IRANIAN WOMEN'S ROLE AND POSITION IN SCIENCE AND EDUCATION;  
A HISTORICAL STUDY

Ladan Rahbari  
Ph.D. Candidate in Sociology  
University of Mazandaran  
Rahbari.ladan@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Women have never achieved an equal status as men in the history of scientific work. Historical study of women's roles and participation in the world and in Iran shows that there is not a significant distinction between western women and Iranian women's status in scientific work until the last decades of the nineteenth century. Before this period, women's education and role in educational institutions was limited in western societies and in Iran, due to the domestic roles and cultural ethics and virtues. In late nineteenth century, women's education and role in scientific work developed in most west societies, while there was an education lag for Iranian women. In the contemporary era, women have not yet reached the same place as men in science. Comparing Iranian, European and American rates of higher education attendance indicates that rates of female entrance in higher education are similar and sexual percentage of women in both undergraduate and postgraduate studies in Iran is nearly equal to many European countries. There is, however an apparent difference between Iran and west in the rate of placement of women in managerial, educational and collegial positions. Although the same rate of women enter university as in European countries, in Iran, female faculty members, female members of scientific institutions, female lecturers and specially women in faculty or university managerial positions are extremely rare and it shows no significant change by time. Sociological theories have focused on two factors of women’s participation and external exclusion to explain women’s lower status in knowledge and scientific institutions. By reviewing the empirical evidence, I discuss that in the case of Iran, according to the gap between high rates of female educational achievements and low rates of female placement in formal positions, the external exclusion is the dominant factor.

Field of Research: Education, exclusion, gender, Iran, participation, science, women.

1. Introduction

Women make up one half of the world’s population and thus its human capital. Educating and empowering girls and women and making full use of their talents, capabilities and leadership capacities in the global economy, politics and society are fundamental elements of succeeding to reach high levels of development in economic, social and political dimensions.

For many centuries women have not participated in scientific production because of their gender. Sociology of knowledge shows that women's current situation in scientific work is not an accidental result of history but a result of dominant social, cultural and political structures. The public-private duality has made women’s status a more unstable one in many social roles. Regarding educational roles, Tamboukou (2008) explains that teaching children has always been considered to be in the middle of public-private continuum. Anthropologist Sherry Ortner (2006) similarly notes that
women's position in culture is between the natural and the cultural and they are also considered as the linkage between culture and nature. Women train and nurture the most natural shape a human being has, namely infants, to become cultural beings or adults. Although women are eligible to teach, their role is bounded to teaching young non-adult trainees. Women's role in educating young children is linked to their natural role as a mother (Tambouko, 2008, p. 138).

There is a large body of literature claiming that eastern women have always had a low status in knowledge. This claim is equally generalizable to western and eastern societies before nineteenth century. Historical evidence shows that in both Asian and European countries, between eighth and nineteenth century, there was a common idea of femininity that was considered to be in contradiction with education and mental activity (Najabadi, 2005, p. 181). This ideology was rooted in Aristotelian ideas of gender inequality. Many intellectuals such as Rousseau, Kant and Comte believed that women were anatomically unable to conduct mental activity (DeJardin, 2010, p. 15). In Early nineteenth century European constitution passed a law to prohibit any kind of formal training for women, except domestic chores and virtue courses, in order to protect the familial union (Groult, 2000, p. 107). In pre-nineteenth century Europe women had four choices of life: marriage, becoming a nun, a maidservant or a prostitute (Laven, 2003). Iranian women's choices were the same as three of the choices of the European; but they could not avoid marriage as Christian nuns did because a woman's existence was highly defined by her bound to male relatives especially her husband. In both societies, Women's education was limited to reading religious texts, learning ethical-cultural female virtues and learning how to do domestic chores such as sewing.

In the contemporary era, in many countries such as Iran, although women have entered university with the same rate as men (and with a higher rate in many fields), there are relatively very few women in high collegial, educational and managerial position in scientific institutions such as universities. Janalizade, Moghimi and Amini (2008) have reviewed sociological literature on women's role in scientific work in Iranian scientific journals; they have recognized two categories based on the theoretical contents of academic inquiries. First category studies women's participation in knowledge production and its socio-cultural consequences, while second category which consists of a smaller portion of literature focuses on unequal shares and gender discrimination and female exclusion from scientific institutions. Whether women's position and role in science is a result of their low participation or an existent discrimination is the main question addressed in this paper.

In this article, I will try to picture Iranian women's historical and contemporary role and position in scientific work, by focusing on data available on universities. First we have to take a brief look at Iranian women's history of education to be able to analyze their role and position in contemporary science.

2. Research Method

This research is based on systematic review of data derived from historical documents, official archives and websites and academic researches and books. Systematic review is referred to a method of reviewing with the scope of providing a summary description and combination of the results in a field of study, sometimes followed by re-analyzing them; if the re-analysis is included in the research, the systematic review becomes a meta-analysis (Tabatabayi and Vdadhir, 2010, p. 62). In this research, meta-analysis was done on all available data on women's role and position in science and education in the subfield of sociology of knowledge. To do this, first, possible resources have been identified. Second, resources were systematically reviewed and a summary was extracted from important results. Third, gathered data was categorized conceptually; these categories will be...
discussed in subsequent parts of this paper. Sociology of science and knowledge has very recently attracted Iranian social science scholars; thus the literature on women's role and position in science was not vast. After categorizing data, accordance and contradictions of the approaches and findings are highlighted and obscurities in researches are recognized.

3. Brief History of Iranian Women's Education

There is very little historical evidence available about women's (and men's) role and position in knowledge and their education from the pre-Islamic ancient Persia. Several historical invasions to Persian emperor, including Hellenic invasion in 334 BC-331 BC, Islamic invasion in 637 and Mongol invasion in 1219, followed by centuries of unrest and anarchy, have destroyed most existent historical evidences, books and documents. The oral literature is relatively unreliable. Consistent and reliable evidence is however available since around sixteenth century, since the onset of Safavid dynasty's ruling in Persia. The Safavid ruled Persia from 1501 to 1722. During this period, science and technology made a lot of progress. In this period, historical records show, that there were women who contributed in scientific work by writing books, teaching and founding libraries and mosques (Riahi, 2006, p. 218). However, there were no official education for women and the few exceptions of female accomplishment were women whose male close relatives (husbands, fathers …) were among scarce intellectual elite who believed in advantages of women's education. Despite the expansions and upgrades in knowledge, in all Safavid period, there were only a few women scholars who had some impact on knowledge production.

After the Safavid's collapse, there came decades of anarchy and civil war until Qajar dynasty took over the throne in late eighteenth century. Qajars were powerful monarchs under heavy influence of western culture who were interested in modernizing the society. They founded Dar Al-Fonun which was one of the most important events in Persian history of education. Dar Al-Fonun was a modern only-male college to train upper-class Persian youth in Medicine, Engineering, Military Science, and Geology. The first formal education system for women in Iran was founded at 1848 by the Qajar reformist king Nasereddin Shah (Abrahamian, 2008, p. 13). However, this formal education was not general and it only covered a small portion of society who were mostly rich, noble and khan families.

General schooling system for women started in 1912 (Najmabadi, 2005, p. 201). However, its development and extending the system throughout the country took place very slowly due to inefficient management of monarch administrators, state internal problems and external interference in internal national affairs. Iranian women's education started to expand since 1950s in Pahlavi dynasty's era. Literacy rate have constantly been growing since 1956 until 2010; in a way that women's literacy rate grew 22 percent from 1986 to 1996 and it reached 80.34 in 2006 (Khazali, 2010, p. 6). It is estimated that literacy rate is 81 percent for women and 89 percent for men in 2012 (with a sex ration of 0.90) ranking the country 100th among 132 countries in the world (Hausmann, Tyson, Bekhouche, Zahidi, 2012, p. 49).

Women's university and college education was delayed until the last decades of twentieth century; while in England, first woman entered university in 1893 and in United States universities such as Chicago, Cornell and Berkeley started to accept female students in 1890s (DeJardin, 2010, p. 17-18). After Iranian revolution in 1979, women's enrollment in tertiary education has grown. According to data provided on UNESCO website, women's enrollment in tertiary education was 51 percent in 2005; while in 2007 the same ratio was 72 in Canada and 70 in United Kingdom. In 2012, world economic forum declared that Iran is in rank 101 of educational attainment parity score among 135 countries. Educational attainment parity index is a combination of female literacy and female enrolment in various levels of education (Hausmann, Tyson and Zahidi, 2012). This rank shows that
despite having made progress through a more equalitarian educational system, comparing with other countries, Iranian women’s right to equal education has not been realized.

4. Women’s Contemporary Position in Iranian Universities

First research on women's position in Iranian universities goes back to 1991. This study, conducted by Zahedi (2002) focuses on three major universities in Iran's capital city: Tehran University, Shahid Beheshti University and Allame Tabatabayi University. This research had two important results: 1. Female academic position rates are relatively very low and 2. Gender is a defining factor in the elections of eligible candidates for open positions. This situation has not been dramatically modified until today. Mahdavi and Latifi’s (2009, p. 8) study in all Iranian public universities in 2009 shows that from an overall amount of 79617 university chair holders, 18.25 percent are female and 81.75 percent are male.

In this article women's role and position in universities will be investigated from two aspects. First I will discuss women's scientific position; referring to their role in lecturing, writing, researching and membership in scientific committees. Then women's role in executive positions, such as membership or directing administrative roles such as managing collegial associations and universities will be investigated.

4.1. Women's Scientific Position

Scientific position refers to women's position as faculty chairs, lecturers, scientific council members and scientific journal referees, writers and members.

4.1.1. Women in University Chairs

In the last few decades women have appropriated a higher university entrance rate than men. Tavakkol, Yegane and Sadati (2010, p. 29) have studied overall university entrance sex ratio in ten years from 1993 to 2003. They show that 68 percent of all bachelor degree, 52 percent of master degree and 35 percent of doctorate degree entrants have been female students. Sexual ratio is obviously going up by moving to higher levels of education.

Javaheri and Dariapour (2008) report women's percentage in university chairs in eight provinces of the country as in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Overall university chairs population</th>
<th>Female population</th>
<th>Female percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mazandaran</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilan</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isfahan</td>
<td>1214</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamedan</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khuzestan</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tehran</td>
<td>4921</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fars</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The average number of university chairs in above eight provinces is 8.2 percent which is obviously very low comparing to the average 35 percent female doctorate graduates. There is also evidence showing that women's scientific position is not developing. Zahedi’s (2002) study, in three major public universities from 1991 to 2001, shows that women’s share in faculty membership has not significantly grown in ten years. Her findings are reported in table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Female share in 1991</th>
<th>Female share in 2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tehran University</td>
<td>9.19%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahid Beheshty</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allame Tabatabayi</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparing Tehran's female chair percentage with female percentages on table 2 implies that there is not homogeneity in female university chair percentages in different universities. This implies that no nationwide common long-term plan is exerted to empower women in scientific arena.

### 4.1.2. Women as Part-time Lecturers

We can by now conclude that women’s position as university chair has not been equal to men, nor has it made any significant development in the last few decades. Whether there is a glass ceiling at work needs more evidence to be clarified. In order to provide a clearer image of women’s position in teaching positions of higher education, yearly statistics provided on official website of Iranian Ministry of Science Research and Technology have been used and percentage of female university lecturers, in all academic levels from 1995 to 2008 have been extracted. Findings are reported in table 3 as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational year</th>
<th>Female percentage</th>
<th>Female percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995-1996</td>
<td>18.30</td>
<td>18.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-1997</td>
<td>17.71</td>
<td>18.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-1998</td>
<td>16.82</td>
<td>18.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-1999</td>
<td>17.66</td>
<td>18.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>18.38</td>
<td>10.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is an obvious decline in the percentage of female lecturers in universities from 2006-2008. Comparing to the average percentage of 8.2 female chair holders in 8 Iranian provinces with the average percentage of 17.10 female lecturers indicates that female graduates are most likely to have a temporary position in universities than a constant post as university chair; so we may say that universities avoid hiring full-time female graduates.

To prove the validity of this conclusion, two national formal announcements for filling university chairs which are published on Iranian Ministry of Science Research and Technology official website have been reviewed. In 2011 national announcement for hiring fulltime university chairs published the names and requirements of all universities willing to hire PhD graduates; in this announcement 16.50 percent of universities declared that they would hire only male graduates despite having no limitations to accept female graduates. This trend was repeated in 2012 when again 15.22 percent of
universities omitted female applicants at the very onset of evaluation process. These universities accepted students of both sexes. Mahdavi and Latifi (2009) have investigated several factors' impact on female university chair holders' academic upgrade. They indicate that scientific work, achievements and experience explain their upgrade with a 0.23 beta coefficient in multivariate regression analysis; this result shows that other factors apart from scientific achievements are at work to hire candidates of academic positions.

4.1.3. Women as Researchers and Members of Scientific Councils

The amount of researches by a scientist has been proved to be a function of several factors such as personal effort, academic level and the quantity and quality of scientific networks. In Iranian universities, not only female chair holders are rare, but they also benefit from fewer advantages of scientific networks, informal social interactions and communications with colleagues (Mahdavi and Latifi, 2009, p. 12). Despite these limitations, and despite the unchanging rate of female scholars in universities, there is evidence that women's share in individual scientific researches has expanded. Zahedi (2002) has reported changes in women's share of scientific publications between 1991 and 2001 in three major universities. These findings are reported in table 4.

| Table 4: Changes in percentage of women's share of publishing scientific books, articles and formal researches between 1991 and 2001 |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Women's share in book and article publication | 12.1% | 45.4% |
| Women's share in formal researches | 27.4% | 58.1% |

This evidence slightly shows that women are actually in possession of high capacities to reach some achievements; because despite being an obvious minority in the academic realm and encountering structural limitations they endeavor to reach better positions.

There is also evidence that women are in minority in scientific councils. Ezazi (2009) has studied women's involvement in three Iranian sociological journals. She showed that women have a relatively low involvement in peer viewing of articles (11%) and in scientific committee (4%) and only 12 percent of published articles are written by a woman as the first writer.

Women's low membership in scientific councils and associations seems to be a universal problem. In 2002, approximately 10 percent of all fulltime members of 20 scientific academies in the world were female and this rate is nearly 4.4 in Nobel Prize organization (Janalizade, 2007, p. 196). Goulden, Mason and Frasch (2011, p. 144) discuss that although female students are in majority in many disciplines such as social sciences and psychology, scientific organizations and institutions are still selecting their members based on traditional gender ideologies.

4.2. Women in Executive Positions

United Nations reports that in year 2000, women are holding 30 percent of work force in administrative and executive jobs in all categories (Javaheri and Dariapour, 2008, p. 85); while in Iran according to World Economic Forum yearly report of 2012, female legislators, senior officials and
managers hold 13 percentage of the whole existing positions (0.15 female to male sex ratio), ranking the country 97th among 132 countries (Hausmann, Tyson, Bekhouche, Zahidi, 2012, p. 47).

Iranian public universities have never had a female University Head except for universities which accept only female students (Mahdavi and Latifi, 2009, p. 2). Lack of women in university managerial position seems to be somehow universal. In 2010, only 7 percent of all universities around the world had a female Head (Tavakkol, Yegane and Sadati, 2010, p. 29). Zahedi (2002) has investigated women’s position in high university committees, boards of directors and other managerial positions from 1991 to 2001. She shows that not only women have little share, but also in the duration of ten years there is not a significant change in these positions. Her findings are reported in table 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of female members</th>
<th>in 1991</th>
<th>in 2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Female scholars believe that cultural beliefs are the most effective obstacle impeding their promotion to high academic levels and managerial positions; they also believe that sexual discrimination is the result of patriarchal ideology (Zahedi, 2002). Hoseini, Saeedi and Salehi (2007) have used logistic regression to estimate women’s luck for acceptance in a managerial position. They conclude that there is no correlation between women’s administrative capabilities and their election for such positions. There is much evidence to support the hypothesis that women are facing external cultural and structural obstacles to reach high positions; for example, there are also indications in the literature which show that culturally defined stereotypes have also impacted women’s willingness to achieve high positions. Tavakkol, Yegane and Sadati (2010) have investigated the correlation between patriarchal socialization and women’s tendency to enter higher studies and hold administrative positions. They indicate that women who believe in gender stereotypes and traditional female roles are less likely to volunteer for such positions (2010, p. 46).

5. Gender Educational Gap

Until now we have provided descriptive information about women’s history of education and development of their current position and role in scientific institutions, especially universities. These findings demonstrate that women have been struggling to reach their rightful positions in a gendered hierarchical structure. By merely reporting these descriptive findings it is not possible to exactly picture the development of women’s position in scientific institutions. A more appropriate analytic tool is the Global Gender Gap Index introduced by World Economic Forum which is a framework for capturing the magnitude and scope of gender-based disparities and tracking their progress (Hausmann, Tyson, Bekhouche, Zahidi, 2012, p. 3). This index seems appropriate for three main reasons: First, it focuses on measuring gaps rather than levels. Second, it captures gaps in outcome variables rather than gaps in means or input variables. Third, it ranks countries according to gender equality rather than women’s empowerment. World Economic Forum’s report of gender gap index includes 132 countries around the world including Iran. This report shows that Iran's gender gap which consists of gender inequality in four spheres of economy, politics, health and education have not changed during the past seven years. It is also reported that Iran slips in the rankings to the 127th position in 2012, due to a worsening of the estimated earned income ratio (Hausmann, Tyson, Bekhouche, Zahidi, 2012, p. 27). Table 6 shows Iran’s rank of gender gap from 2006 to 2012.

Table 6: Changes in percentage of female membership in scientific councils and committees and managerial positions between 1991 to 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of female members</th>
<th>in 1991</th>
<th>in 2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Iran’s gender gap from 2006 to 2012.
In the case of educational attainment Iran's rank in 2012 is 101\textsuperscript{st} among 132 countries showing that in this country, women still make up a fairly low percentage of the senior and highly skilled positions. Table 7 shows Iran's rank of gender gap in educational attainments from 2006 to 2012.

### Table 7: Iran's rank of gender gap index in educational attainments from 2006-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iran's rank</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Discussion

At the beginning of this article the main question of the paper was addressed as 'is women's position and role in science a result of their low participation or an existent discrimination?'. To respond such a question a theoretical framework is necessary. There have been several explanations suggested in the framework of several sociological theories for women's current position and role in science and education. Two categories of sociological theories have been recognized in this research: Participation theories and Exclusion theories.

6.1. Participation Theories

There are several theories claiming that women's low participation is not the result of any social, cultural or political structures but the natural outcome of their sexuality. Difference theory and role conflict theory are among them. Difference theory claims that women are unable to reach the same positions because of their inherited natural traits. Lawrence H. Summers, University of Harvard's chief administrator declared in a speech in 2005 that women's contemporary position is the result of biological differences between men and women (Janalizade, 2007, p. 178). Difference theory, by ignoring socio-historical impact, fails to explain gender equality in many countries such as Iceland (Hausmann, Tyson, Bekhouche, Zahidi, 2012, p. 200-201).

Role conflict theory claims that having different innate roles, women and men must act in the framework of their pre-determined roles. According to this theory, gender roles are inevitable and conflicts arise when gender boundaries are violated (Janalizade, Moghimi and Amini, 2008). Researchers who work in the framework of this theory take in to granted role divisions based on gender. For example, Qaem and NurayiNejad (2010) have provided some solutions of time management tips for women in higher education who are facing problems dealing with house chores and their job responsibilities. This theory obviously ignores the cultural foundations of gender role divisions, falling in biological essentialism.

6.2. Exclusion Theories
Second category is exclusion theories which consist of theories that defend the existence of socio-cultural, economic and political structures which create obstacles against women's upgrade. These theories adopt a more criticizing approach and propose that changing current situation is only possible by removing structural obstacles. Javaheri and Dariapour (2008) suggest that gender ideology of patriarchal system is the bedrock of all sexist discriminations and attitudes and of course the first step to eliminate educational inequality and any kind of inequality is to abolish patriarchal ideology.

Gender based stereotypes are very common part of popular culture. Esfidani (2002) shows that many university administrators and policy makers hold the same stereotypes and do not believe women can be effective in top positions. Socialization processes are effective ways of changing such stereotypes. There is evidence, however, that Iranian elementary training system has a major impact on internalizing sexist role ideology; a process that affects not only boys but also girls. Forutan (2010) has conducted content analysis on elementary school books. His findings show that public – private duality of gender roles is highly reproduced and represented in elementary school book contents and pictures. Shahtalabi, Yarmohammadian and Ajami (2009) have studied factors effecting women’s success in academic sphere; they demonstrate that women in academic positions are affected by their family members' and friends' ideas but also by collegial managers' ideology.

There is also evidence showing that there is an official exclusion at work for both accepting female students and recruiting female university graduates in academic positions. It is reported that 40 academic fields, including engineering and mathematics, in 20 universities have started to accept exclusively male students since 2011 (Etemad, 2012, p. 13). The gap between female graduates of higher education and female lecturers along with yearly official exclusion of female applicants of university chairs show that the second category of theories would be applicable in analyzing women's role and position in science and education Iran.

7. Conclusion and Policy Implications

This article discussed about women's historical and contemporary position in science and education focusing on women's position and role in universities. It seems that the main question asked at the beginning of this article may be answered now. The question was: are women's position and role in science and higher education a result of their low participation or an existent discrimination? Systematic review of available Iranian researches and data on women's role and position in science and education shows that there is a general accordance on two findings. First, Gender discrimination is at work in restricting women's choices by systematically excluding them from managerial and administrative positions. Second, in spite of increase in women's enrolment in tertiary education and graduates of higher degrees of education, no significant difference is spotted in women's position and role in scientific and educational institutions due to structural obstacles.

This paper found substantial proof that Iranian scientific institutions effectuate gendered hierarchy and power distribution. Cultural-historical ideological system of patriarchy is reinforced and reproduced in universities; thus the most effective theoretical tools to analyze this issue are theories of exclusion, that are based on recognition of a structural discrimination such as social learning and feminist theories.

After reviewing the literature on women's role and position in science and education, and discussing structural discrimination mechanisms which affect women's professional life, we suggest that the following policy implications may help change the situation:
- Changing trends of formal socialization in elementary and secondary schools by lifting sexist ideology and teaching students an equalitarian mentality;
- Lifting legal sanctions of women’s entrance in university academic fields and programs and holding high formal positions;
- Assigning a range of gender quota for studentship and university chairs so that personal views cannot affect the decision making process;
- Prohibiting any form of interference of university staff with sexist ideas in university decision making such as recruiting exclusively male graduates, assigning male candidates to administrative positions and limiting female students in some courses.

This article merely provides understanding of the nature of gender discrimination in scientific institutions in Iran. The issue has not attracted much attention in Iranian social science inquiry but there is evidence that attention is rising among young scholars. No work can claim to be perfect. This article is not an exception. It faced challenges in finding reliable and sufficient data and it had to cope with lack of official statistics. Further detailed investigation and etiological analysis is required to fully understand the intricacy and complexity of women's role and position in science and education.

References


Websites

