

Reviewing Status of Women in Kermanshah, an Iranian Western Province

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Women as half of the population play a vital role in socio-economic life of any society. Improvement or diminishing status of women makes socio-economic life process of the society enhanced or critical. Given the fact that women deal with the most important demographic event, fertility, and they cooperate closely in the family continuation, it is necessary to analyze their status. It helps to plan appropriate policies to enhance their situation. This paper aims to portrait status of women in Kermanshah province using data from different sources.

Women' studies focus on women and gender relations across a wide range of issues like power structures, oppression, inequality, and social suffering. There are many articles describing Iranian women's socio economic status as a whole or dividing them into the two main categories of urban rural residents (V.M.Moghadam, 1980;1991;2003;2004). But the results of limited studies show that women's status in Kermanshah province is worse among other provinces (H.ShadiTalab 2006; Ghazi TabaTabaiee 2004, A.Ayaseh 2011).

United Nations emphasizes on human development as the nation's development and identifies continuation of development depending on: access to education, health, nutrition, shelter, occupation and income distribution (UNESCO 2005). It is considered that these indices can be used for evaluating gender inequality, but actually they are not able to represent differentials in human development based on gender. Because shelter, for example, is shared by both sex.

The study goal is reviewing status of Kermanshahi women according to the following subjects:

Educational status

Labor force participation

Participation in managerial jobs

Domestic violence

Kermanshah is a western province in Iran with 1945227 of population (Statistical Center of Iran 2011) which is thirteenth most populous province. The results of reviewing women's status in this province show that women's literacy rate has dramatically increased from 42.7 percent in 1976 to 77 percent in 2006.

Surprisingly women's increase of literacy rate has been more rapid than men. In

addition, women's ratio of entrance to university was 47 per 100 men in 1981 while it has risen to 140 per 100 men in 2009.

Data on women's participation in labor force indicates that in 1966 only 6 percent of women participated in the paid jobs while it was 64 percent for men. After 20 years in 2006 the rate of women increased up to 14 percent while the rate of men didn't change. It was also found that the pattern of work participation of women tends toward agricultural related jobs, then services and industries respectively, while at the same time men's share is more in services, then agriculture and industries respectively.

In terms of social status, data shows that women's share in managerial jobs is only 16 percent while 84 percent of seats belong to men. Domestic violence data shows that 25 percent of women experience high and very high level of domestic violation (Ayaseh 2009).

Female mortality has decreased during the last 20 years and life expectancy is 78 years for women and 73 years for men. According to ministry of interior affairs report (2006), female suicide rate in Kermanshah is 36.4 per 100000 that rank as the highest rate in the country (Seddigh Sarvestani 2006). In addition, suicidal ideation is very high so that 21 percent of women have very high and 36 percent moderate degrees of suicidal ideation (Ayaseh 2009).

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