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INVESTIGATING WOMEN'S ATTITUDE TRANSFORMATION IN THE FAMILY IN TERMS OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL CLASSES (CASE STUDY: ISFAHAN CITY)

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the impact of social class on the women's role transformation in the family. The research method in this study is Survey and the way of collecting data is a valid and reliable questionnaire. The statistical sample of the study is one group of married women, 14 years old and older, in Isfahan that includes 589240 persons. The sample size has been estimated 384 persons using Cochran formula, for %95 confidence interval and maximum distribution. Results indicated that there was no significant difference between attitudes toward household chores, gender beliefs and childbearing in terms of different social classes but there was a significant difference between the attitudes toward decision-making power and gender justice, in terms of different social classes.

Keywords: Social Role, Stereotypeing, Gender Justice, Social Class

INTRODUCTION

Today the traditional borders of dividing tasks are unstable. This is mainly a result of high level of education in women, occupation of positions which were only for men in the past and more cooperation of men in doing house hold chores (Giddens, 2001).

In the present families, women have a greater role (Armaki, 2011).

Modern world and globalization process provide the background which is necessary for getting rid of the traditional causes (Aziz, 1998).

Widespread presence of women in social life, the diversity and alteration of marriage forms in western societies, low value of marriage in its traditional form, replacement of the roles assigned to women in the cultural environment with the acquired roles, reduction of marriage effect on the person's identification process, are the consequences of women role alteration in the era of globalization (Giddens, 2003). Changes in family, as the smallest fundamental unit of society, are considered by scholars. Families influenced by the globalization process have experienced changes which put them at odds with traditional families (Enaiat and Movahed, 2004).

On the other hand, one of the important issues in relation to gender is the persons' social class. In fact, the dominant beliefs in the society about men and women are as the same as the beliefs of ruling class in the society. This beliefs show us how men and women should behave in the family and society (Holmes, 2010).

An Overview of Conducted Researches

Ehtesham (2010), in a study entitled "Transformation of women's gender roles and family's mental health", showed that changing unpleasant traditional beliefs about women, increasing women's education and supporting women working outside the home by their husbands more than before, are considered as techniques for reducing the negative effects of women's roles transformation and protecting family mental health. Zhu and Bian (2005) in a study in China showed that women's status in family can be improved by increasing power sources such as employment and income among them. Sidanus and Pana (2001) in a research investigated the effect of gender nature of family structure on the anti – egalitarian attitude. The results of their research indicated that the children of single parent families esp, the ones who live with their father have the highest level of anti – egalitarianism.

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Theoretical Framework

Different opinions have been considered in the present study as follows:

From Bourdieu’s perspective, social class has been made by using important concept called habitus. In fact, habitus is the inner reality (Moghadas and Soroush, 2011).

Bourdieu emphasizes the importance of social class in its traditional sense and cites researches that their results have shown that the social class is basically a social – economic issue and poses profound inequalities (Lovel, 2004).

From Parsons’s perspective, in industrial societies the roles of men and women have been separated and this separation is started from the beginning of common life. (Lahsaiee, 2001). In the Parsons theory, the traditional division of roles between men and women is considered to be essential (Ingoldsby, 2004). In his opinion, Men have instrumental role and women have expressive role. Instrumental role mostly includes men’s moods and expressive role includes mostly feminine moods. He believes that this roles division protects family unity (Aazazi, 2008).

Social Learning Theory has a great emphasis on the roles of social factors in the learning of attitudes and behaviors (Riahi, 2007).

From Millet’s perspective, family has an important role in transferring and internalizing patriarchal ideology through training and rating roles and bases for each sex (Donovan, 2001). Alport states that children learn prejudice through observation and imitation of parents roles (Levy and Hughes, 2009). In general, proponents of this theory believe that parents have an important role in teaching gender roles to children.

In the feminist approaches, family is one of the major sites of women’s suppression in which the men’s authority over women and children is formed (Ham and Gambel, 2001).

Feminists believe that men have defined the world so far and women have been ignored in this manly definition (Sotudeh, 2007). The followers of Marxist – feminist theory believe that the gender inequality originates from authority inequality in capitalist society and gender inequality is as the result of exploitation of women by husbands and fathers (Momtaz, 2002). Followers of radical feminism also believe that patriarchal system makes the women strongly dependent on the family (Kendall, 2003).

Social Status theory considers the fertility rate of each family and society based on the status of parents or resident of that society and believes that family thinks about childbearing based on the achieved progress and its status as a member of the society (Rashidi, 2000).

Hypothesis of the Research

Attitudes of women of different social classes toward the participation of women in household chores are different.

Attitudes of women of different social classes toward having the decision – making power in family are different.

Attitudes of women of different social classes toward gender beliefs are different.

Attitudes of women of different social classes toward gender justice are different.

Attitudes of women of different social classes toward childbearing are different.

Reliability of the Questionnaire

Table 1: Calculating the reliability coefficient

Questionnaire Dimensions	Involvement in household chores	Decision-making power	Gender beliefs	Gender justice	Childbearing
Reliability coefficient	Gender beliefs	Cronbach’s alpha	Cronbach’s alpha	Cronbach’s alpha	Cronbach’s alpha
Coefficient	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.6

According to the above table, all the dimensions of present questionnaire have the necessary reliability.

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Survey Findings

A) Descriptive findings

Table 2: Frequency of respondents in terms of age groups

Age groups	Frequency	Percentage	Validity
14-19	6	%1.6	%1.6
20 – 24	34	%8.9	%9.3
25 – 29	68	%17.7	%18.6
30 – 34	58	%15.1	%15.8
35-39	69	%18	%18.9
40 – 44	37	%9.6	%10.1
45 – 49	36	%9.4	%9.8
50 – 54	23	%6	%6.3
55 – 59	13	%3.4	%3.6
60 years and over	22	%5.7	%6
Without response	18	%4.7	-
sum	384	%100	%100

Table 3: Frequency of respondents in terms of education

Education level of spouses	Education level of respondents					Sum
	Low literacy	Guidance	Diploma	Bachelor	Master's degree or higher	
Low literacy	76.3	18.4	5.3	.00	.00	%100
Guidance level	10.5	44.7	34.2	7.9	2.6	%100
Diploma	0.7	6.9	73.5	15.2	0.7	%100
Associate's degree	33.3	0.00	0.00	33.3	33.3	%100
Bachelor	0.9	0.00	19.4	63.9	15.7	%100
Master's degree and higher	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.7	%100
Sum	10.1	10.9	41.1	28.5	9.5	%100

B) Inferential Findings

Since the hypothesis are univariate and the variant is quantitative, univariate T test has been used for testing the hypothesis. Statistical hypothesis are as follows:

H: $\mu=3$

H: $\mu<3$

In the null hypothesis, it is assumed that there is no significance difference between the women's attitudes toward the level of participating in household chores, the rate of decision-making power, gender beliefs,

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gender justice and childbearing rate, in terms of social classes and in contrary hypothesis, it is assumed that women’s attitudes toward each of the mentioned variants are different in terms of social classes.

Test of Hypotheses

Table 4: Attitudes toward participating in household chores in terms of social classes

Class	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	St.Error	%95 Confidence Interval for Men		Min	Max
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Low	13	3.16	0.805	0.223	2.67	3.64	1.73	4.27
Lower-middle class	40	3.17	0.499	0.079	3.01	3.33	2.18	4.48
Moderate	216	3.13	0.484	0.032	3.06	3.19	1.36	4.64
Upper-middle class	92	3.28	0.510	0.053	3.17	3.38	2.09	4.18
High	23	3.32	0.596	0.124	3.06	3.58	2	4.36
Sum	384	3.18	0.515	0.026	3.13	3.23	1.36	4.64

Table 5: ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)

	Participation in household chores				
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	1.97	4	0.494	1.88	0.1
Within Groups	99.61	379	0.263		
Total	101.59	383			

Table 6: Eta Index

Participation in household chores	Eta	Eta Squared
	0.14	0.01

According to the above tables, the amount of F according to (Sig = 0.1 > 0.05) is not significant and the research hypotheses is rejected.

Table 7: Attitude toward decision – making power in terms of different social classes

Variants	Class	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	St.Error	%95 Confidence Interval for Men		Min	Max
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Decision – making power	Low	13	3.15	0.012	0.280	2.54	3.77	1.33	4.89
	Lower-middle class	40	3.52	0.558	0.88	3.34	3.70	1.89	4.56
	Average	216	3.39	0.625	0.042	3.06	3.48	1.33	4.78
	Upper-middle class	92	3.63	0.659	0.068	3.17	3.77	2	4.78
	High	23	3.47	0.850	0.177	3/06	3.84	1.33	4.78
	Sum	384	3.46	0.664	0.33	3.13	3.53	1.33	4.89

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Table 8: ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)

Decision – making power					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	5.11	4	1.278	2.59	0.02
Within Groups	163.90	379	0.432		
Total	169.01	383			

Table 9: Eta Index

Decision – making power	Eta	Eta Squared
	0.17	0.03

According to (Sig = 0.02 < 0.05), attitudes toward the rate of decision – making power in different social classes are different and in this case, the research hypotheses is confirmed.

Table 10: Attitude toward the gender beliefs in terms of social classes

%95 Confidence Interval for Men									
Variants	Class	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	St.Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Min	Max
Decision – making power	Low	13	3.19	0.892	0.247	2.65	3.73	1.55	4.60
	Lower-middle class	40	3.41	0.515	0.081	3.25	3.57	2.20	4.30
	Average	216	3.37	0.572	0.038	3.30	3.45	1.90	4.60
	Upper-middle class	92	3.56	0.613	0.063	3.43	3.69	1.70	4.85
	High	23	3.45	0.779	0.162	3.12	3.79	1.55	4.40
	Sum	384	3.42	0.606	0.030	3.36	3.48	1.55	4.85

Table 11: ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)

Gender beliefs					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	2.95	4	0.740	2.03	0.08
Within Groups	137.88	379	0.364		
Total	140.84	383			

Table 12: Eta Index

Gender beliefs	Eta	Eta Squared
	0.14	0.02

According to (Sig= 0.08 > 0.05) the hypotheses of research is rejected. Therefore there is no significant difference between attitude toward gender beliefs and different social classes.

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Table 13: Attitude toward gender justice in terms of different social classes

Variants	Class	N	%95 Confidence Interval for Men						
			Mean	Std.Deviation	St.Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Min	Max
Gender justice	Low	13	3.38	0.544	0.150	3.05	3.71	2.80	4.33
	Lower-middle class	40	3.31	0.349	0.055	3.19	3.42	2.47	4.07
	Average	216	3.25	0.373	0.025	3.20	3.30	2.47	4.40
	Upper – middle class	92	3.39	0.400	0.041	3.30	3.47	2.40	4.40
	High	23	3.36	0.389	0.081	3.19	3.53	2.73	4.07
	Sum	384	3.30	0.387	0.01	3.26	3.34	2.40	4.40

Table 14: ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)

	Gender justice				
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	1.36	4	0.341	2.29	0.05
Within Groups	56.23	379	0.148		
Total	57.59	383			

Table 15: Eta Index

Gender justice	Eta	Eta Squared
	0.15	0.02

The amount of Sig = 0.05 indicated that there are significant differences between the attitudes toward gender justice in different social classes.

Table 16: Attitudes toward childbearing in terms of different social classes

Variants	Class	N	%95 Confidence Interval for Men						
			Mean	Std.Deviation	St.Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Min	Max
Gender justice	Low	13	3.33	0.685	0.190	2.92	3.75	2.27	4.18
	Lower-middle class	40	3.50	0.421	0.066	3.36	3.63	2.55	4.27
	Average	216	3.55	0.437	0.029	3.49	3.61	2.00	4.64
	Upper-middle classes	92	3.64	0.391	0.040	3.55	3.72	2.45	4.73
	High	23	3.52	0.631	0.13	3.25	3.80	2.09	4.27
	Sum	384	3.56	0.450	0.022	3.516	3.60	2	4.73

Table 17: ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)

	childbearing				
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	1.38	4	0.347	1.72	0.1
Within Groups	76.36	379	0.201		
Total	77.75	383			

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Table 18: Eta Index

Childbearing	Eta	Eta Squared
	0.13	0.02

The amount of Sig= 0.1 indicated that the research hypotheses has been rejected and the differences in attitudes toward the childbearing in different social classes is not significant.

Conclusion

The present study showed that there is a significant difference between the attitudes toward the level of decision- making power and gender justice in different social classes. Also, high social class and upper-middle class had more negative attitude than the rest of social classes and this fact is because of the ability to earn, education and job prestige that all of them are dependent to the world of economic out of the home where the men are more superior than women (Safiri et al., 2000).

There is no close relationship between class inequality and participation in household chores, the level of gender beliefs and childbearing.

Either way, it seems, attitudes toward class inequality and gender inequality are closely associated with each other. Therefore, social class inequality should be removed in order to decrease gender inequality.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my very great appreciation to Associate Professor Mansoor Haghghatian and Assistant Professor Ebrahim Ansari for their valuable and constructive suggestions during the planning and development of this research work. Their willingness to give their time so generously has been very much appreciated.

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