university professors, 7% as general managers, 3.6% as the crew, and 6.8% as the staff of productive units. Kung in his study stated the percentage of women's income compared to men's in terms of cases of the study, their age, and etc. implementing the policy of women's participation in the approval of general laws and the structure of social projects and political activities can be the requirement of women's empowerment (Taghizadeh, 2007).

Lowler et al. studied the development of involvement in tasks in 10000 companies up to recent decade and their study was published in the Journal of Fortune. They investigated thousands of employees and the published results indicating the involvement in doing tasks can be considered growing factors in recent years, and it is expected that it will be continued. The main result of this research is that organizational efficiency can be attributed to empowerment strategies and this empowerment can be a favorable response to the facilitation of global competition (Soleimanian, 2002).

Miller (1998) in his research concluded that discrimination and bias are two cultural dimensions which are located on the path of women's advancement in management. Bias means having negative attitudes towards a member of an organization due to his group identify and discrimination means observable behavior towards that person due to the same reason (Miller, 1998).

Cho (2003), in his thesis investigated the organizational culture and empowerment for changes in small productive industries in Hong Kong. The results of the study indicated that when management in organizational changes only considers hardware, it will face with failure because in organizational changes, software is a part of necessary parts. Organizational culture which guides the changes and empowerment of the staff is the main software part which conducts the successful process of changes. Research indicates that the mentioned software is the main core of successful implementation of changes in organizational culture for continuing quality improvement. The advantages of empowering the staff have been discussed and it is believed that by clarifying these chains of success in productive industries in Hong Kong will increase significantly (Ali Naghian, 2007).

"The UN in the Document of the General Assembly Special Session for Women counts the barriers of women's empowerment as cases such as the lack of education, extra loads burdened on women at work with wage and without it, attitudes and negative social clichés (the UN Document of the General Assembly Special Session for Women).

In the UN document in Beijing, it is mentioned that educational courses and curriculum are greatly advocates a particular gender, and is rarely sensitive to women's and girl's needs. This issue reinforces the male and female roles and causes that the chance of full and equal participation be avoided from women in a society. The tutors' unawareness of affairs related to gender in all educational levels reinforces discriminative tendencies and removes respect for females. Therefore, it results the reinforcement of inequality available among women and men (Beijing action plan and declaration).

Rezazadeh (2011), in his study titled as "empowering women and appropriate urban governance in Iran" investigated the women's role in urban management and the possibility of more tendencies towards active participation of women in different fields. This study indicated that women are in search of getting power and taking more active roles in urban life. They have used all accessible resources for improving their own abilities. In addition, further research is required for better understanding of cultural and social barriers for increasing women's participation rate in governance (Rezazadeh, 2011).

Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2009) in their research titled as "professional advancement and family strategies of women's executive balance" investigated the professional advancement of women and the creation of balance between

executive affairs and families, and guided women to pursue a balanced combination of professional and executive activities, families and organizations, and be committed to women's advancement (Ezzedeen and Ritchey, 2009).

Dehghanian et al. (2012), in their research investigated the factors limiting women in governmental organizations and concluded that structural, cultural, and social factors are among those limiting women in governmental agencies (Dehghanian et al., 2012).

2. The history of women's political participation in the constitution movement

The process of women's participation in the Constitution Revolution can be divided into two sections before and after the victory of the Constitution Revolution:

2.1. Before the victory of the revolution

Women with participation in demonstrations, rallies, gathering and clergies' migration for rallies, declared their own support of constitutionalists and opposition with Qajar monarchy and calamities resulting from it. Opposing women were always active in the constitution movement, made possible rallies and helped them financially and morally (Nejad Bahram, 2009). Forming a secret women's association, was in fact a systematic effort in the field of politics. In addition, Iranian Tobacco Association established in 1890 by some reformist women against Russians' greed was active against Iran's economic dependency to Russia by sanctioning any purchase from them (Bamdad, 1968).

2.2. After the victory of the revolution

Women, by selling their jewelries, helped the national budget, capital and establishing national banks, and in reaction to the ultimatum declared by Russia and Britain requesting to the dismissal of Morgan Shuster, started armed protests and sanctioned the goods from the two countries. After the revolution, women, in spite of the fact that the election law of 1906 prohibited women's participation in political campaigns, did not pay attention to it and conducted significant activities in establishing their constitutional system (Feminism Bulletin).

Accordingly, women in Iran have never been passive in political upheavals and movements during the contemporary era and used all their abilities such as demonstrations, rallies, armed movements, writing article, constructing associations, releasing newspapers, and etc. for helping the advancement of the constitution. These activities which later were centralized in the form of associations, schools, and women's newspapers, provided gradual grounds for more aware and responsible participation of women in other sections of sociopolitical movements.

However, in no periods of the history of the constitution, women's presence in decision making arenas has not been observed significantly and even in case of the establishment of parliament, they were deprived of right to vote (Nejad Bahram, 2009).

3. Empowerment theory

3.1. Empowerment from psychodynamic approach

From psychodynamic approach, empowerment, in addition to increasing self-esteem, causes changed in a set of phenomena. It should be noted that conducting real empowerment requires understanding a set of mental differences and commitment of managers as well as employees constructed on the basis of integrity, honesty, and mutual trust (Taheri Tarigh, 2004). Changes in culture, behaviors, and old habits is a very appropriate method by which we can create a very powerful relationship between managers and the staff based on moral and ethical values. In addition, it should be tried that individuals feel freedom, respect, motivation, and authority and exemplify ethical values such as originality, trust, and confidence for themselves and their own organization (Ghasemi, 2003).

3.2. Empowerment from ultra-motivational approach

Thomas and Velthouse in their interpretative model for intrinsic task motivation, define the task of empowerment as follows:

Empowerment, empowering individuals, authority cession and capacity building. Empowerment is a title for the new paradigm of motivation which is necessary with the created changes of a search for proper alternatives for management forms motivating commitment, risk and innovation. The new paradigm includes simple controls and emphasis on internalized commitment in job themselves. Empowering is the process of developing culture and this development includes the following cases:

Participation in information in the form of shared vision, clear objectives, decision making frameworks, and transparency of the results of efforts.

Increasing competencies via learning and experiencing

Obtaining benefits for doing tasks effectively

Providing supports in the form of guiding and tutoring, cultural support and motivating risk appetite

Individuals, when working, will be empowered by experiencing and learning, and this is an opportunity which an employer may provide for an employee.

Empowerment is the process of becoming and this is a task not a result.

Empowerment is a continuous improvement and never ends.

An individual cannot become absolutely empowered and only in this case that empowerment becomes a part of organizational culture (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990: 666-681).

3.3. Empowerment form relational (multi-Dimensional) approach

In scientific resources related to this approach an up to bottom and mechanical definition is defined which indicates individuals' power and their absolute dependency in relation with others (Spreitzer, 1996).

According to this approach, applying new processes and distributing power causes the empowerment of individuals. In fact, empowerment means delegating (legal and spiritual) authority and requires investigating the role of managers and leaders both before empowering and after it because they have great and inevitable effects on the staff's psychological perception of empowerment, and play important and different roles such as creating shared objectives, promoting the staff's senses regarding their empowerments, emphasis on the staff's efforts and praising their roles in assisting to attain organizational objectives and concentrating strategies motivating group autonomy and independence in decision making (Hor Abadi Farahani, 2005). From this approach, empowerment is a process through which a leader or manager tries to divide power among his subordinates.

3.4. Negative and positive approaches

Based on the two negative and positive approaches, the mechanism of socialization in creation of intellectual process of patriarchy can be analyzed. From the negative approach, this type of socialization causes the negation of some women's abilities. This type of socialization is exactly extracted based on a patriarchic culture and particularly in the third world; the same patriarchy is deliberately considered as a factor for women's empowerment. Promoting approaches in which men, white women's support, guarantee the empowerment and survival of them, originates from this thought. While experiences indicate that the use of patriarchic culture for empowering women due to the lack of positive changes in gender attitudes cannot result in women's empowerment because this culture necessarily makes sense of women's empowerment as being passive and subordinate. This culture which has been accepted in most human communities over history, in the present age cannot be the factor of improving women's states and in general, this consideration originates from knowing women as subordinate and not as rightful. From the negative approach, replacement of humanistic and justice-oriented culture with patriarchic one can result in empowering women and materialistic and spiritual promotion of members of the society including women. The governance of humanistic attitude means that if legislators, policymakers and

executives of policies and activities generalize themselves to women's issues and problems, women can access their human rights to a great extent. From this approach, their philosophy of existence is not summarized in doing tasks. Rights and tasks are two ranges of empowering. By women's rights, it means those rights which are necessary for women's human life due to their being women or gender (Shadlou, 2002).

4. Different attitudes regarding limitations of women's empowerment

4.1. Attitude 1: person-oriented approach

This attitude considers the guilty of the limitation of women's professional advancement in factors which are present in females themselves. This means that particular characteristics and behaviors conducted by women cause their failure in advancement. For example, the relationship between genders can add some problems which women face with. Women and men, both in their verbal and non-verbal relationships, make communication differently and this is understood in such a way that women have less ability in making communication (Givorian, 2000).

4.2. Attitude 2: Socialization Process Cultural

This process moves women towards professional activities, not management positions, and these examples reinforce the existence of cliché functions (i.e. for the structure of each gender, a series of jobs is appropriate). Accordingly, women's tendency towards management is significantly less than men's. Other factors which have effects on the failure in women's advancement in this attitude are as follows:

The potential effect of jobs on family life, role conflict, lack of role models, and the disappointment they receive from educational consultants whether in high school or in universities (ibid).

Women's socialization is such that women are accustomed with lacking in self-confidence and decision making for competition with men for professional objectives. Female managers in most societies in the world, even in developed countries such as the US and Japan, and European countries, have different behaviors with men due to cultural and value differences. These value and cultural differences have causes that men and women can be imagined two poles of a continuum, while binary values are totally complementary and hand in hand with each other. Particular behaviors which usually female managers show from themselves in environments which men are dominated, requires particular training for female managers, which these cases is not required so much by men. Some emphasized issues as follows:

1. Developing professional skills to the extent of creating self-confidence in them.

2. Developing management skills regarding relationship between staff.
3. Accessing strategies which can cause changes in organizational culture (Mir Sepasi, 2004).

4.3. Attitude 3: the lack of opportunity for attaining experiences

Another barrier is the lack of opportunity for attaining required experiences in workplaces. This issue is mostly due to the lack of consultants and supporters for women in organizations. A supporter can be a teacher or supporter of women in workplaces. Studies indicated that the tasks of consultants can be divided into two parts:

Professional tasks which can be effective on determining professional paths and advances such as: professional training and supports

Psychosocial tasks which increase the sense of self-confidence and ability in individuals such as: accepting and confirming individuals, consultation, friendship, and modeling roles.

Active consultants or supporters can be very effective for promotion and creation of self-confidence in them (Givorian, 2000).

Another barrier can be binary responsibilities and traditional and professional functions. There are other problems in this regard. For example, Morrison and Glinow point out that women which have been promoted in management, mostly have received less wages than men have. They state that certain characteristics in the organizational structure and system prevent women's access to men's positions. In this regard, three organized barriers are investigated:

Firstly, there are firm evidences that women have limited access to informal information networks or that they are deprived of them. Limited access to informal networks causes limitations such as insufficient knowledge of what occurs in organizations and also the problem of forming coalitions, which in fact are related to the limited mobility and the effects of "glass ceiling" (Ghobadi, 1999).

Deprivation of informal and formal networks and in general, the lack of planning for activities of women constructing a part of personnel of an organization is cases which hinder women's advancement (Abbasi, 2001).

Women rarely enjoy management which they require. The problem is that men mostly who management positions are occupied by them are not aware that female employees are different, and in relation with, women men require to learn new management and leadership methods and learn how to criticize them (Boon Hall, 1999).

Another factor is that in many organizations, men, particularly in management levels, are representatives of most employees. Therefore, women and racial minorities in management positions are very obvious representatives of their own gender and minorities. According to Morrison and Glinow, due to the pressure which followers put

on their own representatives, and due to the fact that the dominant group exaggerates about the differences based on cliché criteria, these representatives face barriers in their own performance. Therefore, increasing the number of men in management positions can be an organized pressure on women (Ghobadi, 1999: 308).

4.4. Attitude 4: gender approach

Another barrier is gender approach. This approach can engender main problems for working women. Women can rarely be managers over men in some cultures. Industrial advanced societies, as other developing countries, involve this belief that women are sensitive and illogical for higher levels of management, and are more appropriate for different family affairs. Even women themselves believe this gender approach and take insensitive roles which cause that they will be marginalized and are professionally limited (Ahmadi, 1997).

Another researcher of the gender approach in organizational situations is Rozabeth Mass Kanter, the author of the book "Men and Women in Organizations". Kanter investigated different issues related to gender from representativeness (promotion of a limited number of women) to the role of executive secretaries as well as colleagues' wives. In her analysis, Kanter clarified that issues related to gender have been outspreaded to family lives. In recent years, researchers, discussing that organizations of today have patriarchic nature, investigated gender in organizations. For example, in these organizations, male cliché features such as offensiveness and competition are cases of value. But, female cliché features such as emotions, agreement, and intuitionism are values. Women-advocate researchers discuss that even cases used in understanding organizational life (such as being logical and hierarchy) are due to patriarchy. Summarily, these researchers believe that women due to the gender-based dynamic relations in the patriarchic structures are marginalized (Ghobadi, 1999).

Characteristics such as paying attention to others, sharing power and supporting, in most cases are considered as the strengths of valuable management, which are dominant characteristics in female leaders, and men's characteristics are goal-orientees and self-verification. Men usually think of only themselves, while women have the characteristics such as socialization, emotionality, optimism and respect for others. Further, women persist hat methods of cooperation at work are necessary for increasing services quality. Women emphasize customers and users and prefer workplaces having in formal and open relations. They pay attention on problem solving, and tend to planning in management. These characteristics different in men and women can result in preventing effective relations and organizational performance in many cases (Abbasi, 2001).

When women are successful in attaining scientific or professional positions, they usually face with cultural barriers such as their attitudes towards female functions and expectations they have of others. Women's problems are related with their binary responsibilities as wives and mothers and their own professional tasks. In many cases, traditional functions are in the first level of significance and in the next level, professional functions are located. In India, for example, women put family functions at the first rank of significance and due to convenient situations and compatibility of universities holidays, they tend towards these tasks and scientific jobs. However, there are discrepancies between family roles and professional ones for women and working women everywhere face difficulties for merging motherly, spousal and professional functions (Ahmadi, 2007).

If opportunities, equal to those of men, are provided for women in employment by organizations, after employment, they will not have equal opportunities for advancement. These differences can be observable in all levels of management levels particularly in the mentioned situations. No equality is available between wages and rewards received from organizations between men and women. In addition, women should work harder than men for advancing and getting more rewards (Abbasi, 2001).

A lot of managers employ women for less significant jobs for fewer wages to limit the rate of the effect of their turnover in organizational activities. As a result, they have fewer tendencies to invest on in-service training courses and other plans for developing those women who leave organizations and again return. While, women needs training for their advancement (Abbasi, 2001).

Some scholars assign men's favorable and successful performances to internal factors, but assign the same issue to external factors for women, and attributing to external factors is along with receiving less scores. The result of this attribution bias is that although the man and women do tasks at the same level, that person who deserves praise and rewards is the man. However, this tendency is decreasing (Boroumand, 2003).

4.5. Attitude 5: cliché approach

In a lot of societies, there are a series of attitudes about individuals' gender which have caused problems in organizations. These clichés related to gender, which are mostly untrue, have penetrated into workplaces and men-women relations. Studying on stereotyping related to gender states that the existence of negative attitudes towards women is in non-traditional functions.

There is a common attitude about women is that they cannot do particular jobs at higher levels of organizations and consequently, they are not supported as appropriately as possible. In a lot of organizations, male management models are accepted as the standard model and in this mode,

women are considered as incompetent managers. The existence of such a management model causes the increase in negative attitudes about women in retaining the status quo or advancing towards higher levels in organizations. Discriminatory judgments, employment, and promotion retain them far from the power situations on which men are dominant (Abbasi, 2001).

Judith Burdick states that the gender discrimination is a fact in the work markets, but more persuasive reason regarding the incapability of women's work is due to their intendency to accepting professional long-term jobs. Regarding women's abilities and productivity, Hellen Duch, states that always deny sensitive activities and their own successes without feeling that they sacrifice everything, but they will be exited with their husbands' successes and advancement. The profound sense of being insecure and instable about one's own abilities causes that a woman be severely dependent and passive (Yaghoubi, 1994).

In theory, women are fearful of successes because they will be concerned when they are expected to behave as men. In fact, that person considered as a successful manager should be competitive and offensive, but these characteristics are not among women's concern (Boroumand, 1998).

5. Methodology

The method employed in the present study is a descriptive-survey research. In addition, in terms of objectives, it is a applied one because it provides evidences of the results of research for managers and planners of the society.

6. Population

The population included all women working by contract and formally in all ministries and state organizations in Iran. The number of by contract and formal female employees are 659522 individuals in all ministries and organizations. About 94% of them are working in four miniseries of Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Medical Education, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance and the Ministry of Welfare and Social Security (Yearbook of Staff Working in Executive Agencies, 2007: 12). The sample size included 385 participants who were selected using simple random sampling method.

7. Data collection instrument

This section includes collecting data and note-taking from books, articles, papers, and theses (MA and PhD ones) of management and its different sub—fields in different universities and the Internet. These studies were suitable for founding the theoretical framework of the present study.

In addition, a questionnaire was used including 54 questions consisting of 21 questions were about structural and organizational limitations, 12

questions about social and cultural limitations, 18 questions about personal and behavioral limitations, and 3 questions were about empowerment. To determine the trustworthiness of the instrument, there are different methods one of which is measuring their internal consistency. Internal

consistency can be measured by Cronbach's alpha. For the instrument for the present study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was obtained as 0.7.

8. Conceptual model of the research

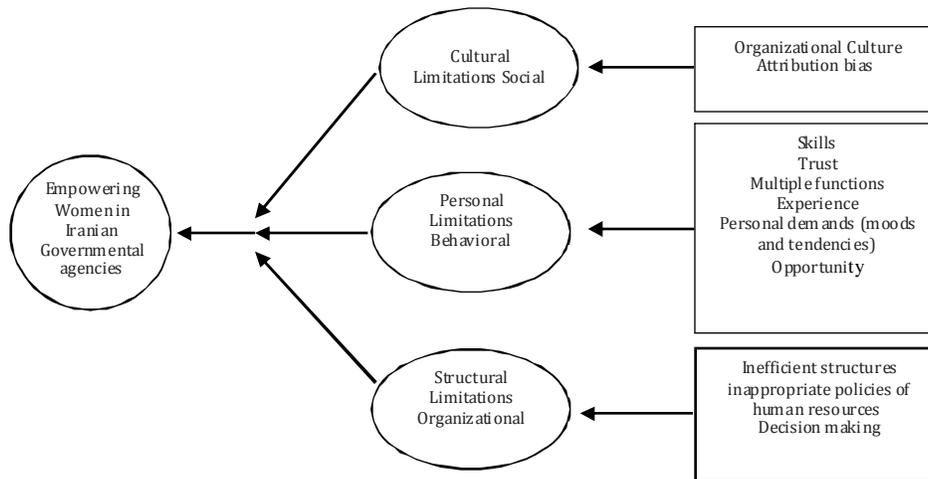


Fig. 1: the model based on research hypotheses

9. Data analysis

To process and analyze data collected in the present study, in each stage, different techniques and software programs were used. In the Delphi technique, for summarizing and describing the ideas of the panel members, and determining central and measures of central tendency and dispersion of data, descriptive methods were used.

In the survey process, to analyze data obtained from the questionnaire, inferential methods such as chi-square and Pearson correlation coefficient were used. In addition, for data processing, SPSS software program was used.

10. Main research hypotheses

10.1. Hypothesis 1: structural and organizational limitations have effects on empowering women in Iranian governmental agencies.

To investigate this hypothesis, first of all, to indicate the correlation between each of the indices (1-21) with structural and organizational limitations, chi square test and Pearson correlation coefficient at error probability level 0.05 were used. Table 1 indexes the results.

Table 1: A list of questions and indices related to structural and organizational limitations

Abbreviations	Titles of indices related to the first hypothesis (structural and organizational limitations)
Q1	Managers do not tend to delegate authorities to women.
Q2	Managers have no accurate and sufficient interoperation of organizational rules.
Q3	Not appropriately implementing rules by organizational officials
Q4	Organizational aims and missions are not clear for women.
Q5	Limitations in terms of attracting and employing women
Q6	Gender discrimination in some occupations for women.
Q7	Managers' lack of willingness to invest in the education of women.
Q8	No effect of training courses to prepare women in decision-making positions.
Q9	Women's lack of job security and stability.
Q10	Lack of social security for women.
Q11	Differences and unfair incentive system (encouragement, praise, reward, and etc.)
Q12	Difference and unfairness of the wage and allowance system
Q13	No clarity of the path for women's professional advancement and not being aware of important professional opportunities
Q14	Temporary organizational turnover (women's breaking with jobs due to travels and unpaid leave
Q15	Forceful professional gap due to Parturition, lactation, illness and treatment, and etc.
Q16	Managers' being distrustful to women's competency and efficiency in attaining successful experiences.
Q17	Incompatibility of management style of managers with women's empowerment
Q18	Not involving women in organizational decision making by managers
Q19	No tendency of some women to participating in group activities and decision making
Q20	The lack of the space of participation in organizational decision making (domination of personal decisions instead of group ones)
Q21	Not involving women in decision making councils in higher levels of decision making

Table 2: The result of the existence of correlation between desired indices and structural and organizational limitations

Index	Calculated chi-square value	Table chi-square value	Probability level	Sig.	Test results
Q1	99.067	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q2	204.291	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q3	167.168	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q4	92.838	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q5	74.318	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q6	114.514	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q7	85.128	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q8	71.972	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q9	46.385	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q10	54.877	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q11	50.352	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q12	15.575	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q13	78.927	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q14	90.827	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q15	140.631	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q16	86.441	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q17	128.676	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q18	98.369	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q19	73.844	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q20	85.631	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q21	61.134	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected

10.2. Hypothesis 2: social and cultural limitations in empowering women in governmental organizations.

To investigate this hypothesis, firstly to indicate the correlation between each of the indices (22-32) with social and cultural limitations, chi square test and Pearson correlation coefficient at $\alpha=0.05$ were used. Table 3 indicates the results:

Table 3: The list of questions and indices related to social and cultural limitations

abbreviation	the list of questions and indices related to hypothesis 2 (social and cultural limitations)
Q22	Managers' false and negative attitudes towards women having the same rank or higher than them
Q23	Domination and rule of patriarchal culture in the organization.
Q24	Common attitude which women cannot do particular tasks in higher levels.
Q25	Men's fear of women's empowerment
Q26	Some believe that women have sensitive spirit and do not have power to decide.
Q27	Some believe that women have sympathetic spirit (agreement and compromise)
Q28	Some believe that women have Intuitionism spirit (decision based on inspiration and the call of their hearts)
Q29	Attributing favorable performance of men to their internal and natural factors.
Q30	The domination of traditional beliefs and old narrations (dependent, unwilling, sensitive, imaginative, non-competitive, introspective, and etc.)
Q31	Women's incorrect and unfavorable attitudes towards their cognates
Q32	Attitudes, values, and beliefs dominating over the organization and society.
Q33	Incorrect belief of some women in the issue that politics and power are male affairs.

Table 4: The results of the test of the existence of correlation between mentioned indices and social and cultural limitations

Index	Calculated chi-square value	Table chi-square value	Probability level	Sig.	Test results
Q22	82.754	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q23	88.117	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q24	98.453	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q25	70.240	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q26	153.816	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q27	128.453	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q28	83.732	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q29	90.659	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q30	106.944	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q31	105.492	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q32	175.547	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q33	113.034	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected

By rejecting H₀, the existence of any relationship between these indices and social and cultural

limitations is confirmed. In other words, there are statistical evidences for supporting it.

10.3. Hypothesis 3: personal and behavioral limitations are effective on empowering women in governmental organizations.

with personal and behavioral limitations, chi square test and Pearson correlation coefficient at $\alpha=0.05$ were used. Table 4 indicates the results:

To investigate this hypothesis, firstly to indicate the correlation between each of the indices (34-51)

Table 5: The list of questions and indices related to personal and behavioral limitations

Abbreviation	the list of questions and indices related to hypothesis 2 (personal and behavioral limitations)
Q34	The low level of women's self-confidence in social and organizational relations
Q35	Conflict and discrepancies of traditional and original roles of women with their jobs (the role of their husbands, mothers, sisters, and etc.)
Q36	Not accepting key and sensitive functions by women
Q37	Managers marginalizes women.
Q38	Not creating appropriate space for women to attain management experiences in workplaces.
Q39	Low level of experiences and familiarity of women with general management.
Q40	Low level of experiences and familiarity of women with executive and strategic management.
Q41	Women's being too much kindness
Q42	Low spirit of competitive spirit in women
Q43	The existence of fear from decision making in most women
Q44	Low levels of spirit for risk appetite in women
Q45	Women's indifference to management
Q46	The lack of appropriate opportunities for the appearance of women's abilities
Q47	The lack of appropriate opportunity for the appearance of women's capabilities
Q48	Indifference to the empowerment of women warning in strategic and major plans in Iran
Q49	Family goodness (women willingly prefer family goodness to accepting management positions)
Q50	Family limitations (men create limitations for women and impose the preference of family goodness to management positions on women)
Q51	Positive though to men's abilities while women need to prove their own abilities.

Table 6: The results of the test of the existence of correlation between mentioned indices and personal and behavioral limitations

Index	Calculated chi-square value	Table chi-square value	Probability level	Sig.	Test results
Q34	86.497	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q35	92.335	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q36	91.525	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q37	112.279	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q38	109.263	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q39	125.464	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q40	102.559	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q41	145.939	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q42	85.687	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q43	120.687	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q44	104.039	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q45	102.140	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q46	109.151	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q47	119.682	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q48	94.877	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q49	148.508	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q50	125.659	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q51	143.983	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected

11. Test results

By rejecting H₀, the existence of any relationship between these indices and structural and organizational limitations is confirmed. In other words, there are statistical evidences for supporting it

11.1. The results of the test

By rejecting H₀, the existence of any relationship between these indices and personal and behavioral limitations is confirmed. In other words, there are statistical evidences for supporting it.

Table 7: the results of chi square test and Pearson correlation related to the variable of empowerment

Empowerment	χ^2 calculated	χ^2 table	Error probability level (α)	Sig.	Test results
Q52	266.832	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q53	261.693	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected
Q54	292.363	9.49	0.05	0.000	H ₀ is rejected

12. Conclusion

With considering the studies conducted in the literature related to the subject, the theoretical framework of the research is that social and cultural limitations, personal and behavioral limitations, and structural and organizational limitations of women in governmental organizations are effective on empowering.

In general, conducted tests on the conceptual model of the research and calculated statistical indices indicate that the data collected from the studied sample have significant compatibility with the conceptual model. due to the fact that the population includes women working in Iranian governmental organizations, and 94% of these women work in four ministries of Ministries of Education, Health and Medical Education, Finance and Welfare and Social Security, and further, research hypotheses in general are designed in relation with governmental agencies; therefore, the results obtained from the administered tests are in relation with all governmental organizations and are not based on the separation of the four ministries and the objective was to generalize it to all governmental agencies.

The three research hypotheses were confirmed. In other words, it can be said that the structural and organizational limitations, social and cultural ones, and personal and behavioral ones, are effective on empowering women in governmental agencies in Iran.

The results of the fourth hypothesis indicate that structural and organizational limitations enjoy less weight (0.28) than the two other sets, and consequently, it has less effect on women's empowerment. In other words, it can be said that these sets of limitations have no so serious effects on women's empowerment. Therefore, in societies where structural and organizational limitations is located in the third rank, the required grounds for the presence of women in different fields of decision making should be provided and their participation should be increased by reducing structural and organizational barriers.

Therefore, in societies where personal and behavioral limitations are in the second rank, it is necessary that the required grounds for the presence of women in different fields of decision making should be provided and their participation should be increased by reducing personal and behavioral barriers.

In general, the results obtained from the prioritizing the tree sets of limitations in women's empowering indicate that social and cultural

limitations with weight 37% are the first and most important role in women's empowerment, and then personal and behavioral limitations with 33% are located in the second rank, and at last, structural and organizational limitations with the weight 28% are located in the third priority.

References

- Abbasi, T. (2001). Organizations as the domains of women and men. *Journal of Tadbir*. No. 119. 39.
- Ali Naghian, M. (2007). applying appropriate ICT in components of organizational empowerment and its relationship with increasing the productivity of Iran National Gas Company. MA thesis of management Islamic Azad University. Science and Research Branch.
- Asadi Araghi, F. (2005). Investigating the reasons of the lack of women's promotion in management profession in ICT Company of Tehran, Staff Offices. MA thesis of Management Islamic Azad University. Central Tehran Branch.
- Bamdad, B. (1995). Iranian women form the Constitution to the White Revolution. Tehran: Ibn Sina.
- Boom Hall, B. (1996). Female managers. Z. Ghaeni (Trans.). Tehran: Senobar.
- Boroumand, Z. (1999). Women's situation in proving management positions. *Journal of Accountant*. Year 3. No. 129. Pp. 15-17.
- Center for Statistics of Iran. (2007). Yearbook of the employees working in executive agencies.
- Dowling, L. and Aghdeh, A. (1994). Women's hidden fear of independence and self-sufficiency. M. Yaghoubi (Trans.). Tehran: Attar.
- Fehghanian, F. (2012). Women's empowerment PhD thesis of management Islamic Azad University. Science and Research Branch.
- Ghasemi, J. (2003). Empowering. *Journal of Tadbir*. No. 132. 22-27.
- Giovrian, H. (2000). Women in management *Journal of Tadbir*. No. 119. 13.
- Kabeer, N., (b). (2005). is Microfinance a ' Magic Bullet' for Women's Empowerment: Analysis of findings from South Asia. *Economic and Political Weekly*"
- Mayoux, Linda (2005). Micro- Finance and the Empowerment of women (A review of the issues).

- Mir Sepasi, N. (2004). Strategic management of human resources and work relation with an approach to the process of globalization. Tehran: Mir Publication.
- Nejad Bahram, Z. (2009). Barriers of political participation of women in Iran. Tehran: Resanesh.
- Rezazadeh, R. (2011). Women Empowerment and Good Urban Governance In Iran", *Asian Social Science*, Toronto: Mar2011. Vol.7, Iss.3, pg.260, 9 pgs.
- Salimian, M. A. (2002). Designing and explicating an appropriate model in empowering human resources of SAMAJA. PhD thesis of management. Islamic Azad University. Science and Research Branch.
- Shadlou, Sh. (2001). The role of culture in balancing gender attitudes for women's empowerment with emphasis on international documents. Tehran: the proceeding of the 1st conference of women's empowerment Center for Women's Participation.
- Spreitzer, Gretchen M. (1996). Social Structural characteristics of Psychological Empowerment, *Academy Of Management Review*, Vol. 39.No.2.pp.483-507.
- Taghizadeh, H. (2007). Investigating the methods of empowering women heads of households in Tehran Province. Case study: Shahr Ray (analyzing attitudes of women heads of households). MA thesis of management Islamic Azad University. Science and Research Branch.
- Thomas Kenneth, W and Velthouse, Betty. (1990). Cognitive Elements of Empowerment: An Interpretive Model of Intrinsic Task Motivation, *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 15.No .4. PP.666-681.
- Wee, Vilian, and Shahid, Farida, (2006). "A Research from work for women's empowerment in Muslim contexts: gender, poverty and democratization from the inside out" WEMC process document 1, 1, 2006, Hong Kong.
- Whetten, D. and Cameron, K. S. (2004). Empowerment and delegation of authorities. B. Owrei Yazdani (Trans.). Tehran: institute of Research and Education of Management of Ministry of Energy and Force.