

# **Prioritizing Physical-Participation-Inhibiting Factors in Female Staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company (Case Study: Ahvaz)**

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**Abstract** – The aim of this study was to determine prioritization of participation-inhibiting factors in female staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company in sport activities. The study was a descriptive survey done via field research. Statistical society for this study consisted of all female staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company in 2013, who were 150 people according to a performed census. The statistical sample was determined to embody 108 individuals according to the Morgan Table. To determine sport participation-inhibiting factors, the questionnaire for the Carol et al. (1997)'s hierarchical model of leisure was used. The questionnaire comprised of 8 micro-scales of inhibiting factors. Confirmatory factor analysis method dependent on the structural equations model was employed to examine and confirm questionnaire micro-scales. Reliability of the questionnaire was calculated to be 0.94 using Cronbach's alpha. According to the findings of this research, inhibiting factors had negative effects on subjects' sport participation. Deficient facilities, lack of time, lack of access, individual-psychic problems, lack of companion, unawareness, cultural-social-safety obstacles, and lack of interest were respectively first to eighth priorities that prevented the participation of female staff of National Iranian Drilling Company in sport activities.

**Keywords** – Sport Participation, Women's Obstacles, Staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

As confessed by many social psychologists and experts, a healthy society is built upon healthy families. Women and mothers form the main pillar of a family (Ghahremani, J., et al, 2013). Events of the last three decades in many societies show that women have gained many positions in companies, offices, organizations, and other governmental/private centers, and that they are also demanding opportunities equal with those of men in social situations (Naderian Jahromi, et al, 2009). Activities of women in Iran's oil industry is a non-deniable fact. In this industry, on which over 80 percent of Iran's economy is dependent, women have a constructive and dynamic role (Deputy of developing human resources and management of the Oil Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2013). Given the latest statistics, 8.8 percent of the oil industry's staff are women (National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC)'s information portal, 2014).

The number of educated and expert women in all occupations is increasing on a daily basis. However,

women have sexual limitations for participation in many fields. In terms of regarding Islamic values cultural observations women have multiplied limitations compared to men (Naderian Jahromi, et al, 2009). By the way, according to the latest statistics of WHO published in 2013, lack of physical activities, as the fourth major risk factor for global fatalities, has resulted in over 3.2 million deaths all around the world (World Health Organization, 2013). In addition to that, today organizational life is coupled with psychic pressures, stresses, and exhaustion caused by work (Naderian Jahromi, et al, 2009), and preventing work-related physical and spiritual-psychic problems in the group of female clerks leads the mind to tendency toward different leisure activities. (Aghayii, N, Fattahian, 2012).

Studies in this regard have shown that the amount of physical activities in leisure time and healthy recreations have significant relationship with reduced pressurized situations, exhaustion, and increased of physical and psychic life (Feyzi et al, 2011). Unfortunately, however, women's opportunities in sport area cannot be compared with men's. This is why one of the most basic topics in sport sociology is the appreciation of reasons for low women's participation in sport activities and factors affecting it (Naghdi et al, 2011).

For many reasons most of which are cultural-social, woman has not found sufficient opportunities throughout history to prove her capabilities for participation in sports because borders have been put against her, and her social roles have sketched these borders as female creature (Alkholi, 2002). In this way, by creating more pressure and dual opposite responsibilities of marriage and giving birth to babies, women's occupation aggravates difference and variation in the amount of women's leisure time and how it is spent compared with men's. That is because with women's occupation and increase in their working hours, their leisure time decreases. And since women spend more time on affairs related to home and family, each more working hour might lead to more decrease in their leisure time (Safiri&Modiri, 2010).

## **II. LITERATURE**

Regarding recognition of factors that hinder women's participation domestically and abroad, researchers have recognized different factors. Ghahremani et al (2013)

showed that a significant negative relationship exists between each of hindering factors, psychological, social, cultural, managerial micro-scales, facilities, equipment and sport participation of female teachers. Generally participation of women in bodily exercises decreases as variation of hindering factors increases. Also Hatami (2012) found by a survey of female students in Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz that economic, facility-related, cultural, social, family factor, and personal factor are the most effective factors that hinder women's participation in bodily exercises. AmiriPariyani (2012) found in his survey of female nurses in Shahid University of Tehran that factors of individual-psychic problems and lack of facilities, lack of interest, unawareness, lack of access, and lack of time are respectively the most important factors that hinder women's exercise participation. Also, by surveying female staff of Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Omarayi et al (2011) considered economic, social, cultural, and personal factors and family factors as the most important factors that impede women from taking part in bodily exercises. Naderian Jahromi and Hashemi (2009) found that lack of time due to occupations, preferring work to exercise, lack of safe workplace exercise facilities, and ignoring women's sport by people in charge are the most notable obstacles and factors that impede sport participation of female clerks of Isfahan. Karimi and Bagheri (2009) considered cultural factors, management and planning, budgeting and credits allotted to women's sport among the most important exercise participation-inhibiting factors for Qom's women.

In agreement with what was mentioned above, studies by Khavareji and Khalaji (2008) showed that technical problems, problems concerning sport facilities and equipment, managerial problems and regional and climatic problems are respectively among the reasons why female clerks of Arak's Education Office do not do regular bodily exercises. In a study on female clerks of the Islamic Azad University, Musavi (2001) concluded that female clerks in the Islamic Azad University of region 3 do not do exercises due to lack of time. Also, views expressed by subject females in this study showed that the 3 major reasons for women's not doing exercise are deficiency of facilities, lack of habit, and lack of facilities.

According to WHO (2014), women's less revenue compared to men and subsequently their costs of accessing facilities, amount of housework, taking care of other family members, and cultural expectations in certain types of bodily activities are considered the reasons for women's lack of bodily activities. Among other studies carried out abroad, Ahmad Kamal et al (2010)'s survey on female students of the University of Malaysia can be addressed in which they showed that lack of facilities, high cost, and physical problems are the most important factors that impede them from participation in bodily activities. Also, Solomon (2010) concluded by study on female students of the South African University of Cape Town that deficiency of time, lack of resources and vehicles, lack of skills necessary for doing bodily exercises, family-related responsibilities, society's expectations, and lack of

security are respectively factors that prevent them from taking part in sport activities. In a study done on girls and their mothers, Liechty et al (2006) concluded that mental image of these women from themselves and their bodily appearance are the factors that prevent them from participation in sport.

In this respect, Crawford et al (1991) presented a hierarchical model and showed in it that impeding factors are positioned in a hierarchy of decision stages, and the individual experiences these factors in a hierarchy with the priority of personal impeding factors, inter-personal and structural factors.

Studies of Aghaei and Fatahian (2012), Feizi et al (2011), Lashgar and Ehsani (2007), and FarahmandNia (2011) performed according to the Hierarchical Model of Leisure time on women showed that this model was not confirmed in Iran. Given the results of these studies, structural impeding factors that include lack of facilities and resources, lack of time, and lack of access, are considered the major obstacles against women's participation in sports.

Given the fact that 8.8 % of the oil industry staff are women and in other words, 31.5 % of women who work in the Iranian Oil Industry have at least 15 years of service background and about 60 % have less than 9 years of experience, and also given the increasing statistics of women's employment in Iran's oil industry in agreement with the aim of changing patriarchy in the oil and energy industry in different global companies with the purpose of creating variation in workforce, and also due to lack of study background in this statistical society and importance of bodily and mental health of this group of society, the authors have been trying to answer the question of "what are participation-impeding factors of women employed in the oil industry, who play an important role in advancing society's economic aims and undergo responsibilities of life and establishing family foundation?". Hopefully, with targeted and proper policies and plans, ways of resisting the mentioned hindrances toward more presence of female clerks in the field of sport will be provided.

### III. STUDY METHODOLOGY

This study is of survey type performed via field research. Statistical society of the study comprised of all female staff in the National Iranian Drilling Company in 2013, who were 150 according to a recent census. The size of the statistical sample was determined to be 108 according to the Morgan table for the whole statistical society. To prevent statistical drop, a total of 120 questionnaires was distributed within the statistical society. From among these questionnaire, 112 were returned, that were considered as the statistical society for the study.

#### 3-1: Measurement tool

To determine sport participation-hindering factors, the questionnaire of Carol et al.'s Hierarchical Model of Leisure (1997) was used, which has become adjusted by seasoned scholars of the field according to the country's cultural conditions. This questionnaire is comprised of 8

micro-scales in connection with unawareness, intrapersonal obstacles regarding lack of interest, intrapersonal obstacles regarding individual-psycho problems, inter-personal obstacles regarding lack of companion, interpersonal obstacles regarding cultural, social, and safety-related obstacles, structural obstacles relating to lack of time, structural obstacles connected with deficiency of facilities, and structural obstacles regarding lack of access. Since according to experts of structural equations the statistical method used in step one must be a confirmatory factor analysis when researchers have a given model, the confirmatory factor analysis method based on the model of structural equations was used to examine and confirm the questionnaire micro-scales, and in other words, to confirm validity of the questionnaire's structure (Brown, 2006), and the questionnaire's internal homogeneity was determined using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The Indices obtained in this model are as follows:

Table 1: Fitting indices of the model

Index	Amount
$\chi^2$	176.45
$\frac{\chi^2}{df}$	1.43
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.049
Goodness of fitness indices (GFI)	0.90
Adjusted goodness of fitting indices (AGFI)	0.91
Standard root mean square residual (SRMR)	0.047
Comparative fit index (CFI)	0.93

Typically, greater values for CFI and GFI (i.e. greater than 0.90) are desired and they compare lack of fitting in a given model with that of an independent model. However the lower RMSEA (e.g. less than 0.50), the better the

fitting for the obtained model. As it is seen, indices show fitting of the model. Therefore, structural validity of the questionnaire is confirmed. In current study Cronbach's alpha, which is equal to 0.94 for the whole questionnaire and implies desired validity coefficients of the given questionnaire, has been used to determine validity of the questionnaire,

Also, validity of each of the intrapersonal obstacles connected with individual-psycho problems, interpersonal hurdles connected with cultural, social, and safety-related problems, structural obstacles connected with lack of time, structural hurdles connected with deficiency of facilities and structural hurdles connected with lack of access is 0.88, 0.85, 0.88, 0.83, 0.82, 0.92, 0.88, and 0.78 respectively.

### 3-2: Application method

Required permissions were acquired from relevant custodians and questionnaires were distributed among statistical samples, and were completed and gathered. Also, respondents were assured about privacy of their answers and that their answers would solely be used for research purposes.

### 3-3: Statistical method

Mean and standard deviation was used as descriptive statistics, single-sample t-test was used to analyze sport participation-impeding factors, and the Freedman test was used to prioritize obstructing factors as inferential statistics. Data analysis was used with the help of statistical software SPSS 16 and AMOS 18. Significance level in all study hypotheses has been considered to be  $\alpha=0.05$ .

## IV. RESULTS

Mean, standard deviation, and most and least values connected with obstructing factors have been shown in table 2.

Table 2: distribution of mean and standard deviation related to obstructing factors

Factor	Micro-scale	Number (#)	Least	Most	Mean	Standard deviation
Impeding	Unawareness	106	1	5	2.03	0.87
	lack of interest	104	1	5	1.93	0.81
	individual-psycho problems	104	1	5	2.27	0.79
	lack of mate	106	1	5	2.48	1.06
	cultural, social, security-related obstacles	106	1	5	1.95	0.72
	lack of time	107	1	5	3.16	1.11
	deficiency of facilities	109	1	5	3.17	1.05
	lack of access	106	1	5	2.54	0.91
Total	all abovementioned micro-scales	98	1	5	2.42	0.66

As it is seen in table 2, unawareness, lack of interest, personal-mental problems, lack of mate, cultural, social, and safety-related problems, lack of time, deficiency of facilities, and lack of access respectively have means of

1.93, 1.93, 2.27, 2.48, 1.95, 3.16, 3.17, and 2.54. Also, the factor of deficiency of facilities with a mean of 3.17 is the most important obstructing factor for female staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company, whereas lack of

interest, with a mean of 1.93, is the least obstructing factor. Table 3 shows results of one-sample t-test for determination of obstructing factors in female staff's lack

of sport participation in the National Iranian Drilling Company.

Table 3: One-sample t-test for determination of impeding factors in lack of sport-participation of female staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Test value	Degree of freedom	Observed T	Level of significance
Impeding Factors	2.42	0.66	3	97	-8.56	0.001

As seen from table 3, mean value of those who answered micro-scales regarding impeding factors is 2.42, which is less than the value of theoretical mean (3), but significant in statistical terms. In other words, impeding factors affect lack of sport-participation of the National

Iranian Drilling Company's female staff. To consider roles of each one of micro-scales of impeding factors in lack of sport-participation of the National Iranian Drilling Company's staff, Freedman was used.

Table 4: Prioritizing impeding factors in lack of sport-participation for the National Iranian Drilling Company's female staff

Factors	Micro-Scale	Mean Degree	Priority	Degree of Freedom	χ <sup>2</sup>	Level of Significance
Obstructing	unawareness	3.43	6			
	lack of interest	3.04	8			
	personal-mental problems	4.46	4			
	lack of mate	4.39	5	7	224.49	0.001
	cultural, social, and safety-related obstacles	3.06	7			
	lack of time	6.20	2			
	deficiency of facilities	6.48	1			
	lack of access	4.94	3			

As observed in table 4, factor of deficiency of facilities, with a mean of 6.48, has the highest priority and lack of interest, with a mean of 3.04, has the lowest priority in non-participation of female staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company.

## V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Organizational life is coupled with mental pressures, stress, and exhaustion due to work. Under such circumstances, experts in the field of behavioral sciences in organizations and offices, mention sport recreations as an effective and desirable tool to provide healthy recreations, excitement and joy so that it would be effective in progressing and developing moral, mental, and social aspects of individuals in addition to leveraging work power. Nonetheless, women have gender restrictions for participation in many programs especially sport programs and activities (NaderianJahromi, et al, 2009). Results of the study showed that obstructing factors had negative effect on the female staff's sport participation. From among eight obstructing factors, factors concerning deficiency of facilities, lack of time, lack of access, lack of mate, personal-mental problems, cultural, social, and safety-related obstacles, and lack of interest had priorities 1 to 8 in terms of obstructing sport participation of female staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company. These results are partially in agreement with Hatami (2012), AmiriParyani et al (2012), Moshkelgosha (2009), and AhadiKareshk (2008).

According to performed studies, despite the fact that a half of the world's population is made up of women and two thirds of works are done by women, only one tenth of the world's income and only one hundredth of the world's possessions have been allocated to women (Mohammadi, 2006). According to Baerrel (2000), since physical exercises have been defined specialized to men in most communities, sport facilities have mostly been allocated to them (Naghdi et al, 2011).

Prioritizing female staff's sport participation-impeding factors showed that the most important obstacles in subjects' views are respectively as follows: deficiency of facilities, lack of time, and lack of access, all of which are subsets of structural obstacles. Given these results, the model obtained by Crawford et al (1991), in which they showed that obstructing factors are positioned in a hierarchy of decision stages and the individual experiences these factors in a priority hierarchy of personal, inter-personal, and structural impeding factors respectively, was not confirmed. In other words, this model was not true for the female staff of the National Iranian Drilling Company. Generalizing this model to other societies given different economic and social conditions is not possible.

Most studies performed domestically, e.g. works of Aghaei and Fatahian (2012), Hatami (2012), Omaraei (2011), AhadiKareshk (2008), and Monazzami et al (2011) show that structural factors (deficiency of facilities, lack of time, lack of access) and especially factors connected with deficiency of facilities including low-quality exercise facilities, overcrowding of existing



exercise facilities, and low number of accessible facilities are very effective in women's lack of tendency for taking part in physical exercises. These studies agree with the current study in terms of priority of the factor of low facilities in comparison with other obstructing factors.

Also in other studies performed in western countries, other obstacles like lack of friend's companion (Palacios, 2011), deficiency of time (Solomon, 2010; Kamaradin and Fauzee, 2007) and mental image from one's bodily appearance (Liechty, Freeman, Zabriskie, 2006) have been stated as the most important factor of subjects' lack of sport participation. Also, factors concerning low facilities, have less obstructing effect on women's sport participation. These results do not agree with conclusions of the current study.

Studies reveal that profession type is determinant of the number of individual's leisure hours and professional life of each person determines the pattern of how he/she spends his/her leisure time. However, type of sport programs and choice of the type of physical activity depends on a high number of factors which can be investigated (Moshkelgosha et al, 2009). Since due to having dual responsibilities and more work in home and workplace employed women have to take care of house work, kids, and their husbands, this can be another reason for women's time deficiency for doing regular bodily exercises (Khajavi, &Khalaji, 2009).

According to the results of this study, the factor of deficient time caused by work occupations, family affairs, works outside home, inability to do remaining affairs, and inability in setting time for participation in sport activities also, as the second obstructing factor among the eight factors, plays a big part in women's lack of tendency for bodily exercises. Results of AhadiKareshk in 2008 is in agreement with the current study in terms of the state of deficient time. The reason for this agreement can be attributed to similarity of working hours and leisure hours of the women employed in the National Iranian Drilling Company and those employed in the faculty of ShahidChamran University of Ahvaz. Also, in Musavi (2001), Shojaoddin (2001), Dadashi (2000), Kamaradin and Fauzee (2007), Solomon (2010), and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2007), the factor of time deficiency plays has the most important role in terms of obstruction among other obstructing causes of women's sport participation. Therefore, the results thereof is incompatible with this study in terms of the time-deficiency factor.

Women's obstacles for participation in doing sport exercises is not limited to deficient facilities and deficient time. According to this study's results, lack of access is the third obstacle for female clerks. In today's community, women are still facing transport restrictions due to such reasons as insecurity, family's opposition and control, and on the other hand, due to their family and professional responsibilities, they often have limited leisure time for doing recreational and physical activities. Given lack of access to recreational and physical facilities, they might use this remaining time for departure and access to parks and clubs faraway. These difficulties might lead to their lack of participation despite their interest in physical

activities. Results of AmiriParyani's work in 2011 and Moshkelgosha's work in 2009 is incompatible with current study's findings in terms of lack of access. That is because in these two studies, lack of access to facilities in the first place and obstacles in the second place were stated by women. Probably, the reason for this incompatibility is due to difference in allocating equal to women across the country, and difference in the amount of sports and accessible and appropriate recreational facilities for women.

According to this study's results, the least significant impeding factor involves lack of interest including lack of interest in bodily exercises, non-desirability of sport experiences, lack of interest in gym environments and suggested sports. This factor has been selected as the 8th obstructing factor by female clerks of the National Drilling Company.

Results of the study done by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (Australian Bureau of Statistics) in 2007 on men and women showed that reasons for lack of participation of managers, workers, faculty members, students, and physicians is as follows in order: work occupation and study, family issues, fearing injury, illness, high cost, aging, and lack of interest. These results are compatible with the current study in terms of low effect of the factor of lack of interest on impeding from participation in bodily and physical activities. Also, in works of Sirard et al (2006) on school boys and girls, results revealed that in either gender, lack of interest, education issues and obstacles are considered as wearing factor, which are incompatible with current study's results terms of position of the lack of interest factor among other factors,

One other important tip that was obtained from the current research is highlighted position of the factor of unawareness and acquiring 6th priority before factors connected with cultural, social, and safety-related obstacles and lack of interest. This position shows that custodians' lack of notification regarding notifying women about gyms' facilities and usage hours can be stated as cultural, social, and safety-related obstacles facing women. Even, lack of notification about sport facilities and gym hours and types of provided sports can be factors that highlight the factor of deficient facilities in women's views.

It should be stressed finally that given increasing participation of women in different jobs including those in the National Iranian Drilling Company and the fact that women mostly get employed in jobs that do not have high bodily movements, e.g. office clerks. Also, given various side-effects of lack of movement on individual's physique and psychology, custodians and managers of organizations should obligate themselves to identify and solve obstacles of employees in participating in bodily and sport activities, thus offering health to body and soul of female clerks who play an important role in country's economic development today, along with establishing family and bringing up forthcoming generations.

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