

# Management and Business Research Quarterly

2017(3)17-26



## The Barriers of Female Managerial Role in view of Female Principals and assistants in elementary schools of Ardabil

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*Received 01 March 2017 Accepted 15 April 2017*

### ABSTRACT

The goal of current descriptive-survey based research is studying the barriers to apply the role of female management in view of principals and deputies in elementary schools of Ardabil which is conducted integratively. Out of the total population; 393 principals and deputies of elementary schools in districts 1 and 2 in Ardabil, 196 participants were selected through stratified random sampling. The required data were collected by standard questionnaires and it was fed in to SPSS software in two descriptive and inferential levels. The acquired results revealed that environmental and individual barriers are the main factors respectively. Social barriers (3.07), higher than the mean have the most priority and historical barriers (1.95), lower than the mean, have the lowest priority, thus inter-personal barriers (2.28) have the highest priority and knowledge barriers (1.66) have the lowest priority in the field of personal barrier.

*Keywords: Barriers, Managerial Role, Female Management, Principal, Assistant*

### Introduction

Up to date, female management has been considered as an important issue in both developing and developed countries by various science experts; and it also has taken worldwide attention. Hence, female involvement in decision making and high level businesses is remarkable. One of the significant factors which is mentioned as gender development criterion and also empowering females, is the rate to which females' involvement in making significant decisions about the country and also their presence in management positions (Ja'farnezhad, 2005). The main and undeniable role of females is observed from different perspectives. The role of females on the

country's development process has been highly illuminated. Holding meetings, seminars and several congresses about female's position and their role in development is a vital evidence. It is observed that holding this type of programs also suggests that the role of females has been ignored. This suggests existing discriminations and gender inequalities in various political, economic, social and etc. (Badvi, Bakhtiari, Hashemi fesharaki & Nasiri, 2011). Female management improves management skills and organizational performance. It also facilitates democratic leadership method, democracy management, the managers sensitivity to the needs of individuals, development of healthy culture, morality, improvement of organizational communications and promotion of innovation. Comparing the attitude of males and females towards a fair world, (Esfidani & Ja'farnezhad 2005) revealed that they both think that females are confronted with injustice. Because of the ignorance of female's roles human society has experienced irreparable damages. Management is a neutral and non-sexual concept in the theories and according to the principles of the management, the concept of gender could not have an effective role and meaning in management theories. However, beyond these theoretical facts, there is also a fact that originates from historical and cultural-social beliefs and thoughts making a deep and unbreakable link between the concept of management and the notion of male chauvinism (Talebzadeh, 2004). Nowadays, females are dealing with various problems in the procedure of social, economic measures and development of the societies and suffer from many inequalities in education, accessing proper job opportunities according to their own capabilities, disproportion in distribution of incomes, inequality in civil rights and political involvement, all around the world. Not only enhancement of females' involvement in quantity is not in line with their improvement but also accessing management positions and inequality and discrimination in job opportunities are still remaining (Farzinnia, 1995).

Employment of mothers is not the only determinative factor in marital relationship and growth and education of children, but it is important in terms of family atmosphere, attitudes and expectations of the spouse and the way of spending free time with family. Statistical data suggest that most women tend to quit their job after marriage. The most important reason for that is reluctance of the spouse in collaborating in home chores and also female inability to afford home and job tasks simultaneously. Presence of children, inconsistency of professional and family roles are other factors that affect female employment. The census of 2011 suggests that more than 92% of population in the country (more than 10 million) are literate. On the other hand the fast trend of high education in the country which is increased by development of state and private universities, indicates its effects in which more than 18% of population have high and seminary education. Male and female education levels are 2.18 and 4.18 respectively. It is said that high percentage of educated females is a step towards accountability of most females in coming years (Statistics center, 2001).

The role of females in development process since early 1370s has been considered. Actually, renovation and development have had unequal outcomes for males and females in developing countries; the males and stakeholders were victims of this process. Empowering females and their involvement in development require progress, education ... in different fields,

since development of this group (females) leads to the development of family, foundation and main core of society (Farzinnia, 1995). Traditional patriarchal society controls and suppresses females and this issue leads to lack of confidence and self-respect. Some strong negative cultural patterns have caused females to lose their vital, intuitional and intellectual feminine energy which is required to reach their goal (Ganji, 1999). Dealing with various obstacles and problems on females' managerial cooperation made the researcher assess and realize some barriers that females are confronted, so that by removal of these barriers and problems, the authorities develop and active managerial cooperation by preparing proper conditions and optimal involvement of females' capabilities. Hence, female involvement in decision making processes is valuable for society. Females also benefit from it in economic developments. Development of society will make sense just with integration of females and males and it is not accessible without considering efficiency of females' development and renovation.

Naseri Jahromi (2014), studied the barriers of female management improvement in view of female high school principals in Shiraz. The obtained data indicated that comparing social and cultural barriers are dominant barriers of managerial improvement. Moreover, it was found that among barriers for improvement of female managers, the aspect of accountability has more role compared to qualification and cultural barrier dominates other aspects. In a similar study Nagizadeh, Shokri & Soltani Fasghandis (2012) investigated the barriers of female management improvement. Findings revealed that the stereotype of gender, gender discrimination, conflict between job and family, lack of leader's support, lack of family support, relationships at work and existence of glass roof are among the barriers for female improvement on managerial positions. Moreover, Dehqanpour and Kazemi (2013) investigated realizing and prioritizing the barriers for presence of females in managerial positions of oil industry. Results showed that both males and females believe the priority of cultural and social barriers. Afterwards, external and internal barriers are known important by females and males, respectively. The attitude of females is positive towards their own capabilities, however males have negative attitude towards capabilities and management of the females. Further more, Alishiri and Kamari (2015) studied the factors of success and problems of females in higher education and introduced some solutions for them. The obtained results suggested that the barriers of females' success could be categorized in three main elements which include social elements (social problems and troubles and negative attitudes in the society), organizational elements (attitude of senior managers and authorities, negative conditions and situations, principles and regulations of the university), and individual elements (personal problems, family problems and job problems). In addition to the mentioned elements, organizational structure of official systems could be referred to another vital element which its consequences are remarkable. To avoid financial and human loss and their destructive social effects, required policy and decisions must be adopted.

Feizi, Hosseini, Mogholi, & Rafiee (2015) conducted a study on the statute of the factors of females' improvement in managerial positions of health and care ministry and medical science education. It was found that the main problem of the organization is that who should be a manager to be able to use official authority and also to have the power of attracting others'

involvement. The rights of education, vote, health and... are same for both male and female in Islam. However, a promotion indicator of females' managerial positions in ministry of health and care and medical education is very low and under medium

Social and cultural factors, wrong public attitude towards females' employment, improper social norms, negative attitude of males towards their own management positions and their tendency to eliminate the competitors from practical fields are some of the barriers of accepting managerial positions by females. Historically, the number of males are more than females, however today the number of females is also increasing. By studying the barriers to females' promotion on middle and higher management positions in view of teachers, (Mirkamali & Nastizaie, 2009) it was found that family, organizational, cultural and social barriers affect female promotion in a highly significant level. Moreover, factors like Fatigue and burnout, job discrimination and satisfaction affect their mental health. It was also revealed that communication and mental barriers have no role in promotion of females in middle and higher management positions in education. Occupation makes life dynamic and it is considered as key concept in social communications. In this study, the researcher seeks to realize and prioritize the barriers of performing female's managerial role.

### Research method

The population of this descriptive study included all female managers and assistants in elementary schools of Ardabil in 2016-2017. Out of total 393 participants, 102 and 291 are in management and assistant positions respectively. The sample was selected through classical random method including 51 manager and 145 assistant.

Table 1  
*Size of Selected Sample of Population Size Using Morgan Table*

position	Population	Sample
manager	102	51
assistant	291	145
Total	393	196

In this research, required data were collected by a standard questionnaire. This questionnaire has 22 items which its answers are in the range of 1 (absolutely disagree) to 5 (absolutely agree). This questionnaire has 8 subscales which are as follows: questions (1,2,3) for social barriers, (4,5,6,7,8) for cultural barriers, (9,10) for religious barriers, (11,12) for historical barriers, (13,14,15,16) for personal barriers, (17,18,19) for personality barriers, and questions (20, 21, 22) for knowledge and awareness barriers are devoted. Reliability of scale for testing female management barriers was obtained by Cronbach's Alpha as 0.88.

In order to analyze data and research questions, SPSS software and uni-variable t-test were used respectively and to draw the Tables, graphs, frequency, percent and means, descriptive statistics were applied.

**Findings**

According to the following Table and figure 1% of respondents (2) have 1-5, 1.7% (14) have 6-10, 21.9% (43) have 11-15, 27% (53) have 16-20, 30.1% (59) 21-25 and 12.8% (25) 26-30 years of experience. The above mentioned data suggest that respondents have 21-25 years of experience in their job.

Table 2

*Distribution of Frequency and Percent of Job Background Variable in the Studied Sample*

job background	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1 to 5 year	2	0/1	1/0	1/0
6 to 10 year	14	1/7	7/1	8/2
11 to 15 year	43	9/21	21/9	30/1
16 to 20 year	53	0/27	27/0	57/1
21 to 25 year	59	1/30	30/1	87/2
26 to 30 year	25	8/12	12/8	100
Total	196	100	100	

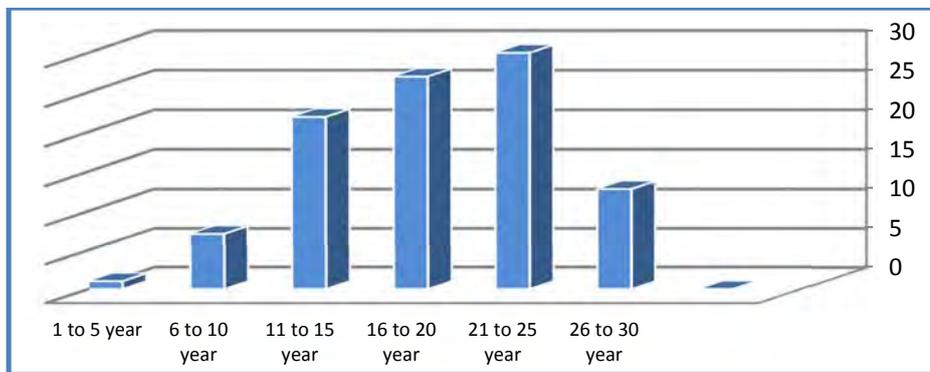


Figure 2. Distribution of frequency and percent of job background variable in the studied sample

Data of Table and figure 3 suggest that about 8.7% of respondents (17) hold A.A., 69.9% (137) have B.A., 20.9% (41) have M.A. and 5% (1) have Ph.D. degree. The mentioned data suggest that most respondents have B.A. degree.

Table 3

*Distribution of Frequency and Percentage of Education Level of Studied Sample*

Education level	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
A.A. degree	17	8/7	7/8	8/7
B.A. degree	137	69/9	69/9	78/6
M.A. degree	41	20/9	20/9	99/5
Ph.D. degree	1	5	5	100
Total	196	100	100	

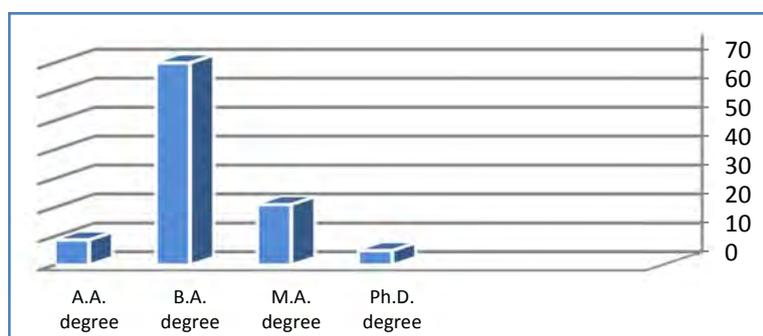


Figure 3. Distribution of frequency and percentage of education level of studied sample.

As mentioned in Table and figure (4), 26% (51) of respondents have manager organizational position, 31.1% (61) have educational assistant position, 23% (45) are in deputy director posts and 9.19% (39) have executive vice position.

Table 4

*Distribution of Frequency and Percentage of Organizational Position of Studied Sample*

Organizational position	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Manager	51	26/0	26/0	26/0
Educational Assistant	61	31/1	31/1	57/1
Deputy Director	45	23/0	23/0	80
Executive Vice	39	19/9	19/9	100
Total	196	100	100	

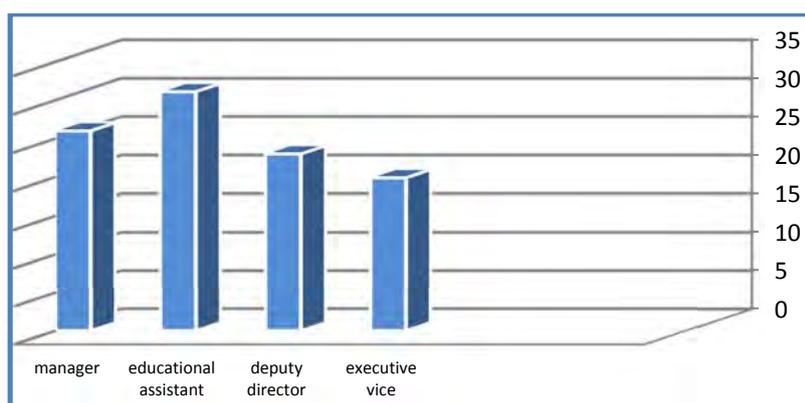


Figure 4. Distribution of frequency and percentage of organizational position of studied sample

**Research question:** what are the barriers for performing the role of female management and how are they prioritized?

T-test was used to assess research question in Table 5.

Table 5  
*The Results of One Sample T- Test To Identify Barriers to Females' Managerial Role*

Index	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Social barriers	3/72	0/99	10/276	0/000	0/5896	0/8696
Cultural barriers	3/46	1/04	6/197	0/000	0/3144	0/6080
Religious barriers	3/02	1/20	0/295	0/768	- 0/1448	0/1958
Historical barriers	2/72	1/12	- 3/448	0/001	- 0/4371	- 0/1190
Personal barriers	2/77	1/02	- 3/062	0/003	- 0/3670	- 0/0794
Personality barriers	3/01	1/04	0/205	0/838	- 0/1322	0/1627
knowledge barriers	2/38	1/13	- 7/510	0/000	- 0/7709	- 0/4502
Test Value = 3 N= 196 df= 195						

As it is mentioned in Table 5, mean and standard deviation of social and mean and standard deviation of cultural barriers are  $3/72 \pm 0/99$  and  $3/46 \pm 1/04$ , respectively which are known as main barriers. Religious barriers with mean and standard deviation of  $3/02 \pm 1/20$  and interpersonal barriers with mean and deviation of  $3/01 \pm 1/04$  are considered as secondary barriers. However, historical barriers with mean and standard deviation of  $2/72 \pm 1/12$  and personality barriers with mean and standard deviation of  $2/77 \pm 1/02$  and knowledge and education with mean and standard deviation of  $2/38 \pm 1/13$  are significant, but their mean is less than average and are not mentioned as primary or secondary barriers.

Table 6  
*The Results of one Sample T- Test to Identify Barriers and Their Priorities*

Index	Questions	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
Social barriers	s1	3/68	1/45	6/59	0/000
	s2	3/73	1/07	9/55	0/000
	s3	3/77	1/23	8/71	0/000
	s4	4/06	1/28	11/61	0/000
Cultural barriers	s5	3/33	1/51	3/11	0/002
	s6	3/28	1/41	2/77	0/006
	s7	3/23	1/31	2/49	0/013
	s8	3/38	1/41	3/84	0/000
Religious barriers	s9	3	1/45	0/00	1/000
	s10	3/05	1/37	0/51	0/604
Historical barriers	s11	7/29	1/45	- 0/24	0/806
	s12	2/46	1/42	- 5/20	0/000
	s13	2/82	1/43	- 1/68	0/093
Personal barriers	s14	2/44	1/44	- 5/40	0/000
	s15	2/67	1/40	- 3/26	0/001
	s16	3/16	1/41	1/61	0/109
	s17	3/24	1/44	2/37	0/019
Personality barriers	s18	2/87	1/44	- 1/18	0/237
	s19	2/92	1/42	- 0/75	0/453
	S20	2/43	1/32	- 5/91	0/000
Knowledge barriers	S21	2/38	1/31	- 6/50	0/000
	S22	2/34	1/27	- 7/23	0/000
Test Value = 3 N=196 df= 195					

According to Table 6, Priority of barriers are as follows in terms of given mean.

**Prioritizing social barriers:**

1. Non-existence and/or inactivity of a systematic organization for protecting females' rights
2. Inequality in dedicating facilities and resources
3. Domination of relationships instead of principles

**Prioritizing cultural barriers:**

1. Multi-responsibility of females
2. Monopolization of males for obtaining management positions
3. Domination of patriarchal culture
4. Cultural statute including non-believing the power of females
5. Stereotype beliefs about physical deficiencies of females

**Prioritizing religious barriers:**

1. Inadvertent and intentional misinterpretation about religion and religious affairs
2. Traditional religious beliefs

**Prioritizing historical barriers:**

1. Non-existence of management models for females from their own gender in Iran
2. Inability in proving females' qualification in terms of accepting responsibility

**Prioritizing personal/personality barriers:**

1. Over-sensitivity of females
2. Low risk-taking of females
3. Lack of self-confidence to handle management
4. Reluctance to accept management position

**Prioritizing inter-personal barriers:**

1. Lack of cooperation among females (jealousy and competition)
2. Inability in taking risks of non-organizational relationships dominating manger selection
3. Non-promotion of females due to tension among female managers and other females especially the staff under their supervision

**Prioritizing the barriers of knowledge and awareness**

1. Low level of knowledge and awareness in the terms of current and social affairs
2. Low level of knowledge and awareness of females in terms of scientific, professional, specialized and executive affairs
3. High professional coefficient females

**Discussion and Conclusion**

In this research, promotion of females towards managerial positions was studied based on eight variables of social, cultural, religious, historical, personality, interpersonal, knowledge, and awareness barriers and the following was obtained through testing research question.

1. Social and cultural barriers are among primary barriers.
2. Religious and interpersonal barriers are among secondary barriers.
3. Historical, personality, knowledge and awareness barriers are not realized as barrier.

The obtained results from the research question suggest that totally, social and cultural barriers are higher than middle level and are among main barriers which are in line with the results of studies conducted by Dehqanpour and Kazemi (2013), Mirkamali and Nastizayi (2009) and Rashtiani (2013). Among social variables, lack of systematic organizations to defend females rights, have higher priority to other variables which are in line with the results of research conducted by Feizi et al. (2015) and also among the variables of cultural, multi-responsibilities of females has higher priority to other variables which are similar to the results of research conducted by Mirkamali and Nastizaie (2009), Rashtiani (2013). It was also found that, religious and interpersonal barriers could be considered as secondary barriers, inadvertent and intentional misinterpretation are prior rather than religion and religious affairs. Moreover, inability in risk taking in human relationships has higher priority among interpersonal barriers.

However, the results of the research conducted by Naseri Jahromi et al (2015), are in conflict with the results of current research and social barriers are more dominating than cultural barriers and in cultural barriers, female multi-responsibilities is more important.

Development might not be feasible without cooperation of all members in a society, unless it's all capacities are used in the best way. Eventually, according to the obtained results, the followings are suggested for removing the barriers of managerial promotion of female managers of elementary schools in Ardabil:

- Developing professional associations in the form of official and non-official organizations for protecting females' rights and improving their job conditions.
- Cultural development by media for equality of females and males rights in all stages of life and eliminating gender discrimination for selecting female and male managers.
- Considering competence rather than relationships in adopting managers
- Developing required conditions for decreasing troubles, various roles of females in the society and attracting male collaboration in doing chores.

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