

Gender Inequality in the Lived Experience of Social and Cultural Active Kurdish Women

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Abstract: This study has reviewed the lived experience of social and cultural active Kurdish women using qualitative methods and the Grounded Theory. The purpose of this study is identifying their attitude and practical responses to "gender inequality". Due to comparing two different aspects of these women's lived experience, at the end of the study, two paradigmatic models are obtained. The analysis of data and "theory model" provided by this study shows that some factors such as the "system of inequality", "stabilization of unequal system", "lack of human relations between men & women" and "lack of equity" led to the phenomenon of "gender inequality". Under this situation, the strategies which are used by women are "acceptance of inequality", "preferring other's interests and projects" and "need for trust & support". Consequences of these strategies for these women are "losing opportunities", "pressure roles", "physical and psychological harm," "regret, longing, disappointment" and "frustration". The other phenomenon, on the contrary is related to the lived experience of social and cultural active Kurdish women which is called "human equality". Conditions such as "opportunities for self-actualization," "experiencing freedom," "human relations between man & woman", "social activity" and "consciousness" are the consequences of this phenomenon. Strategies which are used by these women are "cultural, social, economic & political activities," "management of general and private sphere", "practical advocate of women's rights," "taking the opportunity", "Resistance identities imposed against Taboo breaking and teaching equity in the family. The outcomes of these strategies are "serving & kind heartedness", "hope, perseverance and follow-up", "model making", "gaining experience" and "gender, learning and equity". The more "Human Equity" desire among these women, the more we'll face, "taboo breaking", "teaching equity" in the Family", "gender, learning and equity" strategies. The outcomes of the research sites that along with the existing effect of system of inequality in the establishment of "gender segregations"; what's so ever is needed to be considered among Iranian women's experience, especially the Kurds, is the issue of "lack of human relations between two genders" and overall "lack of sense of human equity". Due to different cultural, social & political structure of developed countries, this issue is less taken in to account in Feminist's sociological theories.

Keywords: gender inequality, general & private sphere, The Grounded Theory approach, gender consciousness, background or opportunities to flourish, feminist dialectic, social and cultural active Kurdish women.

Introduction

The history of social participation of men and women is as old as the history of the existence of human on earth. The women have always experienced various social roles depending on their own society's situations. Iranian women have also been acting in their public environment along with men; though, the form and the quantity of their activities might have been different regarding the social and political situations.

Considering the promoting trend in the number of the female university students both inside and outside the country, it seems that women will have more participation in the political, cultural and economic situations either formally or informally. Therefore, the conflict between the traditional and modern approaches for the resolution of women's affairs should be wisely managed considering the women's and men's common affairs. (Abdullahi, 1387:46)

Women's social issues such as, gender discrimination, structural problems, inequality and segregation are among the important obstacles against their cultural and social participation. The activist Kurdish women as a part of the

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Iranian women have had similar experiences in the social and cultural fields; though, their situation bears special ethical and cultural features.

Studies such as "Kurdish woman and her status in the Kurdish society" and "Political participation of the Kurdish woman" (Ibrahim Al-Rabbati, 2004 & Tahir Al-Zibari, 2005) have also confirmed the presence of social and cultural active Kurdish women from the past to the present time. The degree of their activities has though been limited by factors such as ideas and unequal values, and their dependence on the private not public spheres. We can even see that the women's presence in the non-governmental organizations achieves the party's benefits not the women's public interests, (Al-Rabbati, 2004:299).

According to the feminist views the most important obstacle against the achievement of women and men's equality is sex discrimination or gender segregation. This phenomenon's features are mainly based on the social and political structures of the (developed) countries studied by the feminist socialists. The present study intends to investigate the lived experience of social and cultural Kurdish women using qualitative methods and the "Grounded theory".

Problem Statement

Women's social participation, as a social behavior or social interaction, is from one point of view considered the outcome of a group of interconnected situations of social and individual factors and the founder and strengthening element of the non-governmental organizations or NGOs. This is also considered as a major cause of development and the flourish of the NGOs in the society.

Although the Eastern women are participating in the social, cultural and political fields, they are still facing various barriers such as structural dilemmas, inequality and discrimination, gender segregation and lack of self-consciousness. Passing all these barriers need a reform in the women's social position and the other cultural and social factors which are related to them.

Regarding social participation, women are in a worse situation in comparison to the men. Only 20 percent of the women are working with the various independent social, political and cultural foundations and organizations. The number of the women who are members of such organizations is not more than 12 percent of the Iranian women's population. This low percentage is the result of historical, geographical, economic, political, social, cultural and ethnical elements, (Abdullahi, 1387:11).

The Kurdish women are experiencing similar situations to the ones the other Iranian women are experiencing, though with special cultural features from their own communities. Besides, the Kurdish women are suffering from many forms of oppression in their daily public and private lives. This has led the researcher to examine the social and cultural activist Kurdish women's experiences. She has taken notes and used her own observation of the documents along with interview to collect the needed data. The following are the questions which have been explored in the present study.

Research Questions

1. What is the view of the social and cultural Kurdish activist women about the gender inequality in their own society?
2. What are the reactions of the social and cultural Kurdish activist women toward gender inequality in their lived experiences?
3. What have these women as the people with the lowest common social identity appearing performed in order to decrease gender inequality and increase gender self-consciousness in the society?

Theoretical Framework

In this study, different theories such as "dialectic of identities" by Richards Jenkins, "social construct of reality" by Berger & Luckmann, "minimal social action" of the social feminists, "gender inequalities" of liberal feminism and "gender oppression" of social feminism have been taken into consideration.

The attitude of "agency and construct" has also been considered in the observation which includes "agent and culture" by Margaret Archer, "mental habitus and field" by Pierre Bourdieu, "feminist dialectic" by social feminists and finally the "structural reformation in the public sphere".

The research is in fact explorative and there has been no previous work on the Kurdish women's experiences about the gender inequality in their society. Therefore, the researcher has not followed a specific theory, though the above mentioned theories have been her guide from the beginning to the end of the study.

The gender identity of the women in Iran, specially the Kurdish women is formed under the influence of concepts and definitions which are reproduced by cultural and social norms of the society. Therefore, gender identity would include a group of masculine and feminine features which lead Kurdish women to follow the predetermined roles imposed by the society. The theory of the dialectic of identities presented by Jenkins demonstrates a model for identifying a sole and dialectic identity which has got two dimensions. One is internal or individual identity and the other is external or social identity. Identities are formed in social and cultural contexts and in a cooperative process. Jenkins views mass identity as an aspect of social identity which is actually physical such as sex, race and class. According to Jenkins, the formation of the personal identity and its relative stabilization occur in the primary socialization. He also believes that gender is one of the first identities which is formed in the beginning of life and will not alter easily in the rest of life, (Jenkins, 1381:107). According to this view the natural identities cover the roles and status of which the roles are objective and the status are abstract. Women can have feminine roles such as housekeeping, and feminine positions like heavenly position of motherhood. Jenkins emphasizes that only the people with access to strong cultural and economic sources can resist against the imposed classes and identities of the society. The above is true for the women too. Generally, the women who benefit from cultural sources (social support) and economical sources (economical capital) are more able to stand against the imposed roles of the society.

"The process of the daily construct of reality" is a part of the theory of "social construct of reality" presented by Berger and Luckmann. To them individuals intend to conceive the daily life as a managed reality. In the operator's view social reality, is independent of the conception of the reality. Language plays a great role in leading the individuals to actualization. This is because language is constantly equipping them with indispensable exactness and establishes a kind of discipline based on which daily life becomes meaningful, (Ritzer, 1388:36).

The majority of the women view their social environment as a phenomenon which is independent of their conception of that phenomenon. This is strengthened by language as social and cultural medium. The more do the Kurdish women define themselves according to the criteria given by the Kurdish culture and society, the less will they be able to realize their potentialities. This concept has been referred to by the feminist sociological theories at its minimalistic levels; as the internalization of the social norms. The more successful a woman is at understanding the generalized "other" dictated to her by the society, the more she will demolish the self-esteem and self-awareness facilities which she may have, (Ritzer, 1388:509). This is also true for the Kurdish women.

Of the other concepts mentioned in the above theory we can refer to the following. "Understanding and playing the roles of the other"; the "other" for the women here is the "men". "The identity of self as a social subject", the women are mainly acting for the balance and benefit of the others and they more intend to compromise than to conquer the social positions. "The daily life awareness", the women's awareness is a two-piece awareness. It means that the women experience things which are an edge line between their personal experience and a set of fixed samples in the stored social knowledge. Besides, the theory of "gender inequality" presented by the liberal feminism emphasizes that women are provided with less financial sources, lower social status and less power and self-actualization opportunities. Gender discrimination is a major feature of any system which is based on gender inequality. This kind of system has been constructed based on the gender division of jobs and includes two public and private spheres, (housekeeping for the women and working out of the house for men). Social feminists with the affiliation of hegemony confirm the system of control by presenting "gender injustice". This system is based on social class, sex, race, nationality, age, and a nation's position in the global ranking. "Patriarchy" is also a model of gender injustice in this system. The analytical program of the social feminists is historical materialism. They strongly believe in the role of the economic situations of the human life in forming their experience, personality and social organizing, (Ritzer, 1388:474-494). The Kurdish women have got a special experience of their individual and social life due to different reasons such as economic situation, patriarchy, social class system, gender, race, and age.

The next section of the theories follows a process of agency and construct. This issue interested the researcher for a couple of reasons: First, the significance of human factor (women in this case), and the effect of cultural and social structure on the formation of social actions. Moreover; the study of these two concepts in the social interaction field was of importance.

Margaret Archer's theory of "agency and culture" emphasizes the development of form in the cultural field, (Ritzer, 1385:668). According to this theory the cultural state of the Kurdish society influences the social interaction of the

Kurdish women. This social interaction will also lead to the structure completion. The women themselves strengthen the effects of cultural system through following the social and cultural norms. They also stand against these factors through deconstruction. This is called natural bilateral relation between system and human agency.

Pierre Bourdieu presented the dialectic of objective structures and mental phenomena by the help of the theory of "habitus and field". He defines habitus as mental or cognitive structures by which humans deal with the social world, (ibid.).

Habitus or mental structures are a set of mental designs or schema by which Kurdish women understand, analyze and evaluate their social world. He also defines "field" as a network of relations among the objective positions inside the field. These relations are independent of individual awareness and will power. Field is similar to a competitive market in which economic, cultural, social and symbolic capitals are determined by the quantity and relative importance of their capitals. This capital lets the individual observe and influence her own and the others' destiny. This concept was examined in the present study as "the context or opportunities of self-actualization". Bourdieu has also discussed "symbolic cruelty". It is a mild form of cruelty made by the company of the social agent herself indirectly through cultural mechanisms and cruelty against women. This includes "women's cruelty against women" and "women's cruelty against activist women" which are both different images of "symbolic cruelty".

Feminist dialectic which has been presented by the feminist sociologists emphasizes that women are structurally the followers of men. In other words, the women do not view themselves equal to the men and the society does not put them in the same position as it does the men. Women's daily activities are also considered insignificant and their experiences are treated as inappreciable, (Ritzer, 1388: 500). As an example, although, the position of motherhood is considered so high and unattainable and housekeeping and doing the chore are viewed so mean and cheap, the activist Kurdish women view these concepts as the factors of the reproduction and the enhancement of the unequal system. The individuals are influencing and dependant on some of the rules, norms, and regulations in the social and private spheres of their own lives. The more the government and the society merged, the private sphere's lost its own features gradually, (Muhammadi, 1388: 247). Habermas studied the "structural transformation of the public sphere"; however, we can see that the separation of the human life spheres into private and public or private woman and public man in the lived experience of the activist Kurdish woman.

Research Method

The process of "grounded theory" is appropriate for a kind of social research which concerns human interaction. Therefore, the present study has been performed qualitatively and based on the grounded theory. Considering the topic of the research, the research questions and the researcher's own choice, a qualitative research method was opted for. The method or approach of a research is a major question in the qualitative researches. The viewpoint and the interaction of the social activist Kurdish women toward the gender inequality in their society have not yet been explored sociologically. Therefore, the present explorative study intends to examine the different aspects of the topic based on the grounded theory which is considered to be the best approach.

In this study, the researcher focused primarily on the general exploration of the lived experience of the activist social and cultural Kurdish women, then during the process of the research these women's views about the gender inequality in their society as one of the deepest and the most fundamental lived experience was taken into account. Besides, these women's practical interactions toward this inequality were examined. Therefore, the main research question is the view and interaction of the social and cultural activist Kurdish women to the gender inequality in their society. Along with the main question, another question was proposed which intended to study what these women have been doing to decrease the degree of gender inequality in their society.

In the present study Semi-structured interview was applied and the interview time was divided into two major sections. In the first question the interviewee was required to introduce herself and give a comprehensive narration of her life. The interviewee was free to choose her way of narration and the interviewer did not interfere in her speaking. In the second question the interviewee was asked to explain her own experience about her social participation and cultural-social activities. The interviewer did not interfere in this section also and she returned the interview to its course in case the interviewee diverted the course of the interview. All the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed with the permission of the participants. Each interview lasted from one to two hours which was totally about fifteen hours.

First the books and documents related to the social and cultural participation of the Kurdish women were explored. During the research "Islamic Jma'a of Da'wa Wal-islah of Iran" and "the society of the Kurds who live in Tehran"

as two important and active Kurdish centers were identified by the researcher. The researcher attended their meetings and carefully studied their statutes and manifestos. She also studied their cultural products such as films, journals, and their other documents. Above all, any kind of cultural products of the participants were studied. Finally after the data were collected they were described and analyzed based on the grounded theory.

First the audio tapes were transcribed the sentences were categorized according to the four questions which had later been shortened into two main questions. The outcome was about 2000 pieces of data in the form of sentences which were all related to the questions. These sentences were analyzed line by line and sentence by sentence based on grounded theory.

Open coding is a process of breaking, comparing, conceptualizing or categorizing data. For example, the concept of "low importance of women's work and activities" was taken from the following three sentences. "The community looks down on the women's work and ignores it". "People did not accentuate women's education". In order to reach the statements, first the homogeneous concepts were put together and then they were given suitable titles. For example, the above mentioned concept along with two others such as, "ideologues" and "making invisible" formed the statement "stratified concepts". At the end of open coding where the main concepts and statement were finalized, 444 of the concepts were views about gender inequality and 502 concepts were practical reactions to gender inequality. There were totally 79 major categories, 37 of which were related to the first research question and 42 were related to the second research question. The next stage was pivot coding through which the researcher combined the previous categories in order to build paradigmatic models and attained 46 categories. The researcher selected "gender segregation" as the main category for the first research question and "human equality seeking" for the second research question. Paradigmatic models were designed at this stage and regarding different aspects of the lived experience of the women in this study and the variety of the questions two major models were finally designed. At the last stage, the narration of each of the two phenomena was written using selective coding which resulted in two major models, and these two models were accordingly summarized into one general narration. This final narration was a description of the whole story and covered the two phenomena.

The Participants

Unlike quantitative researches in which the randomly selected cases are considered to be representative of the whole community, the samples in a qualitative research are selected purposefully. In this sort of research the researcher makes the sample selection based on different features such as environment, participants, the events and the best time for the participants to be best able to provide the research with the necessary information, (Azkia & Imani, 1390:60).

In the present study theoretical and purposive sampling methods were used. At first, based on the research questions the cultural and social activist women in Tehran were identified. Three participants were interviewed and then after the primary coding and the data analysis, the basic concepts and statements were obtained.

Considering the primary statements, the next samples were selected through theoretical sampling method and the participants were interviewed. The researcher could find out the core statements after the ninth interview; however, she performed the tenth interview to achieve theoretical validity. Due to the theoretical saturation the interview was ended. The cultural and social centers of the Kurds residing in Tehran were identified at first and then contacted. These centers were good sources of information about the samples of the present study.

The interview was, in most of the cases, performed in the participant's work place. Having performed the first three interviews and their primary coding, the researcher decided to identify other samples in West Azerbaijan province. She interviewed five people there. Of the three people who were interviewed in Tehran, three were originally from Mahabad, a city in West Azerbaijan, and one was from Marivan, a city in Kurdistan province. All the three participants had chosen to live in Tehran after their marriage. Of the next five interviews performed in West Azerbaijan, four people were from Mahabad and resided there, and one was from Oshnavieh but resided in Bukan, a city in West Azerbaijan. The last two interviews were done in Tehran. One of these people was from Marivan, but she had lived most of her life in Tehran. The second person had lived her childhood and adolescence in Sanandaj and Mahabad. The women participating in this study were all somehow members of different non-governmental organizations such as charities, civil-social organizations, environmental educational centers, and political parties and groups. They were active in various social, cultural and political fields. Besides, most of them were professionally distinctive. The majority of these women were from an average social class and at an average economic situation. Except one of them who was economically at a high level.

Table (1): The features of the participants

Age	Marital status	Number of children	Education
59	Married	2	High school graduate
50	Married	2	2 nd grade high school
55	Married	3	First grade high school
57	Married	3	High school graduate
61	Married	3	First grade high school
48	Married	2	BA
25	Single	0	BA
45	Married	2	MA
29	Married	0	BA
26	Married	0	MA

Due to the variety in the research questions, two different dimensions of the socially and culturally activist Kurdish women were explored. For this reason, a paradigmatic model centered on the "gender segregation" was achieved in response to the first and second questions and a different paradigmatic model for the third question on the "human equality seeking" was obtained.

Table (2): The chronological description of the two models in the life of the social and cultural Kurdish activist women

Causative conditions	Inequality system or the domination of the inequality system (culture, law, jurisprudence, mothers, women, (symbolic cruelty and women against activist women)
Phenomenon	Gender segregation and inequality system
Meddling Conditions	The absence of father in the process of children's bringing up Being in small towns The absence of education for the two genders The lack of opportunities of self-actualization
Field	The Kurdish regions in Iran (birth years from 1950 to 1985) Degree of intensity Periods
Strategies	The lack of self-awareness and the acceptance of inequality The acceptance of inequality as a systematic reality The acceptance of the stratifies concepts The acceptance and enhancement of the generalized other) The balance of the others' benefits and plans Trust seeking Support seeking
Outcomes	Loosing opportunities The pressure of the roles on women Physical and spiritual harms Sorrow Regret and repentance Disappointedness

The Phenomenon of "Gender Segregation"

The phenomenon of "gender segregation" was taken into consideration and referred to directly and indirectly by the interviewees. The participants noticed the concept of "gender segregation" with the meaning of the division of most of the public and private spheres into feminine and masculine. In other words, the majority of the life affairs are either feminine or masculine and there are two different worlds.

Causative Conditions

Inequality system or the domination which covers all the obstacles, limitations, discriminations and inequality prevail in both social and family life. A part of the interviewees' ideas is presented in this section. "Kurdish families are patriarch.", "women are not valued much in these families." and "unlimited freedom for boys and limitations for the girls".

Stabilizing or the reproduction of the inequality includes traditions, law, religious jurisprudence, language, women and mothers. These factors are effective in stabilizing and reproducing inequality against women. To name a group of inequality customs we can refer to the following: cultural limitations in the selection of the form of social presence, the low importance of the girls' education, prejudice as an obstacle against continuing education, inside-relatives marriages, forced marriages, low-age marriages, the low significance of the women's income, the forbiddance of women's presence outside without the presence of a man, considering boys' and girls' relations inappropriate even after they are engaged. Here are some examples of unequal customs.

Examples: "the last time when my sister's husband had beaten my sister her face had turned completely red and she said she couldn't return to her own house, my brother told her she should tolerate it because she had a child." "My cousins stated that it was meaningless when a girl goes away and lives in a different city for studying." "They were shocked to hear that a girl gets up early to go maintaining." "One of the managers advised me to get married and start my own family and forget about going climbing." Law is the second factor in establishing inequality. "After my father's death the guardianship of the family was given to my step brother. He did anything to gain the possession of the family's properties while my mother couldn't possess anything." "My grandmother's husband had divorced her because he had sworn divorce in the market. He had also married a new wife without my grandmother's permission or even informing her. He brought the new wife to my grandmother's house and made her marry another man. My grandmother didn't even have the right to ask him why he did that (she had a child)." "The present law separates the couples hoping that one of them gets tired of the situation and they keep their family." Another factor of the reproduction is jurisprudence. Since our national law and religious jurisprudence are both based on Islam the legal and religious problems coincide in most cases. For example, custody, inheritance, blood money are legal problem for which religion should find a solution for. Religion scholars should find solutions for the present life problems. Language is another factor of stabilization or reproduction inequality system. Language includes both the inequality terms and labels which are utilized in an unequal society. For example, when a man is called "hen pecked" it means that he has lost his masculine personality and has been exploited. "Everybody told me that I was a widow and I shouldn't leave the house." I heard so many teases, and abuses. Where is your sweep? Are you having a good time? And things like these." "In our region women are called 'the week' and people really believe that women are week."

The women themselves were taken into account as a factor affecting the reproduction of inequality in this study. This category was attained out of the interviewees' statements and it was titled as symbolic cruelty based on the theory of "habitus and field" presented by Bourdieu. For example, "women are to be blamed themselves because they don't believe in their own abilities." "I told my sister that she was guilty because she didn't say anything when her husband took her to the clergy to divorce her. My sister said that her husband had mental problem and thought that she had to tolerate him. The clergy told my sister to take it easy and keep on living with her husband. ", "women have to leave the kitchen and stop spending their time cooking.", "it was my own fault, I was very afraid of the people's words.", "in that time I wrongly thought that the salary which I could earn as a college graduate was not worthy enough."

We ourselves have believed that woman is a second class citizen that is why we cannot do anything.

The next section of the research which was very emphasized by the participants was "the women's position against other activist women". For example, "women don't care as much for my ideas as the men do." Women cannot stand another woman's success". They are so jealous. The "mothers" are also referred to by the interviewees. They said that "mothers advised us to wait on the men before the girls or women eat anything, men should receive the food first". Since the boy who proposed to marry me was my aunt's son I was not allowed to reject his proposal". "There was a student in our school who was badly insulted by her mother in front of all the other students". "My mother always warned me not to play with the boys when I was a child".

Another factor of the causative conditions for the phenomenon of "gender segregation" is the "stratified concepts". This title has been taken from the "dialectic theory" presented by the feminist sociologists. According to this theory the women's daily operations occur in a field of ignoring, ideologies, and making invisible their activities and their experiences.

The interviewees referred to concepts such as, "motherhood is a noble position which inclusively belongs to women". Therefore they do not need to leave the house. They can bring up their children well and if they intend to help the family economically they can do it by doing small things like decorating their dresses and save the money to spend on the family affairs". "Even some of the educated men do not believe in any active roles for their wives or any other women". "Even my friends advise me to stay at home, do the chore and take care of my children and my husband". People tell me "then what?! You will finally have to get married".

Another point mentioned by the participants was the "lack of human relations between the two genders". This prevails in different layers of women's lives, though it has different sources. Some women have experienced this in their marriage life. The considerable point; however, is that this problem which is a major cause of gender segregation basically existed in the social structure.

The following is a part of the interviewees' statements. "We could not even stay alone with our cousins in our own house". They said, "You should not stay alone with men". "Although I have not had any limitations, I was not allowed to stay alone with men". "My husband and I usually disagreed about women's working among men".

"The lack of human view and equality" was a relatively complicated and hidden category. This was directly mentioned by a few of the participants and indirectly mentioned by most of them. One of the participants objected to the separation of the spheres to masculine and feminine directly and observed the cause in the lack of human view and equality. This triggered the idea in the mind of the researcher and led her to look for that in the other interviews too. Here are some of the inferences made by the other participants. "Humanity is higher than party, religion, political group, nationality, geography, and so on. Nothing is higher than human.", "we need a internal reformation, we should change the social condition of our children and our thinking, otherwise these problem will arise again from our inside.", "these things are important for my family, but the only important thing for me in humanity, it is one of my wishes that the humans see each other just as humans."

Background

The background of the research is the West Azerbaijan and Kurdistan which are two provinces in the West of Iran most of whose populations are Kurds. Mahabad and Oshnavieh are located in West Azerbaijan and Marivan and Sanandaj are cities of Kurdistan Province. The total number of the interviewees was ten, five of whom are still residing in the Kurdish regions and the next five moved to Tehran after they got married. All the interviewees referred to the phenomenon of "gender segregation" in their speaking, though the density and degree of the phenomenon in their views were different concerning the other three factors. The women who had these three factors had the highest degree of influence from "gender segregation" and the degree was different in different periods of their lives. The three factors are "the lack of human relation between the two genders", "the lack of humanitarian views and equality seeking" and "the lack of background and opportunities of self-actualization". The concept of "period" here implies the historical aspect of the issue. This means that the nearer we get to the present time; this intensity of the issue dwindles. However, it is still the most significant phenomenon in the lived experience of the participants of the present study.

The Meddling Conditions

The category of "the absence of father in the process of kids' training" was referred to by the interviewees. Some of them stated the issue to demonstrate their protest to the old procedures of kids' bring-up in the families and some others directly mentioned it as an indispensable factor for the equality and marriage life. Some of these statements are as follow: "my father was too busy with his job to talk with us about our problems" and "men should also express their feelings and share everything with the wife rather than just work outside".

The second category was "small town" which was viewed by the participants from different aspects. This category was considered from social, cultural and facilities views. For example some said "our town was small and people's culture was just limited", or "when I went the small towns and talked to the women about these issues they just made fun. These issues are just taken into account in Tehran because it is a big city". "Our city was small and we did not have any facilities" "in our region (Kurdistan) people express their private feeling so easily but they don't do it in Tehran".

The next point mentioned by the participants was "lack of education for the two genders". A group of the participants believed that the men should be educated along with the women. By education they meant the men should be taught about equality in the inside-family relations especially between men and women. Another group emphasized educating the kids about the equality relations among the family members. For example "men should

be aware that women are human too, and they have rights, ideas and wishes. It is not enough just to educate women; men need to be educated too".

The next effective category was "lack of opportunity for self-actualization". This title was taken from the theory of "habitus and field" presented by Bourdieu and the "gender inequality" by the liberal feminists. The lack of "field" or "self-actualization opportunities" was one of the meddling conditions in "gender segregation" and inequality. For example "after I finished high school I had to get married because I was not allowed to go to university in another city and we didn't have any universities in our own city", "although I was interested in continuing my education, I couldn't do it because I had my kids and I was in charge of keeping the house", "I was the only daughter of the family", "my husband didn't let me work, though my major was a good one and I was interested".

"Cruelty" is another factor which affects "gender segregation and inequality" and increases it. Types of cruelty could be; political pressure and cruelty, physical cruelty, mental, spiritual and street cruelty. For example "if my brother found out I had left the house he would kill me, he even hit me once with a hammer", "he cursed and I told him that he would finally kill me", "unfortunately my husband had got so black-hearted that he never let me out, I even didn't know how to buy bread", "I was imprisoned twice, the second time my son was only eleven months old, he started to walk in prison", "I have been imprisoned three times and interrogated a hundred times".

Another meddling factor was "weakness or lack of security". This includes general social security or job security. For example, "it was winter and I was waiting for a taxi, I was pregnant. The driver was old, I got on, and then I saw that he was showing interest in me. I threatened him and forced him to stop and I got off", "I cried a lot, my loneliness, addicted drivers, I was under big stress", "unfortunately, you can see hypocrisy in the sport places", "my program won the third place all over Iran, some didn't like me to work here and said that my family was anti-revolutionists and I lost my good job".

Strategies

"The lack of "self-consciousness" as a basic and decisive factor is the result of "gender segregation and inequality". For example, "I was ready to do anything in my father's house, I never objected to anything", "as he had let me have my job, I thought it was the summit of enjoyment", "I was not mature in that time, if I was, I would agree to marry him only under special conditions".

The next strategy which is very immense and various and covers different parts of women's lives is "inequality acceptance". This "acceptance" has been taken into account from three viewpoints. The points were all explored based on the interviewees' statements. 1) inequality acceptance as an organized fact: "after I got married I thought that I should take care of the men as we used to do in our father's house", "I got married when I was a first-grade high school girl, because they all thought that girls should get married as soon as possible and I had plenty of proposals, the other two sisters did the same thing". 2) The acceptance of stratified concepts: "it is true that women should be highly educated but it doesn't mean that they should necessarily be free to leave the house". 3) The acceptance and enhancement of the generalized other: the interviewees stated this point as: "I had to iron 15 or 16 shirts at one time or I had to cook different types of foods.", "I have been married about 47 years but I have never missed to cook for lunch, everything has always been on time".

The next strategy is the "lack of objection" which occurs most of the time along with "lack of self-awareness". In spite of the existence of awareness in some cases the women inevitably accept the inequality without any protest due to the unequal situations or visible and invisible cruelty in the family. The title of "inability to protest or acceptance of inequality" was selected for the lack of protest. The second example is: "I didn't object to anything so that I was not prohibited from going to work.", "even now, if I get home late from work and my husband gets angry I would give in and say that he is right." "The women who have jobs may easily accept abjection because of their social reputation or because they think divorce destroys this reputation."

The next category is "the balance of benefits and the others' projects". This has been taken from the theories of "feminist sociology". Regarding the present study, this category was performed through "giving priority to the others' wishes and benefits", "performing various hard roles", sacrificing one's own wishes", "getting along with adverse situations", "self-sacrificing", "quitting education", and finally "marriage". The examples are: "although I loved studying and social activities I had to stay at home because my husband was a university student and he worked at the same time. We also had two kids and we usually had guests."

"Need of trust" was another category whose title was taken from a study performed by Hossein Imani Jajermi. "Need of trust" was followed in this research alongside with "the balance of others' benefits and projects" and

"fear". We can even state that these three categories were intermixed so much that it was not easy to separate them, and the participants' strategies were eventually a complicated mix of all of them. For example, "all of a sudden I saw myself in front of a suitor that I could not reject. He was my cousin, my father loved him, and my mother had a good impression of his sister. I was afraid of people's words, I thought if I didn't marry him I couldn't keep my relation with my aunt, I thought my rejection would make a disaster therefore I agreed".

"Need of support" was also a category that the interviewees referred to. "It was the national team camp, I went to the head of the physical education organization to request help and support for the commuting. I asked for the fare to Tehran. We had to pay the tuition ourselves because we were low age girls". The significant point in this study is the adjacency and the complexity of "fear" with the other two categories of "trust seeking" and "support seeking". "Fear" as a category which had a wide presence in the lives of the participants, lead to "trust seeking" or "support seeking" more or less. For example, after what happened to me in the taxi, my husband was home when I arrived, I didn't know whether to tell him or not. I thought he might be skeptical of me! The man told me he had observed me for a long time. What could I do? What would happen?! I finally decided to let my husband know".

The Outcomes

Considering the strategies mentioned about the phenomenon of "gender segregation" the direct and indirect outcomes of the lived experiences of these women were observed in this study. The direct outcomes are:

- 1) Missing the opportunities such as education, job, and some other things.
- 2) Roles pressure on women: due to different strategies in front of "gender segregation", the women took different roles such as; girlhood, spouse, motherhood, housekeeping, having jobs, sports women, artist, social and cultural activists. These roles produced other types of pressures on women which will be discussed in the indirect outcomes section.
- 3) Physical and mental harm: the direct outcomes of the mentioned strategies were based on the lived experiences of the women. These harms were the direct outcomes of the "roles pressures" and in some cases such as "inequality and cruelty acceptance" we could observe mental harms.

The "indirect outcomes" are the results of the "direct" outcomes which include the following:

- 1) sorrow; expressing sorrow about the inequality and the lack of women's struggling against it, and also lack of education and proper opportunities for equality actualization. This sorrow was first about their personal life and then about the whole society.
- 2) Regret and repentance: this was the result of "missing opportunities", and the "mental and physical harms" which were due to the "roles pressure". It can also be stated that "regret and repentance" was more the outcome of "lack of self-consciousness" and "inequality acceptance" and the participants claimed that "If I was as mature as I am now, I would not do what I did or I resisted".
- 3) Disappointment and frustration: the person suffered from frustration due to missing the opportunities. This problem occurred both in the private and public spheres. In the private sphere we can refer to "marriage" and "education" and in the public sphere we can mention "not achieving social, economic and cultural position" which was expected by the person. "I personally came to the conclusion that I shouldn't have disclosed that event, what would have happened if I hadn't revealed that?! Nothing would have happened". "Everybody wants to keep you from progressing, I never improved, believe me, it is not just what I say, others know that too, I expected to achieve much more!" "I regret, because I was more talented, I will always be regretful, I couldn't accomplish anything inside that prejudice".

The explanation of the second model with the focus on "human equality seeking" is presented here.

Causative conditions		Field
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field or opportunities for self-actualizations • Freedom experience • Human relation of the two genders • Self-awareness 	<p>The phenomenon of human equality seeking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kurdish regions in Iran • (People born from 1329 to 1365) • Degree density • Periods
Social presence and activities	Strategies	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meddling conditions • Interest in nature, feminine identity, feeling the nature of life • Having a man support • Realism • Ethnic identity, freedom and equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural, social, economic and political activities • The management of the public and private field • Practical support of the women rights • Making use of the opportunities • Resistance against imposed identities • (ignoring the stratified concepts) • Breaking the taboo • Teaching equality in the family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service and benevolence • Hopefulness, perseverance, consistency • Modeling • Lesson taking • Gender, learning and equality

The Need for Equality

The phenomenon of "equality seeking" was selected as the central phenomenon for the present study's second model. The reason for this selection was the direct and indirect emphasis made by the participants. This title was taken from the interviewees' statements who emphasized it directly. This phenomenon, which includes both the views and the performance of the interviewees, covers different concepts such as; "justice", "freedom seeking", "equality seeking", "human and moral performance". Some of the participants' statements are mentioned here to give more explanation: "I have told my kids to tell me the truth whatever they do. I never tell lies and never teach lies to my kids.", "if you make a mistake you should accept your mistakes and appreciate your husband's help (don't call him henpecked).", "I write about humans. Humans' affairs are the same for men and women, women's problems are social problems before they are womanly.", "if I believe in equality, I should care for some other matters, otherwise it would be a kind of cruelty to men.", "you can achieve freedom through art and express your words, I wish to be a free and active woman."

Causative Conditions

The first factor of the causative conditions is "the field or opportunities of self-actualizations" which includes the following: "social and cultural background of the family", "the availability of education", "the support and trust of the family", "social relations", "the husband's support and trust", "the husband's encouragement and company", "mother as a source of identity", "father as a provider of equality", "the availability of economical facilities", and "the possibility of social presence".

"The field or opportunities of self-actualization" is the first condition for the realization of "human equality seeking". However; all the participants did not have all the above-mentioned factors equally. For example one participant had a better condition before marriage in her father's home while the other had a better situation in her husband's house than in his father's. All in all, the existence of "self-actualization's opportunities" is significant in the emergence of "human equality seeking". Here are some cases: "luckily I didn't have any problems about studying, they told me to study.", "My parents gave me a lot of freedom and they always expected me to be the top, my father respected women a lot, he even had decided my share of inheritance and my mother's to be equal to my brother's". "we needed about three million tomans for our camping which was sponsored by the city of

Mahabad, Avraz sports club and my family.", "Our cultural atmosphere had a great positive effect on our personalities, my uncles' rooms were full of books, they would always encouraged us and they themselves were educated in that time." "My mother was a source of poem and lyrics and was famous for her sense of humor and sweet words. She always used to say that religion was more extensive than what people thought; my mother, my cultural environment and my own studies helped me to have my present views.", "One of the persons who helped me to participate in the social activities and take the position of defending the women's rights was my husband".

The second factor of the causative conditions is "freedom experience". This does not merely include the social participation freedom, but it is freedom and the right of choice in different stages of life with different degrees. Although this phenomenon was relative and could happen to different participants before or after their marriage, it was an effective factor which could lead to "self-discovery and self-consciousness" alongside with the other factors and it could eventually lead the person to "human equality seeking". Examples: "My family had a great effect on breaking taboos, my father never discriminated among us about going out of the house, or about our dressing styles.", "I was very relaxed with my parents, we were good friends, they gave me a lot of freedom.", "I used to go to a special school for the talented; my father let me free, he presented his suggestions but let me make my own decisions and supported me.", "I don't have any problems with my social presence in my marriage life."

The third factor is "human relations of the two genders". This is to some extent "opportunities for self-actualization", however, it was considered as an independent factor due to its significance and its direct effect on the lived experience of the women and the establishment of "human equality seeking". This relation can be distinguished into two main states, before and after the marriage. This starts with friendly relation with father, uncles, and other siblings, and covers the other general human relations with opposite sexes in the society. Regarding this kind of relation the participants had different experiences since some had this opportunity before their marriage and some after their marriage. However, the important point is the establishment of this relation and having human views to the relation between the two sexes. Examples: "we used to go climbing with my father and my uncles; I am very close to one of my uncles, I could deal with the issue of boys and girls relation better in the university." "When I was traveling abroad to publish one of my books the governor called me and told me that he had observed humanitarian views in my works, he assured me that he would support me and this was how our friendship started."

The fourth factor of causative conditions for "human equality seeking" is "self-consciousness". According to the participants' statements "self-consciousness" can be viewed in two forms. The first form is the women's consciousness about their individual abilities as a human or their consciousness about individual identity. The second form is the women's social presence, the flourish of their talents and utilizing these talents in social life or their awareness of the social life. Examples: "gradually I found out that my feeling was more than mere interest and I followed the courses more seriously.", " I thought that I had to enter the society and I saw my abilities more than just taking care of the kitchen's affairs.", " I was fond of painting and calligraphy, I used to write for the school journal and manage the school literary club."

The last factor of the causative conditions is "social presence and activities". It includes two categories of "motivation and interest in social presence" and "social presence and activities". To achieve "social identity" as an introduction to "human equality seeking", "social presence and activities" is essential. Examples; "I am interested in social activities such as various celebrations in the Kurdish community and attending different national and foreign exhibitions." "I have done a lot of activities both in my private and social life."

Background

The background for this phenomenon is the same as the one mentioned before. The phenomenon of "human equality seeking" was pointed out by all the participants though its density and degree was different considering the other four factors. These four factors are; "self-actualization opportunities", "self-consciousness", "human relations of the two genders", and "interest in nature, feminine identity, and touching the life facts". The women with these factors enjoyed the highest degree of "human equality seeking" though this degree differed due to their lived experience and in different periods of their lives. There was not a direct relation between the degree of this factor and the age; it was mainly based on their experience in different stages of their lives. Two of the women who were the youngest among ten participants had the highest degree of "human equality seeking". The women had all experienced these four factors in different stages of their lives.

Meddling Conditions

"Interest in nature, feminine identity and feeling the life facts" is the first factor of the meddling conditions in the phenomenon of "human equality seeking". This can be classified under three categories; "interest and having connection with nature", "interest in feminine identity" and "experiencing and feeling the facts of life". "Interest in feminine identity" is a kind of gender self-consciousness and being aware of feminine abilities along with their utilizing for the achievement of "human equality seeking". To achieve "human equality seeking" the present factor along with the others are needed. "I love nature and silence, I feel that woman has got such a power, I love these abilities and power.", "climbing gave me a greater thing, it gave me a new life, it gave me the thing which anybody needs to make a change, the thing which is needed for self-consciousness, you can find human relation in the mountain, you can find empathy, and sincerity which any friendship needs. "My primary school period was full of experiences which I had achieved myself.", "I had to experience those problems."

The next factor is "having a man support", which was mentioned by all the participants. Some had this support before marriage, some after marriage and some others in both stages. Example: "my brother-in-law was a nice man, he was my major encouragement, and my brother was too.", "I had very good trainers, I practiced every day, and the boys of the group tried hard."

The third factor is "realism". This could be about different life issues in any time, and in any situation. It can also be about various aspects of the affairs and making preparation to face different life circumstances. Examples: "we should not forget our past; if you forget your past you will not be able to keep your future in your mind. You should always remember how you achieved your present position.", "I got along with all my problems, because I was content. If you wish to achieve something you should embrace all your problems."

The next factor of the meddling conditions is "ethnic identity, freedom and equality". By ethnic identity is meant "a set of characteristics and features which distinguishes the Kurds as a social community". The participants attain a part of their social identity and human freedom through the ethnic identity or better to say through their "Kurdish identity". This identity functions as an agent for the social presence and activities which eventually led to the establishment of "human equality seeking" in the women of the present study. Examples: "after I identified the Kurdish society I understood that I could participate and work in that society.", "we are Kurds and we don't have some limitations in our society as the other societies might have.", "I told the driver, look, I am neither afraid of you nor any other person.", "I write in my works so as to abate tension and increase brotherhood and understanding, to strengthen humanity."

Strategies of "human equality seeking"

The first strategy is "cultural, social, economic and political activities". This strategy is very extensive and it covers different sorts of cultural, social and political activities which are themselves divided into four categories:

1. Cultural, art and sport activities,
2. Social and political activities,
3. Attaining a job or economic status,
4. Making relations, attaining status and independency in social presence.

Due to their being so extensive, each category will be discussed separately:

Cultural, art and sport activities: this general title was opted for a set of activities performed by the interviewees. The activities included cultural, art and literary products such as books, films, handicrafts, etc. Holding courses regarding psychology, religion, culture, literature and sports. And also any attempts to achieve academic and non-academic certificates in any of the mentioned fields. For example "I am a member of "Awraz sport club" and I am the only Azerbaijani girl who has climbed the Himalaya." " up to now, I have made two films which have been shown in the national and international festivals.", "It is about 16 years that we have founded the literary society and I have been in charge since then, I have written some books and a collection of poems, more than one hundred articles of mine have been published in the Iranian journals."

Social and political activities: it is not easy to separate social and cultural activities; it was though done in order to categorize the activities. Social activities include working for the charity and social-cultural organizations and political activities are like being a member of the political parties and working in the cultural-social field which turns into political activities in developing countries like Iran due to their political structures. Here are some of the interviewees' statements: "I am a member of the board of the directors of the Society of the Kurds, member of the

United Front of the Kurds, charity organization of Ra'd, and I am also an active member of the Jiin society of the women in Mahabad, " member of the board of directors of the Khahenei Boostan (a center for keeping the orphans and children with bad guardians), member of the society of addiction prevention of Erfan, and finally I am member of the Islamic party of Dawa Wal-Islahe Iran.

Attaining jobs and economic status: what the participants took more into account was their job and their economic situation was considered as the second priority though four of them put emphasis on economic situations along with job. For example, "I experienced most of the positions in the ministry of education; jobs like teaching, managing schools, supervising, etc.", "I have my job and most of my properties are registered to my own name." "Economy is an important principle even if not considered to be the first of everything."

Making relations, attaining status and independency in social presence: this strategy was agreed upon and attended to by all the participants. This includes three categories:

1. Making social relations,
2. Attaining social status,
3. Independency and social presence.

Examples: "I wish I could go anywhere and get more self-consciousness through relations with other humans.", "when I was working in a village where there was no running water and the road was not in a good condition, I moved to the governor office to work, then I became more popular and people started to think that I could do something for them.", "I usually travelled to Tehran alone, my mother-in-law says if I went overseas with her she would return me home again."

The second strategy is "managing the private and public sphere". This also includes five categories:

1. Private sphere management,
2. Public and private sphere management,
3. Interaction in marriage life,
4. Sense of responsibility,
5. Noticing the social-cultural sensitivities.

Here are some parts of the statements: "I gradually attracted my husband's trust and took the control of the family through loving my husband.", "I behaved in a way that my job did not make any problem for my family.", "My husband and I are just like friends and trust each other.", "After my husband passed away, I came across so many problems, however, my daughter and my son could take their bachelor's degrees, they both got married, I sold my jewelry and used the money I had saved.", "We cannot tell whatever we want to any women, we should first know their situations, we may say something which will hurt them.", "If you could get along with your problems you will be able to get the fruit, and not to destroy what you have."

The third strategy is, "practical support for the women's rights". This includes "defending self-rights", and "defending other women's rights". Examples, "now I discuss with everybody, I disagree, and I resist, I insist on my rights, I defend other women's rights, they tell me their problems."

The fourth strategy is "making use of the opportunities". This strategy is so wide and it can include any kind of opportunity which paves the way for achieving equality or help women achieve their goals. Such opportunities could be big cities, continuing education, having jobs, freedom before and after marriage, social relations and so on and so forth. Examples, "after I got married I gradually understood that I live in a big city and I could do something there.", "I saw that my husband did not make any limitations for me, I thought why should I make any for myself."

The next strategy is "resisting against the imposed identities". This strategy is performed after the "ignoring the stratified concepts" in most of the cases. Therefore, "the ignorance of the stratified concepts" is discussed first. As it was mentioned earlier, "the daily interactions of the women are performed in an atmosphere of ignorance, fantasizing or diminishing the women's activities and experiences." The strategy of these women is ignoring these stratified concepts. Example: "others think that sewing and making dresses are worthless jobs, but I did not care and kept on doing my job." "Resistance against imposed identities" is a title taken from the theory of "dialectics of identities" by Richard Jenkins.

He used this title generally as "resistance against stratification and imposed identities", though, in the present research we mean the women who are withstanding against imposed identities. The more the self-consciousness of the women, the more resistance we can observe. Examples: "It is true that I am a girl also, but my kind of thinking is different. When I don't enjoy buying a dress or sometimes they tell me: then what?! You will have to marry. I tell them, I do anything in its time, I should do the thing which is right.", "I used to argue all the time with my husband, however, I am still active, and I have written some books and articles."

The next strategy is "breaking taboos". This strategy is a step beyond "resistance against the imposed identities", and has got different forms depending on the style of participants' life styles. All the women do not enjoy the same degree of "breaking taboos". The women who have practiced more of "opportunities for self-actualization", "self-consciousness", "freedom experience" and "human relation with the opposite sex" are breaking more taboos. In this study "taboo" is used for the cultural taboos which women face because they are women. Four out of the ten participants had broken more taboos than the others. They mostly occurred in the fields of human relations with the opposite sex, and sport and social-cultural activities.

The last strategy is "practical training for equality in the family". This strategy was noticed in the people who had the highest degree of "self-consciousness". For example, "I have taught my daughter that she is not at all different from her brother in the family."

The Outcomes

The first outcome of "human equality seeking" is "giving services and benevolence" which was referred to by most of the participants. This was sometimes understood directly and sometimes it was inferred from their activities. "I have some knowledge, there is no problem, they are just like our own children, and anybody who needs something in the society is like our children."

The second outcome is "hopefulness, perseverance and consistency". This was observed in all the participants. The third outcome is "model making" which is more evident in the women who enjoy "self-consciousness". "I killed myself and endured a lot of physical and mental difficulties so that I could see a girl starting this, climbing and going to Himalayas."

The fourth outcome is "taking lessons". The more self-consciousness there is, the more taking lessons occur. "I always tell myself this world is a big school which can teach us a lesson every day in case you are a mature student of this school."

The last outcome is "gender, learning and equality". This outcome was observed among the participants who enjoyed more of "self-actualization opportunities", "self-consciousness", "human relation with the opposite sex", and "human equality seeking". Three of the participants did not accept this outcome and two others accepted it only to some limited extent. However, five of the participants emphasized and believed in the "talent and ability" of women in all the fields and they believed in the trainability of gender or "gender sociability". They all highlighted the indispensability of the men and women equality in all the fields and the establishment of human equality regarding the issue of gender. Here are some of the statements: "human can do anything if he/she wishes and it doesn't matter it is he or she, they can do anything in case they have the ability and it does not have anything to do with gender, whatever a man can do, a women can do too.", "when in the childhood a girl is given a doll and a boy is wanted to act like a man, they are trained to be like this, these differences are related to the type of bringing up.", "nowadays, women enter field which were earlier performed merely by men and this is due to education."

After open and pivot coding, selective coding is performed. In this stage the narration of the story which is the connection of all the concepts and the major categories to the research has to be performed. Here, the narration of the first story based on the paradigmatic model is presented as an example.

"The Kurdish women of the study were discriminated under the inequality system or domination. This inequality was strengthened by factors such as: jurisprudence, law, language, mothers and women. This unequal system enjoys features such as stratified concepts, lack of human relation between the two genders, the lack of human view and equality seeking which altogether lead to "gender segregation" (the separation of the life spheres into masculine and feminine) and inequality. Besides all these, there are other conditions, which affects greatly the actions or interactions of the Kurdish women, e.g. the absence of father in the process of bringing up the kids, small town, lack of education (of the two genders), lack of self-actualization opportunities, cruelty and security weakness.

Under the influence of all the above-mentioned factors the Kurdish women had strategies such as action/interaction, lack of self-awareness and protest and the acceptance of inequality, (1. the acceptance of inequality as a managed truth, 2. the acceptance of stratified concepts, 3. the acceptance and strengthening the generalized other), the balance of benefits and others' projects, wishing trust and support. The outcomes of the action/interaction strategies appear as losing the opportunities, roles pressure on women, physical and mental harms, sorrow, regret and frustration and fiasco."

Conclusion

In this study the lived experiences of social and cultural active Kurdish women were reviewed using qualitative methods and the "Grounded theory". The researcher intended to examine the views and practical reaction of the social and cultural active Kurdish women regarding gender inequalities in their society and the practical activities of these women to lessen this inequality and promoting gender awareness. As it was mentioned earlier this study had two major questions out of which the researcher wished to make a model. The elements of this model were taken from the research data which had been selected and analyzed based on the "grounded theory".

Therefore, the researcher attempted to make the theory based on the data and through constant examination of the data and the established categories she tried to have a theory with a real ground. With the purpose of studying the lived experience of the social and cultural active Kurdish women, the researcher first examined the documents and evidences which were half technical and half non-technical. During the procedure the main research questions were presented more vividly and specialized in the form of two major questions. In addition, identifying and making connection with the centers of social and cultural activities for the Kurdish women prepared the situation for performing semi-structured interviews, observations and taking notes in order to collect the research data.

The collected data were analyzed based on grounded theory in three stages of open, pivotal, and selective coding which finally lead to two models. The reason was the variety in the questions and exploring two different aspects of the lived experience of the cultural and social active Kurdish women. In the first model "gender segregation" was opted for as the basic phenomenon.

"Gender segregation" was presented by the liberal feminists under the title of "gender discrimination" and it is considered as the separation of the human environment into private and public spheres. This was done considering the theory of "the transformation of the public sphere" presented by Jürgen Habermas. The significant point here was the extensiveness of "gender segregation" from the view point of the participants and its presence in all angels of their lives. The deepest layer of the "gender segregation" was "the lack of human view and equity seeking" which was referred to by some directly and indirectly by others. This point was not mentioned in the first parts with the features mentioned here.

The feminist sociologists believe in the unequal system or hegemony as the main base for the unequal societies and along with this they have studied the stabilization tools or the reproduction of this inequality. Of these tools we can refer to customs, law, language, women and the stratified concepts. Pierre Bourdieu accounts for the "hidden cruelty" as the hidden form of cruelty which is performed by the people themselves and cultural tools.

The outcome of the present research based on the theoretical model was the significance of the women's and the mothers' roles in the stabilization of the inequality and emphasis on "lack of human relation between the two genders" as one of the basic and fundamental factors in the establishment of "gender segregation". This result might be due to the political, social and cultural structure of the Iranian society and the Kurdish regions.

The research has also noticed the "dialectics of identities" and "the model of the unique study of identity" presented by Richard Jenkins, and his emphasis on the point that social and individual identities are two sides of the same coin. The interviewees have also referred to the social and individual identity of the women directly or indirectly.

Based on the theoretical model "the acceptance of inequality" was the women's practical strategy in their practical reaction to gender inequality which appeared in the following three forms:

The acceptance of inequality as a managed reality: In their analysis of the social structure, Berger and Luckmann have stated that understanding the daily life as a managed reality is formed based on interactions and is rarely questioned. They stated this concept in a general form, it was however observed in the present research.

The acceptance of the stratified concepts taken from the feminist theories; the acceptance and promoting the generalized other, have been defined by the feminists as: the stabilization of the social norms in the mind of the people (the generalized other). The more successful a woman is in the perception of the generalized other which is suggested by her community, the more she will destroy her self-esteem and self-actualization opportunities. This concept was observed in the present research.

The second model of this research intends to explain "human equality seeking". As it was discussed in the explanation of the "gender segregation", "the lack of human view and equality seeking" is the hidden aspect and the causative condition of this phenomenon. The issue which was presented as the central phenomenon in the second research question-"human equality seeking"- affected both the view and operation of the women as the most impressive practical operation to increase gender self-awareness (both for men and women) and to decrease gender inequality in their society.

Background or "self-realization opportunities" is the primary condition for the "human equality ". The meaning of "background" has been taken from the theory of mental habitus by Pierre Bourdieu. "Background" is a net of relations which exist amongst the objective positions in the background. The holders of the background could be human subjects or social institutions. The amount and the significance of the capital of each subject, and lets an individual take her destiny or that of other's under her control. This significance was also observed in the present research.

The noteworthy point is about the "human relation between the two genders" in the theory model as one of the most significant causative conditions which has not been referred to by other theories. There are some other concepts such as "nature interest, feminine identity and feeling the reality of life", "having a man as a support", "ethnic identity, freedom and equality" which have been found by the present research as the meddling conditions of "human equality seeking".

"Breaking taboos" and "practical teaching of equity" in the family are two important but distinctive strategies which the active Kurdish women use to reduce inequality and promote gender self-awareness. It should be noticed that these strategies were mostly used by the women who enjoyed the highest level of "human equality seeking" and the more significant point here was the women's humanitarian view and practice about the opposite sex and their comprehensive view about gender inequality and their attempt to reform unequal structures through various forms of cultural, political and social activities.

"Gender, learning and equality" was a different outcome of "human equality seeking" .This was a phenomenon which emphasized the women's capability and equality in human rights for the women who enjoyed humanitarian view and operation and they were following equality.

As a result the findings of the present research emphasized the importance of the role of "human equality seeking" in decreasing inequality. The next point which was investigated was "Gender segregation" as an inequality phenomenon in these women's public and private spheres of lives and their practical strategies against "human equality seeking".

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