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Research Article

The Study of Segregation and its Consequences in the Kabul City

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Abstract: This study investigates urban segregation in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, utilizing a multifaceted theoretical framework that integrates various explanatory models of segregation. The research targets the general population of Kabul, with a sample size of 233 individuals selected through a non-probabilistic cluster sampling technique. Data were collected using a comprehensive questionnaire focused on the Afghan context, incorporating insights from relevant studies. The analysis was conducted using SPSS software, employing both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Demographic characteristics and participant responses in ethnically dominated areas were summarized using frequencies and percentages, while key variables were examined using measures of central tendency, dispersion, and distribution, including mean, standard deviation, variance, skewness, and kurtosis. The segregation tendencies of Kabul residents were analyzed using T-test, ANOVA and Spearman correlation. The results reveal a pronounced level of segregation within Kabul, with significant implications including the reinforcement of ethnocentric attitudes, the preservation of distinct subcultural identities, enhanced feelings of community security, and increased intra-group political and social engagement. The study found that followers of Shia Islam tend to segregate themselves from other religious groups, while the Pashtun ethnic group shows the lowest tendency toward segregation. Additionally, Kabul citizens tend to live among their own religious groups and the lower the level of education of individuals, the greater their tendency to separation.

Keywords: segregation; subculture; ethnocentrism; feelings of security

1. Introduction

In general terms, the concept of segregation is related to the idea of distance and separation between different population groups, and/ or relative social distance occupied by a wide array of ethnic groups (Reardon & Firebaugh, 2002; White et al., 2005). In sociology, segregation means social distance and ethnic preference dynamics (Fossett, 2006). In fact, cities, as products of division of labor, not only allocate social and economic values to different occupations but also reflect this division in residential spaces, particularly along ethnic and religious lines. Thus, urban life can be characterized by distinct separations.

From another point of view, segregation can be broadly defined as the degree of spatial separation between two or more population groups in a region (Yao et al., 2019) and according to Firman; there are three theoretical approaches to explain patterns of spatial segregation. The first approach is the human ecology approach, which views the city as a whole and examines changes in the city due to competition for space. The second approach, social and ecological factor approach, maps the spatial patterns of economic and social characteristics of the city through principal component analysis, encompassing social, economic, and ethnic dimensions. The third theory is the behavioral approach, focusing on housing market demands such as demographic structures, household income levels, access to bank credits, and interest rates (Firman, 2004).

In the theory of polycentric city, Harris and Ullman consider multiple nuclei instead of a single core, where each nucleus is associated with a specialized activity. Different nuclei may have emerged from the city's early stages based on division of labor (Harris & Ullman, 2020). Louis Wirth identifies the main sociological issue as discovering specific social actions and social organizations within relatively permanent residential areas that are densely populated

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and are socially heterogeneous. He views the city as a vast, permanent, and densely populated residence of socially heterogeneous individuals (Wirth, 2012). According to him, a larger population leads to increased spatial segregations based on race, ethnicity, and status. In his article titled "Urbanization as a Way of Life," Wirth attempts to analyze the urban cultural diversity through three independent variables: population size, population density, and cultural heterogeneity. His fundamental argument is that urban life is characterized by social isolation and disorganization, as all cities are large, dense, and heterogeneous.

Ernest Burgess stated that the typical tendency of urban growth is the expansion radially from its central business district by a series of concentric circles, as (a) the central business district, (b) a zone of deterioration, (c) a zone of workingmen's homes, (d) a residential area, and (e) a commuters' zone. manifest the paradigms of united concentric zones, each with its own distinct characteristics (Burgess, 2015).

Jami have investigated the spatial-social segregation of educational and occupational groups in Ardabil through quantitative research with a descriptive-analytical approach. The research findings show a moderate separation between the strata in the city indicating that the spatial structure of Ardabil city exhibits a concentrated pattern, and areas experiencing the highest urban deprivation are located in the northwest and southeast, primarily encompassing informal settlements, areas with irregular structures, and areas with a rural background (Jami et al., 2022).

Similarly, in a study titled "Analysis of the Impact of the location of Ambassadors and Foreigners in the Evolution of the Socio-Spatial Segregation Structure of Tehran During the Qajar Era" historical and descriptive-analytical methods were employed. It shows that foreigners during the Qajar period occupied prominent residential areas of Tehran in various intervals and contributed to the expansion and strengthening of the phenomenon of social-spatial segregation in Tehran (Hosseini, 2023).

Balali and Makhdoomi, in their 2021 study using a survey method, examined spatial segregation or social segregation? a comparative study of marriage patterns of women in the high- and low-class regions of Hamadan province. The research results indicate that spatial segregation aligns partially with social segregation in certain cases (Balali & Makhdoomi, 2021).

Meshkini and Rahimi investigated spatial segregation patterns in Tehran using the variables of household, ethnicity, and religion. The research demonstrates significant spatial segregation in Tehran; ethnicity and religion show higher levels of binary and multi-group segregation compared to other variables. Using standard deviation, it was revealed that Tehran exhibits a highly dualistic structure based on house area. Contrary to prevailing theories, increase in household aspect is not aligned with increase in the area of residency rather population-dense houses with small areas are situated in the southern part of the city, while larger houses with fewer residents are found in the north (Meshkini & Rahimi, 2012).

Monshi Zadeh, have concluded that in the villages surrounding Nourabad city, changes in flows, relationships, and interactions between the studied villages and Nourabad city, influenced by demographic, physical, and spatial transformations due to the influx of migrants as well as urban capital formation, have significantly transformed the pattern of social segregation. In such a way that today in this region, the establishment of residential units is largely based on the economic status of their owners, and the role of ethnic and tribal affiliations in this regard has greatly diminished (Monshi Zadeh et al., 2011).

Azam Azadeh has examined the pattern of residential segregation in Tehran. According to him, while the segregation of various social groups in large cities is an accepted phenomenon, this hypothesis has not been adequately studied through scientific methods and appropriate indexing. In this article, considering the diverse consequences of residential segregation in cities, spatial-segregation among various socio-economic groups has been tested using various statistical indices based on secondary data, confirming the separation of different social bases and its dimensions according to verified areas (Azam Azadeh, 2003).

As a multi ethnic country Afghanistan is among the fastest urbanizing countries in the world with an annual urban growth rate of 5 percent and if this trend continues, the urban population could increase by 15 million by 2060, with half of the population residing in cities (Beall & Esser, 2005). This is due to fragile security situation, poor economic conditions, lack of basic services and public utilities in the rural areas and social preferences (Ahmadi, 2019; Sarwari & Ono, 2022). Following 2001, Afghanistan's major cities, especially Kabul, experienced significant population growth due to the influx of internally displaced persons (Chaturvedi et al., 2020) and massive return of refugees and migrants (Ahmadi, 2019). As its consequence, the city population reached over six million by 2017 (Hidayat & Kajita, 2019).

As the largest city of Afghanistan, Kabul has an ethnic urban landscape (Hidayat & Kajita, 2019) and the city's ethnic landscape is divided among Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara and Uzbek groups, each settled in distinct areas based on historical and geographical factors (Sarwari & Ono, 2023). Ethnic fragmentation and/or segregation and socio-economic diversity in Kabul pose challenges for urban planning and development (Habib, 2011).

In Kabul city, the segregation not only leads to consequences like poverty, inequality, and the formation of crime-prone areas but also prevents urban society from embracing its differences. In Afghanistan, with pronounced ethnic-religious divides (Ishtiaq et al., 2024), this issue can particularly and significantly affect urban life in Kabul city. Realities indicate that some of Kabul's ethnic-religious conflicts stem from an unwillingness to accept cultural differences, and due to segregated choice of Kabul citizens, the conflict became sever. The examples of such conflicts as historical realities of Afghanistan could be observed in the ethnically concentrated areas of Kabul. Segregation of ethnicities and sects in Kabul has reduced inter-ethnic interactions, leading to a lack of communal belonging among different ethnic groups (Sarwari & Ono, 2022). Consequently, ethnic-religious divides have widened, often resulting in inter-group conflicts.

Meanwhile, (Habib, 2011), argue that one of the serious issues in major cities of Afghanistan, particularly Kabul, is the phenomenon of segregation, where social integration has failed to occur, leading to increased social distance among Kabul's citizens. The consequences of such segregation can be observed in the inability to accept differences, wider inequalities, and an increase in crime and distrust among Kabul's residents. Governmental and executive bodies in the Kabul city such as the Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Refugees, Kabul Municipality, and other institutions have not made sufficient efforts to tackle segregation, its causes and consequences.

Therefore, it is required to investigate the extent and intensity of segregation, as well as its influential factors and consequences. Reliable and systematic information obtained through scientific research in this area will contribute to a precise understanding of this issue and will assist activists in achieving more effective solutions. Given these, the current research, which focuses on an exploratory approach, examining segregation and its consequences at the Kabul city, can be perceived as significant both theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, there has been a lack of serious and impactful research in identifying the factors and consequences of segregation in major cities of Afghanistan. This research can help fill the knowledge gap and address the lack of scientific knowledge regarding segregation. From a practical point of view, it is expected that this research, by identifying the extent and consequences of segregation in Kabul city, will be utilized by governmental and urban planning entities to promote social integration and mitigate segregation effects.

Research Objectives

Segregation, its extent and intensity as well as its consequences in the city of Kabul are the main issues of this study. Considering these the objectives of this study are specifically as following:

1. Identification of the extent and intensity of segregation in the Kabul city through analysing the segregation tendency of it's residents.
2. Analysing the consequences of segregation in the Kabul city through describing the socio-political activities of ethnic groups.

2. Materials and Methods

Methodologically, the present study is descriptive-analytical as a frequently used method (Ischak et al., 2019; Mehri & Davoudpour, 2019), focusing on describing the extent and intensity of segregation in the Kabul city. In terms of objective, this is an applied study (Niiniluoto, 1993); in terms of data nature, it is quantitative (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019; Gunter, 2013; Holton & Burnett, 2005); in terms of data collection tool, it is survey-based (Nardi, 2018); and in terms of unit of analysis, it is non-case oriented. The statistical population under study is Kabul city, and using non-probabilistic cluster sampling method (Levy & Lemeshow, 2013; Peregrine, 2018), a sample size of 233 individuals residing in various districts of Kabul were surveyed by employing Krejcie and Morgan (Chuan & Penyelidikan, 2006).

A questionnaire was used for data collection, selected as it aligns with the dominant approach and method of this research. The questions were developed and formatted based

on previous studies in different regions and with input from relevant stakeholders to ensure compatibility with the demographic conditions of the research population. Various tests were conducted to assess the validity (face, construct) and reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the measurement tool. The initial form of the questionnaire was reviewed by researchers, university professors, experts, and the statistical community to ensure validity. Cronbach's alpha was also utilized to confirm the reliability of the measurement tool. Likert scale was used to measure the main variables of the research: cultural preservation, ethnic centrality, intra-group socio-political activities, sense of security and tranquility, and identity separation.

Results and conclusions drawn from the statistical community were incorporated into the final formulation of the measurement tool for the current research. The Cronbach's alpha for each of the above variables is shown in Table 1 indicates the satisfactory reliability across all spectra.

Table 1. Cronbach's alpha of the study variables

Variables	Type of variable	Number of questions	Cronbach's alpha
Segregation	Independent	10	0.74
Protection of subcultures	Dependent	7	0.77
Ethnocentrism	Dependent	6	0.70
Feeling of security	Dependent	8	0.74

In this study, the sample size was determined using the Cochran formula based on the variance of the population. Initially, 30 questionnaires were distributed to respondents according to the sampling method. Subsequently, based on the data obtained from these 30 respondents, the variance and sampling error were determined to be 0.60 and 0.10, respectively. Using the Cochran formula, a sample size of 230 individuals was calculated for the study. The following table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents of this study. To mitigate potential questionnaire reduction, the sample size was increased to 233 individuals.

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics	Categories	Unanswered	F	%	VP	CP
District	4th district		46	19.7	19.7	19.7
	6th district		70	30.0	30.0	49.8
	11th district		65	27.9	27.9	77.7
	12th district		52	22.3	22.3	100
Age	More than 25 years old	12	54	23.2	24.4	24.4
	21-25 years old		60	25.8	27.1	51.6
	16-20 years old		83	35.6	37.6	89.1
	Less than 15 years old		24	10.3	10.9	100
Gender	Male	9	149	63.9	66.5	66.5
	Female		75	32.2	33.5	100
Ethnicity	Uzbek		46	19.7	19.7	19.7
	Hazara		76	32.6	32.6	52.4
	Tajik		65	27.9	27.9	80.3
	Pashtun		46	19.7	19.7	100
Sect	Shia	6	98	42.1	43.2	43.2
	Sunni		129	55.4	56.8	100
Marital status	Married	6	92	39.5	40.7	40.7
	Single		134	57.5	59.3	100

Using SPSS (Allen et al., 2014), the analysis and processing of findings in this study were conducted at three levels of statistical analysis (descriptive statistics, analytical statistics, and inferential statistics). Demographic variables were examined and assessed using descriptive statistics. At the analytical statistics level, for the main research variables, quantitative indicators were first constructed for each variable, and then analyses of central tendency measures and dispersion statistics of the respective indicators were conducted. Additionally, at the inferential statistics level, linear regression was employed to assess the simultaneous effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. Furthermore, other tests such as the t-test, one-way ANOVA, and Pearson correlation coefficient were also conducted, and the results obtained from these tests were examined.

3. Results

The findings of this study are described at three levels: the tendency of respondents toward the preservation of subcultures, ethnocentrism, and feelings of security and calmness; the evaluation of the ethnic socio-political activities of the residents; and the analysis of residents' tendencies toward segregation.

4.1. Quantitative Description of Research Indicators

According to table 3, the sample size for measuring the preservation of subcultures was 233, all of whom responded to questions related to this indicator. The results related to the quantitative indicator of subculture preservation indicate that the minimum value of this variable was 1.67 and the maximum value was 5. The statistic mean shows that the average subculture preservation among the examined sample is 3.55. The standard deviation also indicates that the average dispersion of subculture preservation in the sample from the mean is 0.80. The obtained skewness coefficient is highly positive at 0.10, indicating that subculture preservation is generally lower than the mentioned average among the majority of sample size. Additionally, the kurtosis coefficient is highly negative at -0.74, indicating that the similarity among sample members in terms of subculture preservation is less than normal.

Table 3. Quantitative indicator of preservation of sub-cultures

Indicators	Values
Mean	3.55
Standard Deviation	0.80
Variance	0.65
Skewness	0.10
Skewness error	0.16
Kurtosis	-0.74
Kurtosis error	0.19
Minimum value	1.67
Maximum value	5.00

According to the table 4, the sample size for ethnocentrism measurement is 233 individuals, all of whom have responded to the questions related to this indicator. The quantitative results for ethnocentrism show that the variable ranges from a minimum of 2.43 to a maximum of 4.77. The average (mean) statistic indicates that the average level of ethnocentrism among the examined sample is 3.47. The standard deviation, which measures the average dispersion of ethnocentrism around the mean, is 0.46. The obtained kurtosis coefficient is strongly positive at 0.32, indicating that ethnocentrism tends to be lower than the mentioned average among the majority of sample. Additionally, the skewness coefficient is negative at -0.49, suggesting that there is less ethnocentrism than normal among sample size in terms of its presence.

Table 4. Quantitative indicator of ethnocentrism

Indicators	Values
Mean	3.47
Standard Deviation	0.54
Variance	.214
Skewness	0.32
Skewness error	.159
Kurtosis	-0.49
Kurtosis error	18.3
Minimum value	2.43
Maximum value	4.77

According to table 5, the results related to the quantitative indicator of sense of security and calmness indicate that the minimum value of this variable was 1.89 and the maximum was 4.78. The mean statistic shows that the average sense of security and calmness among the sample under study is 3.42. The standard deviation also indicates that the average dispersion of sense of security and calmness among the sample from the mean is 0.65. The obtained skewness coefficient is -0.10, indicating that the majority of sample members have a lower sense of security and calmness than the mentioned average. Additionally, the kurtosis coefficient is a strongly negative -0.64, suggesting that the similarity among sample members in terms of sense of security and calmness is less than normal.

Table 5. Quantitative indicator of felling of security and calmness

Indicators	Values
Mean	3.00
Standard Deviation	0.65
Variance	4.35
Skewness	-00.1
Skewness error	.159
Kurtosis	-44.6
Kurtosis error	18.3
Minimum value	.891
Maximum value	4.78

4.2. The activities of ethnic groups in Afghanistan, both intra-group and inter-group

Table (6), shows the level of socio-political activities of ethnic groups in Pashtun dominated areas of Kabul. In total, out of 25 respondents regarding the extent of ethnic activities in Pashtun areas, 6 respondents believe that Pashtuns are very active in these areas, 28 respondents believe that they are active, 51 respondents believe that the activity is moderate, 42 respondents believe that it is low, and 40 respondents believe that it is very low. Therefore, from these statistics, it can be concluded that the activities of various ethnic groups, including Pashtuns, in Pashtun areas of Kabul are moderate, with the highest activities being intra-group and intra-ethnic.

Table 6. Level of socio-political activities of ethnic groups in Pashtun dominated areas of Kabul

Ethnicity/ Scale	Very active	Active	Moderately active	Passive	Very Passive	Total
Uzbek	3	2	9	7	8	29
Hazara	3	6	10	13	20	52
Tajik	4	8	16	20	11	59
Pashtun	15	12	16	2	1	46
Total	25	28	51	42	40	186

Table 7 illustrates the level of social-political activities of ethnic groups in Tajik dominated areas of Kabul city. Overall, among the respondents, 38 individuals believe that ethnic groups are very active in these areas, 43 individuals consider the activity to be high, 48 individuals perceive it as moderate, 40 individuals describe it as low, and 20 individuals think it is very low. Therefore, based on these statistics regarding the activity of ethnic groups in predominantly Tajik areas of Kabul, it can be concluded that the activity of various ethnic groups, including Tajiks themselves, is primarily moderate. Secondly, the most significant activities of ethnic groups are both intra-group and inter-group.

Table 7. Level of socio-political activities of ethnic groups in Tajik dominated areas of Kabul

Ethnicity/ Scale	Very active	Active	Moderately active	Passive	Very Passive	Total
Uzbek	4	4	13	7	3	31
Hazara	3	8	19	14	8	52
Tajik	26	25	3	4	5	63
Pashtun	5	6	13	15	4	43
Total	38	43	48	40	20	189

Table 8 shows the level of social-political activities of ethnic groups in Hazara dominated areas of the Kabul city. Out of 42 respondents regarding the extent of ethnic activities in Hazara dominated areas, 10 believe there is very high activity, 25 believe there is high activity, 41 believe there is moderate activity, 53 believe there is low activity, and 38 believe there is very low activity among ethnic groups in Hazara dominated areas. Therefore, from these statistics, it can be concluded that the highest level of activity among various ethnic groups, including the Hazara ethnic group itself, in Hazara dominated areas of Kabul has been intra-group and intra-ethnic, and has been relatively opposed to extra-group activities.

Table 8. Level of socio-political activities of ethnic groups in Hazara dominated areas of Kabul

Ethnicity/ Scale	Very active	Active	Moderately active	Passive	Very Passive	Total

Uzbek	12	5	14	4	4	39
Hazara	24	13	10	10	5	62
Tajik	3	4	10	15	24	56
Pashtun	3	3	7	24	5	42
Total	42	25	41	53	38	199

Table 9 shows the level of social-political activities of ethnic groups in predominantly Uzbek areas of Kabul. Out of 67 respondents regarding the extent of ethnic activities in Uzbek dominated areas, 6 individuals believe that ethnic groups are very active in these regions, 9 believe they are quite active, 27 believe they are moderately active, 53 believe they are inactive, and 76 believe they are very passive. Therefore, the conclusion drawn from these statistics regarding the extent of ethnic activities in Uzbek dominated areas is that the highest level of activity among various ethnic groups, including Uzbek themselves, in Uzbek dominated areas of Kabul has been within intra-group and intra-ethnic activities, showing significant opposition to extra-group activities.

Table 9. Level of socio-political activities of ethnic groups in Uzbek dominated areas of Kabul

Ethnicity/ Scale	Very active	Active	Moderately active	Passive	Very Passive	Total
Uzbek	1	1	3	5	15	25
Hazara	4	3	11	9	22	49
Tajik	0	4	8	17	27	56
Pashtun	1	1	5	22	12	41
Total	6	9	27	53	76	171

Table 10 shows the level of social and political activities of ethnic groups in the minority groups dominated areas in Kabul. In total, 21 respondents believed in very high activities of ethnic groups. Furthermore, 16 respondents believed that ethnic groups are active, 33 respondents believed that they are moderately active, 36 respondents believed that they are passive; and 72 respondents believed that they are very passive. Therefore, from these statistics, it can be concluded that the highest level of ethnic activities in minority groups dominated areas has been intra-group and intra-ethnic.

Table 10. Level of socio-political activities of ethnic groups in minority groups dominated areas of Kabul

Ethnicity/ Scale	Very active	Active	Moderately active	Passive	Very Passive	Total
Uzbek	3	3	4	5	10	25
Hazara	11	5	13	7	19	55
Tajik	3	7	13	18	16	57
Pashtun	4	1	3	6	27	41
Total	21	16	33	36	72	178

Finally, based on the statistics obtained from tables number 6 to 10, which indicate the nature and extent of socio-political activities of various ethnic groups in Afghanistan in their respective areas, it can be concluded that all ethnic groups in Afghanistan show a greater tendency towards intra-group and intra-ethnic social-political activities. Their extra-group activities are mostly at a relatively moderate level, while their completely open and extra-ethnic activities are relatively low and very low.

4.3. Segregation Tendency of the Participants

The segregation tendency of the participants taken place using three analytical tests including T-test, ANOVA and spearman correlation test. These analytical tests are as the following:

4.3.1. Segregation Tendency Based on t-test

Considering the demographic characteristics of the respondents the segregation tendency of the respondents of the study was analyzed. The data in table 11, compare the results of the independent T-test between Kabul citizens and demographic variables. The T-test results between gender and marital status with the segregation tendency among Kabul citizens showed no significant difference as the significance level was greater than 0.05. However, a significant difference exists between religion and the segregation tendency among Kabul citizens, with a P-value less than 0.05. Followers of Shia Islam had the highest average

scores. Therefore, it can be said that there is a significant difference in the segregation tendency based on religion among the research sample.

Table 11. Segregation tendency based on t-test

Variables	Groups	Frequency	Mean	SD	Significancy
Religion/ Sect	Shia	97	3.8247	0.98964	0.007
	Sunni	125	3.4080	1.13661	
Gender	Male	146	3.5822	1.08759	0.496
	Female	73	3.6164	1.11343	
Marital status	Married	90	3.6111	1.08818	0.777
	Single	131	3.5496	1.11088	

4.3.2. Segregation Tendency Based on ANOVA

Table 12, shows the results of ANOVA among the variables of ethnicity, age, and family income with the segregation tendency of Kabul citizens. The results of the ANOVA among the age group and family income variables with the segregation tendency of Kabul citizens indicate that there is no significant difference, as the significance level for both variables is greater than 0.05. However, the results between the ethnicity variable and the segregation tendency of Kabul citizens show a significant difference, with the Pashtun ethnic group having the lowest average score compared to other ethnic groups

Table 12. Segregation tendency based on ANOVA

Variables	Groups	Frequency	Mean	SD	F	Significancy
Ethnicity	Uzbek		3.5870	1.16573	6.495	0.000
	Hazara	76	3.8026	0.96636		
	Tajik	62	3.7581	0.93538		
	Pashtun	44	2.9773	1.22927		
	Total	228	3.5877	1.09312		
Age	Over 25 years		3.5000	0.91823	1.372	0.252
	21-25	59	3.4407	1.23555		
	16-20	81	3.7654	1.02800		
	Under 15	24	3.7500	1.11316		
	Total	216	3.6111	1.07689		
Income	>60 thousand Afs		3.2941	1.15999	1.274	0.274
	50-59 thousand	26	3,3462	1.12933		
	40-49 thousand	17	3.5882	1.17574		
	30-39 thousand	28	3.7143	1.21281		
	20-29 thousand	56	3.5179	0.95329		
	10-19 thousand	44	3.9091	0.96009		
	< 10 thousand	216	3.5787	1.08834		
	Total	17	3.2941	1.15999		

4.3.3. Segregation Tendency Based on Spearman Correlation Test

The data in table 13 show the results of the Spearman correlation test among the research variables. The correlation coefficient for the variable of religious similarity is 0.183 with a significance level of 0.006, and the correlation coefficient for the increase in the educational level is 0.228 with a significance level of 0.001. These results indicate a strong, statistically significant negative correlation at the 0.01 significance level between these variables and the segregation tendency of Kabul residents.

Table 13. Segregation tendency based on spearman correlation test

Dependent Variable	Groups	Correlation coefficient/ r	Significancy

Segregation tendency of Kabul residents	Religion/ Sect similarities Preferring to live among one's own ethnic group	-0.183**	0.006
	Increase in Education Level Preferring to live among one's own ethnic group	-0.228**	0.001

Therefore, it could be stated that considering the religious/ sectarian variable, the followers of Shia Islam meaningfully tend to segregate themselves from other religious followers. Moreover, the analysis of segregation tendency based on ethnicity variable indicate the lowest tendency of the Pashtun ethnic group in living in segregation. Finally, the significant negative correlation between segregation tendency of Kabul residents and religious similarities and increase in educational levels. This mean that the Kabul citizens tend to live among their own religious groups and avoid living among members of other religious groups. Additionally, the lower the level of education of individuals, the greater their tendency to prefer separation.

4. Discussion

As Wirth (2012) views the city as a vast, permanent, and densely populated residence of socially heterogeneous individuals, with increased segregation based on race and ethnicity, Kabul city exemplifies this concept. The city is populated by individuals from various ethnic groups (Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, and Uzbek) and religious identities (Shia and Sunni). The ethno-religious characteristics of Kabul's residents significantly influence their lifestyles, which is a primary focus of this study. This study aims to explore the extent and intensity of segregation in Kabul, along with its influential factors and consequences.

Education level, a key characteristic of the population, has attracted significant scholarly attention regarding its role and effectiveness in segregation. Jami et al. (2022) found moderate separation between educational and occupational groups in Ardabil city. In alignment with Jami's study, the current research found a significant negative correlation between the segregation tendencies of Kabul residents and their educational levels. Specifically, lower educational attainment was associated with a greater tendency toward segregation and a preference for living among one's own ethnic group.

Socially distinguished and segregated populations often spatially segregate themselves. Kabul, with its pronounced ethnic-religious divide (Ishtiaq et al., 2024), exhibits severe segregation, which hinders the urban society from embracing its diversity. This aligns with Balali and Makhdoomi's (2021) observation that spatial segregation often partially reflects social segregation.

Meshkini and Rahimi investigated spatial segregation patterns in Tehran, focusing on household, ethnicity, and religion variables. Their research revealed significant spatial segregation, with ethnicity and religion showing higher levels of binary and multi-group segregation compared to other variables. The current study, focusing on the ethno-religious characteristics of Kabul's population, found a significant correlation between these characteristics and residents' tendencies toward segregation (see Tables 11, 12, and 13).

Contrary to findings by Monshi Zadeh et al. (2011), who argued that residential unit establishment in Nourabad city was primarily based on economic status, the current study highlights the continued importance of ethnic and tribal affiliations in determining residential areas in Kabul. Previous studies by Hidayat and Kajita (2019) and Sarwari and Ono (2022) also noted that Kabul is divided based on ethnic groups, with each group historically and geographically settling in distinct areas.

Although previous studies have identified socio-cultural challenges caused by the segregated choices of Kabul's citizens, such as an unwillingness to accept cultural differences (Ishtiaq et al., 2024), the current study did not find significant tendencies among respondents to preserve sub-cultures. Despite a low similarity in responses, there was no significant intention to preserve sub-cultures (see Table 3). Similarly, while responses related to ethnocentrism were low, there was no uniform response among the sample population (see Table 4). Nonetheless, respondents reported feeling less secure and calm regarding other ethno-religious groups.

The study also examined the socio-political activities of ethnic groups in five areas of Kabul, each dominated by a specific ethnic group (Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, and other minority groups). The findings indicate significant intra-ethnic and intra-group socio-political

activities (see Tables 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10). Spatial and social segregation, associated with ethnic and religious diversity in Kabul, has led to lower inter-ethnic and inter-group socio-political activities and has instead fostered significant intra-ethnic and intra-group interactions.

5. Conclusions

Segregation in the Kabul city not only leads to consequences such as poverty, inequality, and the formation of crime-prone areas but also prevents urban society from embracing its differences. In Afghanistan, being a multi-ethnic society, deeply entrenched ethnic and religious divides significantly impact urban life in Kabul. Evidence shows that some ethnic-religious conflicts in Kabul stem from a lack of cultural acceptance, exacerbated by residential segregation. Examples of such encounters can be observed throughout Afghanistan's historical reality.

Poverty and inequality further exacerbate the segregation in the Kabul city, dividing neighborhoods along ethnic lines due to unequal distribution of resources, leading to severe economic disparities. Understanding the extent and intensity of segregation in the Kabul city, its contributing factors, and its impact on urban life, including mapping different areas based on the severity of segregation, have been subjects of investigation. Research has precisely identified that segregation tendencies exist prominently in the Kabul city, with its citizens segmented into various social groups based on influential factors such as ethnicity, religion, race, and language.

Moreover, such conditions and structuring within Kabul itself have created a chain re-action, generating additional circumstances where certain social groups are marginalized from active social participation. This phenomenon has intensified ethnic-centric activities and intra-group dynamics, ultimately transforming trust, security, and tranquility into a realm fraught with distrust and unrest. Consequently, it perpetuates various forms of social inequalities within these segmented groups.

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