Ethnic Enclosure in Multicultural Muslim Community Life: Case Study in Golestan Province, I.R. Iran

Reza Saberi
Department of Communications Sciences, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran
Email: r.saberi@atu.ac.ir

Abstract

In this paper we focus on ethnicity and ethnic enclosure among Muslim ethnic groups in Golestan province of Iran. It also has referred to the aspects of interethnic interactions among and between the ethnic groups which consider themselves, and are regarded by others, as being culturally distinctive. We find that ethnic differences and similarities have made individuals ethnically consciousness. This in turn has implications for and influence ethnic enclosure. People in the cities were socially organized mostly along some aspects of ethnicity such as ethnic identities based on linguistic, religious sect (Shiite and Sunnite) or region of origin criteria. People grew strongly self-consciousness of their ethnic identity under these circumstances of contact with members of other groups. They develop standardized ways of behaving vis-à-vis each other, and orient themselves socially according to 'ethnic map'. Ethnic groups model settlement pattern, marriages and perceptions along ethnic lines, and ethnic disparities come in to play while interacting with out-group members.

Keywords: *Ethnicity, Ethnic enclosure, Ethnic group, Ethnic stratification, Multicultural society*

Abstrak

Fokus penelitian ini adalah pada satu etnis di antara kelompok etnis Muslim di provinsi Golestan Iran. pada aspek interaksi antaretnis di antara dan antara kelompok etnis yang menganggap diri mereka sendiri, dan dianggap oleh orang lain berbeda secara budaya. Dalam penelitian ini kami menemukan bahwa perbedaan dan persamaan etnis telah membuat individu menjadi sadar secara etnis. Hal ini pada gilirannya memiliki implikasi dan pengaruh pada etnis tersebut. penduduk di kota-kota diorganisasikan secara sosial sebagian besar dikarenakan memiliki kesamaan dalam beberapa aspek etnis seperti identitas etnis berdasarkan linguistik, sekte agama (Syiah dan Sunni)

atau kriteria daerah asal yang pada gilirannya saling menumbuhkan kesadaran dan saling kontak. Mereka mengembangkan cara-cara standar berperilaku satu sama lain, dan mengorientasikan diri mereka secara sosial sesuai dengan 'peta etnis'. Kelompok etnis menyaamakan pola pemukiman, perkawinan dan persepsi di sepanjang garis etnis, dan kesenjangan etnis untuk saling berinteraksi dengan anggota kelompok luar lainnya.

Keywords: *etnis, kelompok etnis, startifikasi etnis, masyarakat multikultur*

INTRODUCTION

It is a fact that ethnicity has become so visible in many societies that it has become impossible to ignore it. According to 'The Social Science Encyclopedia' (A. Kuper and J. Kuper 2004, 316), "more than 80 percent of contemporary states that comprise the United Nations are ethnically plural, in that they contain two or more mobilized ethnic communities". Furthermore, all the major regions and sub-regions of the world (with minor exceptions) have experienced some forms of ethnic conflict (Phadnis and Ganguly 2001, 11). In plural societies, "secessionism is usually not an option and ethnicity tends to be articulated as group competition" (Eriksen 2002, 15). But, politically, one of the essential issues in multiethnic societies has always been that how join the 'ethnic communities' one another in order to form a comprehensive and permanent 'national community'.

Multiethnic nature of Iranian society has been the object of research in social science during recent years. Iranian society has been viewed from two perspectives. One, not agreed upon by many scholars, denies multiethnic nature of Iranian society, while the other insists on its multiethnic characteristic. The second perspective, however, seeks to describe ethnicity in Iran in terms of linguistic, religious and 'racial' variations, as viewed by scholars.

This article, based on anthropological approaches, would reveal the influence of ethnicity on social life. Yet, we understand little about the problems of interactions in multiethnic society, which arise when individuals from different ethnic identities interact. We know that ethnic differences may give rise to serious conflict, but we know little about the nature of interethnic interactions specifically in the Iranian context. The present study seeks to investigate ethnicity and ethnic enclosure in the Golestan province of Iran. The present study uses sets of ethnic as well as non-ethnic variables to analyze the interaction of individuals with a view to clearly understand the influences of ethnicity on interactions in plural society. As an outcome of such an attempt, the present work provides a theoretical perspective to the study of ethnic relations in multiethnic society.

RESEARCH METHOD

Survey method of data collection was extensively used in the present study. The survey method is characterized by data directly collated from the sample at that particular time. A structured interview schedule was used for the purposes of data collection. Structured interviews were conducted with the help of an interview schedule. The same questions were put forward to all the respondents from various ethnic groups in the same order. Each question was asked in the same way in each interview. Therefore, the data for each interview was easily comparable among respondents of all ethnic groups.

In the present research, sample was drawn in two stages. Stage one included two parts. In part one of stage one stratified sampling was used. Stratified sampling was used to divide population in terms of ethnic groups, gender, and cities strata. The stratification of population was necessary for increasing a sample's statistical efficiency, providing adequate data for analysis different patterns of ethnic group relations. In the second part, a systematic random sampling technique was used to select samples for structured interviews .

The procedure of sampling in stratified sampling technique was as follows :

A. Five major ethnic groups identified for the study were Persian, Turkmen, Turk, Zaboli, and Baluch. A sample of 150 individuals was selected from each ethnic group. Thus, the total sample size for the survey was 750 .

B. Considering differential out-group interactions between men and women, a larger number of male respondents were selected. The proportion of sample for male to female was in the ratio of 7:3 in each ethnic group. Thus, of the total sample size of 750, 525 were men and 225 were women.

C. Further, this study was conducted in three cities, and the cities differed on the basis of population size and ethnic diversity. According to 2006 censes, the population size of cities under study are: Gonbadekavoos -129166, Kalaleh - 28035, and Bandareturkmen - 45249. Also, all ethnic groups under consideration constitute a part of population of Gonbadekavoos and Kalaleh, but only three ethnic groups (i.e.Turkmen, Persian, Turk) live in Bandareturkmen city. Therefore, samples drawn from the three cities were: Gonbadekavoos - 340, Kalaleh - 280, Bandareturkmen – 130.

In the second part of stage one, systematic random sampling was used to select samples in each city using the following procedure:

A preliminary survey was conducted in each city to locate and map residential localities and the predominant ethnic groups therein. This was achieved by interviewing around 5 to 10 informants from different localities and taking the majority view regarding the residential concentration of ethnic groups in localities. Thus, we found 8 localities in Gonbadekavoos, 9 localities in Kalaleh, and 2 localities in Bandareturkmen. A few localities were populated by single ethnic group whereas other localities were populated by 2 to 4 ethnic groups.

On the basis of the concentration of each ethnic group in the cities, a minimum of 2 and maximum of four localities were selected for each ethnic group in Gonbadekavoos and Kalaleh. For instance, in Gonbadekavoos, two localities with a sample of 20 and 55 were selected for the Baluch keeping in mind the population of the Baluch in the city and the locality. Similarly, four localities with a sample of 15 in each locality was selected keeping in mind the Persian population in the city and the locality. Thus the concentration of ethnic groups played an important role while selecting a locality for an ethnic group. Considering there were only 2 localities in Bandareturkmen, the samples of Turkmens was drawn from one locality and the samples of Persians and Turks from another locality. Table 2.2 shows sample sizes on the basis of ethnic groups and localities in the cities .

The first household in each locality was selected using a random number from the table of random digits. Every tenth household was selected thus. A member of the household who was 18 years old or above was interviewed. In case the sampled household turned out to be one belonging to a member of an ethnic group not included in this study, the next household belonging to the one included in the study was selected for interview.

Data present in the interview schedule was converted into a numerical form and presented on the coding matrix. A coding frame was prepared for each question. This process reduced the qualitative data to a manageable proportion. These data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Some of data described on the basis of their percentages. On the basis of ranking pattern, respondents were asked to rank the ethnic groups, including their own, for various aspects of the study. Ranking was carried out with a suitable scale according to the nature of the question. Mean was an important statistical measure to describe the data. To analyze of correlation coefficients between non-ethnic variables and out-group interactions, statistical measures were calculated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The concepts of 'ethnic group' and 'ethnicity' are interrelated to the extent that one cannot be explained without reference to the other. Thus scholars have defined ethnicity as "the character or quality of an ethnic group" (Glazer and Moynihan 1975,1), "ethnic group provides ethnic identity and … ethnicity is a sense of ethnic identity" (Kurane 1999, 32), "the character, quality of conditions of ethnic group membership, based on an identity with and/ or a consciousness of group belonging that is differentiated from others by attributes and traits, symbolic markers (including cultural, biological or territorial) and is rooted in bonds of a shared part and perceived ethnic interest." (Burgess 1978, 278) Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2002) also emphases that "for ethnicity to come about, the groups must have a minimum of contact with each other, and they must entertain ideas of each other as being culturally different from themselves. If these conditions are not fulfilled, there is no ethnicity, for ethnicity is essentially an aspect of a relationship, not a property of a group. There may also be considerable cultural variation within a group without ethnicity. Only in so far as cultural differences are perceived as being important, and are made socially relevant, do social relationships have an ethnic element"(12).

Ethnic cultural similarities and differences create and foster a feeling of separation among members of different ethnic groups and a 'we-feeling' among the in-group members. They, however, make the individuals in a plural society ethnically consciousness of their ethnic identity. As Patterson (1977, 104) maintains an ethnic group exists "only where members consider themselves to belong to it". Abdollahi and Ghaderzadeh (2004, 2) define ethnic group as a group of people in which the members believe that they have: (a) Common history, origin, ancestors, land, custom, language and cultural institutions; (b) More or less common feeling of belonging, obligation and loyalty toward their own group; and (c) This common collective sense is usually expressed by using plural subject pronoun 'we', which creates solidarity among the members of each ethnic group; and (d) Such an ethnic group determines symbolic boundaries and social distance of each group with another one.

In his celebrated essay "Ethnic Groups and Boundaries", Barth (1969) criticized a then common view on ethnicity for assuming that ethnic phenomena come about due to contact between groups which are already culturally distinctive, often in a colonial setting. In return, "Ethnic

identity is primarily a product of interaction among members of social groups that perceive themselves to be different" (Howard 1985, 272). Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2002,12) also emphases that "for ethnicity to come about, the groups must have a minimum of contact with each other, and they must entertain ideas of each other as being culturally different from themselves. If these conditions are not fulfilled, there is no ethnicity, for ethnicity is essentially an aspect of a relationship, not a property of a group."

The theory of 'Contact' proposes that ethnic diversity in multiethnic society can reduce ethnic enclosures, stereotyping, conflicts and prejudices by bringing individuals into direct contact with members of ethnic out-groups (Allport 1954, Hewstone and Brown 1986). Contact has this effect because stereotypes are replaced by schema derived from direct experience, which serve to foreground the individual heterogeneity that exists within as well as between ethnic groups. Positive individual-level interactions are generalized to the ethnic out-group to which the individual belongs and, potentially, to ethnic out-groups as a whole (Sturgis et al. 2014, 1289). Gambhir (1985, 10-12) states that "a society, characterized by the presence of several distinct cultural groups, is termed as a plural society. A cultural group in a plural society may be conceptualized as an ethnic group, because it constitutes a part of the wider society and its members interact with those of other similar group within the framework of a single social system". In such a society structural arrangement is characterized by ethnic stratification. Thus ethnic consciousness and structural disparity are important factors in the understanding of in-group and out-group interactions and other aspects of social life in plural societies.

The term, ethnic enclosure, is borrowed from Van den Berghe (1965,78-9) who listed five common indicators of enclosure. They are: (1) endogamy, (2) ecological concentration, associational clustering and institutional duplication, (4) rigidity and clarity of group definition, and (5) segmentary relations of members with out-group. While Van den Berghe only identified these indicators. Nair K.S. (1983: 412) operationalized the concept of ethnic enclosure to measure structural pluralism in his study in an Indian city. His study was based on four indicators of Van den Berghe's indicators (except for segmentary relations of members with out-group). He constructs the index of ecological concentration from two indices: 'Locality Segregation Index' and 'Residential Segregation Index.

The present study draws upon from Nair's work to understand ethnic enclosure in the context of Golestan. Nevertheless, considering socio-cultural context of Golestan (especially common religion), 'associational clustering and institutional duplication' as an indicator was not a suitable factor to study of degrees in enclosure among ethnic groups of the province. Therefore, the ethnic enclosure in cities of Golestan province was investigated by locality segregation index (predominant ethnic groups in localities), residential segregation index (predominant ethnic groups in immediate neighborhood), endogamy, and clarity of group definition. The sum of the above-mentioned indicators constitutes the index of ethnic enclosure.

However, the objectives of the present study clarified on the basis of following assumptions:

a. In order to study the phenomenon of ethnicity in plural society of Golestan province, it is necessary to understand ethnic identity formation. Ethnic identity is a matter of perception by the self and of the self by others. People perceive themselves and others as belonging to different ethnic groups. Therefore, at the outset, we pose to study the criteria people use to define ethnic

group membership and to categorizing people in different ethnic group and resultant ethnic identities.

b. With regard to analysis the influences of ethnicity in multiethnic society, our assumptions are that in-group and out-group cultural similarities and differences among ethnic groups give rise to ethnic consciousness in plural society. This ethnic awareness leads the interactions and perceptions of members of ethnic group in the light of their own ethnic identity. If so, we intend to find out what is the nature of ethnic enclosure (locality and residential segregation, endogamy, and clarity of group definition) among ethnic groups in urban areas?

During last three decades, a number of scholars in social sciences, political sciences, and history disciplines such as Aghajanian (1983), Kazemi (1988), Ayubi (1998), Ahmadi(1999), Hajiani (2001), Altaiee (2002), Abdollahi and Ghaderzadeh (2004), and Ghamari (2005) have attempted to analyze ethnic diversity in the Iranian society. On the basis of above studies, two perspectives are presented on the multiethnic nature of Iranian society. According to a research in politic discipline on ethnicity, namely 'Ethnicity and Ethnocentrism in Iran; Legend and Reality', Ahmadi (1999) argues that Iran is not multiethnic in nature. The second perspective emphasizes on multiethnic nature of Iranian society. Abdollahi and Ghaderzadeh (2004,2) in their empirical study "Ethnic Distance and the Factors Affecting It in Iran" state that Iran is multi-ethnic society and various ethnic groups live in different regions. They have their own linguistic, local and cultural traits.

Considering the geographic distribution of ethnic groups in Iran on one hand side, and political divisions on the basis of provinces on the other hand, half of Iran's provinces have ethnic diversity; and herein the ethnic variety in Golestan province has more diversity as compared to other provinces. Because, the ethnic diversity of this province include five main ethnic groups of Iran. They are Persian, Turkmen, Turk, Zaboli and Baluch. According to 'Iran Statistical Yearbook' (2006), the population of Golestan is 1,617,087 and 49.2% of the population lives in urban areas. Considering political divisions in 2000, this province includes eleven small provinces, twenty four towns, twenty one districts, fifty boroughs, and 994 villages. The capital of Golestan province is Gorgan and it is 350 Km. away from Tehran (capital of Iran). The present study was conducted only in urban areas. It was carried out in three cities of Golestan including *Gonbadekavoos*, *Kalaleh*, and *Bandareturkmen*.

In-Group Membership Criteria: Scholars (Ghamari 2005, Altaiee 2002, Hajiani 2001, Ahmadi 1999, Ayubi 1998, Hoggart 1992, Aghajanian 1983, Lois Beck 1980) on the basis of some criteria such as race, religion, and language distinguished ethnic diversity of Iran society. However as Yinger (1976,200) defines ethnic group as "a segment of a larger society whose members are thought, by themselves and/or others to have a common origin or to share important segment of a common culture and who, in addition, participate in shared activities in which the common origin and culture are significant ingredients". In this study the respondents were asked what criteria they use to recognize members of their own ethnic group and why. The respondents mentioned the same criteria's viz. language, religion, and physical feature or a combination of these. Data show that 60.9% of the respondents from all the five groups used language as the criterion of in-group membership. Some respondents (19.1%) said that religious tradition (Shiite and Sunnite) and 9.6% of respondents stated that same language and religious sect as the criteria for their ethnic group membership. A few of respondents mentioned other criteria for in-group membership.

To sum up: language is the basic criterion for in-group membership in Golestan. On the basis of this criterion the ethnic groups of Golestan are distinguished from one another. As Ahmadi (2005, 129) states, different lingual and religious groups exist in Iranian society. Thus, these traits in population of Golestan province of Iran, as ethnic boundaries, explain the multiethnic nature of it. Yinger (1997, 302) states, "Considering the vital importance of language to culture as a whole, one of the most important aspects of any society is its language structure. Is it basically monolingual or multilingual? The ethnic order in virtually every society is entwined with its language structure." Persian language is important for interacting not only with members of their own group but also with members of other groups in Golestan. Other languages (Baluchi, Zaboligi, Turkey, and Turkmeni) mainly are intra-ethnic languages which the members of ethnic groups use to interact with members of their own groups. Therefore, language is an important ethnic marker in Golestan that people use to define and identify themselves and others in various ethnic groups.

However, respondents have ranked these groups in terms of their level of dominance on the basis of relative population size, economic power and political position. They perceive different ethnic groups as 'dominant' or 'minority group'. In their perception, Persian and Turkmen are dominant groups followed by the Turk and then the Zaboli and Baluch as minority groups.

Locality Segregation: The index of 'Locality Segregation' takes into account the predominance of people belonging to one's own ethnic group in the cities of Golestan. The respondents in the present study were asked which ethnic groups are numerically dominant in their localities. Consequently, the data of locality segregation in cities show that locality segregation in above-mentioned cities is based on some aspects of ethnicity. Some of them are mono-linguistic localities that these localities are populated by single ethnic group. Second type of locality segregation was mono-religious sect localities. This kind of localities is created by Persians, Turks, and Zabolis in cities. Third type was a small locality with combination of Zabolis and Baluchs. Their region of origin is the same. Multiethnic locality was one another type of locality formation. This type was created with combination of Persian, Turkmen, and Turk groups.

According to responses the main patterns of neighbourhood in cities were following:

a) Mono-lingual neighbourhood: 25% of respondents stated that all of their neighbours are from their own ethnic group.

b) Mono-religious sect neighbourhood: 35.5% of respondents stated that their neighbours are from other ethnic group, but they share Shiite tradition.

c) Multiethnic neighbourhood: 27.9% of the respondents stated that their neighbours were from other ethnic groups and religious sect. The most important pattern of multiethnic neighbourhood was constituted with Persian, Turkmen and Turk groups. They are economically and demographically dominant groups of province and also have a long history of residency in Golestan. Other kinds of multiethnic neighbourhood constituted were a combination of 'Baluch, Zaboli, and Turk', 'Baluch, Zaboli, and Persian' and 'Persian and Turkmen' groups.

    d) Common region of origin neighbourhood: 11.7% of Zaboli and Baluch respondents stated that they were neighbour with members of these groups. These groups are similar on account of common region of origin and are as minor groups in the province.

Endogamy: Two general patterns of marriage exist: endogamy, which is marriage between people of the same social group or category; and exogamy, marriage between people of different social groups and categories (Scupin R. and De Corse C.R. 2005, 334). Lewis (1985, 240) remarks: "The exogamic motto declares in effect: We are those who do not marry each other-this is distraction. The endogamic manifesto proclaims: We are those who do not marry among themselves. Each statement has the same effect: it defines the limits of group solidarity in terms of marriage." However, from a defined perspective, "exogamy and endogamy may produce similar results, either can emphasize on group identity and exclusiveness" (Srivastava 2005, 74). Nair (1983, 413) states that "endogamy helps to heighten exclusive interactions within a group. It is also the most important means of group maintenance and cultural/structural persistence."

    In present study the married respondents (514 respondents) were asked about ethnic identity of their spouses. There were 4 patterns of marriage among respondents. Majority of the respondents (88.3%) had married with members of their own ethnic group (Same ethnic group). 9.9% of respondents stated that their spouse belong to different ethnic group but share the same religious sect. Only 0.8% of respondents stated that their spouse came from their own region of origin but not from the same ethnic group or same religious sect. Only one percent of respondents stated that their spouses were from some other ethnic groups other religious sects and regions (inter-ethnic marriage). The endogamy pattern, therefore, is the most important mode of mating in Golestan.

    Clarity of Group Definition: In order to assess the clarity of group definition, the response of interviewees with respect to differences in aspects of ethnic characteristics (including dress pattern, food habits, manners and etiquette, life-cycle ceremonies, festivals, place of worship, rituals, language/dialect and physical feature) were considered. Turkmen have the greater clarity of group definition as compared to other groups. Second, were the Persians and the Turks. They have more clarity of group definition as compared to the Zabolis and the Baluchs.

    Index of Ethnic Enclosure: The index of ethnic enclosure was worked out as a sum of the scores for locality segregation (the range of scores 0 to 3), residential segregation (the range of scores 0 to 3), endogamy (the range of scores 0 to 3), and clarity of group definition (the range of scores 0 to 18). The total ethnic enclosure scores range from 0 to 27.

Table 1: ranking of ethnic groups based on mean enclosure scores

Ethnic groups	Turkmen	Persian	Turk	Zaboli	Baluch
Mean enclosure score	23/1	19/1	17/7	14/7	13/2

The summary of the data on the comparative enclosure of ethnic groups in the cities of Golestan enables us to arrange ethnic groups in a continuum from the highest to the lowest degree of structural separation. Thus, the most enclosed ethnic group is the Turkmen. The Persians and Turks exhibit intermediate degrees of enclosure. Ethnic groups with comparatively low enclosure are the Zabolis and the Baluchs. Table 1 summarizes the mean enclosure scores of ethnic groups.

From the total sample of 750, the sub-indices of enclosure produced the following inter-correlation matrix. The inter-correlation between the indicators of enclosure used for constructing the composite index of enclosure is both strong and statistically significant, except in the case of endogamy and locality segregation, endogamy and residential segregation, and endogamy and clarity of group definition (table 2).

Table 2: The inter-correlation between the indicators of enclosure in cities of Golestan province

Variables		Locality segregation	Residential segregation	Endogamy	Clarity of group Definition
Locality segregation	Correlation Coefficient		.635**	.069	.383**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.121	.000
	N		750	514	750
Residential segregation	Correlation Coefficient			.057	.348**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.194	.000

	N			514	750
Endogamy	Correlation Coefficient				-.031
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.480
	N				514

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The comparison of population size of ethnic groups with their scores in ethnic enclosure revealed that ethnic groups with large population size (numerically dominant) in a city demonstrate high degree of ethnic enclosure. Those with smaller population size show lesser degree of ethnic enclosure. Turkmens comprise of 33% of the total population of Golestan, and have the highest economic power and ethnic territory (Turkmen Sahara) in the province. Turkmens thus have the highest degree of ethnic enclosure as compared to other groups. The members of this group like to emphasize their ethnic identity to maximize their opportunities in different aspects .

Persian and Turk groups emphasize on their ethnicity in the middle level. They have the most ethnic relation together (as a result of this study) and share a common religious background and comprise of 57% of total population in the Golestan. They are also powerful groups economically and politically. On the contrary, the Zaboli and Baluch groups are recent immigrants in the province. They are minority groups not only from the point of the population size, but also economic power as compared to other groups in province. Therefore, they like to identify themselves with other similar groups. For example, for more access to politico-economic opportunities, they stress upon their religious background (the Zabolis share the Shiite traditions with Persians and Turks, while the Baluchs share the Sunnite traditions with the Turkmens).

CONCLUSION
Individuals, perceive themselves culturally different from others with respect to characteristics such as language/dialect, life style ceremonies, festivals, manners and etiquettes, rituals, dress pattern, place of worship, and food habits. Respondents emphasized language/dialect as the most important and reliable criterion to distinguish in-group and out-group members. Therefore, on the basis of this criterion, they identified themselves and were defined by others in different ethnic groups. Such a society is plural in nature.

The data on cultural similarities among ethnic groups reemphasized that ethnicity is a subjective perception of ethnic differences. Ethnicity, therefore, is not only a function of the

existence of objective cultural differences between groups. It is also important to note the subjective perceptions of cultural differences by members of various groups. Therefore, ethnicity is a matter of subjective perception of objective cultural and other differences, which gives rise to the formation of ethnic groups in a Muslim society.

The findings of present study reveal that ethnic differences give rise to ethnic enclosure and separation in society. In turn, ethnic enclosure results in isolation among ethnic groups in society. In contrast, when we talk of ethnicity, we indicate that ethnic groups and identities have developed in mutual contact rather than in isolation. Then, ethnic identity is primarily a product of interaction among members of ethnic groups that perceive themselves to be different. It is evident that people are aware of interethnic differences and basic status inequalities (perceptions of ethnic groups as dominant and minority) which in turn have resulted in ethnic stratification and hierarchic structure. This has made people aware of the ethnic disparities and basic structural inequalities among ethnic groups.

On the contrary, there is correlation between ethnic disparity and interethnic relations in multiethnic Muslim societies. In other words, ethnic disparities or dominant and minority ethnic group status influence and determine inter-ethnic group relations in the plural society. Dominant groups frequently interact with other dominant groups and have fewer interactions with minority group. Thus, ethnic enclosure and ethnic stratification are interrelated and mutually reinforcing in a plural society. Dominant groups have the highest degrees of ethnic enclosure, and minority groups have the lowest. In turn, ethnic stratification is an important principle to organize the relationships of dominant and minority groups in a plural society.

Further, in Muslim plural society, each ethnic group constitutes a part of the wider society within the framework of a single social system. They share and operate within same economic and political system. These facts make them interdependent and compel to adjust and accommodate with each other. This, in turn, contributes to social integration in plural society. Therefore, ethnic enclosure and ethnic stratification give rise to pluralism and integration in plural society. Although, members of ethnic groups are accepted as legitimate subdivisions of the society with partially distinctive cultures and ethnic identities, social integration can exist to the degree that ethnic groups are accorded the same rights and public privileges, similar access to political and economic advantages, and they share similar responsibilities as citizens and members of the society.

Consequently, ethnicity is one of the significant principals of social organization in Muslim plural societies. Both ethnic identification and ethnic disparity variables are reflected in interactions and perceptions of individuals, and thus ethnicity influences every domain of social life in Muslim plural society.

REFERENCES

Abdollahi, M. and Ghaderzadeh, O, (2004), "Ethnic Distance and the Factors Affecting It." *Quarterly Journal of Social Sciences*, No: 24. 1-36. Tehran, Allameh Tabataba'i University.

Aghajanian, A. (1983), "Ethnic Inequality in Iran: an Overview." *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 15(2), 211-234.

Ahmadi, H. (1999), *Ethnicity and Ethnocentrism in Iran: Legend and Reality*. Tehran: Nye.

Ahmadi, H. (2005), "Unity within Diversity: Foundations and Dynamics of National Identity in Iran." *Critical Middle East Studies*, 14(1), 127-147.

Allport, G.(1954), *The Nature of Prejudice*. Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Altaiee, A. (2002), *Crisis of Ethnic Identity in Iran*. Tehran: Shadegan.

Ayubi, H. (1998), Ethnic Gap and Conflicts in Politic competitions. *Quarterly Strategies Studies*, No: 1, 66-107.

Barth, F. (1969), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*. Boston: Little-Brown

Beck L.(1980), "Revolutionary Iran and Its Tribal People." *MERIP Reports, Iran's Revolution:The Rural Dimension*. No: 87, 14-20

Burgess, M.E. (1978), "The Resurgence of Ethnicity: Myth or Reality?" *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 1 (3), 265-285.

Eriksen, T. H. (2002), *Ethnicity and Nationalism*. London: Pluto.

Ghamari, D. (2005), *National Solidarity in Iran*. Tehran: Iranian civilization.

Gambhir, R.D. (1985), "Situational Ethnicity: a Study of Identity Manipulation in Resource Competition." PhD diss., University of Poona.

Glazer, Nathan, Daniel, Moynihan, (1975), *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*. Cambridge: Harvard University.

Hajiyani, E. (2001), "The Issue of Ethnic Unity and the Pattern of Ethnic Policy in Iran." *Iranian Sociological Association*. 137-177

Hewstone, M., Brown, R. (1986), "Contact Is Not Enough: An Intergroup Perspective on the Contact Hypothesis." *In Contact and Conflict in Intergroup Encounters*, edited by M. H. A. R. Brown, 1–44. Oxford: Blackwell.

Howard, M. C. (1985), *Contemporary Cultural Anthropology*. The University of the South Pacific

Hoggart, R. (1992), *Oxford Encyclopedia of People and Cultures*. Oxford: Oxford University.

Kuper, A. Kuper, J. (2004), *The Social Science Encyclopedia*. London and New York: Rutledge

Kurane, A. (1999), *Ethnic Identity and Social Mobility*. Jaipur and New Delhi: Rawat.

Maybury, L. (1985), *A Special Sort of Pleading: Anthropology at the Service of Ethnic Groups*. In R. Paine, ed., Advocacy and Anthropology, St. John's, Newfoundland: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Newfoundland: Memorial University.

Nair, K.S. (1983), "Structural Pluralism and Ethnic Boundaries: an Empirical Analysis in an India City." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 8, (4), 410-437

Patterson, O. (1977), *Ethnic chauvinism: The Reactionary Impulse*. New York: Stein and Day.

Phadnis, U. Ganguly, R. (2001), *Ethnicity and Nation-building in South Asia*. New Delhi: Sage.

Scupin, R. DeCorse, C. (2005), *Anthropology: A Global Perspective*. New Delhi: Prentice Hall.

Srivastava, A.R.N. (2005), *Essentials of Cultural Anthropology*. New Delhi: Prentice Hall.

Sturgis, Brunton-Smith, Kuha, Jackson, (2014), "Ethnic diversity, segregation and the social cohesion of neighbourhoods in London." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 37(8), 1286-1309, DOI: 10.1080/01419870.2013.831932

Berghe, Pierre, (1965), *South Africa: a Study in Conflict*. Middletown: Wesleyan University.

Yinger, j. M. (1976), *Ethnicity in Complex Societies: Structural, Cultural and Characterological Factors*. In: The Uses of Controversy in Sociology. ed., Coser, L., Larsen, O. London: Collier Macmillan.