THE ENDOGAMOUS MARRIAGE IN THE POPULATION OF DOUKKALA (MOROCCO)

Abderrazak El Khair1*, Noura Dahbi1, Khadija Cheffi1, Jalal Talbi2, Abderraouf Hilali1, Hicham El Ossmani3

1 Hassan First University of Settat, Higher Institute of Health Sciences, Laboratory of Health Sciences and Technologies, Settat, Morocco.
2 National Laboratory of the Scientific and Technical Police of Casablanca, Casablanca, Morocco
3 Institut de Criminalistique de la Gendarmerie Royale, Rabat, Morocco
*a.elkhair@uhp.ac.ma

ABSTRACT

Background: Endogamy is an ancient matrimonial practice deeply rooted in the population culture. It involves choosing a spouse from the same group who shares common conditions. This type of alliance is dictated by socio-cultural, socio-economic and geographical conditions.

Aim: This paper examines endogamous marriage among the Moroccan population of Doukkala.

Method: A survey was conducted among 1361 couples from the Doukkala region. Geographical endogamy in this population was determined by using a questionnaire that collected data on the place of birth, the place of residence before and after the marriage of the couples studied.

Findings: The endogamy in the Moroccan population of Doukkala reaches 84.79%. The level of this marital behavior in rural areas is 87.34% compared to 60.57% registered in urban areas. The intergenerational evolution of endogamy reaches high levels in the first (92.84%) and second (91.02%) generations compared to the last generation (58.56%).

KEYWORDS
Morocco, Doukkala, population, marital behavior, endogamy

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a demographic phenomenon that has assumed great importance in the life of the individual, the family and society. It is closely related to the customs, traditions and values recognized in each community. The role of parents is crucial in the process of intergenerational transformations (Girard, 1964). This institution remains the basis that decides most of the redistributions of genes between individuals over the generations (Talbi et al., 2008).

Endogamy and exogamy are two terms coined by Mac Lennon in 1866 to describe these matrimonial practices (Descamps, 1927). The term endogamy means marriage between two people belonging to the same ethnic community or another category, while exogamy means marriage outside one's own community (Rosenfeld, 2008). For sociologists, endogamous marriage is a fundamental indicator of cohesion and solidarity within a group, but also of the degree of social isolation between groups (Gordon, 1964). This social behaviour may depend on kinship, geographic isolation, and sometimes social stratification (Hami et al., 2007).

Endogamous marriage is a peculiarity of the alliance system that has existed since the dawn of humanity, where it was necessary to make the right choice of partner to ensure the continuity of the human species, but this choice is dictated by socio-cultural, psychological conditions and cannot be left to chance. It contributes to the strengthening of family and community relations, by creating integrated groups while reducing its tendency to divide (Sbii,
The Endogamous Marriage in the Population of Doukkala (Morocco)

2008). This type of alliance could be influenced by individual choice of partner, social pressure from parents and social status (Kalmijn, 1998).

METHOD

The Doukkala region (figure 1) is an agricultural region and is one of the few plains in Morocco that has always been populated. It is rich in tangible (historical, artistic, scientific and anthropological) and intangible (tradition, customs and performing arts) cultural heritage (Enniouar et al., 2015; Errami et al., 2013). It covers an area of approximately 7 106 km², with a privileged geo-strategic position with a seafront of 80 kilometers on the Atlantic Ocean. It is among the least urbanized regions of Morocco where the urbanization rate reaches 24% (Urban Agency Berrechid Benslimane, 2020).

![Figure 1: Map of the Doukkala Region Showing Its Borders (Black Area Represents the Sampling Location)](image)

The present study involved 1361 couples from the Moroccan region of Doukkala (table1). The survey was conducted by using a questionnaire to collect data on the place of birth, place of residence before and after the marriage of the couples studied.
Social immobility is one of the main causes of endogamy, which is characterized as the tendency to marry between people of the same social class. There are several types of endogamy: religious endogamy, professional endogamy, familial endogamy or consanguinity, and geographical endogamy. The objective of the present work is to study the geographical endogamy, according to the environment of birth.

The survey were conducted in three steps:
1) A brief description of the context of the study for the person interested in participating;
2) Have the interviewee's consent to participate in the study; and
3) This step involves asking people for information through a questionnaire.

The data collected were on place of birth and residence, age at marriage of spouses. For the dates of the different events, date of birth of the participants, age at marriage of the participants, and as we are in front of a population where the rate of illiteracy exceeds 66% in the rural world and the urbanization rate does not exceed 17% (HCP, 2013), we established a relative chronology of the historical events that marked the region or the nation (Baali et al., 2005). In the present study, participants were randomly selected and the data collected were coded while maintaining confidentiality and anonymity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The geographical endogamy in the studied population reaches 84.79% (Figure 2). Previous work showed that marital behavior is highly observed in Moroccan populations, these rates estimated respectively as 91.98% in Moroccan population (Talbi et al., 2006), 86% in northern Moroccan population (Habibeddine et al., 2019), 77.2% in Souss-Massa-Daraa population (Sbii, 2008), 73.2% in Anougal population (Cherkaoui, 2002), 72.4% in Azgour population (Baali, 1994), and 70.48% in Kenitra population (Hami et al., 2005).

Compared to a study conducted in 2008 (Talbi et al., 2008), during a decade, the level of endogamy has evolved from 77.45% to 84.79% in the Moroccan population of Doukkala, which means that this marital behavior seems to offer psychological, social, economic and cultural benefits to couples and their families. On the other hand, this population has experienced an economic metamorphosis since 2008 due to the Green Morocco Plan established by the Moroccan government, which aims to promote agricultural production and the fight against poverty (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2008).
The analysis of endogamy by environment (table 2) indicates a rate of 87.34% registered in rural areas and 60.57% registered in urban areas. The endogamy is highly adopted in the rural areas, but little observed in the urban areas (Lamdouar, 1994; Khlat, 1989). For some, marrying outside the tribe or family seems to weaken group membership. In some families, the choice of spouse is dictated by a set of factors such as heritage, dowry, name, and land ownership. Thus, endogamy is a factor of social immobility (Ben M’rad & Chalbi, 2004).

Table 2. Distribution of Geographic Endogamy According to the Environment Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Habitat</th>
<th>Endogamous Marriage</th>
<th>Exogamous Marriage</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>60.57</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>1076</td>
<td>87.34</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1154</td>
<td>84.79</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The intergenerational evolution of geographical endogamy (table 3) shows a high rate in the first (92.84%) and second (91.02%) generations compared to the last generation (58.56%). This observation could be explained by many factors such as the limited infrastructure and logistics related to transport and communication during the first half of the XXth century, and the political instability that Morocco experienced under the French protectorate (1912-1956) which caused a kind of insecurity and anxiety among the population about the political future of the country, which led the population to adopt an inward-looking approach, and consequently increased the rate of endogamy. Post-independence, endogamy tends to regress from one generation to the next until it reaches 58.56% in the last generation. Over time, generations start to free themselves from cultural pressure and to be open and permissive due to different reasons such as security, social stability, economic growth, and participation of women in economic activities by becoming active in society and being a good financial partner in their families, in addition to the impact of social networks and media on customs and traditions.

These findings are consistent with the results found by Talbi et al in the Moroccan population (Talbi et al., 2006) and Baali in a semi-isolated Berber population of the High Atlas (Baali, 1994).
Table 3. The Evolution Over Time of Geographical Endogamy in the Moroccan Population of Doukkala

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Interval</th>
<th>Endogamous Marriage</th>
<th>Exogamous Marriage</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1924-1947</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>92.84</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1948-1971</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>91.02</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1972-1995</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>78.97</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1996-2019</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>58.56</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1154</td>
<td>84.79</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSION
The Moroccan population of Doukkala is highly endogamous, and the type of habitat (rural or urban) has some influence on its structure. This marital behavior decreases from one generation to the next, indicating that this population tends to open up progressively over time. Therefore, future research are expected to discuss more about this topic since it is an important aspect in life, especially in Doukkala. The researchers also hope that more variables can emerge from different research.

REFERENCES


