

EXAMINING THE HIERARCHICAL MODEL OF LEISURE CONSTRAINTS AMONG WOMEN IN TEHRAN REGARDING SPORTS PARTICIPATION

Sara KESHKAR¹, Mohammad EHSANI², Hashem KOOZECHIAN², Hamid GHASEMI³, Sardar MOHAMMADI⁴

Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran. sarakeshkar@gmail.com¹

Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran.²

Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran.³

Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, University of Kurdistan, Sanandaj, Iran. sardarmohammadii@gmail.com⁴

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine the constraints that prohibit Iranian women who live in Tehran to participate in sport activities during their leisure time. The three-dimensional leisure constraints based on the Jackson, Crawford and Godbey's [1993] Leisure Constraints Model, was used as the theoretical frame work for the study. The sample consisted of 1200 women who lived in Tehran city. The instrument of this research was a questionnaire which was designed to measure three types of constraints to sport participation: [1] structural, [2] interpersonal and [3] intrapersonal. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire was approved. The results suggested that the subjects were constrained most by structural factors and this result is very different from what the original model claimed about the intrapersonal factors as being at the first place in the hierarchical model.

Keywords: Leisure constraint model; sport participation constraints; sport activity; leisure

INTRODUCTION

Today, sports, as a multidimensional tool with widespread effects on economy, individuals' health, leisure time, upbringing and education, social relations, and prevention of social and moral depravities, has demonstrated its role and status in most human communities.

Despite the constructive role of sport in the lives of different people in the society, women, in comparison with men, face noticeable limitations in taking advantage of this social privilege. Such limitations are enmeshed in various communities with different degrees of severity. The aforementioned issue has been confirmed in various research studies carried out on identification of constraints and barriers of participation of women in leisure time and sports activities [Henderson, Bialeschki, Shaw and Freysinger 1996; Shaw and Henderson, 2005; Kassim et al. 2009; Kouthouris et al. 2009; Casper et al. 2010]. In recent years, research on gender and leisure showed the relationship between women's disadvantaged position in terms of access to leisure and their lack of power in society in general [Aitcheson, 2001]. The growing body of research on women's leisure indicates women's position in society, their lack of access to valued resources, and societal expectations of women's lives, roles, and responsibilities reduce their freedom and constrain

their options [Green, Hebron and Woodward, 1990; Henderson, 1994b; Shaw and de la Durantaye, 1992].

Most studies on women's leisure have not used a constraint framework. When a constraint framework has been adopted, however, the research has shown women do indeed face more constraints in their leisure than do men [Jackson and Henderson, 1995] and these constraints relate to culturally-based gender role expectations [Jackson, 2005]. In the present study, the researchers used the hierarchical model of leisure constraint framework, which is widely accepted and adopted by researchers [Jackson and Scott, 1999], to study the constraints of women's leisure participation to examine which kinds of constraints are more effective on the way women may participate in leisure activities, especially recreational sport activities.

Moreover, identification of constraints and barriers of participating in leisure time-related activities, one of which is sports, researchers' attitudes toward these factors, and the methods they use for studying and identifying such factors is very important.

It should be mentioned that studying of the factors that limit the participation of women in leisure time-related activities commenced approximately twenty years ago. During these years, invaluable

information has been obtained on the concept of leisure time coupled with "how people participate in such activities" and/or "which factors barrier their participation in sports activities" [Henderson, Bialeschki, Shaw and Freysinger, 1996; Shaw and Henderson, 2005; Aminuddin et al. 2007; Kassim et al. 2009].

The studies show that participation and/or non-participation of women in leisure-time related activities, especially recreational sports, is varied due to various constraints in different countries with various culture, religion, and climate conditions. [Floyd and Gramann, 1993; Henderson, 1998; Stodolska and Yi-Kook, 2005; Walker, Deng and Dieser 2005; Junui, 2000; Khan, 1997; Tirone and Shaw, 1997; Russel and Stage, 1996].

In Iran, unlike many other countries, few research activities have been conducted with a recreational sports approach on the identification of factors effective on participation of individuals, especially women, in leisure time-related activities. In other words, such research activities have been made occasionally, with inadequate number social, political and cultural context, makes a special situation In Iran, the religious atmosphere and the social and political and cultural context, makes a special situation towards women's activities that is very different from what occurs in the western countries. In spite of considerable improvements in scientific areas, Iranian women still encounter some limitations in using sport facilities.

Indoor facilities are not enough to cover women's demands to participate in sports. On the other hand, using outdoor facilities necessitates having hijab, which means they should wear clothes to cover their bodies according to the belief of a Muslim women; this is the most important difference between the women in Iran and in the western countries. Though, in recent years, The Iranian government designed and built some women's parks in different cities, it is still not enough to meet the needs of women's sport. Of course this limitation does not hinder many women from using outdoor recreation centers, but anyway it is a very important aspect, while studying the way, Iranian women choose the activities to spend their leisure time. Although comparison of Iranian women leisure involvement with those in the western countries is not an objective of the current study, it is important to get familiar with the Iranian women context of life to understand the results of this research better.

The present study has been performed with a hierarchical model of leisure constraints approach to study and analyze the constraint factors that limit the participation of women in sport activities based on various individual characteristics. To this end, a group of Iranian women were randomly selected and were asked to fill out questionnaires, which were formulated based on the classification of

constraint factors in the hierarchical model of leisure constraints [Jackson, Crawford and Godbey, 1991].

The questions posed in this research were as follows:

1. Is the predicted hierarchical ordering of constraint factors supported, using a sample of Iranian women?
2. Do women with various individual characteristics experience constraints differently?
3. Do education, employment, marital status, being parent, and age play an effective role in the way Iranian women experience constraints?

Most research activities, performed in North American states, confirm the order of constraints in the hierarchical model of leisure constraints as intrapersonal constraints, interpersonal constraints and structural constraints. In this study, the order of these constraints is examined in Iran as a Middle East country with very specific religious, cultural, and political conditions.

Review of Literature

Studying the constraints that have been identified by researchers or those constraints experienced by individuals or assumed to be present in the country is considered the major objective of studying leisure constraints. These constraints cause individuals to adopt preferences towards various activities and/or cause individuals to participate in leisure activities and enjoy them and/or prevent them from participating in such activities [Jackson, 2005].

It should be mentioned that classification of constraints will improve understanding of these factors. Hereunder are regarded the various types of constraints, which researchers have previously studied:

1. The internal – external dichotomy,
2. Motivational versus physical barriers,
3. Absolute versus relative barriers,
4. Blocking versus inhabiting barriers and
5. Temporary versus permanent constraints.

Constraints research moved from a narrow focus on barriers to participation toward a broader conceptualization of constraints. In addition, typologies of leisure constraints have been developed, and the three categories of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural constraints, originally introduced by Crawford, have become widely accepted and adopted by researchers [Jackson and Scott, 1999].

In their research on the development of the scope of constraints in 1987, Godbey and Crawford studied a simple model of preferences / constraint / participation. In this regard, they studied a factor, which was called, at that time, a preparatory constraint. Therefore, they introduced three types of constraints entitled "Intrapersonal Constraints", "Interpersonal Constraints" and "Structural

Constraints". In the following years, the researchers adopted changes in their original model and a new model entitled "the hierarchical model of constraints" was defined and designed [Jackson, Crawford and Godbey, 1993].

The Hierarchical Model of Leisure Constraints

In 1991, Jackson, Crawford, and Godbey offered a hierarchical model of constraint. They believed that most research activities have concentrated on structural constraints, which may have the least importance in shaping leisure behavior, and less focus has been made on both intrapersonal and interpersonal constraints. It should be mentioned that intrapersonal and interpersonal constraints in participation of leisure time activities, have a high level of importance [Jackson, 2005].

They offered a model that put constraints in a hierarchy of decision-making stages and how an individual experiences these constraints in a hierarchy [Alexandris, 1997].

Participation is highlighted by the two sides of the participating group, that is, individuals, who either participate or do not participate in pertinent activities. As long as participation is considered in the forms of participating or nonparticipating, constraints apply their effects in a hierarchical form. Firstly, preference of an individual's leisure time is formed at the intrapersonal constraint level; the definition of intrapersonal constraints, as given by Crawford and Godbey, suggests that intrapersonal constraints fit with the definition of the psychological mediators. This occurs when intrapersonal constraints, perceived in previous situations, were absent and/or lost their effectiveness when put against a complex of human desires and privileges [namely, intrapersonal constraints lose their effects due to the existence of a series of human desires and privileges; at any rate, these intrapersonal constraints are absent]. At the next stage, an individual, based on the type of activity, may face the interpersonal constraints level. This issue may happen at the time when one individual needs a companion for participation in one activity. When individuals can control this type of constraint [if accorded with the type of activity], then the structural constraints may influence his/her decision for participating in leisure activity.

Structural constraints include factors like time limitation, problems with facilities, and costs of participating, social and geographical isolation, lack of skills or abilities, and individual commitments. In the same direction, participation and activity emerge, when structural constraints are absent. If structural constraints show enough strength, at any rate, the result will be not participating in activities. At any rate, participation

strictly hinges on constraints. In other words, absence of constraints is not defined as participation [although this issue may seem accurate for some individuals], rather participation will or will not occur as a result of a negotiation of these constraints. Such negotiation may change the form of participation but will not bar it [Jackson, Godbey, and Crawford, 1993].

The "negotiation thesis," as it is known, was based on the idea that despite experiencing constraints, people do find ways to participate in and enjoy leisure, even if such participation and enjoyment may differ from what they would have been in the absence of constraints [Jackson, 2005]. This proposition explains that constraints will not always result in lack of participation; rather constraints may cause adaptation of participation. As Jackson and colleagues stated in 1993, participation as a result of negotiation may differ from the participation which occurs in absence of structural constraints. For example, a person who wants to swim every day, he/she may not carry out this activity due to shortage of time. At any rate, lack of time as a constraint may not cause cessation of participation in an activity rather it may result in adapted participation. For example, it may cause one to swim for shorter periods of time.

Constraints and genders

Most studies on women's leisure have not used a constraint framework. Rather than looking at specific types of constraints that reduce levels of participation in desired activities, the majority of feminist researchers have directed their attention toward the linkage between women's gendered lives and women's leisure. Moreover, although the categories traditional constraints have not typically been employed by feminist researchers, the findings from empirical studies of women's leisure can be adapted to correspond to these categories, thus providing some information and understanding about questions of structural, intrapersonal, and interpersonal constraints [Shaw, 1994]. This adaptation suggests linkage do exist between feminist research and constraints research, but the linkage have been implicit rather than explicit, in part because of the separation of the two bodies of research [Jackson, 2005].

Many of the constraints on women's leisure, as revealed through the feminist literature, can be conceptualized as structural constraints, or factors that intervene between desire for leisure activities and levels of actual participation. Women's lack of financial resources, and the fact that they often lack financial independence, can be seen in this way, and some women, particularly single mothers and older women living on their own, are often severely economically deprived. Women's financial limitation is associated with other types of constraints as well, such as lack of

transportation [Deem, 1986; Arab- Moghadam, Henderson and Sheikholeslami, 2007].

Lack of leisure opportunities and programs can also be seen as structural constraints on women's leisure. Sports and physical activities are obvious examples. Though these days women can participate in most sports activities, women are still more limited in joining the teams and involvement in sport leagues, compared to men [Robinson and Godbey, 1999; Theberge, 2000; Perline and Stoldt, 2007].

Time stress and lack of time for self are major constraints on women's leisure lives. For women, it is not only paid work, but unpaid work and household responsibilities that together leave little time for personal rest, relaxation, or the development of personal leisure activities [Green et al., 1990]. In some studies, women declared that though they encounter time limitation, it is not very important to hinder them from participating in sport activities [Stavropoulou, 2008].

Intrapersonal constraints were examined in different investigations. Most of them showed that women's ethic of care, i.e., the caring behavior the women feel for their family and relatives constraints their participation in leisure activities [Bialeschki and Michener, 1994; Henderson and Ainsworth, 2001; Herridge, Shaw and Mannel, 2003; Arab- Moghadam, Henderson and Sheikholeslami, 2007]. In some other research, the self-esteem, embarrassment, social attitude, and fear of violence are very important factors that constraint women's participation in leisure activities, especially sports [Henderson and King, 1998; Lafrance, Zivian and Myers, 2000; Wiley, Shaw and Havitz, 2000; Carr, 2000].

Few studies have focused on factors that could be considered interpersonal constraints on women's leisure. This scarcity may be explained by the tendency of women toward having a greater number of social relationships than men. Thus, they less likely lack leisure partners [Henderson and Ainsworth, 2000].

Anyway, some studies have demonstrated that other types of interpersonal constraints may negatively affect women's leisure. For instance, social disapproval of activities considered to be inappropriate may be a type of interpersonal constraint through friends, family members, or others making their disapproval evident. Similarly, the social control of women's lives by husbands discourages them or makes it difficult for wives to participate in desired leisure activities [Glaser, Evandrou and Tomassini, 2006].

Constraints and Variables of Individual Characteristics

Age is considered as one of the most important constraint factors affecting participation of individuals in sports activities. In other words,

the age of individuals will play a key role affecting their participation in sports-related activities. In most research activities made in this regard, it was shown that the advancement of age is not a rationale to quit or cease participating in sports-related activities [Alexandris and Carol 1997; Aghai, Ahacic and Parker, 2006, Bult, Verschuren, Jongmans, Lindeman, and Ketelaar, 2011]. Also, Australian Social Trend [2007] showed that 37% of women, who participated in sport activities more than twice a week, belonged to women over 55 years old. In addition, other studies have shown that individuals of advanced ages select sports activities in accordance with their physical and gender conditions. Generally, increase of age will not cause hindrance of the participation of individuals in sports activities; rather the shape and type of activity is changed. In the same direction, new activities will be replaced with old and traditional activities. Some studies demonstrated that the advancement of age has a contrary relation with the degree of participating in sports activities [Matheson, 1991; Kolter et al., 199].

In the same direction, gender is regarded as one of the individual characteristics, which causes constructive effect on the way and rate of participation of individuals in sports activities. Studies show that women face noticeable limitations, as compared with men, for participating in sports and leisure activities [Caldwell, Perkins, Edubra and Smith, 2002; Deberg, 2000; King, 2000; Green, Hebron and Woodward, 1990; Shaw and Dorantay, 1992; Aitchison, 2001; Ehsani et al., 1996; Alexandris and Carol, 1997]. in spite of women facing limitations more than men but some studies showed that women participate in leisure time activities including sports more than men [Fourie., Slabbert.,Saayman., 2011]

The type of duties and responsibilities of women in households, as housewives, mothers and/or spouses, will affect the type and rate of their activities directly and, on some occasions, the selection of activities are made based on the inclinations of other family members and/or based on shortage of time [Herridge, Shaw and Mannel, 2003; Henderson and colleagues, 1996; Herington, Dawson and Rodgers, 1997; Hunter and Whitson, 1992]. Having a job outside the home increases the responsibilities and duties of employed women compared with housewives, and so causes them to spend less time in sports and other leisure related activities [Henderson et al., 1988; Crawford and Hotsun, 1993].

The studies show that married women, when compared with single women, face more limitations to participate in sports and other leisure-related activities; because the responsibilities of common life will leave less time for married women. Due to shortage of time, married women participate less in sports as leisure time activities

[Alexandris and Carol 1997]. The constraint factors on women holding high academic degree will cause fewer limitations to participate in leisure sports activities as compared with other women. In other words, women with high academic degree face fewer limitations to perform sports activities, when compared with other women [Ehsani et al., 1996; Alexandris and Carol 1997; Coalter et al., 1995]. In addition, women with high academic and educational degrees spend more time participating in sports activities, as compared with other women [Graton and Tyce, 1991].

Women with children, who have been tasked with caring and keeping their children, spend less time participating in sports and other leisure related activities [Fredrick and Fest, 1999]. Women who have several children spend less time, as compared with mothers of fewer children, participating in sports activities, and consequently they face multiple responsibilities and duties [Arab Moghaddam and Henderson, 2007]. In general, mothers with children spend less time for participating in sports activities.

Order and Importance of Constraints

Various investigations in the field of studying constraints according to the hierarchical model of leisure constraints, apply the order and significance of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural constraints based on the aforementioned model [Jackson, Crawford and Godbey, 1993; Scott, 1991; Alexandris, 1997].

The results of some experiments indicate that the order of three-category constraints, that is, intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural constraints, in different countries strictly hinges on various cultures. It should be mentioned that this order and sequence is changed in various parts of the world according to the culture of the society [Chick and Dung, 2004; Arab Moqaddam and Henderson, 2007; Aminuddin et al., 2007; Masmanidis et al., 2009].

In Iran, the few research activities made on the identification of leisure constraints concentrates on the importance of structural constraints, which include income level, time, and existence of facilities, physical condition, and awareness [Ehsani et al., 1996; Ehsani, 2003; Arab Moqaddam and Henderson, 2006]. As mentioned above, the existence of constraints is not defined as the cessation of participation in sports activities and/or engaging leisure time.

The results of research activities show that individuals, despite facing constraints, take part in their favorite activities, but the strategies of such participation undergo some changes in the strategies; for instance in the type of activity and/or the frequency of participation in that activity [Scott, 1991; Kay and Jackson, 1991; Jackson and Rakez, 1995; Jackson and Samdel, 1997; Hobard and

Mannel, 2001].

METHODOLOGY

This study is a survey, in which pertinent questionnaires were distributed to a statistically viable sample society. The participants were selected using a cluster multistage sampling on women above 18 in Tehran, as the country's largest city.

Identification of constraints among Tehran's women against participating in sports activities and other similar activities is the major objective of the current research. Other objectives were determining the probable relationship participation in the sport activities on the one hand, and age, level of education, marital status, employment, and the number of children, on the other hand.

Sample and data collection

Questionnaires were distributed to 1500 women in Tehran. They were asked to explain the degree of their participation in sports activities, and also any constraints affecting their participation. The research participants were randomly selected from 22 districts of the Tehran municipality. In this regard, Tehran was divided into five north, south, east, west, and central districts. In each district, 2-3 regions were randomly selected. Each region included a number of districts. Considering the population of that region, 2-5 districts were randomly selected and 5 to 10 houses, with even-numbered addresses, were selected from each street. Then, questionnaires were given to the inhabitants of the houses. The women were asked to fill out the questionnaires within one hour. Finally, the filled out questionnaires were returned to the individuals in charge of distributing the questionnaires.

Of a total of 1,500 distributed questionnaires, 1,263 --amounting over 84 percent of the total number of distributed questionnaires-- were gathered and the remaining questionnaires were excluded from the research process because of not responding all questions and/or giving incomplete answers to questions. Of the total number of women who answered all the questions, 34 percent had academic degrees, while the remaining had either high school diploma or not. In this research, approximately 57 percent of the participants were between 18-30 years old, 24 percent between 31-45 years old, and 18 percent were above 46 years old. It should be mentioned that 53 percent of women were single. Of the total number of women that answered the questions, 61 percent were housewives, and 39 percent were employed. Moreover, 26 percent of women had no children, 57 percent had 1 to 4 children, and 17 percent of them had more than five children.

INSTRUMENT

A questionnaire was prepared by the researchers as the main instrument of the study. The steps listed below were used in the formulation of the present questionnaire. Considering the literature review of the study, the questions were prepared according to the three types of classifications, i.e., intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural constraints.

The following steps were taken in development of the questionnaire:

1- Common factors and information were determined according to the questionnaires used by researchers, both inside and outside the country.

2- To improve the validity of the questionnaire's items and also the accordance of its items with the native norms, the instrument was given to 20 female athletes. These female athletes were asked to add other items to the list, regarded as effective constraints affecting the participation of Tehran women in sports activities.

To evaluate the validity of the questions, ten experts[panel of expert] in the sports management were asked to offer their viewpoints on the questions and the order of the items in the questionnaire. Finally, a questionnaire was

provided with 44 items according to the following tables on a five-point Likert scale, in three sections as personal information, degree of participation, and constraints, drawn up in triple constraints of the model that is, intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural constraints. The devised questionnaire was randomly piloted among seventy Tehran women above 18 years old. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined using alpha Cronbach. The obtained Cronbach's alpha for all items of the questionnaire was 93 percent.

RESULTS

The order of the three-category constraints of the hierarchical model was assessed by drawing up a list of 44 items and giving the questionnaire to individuals in the society. Based on the previous studies carried out in this regard, it was shown that the order of three-category constraints of the hierarchical model of leisure constraints has changed among Iranian women, the results of which are in favor of structural constraints. In this study, the results show that the order of constraints is changed to structural, intrapersonal and interpersonal constraints.

No. of Variable	General Average in case of Elision	Variance in Case of Elision	corrected General Correlation	α	No. of variable	General Average in case of Elision	Variance in Case of Elision	corrected General Correlation	A
Intrapersonal Constraints	----	----	----	----	Not having permanent job	121. 16	1154. 023	0.492	0.924
Disfiguration	121. 10	1155. 063	0.463	0.925	Expensiveness of appliances	120. 49	1158. 795	0.503	0.924
Being ashamed	121. 71	1168. 756	0.445	0.925	High-charge of transport fare	120. 84	1154. 553	0.528	0.925
Activities agreeable to family	121. 22	1164. 166	0.418	0.925	Program scheduling	120. 41	1173. 671	0.366	0.926
Activities agreeable to friends	121. 57	1169. 563	0.403	0.925	Time shortage	120. 31	1182. 799	0.262	0.925
Religious beliefs	121. 18	1153. 340	0.502	0.924	Occupational duties	121. 06	1167. 360	0.382	0.925
Lack of self-confidence	121. 23	1150. 700	0.539	0.924	House-related duties	120. 94	1170. 072	0.371	0.924
Insecurity	120. 80	1151. 486	0.526	0.924	Obesity	121. 28	1147. 566	0.408	0.926
Fear of lack of ability and expertise	121. 47	1161. 444	0.493	0.924	Health	120. 39	1151. 968	0.497	0.924
Lack of interest	121. 20	1166. 167	0.395	0.925	Disability	121. 77	1154. 264	0.501	0.924
Impatience and boringness	120. 80	1185. 405	0.231	0.927	Women's clubs	120. 65	1148. 709	0.560	0.294
Interpersonal Constraints	----	----	----	----	Lack of publicity	120. 82	1154. 903	0.491	0.924
Lack of companionship	121. 08	1172. 161	0.369	0.925	Crowdedness	120. 43	1165. 265	0.430	0.925
Decision making of others	121. 76	1171. 630	0.445	0.925	Faraway distance places	120. 30	1164. 388	0.428	0.925
Lack of expertise of friends	121. 62	1167. 540	0.447	0.925	Equipment and tools	120. 22	1162. 165	0.438	0.924
Lack of companionship of family	121. 30	1167. 470	0.415	0.925	Unawareness of programs	120. 69	1158. 927	0.482	0.924
Disallowance of family	121. 45	1152. 386	0.535	0.924	Lack of vehicle	120. 87	1158. 893	0.451	0.925
Obligation in accompanying with others	121. 81	1169. 187	0.456	0.925	Educational substandard	120. 43	1157. 028	0.515	0.924
Inexistence of righteous persons in environment	121. 03	1149. 337	0.543	0.924	Inexperienced trainees	120. 22	1153. 103	0.544	0.924
Mocking others	121. 70	1161. 268	0.470	0.924	Inattention of officials	120. 23	1154. 840	0.518	0.924
Fear of inattention to opposite sex	121. 92	1165. 277	0.466	0.925	Unawareness of advantages	120. 29	1163. 665	0.319	0.926
Structural constraints	----	----	----	----	Non-observing environmental health	120. 76	1167. 895	0.467	0.925
Expensiveness of treatment cost	120. 78	1152. 729	0.521	0.924					
Low income	120. 59	1152. 477	0.524	0.924					
Surcharge of tuition fee of classes	120. 09	1162. 842	0.470	0.924					

Table 1: Results of Test behind Combining Three-Category Factors

<i>Differences of Average</i>	<i>X1 = 25.1</i>	<i>X2 = 20</i>	<i>X3 = 78.5</i>
<i>Averages</i>			
25.1 = Average of intrapersonal factors	-----	* 5.1	* -53
20 = average of interpersonal factors		----	-58.5
78.5 = average of structural average			-----

The order of the three-category constraints model was studied based on intrapersonal variables, the results of which showed that the order obtained in each of the intrapersonal variables [age, education, number of children, employment, and marriage] is similar. For all these variables, structural constraints stood at the first rank, and intrapersonal and interpersonal constraints stood at the second and third ranks respectively.

The degree of participation of the participants in sports activities was studied and it was showed that, despite facing various constraint factors, they participated in sports activities in different ways. The results of this research indicate that 64 percent of women in the society participate in sports activities in a way that the presence of constraints has left direct effect on the selection of the type and timing of the activity as well as the

frequency of such activities. The results of the current study show that women with academic degrees participate in sports activities more than women who either have or do not have high school diplomas [70% versus 59%]. In other words, women with academic degrees spend more time in sports activities, as compared with women with high school diploma or no educational degree at all. Similarly, a total of 14% of the women never participate in sports activities, including women with and without high school diploma. Moreover, married women participate more in sports and leisure time-related activities as compared with single women [66% versus 62%]. In other words, married women spend more time in sport activities. Generally speaking, women above 45 years old [70%] spend more time in sports activities than women of 18-30 and 31-45 age groups.

Table 3 Reliability test results of three-Category Constraints Variables

<i>Kronbakh alpha</i>	<i>No. of Factors</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Variance</i>	<i>Average</i>
0.926	44	34.840	1213.813	123.74

Results of X^2 test did not show any significant differences between the frequencies of the number of children and employment variables.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The data obtained in the current research provide a suitable context for studying the way Iranian women deal with constraints in the specific social, religious, and political situation in Iran. Furthermore, the order of the three-category constraints of the hierarchical model was studied among Iranian women. The order of these constraint factors was also studied in relation with individual characteristics such as age, education, number of children, employment, and marital status. The concentration of this research was on the rate of participation of Iranian women, despite facing constraints, considering their individual characteristics.

The results showed that the structural constraints are the most significant constraint group, women face when participating in sports and leisure-related activities. Shortage of sports facilities and equipment, as well as economic and financial problems and attitude of family and society towards attendance of women in sports arena is considered as the most important factors in this regard. This is consistent with the results reported by Arab Moghadam et al. [2007], in which

they emphasized on traditional views and the social significance of leisure, economic, and social factors, and the family's expectations as the most constraining items to the Iranian women's leisure.

The above findings show that the order of the three-category constraints of the hierarchical model is not fixed throughout the world, and its order strictly hinges on various conditions existing in different countries. In Iran, due to the existence of specific economic and cultural conditions, some limitations make women's participation in sport activities in their leisure time difficult. According to the World Factbook [2011], the family income is not in a good economic position for Iranians. In addition, the inflation rate in Iran was 11.8% in 2010, as reported by the World Factbook [2011], while the rate in some western countries was significantly lower; for instance 1.6% in Canada and 1.4% in the United States. So, it is obvious that economic pressure on Iranians is considerable. Most of the requirements of families are very expensive. So, it is difficult for people to spend their money on expensive leisure and in recreational sport centers. Therefore, the cost of leisure and sport centers acts as important constraint to participation in sport activities. It is evident that the limited income and financial factors will associate with other factors like transportation

and preparing the necessary equipments for some sports.

The Order of constraints in the above-mentioned model has been approved in various countries, especially in western countries such as different parts of North America [Godbey, Crawford and Jackson, 1993]. As mentioned above, in these countries, people do not face economic problems as compared with Iran. Considering the economic, social, and cultural conditions, it is natural that the first constraints of individuals in such countries are intrapersonal constraints. Eventually, the structural constraints are taken into consideration. As Abraham Maslow stated in 1943, human hierarchical needs in various countries differ according to the particular specifications of that country. In countries that do not suffer from economic problems, naturally, human initial needs are minor and in some cases, the initial needs are not taken into serious consideration. But in countries that suffer from severe economic problems, the initial needs of people are highlighted more than their other requirements.

Social and cultural factors are other important aspects of Iranian women life affecting the order of constraints level in the model. The social and cultural attitude towards women sports in general is positive, but religious beliefs and legislation put some limitation for women participating in outdoor recreational sports. They should wear Hijab. Also, some people look at some sports as manly sports, so they do not want women to participate in such sports.

Thus, it is logical that the hierarchical model of constraint strictly hinges on the existing condition of each country. In Iran, due to specific economic, cultural, political, and religious conditions of this country, people's requirements differ from those of other countries, and consequently, the significance of the three-category constraints varies in the view of Iranian women.

The results of the research are in agreement with those obtained by Aminuddin et al. [2007], Ehsani [1996], and Dung and Chick [2004]. In the study carried out by Ehsani [2003], it was shown that the structural factor is regarded as the most important constraint factor in the participation of Iranians in sports activities. Chick and Dung [2004] reported that the order of the three-category constraints strictly hinges on the existing cultural condition of each country. Moreover, they showed that the order of constraints in the hierarchical model changed in Chinese society. Similarly, the results of the present research indicate that the specific conditions in Iran have changed the order of the three-category constraint model. As mentioned above, it can be the result of the differences in the cultural, economical, and some other factors including specific social attitude and also religious beliefs, all of which lies in the

cultural context of Iran, which is different from that of the western countries where the order of the constraints in the model was determined.

The obtained order of constraints in this research is fixed due to individual characteristics such as education, age, employment, number of children, and marital status. Generally, structural constraints are regarded as the most important constraints, which stood at the first rank, while intrapersonal and interpersonal constraints stood at the second and third ranks, respectively. Apparently, the order obtained in this regard was not affected by any of the individual characteristics. It should be mentioned that the significance of the structural constraint is fixed in all the groups studied. Despite facing constraints, women still participate in sports activities, which is also highlighted in this research. In other words, although women face constraints, they still take part in sports activities. Existence of constraint factors does not create barriers to participating in activities and they still participate in sports activities. Generally speaking, existence of constraints did not bring about hurdles to the participation of women in sports activities; but the constraint factors have severely affected the rate and type of participation. As Scott and Jackson stated in 1991, individuals participating in sports activities have to use specific strategies aimed at weakening the barring effect of constraints. Moreover, these individuals use various strategies with the aim of overcoming constraints as well as preparing suitable contexts for participating in their favorite activities.

Although Iranian women face various constraint factors, the results of research show that almost 70% of women in Tehran participate in sports activities. In other words, Iranian women only face limitations to the rate and way of participation. Moreover, this research was carried out to address the nature of constraints, not only emphasizing on participation. As Jackson [2005] declared, the history of women's leisure studies focused mainly on the participation of women in leisure, and the impact of constraints on leisure activity conditions were rarely examined. This research showed that the particular situation in each country may affect the way constraints affect the preference and frequency of recreational sport activities. The results of the study show that the dominant circumstances in each country can determine the significance of the constraints. So, it seems necessary to study the hierarchical model of leisure constraints under different conditions to see how different cultures, religions, economics, and politics affect the model.

REFERENCES

- [1] Aghai, N., Ahacic, K., & Parker, M. G. [2006], Continuity of Leisure Participation from Middle Age

- to Old Age. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 61 [6], 340-346.
- [2] Aitchison, C. [2001]. Gender and leisure research: The codification of knowledge. *Leisure Sciences*, 23, 1-19.
- [3] Alexandris K., & Carroll B. [1997]. Demographic Differences in the Perception of Constraints on Recreational Sport Participation: Results from a Study in Greece. *Leisure Studies*, 16, 107-125.
- [4] Aminuddin, Y., & Parilah M. S. [2007]. Sport Participation Constraints of Malaysian University Students. *The International Journal of the Humanities*, 5 [3], 189-196.
- [5] Arab-Moghaddam, N., Henderson, K., & Sheikholeslami, R. [2007]. Women's leisure and constraints to participation: Iranian perspectives. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 39, 109-126.
- [6] Australian Social Trends [2007]. Participation in sports and physical recreation, Australia, 2005-06 [ABS cat. no. 4177.0].
- [7] Bialeschki, M. D., & Michener, S. [1994]. Re-entering leisure: Transition within the role of motherhood. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 26, 57-74.
- [8] Bulta, M.K., Verschuren O., Jongmans, M.J., Lindemana, E. & Ketelaars M. [2011]. What influences participation in leisure activities of children and youth with physical disabilities? A systematic review, *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, Volume 32, Issue 5, 1521-1529.
- [9] Caldwell, L. L., Perkins, D., Adubra, E. Adubra, L., & Smith, E. [2002]. Youth capacity building in rural Togo: A community analysis. Technical report submitted to the Children, Youth, and Family Consortium, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA.
- [10] Carr, N. [2000]. An assessment of the Use and Trust of Different Tourism Information Sources Amongst University Students. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Tourism Research.
- [11] Casper, J., Bocarro, J., & Kanters, M. [2010]. Perceived constraints on middle school sport participation, Presentation at the 2010 Active Living Research Annual Conference.
- [12] Chick, G., & Dong, E. [2004]. Possibility of refining the hierarchical model of leisure constraints through cross-cultural research. Proceedings of 2003 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium, USDA Forest Service.
- [13] Coalter, F., Dowers, S. & Baxter, M. J. [1995]. The Impact of Social Class and Education on Sports Participation: Some Evidence from the General Household Survey. In *Leisure and Social Stratification*, LSA Publication, No. 53 [ed. K. Roberts], Leisure Studies Association, 59-73.
- [14] Crawford, D., Godbey, G., & Jackson, E. [1991]. A hierarchical model of leisure constraints. *Leisure Sciences*, 13, 309-320. Department of Sport Sciences, Master's Thesis.
- [15] Ehsani, M. [2003]. Leisure Constraints and Levels of Sport Participation for Women in Iran Sport, Leisure and Social Inclusion: Potential, Participation and Possibilities. LSA [Leisure studies Association] Publications, No. 82.
- [16] Ehsani, M., Hardman, K., & Carroll, B. [1996]. A comparative study of leisure constraint Factors on the sporting Activity English and Iranian students. The Tenth Canadian Congress on Leisure Research, University of Alberta, May 2002, 22-25.
- [17] Floyd, M., & Gramann, J. [1993]. Effects of acculturation and structural assimilation in resource-based recreation: The case of Mexican Americans. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 25, 6-21.
- [18] Fourie, Jaco; Slabbert, Elmarie; Saayman Melville, [2011]. The leisure and sport participation patterns of high school learners in Potchefstroom, South African Journal for Research in Sport, Physical Education and Recreation, Volume 33, 65 - 80.
- [19] Frederick, J. A. & Fast, J. E. [1999]. Eldercare in Canada: Who does how much? Canadian Social Trends, Catalogue No. 11-008, Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 26-30.
- [20] Glaser K., Evandrou M., & Tomassini C. [2006]. Multiple role occupancy and social participation among midlife wives and husbands in the United Kingdom. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 63 [1], 27-47.
- [21] Gratton, C., & Tice, A. [1991]. The Demands for sport: A two Stage Econometric Model Using the 1977 General Household Survey. Manchester Polytechnic Department of Economics Discussion Paper.
- [22] Green, E., Hebron, S., & Woodward, D. [1990]. *Women's Leisure, What Leisure?* Hampshire: Macmillan Distribution Ltd.
- [23] Henderson, K. A., & Ainsworth, B. E. [2003]. A synthesis of perceptions about physical activity among older African American and American Indian women. *American Journal of Public Health*, 93 [2], 313-317.
- [24] Henderson, K. A., & King, K. [1998]. Recreation programming for adolescent girls: Rationale and foundations. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 16 [2], 1-14.
- [25] Henderson, K. A., Bialeschki, M. D., Shaw, S. M., & Freysinger, V. J. [1996]. Both gains and gaps: Feminist perspectives on women's leisure. College Park, PA: Venture Publishing.
- [26] Herridge, K., Shaw, S., & Mannell, R. [2003]. An exploration of women's leisure within heterosexual romantic relationships. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 35 [3], 274-292.
- [27] Hubbard, J., & Mannell, R. [2001]. Testing competing models of the leisure constraint negotiation process in a corporate employee recreation setting. *Leisure Sciences*, 23, 145-163.
- [28] Hunter, P. L., & Whitson, D. J. [1992]. Women's leisure in a resource industry town: Problems and issues, *Loisir et Societe*, 15 [1], 223 - 244.
- [29] Jackson, E. [1997]. In the eye of the beholder: A comment on Samdahl and Jekubovich: A critique of leisure constraints: Comparative analyses and

- understandings, *Journal of Leisure Research*, 29, 458-468.
- [30] Jackson, E. [2005]. *Constraints to Leisure*. Venture publishing, Inc. State college, Pennsylvania, 1-30.
- [31] Jackson, E. L. [2000]. Will research on leisure constraints still be relevant in the twenty-first century? *Journal of Leisure Research*, 32, 62-68.
- [32] Jackson, E. L., & Henderson, K. A. [1995]. Gender-based analysis of leisure constraints. *Leisure Sciences*, 17, 31-51.
- [33] Jackson, E. L., & Scott, D. [1999]. Constraints to leisure. In E. L. Jackson & T. L. Burton
- [34] Jackson, E., & Rucks, V. [1995]. Negotiation of leisure constraints by junior-high and high-school students: An exploratory study. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 27, 85-105.
- [35] Jackson, E., Crawford, D., & Godbey, G. [1993]. Negotiation of leisure constraints. *Leisure Sciences*, 15, 1-11.
- [36] Junui, S. [2000]. The impact of immigration: Leisure experiences in the lives of South American immigrants. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 32, 358-381.
- [37] Kassim M., Fikri A., & Radzuwan R. [2009]. Constraints on Recreational Sport Participation among Female, *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 12 [2].
- [38] Kay, T., & Jackson, E. [1991]. Leisure despite constraint: The impact of leisure constraints on leisure participation. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 2, 301-313.
- [39] Khan, N. [1997]. Leisure and the recreation among women of selected hill-farming families in Bangladesh. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 29, 5-20.
- [40] King, K. [2000]. From the precipice: Recreation experiences of high risk girls. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 18, 19-34.
- [41] Kouthouris, C., Kontogianni, E., Famisis, K., Papadopoulos, P. [2009]. Perceived constraints on informal recreational sports participation: the case of school teachers in Midland Greece, *World Leisure Journal*, 51 [1], 39-46.
- [42] Lafrance, M. N., Zivian, M. T., & Myers, A. M. [2000]. Women, weight, and appearance Masmanidis T., Gargalianos D., & Kosta G. [2009]. Perceived Constraints of Greek University Students' Participation in Campus Recreational Sport Programs, *RSJ*, 33 [2], October.
- [43] Matheson, J. [1991]. Participation in sport: A study carried out on behalf of the Department of the environment as part of the 1987 General Household Survey. In OPCS Social Survey Division, Series GHS, 17, London: HMSO.
- [44] Perline, M. M., Stoldt, G. C. [2007]. Competitive Balance in Men's and Women's Basketball: The Cast of the Missouri Valley Conference, *The Sport Journal*, 10 [4].
- [45] Robinson, J. P., & Godbey, G. [1999]. *Time for Life: The Surprising Ways Americans Use Their Time*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
- [46] Russel, R., & Stage, F. [1996]. Leisure as burden: Sudanese refugee woman. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 28, 108-121.
- [47] Scott, D. [1991]. The problematic nature of participation in contract bridge: A qualitative study of group-related constraints. *Leisure Sciences*, 13, 321-336.
- [48] Shaw, S. M. [1992]. Verifying family leisure: An examination of women's and men's everyday experiences and perceptions of family time. *Leisure Sciences*, 14 [3], 271-286.
- [49] Shaw, S. M. [1994]. Gender, leisure, and constraint: Towards a framework for the analysis of women's leisure, *Journal of Leisure Research*, 26, 8-22.
- [50] Shaw, S., & Henderson, K. [2005]. Gender analysis and leisure constraints: An uneasy alliance. In E. Jackson [Ed.], *Constraints to leisure*, 28-34, State College, PA: Venture Publishing.
- [51] Stavropoulou, A. [2008]. *Recreational Sport Participation of Women in Jyväskylä: Constraints and Motives Related with Women's Physical Activity*, University of Jyväskylä,
- [52] Stodolska, M., & Yi-Kook, J. [2005]. Ethnicity, immigration, and constraints. In E. Jackson [Ed.], *Constraints to leisure*, 53-73, State College, PA: Venture Publishing.
- [53] The world fact book [2011]. Middle east: Iran, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html>
- [54] Theberge, N. [2000]. *Higher goals: Women's ice hockey and the politics of gender*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- [55] Tirone, S., & Shaw, S. [1997]. At the center of their lives: Indo-Canadian women, their families and leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 29, 225-244.
- [56] Walker, G., Deng, J., & Dieser, R. [2005]. Culture, self-construal, and leisure theory and practice. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 37, 77-99.
- [57] Wiley, C. G. E., Shaw, S. M., & Havitz, M. E. [2000]. Men's and women's involvement in sports: an examination of the gendered aspects of leisure involvement', *Leisure Sciences*, 22, 19-31.
- [58] Yektayar M, Farshad T, Ali Z, Sardar M, 2012, The relationship between religious attitudes and perceptions of organizational justice in coaches. *Archives of Applied Science Research*, 2012, 4 (4):1753-1757.
- [59] Fatemeh P, Sardar M, Mozafare Y, 2012, The relationship between organizational learning culture and job satisfaction and Internal service quality in sport organizations in Iran. *Archives of Applied Science Research*, 2012, 4 (4):1901-1905