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TRENDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARITAL
RELATIONSHIPS IN NORTH CAUCASIAN FEDERAL DISTRICT

Marina Ruslanovna Gabaraeva (a)*

*Corresponding author

(a) Vladikavkaz Scientific Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 22, Markusa Str., Vladikavkaz, North
Ossetia-Alania, vncran@yandex.ru

Abstract

Demographic changes have taken place in many countries over the past two centuries. They have become the consequences of changes in the family ideas and value system. Changes in marital behavior have also happened in Russia. Regions of the North Caucasian Federal District which still seems to be the stronghold of the traditional robust and patriarchal family are of particular interest in this regard. However, family relations in the North Caucasus Federal District are simultaneously influenced by archaization and modernization: marriage practices that have become a thing of the past in the Soviet period are being revived, and the convergence between the Caucasus and Russia is taking place. Young people have the opportunity to adopt the patterns of behavior of Western European society, as well as the countries of the Middle East, with the development of the Internet and social networks. The transformation of gender relations and the greater freedom of women oriented towards education and career has an impact on marriage relations. A study of statistics for the period from 2001 to 2020 demonstrates a shift in demographic behavior. The rapid growth in the number of marriages begins in 2001, with a slight increase in divorce rates until 2010, and then a decrease in the marriage rate occurs with a continued increase in the divorce rate. It can be assumed that the demographic situation will continue to develop according to the same scenario, taking into consideration the complicated situation with unemployment among young people in the region.

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1. Introduction

The family develops in parallel with the society evolution. People react to social, political or economic changes and crises by adjusting their marital behavior to them: the fact of marriage, the time of marriage, and birth of children (Premchand & Agadjanian, 2008). The family continues to be one of the main institutions of society. A change in marital behavior which is basically associated with a greater individualization of new generations, their focus on personal success and not on creating a family, has occurred in many countries over the past decades. Such changes determine the processes occurring at a given moment of time, and are direct reactions to them. They can also indicate deeper cultural changes, the withering away of the traditional model of behavior and the creation of new models and family relations forms (de Jong et al., 2006).

2. Problem Statement

The growing number of divorces is often noted in Western countries. For example, according to the Institute of American Values, the percentage of people who are married between the ages of 20 and 54 has declined since the 1970s, as well as the percentage of people who consider themselves happily married, the percentage of complete families, and the birth rate (Faysal, 2008).

In Russia, marriage and divorce rates began to change significantly at the end of the twentieth century which was first explained by demographic echoes of the Great Patriotic War (a small population of marriageable age), and in the 1990s – by socio-economic upheavals (Leshchenko & Boeva, 2010). In the first 20 years of the 20th century, there was an increase in the number of marriages which was a reaction to the improvement of socio-economic conditions, but later, in 2010, the marriage rate began to decline and the divorce rate increased in Russia. The North Caucasus appears to be a stronghold of a traditional family that preserves patriarchal customs with an earner father and a housekeeping mother. However, the traditional Caucasian family is influenced by the same trends as Russia as a whole (Starodubrovskaya, 2019).

3. Research Questions

Family relations in the regions of the North Caucasus Federal District are influenced by two tendencies of archaization and modernization. Archaization is manifested in the revival of archaic forms of marriage relations, such as bride abduction, marriage by conspiracy of parents, and polygamy in Muslim regions. Modernization is taking place under the influence of all-Russian trends and brings Caucasian society closer to the whole country where both a decrease in the number of marriages and an increase in the divorce rate are happening (Vereshchagina et al., 2020). The Internet and social media that allow youth to transcend their culture have an impact on the family modernization and marriage relations.

The traditional family model was characteristic of the North Caucasian regions in the pre-Soviet period and began to change during the Soviet era but not so much. More noticeable changes began in the post-Soviet era, when the migration processes of two directions began in the North Caucasus cities: the educated population left the Caucasus for other country regions, and the rural population migrated to the

Caucasus cities. Previous models of urban behavior collapsed, a new format of life collided with the traditional one, and the experience of older generations was depreciated in new conditions. Young people who were more flexible and mastered new technologies became economically independent which also influenced gender relations giving women more financial freedom (Sabanchieva, 2016). Archaization took place simultaneously with modernization. “Traditional” and revived, and more often newly created, models of behavior came to the city with the population migration from the rural periphery.

4. Purpose of the Study

The study of demographic trends in societies whose generations have witnessed cultural, economic, and political changes are of concern to both sociology and demography. The demographic changes that have taken place in developed countries over the past two centuries - known as the First and Second Demographic Transitions – are seen as a consequence of the changing values and ideas about the family that dominate in society. However, such demographic transformations have been studied for a limited number of countries and an even smaller number of regions within countries (Kazenin et al., 2020).

Variances in family relationships can be indicators for deeper cultural and generational changes in society. Since the main marriageable age is 20–35 years old, the statistics of marriage and divorce rates can define the moods of the population young part, about their problems and needs which allows making forecasts for the region development and the demographic picture of the North Caucasus Federal District.

5. Research Methods

General scientific methods were used in the course of the study: a retrospective analysis of statistical indicators of marriage, divorces, and mortality rates from cardiovascular diseases was carried out. The characteristics of the marriage relations state in the regions of the North Caucasian Federal District is given by means of data graphical interpretation.

6. Findings

The main statistical indicators of the marriage institution state are the marriage and divorce rates calculated by the following formulas:

- marriage rate $K_b = \frac{B}{S} * 1000$, where B – number of marriages, S – population size;
- divorce rate $K_p = \frac{P}{S} * 1000$, where P – number of divorces, S – population size.

The change in the marriage rate from 2001 to 2020 is shown in Figure 01. The overall increase in the number of marriages was observed from 2001 until 2008–2010. The decline in the marriage rate begins in the second decade of the 20th century in all regions. This figure reaches its minimum values in the last three years in all regions of the North Caucasus Federal District. The divorce rate has remained at approximately the same level for 20 years although a fairly stable gradual increase is noticeable (Figure 02).

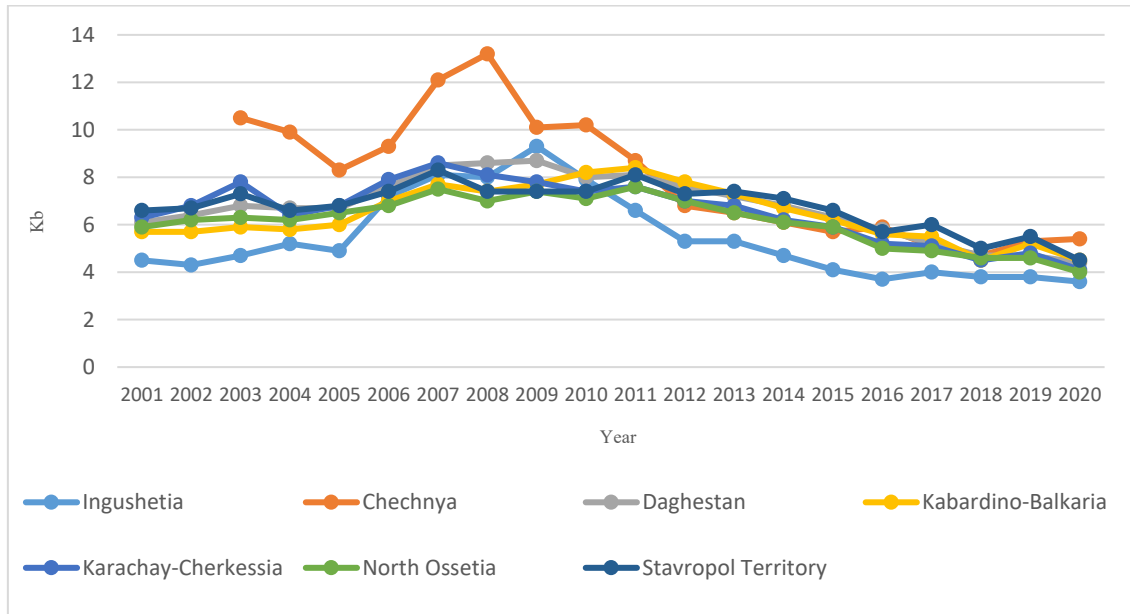


Figure 1. Marriage rates in NCFD regions

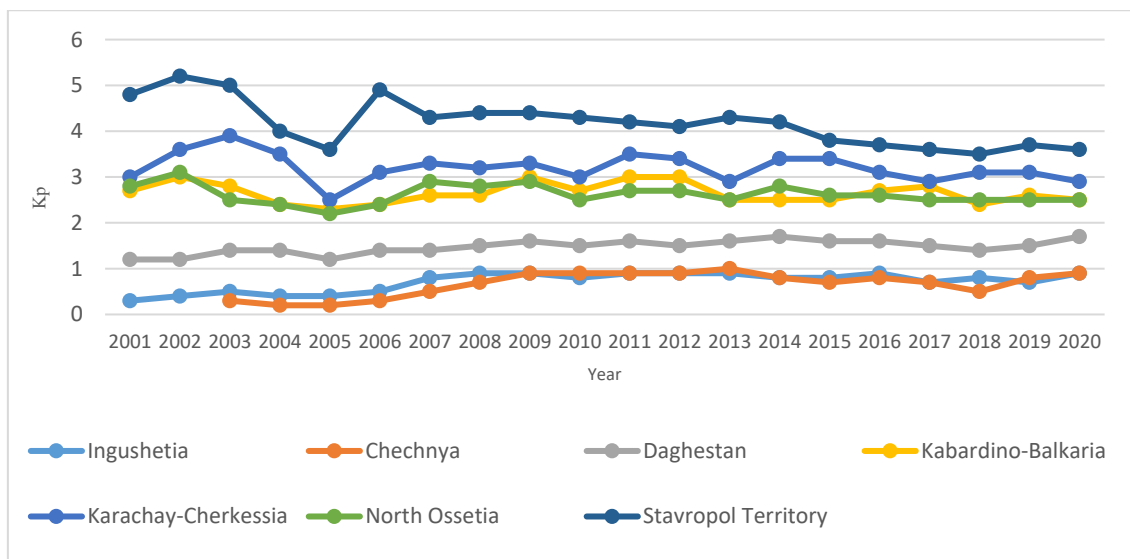


Figure 2. Divorce rates in NCFD regions

The difference between the marriage rate and the divorce rate shown in Figure 03 is also of concern. The values for all regions show, in general, an increase until 2010–2011 which indicates a large difference in the rates, and, consequently, a high level of marriages. The decline has been taking place since 2011: the difference in the rates is getting smaller, that is, the number of marriages is decreasing but the number of divorces is continuing to grow. At that time, the majority of the population entering into marriage (in the North Caucasus, the most active age of marriage is 20–30 years), was the generation born in 1985–1990. The change of generations affected the demographic behavior.

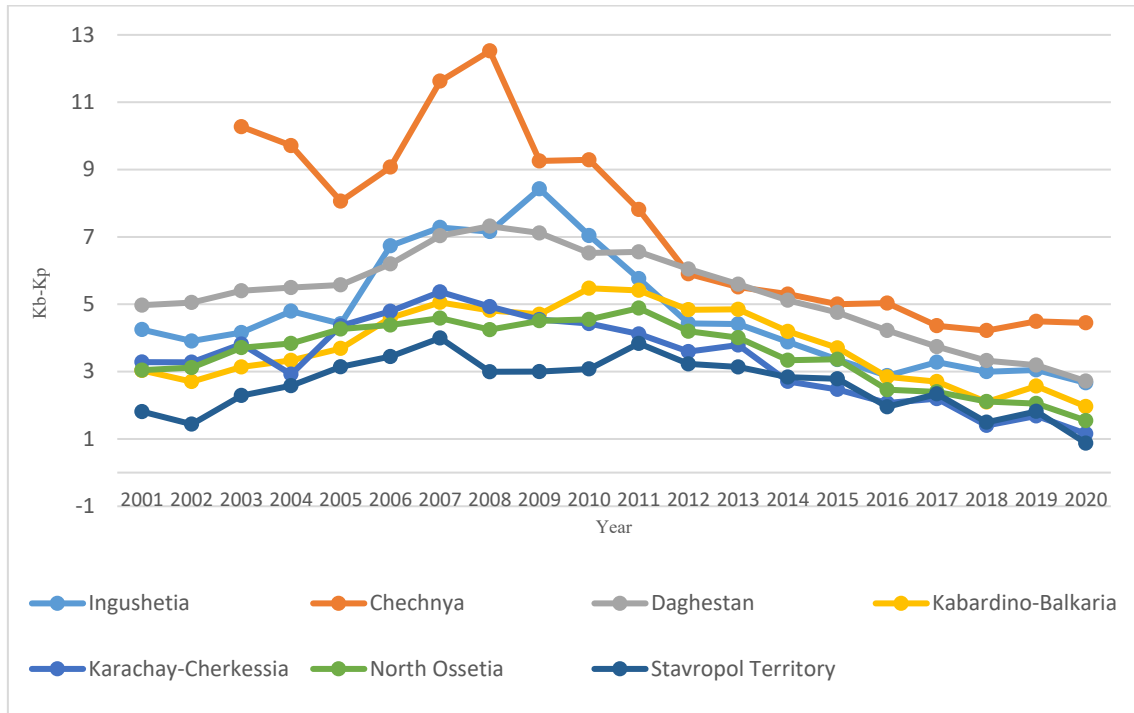


Figure 3. Difference between marriage and divorce rates (Kb-Kp)

Demographic behavior is often associated with socioeconomic situation and life quality. Cardiovascular diseases indicate nervous tension in society, as well as an increase in life expectancy and an improvement in its quality. The decline in mortality rates began in NCFD regions after 2010 when the terrorist situation in the Caucasus began to stabilize. The general standard of living and the availability of health care also improved after this time point. The time point of stabilization of the mortality situation coincides with the time point of the maximum marriage rate – in all NCFD regions in 2010–2011 (Fig. 04).

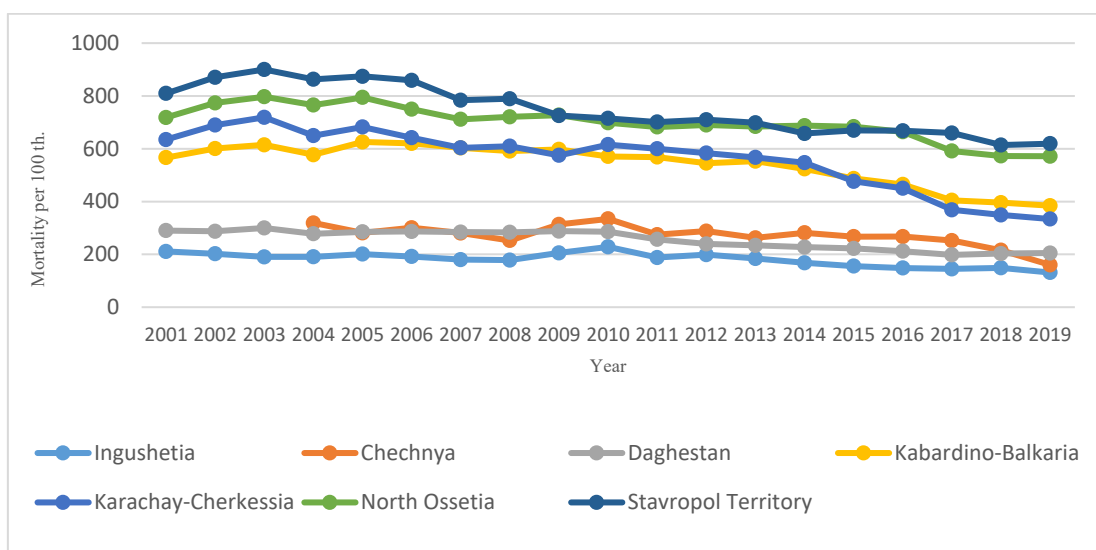


Figure 4. Statistics on mortality from cardiovascular disease per 100 thousand population

Consider the correlation between the difference between the marriage and divorce rates and mortality data from cardiovascular diseases. The data is divided into two parts: from 2001 to the maximum point of the difference between the rates (the maximum rate of marriages) and after this maximum point until 2019. Table 01 demonstrates that the correlation is weak in the first half of the twentieth year, and the data are similar, namely, the rate difference and the mortality from cardiovascular diseases decline in the second half. Therefore, the number of marriages does not enhance simultaneously with the improvement of life quality and the situation sedation but, on the contrary, is constantly reducing.

The demographic situation deterioration occurs simultaneously with life improvement and the comfortable situation in the region based on the mortality data from cardiovascular diseases. Cardiovascular mortality and marriage and divorce rates are not directly related. It can be assumed that such a high correlation indicates that expectations from life increase with an improvement in the life quality especially among young people who grew up in a fairly comfortable situation. Their demands on their future spouse, both personal and financial, are growing.

Table 1. Difference correlation between the divorce and the marriage rates and the mortality statistics from cardiovascular diseases

Region	From 2001 to the point of maximum difference between marriage and divorce rates	After the maximum difference point of the rates
Ingushetia	-0.36221	0.969095
Chechnya	-0.59234	0.743946
Daghestan	-0.35041	0.932688
Kabardino-Balkaria	-0.052	0.964326
Karachay-Cherkessia	-0.41007	0.916652
North Ossetia	-0.484	0.859351
Stavropol Territory	-0.49151	0.881438

7. Conclusion

Globalization has become one of the reasons for the change in the traditional family structure. New patterns of behavior have emerged in the North Caucasus from Europe and the East; they became available due to the Internet spread. This liberalized relations between people, especially young people who received alternatives to the ordinary methods of dating and marriage strategies. Young people are often not ready for marriage and responsibility for the family despite the emergence of greater independence and options in choosing a future spouse. Marriage anticipations are on the rise which leads to early divorces (Haralambos & Holborn, 2008). The expectations and requirements of marriage for men and women are various. The transformation of gender roles has led to the fact that a young, educated, and career-oriented woman has different requests for her future spouse. The older generation represented by parents often continues to insist on early marriage, especially in rural areas of the republics where the influence of archaic sentiments is strong which leads to early marriages ending in divorce and unwillingness to remarry.

Generally, the marriage age is increasing. The generation born in the 1990s and raised on the memories of parents about the complicated socio-economic situation of that time do not want to repeat parents' fate, therefore, they seek to find a job that brings a stable income and acquire their own housing first, and then start a family. However, the search for a stable job, and, consequently, marriage, is increasingly receding given the complicated economic situation in the North Caucasus Federal District, low wages and high unemployment. That is why, according to Figures 01 and 02, the divorce rate is growing slowly and remains at practically the same level while the rate of marriages has been declining after 2009–2010. It can be assumed that the situation will continue to develop due to the same scenario until young people get the opportunity to have a stable job which will make it possible to provide for their families.

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