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Research Paper

Spatial Segregation or Social Segregation? A Comparative Study of Marriage Patterns of Women in the High and Low-Class Regions of Hamadan Province

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Introduction:

Spatial segregation of social classes is often accompanied by social segregation. This means that patterns of social behavior also change in proportion to class spatial segregation. Accordingly, people from different classes living in separate areas are expected to have different patterns of behavior. The main purpose of the present study is to compare the marriage patterns of women in the high and low-class regions of Hamadan province. Marriage patterns include age patterns, dating patterns, the prevalence of consanguineous marriages, intra-ethnic marriages, and differences in the marriage criteria.

Materials and Methods:

The research method was survey and a researcher-made questionnaire was used to collect the data. The statistical population of the study included married women living in high and low-class regions of Hamadan province. According to the latest population and housing census, their number is 198124 cases. The sample size was calculated based on Cochran's formula and equaled 325 people. The sampling method in this study was stratified sampling.

The reliability of the questions related to marriage criteria by removing three inconsistent variables was equal to 0.711. The face validity of this research was based on expert judgement (two students of social research and sociology and two professors of sociology).

Based on some theoretical viewpoints such as Bourdieu's theory of distinction, Giddens's theory, and relational theories of space, a theoretical model was created and some variables were identified. The formulated hypotheses of the study were:

1. The age pattern of marriage is different for women in the high and low-class parts of Hamadan province.
2. The way of acquaintance in the marriage of women is different.
3. The pattern of kinship marriage is different among women in the high and low-class parts of Hamadan province.
4. The pattern of ethnic marriage is different among women in the high and low-class parts of Hamadan province.
5. The importance of marriage criteria is different for women in the high and low-class parts of Hamadan province.
6. The age pattern of the marriage of married women in the

high and low-class parts of Hamadan province is related to their ethnicity.

7. The standards of marriage for married women in the high and low-class parts of Hamadan province are related to their ethnicity.

Discussion of Results and Conclusions:

According to the data obtained, the highest percentage of marriage age belonged to the age group of 16 to 25 years. The average age of marriage was 18-20 years in the low-class regions of the city and 25.5 years in the high-class regions. The results of the t-test showed that there was a significant difference between the mean age of marriage between members of the high and low-class parts of the city. Statistical data showed that there was no statistically significant difference between high and low women in Hamadan province in terms of family relationship with the husband. The chi-square test was used to examine the relationship between couples' ethnic compatibility and residential areas. The test result was significant. This difference was large in the low-class parts of the city and the proportion of adaptation to ethnic non-conformity was 75 to 25 percent. Women living in the low-class parts of the city assigned more importance to the appearance criteria in marriage than women in the high-class parts. However, regarding the economic criteria, the people of high-class parts of the city assigned more importance to this issue. This showed that the economic view of the issue of marriage was more prevalent among women in this region. Accordingly, spatial and class differences were symmetrical. In other

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words, the high-classes paid more attention to economic criteria while the low-classes paid more attention to the appearance criteria in marriage.

The findings of this study showed that some social dimensions of marriage were affected by the place where the person was economically and socially different from others. For example, the age of marriage in the low-class parts of the city was less than the high ones. This showed that there was a difference in attitude in the views of the high and low-class peoples of Hamadan province in terms of the suitable marriage time. The premarital relationship was not different between these two regions with different class structures and seemed to follow a similar and general pattern, not dependent on the region. The premarital relationship was possibly influenced by the currents of modernity and globalization and the like. People living in the low-class parts of the city were more in line with the couples' patterns of kinship and ethnicity.

Keywords: Space, Segregation, Women, High-Class, Low-class, Marriage Pattern.

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