ROLE AND CHALLENGES OF WOMEN IN TOURISM SECTOR

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Abstract

Tourism industry is considered to be one of the fastest growing industries in the global economy. Due to the diverse nature of the industry, it becomes an important source of both direct and indirect employment at all skill levels. Women employees enrich both upper stage and lower level for tourism establishments because of being in need of qualified individual and service sector. On the other hand, women employees are exposed to gender discrimination in tourism sector and this poses an obstacle especially for upper stage. That's why this problem should be figured out. Thus women in our country should acquire a profession, go out to work and also contribute real economy. The role and importance of women in tourism sector and their contribution to national economy will be expressed in this study.

Keywords: Women, Tourism, Economy

1 Introduction

Tourism sector is considered to be one of the fastest growing industries in the global economy. Around the world, a high proportion of women are employed in the tourism sector, but the number of female employees varies per region. Women worldwide have high contribution in tourism whether it is through being visitors, hosts or employees in the tourism destination sector. When we look at Turkey, we see that tourism sector is becoming one of the sectors that keeps developing continuously. This research examines the position of women's employment in the tourism sector of Turkey. In this study, we've studied the chances of women being able to work in the tourism section. It also aims to discover if women have the opportunity of rising to senior positions. There has been a serious increase in participation of women in the tourism sector. Tourism offers women opportunities for income-generation and entrepreneurship.

2 Tourism Sector and Woman Employments

The definition of tourism: While the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) describes it as "the travelling of people to a place other than their place of stay, for less than one year, and the entire connections that during that visit" (www.unwto.org), The Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism defines it as "The travels that are made to a destination other than the play of stay, that last less than 12 months and are made for business, leisure etc." (www.kultur.gov.tr).

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The impact of tourism on the economy is calculated by considering factor such as foreign exchange revenues, gross domestic product and contribution to the balance of payments, employment and multiplier effects (Tosun and Şahin, 2008:210).

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Due to the labor-intensive endurance of the tourism sector, employment in this sector is more intense than in other sectors (Lea, 1989: 45). For this reason, it has a great role in increasing employment and in solving the problem of unemployment. However, as in every sector, there is gender discrimination in the tourism sector as well.

According to World, Travel & Tourism generated 107,833,000 jobs directly in 2015 (3.6% of total employment) and this is forecast to grow by 1.9% in 2016 to 109,864,000 (3.6% of total employment) (WTTC, 2015:4).

Women and men discriminate not on the grounds of biological differences between sexes, but on the grounds of the concept of gender. Though many studies were performed on the concept of gender differences in the 1970s, its existence dates back to the beginning of human history (Connell, 1998:5). Being born in a certain gender is not a matter of choice, but gender is an influential factor in many issues, from the in-society situation to the social roles. The concept of profession is a phenomenon that interacts with gender in this way (Bassey et al., 2012: 238).

Evaluations from the past concerning the role of day-to-day women and men in society, gender perception, cultural and value judgments have made women's gender particularly disadvantageous in working life. Sexual discrimination in working life limits the wages, aims, desires and opinions of women. In post-industrial economies, it is observed that gender discrimination in working life has diminished and efforts have been made to improve equality. However, it has not been possible to eliminate sex discrimination completely. As a result of some legal regulations, it is an indisputable fact that women have some basic rights in their working life. However, it is known that these legal regulations cannot completely eliminate gender discrimination against women, either in the world or in Turkey (Dalkıranoğlu and Çetinel, 2008:277, 278).

Women in many countries, including Turkey, face a number of obstacles because of their sex compared to men. This obstacle, coupled with the challenges posed by the working conditions of the tourism sector in particular, makes women's career opportunities in this area even more challenging (Pınar et al., 2011:74).

This obstacle, coupled with the challenges posed by the working conditions of the tourism sector in particular, makes women's career opportunities in this area even more challenging (Tükeltürk and Perçin, 2008:114). It is important to determine the reasons why women, who are employed more in tourism sector compared to other sectors, are brought to the lower level of administration. The difficulties that women face in the tourism sector cause them not to be able to get enough tasks in some jobs and positions, these jobs and positions to become male dominant in structure, and for female employees to be mainly employed in some disadvantaged jobs and positions. As in other businesses in tourism businesses too, increasing women's employment should not be focused solely on equality and solving women's problems. Employment of women is also important in terms of enabling countries to provide competitive advantage and development (ILO, 2015: 7).

The UNWTO/UN Women Global Report on Women in Tourism shows that tourism can offer significant opportunities to narrow the gender gap in employment and entrepreneurship as women are nearly twice as likely to be employers in tourism as compared to other sectors.

UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, has called upon the tourism sector to step up policies and businesses practices that promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Rifai recalled that "though in most regions women make up the majority of the tourism workforce, they tend to be concentrated in the lowest paid and lowest status jobs and perform a large amount of unpaid work in family tourism businesses". Governments and the private sector have a major role to play in promoting policies that step-up equality and women's empowerment. "There is a particularly important opportunity to promote empowerment through entrepreneurship as tourism has almost twice as many women employers as other sectors", he added (UNWTO, 2015).

Tourism is a tool for economic, social and political empowerment of women. The Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010 is a first attempt to develop a quantitative framework for monitoring the status of women working in tourism across the globe. Its focus is on tourism in developing regions (Global Report on Women in Tourism, 2010).

The UN Millennium Development Goals have also brought gender equality to the forefront of the international development agenda. Five of the eight goals directly relate to the role of women in development. Gender equality and women's empowerment are essential for achieving all the Millennium Development Goals (The UN Millennium Development Goals, 2015).

Women make up close to 70% of the total global workforce in the tourism sector. However, they hold less than 40% of all managerial and supervisory positions, hold less than 20% of general management roles, and make up only between 5% and 8% of corporate board members of publicly-quoted hospitality businesses (EYD, 2015). Women employed in the tourism industry are concentrated in lower-paid jobs with fewer opportunities for career progression. This inequality

can be overcome through pro-active gender-equality policies and training aimed at combating and overcoming gender stereotypes (Lepre, 2013 www.timesofmalta.com).

The share of women's employment has increased considerably in the services sector compared to other sectors. This ratio, which was 41.1% in 1995, has risen to 61.5% in 2015 (ILO, 2016: 22).

Looking at employment statistics in the tourism sector, the employment rate of women in European countries is 45% in 2008 and 46% in 2014. According to this, the percentage of women in employment did not reach a very large change within these six years.

Table 1: Distribution of Tourism Sector in Europe by Gender.

Gender	**Year**			
	2008	2014	2008 (%)	2014 (%)
Man	123 038	118 093	55	54
Woman	99 836	100 190	45	46
Total	222 875	218 284	100	100

Source: (Eurostat, 2016, ec.europa.eu)

3 Role and Challenges of Women in Tourism Sector

The tourism sector in Turkey, which is growing so rapidly in the world, is developing in parallel with the trends in the world. Turkey has accepted tourism as a driving force for economic development in the post-1980 period and has devoted a significant portion of its inadequate economic resources to tourism development. As a result of these efforts, the tourism sector has developed rapidly and has become one of the youngest and dynamic sectors of Turkey and today it is one of the driving sectors of Turkey (Unur, 2000:11).

In Turkey, Travel & Tourism generated 600,000 jobs directly in 2015 (2.3% of total employment) and this is forecast to fall by 0.2% in 2016 to 599,000 (2.2% of total employment). This includes employment by hotels, travel agents, airlines and other passenger transportation services (excluding commuter services). It also includes, for example, the activities of the restaurant and leisure industries directly supported by tourists (WTTC*, 2015:4).

According to the International Labor Organization reports, Turkey is in good condition when it comes to women's company ownership with 11.1% compared to the countries that have no ownership, even though it has remained back on the issue of female employment. Turkey ranks 95th among 108 countries with 12.2% middle and upper level female managerial positions in 2012 (ILO, 2015: 19).

The reason for this is the fact that the family responsibilities of women are higher, especially the role of a wife and mother in family structure in Turkey is more effective and can create a disadvantage for women in business life compared to men. While the fact that a mother who has, a small child is not chosen can be used as a justification for negative discrimination, a man with bad habits such as alcohol abuse, gambling habits, etc. won't encounter the same obstacles. In this respect, there is an inequality in gender discrimination (Demir, 2011: 767).

Table 2: Distribution of Tourism Sector in Turkey by Gender

Years	Man	(%)	Woman	(%)	Total
2008	15.596	73,6	5.597	26,4	21.193
2009	15.402	72,4	5.868	27,6	21.271
2010	16.168	71,6	6.424	28,4	22.593
2011	17.131	71,1	6.969	28,9	24.099
2012	17.511	70,6	7.308	29,4	24.819
2013	17.878	70,1	7.641	29,9	25.520
2014	18.241	70,3	7.689	29,7	25.930

Source: (Eurostat, 2016, ec.europa.eu)

When tourism statistics of Eurostat in Turkey are examined, the employment rate of women in the tourism industry was 26.4% in 2008 and this rate has increased to 29.7% in 2014. According to this, although Turkey has a more positive increase than European countries, it is still quite low compared to European countries.

The tourism sector does not exceed 10 per cent, especially in management positions such as senior management or women's tourism doyens. The reason for this is that women who are responsible for everything have not been able to adopt the organizational work structure. Even though women and men are equal in the family and cultural order in our country, the duties of the woman are always different and higher. The duty of the woman is not to manage the office, but to provide the order in the house (www.turkiyeturizm.com).

4. Conclusion

In addition to economic development, tourism is a sector closely related to intercultural dialogue, preservation of cultural heritage, environmental awareness, technological developments. It is an opportunity for countries to evaluate. Enterprises operating in the tourism sector should develop new strategies in the interest of the intended humanity, to promote a strong representation in international decision-making mechanisms, to promote the preservation of natural and cultural heritage, to raise people's standard of living.

Especially "women's hand" in tourism is a very important development in terms of our country and tourism. Tourism, a labor-intensive sector, is the most important competitive power

and chance our country has with the World. This point in the employment of women also constitutes an important value in our country where unemployment is high.

The tourism sector is a sector where women can participate and offers opportunities for the development of their entrepreneurial activities. In this context, courses planned and projects prepared with the intention for women to gain a profession and participate in the working life and to contribute to the real economy, show that the number of working women in all sectors will increase in the coming years.

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