

# **A Study on Socio-economic status Effects on Private Universities Architecture Students' Educational Motivation**

**B. Dariush<sup>1</sup> , M. Dastyar<sup>2</sup> , AND F. Dastyar<sup>3</sup>**

**1.Shabestan Architectural and Urban Studies Research Center, Tehran, Iran.**

**2.Shabestan Architectural and Urban Studies Research Center, Tehran, Iran**

**3.Shabestan Architectural and Urban Studies Research Center, Tehran, Iran**

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## **Abstract**

The main purpose in this research is A Study on Socioeconomic status Effects on Private Universities Architecture Students' Educational Motivation. Since students could have a great role in reconstructing and improving the society through proper planning, studying students' issues and their attitudes toward higher education with an insight of internal motivation and talents is among the main duties for higher education programmers. Considering the issue significance, the following research tries to study socioeconomic status effects on private universities architecture students' educational motivation. Using the determining factors in students' socioeconomic status, the research studies the relation between this status and students' major, educational motivation, motivations in entering private universities and their job prospects. The statistical society for this research included 12 public and private universities and 306 individuals were selected to answer the research questions through stratified random sampling. To analyze the data, descriptive and inferential statistics (Chi-square) were used. Results suggest that there is a significant relation between university type and major on the one hand and students' socioeconomic status. But there is no significant relation between educational motivation and job prospective with students' socioeconomic status.

**Keywords:** *Socio-economic status, Architecture Students, Educational Motivation*

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• e-mail: babak.dariush@gmail.com

## Introduction

Relying on scientific researches is one of this century's specifications which have a great role in countries scientific and industrial development. Studying the conditions and processes in students, which is related to universities, is one of the main fields that their significance is approved. Various inequalities are observed in many aspects of contemporary life. These inequalities are not only from human nature, but they originate in social life which have strengthened in particular relations so that they have turned into various life necessities. (herad, 2008)

Social base is a position which an individual occupies in a social structure. It is a state or credit which an individual's contemporaries objectively confer to them within the society they live in. (qarai, 2007). Each individual is a social group member and they have a position or base, sociologically speaking, in the society they belong to. Society is not an accumulation or chaotic gathering of humans, but its elements are regular and interactive. Social structure is like a scaffold in which each component is specified in its each joint. (laurk, 2008)

Economic base is the position each individual has an economic régime, or more accurately it refers to their position in the manufacturing sector which in this study includes features such as family income, parents' jobs and housing status. (Agburn & Nimkov, 2009)

Since the social base indicates an individual's ranking comparing to another individual and the social class is the ranking of a group of people relative to the others, it is logical to apply same base criteria in determining the social class. (sarvari, 2007)

Social class is an abstract based on consensus and not a reflection of individuals innate creativity or acquired attributions.

Social Class Determination Indices: Three indices are applied for determining the social class in developed industrial societies which include: income, occupation and education. In addition to these indices, other significant variables such as ethnicity,

religion, nationality, gender, location, family background and generally cultural characteristics are applied as social class indices (Askarian, 2008). The following research uses the two indices of income and parents' education in determining the students' socioeconomic categorization. Since there is no proper ranking on occupations, parents' occupation criterion is omitted.

## Social Class and Motivation

The following research discusses the individuals' motivations from studying bachelors. It could be said that the motivation for studying in the university is mainly formed in the family and has a direct relation with family circumstances and their socioeconomic status.

In a research conducted on high school female students' motivation in Canada in 1983, researchers associated their professional motivations and academic and career aspirations to the socioeconomic status mvariable.

## Materials and Methods

One of the main elements in the university education system is the status. Hence, recognizing their specifications as a part of the society which has a great role in the society's reconstruction and improvement could be of great significance in higher education planning for the university. Students belong to an equal education system, yet from unequal socioeconomic conditions. Most of these inequalities are expressed in the concept of "class" (Patrick, 2006). Based on sociologists studies conducted on children, Newsander concludes that all human are born equal but the earliest months, which a child is born, form its primary experiences. An individual is born in a family which belongs to a society structure; that is, an individual may be born in a working class or a middle social class. A family may live in a specific region which is a village or a city. Each of these factors, either familial, economic, class and regional could lead into opportunity inequality in educational improvements. (bayat, 2006)

Values inequalities and their persistence in today's world, could lead into education problems for individuals who don't possess the upper class privileges. Sometimes, comparisons are done between social classes in education (Holukai, 2006). As it is known, human societies are based on categorizations and hierarchies which more or less determine the social classes. According to Emanuel Monneah, such classes are consisted of relatively close classes which are not equal from education and prestige points of view. (Battle & Michel 2006)

Social categorization has an immense role in individuals' education, educational major, professional progression or regression and even university type. Choosing educational major which leads in to the individual's future profession and their condition in social class system, is not a function of social condition alone, but the society educational and political social class system. (vaziri, 2006)

Haler et al. (2004) studied the social class effect on profession and education expectations. Based on the research they conducted on 4167 male and female high school students, they came to this conclusion that students' profession and education expectations are highly affected by their social class.

According to White (2008) research in France, the chance of entering the university for a worker's son or daughter is ten times lesser than an employer's son or daughter. Studies on students' failure have indicated that there is a correlation between this issue and family's economic situation, and parents' education and occupation. The opposite holds true, as well. As Moniri (2009) states in his research, the most important factors which could direct students' tendencies are the socioeconomic status and its effects.

Social class is a part of the society which are different from the other parts of the same society in their shared values, social status, mass activities, wealth amount and other personal belongings and etiquette. According to another definition, a social class is a set of people or groups that are considered as a social unit in social hierarchy. (Gurvich, 2009)

In various societies, social classes have various forms. For instance, society is divided into various castes, while in most third-world countries the society is divided into upper, middle and lower classes. In industrial countries, society is divided into four classes of lower, working, middle and upper class (McNeal & Ralph, 2007).

### **Research Necessity and Importance**

Conducting research in any field and especially on higher education problems in order to identify the effective factors and their practical and objective information is inevitable. It could also lead into more clear instruction to address the needs. Since student could have a great role in societies' reconstruction and improvement, through proper education programs, addressing students problems and their access to higher education along with identifying their talents are among the main countries' planners' main duties. (Seyfried & Sherri, 2005)

Due to the changes, improvements and technology developments in today's society, changes in education system seem to be vital. Being aware of scientific proper methods of student selection and creating more facilities for students' welfare is significant, for various social classes children are not similar in accessing higher education especially in university type, either state or private or even their major. The following research studies the students' reasons for entering the university, their relation with their majors and university types, study motivation, job prospects and factors associated with it.

Shafi Abadi (2007) in a research, titled "A Study on the Correlation between Students' Education Progression and Family Income", came to this conclusion that the family income could affect the children majors and educational progression.

In her research, Sharifzade (2008) concluded that the education progression has an ascending style, from the bottom to the top of the social class pyramid. Thus, the upper class children could reach more successful in education comparing to the working

class children.

Considering several researches results including presented research, the main question to this research is that if the students' socioeconomic status could affect the students private universities' architecture students educational motivation. In this regard, parents' income and education effects on private universities' architecture students' educational motivation are studied as well.

It seems that certain factors are imposed on the individual and the individual is not able to control them effectively. Socioeconomic status is among such factors which the individual is dependent on them. Some criteria for determining the socioeconomic status are family condition, academic achievement, employment, income and parents' location.

It appears that individuals with higher socioeconomic status obtain more opportunities to enter higher education and especially private ones, for they have less difficulty in paying the tuition costs especially architecture major, which is studied in this research. In a research on the family effects on children educational aspiration, the writer concludes that, the higher the fathers' job the higher the children aspirations and the children educational progression is relatively higher. It should be mentioned that father's job is not the only factor resulting in all these differences, but other factors should be considered as well. In connection with the point previously mentioned, KULI and other psychologists believe that family has the most effect in forming individuals' social characteristics, aspirations, tendencies and core personality. Parents' behaviors toward each other, education, occupation, social class and family amity are among issues which form an individual's personality.

## Research Objectives

### Research Major Objectives

A Study on Socioeconomic status Effects on Private Universities Architecture Students' Educational Motivation

This research studies individual's educational

aspirations, occupation prospect, family condition and parents' socioeconomic status in private universities architecture students'.

To achieve this, determinants to the socioeconomic, status relative understanding of students' socioeconomic status, the relation between this base and private universities architecture students' aspiration, their motivations in entering private universities and occupation prospect are studied.

Research Minor Objectives

- a- Determining the relation between private universities architecture students' university type and socioeconomic status
- b- Determining the relation between private universities architecture students' university major and socioeconomic status
- c- Determining the relation between private universities architecture students' study motivation and socioeconomic status
- d- Determining the relation between private universities architecture students' occupation prospect and socioeconomic status

Research Hypotheses

- 1- There is a relation between private universities architecture students' socioeconomic status and study motivation.
- 2- There is a relation between private universities architecture students' socioeconomic status and occupation prospect.

Research Methodology

To analyze the data, descriptive and inferential statistics (Chi-square) were used.

### A- Descriptive Findings

| Percent | Frequency | Gender |
|---------|-----------|--------|
| 26.1    | 80        | Male   |
| 73.9    | 226       | Female |
| 100     | 306       | Total  |

Table 1- Studied Individuals Distribution based on Gender

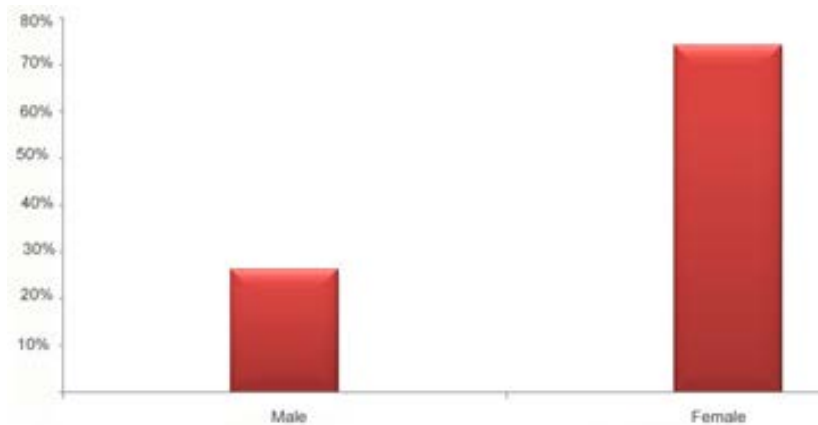


Diagram 1- Studied Individuals Distribution based on Gender

| Percent | Frequency | University Entrance Year |
|---------|-----------|--------------------------|
| 18.8    | 57        | 2006 and Before          |
| 20.8    | 63        | 2007                     |
| 32.0    | 97        | 2008                     |
| 27.7    | 84        | 2009                     |
| 0.7     | 2         | 2010                     |
| 100     | 303       | Total                    |

Table 2- Studied Individuals Distribution based on University Entrance Year

Considering the results presented in the above table, of 306 students, 226 students (73.9 percent) were females and 80 students (26.1 percent) were males.

Considering the results presented in the above table, of 146 students who participated in the test, 88 students (60.3 percent) had rented house. The least students' accommodation was related to the relatives' house which was 4.1 percent.

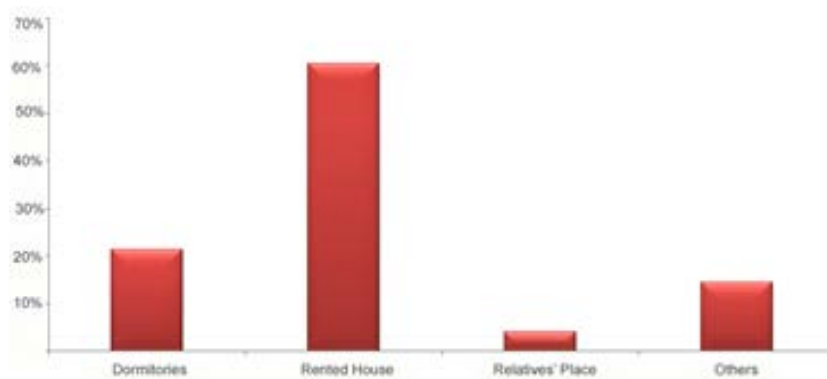
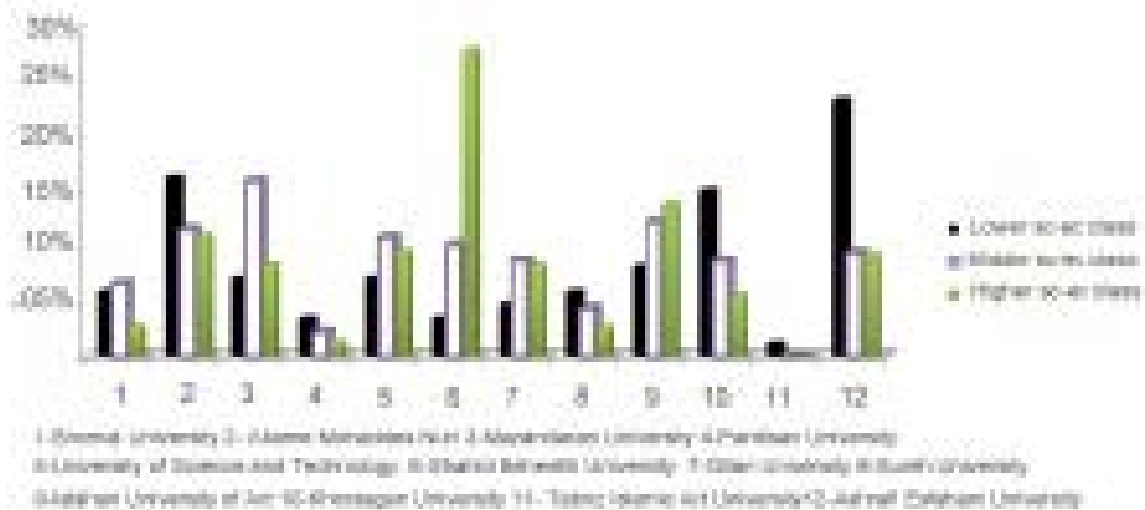


Diagram 4- Studied Individuals Distribution based on Accommodation

B- Results Findings

| Significance Level | X <sup>2</sup> (22) | Higher Socioeconomic Class |           | Middle Socioeconomic Class |           | Lower Socioeconomic Class |           | University                           |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|
|                    |                     | Percent                    | Frequency | Percent                    | Frequency | Percent                   | Frequency |                                      |
| 0.001              | 47.39               | 2.8                        | 2         | 6                          | 9         | 5.7                       | 5         | Shomal University                    |
|                    |                     | 11.1                       | 8         | 11.5                       | 16        | 16.1                      | 14        | Allame Vahdat Nuri                   |
|                    |                     | 8.3                        | 6         | 15.8                       | 22        | 6.9                       | 6         | University of Mazandaran             |
|                    |                     | 1.4                        | 1         | 2.2                        | 3         | 3.4                       | 3         | University of Pardisan               |
|                    |                     | 9.7                        | 7         | 10.8                       | 15        | 6.9                       | 6         | University of Science and Technology |
|                    |                     | 27.8                       | 20        | 10.1                       | 14        | 3.4                       | 3         | Shahid Beheshti                      |
|                    |                     | 8.3                        | 6         | 8.6                        | 12        | 4.6                       | 4         | University of Gilan                  |
|                    |                     | 2.8                        | 2         | 4.3                        | 6         | 5.7                       | 5         | University of Sure                   |
|                    |                     | 13.9                       | 10        | 12.2                       | 17        | 8.0                       | 7         | Isfahan University of Art            |
|                    |                     | 5.6                        | 4         | 8.6                        | 12        | 14.9                      | 13        | University of Khorasgan IAU          |
|                    |                     | 0                          | 0         | 0                          | 0         | 1.1                       | 1         | Tabriz Islamic Art University        |
|                    |                     | 9.4                        | 6         | 9.4                        | 13        | 23.0                      | 20        | Ashrafi Esfahani University          |

Table 5- University Type Distribution based on Students' Socioeconomic Class



Based on X2 test results in the above table, there is a significant relation between university type and students' socioeconomic class ( $p > 0.01$ ,  $df = 22$ ,  $X^2 = 47.39$ ) and university type depends on the students' socioeconomic class, so that the students who

belonged to the lower socioeconomic class entering private universities are higher than the students who belonged to the middle or higher socioeconomic classes.

| Significancy Level | X <sup>2</sup> (6) | Higher Socioeconomic Class |           | Middle Socioeconomic Class |           | Lower Socioeconomic Class |           | Majors                |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
|                    |                    | Percent                    | Frequency | Percent                    | Frequency | Percent                   | Frequency |                       |
| 0.006              | 18.15              | 80.8                       | 59        | 82.0                       | 114       | 59.9                      | 52        | Mathematics           |
|                    |                    | 17.8                       | 13        | 16.5                       | 23        | 37.9                      | 33        | Architecture          |
|                    |                    | 0                          | 0         | 0                          | 0         | 1.1                       | 1         | Vocational            |
|                    |                    | 1.4                        | 1         | 1.5                        | 2         | 1.1                       | 1         | Experimental Sciences |

Table 6- University Majors Distribution based on Students' Socioeconomic Class

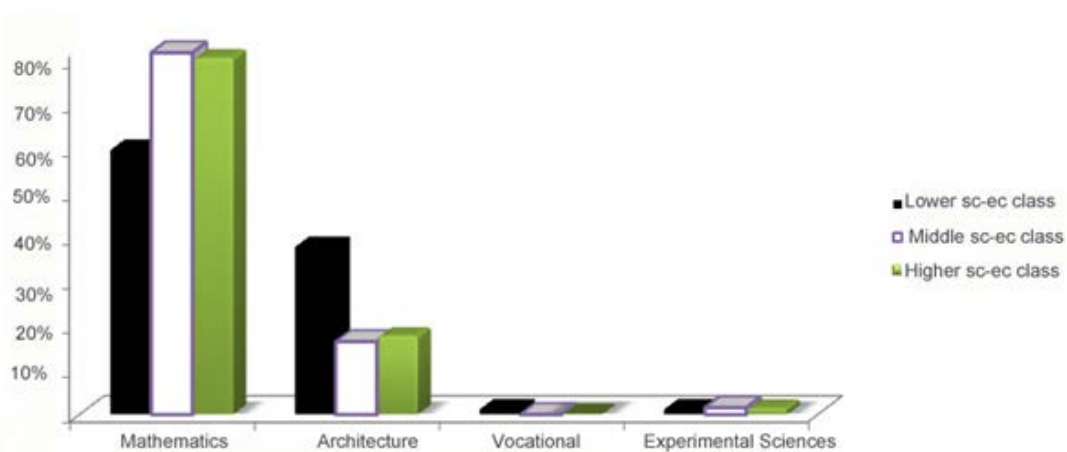


Diagram 6- University Majors Distribution based on Students' Socioeconomic Class

Based on X2 test results in the above table, there is a significant relation between university majors and students' socioeconomic class ( $p > 0.01$ ,  $df = 6$ ,  $X^2 = 18.15$ ) and university majors depend on the students' socioeconomic class, so that the students who belonged to the lower socioeconomic class that have

studied mathematics are higher than the students who belonged to the middle or higher socioeconomic classes.

|                    |                    | Higher Socioeconomic Class |           | Middle Socioeconomic Class |           | Lower Socioeconomic Class |           |                  |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Significance Level | X <sup>2</sup> (4) | Percent                    | Frequency | Percent                    | Frequency | Percent                   | Frequency | Motivation level |
| 0.159              | 6.59               | 5.5                        | 4         | 0.7                        | 1         | 2.3                       | 2         | Low              |
|                    |                    | 17.8                       | 13        | 15.1                       | 21        | 21.8                      | 19        | Average          |
|                    |                    | 76.7                       | 56        | 84.2                       | 117       | 75.9                      | 66        | High             |

Table 7- Educational Motivation Distribution based on Students' Socioeconomic Class

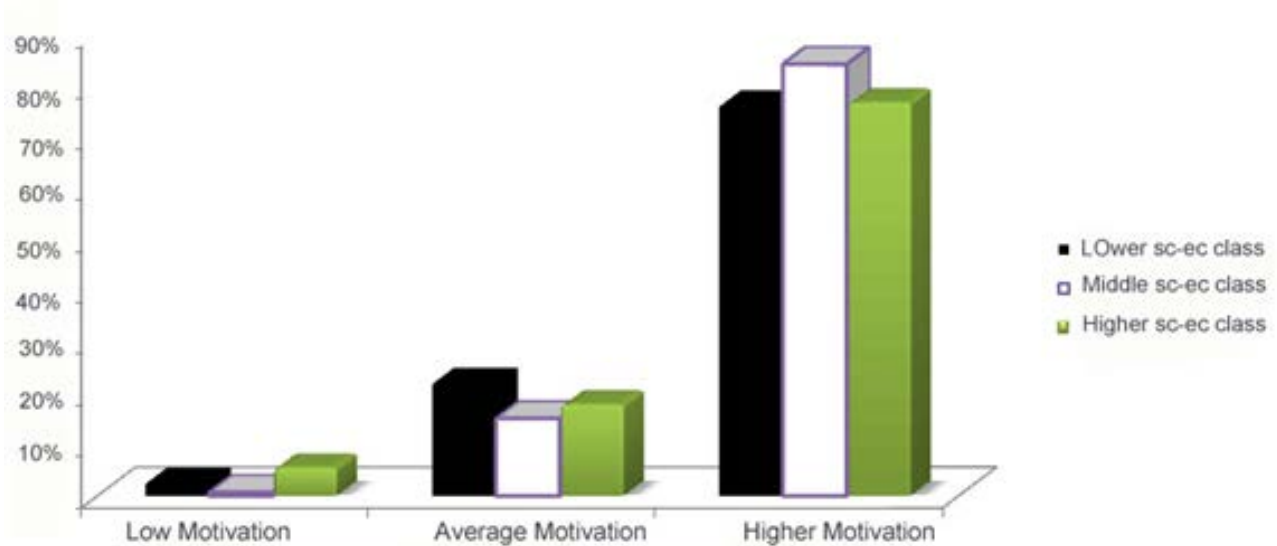


Diagram 7- Educational Motivation Distribution based on Students' Socioeconomic Class

Results indicate that most students have a high motivation. Also, based on X<sup>2</sup> test results presented in the above table, there is no significant relation between motivation level and students' socioeconomic class

( $p < 0.05$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $X^2 = 6.59$ ) and educational motivation is similar in all socioeconomic classes.



|                    |                    | Higher Socioeconomic Class |           | Middle Socioeconomic Class |           | Lower Socioeconomic Class |           |              |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Significance Level | X <sup>2</sup> (2) | Percent                    | Frequency | Percent                    | Frequency | Percent                   | Frequency | Job Prospect |
| 0.754              | 0.56               | 45.2                       | 33        | 43.2                       | 60        | 48.3                      | 42        | Doesn't      |
|                    |                    | 54.8                       | 40        | 56.8                       | 79        | 51.7                      | 45        | Does         |

Table 8- Job Prospect Distribution based on Students' Socioeconomic Class

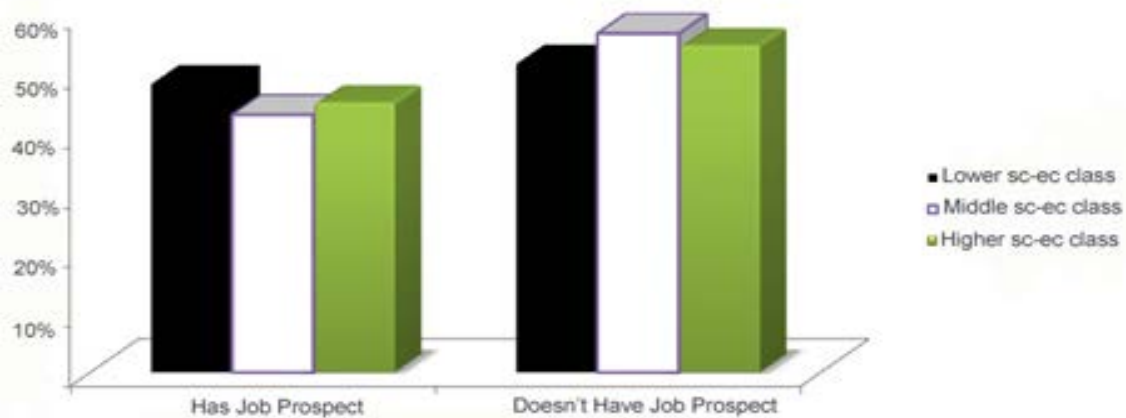


Diagram 8- Job Prospect Distribution based on Students' Socioeconomic Class

Results suggest half of the students have job prospect while the other half does not. Also, based on X<sup>2</sup> test results presented in the above table, there is no significant relation between job prospect and students' socioeconomic class ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $X^2 = 0.56$ ) and job prospect is similar in all socioeconomic classes.

**Practical Suggestions:**

Finally, it should be mentioned that, since the architecture major was formed with two different patterns of BAHAOUSE faculty and BUZAR University in Iran, there is no clear status on it in Iran's higher education. It is not clear if this major should be taught in engineering faculties or under

art faculty. Studying architecture is a popular major in Iran since it has a high social status and job prospect, and since the students' population in private universities is much higher than public universities, studying the students' socioeconomic status as a significant factor in educational motivation and proving that in Supreme Council of the Ministry of Science Curriculum could be of a great effect in further decision-makings. Studying other effective factors on educational motivation for regulating more rules for this major is suggested (factors such as professors' human personality, their communications with students, graduates status and architects association in the society are among the factors which are probably not considered for other majors).

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