

## Employment status of women graduates: (Case Study: Iran)

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**ABSTRACT:** This research is designed to study the employment's situation among female graduates in different majors. The sample of study includes 292 graduates from university of Mazandaran. The data has been collected by questionnaire and then it has been analyzed by descriptive and inferential procedures. The research results show that 56.9 percent of female graduates were employed and 43 percent were unemployed. Among employed, 56 percent worked in service sector, 32% in industry and 10 percent were employed in agriculture sector.

In addition 84 percent of the individual field of studies was technical and engineering, 56 percent humanities, 50 percent basic sciences, and 38 percent agriculture sciences. Factors affecting women's market's needs, and practical skills. Also, female graduates faced with the following obstacles: too many graduates, limited relation with employers, and lack of information about labor market's needs.

**Keywords:** Graduates, Higher Education, Employment, Women, Human Capital Theory.

### INTRODUCTION

During recent years, the number of female students in higher education has increased recognizably (Salehi, 2001&2002). In the education year 2002-2003, women comprised about 56 percent of university students while in the education year 1969-1970, women comprised only 24.7 percent of university student (Table 1). Recent statistics indicates that in the education universities for the first time from which 116927 people (53 percent) were women and 1044109 people (47 percent) were men (Ministry of Science, Research and Technology 2004)

Table 1. Total number of students and graduates between the years of 1978-2003

Academic Year	The No. of Students			Graduates		
	Total	Female	%	Total	Female	%
1978-79	175675	54248	30.5	35559	10233	28.8
1979-80	174217	53571	30.7	43221	12507	28.9
1988-89	250709	71822	28.6	33010	10220	31
1989-90	281392	78573	28	37384	10734	28.7
1990-91	312076	85325	27.3	42587	11704	27.5
1991-92	334045	96969	29	52353	16576	29.6
1992-93	374734	105667	28.2	59194	18612	31.4
1993-94	436564	124350	28.5	63866	19553	30.6
1994-95	476455	145353	30.5	74170	21939	29.6
1995-96	526621	171816	32.6	83385	26938	32.3
1996-97	579070	209163	36.1	83882	28361	33.8
1997-98	625380	238687	38.2	91051	32366	35.3
1998-99	638913	267650	42	105937	40433	38.2
2002-03	535172	298371	56	74197	37802	50.94

Source: MSRT (2004)

The presence of women in universities can be not only an index to indicate their participation in sociological and cultural affairs, it is also necessary for the country higher education policy –makers to attend the

consequences of it and their economic status and the employment of women after graduating (Ezazi, 2002; Elmi, 2004; Sadegi & Emadzadeh 2004). One of the important features in judging about the domestic and external efficiency of the higher education of the society is the quality of human resources harmony with the needs and changes of labor market (Shaditalab, 2003; Salehi, 2004 ; Mirzaie, 2004; Sadegi & Emadzadeh, 2004). Formal statistics show that only 11 percent of women comprise society labour and this status has not changed from 1956 to 1996 (Safari, 1998; Bageri, 2003; Pirahari, 2001).

The background of the research also indicates that the employment problem of the graduated people during recent years in Iran has been put forward as a basic cultural, sociological and economic involvement in the group of the most important national development and security dangers (Rezaie Rashti, 1989; 1999; Chitsaz Qomi, 1999; Farasatkah, 2004).

The basic subject of the present research is to answer the following questions:

1. How much is the degree of the availability to employment for the female graduated?
2. How much is the degree of the availability to employment in the main university department for the female graduated?
3. In the case of the availability to employment for the female graduated, what are the effective factors in attract to work market?
4. In the case of the non availability to employment for the female graduated, what are the obstructions for entering the job market?

### **Theoretical Framework**

In investigating the relationship among higher education, job market and employment that are in the category of the economy of the education, there are different theoretical views that are the appropriate out line for the analysis of the findings of the present research (Salehi, 2004; Schultz, 1993; Woodhall, 1973; Psacharopoulos, 1988; Archer, 1982). These theories include cost benefit theory, public choice theory, conflict theory, feminist theory and human capital theory. Considering that human capital theory is basic, it is the theoretical basis for the analysis of the findings of the present research. This theory is considered the basis for the economic analysis of supply and demand side of higher education so that Martin Carnoy (1995) name it "paradigm theory". In the human capital theory, investment in higher education is as human being's basic attempt for obtaining social security and ability because it is assumed that higher education in course of time results in earning more economic income (Hughes and Lauder, 1991). In this theory, it is also assumed that in market economy the difference in obtaining income is a reflection of the difference in productivity. Job market, on one hand, refers to the people's skills and abilities and, on the other hand, is the reflection of employer's demand for using a variety of skills that are supplied by educational systems.

Anyhow, higher education has a special place in the discussion of human capital theory. In this theory, human resources are considered as capital preservers (through skills that are obtained by higher education) that have the capacity to investment in themselves (Karabel and Halsey, 1977). Educational services are not a form of consumption them but a kind of productive investment in saving human labour (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985). Human capital theory, in meaning, has the two aspects of public and individual "or" macro and micro" with the rates of" private and social return (Tembon, 1999). From the macro view point, this theory, as Windolf analyses, can be a part of the modernism theory in which it is assumed that universities have developed rapidly with the economic development and technical advancement and the need of society to skillful human labour (Windolf, 1997). In this view point, it is considered that there is a relationship between market and the need to trained human labour and universities development. Registration in universities increases in the periods of economic growth and vice versa, decreases in the periods of economic activity. In the micro interpretation of human capital theory that has developed along with the new libertarian policies in countries like England, America and Newzeland, the degree of higher education private return has been emphasized. In this interpretation, it is assumed that human beings with the goal of profit attempt spend time for higher education and invest in it because it is suggested in the existent literature that to obtain job and individual incomes increase with increase in the education years (Haribson, 1973).

It is necessary to mention the point that in many countries people social mobility, manner of life, professional opportunities and life positions have tied up with people's degree of higher education (Bouden, 1977). During the years 1970s, models based on modernism views and human capital in the third world countries have been influenced through many discussions and criticism (Klees, 1986). For example, criticism has been centered on the conflict between education rapid development and the employment of the educated with low pay at the same time. In many countries, those graduated from high school comprised the major part of the unemployed. Also, there are some evidences for the unemployed among those graduated from universities. Evidences indicate

that they do not have the necessary ability to enter in job market, nor are they interested in low social jobs (Kivinen and Ahola, 1999). The founders of human capital believe that employers will answer the supply of skilled lab our with its demand increase. When there is equcation increases because of the increase of the rate of, but the conditions are not equal for job market availability for every one especially for women. Human capital theory has no answer for this question why in similar jobs women have lower pay than men, therefore, it worth's thinking when human capital is considered as risk investment (salehi,2004). Because there is a gap between the ideologies of human capital presented in the present job market status and every day realities with which the graduated people face in job market. Therefore, considering these reasons , the degree of registration or rendering educational services alone cannot be an index for economic growth , but real educational productivity should be looked for in the labour absorb in job market. The course of study and individual's status may also be effective in the degree of return. Some of effective in the degree of return. Some of the courses of study have better status in job market.

Another important point that must be noticed in the criticism and investigation of human capital theory is the role of power and social and political factors in the supply and demand of lab our (Halsey , 1997), especially if the gender matter is included in the discussion and low pay and the obstructions in their entering job market have been investigated. Jayaweera's researches (1997) in Asia indicates that in spite of the attempt of human capital theory that lends an especial priority on higher education as a tool for economic development and human resources, but there is not a positive linear relation ship between higher education and influence to women .Any how, the relationship between education and employment with regard to human capital theory has changed from an idea of extreme optimism in 1960s to an idea of hope and even disappoint in 1990 ( Fagerlin and Saha, 1989). Later investigations also indicated that this relationship was highly complex and depended on different and various factors. Blaug (1985) believes that the golden years of the economy of the education have ended in the early 1970s and analyses that economists should pay attention to the theory of screening and the theory of the segmentation of job market. Easton and Klees (1990) in criticism of the classic relationship between economy and education has put forward an institutational approach according to which the patterns of social behavior have been noticed the patterns that from the supply and demand of education and pay attention to the ways of their use.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

With regard to the nature the research, descriptive method has been chosen to make this consideration. The statistical population of this investigation including all the women graduate in agriculture sciences, basis sciences, human sciences, technical and engineering that their number in the years of 1996 till 2001, had been 1239 person. Sampling method with attention to stock of different training science that was be studying had be chosen. To choose random sample and to fix the number sample, the Morgan's Table had been used.

The method of gathering information realized by way of survey and via questionnaire. Questions of questionnaire was in two cases, open answer and closed answer that with using them, tried to analysis the factors which are the cause of unemployment or attraction women to market. Since the questionnaire was the basic tools of this research, before sending questionnaires, had used from complementary suggests of fellow–members and doing pilot study on number of graduates to increase its validity. We should say that questionnaires had sent via post to the address of graduates that at last, 177 questionnaires received by way of real sample of research (Table 2). Results analysis of research had be done with the help of descriptive and inference statistics and with use of (SPSS) statistic software. It better to say that since the datas of this research is nominal; had used to analysis from the test of nonparametric Chi Square.

Table 2. Research samples by field of study

	<i>Human sciences</i>	<i>Engineering</i>	<i>Agriculture science</i>	<i>Basis science</i>	<i>total</i>
<i>faculties</i>					
<i>Number</i>	50	44	51	24	169
<i>percent</i>	30	26	30	13	100

### Findings

#### **The graduated woman's access to market**

According Table3, between 167 samples that is studying, 56.9 percent of graduated women from Mazandaran University are working on different educational field and 43.1 percent of them are notable to find any special job.

Table3. position of the graduated women's job

Situation	f	%
Employed	95	56.9
unemployed	72	43.1
total	167	100

In the Table 3 had been shown that 62 percent of educated women employees in state sector and 34 percent of them are working in private sector. Just 3percent of the workers propounded that their work is self–employment.

Table 4. Female graduates and access to different job in term of main sectors

Sort of employment	number	percentage
state	63	62
private	34	34
cooperative	1	1
Self – employment	3	3
total	101	100

By the sort of employment in different parts, 56 percent in services sector, 32 percent in industry sector and 10 percent in agriculture sector are working now

Table 5. employment of graduates, according to different sectors

Employment sector	number	percentage
services	49	56
industry	28	32
agriculture	9	10
totality	87	100

**Employment of graduated women in different educational groups.**

In Table 6, percentage of employment of graduate women in different fields had been shown in the different educational groups. For example, dates show that, 84 percent of graduates Technical and engineering are employed and 14 percent are unemployed. Further more, graduates in human science, basis sciences and agriculture science serial 56 percent, 50 percent and 38 percent are employed.

So, it results that the maximum amount of attraction from universities graduate woman connect to technical and engineering sciences (84 percent) and minimum percent of attraction from university graduate connect to agriculture science (38 percent). Further more statistical analysis of square is shown it too, that these differences are meaningful from statistical sight; in other word, access to the job among different group and fields are different . So, may be we could find a connection between accessing job and manner of educational fields.

Table 6. employment of graduate woman in different educational groups

		human	technical	Agriculture science	Basis science	total
employ	number	27	37	19	12	95
	Percentage within group	56%	84%	38%	50%	57%
	Percentage from total	16%	22%	14%	7%	57%
unemploy	number	21	7	31	12	71
	Percentage within group	49%	16%	62%	50%	43%
	Percentage from total	13%	4%	19%	7%	43%
total	Number	48	44	50	24	166
	Percentage within group	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Percentage from total	29%	27%	30%	15%	100%

**Factors effecting to attraction graduate woman in job market**

Consideration of connected factors with employment and unemployment of graduates requests that the subject be considered from different sides because of light up the reasons and effective agents to attraction in marketing. So, in recent research tried to consider about the opinion of graduate women in different fields about agents like practicable talents that had accessed during training, theoretical knowledge that had accessed during training, having good job funds elegant with educational fields, acquaintance with employers, having information about the situation of marketing, talents that should learn in out of universities condition and few number of graduates in mark

ting, talents that should learn in out of universities condition and few number of graduates in marketing that these results of survey are in short from at Table 7 .

Table 7. consideration factors effecting to attraction graduate women in market

Factors	Sort of answer		No	
	Yes frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
Practicable talents that had accessed in college	67	72	26	28
Theoretical knowledge that had accessed during training	83	88	11	12
Having good job funds elegant with educational fields	72	88	20	22
Acquaintance with employers	44	49	45	51
Having formation about the situation of market	51	57	39	43
Talents that should learn in out of universities	59	64	33	36
Few number of graduates in market	13	14	79	86

To add up answers of graduates can result that 88.3 percent , 88.3 percent and 72 percent of graduates confirmed effects of agents by order like knowledge and information had accessed during training in college , having good job founds elegant with educational fields , practicable talent that had accessed in college to accessing job. Further more, 64 percent of them confirmed effects of acquired talents out of university and 56.7 percent confirmed effects of having information about market in market attraction. Just 14 percent of graduates agreed with few numbers of graduates in market on effective agents to attraction jobs and thus, 49.4 percent of them know acquaintance with employers as an effect to accessing job. So we can result that quality of education and having good context are effective to attract graduates in market. So from theoretical sight it seems that manpower planning viewpoint programming is more accepted between graduate woman beside the agents that had said, in consideration of open answer of questionnaires, agents like having perseverance (8 cases) , propensity to doing job and accessing other skills like knowing computerization sciences and English language (12 cases) are mentioned as apart of effective factors that show the importance of technical and vocational training and short time training, it is so limited in the formal program of the colleges.

**Obstacles in way of entering to the market for graduate women**

As said before, most of the graduate women from college aren't able to find a job after their graduating. So, because of knowing the obstacles of employing, a survey disposed, of , about agents like do not having acquaintance with employers (absence of consignment), do not have elegant between educational field and the need of work in the city and province, absence of practicable experience in college, marriage and the problems to keeping children, opposition of family by working out door,sexual discrimination in market, attachment to continuing education in upper levels than B.A, the subjects in university aren't update, a large number of graduated and absence of having enough information about market that the results are described in Table 8.

Table8. obstacles in way of entering to the market for graduate women

Questions	Sort of answer		No	
	Yes frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
Absence of consignment	81	92	7	8
do not have elegant between educational field and the need of work in the city and province	56	65	30	45
absence of practicable experience in colleges	47	55	38	45
marriage and the problems to keeping children	19	23	63	77
opposition of family by working out door	9	11	76	89
sexual discrimination in market	55	64	31	36
attachment to continuing education in upper levels	31	37	53	63
The subjects in universities aren't update	40	50	40	50
The large number of graduated	81	93	6	7
Absence of having enough information about market	57	67	28	67

As a result, by observing the opinion of this group of graduates, factors like large number of graduates (93 percent), do not having acquaintance with employers (92 percent), do not having elegant between educational field and the need of work in city and province (65 percent) and absence of having enough information about market (67 percent) is an important agent to absence of attraction women in market. Vice versa, most of the women do not door, marriage and the problems in keeping children and attachment to continuing education in upper levels as an obstacle in way of accessing job. Further more, in graduate women's opinion agent like absence employing in state sectors (12 cases) and don't having acquaintance with employers (7 cases) are sectors of effective factors absence accessing jobs. So, most of the graduates are waiting for employing in state sectors.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In consideration the situation of graduates from higher education, we should pay attention from one side to demand side of human resources from higher education system and from other side to supply side of human resources. In other word quantity and quality of education that had presented in universities settle to just one remoteness from constructs of training that the other important and basic part by the name of economic, social and cultural needs of society, provide the base to attraction of human resources to society. So, consideration the situation of women's job is a two phase subject that requires different situation of studying. But what are results in this consideration knows the specialty and sights of human resources which trained by one of the universities that its results are described in below resume.

Between 167 graduated woman of the university , 56.9 percent were employ and 43 percent of them were unemployed between graduated employs , 56 percent were in services Sectors , 32 percent were in industry sectors and 10 percent were in agriculture sectors.

Between the sample of research (employed, graduated woman) 84 percent related to technical and engineering fields, 56 percent was related to human science fields , 50 percent was related to basis science fields and at last 38 percent related to agriculture science field in consideration the effective factors in attraction of market , graduated woman believed that factors like knowledge and accessed information during studying in university , heaving good match of jobs with studying fields and practicable skills which access during trainings were effective in accessing job. These results with the founds of Sadeghi and Emadzadeh (2004), Mirzayie (2004) has conformance that increase the chance of entering them to market. These founds remembers planners of higher education that in higher education planning pay attention on demand side instead of supply side.

Factors like large number of graduated, do not acquaintance with employers and absence of factors between educational fields and the need of work in city and province from graduated sight is an obstacle in attraction of market. So, these results has conformance with founds of Kless (1986), Kivinen and Ahola (1999), Karabel and Halsey (1977) and Jayaweera researches (1997). From theoretical part can pay attention to critical sight like the meaning of power and labour market segmentation as an analysis on founds of research.

So, the situation of woman's working on the basis of percentage of employing, funds and educational fields which attract ional fields which attracted in market is like other graduates of higher education hasn't conformance with the need of market or in other word, if there are agreement between dimensions of demand and supply of human resource, woman can entering to the market so easier.

### **Recommendations**

- 1- Since the maximum sector of employing woman are in services sectors, suggest that in economic planning, the services sectors has to improve that causes to attract graduate woman to job.
- 2- The data's of the research show that, graduate women in technical and engineering had more chance to access job in market. So expanding the technical and engineering fields makes better base to accessing jobs.
- 3- By attention to effect of practicable skills besides the training in college of attraction graduate women to jobs, recommend that informal training and short time training attention to the talents during training in college.
- 4-Most of graduates seeking job in state sectors and they think absence of employment is result of absence of attraction of state systems to new power; so, recommend that provide funds to change the sight of students in private sectors .In other word, employment in private sector should be consider and they shouldn't be consider and they shouldn't see employing in state sectors as an only way of employing. Since absence of having enough information about.
- 5- Market and don't have elegant between educational fields and the need of work in city and province are sectors of obstacles , so , recommend to establish centers in universities for showing complete information from employment in two , state and private sectors to the students.

### **Memorandums**

At the view of screening theory, educating is a kind of credential point that employers with using it choose the employers and fix their surface of salary; in other word, education is just a tool for choosing employers with higher talent and defined quality like stimulant, meeting about job, authority and moderning. (Psacharopoulos 1988) .

Labour market segmentation points to the employers who divide human resource in proportion of descent, sexual or other agents that possibility for revenue of them and less payment and discharging them be easier for them.

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