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ORIGINAL SCIENTIFIC PAPER

Investigating Women's Attitudes towards Gender Gap, Employment and Achieving Social Positions Case Study: Women between 20-30 and 50- 60 Years Old



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ABSTRACT

Women who constitute half of the society have lower social and economic positions compared to men. Employment, social functions, higher educations, and other positions that ignore women are examples of this inequality. In the meanwhile, women's attitudes towards this inequality have particular importance, because in the case of accepting this inequality and internalizing it, they themselves instigate this inequality and will internalize it. So far, in many aspects of the society, these intellectual sediments have caused women's retardation from many social aspects. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate women's (particularly women of Tehran) attitudes towards gender-social inequalities against women as well as gender gap in employment and achieving social and economic positions. Due to the vast area of Tehran and lack of possibility to make samples from all areas, the city was divided into three northern, southern, and central parts and in each area, the available streets were identified and numbered. Then, by regular random sampling, several streets were selected and census was

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done. In this study, women were from two age groups of 20-30 and 50-60 years old. After survey and fulfillment of researcher-made questionnaires, data were analyzed in SPSS.

KEY WORDS: *age, gender inequality, social-economic positions, gender socialization, gender stereotypes, subjective concepts*

Introduction

Famous authors and scientists have pointed to inequalities between women and men. A quick look at this issue simply shows that most of the important political positions are captured by men. It means that men can establish rules regarding their power. Of course, this power is tangible in other contexts as well (Hyde, 2001: p. 48).

In all societies, there is a kind of work sharing regarding gender. It means some works are specific to women. According to Okkli (2001), gender-based work sharing is created by the society and is not related to natural differences between men and women. It means that businesses became known as masculine and feminine (Aboot and Wallas, 2002: p. 172). According to a study on a number of female and male students, the results showed that despite equal having IQ, most of males have gained work positions in the future and most of the females became household (Hyde, 2001: p. 129). Fang et al. (2016) analyzed the means and ends of its practices and villagers' attitudes and behaviours in response to them based on a comparison of a failed case (Village A) and a successful case (Village B) in Changchun City.

Women are imagined in a way where are naturally dedicated to household chores and caring and men are considered in general context to earn money as an employer. So that by now, women for success in business world, should adopt there rules (Aboot and Wallas, 2002: p. 174).

Both men and women believe that work is less important for women and due to the responsibilities that men have, they should earn more revenue compared to women and to have higher job security (Aboot and Wallas, 2002: p. 172).

Women are almost seen in lower level jobs while men have higher job positions. Women almost work part-time while a large number of men have full-time jobs. As a result, women will not have job conditions like men (Aboot and Wallas, 2002: p. 187). Women earn less than men. Full-time

wage of women is much lower than men. However, the major reason for these differences is the job separation that allocates different jobs to men and women and even in similar jobs, women are placed at lower levels (Aboot and Wallas, 2002: p. 190). For women, it is more likely to have low income jobs (Aboot and Wallas, 2002: p. 191). Ahl and Nelson (2015) compared the positioning of women entrepreneurs through entrepreneurship policy over two decades (1989–2012) in Sweden and the United States.

Men take jobs that need technical proficiency and woman take semi-technical or simpler jobs with lower wages. Women's employment in lower levers is relatively easy and their job promotion is difficult. In family life, men make obstacles on women's progresses instead of encouraging them. One of the major factors that affect women's carrier is the masculine concept that implies for women, job is after childbearing (Gidenz, 1995: p. 191).

Patriarchal tradition emphasis on motherhood and household roles has always led to the lack of house work and their informal jobs in gross national product contexts while women functions can contain advantages for themselves (self-confidence, relative financial independence, job socialization, participation in formal production organization), family (children's socialization and changing the patriarchal atmosphere in the family), and society (growth of equality and realization of civil society) (Mohammadi Asl, 2002: p. 163). Job inequalities for women regarding employment, wage, and promotion to higher levels are among the cases that necessitate the inequality issue in employment context and the achievement of social positions.

Review of Literature

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Oaks (2003) examined how antiabortion advocates since the late 1990s have promoted an “antiabortion, pro-motherhood” message in response to trends that they identify as indicating that Irish reproduction has “gone awry”. According to a study on a number of female and male students, the results showed that despite equal having IQ, most of males have gained work positions in the future and most of the females became household (Hyde, 2001: p. 129). Factors such as interest and exposure, spaces and places occupied, access to resources and attitudinal factors were influential in shaping their feminism (Kiely and Leane, 2014).

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Methodology

The present study is among non-experimental studies (descriptive) that at descriptive level, investigated the attitudes towards gender gap among young and elderly women. In this study, the survey method has been used. Therefore, in this method, through setting a questionnaire, the required data were collected.

The sample of this study consisted of women at the age range of 20-30 and 50-60 years old of Tehran that due to vast area of Tehran and lack of possibility to make samples from all areas, the city was divided into three northern, southern, and central parts and in each area, the available streets were identified and numbered. Then, by regular random sampling, several streets were selected and census was done. In this regard, areas 1, 11, and 19 were selected and by referring to Iran's Statistics Center Site and based on statistics census of 2006, the total number of 16-26 and 46-56 years old women of these three areas was 12201 that by 2010, these age ranges changed into 20-30 and 50-60 years old. Therefore, to estimate the number of samples in this study, Cochran formula was used:

$$n = \frac{N.t^2.p(1-p)}{N.d^2 + t^2.p(1-p)}$$

Where n is the sample size, N is the total number of sample, t^2 is t-student where the significance level is lower than 0/05, d^2 is approximation in parameter estimation that is 0/05², P is the probability for the existence of trait and (1-P) is the probability for lack of trait existence and by considering the numbers in the present study, the sample size will be as follow:

$$n = \frac{12201 * 1.962 * 0.5(1-0.5)}{12201 * (0.052) + 1.962 * 0.5(1-0.5)}$$

The data collection tool in this study was a questionnaire that was used to determine the validity of the measurement tool from content validity and through interview with the 35 professors of social science and communication sciences as well as master's students, the necessary changes were done. To confirm reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used. The results of Cronbach's alpha (79%) showed that the questionnaire has high reliability. To analyze the data, SPSS was used.

Findings

Hypothesis 1: there is a relationship between women's age and their attitudes towards gender gap.

Table 1: The relationship between age distribution and attitudes towards gender gap

Total	Attitudes towards gender gap		Age group	
	High	Low	Number	
245	160	85	Number	20-30
100	65.3	34.7	Percentage	
128	74	54	Number	50-60
100	57.8	42.2	Percentage	
373	234	139	Number	Total
100	62.7	37.3	Percentage	

X²=2.019, Tau b=-0.74 Sig=0.159

According to Table (1), it can be inferred that with increased age from 20-30 to 50-60, the gender gap in women's attitudes towards employment and social-economic positions decreases. However, this trend is low. For statistical inference of this relationship, we consider chi-square and Kido test where the low value of chi-square states low difference between two age groups. From the negative value, we understand the reverse and weak relationship. But what demands attention us the significance where 0.159 states the significance of this relationship. Therefore, the first hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 2: there is a significant relationship between marital status and women's attitudes towards gender gap.

To prove the veracity of this relationship, Table (2) states the relationship between these two variables.

Table 2: The relationship between marital status and attitudes towards gender gap

Total	Attitudes towards gender gap		Age group	
	High	Low	Number	Percentage
174	122	52	Number	Single
100	70.1	29.9	Percentage	
199	112	87	Number	Married
100	56.3	43.7	Percentage	
373	234	139	Number	Total
100	62.7	37.3	Percentage	

According to the above table, it can be inferred that attitudes towards gender gap is higher in single women while more than 70% of single women have attitudes towards high gender gap. This level in married women decreases to 56%. Also, those theories that were pointed out in the literature emphasize this point that married women, despite more involvement in family, usually have less gender attitude compared to those single women who are only involved in job environment without serious responsibility in family. To prove the statistical relationship, independent t-test was used.

Table 3: T-test, the relationship between marital status and attitudes towards gender gap

Number	Variance	SD	Mean	Gender gap		Married
				High	Low	
174	0.4980	0.4591	1.7011	70.1	29.9	Single
199	0.4954	0.4937	1.5628	56.3	43.7	Married
373	Sig=0.006		T=2.788	62.7	37.3	Total

What can be inferred from t-test results, is the significant difference between two groups and T-value that states the correlation between two variables and the significant relationship due to numerical value of Sig=0/006. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed.

Hypothesis 3: there is a significant relationship between women's employment and their attitudes towards gender gap.

According to the theoretical studies that were stated in the second part, this relationship is a direct relationship. It means that it is expected after the employment, the women's gender gap attitudes decreases while it seems that in job environment, and witnessing inequalities, the attitudes get enhanced. To express this relationship, in Table (4), to variables of interest were evaluated.

Table 4: The relationship between women's employment and their attitudes towards gender gap

Total	Attitudes towards gender gap		Job status	
	High	Low	Number	
101	45	56	Number	Household
100	44.6	55.4	Percentage	
272	189	83	Number	Employed
100	69.5	35.5	Percentage	
373	234	139	Number	Total
100	62.7	37.3	Percentage	

$X^2=19.581$, Tau b=0.229, Sig=0.000

According to the Table (4), it can be inferred that household women have lower gender gap compared to employed women and the highest frequency is related to low gender gap. But in employed women, the frequency is mostly related to high gender gap that confirms the correspondence with the theories. For the statistical test, we used Kido test where the numerical value of Chi-square is high and expresses the significance of this correlation. The average value of Tau b points to the weakness of the relationship and lack of error shows the significance of this relationship.

According to these results, it can be stated that the hypothesis is confirmed and there is a significant relationship between these variables.

Hypothesis 4: there is a significant relationship between social-economic positions and attitudes towards gender gap.

Table 5: The relationship between social-economic positions and attitudes towards gender gap

Total	Attitudes towards gender gap		Social-economic gap	
	High	Low		
93	65	28	Number	Lower class
100	69.9	30.1	Percentage	
125	81	44	Number	Average class
100	64.8	35.2	Percentage	
155	88	67	Number	Higher class
100	56.8	43.2	Percentage	
373	234	139	Number	Total
100	62.7	37.3	Percentage	

$X^2=4.622$, $\text{Tau } c=-0.116$, $\text{Sig}=0.03$

Although all three social classes show higher gender attitude, with increased social class of women and benefiting from better social-economic situations, the frequencies of these attitudes decreases. To evaluate this relationship, we used Tau c coefficient because the independent variable has been evaluated in three classes. The numerical value of Chi-square is weak in this relationship and the Tau c value is negative and weak that show the weak statistical relationship between two variables and their reverse relationship. Of course, the significant relationship is acceptable due to the low statistical error from 5% and this relationship is significant. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is confirmed.

Hypothesis 5: there is a significant relationship between women gender socialization and attitudes towards gender gap.

Table 6: the relationship between gender socialization and attitudes towards gender gap

Total	Attitudes towards gender gap		Gender socialization	
	High	Low		
204	96	108	Number	Low
100	47.1	52.9	Percentage	
169	138	31	Number	High
100	81.7	19.3	Percentage	
373	234	139	Number	Total
100	62.7	37.3	Percentage	

$X^2= 47.236$, Tau b=0.356, Sig=0.000

In the above table, women who have lower socialization have lower gender gap that with increased gender socialization, the attitudes towards gender gap increases. To explain the statistical relationship, Kido test was used where chi-square and Tau b show good statistical relationship and the significant relationship is confirmed. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis is confirmed.

Hypothesis 6: there is a significant relationship between gender stereotypes and attitudes towards gender gap.

In this regard, with increased gender stereotypes that include women's thoughts about the obstacles in business market and positions, the gender gap is affected and with increased stereotypical thoughts, and as a result, the attitudes towards gender gap increases.

Table 7: the relationship between gender stereotypes and attitudes towards gender gap

Total	Attitudes towards gender gap		Gender stereotypes	
	High	Low	Number	Low
148	79	69	Number	Low
100	53/4	46.6	Percentage	
225	155	70	Number	High
100	68.9	31.1	Percentage	
373	234	139	Number	Total
100	62.7	37.3	Percentage	

$X^2= 9.187$, Tau b=0.157, Sig=0.000

In order to investigate this relationship, the variables were evaluated in Table (7). In this table, the attitudes towards gender gap is low in women with thought stereotypes where with increased stereotypical thoughts, the attitudes towards gender gap increases from 53% to 69%. Therefore, with increased gender stereotypes in women, the gender gap increases. For statistical inference of this relationship, Kido test and Tau b correlation coefficient were used where the chi-square was at average level and the relationship was weak. This relationship is significant and therefore, the research hypothesis is confirmed.

Hypothesis 7: there is a significant relationship between women's mental concepts and attitudes towards gender gap.

Table 8: relationship between women's mental concept and attitudes towards gender gap

Total	Attitudes towards gender gap		Mental concepts	
	High	Low	Number	Low
145	83	62	Number	Low
100	57.2	42.8	Percentage	
228	151	77	Number	High
100	66.2	33.8	Percentage	
373	234	139	Number	Total
100	62.7	37.3	Percentage	

$X^2=3.062$, Tau $b=0.091$, Sig= 0.082

This hypothesis means that with increased mental concept scores, the attitudes towards gender gap increases; because, with better understanding of abilities, women can understand their roles in social contexts. To investigate and explain this hypothesis, we prepared Table (8). In this table, it is observed that in women with low mental concepts, the higher frequency of gender gap belongs to higher gender gap and this gap increases with increased mental concepts of women from 57% to 62%. Although this level undergoes a little change, indicates coordinated change of these variables.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to investigate women's (20-30 and 50-60 years old) attitudes towards gender gap and achieving social positions. Data were analyzed in SPSS. The results showed that there is not any relationship between women's age and attitudes towards gender gap. But the marital status, employment, social-economic positions, socialization, gender stereotypes, and mental concepts are related to gender gap.

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