

Awareness of Women and Employment Opportunities in Tourism and Hotels Sector and Empowerment According to the Vision of the Kingdom 2030

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This study aims at identifying the extent of women's awareness of employment opportunities in the tourism and hotel sector and how to empower women in accordance with the Kingdom's 2030 vision. The sample of the study consisted of (450) Saudi women distributed geographically over the various regions of the Kingdom. A questionnaire was designed and sent to them, titled "Awareness of women and employment opportunities in tourism and hotels sector and empowerment according to the vision of the Kingdom 2030". The study concluded with a set of results, the most important of which is that there are many opportunities available for empowering women in the tourism and hotel sector, and they are characterised by diversity and suitability to the nature of women, especially when compared to the lack of employment opportunities in the educational and health sectors. The study reveals a set of challenges that limit the empowerment of women in the tourism and hotel sector; these include the customs and traditions of society. The study sought to present the proposed perception of empowering women in the tourism and hotels sector in light of the Kingdom's 2030 vision.

Key words: *Women, Employment Opportunities, Tourism, Hotel Sector, Empowerment*



Introduction:

The tourism sector is one of the largest sectors within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as it is one of the largest countries in the Middle East region that receives foreigners. Saudi Arabia has the elements for tourist attraction, especially the religious specialty of performing rituals such as Hajj and Umrah. Recently, the Kingdom has focused on improving domestic tourism, and other types of tourism.

In light of this interest, resolution No. 9, dated April 17, 2020, was issued by the Saudi Council of Ministers to establish the Supreme Commission for Tourism. The resolution confirms the adoption of the tourism sector as a cultural, social and economic sector, which requires the responsible authorities to plan for its development and improvement, starting with the distinctive tourism potential, and including the developing, qualifying and preparing of its human element.

The recent successive changes at all national and international levels have revealed a new reality that confirms that the requirements for sustainable development and the movement towards progress cannot be achieved without the actual participation of women, which highlights the importance of the joint role between women and men. The progress in both genders has become a shared responsibility between both men and women in a society that values and crowns those efforts. This research project was funded by the Deanship of Scientific Research, Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University, through the **Program of Research Project Funding After Publication, grant No (41- PRFA-P-45).**

The 20th Women's Conference emphasised the importance of the Twenty Leaders in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh 2020, to adopt women's economic issues, identifying as a supportive and effective partner during the Covide-19 crisis.

Problem Statement:

The problem of the study arose due to the lack of utilising the employment opportunities in the tourism and hotels sector internally, attributed to the deficiency of the societal perspective towards this giant industry. The employment opportunities in this sector are still needed and can be developed and utilised properly, as well as accommodate certain segments of society, especially women, since it is in line with their nature.

There are unlimited employment opportunities in the tourism and hotels sector available for women, whether in the private or public sector. These opportunities are related to tourism work including direct jobs such as those in accommodation, food and beverages, housing and living, tourism, travel and transportation, as well as indirect jobs such as shopping, and services and jobs in the public tourism sector like tourism promotion bodies and the Ministry of Tourism and Heritage (Aynalem et al, 2016).

At the same time, it is necessary to highlight the importance of education and qualifications in tourism specialties, as well as the human resources required. Human resources are essential to support the tourism sectors, to spread awareness in the community towards these promising resources and opportunities that require high-quality specifications and requirements, since they work at global levels within a highly competitive environment in the job market, selection and appointment (Kobra et al, 2019).

In light of capitalism control, there is no space for courtesy or condoning any shortcomings, especially in regard to employment. For that, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia assures the importance of realising the multiple poles for completing the employment cycle and the empowerment of Saudi women in all sectors generally and in the tourism and hotels sector. It starts with raising awareness through specialised professional certificates and education programs in both higher education and technical education, taking into account the focus on applied technical education at higher levels due to the need for large numbers of that type of labour (Ladkin, 2011) and (Alananzeh, 2014). Upon that, the study problem is summarised in the following main question:

How aware are women of employment opportunity in the tourism and hotels sector, and how can women be empowered according to the vision of the Kingdom 2030?

Study Importance:

The study derives its importance from the fact that work in the tourism sector depends directly and mainly on the workforce, and is characterised by the need for large numbers of employees.

The statistics from the General Authority for Statistics show the results of the labour market bulletin, based on the data of administrative records of government agencies for the fourth quarter of 2018, that the total number of Saudis looking for work was (17.8%) for male, compared to (82.2%) for female, and the unemployment rate for females was 32% compared to 6.9% for males.

Additionally, the study is important due to the essentiality of women's role in tourism fields in many countries (Carvalho, 2018), especially as women have become leaders in many tourism businesses and have independent capital (WTTC, 2013). Women's participation supports the green economy through simple contributions such as handicrafts and manual work, enabling them to improve their economic and social conditions in line with the principles of a green economy and international norms, as well as assisting to achieve sustainable development through diversification of employment opportunities in the tourism, hotel and travel sectors (Clevenger & Singh, 2013).

Study Objectives:

The study aims at defining the awareness of women and employment opportunities in the tourism and hotels sector, and women's empowerment, according to the vision of the Kingdom 2030.

Study Questions:

The study answers the main question: How aware are women of employment opportunity in the tourism and hotels sector, and how can women be empowered according to the vision of the Kingdom 2030? The below sub questions were derived from the main one:

1. What is the demographic (social and economic) characteristics of the sample?
2. What are the challenges and opportunities for women to become empowered in the tourism and hotel sector?
3. What is the proposed vision for empowering women in the tourism and hotels sector in light of the Kingdom's 2030 vision?
4. What is the effect of the demographic characteristics (profession and income) of Saudi women on their orientation towards empowering themselves to work in the tourism and hotel sector?

Literature Review and Previous Study:

The UN Human Development report in 2015 (Singh et al, 2007) indicated that promoting human development requires many policies and strategies through three main axes, including: creating job opportunities, preserving the rights of workers, and taking targeted measures by focusing on national employment strategies and seizing opportunities in the changing world of work (Tang & Tang, 2012). This is in addition to safeguarding workers' rights and entitlements, expanding social protection, addressing inequalities, seeking sustainable work and balancing paid and unpaid work. In implementation of the foregoing, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through the Kingdom's Vision 2030, has included these axes, and all responsible authorities are responsible for implementing strategic plans and emphasising the principle of citizenship.

Appropriate laws and legislation have been enacted to safeguard the rights of workers and define their rights and duties in line with international labour norms and laws, in addition to ensuring sustainable employment opportunities in the private sector and putting restrictions in place, to ensure that the interests of both parties are preserved (Good & Cooper, 2014).

■ **Sustainable development of tourism and creating employment opportunities for women:**

In accordance with the reports of the World Tourism Organisation in 2005, Ben Moiza Masoud (2018) and Casado (2009) point out the importance of sustainable development for tourism, which stresses the need to respect environmental and biological capabilities, including the natural diversity they contain, to achieve balance and maintain environmental stability. The reports did not exclude the first goal of development, which is the participation of all community members in the tourism sector, nor did they not consider and respect social values, cultural and value heritage.

Sustainable development will empower members of society to achieve economic prosperity through fair and stable employment opportunities, to reduce poverty and improve the standard of living of individuals and thus ensure the provision of high-quality services to tourists. According to Shiyi (2016), in order to attain sustainable development to manifest itself in achieving its goals, it is natural to pay attention to the youth in society in addition to empowering women, as they represent a societal force that has exceeded half of the community, which leads to the consolidation of humanistic, moral and cultural values in the society.

Numerous studies that have dealt with the work of women in tourism confirm that women in the hospitality sector face many challenges, most of which are social, including wrong beliefs and habits about the tourism work. In addition to that, women faced employment limitations and limited access to leadership positions. The studies recommended the necessity of positively changing the social norms and culture through increasing the awareness toward this industry as being one of the most important sources of income. The studies also recommended providing specialized training for women (USHA, 2016), (Salama, 2010), (Daniel & Loanna, 2007), and (Bengisu & Balta, 2011).

On the other hand, Abd al-Mahdi al-Ajlouni and Abdullah al-Ajlouni (2017) in a study entitled “*The Elements of Tourist Attraction and its Sharia Controls in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*” indicate the importance of establishing schools and colleges to provide the human element as one of the elements of human attraction within the Kingdom. The study concluded the need to establish a set of controls that limit and even eliminating the exclusion of women participation in the tourism and hotel field. The study recommended addressing such obstacles to empower women to work in new fields and improve their social and economic circumstances.

■ **Policies and procedures for women's empowerment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:**

The Saudi Kingdom has taken many measures and created policies to activate and empower women, in many sectors in general (Bazazo et al, 2017). In the same direction, the Kingdom has recently emphasised the importance of the tourism sector in supporting the available employment opportunities to women through the Ministry of Tourism and Heritage, as a means to increase the localisation to the tourism and heritage sectors. At the same time, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development had the decision number (5/2019) to set stages of a timeline for the implementation of localisation in the tourism accommodation sector. The first phase of this targets localisation in front-line and operational roles (excluding senior management / supervisory roles). The second phase aimed at the supervisory roles and the roles of assistant managers. The third and final stage aimed at senior management.

The first stage of the decision stipulates that work should be limited to Saudi men and women by 100% in professions other than (leadership / supervisory), located within the scope of four departments, namely, marketing and sales, reservations, procurement and front offices (except baggage handlers, parking workers and drivers). This is in addition to limiting work to Saudi men and women in the following professions: receiver of room service requests, restaurant or cafe host, goods receiving clerk, store keeper, executive secretary or secretary, general administrative clerk, administrative employee or administrative assistant and administration coordinator.

The decision also clarified the prohibition on employers to bring or transfer services, assign work, or use expatriate workers to the professions mentioned in the decision, whether directly or indirectly. It also indicated that the facility that would violate this decision will be subject to a penalty for violating the localisation of professions restricted to Saudi citizen, of both genders, male and female, according to the list of violations and penalties approved by the ministry.

In 2020, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development aimed at increasing the economic participation rate of Saudi women and to increase the share of women in the labour market. However, the poor alignment of education and training outcomes with jobs that are not occupied in the labour market (besides the lack of training programs directed toward women) challenge the achievement of the desired increases.

Therefore, the Ministry seeks to develop training programs that end with employment and target the unemployed, so that the training program consists of on-the-job training in parallel with the training program. The Ministry of Human Resources and Development is working on increasing the technical and personal skills via specialised training bodies and are giving an approved certificate through companies within the private sector in order to

create a channel for qualifying females job seekers for about 10,000 opportunities nationwide, until 2025 (Koc, 2020).

■ **The Constraints:**

The issue of sponsoring special groups of workers raised a lot of discussion and social difference at the level of jurisprudence (Sawsan Abdul-Jabbar, 2015). This discussion led to research on this issue with a focus on one important aspect, the protection of working women who are subject to the labour law. Such protection rose from the deep belief in the importance of the social and psychological role that an individual plays in society and is based on the importance of drawing some privacy for this category of workers within the framework of labour laws. This privacy guarantees additional protection and other privileges that help women carry out their other responsibilities, in terms of being a mother, a housewife and a worker, as mentioned in the Human Development Report Project, 2015 (Labor for Human Development, UNDP, 2016).

The Office of Human Development added in the issued UNICEF report, that the percentage of women in administrative, leadership and senior management is not exceeding 25 percent, while women earn 24 percent less wages than men. This fact requires the activating and expanding of gender-sensitive policies to activate and encourage women's work for pay. It also requires taking measures to achieve a good representation of women in the public and private sectors through human resource management policies, selection and recruitment processes and incentives, confirmed by the studies of Zhong & Blum (2011) and Linh (2018). These studies focused on the factors affecting the advancement of women in the hospitality industry employment field and the extent of students and teachers' realisation and their expectations towards work and the advancement of women in this field.

In their studies, Fleming (2015) and Freire and Silva (2016) indicated that the difference in wages and financial estimates between women and men has an impact on the reluctance of some students from the tourism sector, in addition to hindering and limiting the rapid progress.

A set of studies by Price and Stead (1997) focused on the importance of connecting working in the tourism sector to the geographical location of sites, so that the tourism sector would provide opportunities for the largest number of employees present in the same region, which is in line with the concept of a green economy as one of the modern principles towards sustainable tourism development (Zampoukos & Ioannides, 2011).

■ **Hospitality as a mean for empowerment (what does it need):**

There is argument about four concepts of power including “power over”, “power to”, “power with” and “power from within” (Bonnie & Ronald, 2002 and Luongo, 2018).

Are there political barriers against women working? Are the barriers social or psychological? Do the barriers lie in women's failure to realise the employment opportunities? Reference studies confirm that policies and strategies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are directed towards integrating and encouraging women and girls at work, and even giving them opportunities to prove their superiority.

This confirms the necessity of researching the social and psychological barriers in addition to the economic factors, which are considered strong drivers and motivators in empowering women in this field (McMillan, 2010). Thus, it is important to highlight the importance of working in the tourism sector within the educational sector, and to raise the awareness about working in tourism and confirming that it does not conflict with the spirit of religious values.

■ **Increasing Societal Awareness**

McMillan, et al. (2011) and Al-Dajani and Carter (2010) found that women working in tourism and hospitality in Nepal is considered one of the most important and first opportunities for the development of women and their participation in the tourism field leading to sustainable development at the economic level.

The studies emphasised the need to pay attention to the educational aspect and to choosing the appropriate employment opportunities for it. In addition, employment opportunities give women self-confidence, self-assertion, motivation, perseverance and engagement in social activities (Contreras & Plaza, 2010). This emphasised the need for societal change towards women’s work in tourism (Andrew, et al., 2013 and Pantelescu, 2017).

(Beedle, et al. (2013) asserted that tourism development and the human environment of the place, including the community, could not be separated. The study justified that as being due to the affirmed impact of the environment on the individual in forming and shaping the nature of his or her life and economic and social level (Koutsou et al, 2010). Many social studies confirm that the motives, needs and goals of individuals change over time (Peeters & Ateljevic, 2009 and Chen & Tian, 2015). Therefore, the researchers believe that the development and the hoped-for tourism planning for the Kingdom calls for, beyond any doubt, a change in the goals and motives of women in line with economic developments.

All the strategic policies in the country are directed towards tourism development and to making it a driving and leading economic mechanism, and a special addition to the hoped-for economic resources. Because of that, it has become extremely important that the attitudes, opinions and perceptions of society change and keep pace with tourism planning, that they contribute to it and sponsor it as one of the most important emerging and promising economic sources for every family, which is confirmed by Ananth and DeMicco (1991).

■ **The promotional aspect of women working in the tourism sector:**

Most of the legislation emphasises equal opportunities. Several companies have raised female expectations by including such a philosophy in their policy documents (Jordan, 1997; Sparrowe & Iverson, 1999 and Janmitha & Anasuya, 2019). Despite these documents, such companies lack transparency in their promotion procedures, and this leads to disappointment among female employees.

In their papers, both CAVE (2010) and KILIC (2003) indicated that larger organisations are more bureaucratic with procedures, while their criteria for promotion are not always clear. In relation to the educational aspect, many Arab countries in the Middle East region that have similar cultures, customs and traditions regarding the idea of females enrolling in education in the field of tourism and hospitality, as well as that in women working in tourism are not get accepted by society. The current status has changed to have a higher percentage of females compared to males, beyond half, which emphasises that working in tourism is more suitable for women (Salama, 2010). The promotion of successful and honourable models have achieved a breakthrough from those societies in the tourism sector and in promoting societal opportunities for women (Ngan & Litwin, 2019).

The female graduates feel proud of their work to achieve their ambitions and reach prestigious leadership positions, which leads to the empowerment of women in the tourism industry. In addition, women generally have personal qualities that distinguish them and enable them to succeed in tourism work, such as self-pride, strength of character, ability to lead, in addition to the constant aspiration towards all new things in order to achieve progress (getting rid of the glass ceiling).

Study Results

The study found a set of important results, which are discussed and summarised in the discussion part within the study. The reliability and validity test performed and found 71.9% using Cronbach's alpha, at a degree of confidence of 95%, which refers to the good degree of validity and reliability of the questionnaire to answer the study questions and fulfill its goals.

The sample was randomly selected from Saudi women, the questionnaire was sent to them and 450 valid responses for statistical analysis were received.

The first question: What are the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the sample?

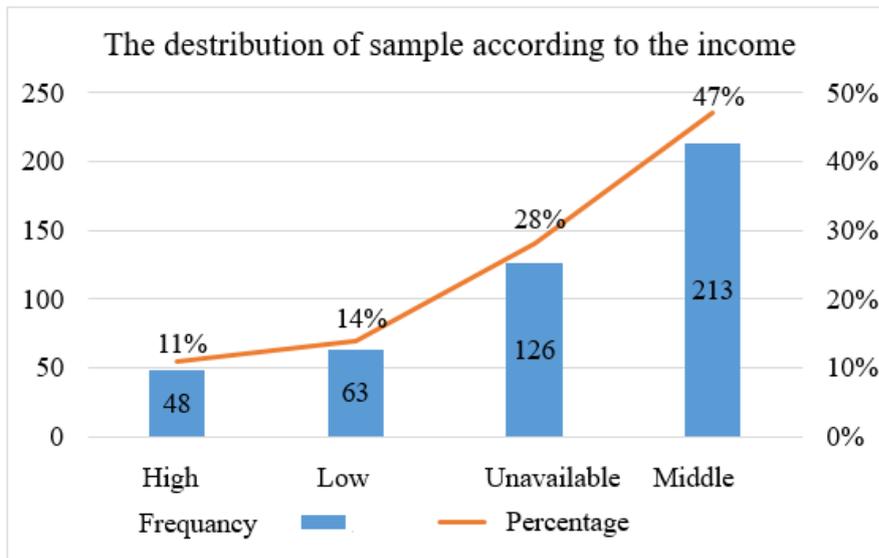
Table (1): The distribution of sample according to some of the demographic variables

Variable	Sub-Group	Frequency	Percentage	Variable	Sub-Group	Frequency	Percentage
The Income	Unavailable	126	28%	The profession	Private sector employee	3	0.7%
	Low	63	14%		Public sector employee	108	24%
	Middle	213	47%		Student	297	66%
	High	48	11%		Housewife	36	8%
Business woman					6	1.3%	

The results show that the majority of respondents are students (66%) or government employees (24%), while the rest are distributed as housewives, business women and private sector employees.

It is also found that about 47% of the respondents have a middle income, followed by women who do not have income, then low income and finally high income at rates of 28%, 14% and 11%, respectively. The following figure shows the frequencies and ratios in detail:

Figure No. (1): The Distribution of Sample According to the Income



The second question: What are the opportunities for empowering women in the tourism and hotel sector?

Table (2): The results of the Chi-Square test and the T-Test to examine the differences between the frequency of the sample responses to the statements of the first axis (Opportunities for empowering women in the tourism and hotel sector)

#	The statements	Agree		Don't Know		Disagree		T-Value	K-2	Average	Rank
		Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.				
1	Multiple employment opportunities are available in the tourism and hotels sector	327	72.7%	105	23.3%	18	4.0%	0.050	338.5	2.69	9
2	The lack of employment opportunities in the educational and health sectors	171	38.0%	129	28.7%	150	33.3%	0.078	5.88	2.05	10
3	Women's knowledge of the opportunities needed by the labour market	375	83.3%	63	14.0%	12	2.7%	0.042	514.9	2.81	3
4	Diversity of employment opportunities for women within tourism training	399	88.7%	45	10.0%	6	1.3%	0.034	625.1	2.87	1
5	The development and support of the country's tourism resources for the sustainable development	375	83.3%	63	14.0%	12	2.7%	0.042	514.9	2.81	3
6	Increase community awareness of work in the tourism sectors	363	80.7%	69	15.3%	18	4.0%	0.047	462.3	2.77	5
7	The general orientation of women in line with the 2030 vision	378	84.0%	63	14.0%	9	2.0%	0.040	529.5	2.82	2
8	Organisational support within the tourism sector through organising a week about the suitable work environment for women	345	76.7%	87	19.3%	18	4.0%	0.049	396	2.73	7
9	Encouraging tourism and attraction	366	81.3%	60	13.3%	24	5.3%	0.050	470.8	2.76	6
10	Provides training programs to prepare them to work in the tourism and hotels sector	339	75.3%	90	20.0%	21	4.7%	0.051	373.1	2.71	8
The whole axis										2.7	

Confidence level (95), significance level $\alpha = (5\%)$.

It is clear from the previous table that:

- There is a statistically significant difference (at the level of $\alpha=0.05$) in favour of the response (Agree) to all of the statements of the first axis except for the second question (Opportunities for empowering women in the tourism and hotel sector) with the average of (2.05).
- The general average for the axis (Available opportunities for empowering women in the tourism and hotels sector) was (2.7 out of 3), which is an average, falling within the range of response (Agree) that extends (from 2.33 to 3), which indicates that the sample generally agrees that all the opportunities mentioned in the axis except (lack of employment opportunities in the educational and health sector) represent opportunities available to empower women in the tourism and hotel sector in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia according to the Kingdom's vision 2030.

The third question: What are the challenges that limit women's empowerment in the tourism and hotel sector?

Table (3): The results of the Chi-Square test and the T-Test to examine the differences between the frequency of sample responses to the statements of the second axis (Challenges that limit women's empowerment in the tourism and hotel sector)

#	The statements	Agree		Don't Know		Disagree		T-Value	K-2 Freq.	Average Perc.	Rank Freq.
		Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.				
1	Insufficient educational and academic opportunities in the tourism and hotels sector	315	%70.0	102	%22.7	33	%7.3	0.057	288.1	2.63%	2
2	The customs and traditions of the community	348	%77.3	60	%13.3	42	%9.3	0.059	393.1	2.68%	1
3	Women do not accept the idea of mixed work	240	%53.3	120	%26.7	90	%20.0	0.073	84	2.33%	6
4	Conflict with the principles and ethics of religion in society	201	%44.7	120	%26.7	129	%28.7	0.078	26.2	2.16%	7
5	The lack of suitable employment opportunities for women in the tourism and hotel sectors	291	%64.7	90	%20.0	69	%15.3	0.069	200.3	2.49%	3
6	Difficult to work in the tourism sectors	162	%36.0	138	%30.7	150	%33.3	0.077	1.92	2.03%	10
7	The surrounding work environment is not suitable for Saudi women	195	%43.3	99	%22.0	156	%34.7	0.082	31.1	2.09%	8
8	Difficulty in reconciling work and family tasks	192	%42.7	93	%20.7	165	%36.7	0.082	34.9	2.06%	9
9	Inability to self-market to get a job	228	%50.7	159	%35.3	63	%14.0	0.066	91.5	2.37%	4
10	There is a gender discrimination when appointing salaries to leadership positions	228	%50.7	150	%33.3	72	%16.0	0.069	81.1	2.35%	5
The whole axis										2.32%	

Confidence level (95), significance level $\alpha= (5\%)$

It is clear from the previous table that:

- There is no statistically significant difference (at the level of $\alpha=0.05$) between the frequency of sample responses in favour of the response (Do not know) on all the statements of the second axis. This means that the majority of respondents do not know what the challenges are that limit the empowerment of women in the tourism and hotel sector.
- The general average of the axis indicates that the study sample does not know exactly what the challenges are that limit the empowerment of women in the tourism and hotel sector in general, knowing that the sample has identified a number of challenges and agreed on their impact on limiting women's empowerment in the tourism sector.

The fourth question: What is the proposed vision for empowering women in the tourism and hotels sector in light of the Kingdom's 2030 vision?

Table (4): The results of the chi-square (X^2) to examine the differences between the frequency sample responses to the phrases of the third axis (The proposed vision for the empowerment of women in the tourism and hotels sector in light of the Kingdom's 2030 vision)

#	The statements	Agree		Don't Know		Disagree		T-Value	K-2	Average	Rank
		Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.				
1	Marketing and advertising of educational opportunities available in the field of tourism and hospitality	396	88.0%	42	9.3%	12	2.7%	0.039	608	2.85	1
2	Providing social services at work (baby sitting and carers for the elderly)	366	81.3%	63	14.0%	21	4.7%	0.048	472	2.77	4
3	Flexibility in determining working hours according to needs	396	88.0%	42	9.3%	12	2.7%	0.039	608	2.85	1
4	Increasing training and qualification opportunities for women in the field of tourism and hospitality	384	85.3%	42	9.3%	24	5.3%	0.048	548	2.80	3
5	Focus on increasing the community awareness about the role of the tourism and hotels sector in achieving sustainable development	366	81.3%	63	14.0%	6	2%	0.048	472	2.77	4
The whole axis										2.81	

Confidence level (95), significance level $\alpha=$ (5%)

The above table reveals the following:

- There is a statistically significant difference (at the level of $\alpha=0.05$) on all the statements of the third axis of (The proposed vision for the empowerment of women in the tourism and hotels sector in light of the Kingdom's 2030 vision), which indicates that the higher percentage of the study sample agree in a statistical significance on all the proposals included in the statements of the third axis.

- The general average for the axis (The proposed vision for the empowerment of women in the tourism and hotels sector in light of the Kingdom's 2030 vision) is (2.81 out of 3), indicating that the sample generally agrees with the proposals that contribute to empowering women in the tourism and hotels sector in light of the Kingdom's vision 2030.

The fifth question: What is the effect of the demographic characteristics (profession and income) of Saudi women on their orientation towards empowerment to work in the tourism and hotel sector?

The main question is divided into two sub-questions in which the One-Way ANOVA analysis of variance and the LSD test for multiple comparisons were used to determine the direction of the statistically significant differences. The results are summarised in the following table:

Table (5): What is the effect of demographic characteristics (Profession and income) of Saudi women on their orientation toward empowerment to work in the tourism and hotel sector? (N = 450)

Demographic features	The effect of demographic characteristics (Profession and income) of Saudi women on their empowerment to work in the tourism and hotel sector	F value	Sig Value	Differences using LSD for
Profession	Opportunities for empowering women in the tourism and hotel sector	21.55	0.00	Private sector employees & Business women
	Challenges that limit women's empowerment in the tourism and hotel sector	6.144	0.032	Public sector employees
	The proposed vision for the empowerment of women in the tourism and hotels sector in light of the Kingdom's 2030 vision	6.054	0.013	Private sector employees & Business women
Income level	Opportunities for empowering women in the tourism and hotel sector	4.254	0.062	-
	Challenges that limit women's empowerment in the tourism and hotel sector	5.917	0.049	Unavailable
	The proposed vision for the empowerment of women in the tourism and hotels sector in light of the Kingdom's 2030 vision	4.742	0.014	High

Firstly, the effect of profession:

The above table reveals the following:

- There are statistically significant differences (at the level of $\alpha=0.05$) in the axis (Opportunities for empowering women in the tourism and hotel sector) due to the nature of the professions of the sample. Using the LSD test, it is found that the most significant difference in the axis is in favour of the average of the professions (Business women and private sector employees) with an average of (2.8 out of 3). This indicates that business women and private sector employees see more opportunities for empowering women in the tourism and hotel sectors than other women doing other professions.

- There are statistically significant differences (at the level of $\alpha=0.05$) in the axis (Challenges that limit women's empowerment in the tourism and hotel sector) due to the sample professions. Using the LSD test, it was found that the most significant difference in the axis is in favour of the profession (Public sector employee), with an average of (2.36 out of 3). This indicates that women working in the public sector see challenges that limit the empowerment of women in the tourism and hotel sector more than other women with any other profession.
- Using the Least Difference Test (LSD), it was found that the most significant difference in the axis is in favour for the average of those with a profession (Business woman and the private sector employee). This indicates that business women and private sector employees see the importance of working in the tourism sector as more effective than women working in other professions.

Secondly, the effect of income level:

- There is no statically significant difference (at the level of $\alpha=0.05$) in the axis (Opportunities for empowering women in the tourism and hotel sector) due to the income level of the sample.
- There are statistically significant differences (at the level of $\alpha=0.05$) in the axis (Challenges that limit women's empowerment in the tourism and hotel sector) due to the economic level of the sample. Using the LSD test, it was found that the most significant difference in the axis is in favour of the average economic level (Unavailable) with an average of (2.39 out of 3). This indicates that the sample whose income level is (Unavailable) see the challenges that limit the empowerment of women in the tourism and hotels sector more, compared to the sample with other economic levels.
- There are statistically significant differences (at the level of $\alpha=0.05$) due to the economic level of sample. Using the LSD test, it is found that the most significant difference in the axis in for the favour of the average of those with an economic level (High) with an average of (2.96 out of 3). This indicates that individuals at a high economic level see the effectiveness of the proposed scenario more than other samples at other economic levels.

Study Results

The research reached a set of results, the most important of which are:

- Women agree on the diversity of employment opportunities and on increasing the available opportunities to empower women in the tourism and hotel sector, compared to the decrease in the employment opportunities in the educational and health sectors in line with McMillan (2010), but this is in contrast with both studies of Abd Al-Mahdi Al-Ajlouni and Abdullah Al-Ajlouni (2017), which affirm that working in tourism is for men and unsuitable for women because of its nature requiring the mixed work of both genders.
- The highest agreement on the statement of the axis (Challenges that limit women's empowerment in the tourism and hotels sector) is for the statement (The customs and traditions of the community) in line with (Peeters & Ateljevic, 2009, Chen & Tian, 2015 and Lorraine, 2013).
- The failure to realise the challenges that prevent the empowerment of women in the tourism and hotel sector due to the lack of awareness or background about the nature of work in the tourism and hotel sector, or the available opportunities.
- Women generally agree on the proposed vision for empowering women in the tourism and hotels sector, in light of the Kingdom's vision 2030, through the marketing and advertising of available educational opportunities in the tourism and hotel sector, as well as flexibility when determining working hours according to needs, in line with Zhong et al. (2011), Fleming, (2015) and Freire & Silva (2016) in their focus on community awareness about the role of the tourism and hotels sector in achieving sustainable development.
- Women working in (The public sector) see challenges that limit the empowerment of women in the tourism and hotel sector more than women with any other profession.
- Women with (Low) income level see the challenges that limit women's empowerment in the tourism and hotel sector more than other women with other income levels, in line with the studies of Garcia, et al. (2012), Salama and Abdel-Raouf (2018) and Mkhize and Ce, (2017).
- Business women as well as women working in the private sector with a high income level agree on the effectiveness of the proposed vision for the empowerment of women in the tourism and hotel sector in light of the Kingdom's 2030 vision, which confirms the studies' results of CAVE and KILIC (2010), McMillan, et al. (2011), Al-Dajani and Carter (2010) and Baum, et al. (2016) and with the studies of Koc (2020) and Bazazo, et al. (2017).

- The research answered practically and theoretically all its questions and found that the obstacles that women may face in their way toward working in the tourism and hotel sector have been overcome through the Kingdom's rational and insightful vision. The 2030 vision helps women in heading to work in the tourism sector and bypasses equal opportunities to instead unlimited opportunities and advantages beyond several Arab countries in the region, through women's empowerment, leadership and provision of suitable work environment.
- The main challenge that prevents women from working in the tourism and hotels sector is the glass ceiling placed by society, as well as themselves psychologically, knowing that the official position inside public institutions widely allows Saudi women to assume leadership positions.
- The media's severe shortcoming is considered one of the main challenges toward women's empowerment in the tourism and hotel sector. This requires an intellectual union and institutional interdependence to form an advanced thought that accompanies the coming population boom and the Kingdom's vision to promote and increase awareness and reduce the intensity of customs and traditions that hinder the economic advancement of women despite their personal strength and ability toward self-actualization.

The Recommendations:

1. Spreading societal and cultural awareness through the media and religious channels, programs and clerics, to bring change in the legacies to increase people's awareness and affect their intellectual perspective in line with the requirements of the next stage and the vision of the Saudi Kingdom 2030.
2. The need to prepare women psychologically and socially to accept the idea of mixed work (with the male gender) in accordance with Islamic values.
3. Establishing schools and colleges for teaching tourism and hotels sciences and practices and for them to be spread across the Kingdom in order to coincide with the Kingdom's vision of the geographical economy and the global trend towards a green economy.
4. Increasing the awareness of female students in the tourism and hotels sector about their rights and duties, promotions and progression, which increases their expectations and aspirations in this field and assists in changing the prevailing ideology of considering jobs only at a low level.
5. Promote and display the employment opportunities that suit women in tourism and hospitality as well as provide a suitable work environment for them.
6. Encourage the private sector to integrate and attract women into the tourism and hotels sector, in order to encourage and create opportunities and appropriate work that helps women preserve their values and principles compatible with their nature.
7. Expand the spread of training and professional development centres for all levels in tourism and hospitality fields to meet the needs of the labour market as well as support women to



work in the tourism sector (as an example, the Organisation of Fahum of the Development to Respond to Humanitarian).

8. Focus on the economic geography of tourism and hospitality, which necessitates studying the geography of tourism, housing and work. This has an influential link in empowering women and providing opportunity in tourism work and is in line with sustainable development and the hoped-for green economy of the tourism sector. In addition, this trend supports reducing the negative aspects emanating from Arab customs and traditions in extra worries about daughters from the social point of view. Moreover, the work for women is like remote work, which has become more official and available than before.



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