Analysis of the Relationship between Women's Employment and their Social Contributions in Iranian Society

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Abstract: Women’s situations and their social contribution is one of the major indicators for evaluating country’s development. The relationship between women’s employment and their social contribution in Iranian society has been analyzed in the present study. In line with this issue, independent variables have been stated as economic-social foundations, situations and features of women’s employment and dependent variable has been formed as their social contributions. Library-oriented and data surveying approaches have been used as the research method in this study. Data gathering is also carried out through questionnaires. Statistical data included 200 women employed in manufacturing companies, educational schools, office administrations and service companies located in region 11 of city of Tehran which are selected through the simple random sampling approach. Research results indicated that there is a significant positive correlation between women’s employment and their social contributions in the society.

Keywords: Employment, economic-social foundation, women, social contribution

INTRODUCTION

Economic, political, social and cultural growth and development are the most important issues of any society which are usually assigned as governments major agendas. Social contribution is one of the main supports of this concern. Besides, as social scientist state, social development of any society requires some criteria, basis and factors that initiate individuals’ active participation and contribution in various areas of the society that might be called as their social contributions. In line with this regards, role creation and responsibility are not limited to men, but women have significant share in the society. As a major part of the society body, women accomplish heavy family and social responsibilities and are capable to participate is various social areas along with men (Wilson, 1990). In a more precise viewpoint, social contribution is one of the main characteristics that all individuals including men and women as members of the society and social systems participate in it, because, social contribution is one of the influencing factors in growth and development process of a country (Wee and Heyzer, 1995). In the same way, theorists believe in contribution and participation as influencing factors in growth and development of any society (Bashirie, 2007).

As stated above, social contribution phenomenon is one of the main dimensions of social, cultural and economic development factors in developing countries such as Iran. Structural and performance related issues of development plans are due to shortfalls existing in this area of concern. The problem which exacerbates the issue could be stated as underestimating the social contribution and its dimensions as a serious issue, because, researches made in this regard revealed that individuals in Iran have acquired superficial understanding and awareness respect to this issue. Women’s affairs and their social contribution during recent decades and centuries have brought about different subjects of matter in various scientific areas and studies made in women’s social contribution. In the present study, major object could be stated as analysis of the Relationship between women's employment and their social contributions in Iranian society.

RESEARCH LITERATURE

Theoretical Foundations:
Parsons’ theory of social actions and contribution culture: The contribution concept has been extensively analyzed in social action theory of Parsons. Based on the social action theory personality is product of internalizing potential situations of role and foundations. An individual acquires different roles in various occasions of the society for instance an employed individual in and administration has an organizational position which has acquired various norms and rules. Such norms gradually would become internalized during socializing and create individuals’ commitment toward their obligations (Ranjbar, 1997). Regarding aforesaid issues, contribution culture could be defined as individuals’ commitment to members and complying with the group norms. Regarding construction of social actions, Parsons believes that the individual role is influenced by 4 systems at the same
time. Organism of personality system, social system, and cultural system are based on relationship and information among names that each system affects the other sub-system. Parsons believes that social actions organize in form of norms and social values while social norms conduct the individual along with the social value system. Parsons believes that social actions originate from social role and position and founded his analysis based on such presumption. He states that cultural and social values in practice from the social actions. In other words actions and reactions of the society individuals are influenced by cultural values existing in that society. He also states that direction of values which could be acquired by the one who reacts during socializing process to some extent is related to performance and operation of basic structure and dominant values of social systems. According to Parsons, social values are not imposed exogenously to individuals at all time however it is formed during their interrelations with the society. In fact, paradigm variable states individuals' social reactions respect to their positions; social actions bring about social activities (Tavassoli, 2009).

**Lipset theory and model:** Most of modeling attempts made in modification of contribution models could only cover social drives, personality differences, social environment and/or more minor variables so that provide a list of subjects and variables correlated with contribution (Anand, 2002). Seymour Martin has tried to present a general model using some of variables of Lip set model that mainly emphasizes on psychological, social and economic features. This approach is evidently a sociological method and endeavors to manifest individuals’ contribution phenomena in various groups based on a variety of general social factors such as those ones that form the individual’s social environment for example; education, career, income level, age, gender, dwelling place. Having applied social variables and emphasized on sociological model, Lipset Model corroborates ideas concerning sociological analysis drive and points out to the need to comparative analysis. Lipset model has been adjusted based on existing information in the western democracy and in connection with their social-economic structure. However, it seems that social factors used in this model can be applied in other societies. Lipset has presented a semi-comprehensive model concerning social factors influencing contribution in 2 levels of expression and description, and draw a conclusion based on research findings in different countries. According to Lipset studies concerning groups of high income levels, not only they have acquired higher education levels and broad viewpoints but also their career activities maintain expansion of their information while pink, blue and white collar workers have little opportunities to get the required information and broad viewpoints. Regarding issues mentioned above, housewives can be exposed to unfavorable impacts due to their limited social network and accordingly restricted availability of information that might explain low level of women’s contribution to some extent (Lipset, 1968).

According to Lipset, individuals of the society influenced by dominant society norms and social forces may be strained to social and political contribution and probably voting. In line with this issue, social and economic groups (which an individual belongs to) are determinant factors. Almost all social research studies corroborate norms in conformity with social dignity. Average levels/groups in general tend toward conformity to common dominant values of the society. In addition to social norms that evaluates a good citizen through his/her contribution and voting, there are lots of driving groups who ask their members to vote for the benefit of the group, so contribution in election process of Europe’s proletarian areas to much extent depends on activity of such groups while inconsiderable contribution of United States’ proletarian classes in the election procedure indicates the fact that they have not developed robust social ranked entities and political norms. Individuals are exposed to lots of opposite forces and drives that probably cause them lose their interest and abandon team activities and social-political movements. Based on the existing studies increasing contradictory drives, cause decrease in social contribution. In the same way, concepts such as education, career, social and economic groups, religious biases, membership in various groups and organizations, access to information and conformity to norms influenced by group-oriented forces are the most important variables in the Lipset model (Lipset, 1968).

**Engelhard’s cultural renovation and contribution theory:** Having studies social and cultural renovation in the western societies, Engelhard concluded that increase in contribution is correlated to three factors of enhancement of education level, political awareness due to changes in contribution’s common norms and priorities of values that has less emphasis on imminent requirements while highlights self-expressing. According to Engelhard, variables such as official education, social and economic opportunities, competency level, information, communication tactics, job experiences, organizational networks, reduction of gender discrimination in social and political responsibilities/obligations influence increase in contribution (Shaditalab, 2002).

**Maestro theory:** Maestro believes in contribution as a process which is together with growth of substantial individual’s capabilities such as human dignity and decision-making as well as reasonable behavior. He believes that independent personality shall bring about cooperation spirit in the society if the contribution is rooted in the public (Saroukhani, 2004). He states that a robust group forgets about the self-confidence and prides when it encounters a problem so that the group capabilities influence the aggregate movements. According to Maestro contribution is a 4-dimensional
phenomenon including self-restraining, self-identity, decision-making capability and self-dominance (Tavassoli, 2010).

**Morris Hellbox theory:** Contribution is basically a social phenomenon which is involved with political and social issues. Contribution as a social phenomenon could be defined as involvement of social values. In other words when people live in the framework of the society’s norms and values, in fact they are contributing in their social life. Regarding a broad expanded society, people can utilize various living approaches and react against cultural-social behaviors, principles and beliefs or accept them (Maguire, 1996).

Socializing as social and cultural phenomena could be defined as conveying values and practices as well as thinking method to children, teenagers and strange people who has not become a member. Socializing procedures in fact is increase in people contribution in social life. Hellbox states that determining social classes in the society ranking depends primarily on contribution level or class utilization from supreme social activities. According to Hellbox, human class’ behavior is influenced y their needs and enjoying supreme social activities or contribution in social life (Tavassoli, 2010).

**Theoretical literature:** In a research study conducted by Kamali and Shaditalab (2004), influencing factors of women’s social contribution in Tehran together with their impact levels were analyzed. The research variables included cultural, value, family, economic and social features. Observations revealed that religious-welfare oriented contribution level is greater than average and there is a little tendency toward other types of contributions among women. Based on social contribution criteria, women could be categorized into 4 groups as; passive 38%, isolated/secluded 31%, active cultural 14% and active participation/contribution is 16%. Structural and family constraints reported to be the most significant and considerable barriers to women’s social contributions.

Identification of various women’s social contributions and related issues is selected as the research objective which is arranged and carried out by Family and Women Affair Center in the city of Tehran. The research revealed 6 types of contributions as civil, supportive, cultural/sport, local/domestic, religious, welfare and revolution activities. Research scope included women older than 15 years old in all 22 regions of Tehran. In the present study, it seems that the most important variables concerning women’s social contribution could be stated as literacy and level of education. Regarding the study findings, about 4% of women have been illiterate and there were only 2.2% higher graduate levels (M.Sc. and PhD) among 1417 responders. In addition, share of B.Sc. and Diploma levels revealed to be 18% totally. Therefore there have been 20.1% educated women or about one 5th of total statistics. Regarding situation of women activities in the society under study, acquired data indicate that overall 16.7% of women are active and remaining 73.3% seem to be passive or inactive. 13.9% of active group are employed and 2.8% are looking for a job. Inactive women could be classified into three groups of housewives, educating and fortune ones without working with relative shares of 64.4%, 15% and 2% respectively in the whole society. Analysis of the employment situation of the research statistics indicates that about 77% work in public and private sectors. Independent official personnel share is 22.1%. However women who work as employers are so few about 3.4%. There are more than 72% married women, 32% single ones and 5% divorced/widower and 0.1% had different situation such as separation from their husbands.

Based on the research findings, women’s social contribution in the city of Tehran have been reported as a low level that 38% of women are the most inactive/passive individuals and may participate superficially in cultural, social, religious and welfare issues. 31% of women mainly participate in local, religious and welfare activities. Third group include 14% of total women analyzed in the present study which is greater than other groups in cultural, sports, religious and welfare activities. Finally, around 16% of women who are categorized as the youngest group are willing to participate in religious, welfare, local and revolution activities.

In another research study conducted by Vosoughi and Yousefi (2005), main study objective was stated as analysis of social and cultural factors influencing the rural women’s social contribution in the development procedure. The said research study was carried out through surveying method and using interview techniques during August 2002 to Jun 2003 in 1 of the villages located in East-Azerbaijan Province. Interviews were made and analyzed using 155 rural women aged from 15 to 60. Average contribution of rural women reported as a low level participation and only 4% of responders had higher social contribution level. Based on statistical analysis, it could be concluded that there is a significant correlation among social contribution of rural women and variables such as women viewpoint to themselves (internal factors), age, education level (contextual factors), availability of city centers and media (structural issues).

In a research conducted by Navah et al. (2005) concerning analysis of influencing factors of women’s social contributions in the city of Ahvaz, data gathering was accomplished through surveying method as a research tool. Data sample included 384 women of Ahvaz inhabitants which were selected through cluster sampling. Main objective of the study reported as analysis of influencing factors of women’s social...
of procedures in which people's viewpoints are asked in through a 5-dimensional Likert feature used in a variety indicators of social contribution is then accomplished part of the said questionnaire. Identification of other cultural/educational contribution are gathered from first women's employment and their social, economic and required data and information. Data required for approach and using questionnaire technique to collect Second part analyzes field studies based on surveying journals as well as various references in connection using documents, final thesis, textbooks and scientific First part deals with library study and investigations operational/practical research and composed of 2 parts. The present study is an Research method: The present study is an operational/practical research and composed of 2 parts. First part deals with library study and investigations using documents, final thesis, textbooks and scientific journals as well as various references in connection with social contribution and women participations. Second part analyzes field studies based on surveying approach and using questionnaire technique to collect required data and information. Data required for women’s employment and their social, economic and cultural/educational contribution are gathered from first part of the said questionnaire. Identification of other indicators of social contribution is then accomplished through a 5-dimensional Likert feature used in a variety of procedures in which people’s viewpoints are asked in each question and the resulting remark shall be calculated after data gathering and analysis using SPSS platform for further statistical analysis.

Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of the questionnaire has been calculated using SPSS software. Besides, descriptive statistics is utilized here for data analysis and ranking raw remarks, design of frequency table as well as dispersion/spreading indicators such as average, standard deviation and variance. Expansion statistics is used for parametric and non-parametric tests and Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistical test is utilized for natural distribution of variances among variables. Loon test is then used for homogenous analysis of variables. K-II and regression as well as Pearson and Spearman correlation factor (if required) have been employed here to analyze the relationship among variables.

Practical and theoretical definitions of variables:
Independent variables:

- **Economic-social basis/foundations:** Age, education, dwelling, income, marital status
- **Employment:** Employment is a pervasive social phenomenon which is a major requirement in today’s modern life. People as social elements have to cope with such social reality. Therefore family as an entity undergoes variations and changes and parents role shall become evolved (MohammadiAsl, 2010). Concept of employment in the present study refers to going out of the house and being involved in a specific activity and during a definite period of time together with predetermined payment and fringe benefits. Regarding above, operational employment in the present study shall mean working hours (part-time, full-time) and type of work (cultural/ educational, production/manufacturing, Service Company, administration).

Dependent variable:

- **Social contribution:** Social contribution is rooted in building a proper communication in a group as localized and nationwide based on a process which could make sure of contribution phenomenon directing individual to public together with collaboration and cooperation and measurability using various simple or complicated approaches. Analysis have been made mainly to investigate the social communication based on cooperation with non-governmental organizations specifically assemblies and similar entities because such institutes are examples of non-profit businesses and activities made voluntarily. However, expansion and depth of contribution concept makes using various aspects of classification and type determination an inevitable attempt. Anyway, it should be noted that the contribution type, scope and depth are all dependent variables so independent variables should be looked into society history formation process, production evolution process, subjective and cultural development, value chain evolution and … (Piran, 1997). It should be noted that concept of contribution has been extremely influenced by various political-social contexts and has changed from simple forms into more complicated ones. Dr. Puran explains such evolutions as follow:
  - Primarily social contribution (official) which is known as communication with public and has been applied for centuries by religious leaders and ideological fans to attract other individuals and encompasses all individual contribution/participation toward ritual ceremonies. Such contributions could be called as ritual contributions
  - Behavior-driven social contribution or conditional is another type of social contribution following up social besiege through social psychological approaches and application of educational media as well as cultural practices to encourage everyone to contribute. The same method is used to instruct and educate leader of colonial countries
  - Robust social contribution realizing in form of confederations and assemblies based on social, cultural and socializing merging toward contribution.
  - Development-oriented social contribution defines as a social, global, comprehensive, multi dimensional and multi cultural process that summon people for national development
Operational definition of social contribution in the present study includes participating in a set of civil, supportive, revolution, cultural, local and sports … activities. Questionnaires prepared for estimation of social contribution in the present research has been designed in a 5-answer spectrum (completely agree, agree, indifferent, disagree, and completely disagree) and individual’s total remark shall be calculated through points obtained from each option.

Questionnaire items:

- **Social contribution:**
  - Working in house and training children is a better activity compared to taking charge of duties outside the house
  - Women should work as housewives; they are not required to participate in other affairs
  - Women can get high rank job positions along with men
  - Women can establish various institutes and assemblies
  - It seems that the society doesn’t care much about women’s activities
  - Some people believe that women’s contribution in assemblies and various careers have no influence on the country’s progress
  - I think the country doesn’t need my potentials and other’s for growth and development
  - Women’s contribution in a variety of social activities shall bring about benefits for them
  - Participation and contribution in various assemblies shall enhance the social ranking and positions
  - Most of social activities are meant to achieve economic utilizations
  - Being active in various social affairs has no effect on my destiny/fate

- **Group activities:**
  - I guess I would more successful in individual activities compare to group ones
  - I am encouraged when I participate in a group activity so that I would keep on contributing in other teamwork & group-work activities
  - In cases of crowding for a public problem, I’m not willing to participate in it
  - Advantages of businesses partnerships in Iran are less that its risk and subsequent predicaments
  - I was satisfied whenever I took part in a teamwork activity
  - I always participate in general activities
  - I play a part in assemblies and/or other studentship activities in the university
  - I am reluctant to take part in meeting that is held by Parents and Instructors Assembly even if I’m invited
  - I’d like to join someone as a partner in a economic/business activity if I have enough capital or money
  - I am not willing to study my lessons together with my friends
  - I take part in group-work activities of my dwelling place with my neighbors

- **Preference of Collective Benefits Compared to Individual ones:**
  - I’d like to do some cultural/educational and social activities during my leisure time
  - You may lose opportunities if you keep thinking of other people.
  - I prefer my benefits and my family profits in case of any conflict between society’s benefits and mine
  - Feeling of becoming more serviceable and useful is one of main reasons for choosing my major in the university
  - I am used to pursuing my personal affairs and activities and don’t look for trouble
  - In the present conditions and circumstances it is impossible to think about others
  - I usually cross the road junction regardless of lights
  - If the municipality asks for optional payment for construction of road blocks, I would contribute in it
  - I emphasize on my idea even if it is in contrast with the whole group’s idea
  - I overlook complying with a specific rule and regulation if its implementation harms my interests

- **Providence:**
  - I hope economic conditions of our society becomes well again in near future
  - If it goes like this, there would be no hope for future
  - I feel I’ll have a bright career in future
  - People’s problems and predicaments will increase in future
  - Political states of the society is improving
  - If you could see clearly, you’ll find out that our society’s situation is becoming worse every day
  - There is no hope for evolution of political structures of Iran society
  - Our children will utilize a better and more comfortable life
  - I’m not worried about future economic conditions of my family life
  - We’re facing a troublesome sociopolitical future

- **Feelings of performance and efficiency:**
  - I’m not capable of planning for my life
  - If any I come across any problem in my life, I can overcome it using my efforts
  - I feel my viewpoint cannot attract attentions in an assembly
• I can improve my prospects
• I guess I am not capable of changing my existing life situation
• Our fate has been predetermined which is an inevitable fact
• I guess my presence in an assembly is a decisive factor
• I guess I could be more successful if I chose another major during my education
• My participation in election and voting shall have a considerable influence on my future prospect

• Questions:

• Is there any significant correlation between women’s employment and their social contributions?
• Is there any significant correlation between social and economic foundations of employed women (age, education and income level) and their social contributions?
• Is there any significant correlation between part-time or full-time working conditions of women’s job and their social contributions?
• Is there any significant correlation between women’s work type (cultural, manufacturing, Service Company, official administration) and their social contributions?
• Is there any significant correlation between marital status of employed women and their social contributions?

• Assumptions:

• There is a significant correlation between employment of women and their social contribution
• There is a significant correlation between part-time or full-time working conditions of women’s job and their social contributions
• There is a significant correlation between women’s work type (cultural, manufacturing, Service Company, official administration) and their social contributions
• There is a significant correlation between marital status of employed women and their social contributions
• There is a significant correlation between women's employment and their social contributions in the society

Sampling method and statistical data: Since there are 4 types of careers for analysis of differences among working status and contribution level of women in the present study, statistical data are required to be selected from 4 classes of women. Therefore 200 employed women have been chosen from production/manufacturing, educational schools, governmental administrations and Service Companies in the 11th district of Tehran that have undergone questioning procedure using random sampling approaches.

Questionnaire validity and reliability: A51query questionnaire has been utilized as the research tool which is composed of 2 parts. First part included demographical data as age, gender, career, education level and marital status and second part included women’s employment and contribution.

The questionnaire mentioned above has been approved by 10 sociological psychiatrists, consultants and faculty members and has acquired conceptual validity. Calculation of the questionnaire reliability such as queries or statistical tests that estimates various features has been carried out using calculation of Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. Reliability of the said questionnaire in 30-individual sample was calculated using Cronbach’s alpha as 0.71.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Test the 1st hypothesis: There is a significant positive correlation between women’s social and economic foundations (age, education level, housing and income) and their social contribution

Statistical characteristics of social participation and social and economic base is shown in Table 1.

Based on the findings, resulting F-test corroborates the semantic aspects and reliability of model (p<0.012, R^2 = 0.63) which means that 63% of communication variances of projecting micro-scale socioeconomic foundation variables have the most influence on

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projection of women’s social contribution. As a result, linear regression model is valid. Regarding validity of correlation between predictive/projective variables (socioeconomic foundations) and criterion variable (social contribution level), results of the verified linear regression model in the regression coefficient table indicate that influencing housing factor (B = 0.264), age factor (B = 0.213), income factor (B = 0.323) and education level factor (B = 0.409) are estimated respect to t-test statistics in which such variables/factors could predict changes related to women’s social contribution as a positive trend. Such issue indicates positive correlation between micro-scale socioeconomic foundations (age, education, housing and income) of employed women and their social contribution level in the society.

Test the 2nd hypothesis: There is a significant positive correlation between women’s marital status and their social contribution, Coefficient of Correlation between Women’s Marital Status and their Social Contribution Level is shown in Table 2.

Regarding data of correlation table, the aforesaid assumption was tested. Results indicated that there is a significant correlation between women’s full-time or part-time job features and their social contribution in the 0.05 interval of Alpha coefficient. In the same way, zero- assumption is rejected and research hypothesis is supported. It could be said that there is a significant correlation between women’s full-time or part-time job features and their social contribution with 95% certainty level.

Test the 3rd hypothesis: There is significant correlation between women’s part-time or full-time job characteristics and their social contribution, correlation coefficient between women’s part-time or full-time job features and social contribution is shown in Table 3.

Regarding data included in correlation table, the aforesaid assumption was tested. Results indicated that there is a significant correlation between women’s full-time or part-time job features and their social contribution in the 0.05 interval of Alpha coefficient. In the same way, zero- assumption is rejected and research hypothesis is supported. It could be said that there is a significant correlation between women’s full-time or part-time job features and their social contribution with 95% certainty level.

Test the 4th hypothesis: There is a significant positive correlation between type of women’s careers (cultural/educational, production/manufacturing, Service Company and administrative) and their social contribution, Statistical characteristics of social participation and social and women’s careers is shown in Table 4.

Based on the findings, resulting F-test corroborates the semantic aspects and reliability of model (P = 0.019, R^2 = 0.694) which means that 69% of communication variances of projecting micro-scale socioeconomic foundation variables could be identified by predictive variables. As a result, linear regression model is valid. Regarding validity of correlation between predictive/projective variables (cultural/educational, administrative and Service Companies) and criterion variable (social contribution level), results of the verified linear regression model in the regression coefficient table indicate that level of influencing factors (service: B = 0.179, administrative: B = 0.280, cultural/educational: 0.573) are estimated respect to t-test statistics in which such variables/factors could predict changes related to women’s social contribution as a positive trend. Such issue indicates positive correlation between micro-scale careers features (educational/cultural, service and administrative) and social contribution level of women in the society. However regarding t-test statistics, such issue is not valid about the manufacturing/production companies.

Test the 5th hypothesis: There is a significant positive correlation between women employment and their social contribution in the society.

Correlation coefficient between women employment and their social contribution is shown in Table 5. Regarding data included in correlation table,
the aforesaid assumption was tested. Results indicated that there is a significant correlation between women’s employment status and their social contribution in the 0.05 interval of Alpha coefficient. In the same way, zero-assumption is rejected and research hypothesis is supported. It could be concluded that there is a significant correlation between women’s employment status and their social contribution with 95% certainty level.

CONCLUSION

What we went through indicates that employed women in the Iran society have more social contribution compared to other women. In other words, main research assumption has been proved and verified that there is a significant correlation between women’s social contribution and their employment status. In addition, regarding statistics, it is estimated that there is a positive correlation between micro-scale socioeconomic foundations (age, education level, housing and income) of employed women and their social contribution. Besides, there are other significant positive correlations between social contributions of women and their marital status, part-time or full-time working features and micro-scale factors (educational/cultural careers, Service Company and administrations). However regarding statistical data, there is not such significant correlation between production/manufacturing businesses and social contribution of women.

Anyway, it should be noted that the important influential point in growth and development of women’s social contribution could be addresses as defining the necessity for introducing their active presence as social and political contribution in the society’s public culture and becomes a cultural belief. On the other hand, being exposed to moral inclinations, adverse and decadent beliefs, and individual subjective assumptions toward women’s social and political contribution process may eradicate such contribution and prevent its internalization in the society.

REFERENCES


