

THE ROLE OF COOKERY VOCATION IN THE TOURISM SECTOR ON WOMEN EMPLOYMENT

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Abstract: Tourism sector makes many contributions to country economies from creating an important share with regard to national income to providing employment opportunities as a dynamic sector. Thanks to this position, tourism sector has become an important sector for developing countries such as Turkey where unemployment problems are experienced. Satisfaction from the service provided in the tourism sector is among the most important conditions for the sustainability of the success of this sector. The food and beverage departments of the accommodation establishments which are part of this sector have a critical importance for both customer satisfaction as well as the economic contributions provided to the accommodation facility. The success of the food and beverage department has direct effects on the success of the accommodation establishment. Male employment has been more dominant in this sector due to the long working hours, intensive weekend schedules as well as tasks that require physical strength. Marriage is also an important factor that has negative impact on the participation of women in this sector. When it is taken into account that the food and beverage services play an important role in customer satisfaction related with accommodation establishments, the importance of trained personnel in this field becomes even more important. Recently, female students who graduated from the Culinary Arts and Gastronomy departments of universities that have started to increase in number started to take place in the food and beverage departments thus contributing to the presentation of a more quality service.

Keywords: Tourism, Food and beverage, Accommodation establishment, Female employment

Introduction

Today, millions of people leave their locations of continuous residence to go to other countries or regions thus meeting their psychological, social and cultural requirements such as travelling, resting, entertainment and education. This event named as tourism makes significant effects both economically and socially and forms a fundamental property of today's civilization.

It is inevitable that the rapidly developing technology of our age will affect the tourism sector. The tourism sector that has grown and developed rapidly all over the world as a result of technological advancements continues to grow and develop in Turkey while also contributing to the development of other sectors as well. When the historical development of tourism activities are examined, whereas the total number of people who participated in international trips during the 1950's was around 25 million people, this number has reached about 1.08 billion people in 2013. In addition, it is expected that the number of people who participate in international tourism activities in the year 2020 will reach 1.6 billion people in the world with international tourism income reaching 2 trillion dollars. The concept of globalization has enabled tourism to become one of the most rapidly growing sectors in the world.

Whereas in our country, tourism sector has developed and changed rapidly starting from the 2000's thus becoming one of the sectors with the highest international competition strength. According to TÜİK (Turkish Statistical Institute) data, the number of tourists who visited Turkey in 2014 was 41 million 415 thousand 70 and the tourism income was 34 billion 305 million 904 thousand dollars. Tourism plays a key role in decreasing foreign trade deficits and unemployment in times of economic distress by providing a significant amount of foreign currency inflow. At the same time, it acts as a savior for preventing unemployment due to its labor-intensive property and by increasing employment. All income to the tourism sector has direct effects on employment in the tourism sector and indirect effects on employment in other sectors. It is important for the development of national tourism that

people are employed in the field of tourism and have the necessary knowledge and skills to be employed. Tourism sector and especially accommodation establishments have a significant employment capacity in our country. The most distinctive structural property of this sector is that it is a service sector and that employees are working at jobs where their labor is primary.

Accommodation establishments; are establishments which meet the demands of tourists for temporary accommodation, food and beverage, entertainment and various other social needs. In other words; accommodation establishments are facilities that meet the demands of tourists for accommodation at different places. The fact that the reasons for travel of tourists, their expectations from their travels, the income levels, age groups and tastes are different requires different accommodation establishments as well. Accommodation establishments in Turkey are classified as hotel, holiday village, guest houses and health facilities according to different criteria. When the economic contribution of accommodation establishments are considered, the importance of food-beverage services provided at these establishments become apparent by their own accord. Because food-beverage department provides the highest income for accommodation establishments after the rooms department. Establishments make significant expenses to foods and beverages in order to acquire this income. Kitchens also have significant importance for accommodation establishments as the division where food production is made. This department generates an important field of employment. When the profile of the employees in this department are examined, it is observed that the number of women employees is low in comparison with men and that even though kitchens are considered as one of the fundamental areas for women, this has not been the case in the sector.

Employment Status In Tourism

It is possible to define the concept of employment in various ways. Employment can be defined in general as, "having people who have the will and desire to work and earn an income work for the production of goods or services".

Contribution of tourism in generating employment increases due to the fact that tourism is in general a labor-intensive sector since majority of the activities in the tourism sector are service related, in addition to the fact that the required labor force is either skilled or unskilled and that such kind of labor force is readily available in many developing countries or regions with collapsing economies. There are many different sectors such as accommodation, transportation, entertainment, travel agencies, management, finance and health which are directly affected by the tourism sector. In addition, various other sectors such as agriculture and production are indirectly affected. Hence, it is quite difficult to clearly determine the effects of tourism sector on employment. The employment effect that increases parallel to the development of tourism results in three different employment types which are direct, indirect and induced employment.

These are:

- Direct Employment: Tourism establishments such as accommodation, food-drink, transportation establishments, travel agencies and tour operators encompass direct employment.
- Indirect Employment: jobs in sectors that provide goods and services that the tourism sector needs and that benefit from the expenses by tourists are within the scope of indirect employment. Sectors such as agriculture, fishing, construction, handicrafts, banks and production sectors are sectors that provide new employment opportunities with the development of tourism.
- Induced Employment: type of employment that encompasses the additional employment opportunities generated in the economy as a result of the income provided by direct and indirect employment.

Employment opportunities that are generated by the tourism sector in this manner are very important for countries such as Turkey that face unemployment problems.

In addition, the fact that mechanization and automation options are limited in the tourism sector increases the employment intensity more for the tourism sector in comparison with other sectors. Touristic expenses generate a high amount of direct employment effect due to the fact that labor-intensive activities are more frequent in the sector. In addition, it also generates an induced employment effect by providing new business opportunities to secondary sectors that provide goods and services to the tourism sector. It is accepted that the investments and expenses made for the tourism sector provide employment at higher ratios in comparison with other sectors. According to İçöz and Kozak (1998:225), the factors that increase the number of people employed in the tourism sector are as follows:

- Labor intensiveness
- The fact that there are many low income business areas
- The high number of part-time and temporary jobs
- Seasonal intensity and periodicity

Tourism sector cannot enable the development of a country by itself; however it is an undeniable fact that it will have positive impacts on providing development. Even though there is no single data related with the employment generated by the tourism sector in the Turkish economy, it can be seen that the total number of people working in this field is slightly above 1 million people according to information compiled from various different resources.

Table 1: Employment at Accommodation Establishments (2000-2010)

Years	Hotel + Restaurant (Thousand People)	Hotel, Entertainment Venues (Thousand People)
2000	776	211.4
2001	796	243.5
2002	826	255.6
2003	847	280.1
2004	872	297.6
2005	949	309.2
2006	1.001	318.4
2007	1.067	328.7
2008	1.058	341.5
2009	1.131	342.4
2010	1.066	351.4

Source: <http://www.tuyed.org.tr> (18.05.2011)

When the table given above is examined, it can be observed that the employment numbers of hotels, restaurants and entertainment venues are continually on the rise with only a decrease in hotel restaurant employment during 2008 and 2010.

When the status of female-male employees in the tourism sector is examined;

The fact that females can address humane emotions better, their status in society and family in addition to their personal attributes comes to the forefront as a reason for their preference. This is understood from the increasing number of female employees in the tourism sector. According to EUROSTAT data, whereas the ratio of males employed in the tourism sector in our country in 2013 was 70%, the ratio for females was around 30. However, whereas the ratio of males employed in the tourism sector was 74.3% in 2006, it decreased to 70.1% in 2013 while the ratio of females increased from 25.7% to 29.9%. When the occupation and positions of the females in this sector are examined, certain distinct horizontal and vertical gender discriminations can be observed.

- Horizontally, females and males are placed in different occupations. Whereas females are employed as waitresses, cleaners, travel agency sales representatives; males are employed as barmen, gardeners, construction workers, drivers and technical personnel.
- Vertically, a typical “social gender” pyramid is also common in the tourism sector. Lower positions and occupations with less career development options are filled with women. On the contrary, significant managerial positions are populated by men.

In this case, even though females comprising half the world’s population have significant impact on contribution to economic life, generating economic value and thus ensuring development, the share they receive from economic development is way behind that of men. The main reason that causes women to remain in the secondary position both economically and socially is gender discrimination that stems from male-dominant culture. This mentality limits the roles of women with the household thereby putting forth that the tasks of the women outside of their household are all secondary even if they have other occupations. Even though female employment increases as a result of the search for flexible and cheap labor brought about by globalization, female labor is still gathered mostly around jobs with no regular income including unpaid family worker.

Female Employment In Cookery Occupation

Women in Turkey have started to take place within the labor market in the real sense following the 1950’s as a result of the urbanization brought about by the migration to the cities from rural areas. The positions of women in the labor market in addition to their working types have changed over time. It is important how this change came about from a sectoral perspective. Because the sectoral distribution of employment in a country is an important indication of the development level of that country. Whereas employment decreases in the agriculture sector together with development, it increases in non-agriculture sectors. This is exactly the case for female employment as well. Female labor is gathered around the agriculture sector in developind countries and regions, whereas females in developed countries work mostly in the service sector. The ratio of females employed in the services

sector in 2000 was 27.3% increasing to 33.3% in 2005. The number of females employed in the tourism sector which is part of the service sector continues to increase. On the other hand, it is a known problem that the personnel circulation rate employed at the accommodation establishments in the tourism sector is quite high. The kitchen department is among the primary departments where personnel circulation rate is high. It is possible to state that working conditions is among the factors resulting in high personnel circulation rates. Because, elements related with the physical environments in kitchens have significant impact on the motivation and efficiency of the personnel. It is not possible to cook without steam or odor in the kitchens and it has been observed that the air pollution generated has significant adverse effects on human health. In addition, it has also been determined that the improper thermal stress at the working environment causes discomfort and health problems while also making negative impact on the work performance. In addition, accidents such as slipping, falling and injury occur frequently in kitchens. Thus, the physical environment should be arranged so as to address the employees. Problems such as seasonal employment, part-time employment, long working hours, undeclared employment and low wages are observed frequently. In addition, employees generally try to cope with negativities due to the physical environment conditions such as closed space, high temperature, insufficient equipment and tools. That is why; there is a need for self-sacrificing employees in the kitchens. A significant portion of this personnel is comprised of those who carry out the cookery vocation. A cook is defined in the national occupational standards prepared by the Vocational Qualification Institute (2010) as; *“a person with the necessary knowledge and skills to prepare standard recipes and menus, soups and consommé from local and world cuisines, hot and cold sauces, pastry dishes, meat and fishery dishes, vegetable and legume dishes, olive oil dishes, rice and pastas, hot-cold starters, salads, side dishes and desserts in accordance with both the requirements of the establishment and department as well as rules of hygiene”*. Cookery is an occupation that requires high level of skills and planning.

The number of females employed in the kitchen department is generally quite low. Females are employed in the sector in occupations that generally require less education and accordingly they earn less financially. Even though the society considers kitchens as one of the fundamental areas for women, this has not been the case in the sector. In addition, there is discrimination as female and male occupation. Burrell et.al. (1997) carried out a study on women working in the accommodation sector in France, Spain, Italy and England as a result of which it was determined that there are differences with regard to the jobs carried out despite the fact that there is not much difference in female and male distribution in the kitchen. Whereas men cook more in the kitchens, women take care of cleaning and dish washing tasks. Mok and Finley (1986) examined the job satisfaction levels of hotel food-service personnel in Hong-Kong according to demographic variables and examined the relationship between job satisfaction and personnel circulation. It was determined as a result of the study that the job satisfaction levels of women are lower in comparison with men and that the the job satisfaction levels of young personnel are lower in comparison with the elderly.

It is thought that the responsibilities of women will affect their performance. The fact that working hours are not standard especially for tourism establishments based on uninterrupted service principle in addition to the possibility of being called to work at any time emerges as an irregularity which poses significant problems especially for married women in the sector. The facts that work loads are generally high in the kitchen department where services are mostly based on human labor in addition to the tendency of women not to be able to tolerate the work load due to their physical properties emerge as a different problem. Insufficient resting due to long working hours may result in accidents in the kitchen since it has adverse effects on the physical strengths of the employees and thus their resistance, power and attention. Kitchen equipment that is not arranged ergonomically cause occupational diseases in the musculoskeletal system. The large and heavy equipment used in the kitchen create difficulties for women. Because lifting these cookers, stirring the large amounts of food prepared in large pots using large ladles, peeling potatoes alone perhaps for a thousand people or carrying a ten kilogram jar of mayonnaise are all tasks that require labor and strength. That is why, injuries such as waist slips, injury in the back muscles and stiffness of the neck occur frequently. Hence, it becomes difficult to employ female personnel for long periods of time in the kitchens of tourism establishments. However, kitchen equipment has also become more modern due to technological advancements in recent years. These devices that make use of new technology have eased the tasks with their different designs, colors, control elements, digital indicators and their programmable features. Women can now carry out tasks in modern kitchens which were deemed impossible in the past. Hence, technology has supported women completely thus creating an environment in the tourism sector where they can work equally with men. There is now a demand for qualified labor that can adopt to the technological advancements in kitchens as a result of this positive impact of technology. In order to accomplish this, employability should be increased by using formal and informal education possibilities for increasing the education level of the female work force in addition to the male employees. It can be stated that there is an increase in the cookery vocation in recent years. Associate degree cookery programs along with undergraduate level gastronomy departments have been opened in many universities. The number of cookery programs was 43 in 2011 which increased up to 91 in 2014. Thus, the increasing demand for qualified female cooks will be met by the employment

of the students graduating from these departments in the food-beverage sector kitchens. Establishments should also enable the graduates to advance in their careers. In addition, they should also provide positive impressions towards the vocation while also providing various opportunities so that students who have received cookery education can develop themselves.

Conclusion

Tourism sector makes many contributions to country economies from creating an important share with regard to national income to providing employment opportunities as a dynamic sector. Thanks to this position, tourism sector has become an important sector for developing countries such as Turkey where unemployment problems are experienced. The food-beverage sector which is part of the tourism sector is also developing at the same rate. However, when the employment status is examined, it is observed that female employees have not reached a sufficient majority even though the number of female employees in the tourism sector in general is high. High work load and long working hours in the kitchens are among the primary problems for both male and female employees and in addition, the physical properties as well as the roles they play in their families should be taken into consideration when making the work-task distribution. Establishments generally consider the employment of quality personnel only as a cost and neglect the benefits that will be provided by qualified employees. In this regard, the employment rates of those who have received an occupational education is quite low in the sector. However, it is an undeniable fact that service quality is among the most important factors for establishment quality and the reasons for preference of an establishment. The required service quality may be attained only through educated and successful employees who are experts at one-to-one communication with the customers. Hence, tourism establishments should determine new personnel policies. Arrangements for equal evaluation during the hiring process, opportunities for equal pay, equality with regard to social rights, equality with regard to working hours, provision of equal opportunities for career development, equal evaluation free from all prejudices during career evaluation in addition to the employment of personnel with the required education and vocational skills should be made with these policies that will be put forth by the establishments. A significant increase in female employment for cookery vocation in kitchens can thus be increased as a result of these regulations.

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