International Journal of Sports, Exercise and Training Science
Volume 2, Number 3, 82-92, (2016) *Original Article*

Career Barriers of Women Managers in Sports Organizations*

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Abstract

Aim: This study aimed to carry out in order to determine the career impediments of career barriers of women managers in sports organizations.
Material and Methods: Interview method as a qualitative research technique was used in the research. Semi-structured interview form was preferred for this purpose. Sample consists of a total of 12 people who accepted the interview request, of which 6 women executives who work as branch managers and chiefs in Central Organization of Youth and Sports General Directorate and 6 women executives who work as presidents and members of board of directors in Sports Federations. The themes and codes are determined by performing content analysis on the data obtained via "Nvivo 8".
Results: As a result, it is found that sports organizations are subject to prejudices as well like other institutions and it is observed that organizational barriers are more prominent than others as career impediments.
Conclusion: These findings have shown that gender-oriented behaviours are valid for the sport organizations as they are for the other organizations. Accordingly, individual, organizational and social improvements are deemed necessary in context of career barriers.

Keywords
Sports organizations, Women managers, Career barriers

Article Info
Received: 08.04.2016
Accepted: 25.08.2016
Online Published: 24.09.2016

DOI: 10.18826/ijsets.04634

INTRODUCTION

Inequality of men and women in cultures and societies, as an interdisciplinary subject of debate, includes a lot of sub-domains that are waiting still to be improved. Among these sub-domains the most important one is the women who are working in management position but left in low and middle levels. The underlying causes of this reality are closely related with the structural and cultural characteristics of the societies (Baxter and Wright, 2000; Güldal, 2006; Işık, 2009; Öge, Karasoy and Kara, 2014).

Societal (Social) role; is the patterns of the behaviour due to individual's social status and position in various organizations (Demir and Acar, 1997). According to the research of social gender role theory, women and men are given different status in society and men have roles with higher status in this hierarchical structure. This difference is thought to affect the stereotypes determined for men and women and thus the expected behaviour and qualities from both genders. So, difference occurs between women and men who have different social roles. The gender differences will also change, when the women's and men's roles change; the gender differences will be reduced as the women have roles with higher status. In this context, gender stereotypes will disappear when the men and women equally shares the child care and housework responsibilities (when people have equal social roles). (Eagly, Wood and Diekman, 2000; Diekman, Eagly and Kulesa, 2002; Eagly and Steffen, 2000)

Eagly and Karau (2002) found out that, within the social role coherence, the potential of women managers for managerial positions are perceived to be less and women managers are tended to the behaviour perceived as management "recipe". Accordingly, women are performing managerial skills either in a behaviour pattern or in an expected ways. In this case, it is observed that the biological characteristics of men and women managerial qualities are not related with their managerial qualities and managerial characteristics depend more on their social roles (Eagly and Karau, 2002).

Numerous studies have been conducted so far on women's position in leadership and decision making/managerial positions, which have a special place in social gender analysis. The general opinion is that there are social roles and stereotypes and politics and bureaucracy are observed to be

*This paper is derived from a master thesis

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male-dominated (Morrison, White and Van Velsor, 1987; Adler and Izraeli, 1994; Melkas and Anker, 1997; Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1999; Eagly, Wood, and Diekman, 2000). The research findings on women's career barriers have shown parallelism with suggestions of Social Gender Theory. The women showing presence in the public arena are facing different prejudices because of their physical weakness and their physical appearance (Spence and Helmreich, 1978; Deaux and Lewis, 1983, 1984; Eckes, 1994; Glick and Fiske, 1996; Eagly et al., 2000). Turkish society, which is defined as a patriarchal society, places woman in the home area and its extensions, while incorporating men more in public space. Indeed, the studies show that women do not choose positions management like which requires extensive time and travel, due to their anxiety for their social gender roles (Günindi-Ersöz, 1998). Aytaç, while explaining women's prevention of promotion to management and upper echelon, defined those barriers as "invisible/non-official" barriers based on the "Glass Ceiling" concept (Aytaç, 1997). This problem, which is called as the Glass Ceiling Syndrome, is also said to exist not only in developing countries but also in developed countries. The absence of a women employee in a high level management position where the women profile and can be shown as an example in the business, causes in the rise of prejudices against women and results in an opinion suggesting women are more appropriate for middle-level jobs (Powell and Butterfield, 1994; Erdoğmuş, 2003, Öge et all., 2014).

Indeed, a lot of question marks emerged related with the social gender approach of the sports organizations that have been researched since the 1980's and findings showed that the number of women in sports organizations is lesser (Koca, 2011). Based upon this, the need arises for creating a general framework to determine the career barriers of women managers in sports management in Turkey and for similar studies to be conducted in this area. This research, aims to determine the career barriers of women in managerial positions that are working in General Directorate of Youth Sport (G.S.G.M) and in Sports Federations in Turkey.

METHOD

Participants

Research is carried out in a qualitative pattern. Phenomenological pattern, which is appropriate for the nature of this research, is used. Langdridge (2007) defines phenomenology as a discipline that "aims to focus on people's perceptions of the world in which they live in and what it means to them; a focus on people's lived experience". The research consists of the sixty-three women who work in the management positions in G.S.G.M. and of the twenty-seven women who work in the management positions in sports federations. Research sample is formed by the purposive sampling methods. "The typical case sampling" and additionally convenience sampling are used (Stacey, 1970). Stakeholder Analysis, which is one of the methods used in the collection of data of qualitative researches, is used in determination of the sample size (Stacey, 1970).

Sample, based on this, consists of a total of twelve people who accepted the interview request, of which six are women executives who work as branch managers and chiefs in G.S.G.M. and the other six are women executives who work as presidents and members of board in Sport Federations. In the research, the semi-structure interview form was used. The semi-structured interview form is developed by the researcher by consulting the expert views and document analyses before the interviews the forms intelligibility is evaluated by making a pilot interview. In the collection of data, the semi-structured interview form that consists of 15 questions is used in a total of twelve interviews with women executives. The 6 of the interviews of which 6 are done in the premises of G.S.G.M. and the other 6 are done in the premises of centres of Sports Federations.

Analysis of Data

The categorical content analysis is used in the analysis of the interviews of the stakeholders. First of all, the main topics on the subject are determined for the categorical content perspective (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011). These main topics are determined as "Being a Woman", "Being a Woman Executive", "Career" and "Career Barriers". Subsequently, sub-themes related with the themes are determined in line with the conceptual literature. Themes and sub-themes which are obtained after the coding are presented in the form of tables and interpreted descriptively.

RESULTS

The following findings are obtained by making content analysis based on the answers provided by the women executives to the interview form questions. The three main themes, which are in line with literature, are provided respectively after the data analysis. The G.S.G.M.s' women executives are coded as W.E.1 and the sports federations' women executives are coded as W.E.2. for the ease of understanding and evaluation

Findings Related to the Personal Status of Women Executives

The personal data of 12 women executives are shown below:

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Women Executives

Position Status	Frequency	%
Chief	3	25,0
Branch Manager	3	25,0
President of the Federation	2	16,7
Member of the Federation Board of Directors	4	33,3
Age Status		
25-27	1	8,3
28-30	3	25,0
32-34	1	8,3
Education Status		
Bachelor	11	91,7
Master's Degree	1	8,3
Marital Status		
Single	2	16,7
Married-with Children	7	58,3
Married-without Children	2	16,7
Divorced/Widowed -with Children	1	8,3
Period of Work		
Less than 1 year	1	8,3
1-3 year	6	50,0
4-6 year	3	25,0
7-9 year	2	16,7
Total	**12**	**100,0**
Number of Children		
1	3	38
2	5	62
Total	**8**	**100,0**

Individual Career Barriers for Women Executives

The findings regarding the career barriers that result from the individual barriers of women executives' in sports institutions are provided below.

As a result of the analysis of the obtained data, the themes in line with literature are formed for the career barriers and these are grouped as "Taking on Multiple Roles" and "Personal Preferences and Perceptions". The codes which are related with the career barriers are listed in the order of the most highlighted problem to the least highlighted problem.

Table 2. Individual Career Barriers for Women Executives

General Directorate of Youth Sport (W.E.1)	• TAKING ON MULTIPLE ROLES • Binary work load • Physical fatigue • Time saving • Responsibility for children • Hard without the husband's support • Sacrifice • PERSONAL PREFERANCES AND PERCEPTIONS • Unable to get along with women • Continuing with difficulty • Boredom • Recession • Identity of sports organization (masculine)
Sport Federation (W.E.2.)	• TAKING ON MULTIPLE ROLES • Easily executable with the husband's support • Responsibility for children • Having plans • Postponing marriage/children • PERSONAL PREFERANCES AND PERCEPTIONS • To have a masculine attitude/ Harsher attitude • Identity of sports organization (masculine) • I don't losed it/there is no such thing/feminine • Planning education • Self improvement

It is observed that when the codes under the "taking on multiple roles" theme for the women executives is examined the group W.E.1 representing the government side of the sports organizations stated the difficulty of "binary workload". In addition to this, "physical fatigue", responsibility for children" and "hard without the husband's support" emerged as other important individual career barriers for W.E.1 group. Moreover, it is identified that the women executives serving in chief and branch manager positions in the public institutions are struggling to keep the balance between the home and work life.

It is identified that the W.E.2 group carry on taking don't give up on their family responsibilities and demands/necessities of the family. Beside, their preference is observed to be in favour of management and this can be seen as a positive picture for the women executives that serve in sports organizations voluntarily.

The both groups are observed to be struggling to keep the balance between the home and the work life. As a result of the analysis on the research group, this balance is found out to originate from the husband's support.

It is observed that the research group benefited from husband's support in their careers, in contrary to the results of many research (Mizrahi, 2010, Nancy and Fitzgerald, 1987) conducted. According to the research conducted, having a career results in late marriage, unable to having children or divorce in many of the cases (Özkaya, 2001). This is also not in line with this research's findings. Despite this, even if it is found out that stakeholders are in balance in their home and work lives according to their discourses, this situation is not thought to encourage any career development or orientation. Indeed, the research of Aycan also highlighted that women are not very eager and ambitious in their career goals in Turkey (Aycan, 2004). From this point, it is deduced that taking on multiple roles originating from the individual barriers is the main reason of women being non career oriented.

Even if it seems as the women are indirectly promoted to sacrificing their feminine characteristics to be able to act as executives according to research findings, women executives' self-perception and behavioural patterns is observed as a more masculine behaviour in the male-dominated executive positions. The avocations of a group of stakeholders, who are advocating that they are not feminine, that this is a style is evaluated as a self-protection method.

The research findings, in line with the literature, indicate that most of the women executives either pursue a path to be genderless or forgetting their femininity. It is observed in the related literature that women are intensively afraid to attract attention, refusing even to be their own success stories' centre, transferring the success to other parties and avoiding even to be recognized, preferring simple hair styles and nails being not too long, preferring the understated nail polishes (dark/bright) (Fels, 2004; Hale, 1999; Rosenthal, 1995; Stevens and Denisi, 1980; Arıkan, 1999; Mills, 1988, Maddock, 1999; Ergeneli and Akçamete, 2004).

Organizational Career Barriers of Women Executives

The findings that are to be discussed under this theme include results that will cover all three themes of the research. The individual and social barriers as well the sub-themes of the organizational barriers consist of.

Table 3. Organizational Career Barriers of Women Executives

General Directorate of Youth Sport (W.E.1)	• ORGANIZATION CULTURE/POLICIES • Reality/More Working/Ambition • Woman not being able to get along with woman • Negative reaction-feedback • Promotion examinations • Marriage/Burden of having children /double responsibility • INTER-ORGANIZATION/OUTER-ORGANIZATION RELATIONS • Woman not being able to get along with woman • Rewards of social-politic circle/Bureocratic relations/Political relations/phylosophy of life • Discrimination • Man solidarity/lobbies/advantage • Selfish • Having a closed mind • Mentor • Insufficient • Selfishness
Sport Federation (W.E.2.)	• ORGANIZATION CULTURE/POLICIES • Lazy - Loving/accepting to be at back stage • More working/Ambition • Positive discrimination • Non-difficult working conditions • INTER-ORGANIZATION/EXTER-ORGANIZATION RELATIONS • Positive discrimination • Mentor • Acceptance • Insufficient • Lazy • Useless • Mentor Radequacy

According to the research results, the W.E.1 group's responses to promotion criteria focused on "women must work more". They pointed out that they receive negative reactions and feedback originating from being women in the organization. The conducted research also pointed out that the entry of women into work life is not blocked, however there exists a organization culture that leads them to being second and inefficient and also pointed that men are reluctant to share the power and uncomfortable to work with women (Maddock, 1999; Hale, 1999). In parallel to this finding, W.E.1 group mentioned about the political circle and the bureaucratic relations regarding the "outer organization relations" are the difficulties of a carrier , despite the examinations in the organization may be beneficial for promotion (refer to table of outer-organization relations). Based on this point, it is deduced that the women are not still members of the organization in executive positions in the public institutions and the re-organization of organizational policies of the public organizations can be suggested as a solution for this.

The W.E.1 group, who gave an opinion for the "mentor" system, declared that they do not find current mentor women executives sufficient and they had trouble finding mentors for themselves in the organization. It is identified that the W.E.1 group show prejudice and resentment to each other and self-centered behaviour is exhibited by women executives. In contrary of the other researches, it can be concluded that the existing women executives do not think about the potential benefits of acceptance in the organization, constructing a base of support and improving their work performance through the mentoring system they may employ (Üstüngüler, 2004; Mat, 2004; Palankök, 2004; Noe, 1988).

W.E.1 group stated, as they think that women cannot get along with women in and outer-organization relations and these causes a conflict of social gender stereotype. The research findings showed that the personal differences are this conflict that prevents to establish an informal communication network. These findings are not in parallel with many researches that state women cannot enter relation networks due to of their responsibilities in their private lives (Palankök, 2004; Yaylacı, 2004; Temel, Misci and Yakın, 2006).

W.E.2 group stated that there is no gender discrimination in the organizational communication and there is no discrimination in assignments and even there is a positive discrimination for women.

W.E.2 group defined the people of their same gender as lazy, loving to be at backstage and admitted and this finding of the research is parallel with many other researches. According to these researches, it is expressed that women have less confidence in themselves and thus they avoid taking risks (Üstüngüler, 2004; Ergeneli and Akçamete, 2004; Sefer, 2006).

Indeed, if the findings of the research conducted are taken as a basis, it may be thought that the women executives working in the sport federations voluntarily are the women with personality called "queen bee" syndrome. The women having characteristics that are defined as the "queen bee syndrome" that women are guilty promoted in the work life; and they think that these women have to for not being stand against the discriminatory behaviour and have to make individual efforts in order to be promoted (Oswald and VanMatre, 1990; Cooper, 1997; Ögüt, 2006; Akoğlan, 1997; Üstüngüler, 2004; Zel, 2008). In theory this results as "women executives approaches to men executives behavioural patterns by changing their behaviour in work environment in time and reacting to other women workers similar to the men executives" (Zel, 2008). The avocations of W.E.2 group that they are not feminine under the individual barriers category also support this opinion under this context. W.E.2 group, by referring to their personal preference and perceptions, also support the opinion that there are no organizational barriers.

As a general evaluation, it is thought that the women executives serving in the sport federations are more agile, self-confident and risk taking and the public executives are not career oriented and accepting to be at the backstage.

Table 4. Social Career Barriers of Women Executives

General Directorate of Youth Sport (W.E.1)	•PROFESSIONAL DISCRIMINATION •Man solidarity •Facilitating •GENDER PREJUDICES •The imageof organization identity/Prejudices •Useless •Whining •Hectic •Chatterer •Rigorous •The disadvantage of being single/ Providing sexual association
Sport Federation (W.E.2.)	•PROFESSIONAL DISCRIMINATION •Equality •Facilitating •GENDER PREJUDICES •The image of sport organization/Prejudices •Lazy •Work aversion

The discourse of W.E.1 group stating "men solidarity" in executive positions is parallel with the related literature. The prejudice related with the gender characteristics that originate from the idea of the personality differences between men and women, the belief of social role differences and labelling based on genders (Fidan, İşçi and Yılmaz, 2006) is a fact that still maintain its validity in today's society. Women cannot persist in professional fields such as executive positions, as their numbers are low and also due to women identity (Ögüt, 2006). Indeed in the related literature, there exists the idea of women cannot dedicate herself into her work as a primary task in an absolute manner and women have more reasons to quit their jobs when compared to men (Wood and Newton, 2006). Long time travels are seen as a situation that is not preferred especially by the married women. A lot of reasons such as this one are observed as a result of society forming specific roles for women and men. The rules formed by society forces perceiving men and women in specific stereotypes (Kottis, 1993, Akpınar, 2012; Öge et al., 2014).

The women executives who expressed that being women is a facilitating situation for managing execution position despite the fact that the men have prejudices for them with the adjectives like "useless, hectic, chatterer, work averse". This supports the related literature (Maddock, 1999; Arıkan, 1999; Stevens and Denisi, 1980, Rosenthal, 1995). In traditional societies, due to the social conditionings it is believed that the women executives cannot make right decisions in the unexpected crises as men does, they will not want to take risks, they will depend more on their femininity rather than their skills and that the feminine behaviour will reduce the judgments capacity. This situation will either lead to a too soft or to too strict management. A different finding is not observed even if this discourse is reduced specially to sport organizations. The prejudice associated with gender shows a social content rather than an organizational one, when the view is taken into consideration that "sports language" is related with the cultural differences (Mills-Lamont, 1998).

Indeed another discussion topic at this point stems from the W.E.1 group who advocate that women cannot get along with women at the organizational level. The templates for the roles formed by society for the women and the templates for the patriarchal family and social structures that are shaped by women's and men's nature during the course of human history, results in accepting the man-domination in work life. As a social learning, women think that they cannot get along with other women in executive positions. It is thought that the women who think feminine characteristic is more appropriate for executive positions, have contradictory statements based on these social learning.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

For the purpose of the research to determine the career barriers for women in sport organizations; when "individual, organizational and social career barriers" are evaluated based upon the views of branch managers and chief women executives that serve in General Directorate of Youth Sport.

In individual factors, it is identified that even if the responsibilities for multiple roles, binary work load and an effort to maintain a balanced home-work life is observed, the women executives do not have any career orientation or a development effort, and under this context women executives cannot get along with other women and they do not prefer a feminine attitude as sport organization's identity is masculine.

In organizational factors it is identified that; women think that they have to work harder to get promoted in organization and they are having negative reactions and feedbacks due to being women, they think that there having women-men discrimination in assignments, they report that women cannot get along with other women in and outer-organizational communication networks that and men are in solidarity and in lobbies, they found that the number of current mentor women executives inadequate, women executives are in a resentful behaviour with each other.

Finally, according to the coding listed under the Social Factors, it is identified that; women's gender characteristic is a facilitating situation for their management, prejudices for women executives are found in all organizations and they do not show any difference in sport organizations. The same "Individual, organizational and social career barriers" are also examined for the reviewed regarding women executives in sport federations serving as president and as member of board. In the Individual factors, it is identified that they are upholding their multiple role responsibilities in a balanced way but this effort of balancing does not create a field for any career expectation and women executives are selecting an attitude far from the femininity.

In the organizational factors, it is identified that women executives perceive other women as lazy, standing at the back all and stay admitted and that, there exist positive discrimination for women in assignments have ever there is no gender discrimination in organizational communication networks. Under the social barriers theme in women executives' statements, it is concluded that prejudice arises from the sport organization's masculine image and women decide to stand back because of this reason. When the results are reviewed, it is quite obvious that there exist individual, organizational and social barriers in front of women executives. It is observed that career barriers are significantly felt especially by women executives serving in General Directorate of Youth Sport. The idea of women cannot getting along with women, is a finding that have to be studied more thoroughly.

As an overview, despite the increase of women in work life, this increase is not at same rate in management field. It is concerning that there exist only two women executives as the federation presidents in research sample and additionally the low number of women serving in board in federations. These findings have shown that gender-oriented behaviours are valid for the sport organizations as they are for the other organizations. Accordingly, individual, organizational and social improvements are deemed necessary in context of career barriers.

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