

Reasons, Opportunities, Challenges and Solutions for Women's Employment in the Tourism Industry of Islamic Republic of Iran

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Abstract

Tourism is one of the new industries that employs vast groups of women and is considered as one of the development tools in different regions. According to the UNWTO, this industry has a feminine nature and women consist a significant part of its employees. As a result, it is rather important to find out their working problems and solve them in order to help women and also get developed. In the current study, the issues related to women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran were explored by interviewing tourism experts and activists and the data from the interviews was analyzed using qualitative content analysis. These issues were categorized into four main groups, including: Reasons, opportunities, challenges and solutions for women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran.

Keywords: *reasons for women's employment, opportunities of women's employment, challenges of women's employment, solutions for women's employment*

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Introduction

Nowadays considering tourism and its advantages has experienced a significant growth (Hall & Lew, 2009) and it plays a very important role in the economic and social welfare of host communities (Walker & Walker, 2011). According to the WTTC, tourism is going to be the biggest industry in the world and based on the estimates of this council, its financial contribution in 2014 has been more than 7.6 trillion dollars and nearly 9.8 percent of global GDP. This industry has also created more than 277 million jobs all over the world, which accounts for 9.4 percent of global employment. Even in some regions such as Europe, this industry constitutes nearly 5 percent of direct employment and it is expected to experience stable growth in the coming years (Strietska & Tessaring, 2005).

As tourism is a service-based industry, human factors and employees in different sections of this industry play an important role in its success (Park, 2015) and they are also a key factor to gain competitive advantage in tourism organizations (Meliou & Maroudas, 2011; Baum, 2007; Lockyer, 2007; Lou & Milne, 2014). As Baum (2012) points out, sustainable development of the tourism industry requires the involvement of human resources in the overall development policies (Shakeela, Ruhanen, & Breakey, 2012). Actually, it can be said that HR can determine whether a tourism organization is competitively successful or not (Baum, 2007).

Women constitute almost 50 percent of human resources in every country and employing them in order to achieve development goals seems to be inevitable. In order to use the capabilities of women, there is no doubt that they must be empowered and their skills should grow (Ateljevic, 2008). Tourism is one of the best options to gain this purpose (UNWTO, 2006). According to the UNWTO, Tourism is a feminine industry and women's contribution to the industry at global level is about 55.5 percent (Baum, 2013). In recent years, this organization has focused on opening tourism doors for women in

order to provide them equal employment opportunities (Tavakoli, 2009a).

According to the estimates of the International Labor Organization (ILO) in 2012, women are engaged in 46 percent of tourism, paying jobs all over the world; which reaches nearly 90 percent in the accommodation sector. These estimates show that women have found a noticeable position in tourism jobs, but it is important to note that the role of women in different organizational and cultural structures would vary and in contrast to the estimates, still in many regions managerial and high-level jobs are not transferred to women (Baum, 2013). This reality reveals the existence of discriminations against women's employment in the industry, next to its opportunities, which are capable of becoming threats. In the developing countries, such as Iran, the situation is even worse and the number of women in high-level jobs is low.

According to the data presented by WTTC, Iran ranks 137 in total contribution to GDP (out of 184 countries), 152 in total contribution to employment and 141 in capital investment. WTTC has also forecasted that Iran's ranking will grow to 39 in total contribution to GDP, 11 in total contribution to employment, 45 in contribution to capital investment and 175 in contribution to exports within 2015-2025. A large number of studies and surveys have been conducted in order to investigate the obstacles which hamper Iran's tourism development and many of these studies (e.g. Madhooshi & Naserpoor, 2008; Shojaee & Noori, 2007; Behzadfar & Zamanian, 2008) have considered HR, low quality services and deficiency of training system as the main problems.

In order to minimize HR-related problems and challenges for women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran, it seems useful to investigate the reasons for women's employment in the industry, opportunities, challenges and also solutions to handle the investigated challenges. As a result, this research aims to achieve the following objectives in terms of a conceptual model:

1. Reasons for women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran
2. Opportunities of women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran
3. Challenges of women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran

4. Solutions to handle the investigated challenges

Literature Review

Nowadays almost all of the development experts believe that human resources are the most important resource in today's organizations, therefore it is really important to identify the situation of human resources and address the probable problems and barriers to their success (Pishgahifard & Poolab, 2009). Women consist a significant part of human resources in today's organizations and it is important to find out what are their differences and similarities with men and what problems could arise from them. To gain this objective, in the following sections, different approaches to women's employment, women's employment in the tourism industry and the situation of working women in the tourism industry of Iran are discussed.

Different Approaches to the Labor Market of Women

Although near to half of the world's population consist of women, only 10 percent of the world's income and one percent of world's wealth belongs to them (Moghimi, 2009). These issues may root in the different approaches to the labor market of women in different periods. Some of the most well-known approaches in this field include the followings:

1. Neoclassical approaches: these approaches refer to the variables, such as family responsibilities, physical power, working hours, absences, job transfers and the impact of these variables on the productivity of human resources and their supply, in order to explain the discriminations between working men and women. Accordingly, most of the employees are unwilling to allocate important and high level jobs to women; instead, they transfer simple tasks to them, with low payments (Nowroozi, 2004).
2. Radical approach (labor market segregation): according to this approach, different occupational structures among men and women are in relation to the system of capitalism. This approach divides the economy into two parts, including primary part and secondary part and implements the basics of neoclassical approaches in both of the parts (Fani, 2011). The primary part includes complicated and high level jobs, which are mostly stable and the secondary part includes the jobs that are under the impact of economic fluctuations. Since, the

situation of women is not as stable as men, they are more vulnerable to work in the secondary part, which include instable and simple jobs (Nowroozi, 2004).

3. The human capital approach: according to this approach, the different distribution of men and women in the occupational structures results from their difference in human capital, which is rooted in their life before they work. Accordingly, although men and women are may be similar in IQ or graduations, but men usually have more working experiences than women; hence, the quality of the work that they offer is better than that of women and the differences between the income of men and women is based on the quality of their work (Nasiri, Hashemifesharaki & Kheiridoostlangroodi, 2014).

4. Feminism approaches: these approaches focus on the social and cultural factors that limit women's participation in the society and labor market. The main assumption of such approaches is that the situations of women in the labor market, home and family are related to each other and they are parts of a bigger social system, which believes that women should follow men (Nowroozi, 2004). As a result, women's participation in the labor market is in paradox with the main social assumption and would also increase the conflicts between different groups of women especially, those that are traditional and modern (Fani, 2011).

Women Employment in The tourism industry

Many of the employment and working strategies and policies in today's world are allocated to women and are trying to improve their situation. Tourism is a new and developing industry, which could benefit women and benefit from them; According to the global estimates, the the tourism industry needs 290,000 managers and 61,000 taskmasters and chiefs, which could be answered by women, based on their special talents (Bikford & Glancy, 2010). As chaharbalesh (2011) notes, the tourism industry is not like the industries which are limited to developed countries; instead, it is one of the best tools to accomplish development goals in developing countries and it is capable of providing many different direct and indirect jobs for women living in those countries. Allocating one of the millennium development goals to promote gender equality confirms this comment (Ateljevic, 2008; Ferguson, 2009). UNWTO

has also focused on women empowerment through the tourism industry by allocating some of its annual slogans to women (e.g. Opening tourism doors to women in 2007). Some of the ways that tourism can empower women through them include: controlling natural resources, economic empowerment, educational empowerment and political empowerment (Ateljevic, 2008). As Abughazaleh (2011) mentions, some trends such as the growing level of education among women, potentials for creating jobs in the industry and growing demand for different skills and people who own them in the industry, reveals the opportunities for women's employment in the tourism industry.

The UNWTO has announced in its global report in 2010 that a significant share of employees in the tourism industry belongs to women and their number in the industry is almost twice other industries. In other parts of this report, it is said that working women are paid 10 to 15 percent less than men in the same job and one fourth of world tourism ministries are women. Since the number of feminine tourists and also feminine employees is more than men and it is about 55.5 percent, it can be said that women's participation rate in the demand and supply chain of the industry is more than men (Baum, 2013). In some parts of the world such as EU, women's participation rate is even more and reaches to 60 percent in accommodation element of the industry. It is important to consider that in some countries such as Bulgaria, the number of women in managerial jobs is noticeable; but in other countries, such as Italy and England, women have no significant role in high or even middle level jobs (Obadic & Maric, 2009). In developed countries, which are mostly in the west, the situation of women's employment has experienced significant changes and many institutions and regulations have established to support them. In contrast, since women in developing countries have no direct access to global strategies and supportive regulations, they suffer from many problems, such as inequality and low payments (Dadandish, 2008). Some of the global barriers which hamper women's employment include: cultural norms and values, lack of sufficient infrastructures, the financial burdens of employees, inappropriate work culture in different parts of the world, lack of working skills, lack of social and communication skills and negative

image of the tourism industry in some countries (Abughazale, 2011). Next to the barriers to women's employment in the the tourism industry, there are also some problems occurring during their employment and working period. One of the most bothering ones that working women in the industry may face is the violence at the workplace which emerges in forms of stress, sexual harassment, bullying and abuse. This problem roots in emotional problems, lack of control and supervision and work-life conflict (Hoel & Einarsen, 2003). Sexual exploitation, discriminative payments and unequal job promotion are other problems that may happen during the working period (Ampumuza, 2010).

There are many parties which are involved in either making or solving the problems related to women's employment in the tourism industry, which include: government, training systems and centers, NGOs, local communities and media. These parties could address the mentioned barriers and problems by policy making in the areas such as encouraging public media to explain the real personality of women and clearly introduce tourism jobs, providing training programs to reinforce entrepreneurship spirit in women, providing job consultations for youngsters and in the schools, formulation of a system to transfer the experiences of women employed in the industry to the newcomers and formulating supportive policies for the managers employing women (Abughazaleh, 2011).

Situation of Working Women in the tourism industry of Iran

These days, the economic and social situation of Iranian families has experienced significant changes and families expect a higher level of facilities and welfare services. As a result, the salary of a family member does not answer the needs of others and in most of the families, both of the parents are working. Also. The number of graduate women and those who plan to go to the university is increasing in Iran and most of them plan to work after their graduation (Fani, 2011). Therefore the number of working women is growing and a vast number of researches and studies are allocated to the issues related to their employment.

Like other parts of the world, women in Iran constitute a significant share of the employees in the the tourism industry, but their situation is not really satisfying; 90 percent of them work as salaried staff in

travel agencies, restaurants and accommodation centers, but their presence in managerial and high level jobs is not noticeable. Actually, in contrast to their low income in comparison to men, they have heavier and riskier tasks; for example, 80 percent of technical managers in travel agencies, which are responsible for designing and implementing tours, are women and also in hotels, they work in the invisible parts, such as laundry (Tavakoli, 2009b). Since the number of women in managerial positions is few, with any small flaw in doing their tasks, they will become conspicuous and labeled (Tavakoli, 2009a). Moghimi (2009) refers to discriminations to show the women's challenges in the industry. In her opinion, these discriminations are divided into two categories: discriminative recruitment and discriminative payment. In order to solve the problems mentioned, Rezaee (2007) names solutions such as human approach to women instead of tool view of them, no controversy between women's employment and their genetic responsibilities, working in the secure and respectful places and equality between working men and women as the most important solutions from the Islamic point of view.

Methodology

The methodological approach of this research is qualitative method and uses qualitative content analysis.

According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), qualitative content analysis is a research method to subjectively interpret the context of textual data through systematically categorizing, coding and identifying the themes and their patterns. Mayring (2000) also defines qualitative content analysis as a controlled, methodological and experimental analytic approach based on the texts and their communicative context, which follows its own principles and model instead of becoming quantitative. This method is often used to analyze a vast group of textual data and it is different from methods such as grounded theory. In fact, this method is used to answer what and why and also analyze the perceptions (Given, 2008).

According to Elo and Kyngäs (2008), after determining the analysis unit and applying it to the text, five steps should be taken when content analysis is inductive and no hypothesis has been assumed. These steps include: open coding, enumerating the codes, grouping,

categorizing and abstraction. In order to achieve the research goals, all the mentioned steps are considered through the research process.

Population and Sampling

At the stage of designing a model, the population of research included managers and professionals in the tourism field and also university professors who were familiar with the tourism context of Iran. Based on this, we interviewed with 17 experts in the field and these interviews continued until the achievement of theoretical efficiency (saturation).

Data analysis

Primarily, all of the interviews were analyzed and the concepts, existing in them were extracted. Then, at the second stage, all of the concepts were listed, and at the third stage, similar concepts were grouped. Table 1 shows the output of the first-third stages of the research. More specifically, out of 255 concepts extracted in the first and second stages, 27 groups were resulted.

After identifying the groups, at the fourth stage each of the groups were categorized into categories (see Table 2). At the fifth stage, the final findings were outlined as the model in Table 3. These tables are available in the attachments. The final model of reasons, opportunities, challenges and solutions of women’s employment in the tourism industry of Iran is exhibited in figure 1.

Table 1. Output of first-third stages

Row	Code	Concepts	Groups
1	1.1	Women natural tendency to nurture	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
2	1.2	Presence of nurturing jobs in the tourism industry	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
3	1.3	Coordination between women outward characteristics and tourism jobs	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
4	1.4	High degrees of beauty and diversity in tourism jobs	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
5	1.5	Self-satisfaction	Flourishing women’s capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
6	1.6	Sense of flourishing	Flourishing women’s capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
7	1.7	Better performance of women in family and society	Improving women’s performance in the family
8	1.8	More efficient human resources in the tourism industry	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry
9	1.9	More productivity in the market	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry

10	1.10	Making women's behavior similar to men	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
11	1.11	Endanger women's physical health	Endanger women's physical health
12	1.12	Imbalance in women's mental health and breaking the norms	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
13	1.13	Beauty competition and keep up with the Joneses	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
14	1.14	Intervening spouse related and motherhood responsibilities	Work-family conflict
15	1.15	Focusing on responsibilities instead of margins by defining appropriate clothes, activities and make-up	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
16	1.16	Managing the views of contacts, colleagues and local community by women themselves	Promoting self-management skills within women employed in the tourism industry
17	1.17	Considering Islamic approaches to women's social participation and utilizing them	Institutionalizing Iranian Islamic values in women employed in the tourism industry
18	2.1	Self-demonstration in different fields such as tourism	Education and growth of expectations
19	2.2	Compensating the shortages resulting from increasing marrying age	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
20	2.3	Beauty competition and keep up with the Joneses	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
21	2.4	Financial independence	The need to be independent
22	2.5	Increasing self-confidence	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
23	2.6	Socialization of women	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
24	2.7	Promotion of women related values in Islam within other nationalities and religions	Promotion of women related values in Islam within other cultures
25	2.8	Not regarding Islamic values during worktime	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
26	2.9	Culture making for women's employment in The tourism industry	Promotion of women's employment culture in the society
27	2.10	Making women to transfer Iranian Islamic values	Institutionalizing Iranian Islamic values in women employed in the tourism industry
28	3.1	Demanding financial and intellectual independence	The need to be independent
29	3.2	Self-demonstration	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
30	3.3	Competition with men	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
31	3.4	Education and growth of expectations	Education and growth of expectations
32	3.5	Feminism flows and resistance toward traditional roles	Change in traditional roles and approaches
33	3.6	Keep up with the Joneses	Imbalance in women's mental

			health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
34	3.7	Help to the family economy	Help to improve the economic situation of the family
35	3.8	Decreasing dependence to spouse	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
36	3.9	Increasing the power of decision making	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
37	3.10	Increasing experiences and acquired wisdom	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
38	3.11	Flourishing women's capabilities	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
39	3.12	Tourism success	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry
40	3.13	Making women behave like men	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
41	3.14	Intervening spouse related and motherhood responsibilities	Work-family conflict
42	3.15	Destroying today and future generations	Work-family conflict
43	3.16	Planning and culture making for women's employment in the industry	Promotion of women's employment culture in the society
44	3.17	Patterning from successful working women	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
45	3.18	Defining appropriate behaviors for women in the workplace by tourism experts	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
46	3.19	Providing equal opportunities and regarding meritocracy	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
47	4.1	The need of developing industries to human resources that women constitute a significant part of it	Increasing demand of industries and services for human resources
48	4.2	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
49	4.3	Women interest in tourism jobs	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
50	4.4	More efficient interactions with tourists	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry
51	4.5	Higher levels of tourists' satisfaction	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry
52	4.6	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
53	4.7	Attracting more tourists in a long time	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry
54	4.8	Disregarding religious limitations	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
55	4.9	Sexual abuse	Abusing women
56	4.10	Long working hours	Endanger women's physical health
57	4.11	Intervening spouse related and motherhood responsibilities	Work-family conflict
58	4.12	Sexual exploitation	Abusing women
59	4.13	Cultural transmutation	Cultural transmutation
60	4.14	Negative view of local community	Negative image of tourism jobs in the society

61	4.15	Loosing parts of tourism markets	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
62	4.16	Cultural development	Promotion of women's employment culture in the society
63	4.17	Promotion of feminine nature of tourism jobs	Promotion of women's employment culture in the society
64	4.18	Training foreign tourists about Iranian-Islamic norms and values before their entrance	Training foreign tourists about Iranian-Islamic norms and values
65	4.19	Separating special targets of tourists from women related areas	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
66	4.20	Training women	Promoting self-management skills within women employed in the tourism industry
67	4.21	Making women to guide tours instead of persons	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
68	4.22	Providing familial businesses in the tourism industry	Providing familial businesses in the tourism industry
69	5.1	Financial independence	The need to be independent
70	5.2	Keep up with the Joneses	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
71	5.3	Prestige of tourism jobs	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
72	5.4	Financial independence	The need to be independent
73	5.5	Women are more successful in tourism jobs than men	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry
74	5.6	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
75	5.7	Jealousy of women to each other	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
76	5.8	Stress and high pressure for women	Endanger women's physical health
77	5.9	The influence of working pressure on the relation with family members	Work-family conflict
78	5.10	Negative image of tourism jobs in the society	Negative image of tourism jobs in the society
79	6.1	Prestige of tourism jobs	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
80	6.2	Feminine nature of workplace	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
81	6.3	Financial independence	The need to be independent
82	6.4	Women interest in tourism jobs	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
83	6.5	Efficient interaction in workplace	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry
84	6.6	Increasing productivity	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry
85	6.7	Increasing the experiences by traveling to different regions	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
86	6.8	Peace of mind in workplace	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
87	6.9	Women empowerment	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
88	6.10	Low payments	Abusing women
89	6.11	Unequal payments and transferring women to the chip workforce in the	Abusing women

		market	
90	6.12	Women competition and preventing each other from becoming successful	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
91	6.13	To get carried away	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
92	6.14	Transferring work pressures to home	Work-family conflict
93	6.15	Long and irregular working hours	Endanger women's physical health
94	6.16	Endanger women's physical health	Endanger women's physical health
95	6.17	Giving priority to beauty instead of profession	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
96	6.18	Negative image of tourism jobs in the society	Negative image of tourism jobs in the society
97	6.19	Culture making in this field	Promotion of women's employment culture in the society
98	6.20	Referring to the profession in order to recruit women	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
99	7.1	Increasing work experiences	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
100	7.2	Financial independence	The need to be independent
101	7.3	Filling free times and get used to work	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
102	7.4	Increasing work experiences to start other jobs	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
103	7.5	Feminine nature of tourism jobs	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry
104	7.6	Women success in tourism jobs	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry
105	7.7	Stress and high pressure of work	Endanger women's physical health
106	7.8	Low income	Abusing women
107	7.9	Difficult working conditions	Endanger women's physical health
108	7.10	Unequal payments	Abusing women
109	7.11	Low level jobs for women	Abusing women
110	7.12	Not referring to the profession	Disregarding working laws
111	7.13	Lack of job security	Disregarding working laws
112	7.14	Jealousy of women to each other	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
113	7.15	Long working hours	Endanger women's physical health
114	7.16	Destroying women's relation with family members	Work-family conflict
115	7.17	Most of tourism managers are not professional	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
116	7.18	Sexual exploitation	Abusing women
117	7.19	Secret marriages	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
118	7.20	Sexual harassment of tourists	Abusing women
119	7.21	Violence in workplace	Disregarding working laws
120	7.22	Lack of insurance and complaining right	Disregarding working laws
121	7.23	Negative image of tourism jobs in the	Negative image of tourism jobs in

		society	the society
122	7.24	Prevent from marriage	Negative image of tourism jobs in the society
123	7.25	Provide minimum criteria to recruit human resources and managers	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
124	7.26	Supervising private sectors	More supervision on private sector of the tourism industry
125	7.27	Culture making in local communities	Promotion of women's employment culture in the society
126	7.28	Creating a court to address women's complaints from their managers	More supervision on private sector of the tourism industry
127	7.29	Insurance	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
128	7.30	Providing long time contracts	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
129	8.1	Financial independence	The need to be independent
130	8.2	Having high level social position	Education and growth of expectations
131	8.3	Prestige of tourism jobs	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
132	8.4	Growing resistance spirit	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
133	8.5	Growing decision making power	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
134	8.6	Work diversification	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
135	8.7	Increasing self-confidence	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
136	8.8	Job diversity and communication with other people and jobs	Job diversity and communication with other people and jobs
137	8.9	Communication with other jobs and people	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
138	8.10	Lack of job promotion	Disregarding working laws
139	8.11	Working in holiday times and vacations	Work-family conflict
140	8.12	Sexual harassment	Abusing women
141	8.13	Problems related to communicating tourists	Cultural transmutation
142	8.14	Exhausted from work	Endanger women's physical health
143	8.15	Providing regulations to support employees against employers	More supervision on private sector of the tourism industry
144	8.16	Training the managers related to feminine employees in the tourism industry	Training the managers related to feminine employees in the tourism industry
145	9.1	Financial independence	The need to be independent
146	9.2	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
147	9.3	Women's satisfaction with low income	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
148	9.4	Women interest in tourism jobs	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
149	9.5	Job diversity and communication with other people and jobs	Job diversity and communication with other people and jobs
150	9.6	Making women spirit more happy	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
151	9.7	Coordination of tourism jobs with talents of women	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence

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152	9.8	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
153	9.9	Work stress	Endanger women's physical health
154	9.10	Payment problems	Disregarding working laws
155	9.11	Problems related to newcomers	Disregarding working laws
156	9.12	Delay marriage or preventing it	Negative image of tourism jobs in the society
157	9.13	Sexual harassment	Abusing women
158	9.14	Lack of insurance	Disregarding working laws
159	9.15	Seasonal job and lack of job security	Disregarding working laws
160	9.16	Intervention of irrelevant people in professional activities	Disregarding working laws
161	9.17	Recruiting men more than women in tourism agencies	Disregarding working laws
162	9.18	Culture making for local people by attracting more tourists	Promotion of women's employment culture in the society
163	9.19	Paying attention to tour guides insurance	Informing women about their working rights in the tourism industry
164	9.20	Training foreign tourists about Iranian-Islamic norms and values	Training foreign tourists about Iranian-Islamic norms and values
165	9.21	Moore support of women from government and public institutions	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
166	10.1	The need to become approved	Education and growth of expectations
167	10.2	To gain rights	Change in traditional roles and approaches
168	10.3	Fight sexual discrimination	Change in traditional roles and approaches
169	10.4	Compensating the weaknesses resulting from delay in marriage	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
170	10.5	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
171	10.6	Women's satisfaction with low income	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
172	10.7	Seasonality of tourism jobs	Job diversity and communication with other people and jobs
173	10.8	Job diversity	Job diversity and communication with other people and jobs
174	10.9	Adjustment of women's capabilities to tourism jobs	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
175	10.10	Cultural misunderstandings	Cultural transmutation
176	10.11	Lack of equal opportunities	Disregarding working laws
177	10.12	Work stress	Endanger women's physical health
178	10.13	Payment problems	Disregarding working laws
179	10.14	Exhaustion and problems related to health	Endanger women's physical health
180	10.15	Remoteness from family	Work-family conflict
181	10.16	Lack of coordination between physical status of women and tourism jobs	Endanger women's physical health
182	10.17	Intervention of irrelevant jobs and professions in professional tourism jobs	Disregarding working laws
183	10.18	Problems related to communication	Cultural transmutation

		with tourists	
184	10.19	Most of tourism managers are not professional	Training the managers related to feminine employees in the tourism industry
185	10.20	Culture making about sustainable tourism development	Promotion of women's employment culture in the society
186	10.21	Providing learning tours	Institutionalizing Iranian Islamic values in women employed in the tourism industry
187	10.22	Presence of women familiar with tourism in attractions	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
188	10.23	Paying attention to tour guides insurance	Informing women about their working rights in the tourism industry
189	10.24	Planning to create stable jobs	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
190	10.25	Paying attention to meritocracy instead of sex	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
191	11.1	Attractiveness of tourism jobs	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
192	11.2	Prestige of tourism jobs	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
193	11.3	Changing culture	Change in traditional roles and approaches
194	11.4	Growth in education level of women	Education and growth of expectations
195	11.5	Satisfaction of women with low payments	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
196	11.6	Financial independence	The need to be independent
197	11.7	Satisfying women's tendency to communicate	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
198	11.8	Women coordination with tourism jobs	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
199	11.9	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry
200	11.10	Being busy for long hours	Endanger women's physical health
201	11.11	Making tension in life	Work-family conflict
202	11.12	Cultural transmutation	Cultural transmutation
203	11.13	Low income	Disregarding working laws
204	11.14	Long working hours	Endanger women's physical health
205	11.15	Reinforcing scientific and cultural basis of women	Institutionalizing Iranian Islamic values in women employed in the tourism industry
206	11.16	Getting acquainted with other cultures	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
207	11.17	Institutionalizing Iranian Islamic values in women employed in the tourism industry	Institutionalizing Iranian Islamic values in women employed in the tourism industry
208	11.18	Teaching time-management techniques	Promoting self-management skills within women employed in the tourism industry
209	11.19	Making tourism a systematic field	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
210	12.1	Growth in education level of women	Education and growth of expectations
211	12.2	Tendency to be present in the society and become approved	Education and growth of expectations

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212	12.3	Financial independence	The need to be independent
213	12.4	Tendency of society and industries to use women's capabilities	Increasing demand of industries and services for human resources
214	12.5	Women can approve themselves in tourism jobs	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
215	12.6	Prestige of tourism jobs	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
216	12.7	To have income	Help to improve the economic situation of the family
217	12.8	Increasing self-confidence	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
218	12.9	Increasing life quality	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
219	12.10	Increasing life quality	Improving women's performance in the family
220	12.11	Coordination between women capabilities and tourism jobs	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
221	12.12	Increasing job satisfaction	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
222	12.13	Increasing productivity	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry
223	12.14	Different approaches to the same jobs	Disregarding working laws
224	12.15	Promotion of inappropriate values as success indicators	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
225	12.16	Problems related to managers relation with employees	Disregarding working laws
226	12.17	Lack of insurance	Disregarding working laws
227	12.18	Low income	Disregarding working laws
228	12.19	Defining a standard framework for present tourism jobs	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
229	13.1	Change in life patterns	Change in traditional roles and approaches
230	13.2	Expectations growth	Education and growth of expectations
231	13.3	Promotion of women's employment by social media	Advertising women employment by social media
232	13.4	The need of today women to be seen and useful	Education and growth of expectations
233	13.5	Easier perspective of tourism jobs in comparison to other jobs	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
234	13.6	Women are better in communications	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
235	13.7	The increasing need to employ women in tourism jobs	Increasing demand of industries and services for human resources
236	13.8	Seasonality of tourism jobs	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
237	13.9	Coordination between women capabilities and tourism jobs	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
238	13.10	Job satisfaction	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
239	13.11	Lack of insurance, adequate income and job security	Disregarding working laws
240	13.12	Comparing local community with tourists and becoming depressed	Cultural transmutation
241	13.13	Tension in family	Work-family conflict

242	13.14	Culture making	Promotion of women's employment culture in the society
243	13.15	Paying attention to women's employment in local media	Promotion of women's employment culture in the society
244	13.16	Paying attention to the spiritual needs of women and training men about them	Promotion of women's employment culture in the society
245	14.1	Acquaintance of women with their rights	Change in traditional roles and approaches
246	14.2	Financial independence	The need to be independent
247	14.3	Attractiveness of tourism jobs	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
248	14.4	Flexibility of working hours	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
249	14.5	Job diversification	Attractiveness of tourism jobs
250	14.6	Coordination of tourism jobs with women mental characteristics	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
251	14.7	Making women spirit happy by job diversities	Job diversity and communication with other people and jobs
252	14.8	Cultural transmutation	Cultural transmutation
253	14.9	Helping to break the norms	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
254	14.10	Exploring women's capabilities and planning to flourish them	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism
255	14.11	Planning for solving the problems occurring during worktime	More supervision on private sector of the tourism industry

Source: Authors

Table 2. Categorizing reasons, opportunities, challenges and solutions of women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran

Row	Group	Generic category
1	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs	Reason
2	Attractiveness of tourism jobs	Reason
3	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence	Opportunity
4	Improving women's performance in the family	Opportunity
5	Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry	Opportunity
6	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors	Challenge
7	Endanger women's physical health	Challenge
8	Work-family conflict	Challenge
9	Formulation of women's employment framework in tourism	Solution
10	Promoting self-management skills within women employed in the tourism industry	Solution
11	Institutionalizing Iranian Islamic values in women employed in the tourism industry	Solution
12	Education and growth of expectations	Reason
13	The need to be independent	Reason
14	Promotion of women related values in Islam within other cultures	Opportunity
15	Promotion of women's employment culture in the society	Solution
16	Change in traditional roles and approaches	Reason
17	Help to improve the economic situation of the family	Reason
18	Abusing women	Challenge
19	Cultural transmutation	Challenge
20	Negative image of tourism jobs in the society	Challenge
21	Training foreign tourists about Iranian-Islamic norms and values	Solution

22	Providing familial businesses in the tourism industry	Solution
23	Disregarding working laws	Challenge
24	More supervision on private sector of the tourism industry	Solution
25	Job diversity and communication with other people and jobs	Opportunity
26	Training the managers related to feminine employees in the tourism industry	Solution
27	Advertising women employment by social media	Reason

Source: Authors

Table 3. The model abstracted from the qualitative content analysis components

Reasons, opportunities, challenges and solutions of women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran	Reasons	Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs
		Attractiveness of tourism jobs
		Education and growth of expectations
		The need to be independent
		Change in traditional roles and approaches
		Help to improve the economic situation of the family
		Advertising women employment by social media
	Opportunities	Flourishing women's capabilities and Increasing self-confidence
		Improving women's performance in the family
		Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry
		Promotion of women related values in Islam within other cultures
		Job diversity and communication with other people and jobs
	Challenges	Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors
		Endanger women's physical health
		Work-family conflict
		Abusing women
		Cultural transmutation
		Negative image of tourism jobs in the society
		Disregarding working laws
	Solutions	Formulation of women employment framework in the tourism industry
		Promoting self-management skills within women employed in the tourism industry
		Institutionalizing Iranian Islamic values in women employed in the tourism industry
		Promotion of women's employment culture in the society
		Training foreign tourists about Iranian-Islamic norms and values
Providing familial businesses in the tourism industry		
More supervision on private sector of the tourism industry		
Training the managers related to feminine employees in the tourism industry		

Source: Authors

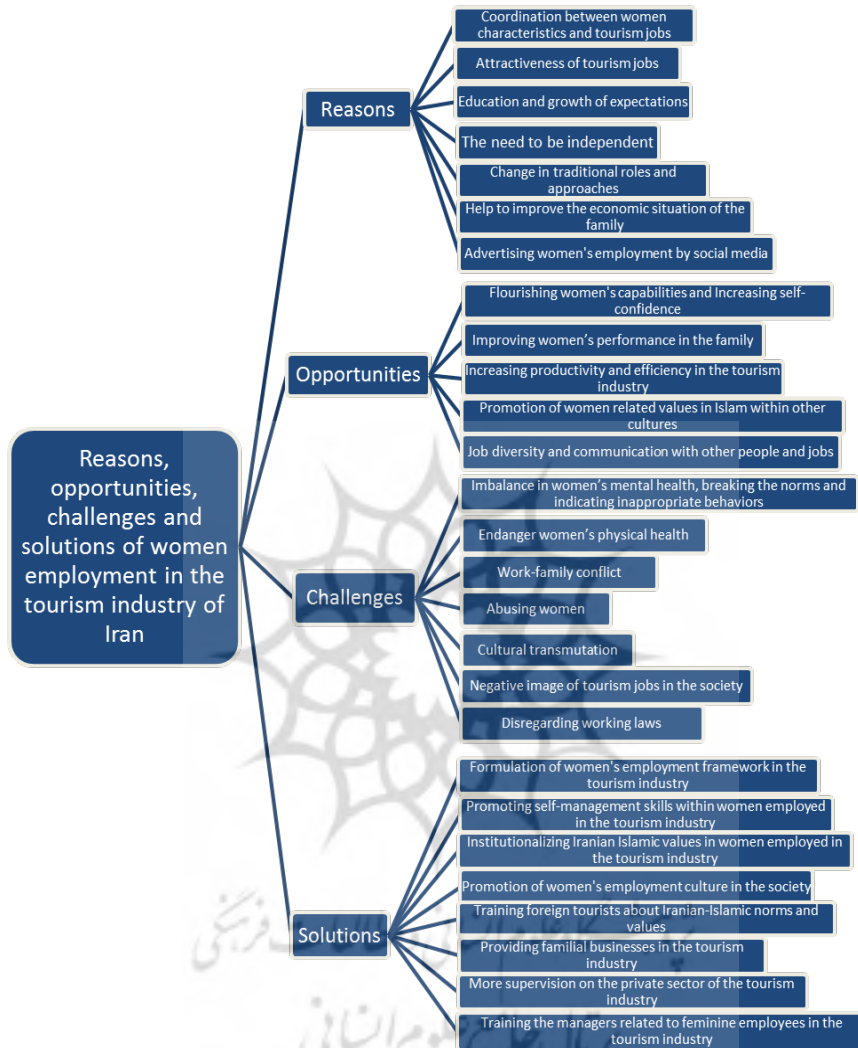


Figure 1. Model of Reasons, opportunities, challenges and solutions of women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran

Source: Authors

Findings

Reasons for Women Employment in The tourism industry of Iran

- Coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs

Women have special natural characteristics which separates them from men. These differences could be categorized into three groups: biological, mental and talent (Yousofi, 2010). These characteristics

are revealed in practical behaviors such as the tendency to nurture, the tendency to communicate and high power in public relations (Hoseini, 2000). Since services industries, such as the tourism industry, need to communicate with different people and cultures, it seems that women special characteristics match the job qualifications in the industry. Besides, since men in Iran are responsible for family expenses, women do not care income and salary as much as men and they will work with lower payments, which are prevalent in the tourism industry.

- **Attractiveness of tourism jobs**

Tourism contains a large group of diversified jobs which demand a high level of communication with different people and traveling to different places. Besides, these jobs are new and partly unknown in developing countries that makes them attractive to youths. The prestige of tourism jobs in the society is another cause for their attractiveness to women, which causes a large number of women in developing countries, such as Iran, try to get employed in the industry.

- **Education and growth of expectations**

Today, women in developing countries, such as Iran, are more educated and informed about what happens around them; as a result, they have new expectations from life and do not satisfy with the previous conditions (Javaheri, 2008). Actually, today educated women like to implement their learnings in practice and prove themselves by their actions (Maknoon, 2003). Tourism seems to be a good choice for women to achieve this objective and feel that they are useful.

- **The need to be independent**

One of the main drivers of women's employment in different fields, such as tourism, is the need to be independent. This need is mostly a mental need, which could appear in forms like financial independence.

- **Change in traditional roles and approaches**

New social conditions of Iran, have caused great changes in women situation and roles. Some of the most important changes to name, include the following:

- Delay in marriage time;
- Growing number of divorces, especially in the cities;
- Growing number of conflicts between parents and children;

- Social problems related to divorced women and widows and their second marriage;
- Barriers to the free relationship of men and women in Islam;
- A vast number of advertisements that encourage women to participate in social activities and work out of home;
- Mechanization of house works and increase in women free time;
- Growing number of educated women in Iran (Maknoon, 2003);

Based on these changes, Iranian women are not satisfied with their traditional roles and working out of home is a serious issue in their life. Next to women themselves, the society of today Iran views women in a different way and many of the traditional limitations related to women do not exist in today's society of Iran.

- Help to improve the economic situation of the family

According to the increasing expectations of family members and also many financial problems that today Iranian families face, it is not possible to live the same way as the past and rely only on one of the family members (mostly on the father). As a result, other members of the family, including girls and women, try to find a job in order to share the responsibility of family expenses and tourism seems to be a good choice that is capable of offering different jobs to women.

- Advertising women employment by social media

Communication equipments and different kinds of media have become one of the necessities of today lives and homes. It has been proved that these equipments and social media have the power to change lifestyle in a long time and advertisements are an effective way to achieve their objectives. Women's employment is not an exception and is encouraged by social media in direct and indirect forms. Showing the programs and films which emphasis on women's employment and using women as TV or radio presenters are examples of this encouragement that have exposed employment as a need or advantage for women.

Opportunities of women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran

- Flourishing women's capabilities and increasing self-confidence

Tourism jobs have special characteristics that can provide a basis for women to prove themselves and increase their self-confidence. Actually, these jobs have feminine nature and are in coordination with

women's capabilities; as a result, women are more successful in these jobs and their capabilities will flourish. Women empowerment in tourism jobs will decrease their dependence to their father or spouse and their power of decision making will also get better.

- **Improving women's performance in the family**

Women's employment in the fields that are in coordination with their capabilities will increase their success possibility and also their satisfaction. Tourism is one of these fields that can satisfy women. This sense of satisfaction in women has the power to improve their performance in the family and make the life quality better for other members. Besides, women's income from tourism jobs could improve the financial situation of the family and also cause other family members to become satisfied.

- **Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry**

According to the feminine nature of the tourism industry and coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs, women's presence in the industry and working in it, will cause better interactions during worktime. Since, women are better than men in public relations and communication skills (Hoseini, 2000), they can attract more customers and tourists and satisfy them using their social capabilities. As a result, the total productivity and efficiency of the tourism industry will increase.

- **Promotion of women related values in Islam within other cultures**

If the women employed in the tourism industry of Iran believe in Islamic values and norms, such as hijab, and adhere to them in meeting people from other cultures and religions, they can influence their thoughts and promote women related Islamic values within other cultures and also facilitate cultural exchange.

- **Job diversity and communication with other people and jobs**

Since the tourism industry is capable of facilitating communications between different groups of people and jobs, it can provide a basis for its employees to get acquainted with diversified people and jobs. Hotel employees are an example; according to their job, they will meet people from different nationalities and cultures. Besides, since hotels are a place to hold seminars and conference, their employees and staff will get familiar with different jobs and organizations that

can provide them many advantages, such as inter-occupational relationships.

Challenges of women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran

- **Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors**

If women work the same as men, they will face problems because they are not actually men. Taking the responsibility of family expenses would distance women from their elegances and make them behave like men. As a result, they will compare themselves with men and exhibit inappropriate behaviors to gain more money and become like men, such as competition on beauty, disregarding profession, jealousy, preventing each other from advancement, getting carried away, paying attention to margins and sexual issues and secret relations and marriages. Such abnormal behaviors in the workplace will cause imbalance in women's mental health and promote anomalies and inappropriate values in the society of Iran.

- **Endanger women's physical health**

Tourism jobs are usually stressful and most of them demand traveling to different places. Since the physical status of women is more delicate than men (Hoseini, 2000), working in such jobs will tire them more than men and accordingly damage their physical health.

- **Work-family conflict**

Women's employment in the tourism industry will affect family scope from different aspects. Stressful jobs in the tourism industry, whether or not will affect women's family and disturb their responsibilities at home. Tiredness from working and many travels may reduce married women's time dedicated to family and home tasks and they cannot allocate enough time to nurture children and verify spouse responsibilities. Moreover, the numerous travels of married women and their encounter with men other than the husband, as their colleagues and their customers or tourists, will disturb their relationship with their spouse and cause them to divorce.

Next to the problems related to married women, the employment of single girls in the industry may cause them to become financially and spiritually independent and hence delay their marriage, which endangers the survival of family and generation.

- **Abusing women**

Since women are not responsible for family expenses in Iran, they are satisfied with low income and they do not care financial issues as much as men. As a result, they have usually been considered as low-cost labor and so, low level jobs are allocated to them. The payments to women working in the industry are also lower than those of the men working in the same jobs. Besides, women may encounter with many foreign men during their work time, which may cause sexual issues, such as sexual abuse and harassment and also secret relationships that harm women more than men.

- **Cultural transmutation**

Since women working in the tourism industry encounter people from different cultures and nationalities, they may compare those people with the people of their local community. If they conclude that tourists are overall better than their local people, they may change their approach to their religious, social and cultural values in a long time. They may also try to become like the tourists and break the local Iranian norms.

- **Negative image of tourism jobs in the society**

In the developing countries, such as Iran, the tourism industry and its jobs are not well known and local communities are not familiar with them; accordingly, they do not have a good view of women who work in these unknown jobs and it is somehow strange to them.

- **Disregarding working laws**

Since the tourism industry is a young industry in Iran, there are not enough hard and soft infrastructures for it in the country. Actually, this industry is like an uninvited guest that there has not been any special planning in advance to face it. This industry has come to Iran, but the number of experts in the field is too few and the industry is in the hands of the investors who know almost too little about it.

Next to the lack of enough tourism experts, there is also the lack of enough laws and regulations to support employees against employers. As a result, there is not enough supervision on different tourism organizations and companies and the employers behave their staff in any way they like. Since women are more vulnerable and also more patient than men, the employers disregard the few laws related to them and women have no right to complain. Lack of insurance, lack of job

promotion (Simin, Zainal & Nazlan, 2014), lack of vacations, lack of job security, unequal and low payments, violence in the workplace and the intervention of other jobs and professions in tourism jobs are examples of this challenge.

Solutions for women employment in the tourism industry of Iran

- Formulation of women employment framework in the tourism industry.

One of the best ways to prevent the problems of women's employment in the tourism industry is the formulation of women employment framework in the tourism industry. This framework can be formulated and implemented up to down or down to up; one way is that policymakers formulate and impart it and the other way is that tourism experts and actives demand such framework from policymakers by their researches and streams. It seems that the combination of both of the ways is the best choice.

Women employment framework in the tourism industry of Iran must be capable of answering questions such as, what, how, where, when, who and whom. Since Iran is an Islamic country, using the Islamic approach to formulate this framework and define its dimensions is more practical. However, this misunderstanding exists that women have no working right in Islam and this religion limits women (El-Husseini, 2015).

- Promoting self-management skills within women employed in the tourism industry: Training the women working in the tourism industry of Iran to promote their self-management skills will enable them to manage the views of their contacts, colleagues and local communities and also get capable of solving their own problems.

- Institutionalizing Iranian-Islamic values in women employed in the tourism industry: As women in the tourism industry encounter people from different cultures and nationalities, institutionalization of Iranian Islamic values in them can prevent many problems such as cultural transmutation. This objective can be gained through cultural and training programs such as training tours.

- Promotion of women's employment culture in the society

One of the most important challenges of women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran is the negative image of the industry within the local community. To solve this problem, the real face of the

industry and its jobs must become evident and the society of Iran get familiar with the advantages that this industry could offer them. This objective could be gained through different ways, such as broadcasting programs in social media to introduce the industry and its feminine nature, promotion of national tourism and increasing the attraction of tourists.

- Training foreign tourists about Iranian-Islamic norms and values

Foreign tourists could be trained about Iranian-Islamic norms and values through different ways, such as holding meetings before they travel to Iran or giving brochures to them, which contain information about the cultural and religious status of Iran. These efforts will adjust the image and expectations of foreign tourists from the Iranian people and staff, which include Iranian women.

- Providing familial businesses in the tourism industry

Making both of the supply and demand chains of the tourism industry familial will provide an atmosphere, which women feel safer in it and inappropriate relationships will decrease. This would engage most of the family members in the industry and as a result restore its negative image in the society and so promote tourism culture.

- More supervision of the private sector of the tourism industry

Since most of the jobs in the tourism industry of Iran belong to the private sector, the management of staff and quality of behaving them do not follow a specific criteria or standard and also they are not controlled by a specific reference. These lacks and gaps will cause problems and result in conflicts between employers and their employees. As women are more vulnerable to these problems, they would suffer more and unfortunately they usually have no right to complain. Increasing the supervisions on the private sector of the industry and creating a legal reference to solve the conflicts could be considered as solutions to solve these problems.

- Training the managers related to feminine employees in the tourism industry

Training the managers related to feminine employees in the tourism industry of Iran will adjust the way they behave their employees and so prevent the possible problems. These training programs are mostly cultural that can be pursuit by creating regulations and laws.

Conclusion

These days, gender issues consist the top discussions of development and women's employment in different fields is in the course of these issues (Simin, et. al, 2014). Tourism is one of the newborn industries that employs vast groups of women and is considered as one of the development tools in different regions. According to the UNWTO, this industry has a feminine nature and women consist a significant part of its employees. As a result, it is rather important to find out their working problems and solve them in order to help women and also get developed.

In the current study, the issues related to women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran were explored by interviewing tourism experts and activists and analyzing the data using qualitative content analysis. These issues were categorized into four main groups: Reasons, opportunities, challenges and solutions for women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran.

The main reasons for women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran include: coordination between women characteristics and tourism jobs, attractiveness of tourism jobs, education and growth of expectations, the need to be independent, change in traditional roles and approaches, help to improve the economic situation of the family and advertising women's employment by social media. The main opportunities that the tourism industry in Iran can offer women consist of: Flourishing women's capabilities and increasing self-confidence, improving women's performance in the family, Increasing productivity and efficiency in the tourism industry, promotion of women related values in Islam within other cultures and Job diversity and communication with other people and jobs. The challenges of women's employment in the tourism industry of Iran include: Imbalance in women's mental health, breaking the norms and indicating inappropriate behaviors, endanger women's physical health, work-family conflict, abusing women, cultural transmutation, Negative image of tourism jobs in the society and disregarding working laws. At the end, The solutions to handle these challenges include: Formulation of women's employment framework in the tourism industry, Promoting self-management skills within women employed in the tourism industry, institutionalizing Iranian-Islamic

values in women employed in the tourism industry, Promotion of women's employment culture in the society, Training foreign tourists about Iranian-Islamic norms and values, providing familial businesses in the tourism industry, More supervision of the private sector of the tourism industry, Training the managers related to feminine employees in the tourism industry.

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