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Navigating the challenges of Iranian women entrepreneurs

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NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES OF IRANIAN WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Exploring the initiatives and programs supporting women entrepreneurs' economic empowerment in Iran.



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INTRODUCTION



Women Entrepreneurs in Iran

This study focuses on Iranian women entrepreneurs and their experiences navigating the unique challenges of the Iranian socioeconomic and cultural landscape.



Motivations and Constraints

The research examines the motivations that drive Iranian women to become entrepreneurs and the constraints they face in starting and growing their businesses.



Restrictive Environment

The study explores how Iran's restrictive legal, financial, and sociocultural frameworks impact the opportunities and challenges for women entrepreneurs.



Insights for Development

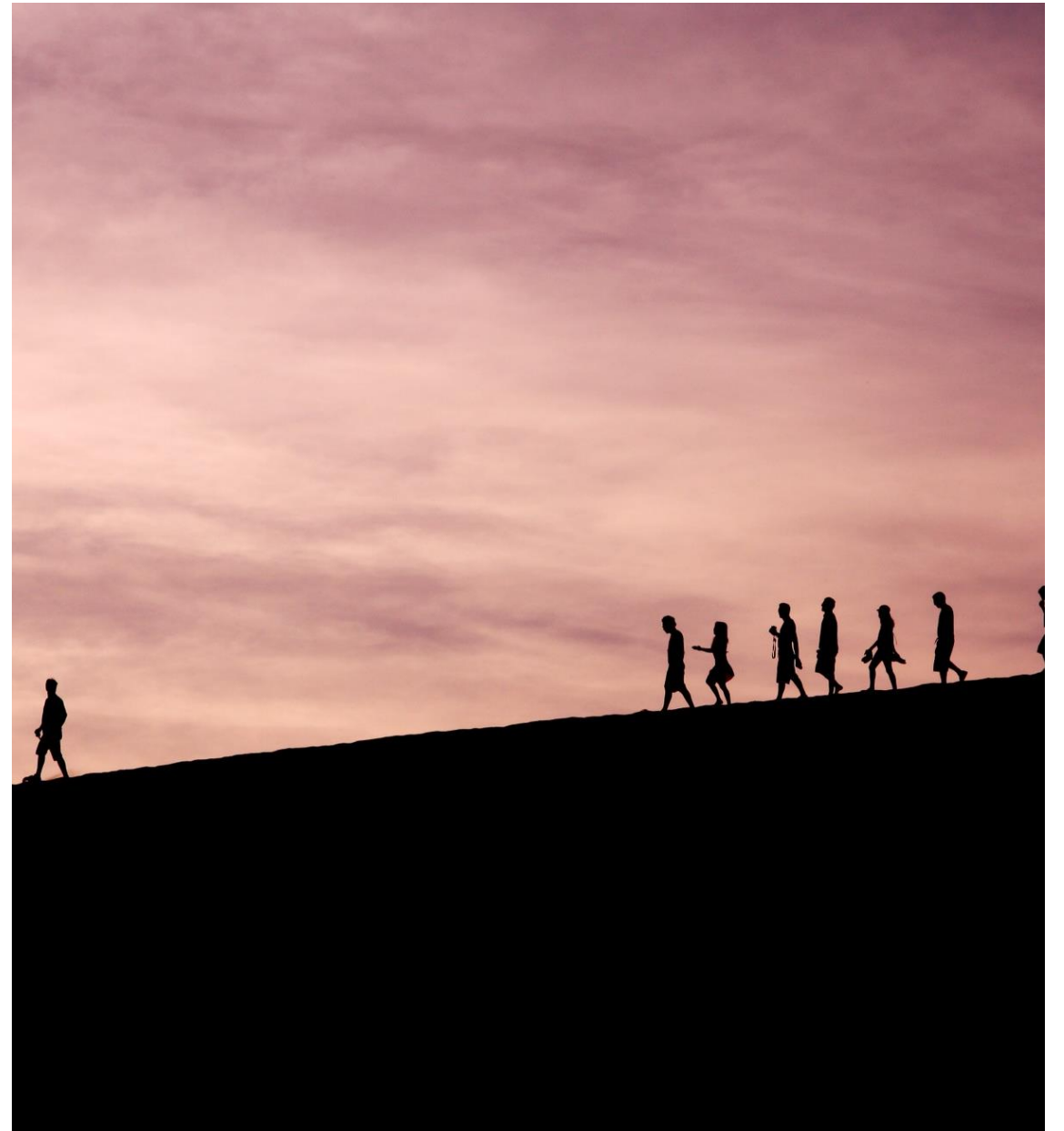
The findings aim to provide valuable insights that can inform policies and programs to support and empower Iranian women entrepreneurs, contributing to economic growth and gender equality.

This study offers a comprehensive examination of the experiences of Iranian women entrepreneurs, shedding light on their motivations, the challenges they face, and the strategies they employ to navigate the restrictive environment.

ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP AND GENDER

At the intersection of entrepreneurship and leadership, a biased biased view highlights the tendency to associate successful successful entrepreneurship with masculine traits.

Including women entrepreneurs and promoting gender equality equality emphasizes the importance of women's entrepreneurial entrepreneurial leadership in fostering high-growth, innovative innovative companies and contributing to job growth and and economic advancement.





WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ITS IMPORTANCE

This study highlights the profound impact of women's entrepreneurship in Iran on economic development, social progress, and gender equality. *It underscores Iranian women entrepreneurs' resilience, adaptability, and creativity as they navigate complex socioeconomic environments.*

Iran's Population and Gender Dynamics

Iran's population is 85.9 million, with 42.6 million women. In 2023, the economic participation rate was 14.3% for women and 68.3% for men, a 1% increase from 2021.

Economic Participation and Unemployment

Iran's GDP per capita was \$13,100 in 2020. Women's employment is less favorable than in other developing countries, with fewer job opportunities and a higher prevalence in the informal sector with low wages. The unemployment rate is 7.7%, with 6.2% for men and 15% for women.

Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Indicators

- Iran ranked 32nd out of 47 countries in the fledgling entrepreneurship index. Its entrepreneurial intention was 26.4%, placing it 16th among the 47 member countries.
- COVID-19 and high inflation negatively impacted the entrepreneurial sector. Established Business Ownership declined from 14.5% in 2020 to 8.8% in 2021, while the Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurial Activity rate slightly increased from 8.0% to 8.8%.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: STEWART'S (1982) DEMAND-CONSTRAINT-CHOICE (DCC) MODEL

Demands

The organization often dictates specific activities and responsibilities that managers must perform, the nature of the job, or external factors. These include meeting deadlines, achieving performance targets, complying with regulations, and adhering to company protocols.

Constraints

External and internal limitations, such as organizational policies, limited resources, legal requirements, and organizational cultural norms, affect a manager's capacity to act. These constraints shape what managers can realistically achieve.

Choices

Managers can decide how to perform their tasks, prioritize responsibilities, and allocate resources. This autonomy empowers managers to make strategic decisions that align with their style or the unique challenges of their specific role.

Dynamic and Adaptable

The DCC framework emphasizes managerial work's dynamic and adaptable nature. Managers operate in structured environments shaped by external demands and constraints but can also make critical strategic choices.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative Research Methodology

The study employs a qualitative research approach to explore the experiences and perspectives of Iranian women entrepreneurs.

Purposive Snowball Sampling

The researchers used a purposive snowball sampling method to identify and recruit Iranian women entrepreneurs as participants for the study.

Semi-Structured Interviews

The study utilized semi-structured interviews to gather in-depth insights from the participants about the drivers, challenges, and experiences of women's entrepreneurship in Iran.

The Research Methodology



Social Constructionist Perspective

The study adopts a social constructionist perspective, focusing on how women entrepreneurs' perceptions and experiences are socially constructed within their contextual environment.



Interpretive Epistemology

The research follows an interpretive epistemology to gain an in-depth understanding of the motivations driving the selected countries' women to become entrepreneurs.



Exploring Entrepreneurial Motivations

The study investigates the underlying motivations that drive the women in the selected countries to pursue entrepreneurship, shedding light on their unique experiences.



Navigating Entrepreneurial Challenges

The research also uses the DCC model to examine how women entrepreneurs in Iran cope with the challenges and constraints of the entrepreneurial landscape.

The research methodology provides a comprehensive framework to explore the motivations and experiences of Iranian women entrepreneurs, generating invaluable insights into their role and contributions to the country's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Data Collection Approach



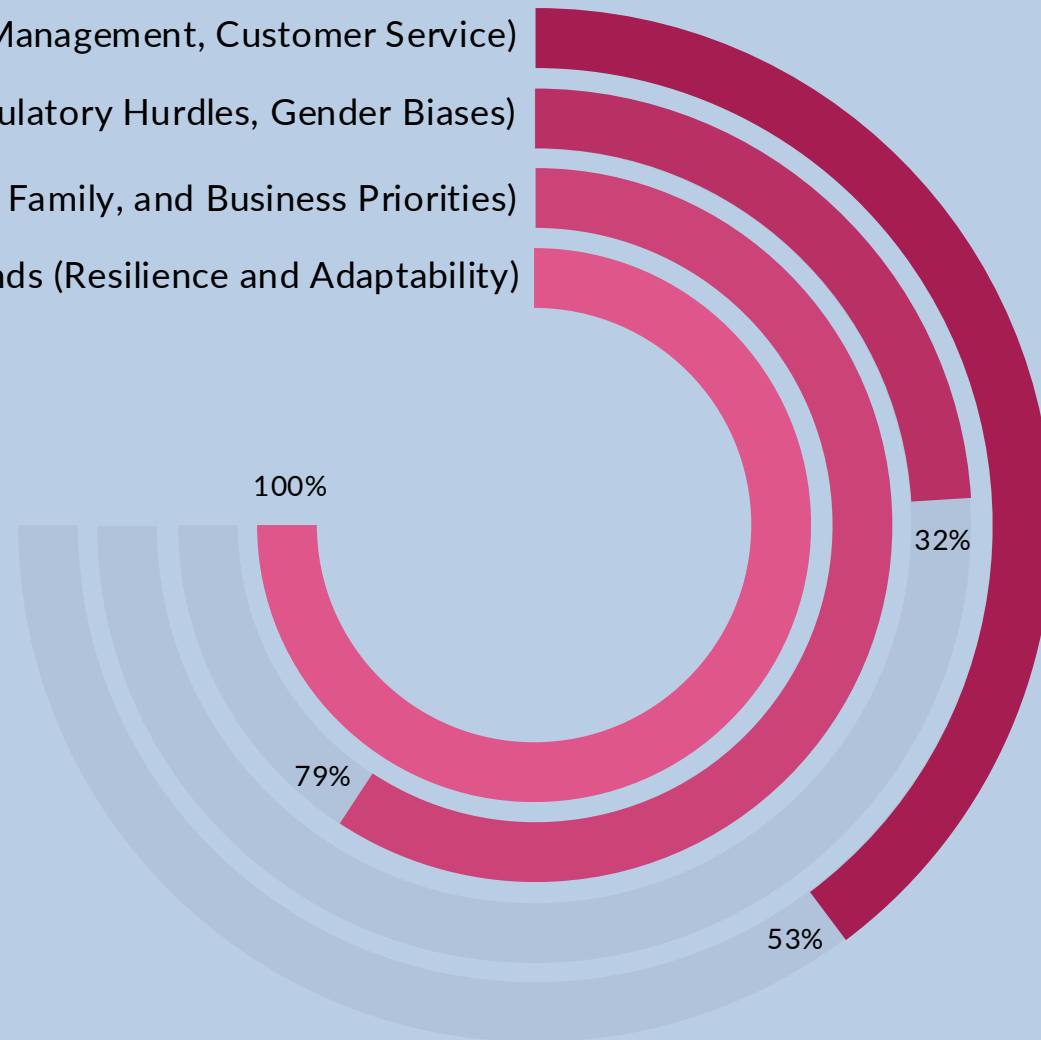
FINDINGS: ROLE DEMANDS ANALYSIS

Internal Demands (Financial Sustainability, Employee Management, Customer Service)

External Demands (Cultural Pressures, Regulatory Hurdles, Gender Biases)

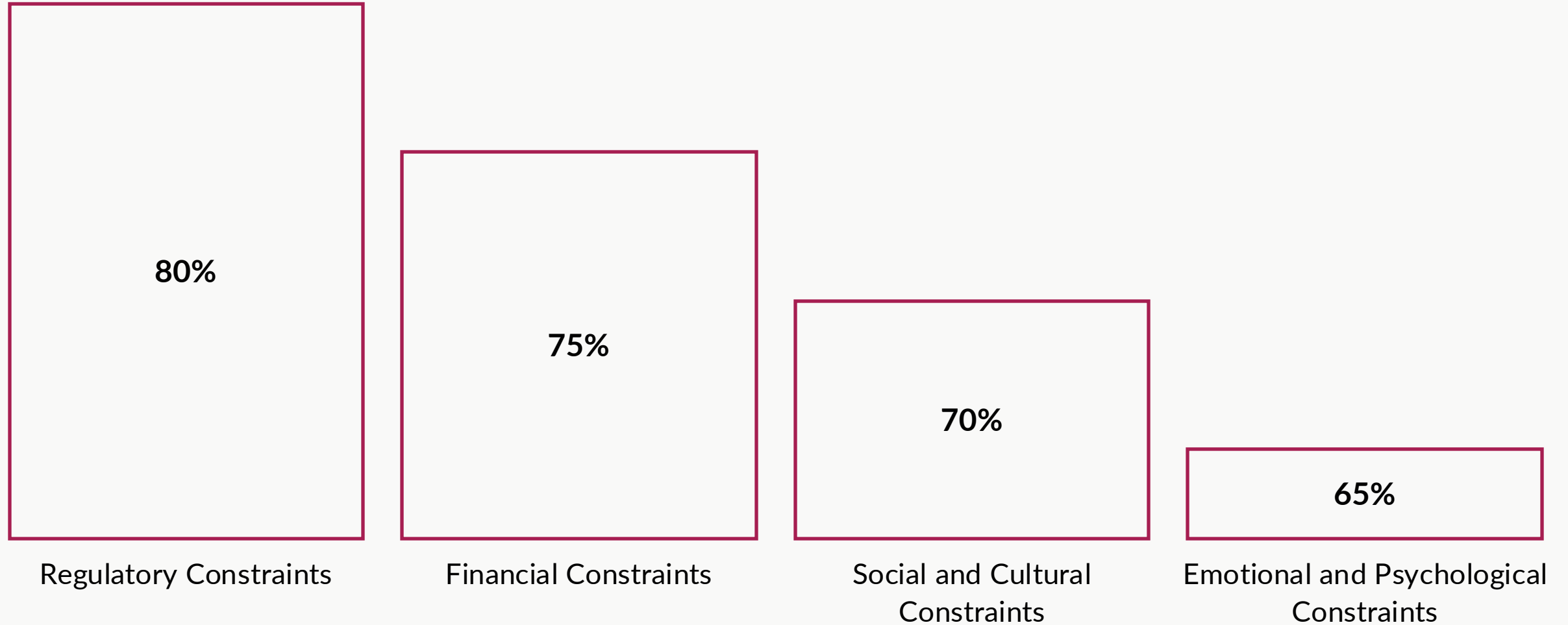
Time-sensitive Demands (Balancing Personal, Family, and Business Priorities)

Navigating Competing Demands (Resilience and Adaptability)



FINDINGS: ROLE CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS

Regulatory, financial, and social constraints (0-100 scale)





FINDINGS: ROLE CHOICES ANALYSIS

The analysis of the 30 semi-structured interviews with Iranian women entrepreneurs reveals that they make **deliberate, adaptive choices to balance the demands and constraints they encounter**. These choices demonstrate their resilience, creativity, and strategic thinking in managing family roles, business operations, financial risks, and regulatory challenges.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Streamline Regulatory Frameworks

Simplify administrative procedures and reduce bureaucratic hurdles to enable women entrepreneurs to navigate the business ecosystem more effectively.



Address Gender Bias and Cultural Norms

Develop public awareness campaigns and educational programs to challenge gender stereotypes, promote gender equality, and empower women's entrepreneurial aspirations.



Improve Financial Access

Implement policies and initiatives to increase women's access to loans, investments, and financial services and address gender bias in the financial sector.



Provide Work-Life Balance Support

To help women entrepreneurs manage their dual responsibilities of business and family, implement family-friendly policies, flexible work arrangements, and childcare support.

Addressing the multifaceted barriers Iranian women entrepreneurs face requires a comprehensive, collaborative approach involving policymakers, financial institutions, educational institutions, and civil society organizations to create an enabling environment for women's entrepreneurial success.

