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WOMEN NEW SOCIAL FORCES

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Abstract

With appearance flow Islamic revolution of Iran and its victory and formation new system, women and men, entered mass action scene against Pahlavie regime and experienced masse participation, instinctively. According viewpoint of witnesses and observers, women's role and their impact under victory and flow Islamic revolution of Iran, otherwise were more than men, were not lower than them. Also women's positive vote to new system had been important effect under process of system formation. For this reasons women perceived new identity, that formatted out of home and family .New identity that they had experienced during Iran history rarely.

In manner that new system formed, with women and men efforts. During years, after revolution victory, hegemonic discourse in Islamic republic system frame have been ideological and traditional discourse, while That present comprehensive and universal discourse in every life men and women area. That defined and limited all the aspect of life in pure Islamic direction shape.

During these years we see so many changes in women's life(rate of educating, level of perception and….) 36 years have been passed from Iran Islamic revolution. In this research we are looking for to engage that after formation new system, What take place about women's political and social rights? Do they prosper political and social rights in suitable rate? Can Iranian women be a new social force in future? Can they challenge for hegemonic discourse?

Frame theory (Norman Fairclough)

Keywords: Iranian women, Iran Islamic republic, new social force, critical discourse theory

1. CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

As a qualitative method, critical discourse analysis was widely adopted by scholars in such different areas as politics, sociology, communications, and linguistics. Linguistic discourse analysis encountered wide development, but it did not stop at linguistics: within only two decades, it entered from social and critical linguistics into cultural, social, and political studies only to wear a critical gown aided by efforts made by thinkers like Derrida, Locklove, Mouffe, Frank, etc.

In this research, Fairclough's critical discourse analysis method is taken, thereby an introduction of his methodology is a primary must.

2.FAIRCLOUGH'S CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS THEORY

Fairclough outlines discourse in three levels: (1) discourse as method; (2) discourse as discourse practices and interactions between production and interpretation of texts; and, (3) discourse as context of the text and relationships between discourse actions and cultural and sociopolitical contexts (Fairclough, 2000, pp. 168-169).

Critical discourse analysis essentially addresses discourse dimensions of misuse of power, injustice, and inequality ensuing therefrom. It, in addition, intends to analyze hidden and apparent structural relationships existing in domination, discrimination, power, and control (Dyke, 2003,p 179).

Critical discourse analysis is precise analysis of texts, since textual analysis is able to explain better than any other method all arriving social processes with their contradictory complexities, failures, and excursive natures. Fairclough believes that texts are one of the significant social modes, since social structures are both condition and origin of a social act and a product thereof.

Fairclough believes that those branches of social sciences that bear critical purposes can take actions. Therefore, textual analyses as a subpart of critical discourse analysis constitute important political sources (Fairclough, 2000, pp. 154-156).

Critical discourse mining mainly wishes to investigate abuse of power. Many delicate forms of dominance which seem to be permanent and continuous happen to be natural before they are exposed to real objections. This is, and has always been, the case regarding dominance of men over women, whites over blacks, and the rich over the poor. In case the minds of subjugated people are so influenced that they voluntarily undergo such dominance, they would act as power holders wish. This is the concept of *hegemony* made simple. Among the major functions of the dominant discourse are to create reconciliation and to make legitimate a dominion (Dyke, 2004,pp 182-188).

3.DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AS A METHOD

In Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, there are three interrelated stages: (1) description of a text (revelation of ideological statements and positions of the text); (2) interpretation (indication of the interaction between text and context); and, (3) explanation (mutual impact of discourse structures and discourse on structures).

3.1 The First Stage: Description

What is the first stage of textual description? Here, an examination of words, grammatical aspects, and linguistic analysis of the texts—which are named by Fairclough as text's nominal values—is presented (Fairclough, 2000,p 171).

In this stage, we, with regard given to sentences and their grammatical roles, intend to get insights into the queries how the generator of the text delineates the social and natural world, where the coordinates of his/her world are placed, where his/her interpretations of the world lay, how the text underlines some certain features of social identities, while denying others, etc.

3.2 Second Stage: What Is Interpretation?

Interpretation is a combination of the text's contents and mind of the interpreter. Since nominal features of the text are in fact clues which activate elements of contextual knowledge of the interpreter's mind, the interpretation will a result of dialectic relationship of the text (description) and contextual knowledge of the interpreter's mind (Fairclough, 2000,p 215). In interpretation stage, two types of questions are posed: (a) What is the story about? What does this activity intend to do? What is the story about with regard to nature of the issue? (b) Who are engaged in the story and what are their relationships? (Fairclough, 2000,pp 219 - 224). There should be an attention to the relationships among social actors in their contexts, texts, and power relations (Are such powers based on superiority and inferiority hierarchies or there is an interaction?)

3.3 Third Stage: Explanation

Explanation stage is going to describe discourse as a part of a social process. It indicates how social structures give shape to a discourse. It also shows the regenerative impacts left by such discourses on structures, the impacts which result to maintaining or changing the structures (Fairclough, 2000,p 245).

Intending to effectuate this theoretical framework on the issue of women's social and political rights, we shall make use of three stages: description, interpretation, and explanation. In description stage, we will make attempts to delineate the dominant discourse, i.e., political-jurisprudent Islam, respecting sociopolitical rights of women. This is to illustrate the point how generators of the text look at our matter under question. In this phase, the viewpoints cited in the Constitutional Law and those held by Imam Khomeini and Ayatollah Khamenei are taken into account. Our attention would be paid to those social relationships which both affirm and accentuate the dominant discourse respecting sociopolitical rights of women. In other words, which certain features of women's social identities are highlighted and which are rebuffed by political-jurisprudent Islam?

In description stage, some statistics and diagrams are taken advantage of in order to arrive at a better and clearer illustration of the issue. Here, legal and political conditions of women are addressed with consideration given to the text and atmosphere of the political-jurisprudent Islam.

In interpretation stage, attempts are made to, in a Faircloughian manner, interpret the data which was

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presented in description phase. Fairclough believes that some questions should be answered in the interpretation stage: What is the story, i.e., what achievements are gained respecting women's sociopolitical rights? Who are the social actors and what groups are included in this regard? Which groups are more engaged in, say, women's affairs?

In the final stage, i.e., explanation phase, attempts are made to explicate how the dominant discourse describes and regenerates present conditions of women and their sociopolitical rights through existing structures. In this phase, impacts left by structural elements of the discourse dominant on women's conditions respecting their political and social rights are planned to be investigated.

4. INPUTS

When the topic of society of and its relevant dimensions is addressed, human society is the first idea that comes to mind. Such society is made of men and women whose relationships are parallel rather than conflicting. These interdependent ingredients are entrusted with special tasks, some of which being affected by biological characteristics and others by social, historical, and cultural factors. In some tasks, gender-based division of works is not only inevitable, but also desirable (like bringing up children and husbandry). Although, grounding all affairs at all regards on gender binarism is both undesirable and a hindrance on the country's route to development. In this research, attempts are made to address the matter under study in order to effectuate relevant theory through three phases: description, interpretation, and explanation.

4.1 Description

Discourse of political-jurisprudent Islam has initiated to set up an all-inclusive arrangement by religious-jurisprudent principles after being established on the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran through presenting a comprehensive image of its integration. It, therefore, decides to regulate all aspects of the lives of human beings, who are finally determined to become perfect beings. In this stage, we are going to examine the concepts offered by the founders of this discourse and Constitutional Law of the Islamic Republic of Iran using the theory presented by Norman Fairclough.

Unalloyed Mohammadian Islam, as the central point of political-jurisprudent Islam, was proposed by Imam Khomeini and it could challenge the dominant discourse of Pahlavi only to introduce men and women into the pitch of social and political acts.

Regarding women's participation in social fields, Imam Khomeini says: "Politics are not values to be allocated to governments; women are entitled to have engagement in politics, and this is their irrefutable duty" (Imam Khomeini, 1984,p 38).

"Presently, women are expected to shoulder their social and religious responsibilities; they should observe public chastity, based on which exercise their sociopolitical tasks. In political and social acts, men and women should be compeers" (Imam Khomeini, 1982, p: 246).

"Women should engage in basic regulations of the country" (Imam Khomeini, 1986, p301).

"In Islamic system, women are entitled to the same rights which men possess" right of education, right of occupation, right of ownership, right of voting, etc. In all aspects in which men are entitled with some rights, women possess rights, too" (Imam Khomeini .1986, p: 189).

Respecting the pattern for a Muslim woman, Ayatollah Khamenei indicates: "After the victory of 1979 Revolution, women found an Islamic-divine identity. In this viewpoint, women maintain their feminine features such as having delicate feelings, ebullient emotions, and excessive affections; promote their spiritual values like acquisition of knowledge and worshipping; and take part in sociopolitical fields equipped with their high-level political intelligence. This is the paradigm of a Muslim woman" (Khamenei, 2004,p 69).

As it is clear, discourse of political-jurisprudent Islam regarding women's rights and presence in different arenas is grounded upon equality of men and women. Below is a lookout into women's rights as viewed by the Constitutional Law.

There are several principles in the Constitutional Law respecting the women's rights. In introduction of the Constitutional Law, there is a special topic entitled "Woman in the Constitutional Law." According to the Principle 20, people of the nation, including men and women, are all identical and supported by the Law. All people, observing Islam's principles, can enjoy human, political, economic, social and cultural rights. The Principle 21 obliges the Government to guarantee women's rights at all respects observing Islam's principles (Constitutional Law of the Islamic Republic of Iran).

There are other references to women's political, social, civil, and cultural rights in other places, to which we presently avoid addressing. Here, our attention is centered on those social relationships which affirm and fortify the dominant discourse thereon.

In the Holy Quran, there are several verses which refer to equality of men and women regarding their human respect and dignity, including 30:21, 4:124, 49:13, and many others. Many Quranic verses determine

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identical penalties for men and women in regards such as retaliation and blood money as in 24:2. This is same for worshiping, whose orders are the same for both genders (33:35). In numerous other verses, Islam has decided that human perfection is achieved in the same way for males and females: 4:124, 23:40, 16:97, etc. Other verses refer to complementary roles of men and women: 43:32 and 2:187.

The Holy Quran admits women's allegiance with the government (60:12). This is used as an indication of the fact that God and the Holy Prophet agree with assignment of political tights to women.

In the migration of the Holy Prophet, which was a political and social movement, women were present. The Holy Quran has referred to the story of Queen of Sheba, i.e., Bilqis, which is another expression showing that God admits women's ability of governance. It also makes a reference to women's right of ownership, including in 4:32 (Mokhtari Pour Siadat, 2011, pp. 36-58).

Woman has taken part in several affairs in the history of Islam, including defending Islamic territories in case of invades by enemies, taking part in Eid prayers, taking part in religious ceremonies, joining congregational prayers, participating in the hajj practices, which requires no permission by husbands, etc.

Presence of women in our Islamic-Iranian society is a large-scale participation, which has been witnessed at all fields and times: revolution, imposed war, and economic arenas. In fact, role and participation of women have been regarded to be on a par with those of men within the discourse of political-jurisprudent Islam.

As clarified above, men and women are not conflicting but complementary to one another both in their social relationships and family's atmosphere in an Islamic society. What is apparent in Islam, the Holy Quran, historical trajectory of the Islamic society, and Islamic discourse is that men's and women's rights are equal in cultural, social, political, and other fields.

In order to advance into the interpretation phase, an employment of statistics and reference to available facts regarding women's conditions seem to be necessary.

Table 1. Population and families: 1976-2011

Year	Population	Men	Women
2011	75,149,669	37,905,669	37,244,000
2006	70,495,782	35,866,362	34,629,420
1996	60,055,488	30,515,159	29,540,329
1986	49,445,010	25,280,961	24,164,049
1976	33,708,744	17,356,347	16,352,397

Above table illustrates women's growth of population within 1976 to 2011, according to which one half of the total country population allocates to women.

Table 2. Life expectancy as segregated by gender

2011				
Gender	Men	Women	Men	Women
Life expectancy	72.1	74.6	71.1	73.1

Above table shows life expectancy in men and women. This statistical index is expressive of average lifetime. The more improved medical indices, the higher the life expectancy levels grow. This index, in reality, is used to measure advancement and backwardness levels of the countries.

Table 3. The number of individuals who have obtained higher-education and seminary-school degrees

Year	Men		Women	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2011	5,474,683	18.2	5,023,992	18.4
2006	3,769,741	13.1	3,116,392	12.3
1996	1,657,699	7.4	900,895	4.7

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| 1986 | 621,525 | 7.1 | 223,436 | 3.3 |
| 1976 | 310,638 | 3.8 | 122,753 | 2.6 |

Above table indicates an increase in the number of women who have obtained higher-education and seminary-school degrees, the increase which is mostly significant in the years 1976 to 2011.

Regarding women's presence in political management, this is noteworthy that the Constitutional Law, as the regulatory and executive reference, has talked about the political rights in many points. It, however, has denied women from leadership and presidency positions, choosing to be silent about such other posts as substitution and ministry. As a matter of fact, ambiguities of the Constitutional Law regarding women's political participation are the most important obstacles in quality and quantity of their presence. There is no feminine participation as a member of the Guardian Council (Naji Rad, 1949,p189).

Table 4. Statistics on women's participation as a representative of the Islamic Consultative Assembly

Periods	Percentage	Number
1st pd.	1.66	4
2nd pd.	1.66	4
3rd pd.	1.6	5
4th pd.	3.6	9
5th pd.	5.6	14
6th pd.	4.4	13
7th pd.	3.7	12
8th pd.	2.8	8
9th pd.	3.1	8

This table is indicative of the low population of women in the Islamic Consultative Assembly in nine periods. What is acquired from this quantity is quality of their presence, which is undoubtedly not touched by this low level. Later on, there would be a discussion on quality of women's participation in the Consultative Assembly.

Table 5. Women's participation in the City Council

Period	Number of men	Percentage of men	Number of women	Percentage of women
1st pd.	162,605	99.16	1,375	0.84
2nd pd.	152,983	98.49	2,336	1.5
3rd pd.	107,645	98.63	1,491	1.36

Above table indicates low participation of women in city and village councils in three periods.(women& family socio-cultural council, annul report 2014).

The report issued by the World Economic Forum in 2014 on the sexual rift in Iran maintains:

This report appraises Iran's score in the sexual rift index to be 0.581, which places Iran 167th worldwide. This means a downfall of seven steps as compared to the 2013 statistics. Sexual rift index is a number between zero and one. The higher this figure, the lower the sexual gap would be, and the vice versa. This index is composed of four subsections: *participation and economic opportunities* (including male and female participation in workforce, average remuneration earned by each gender, percentage of each gender in high- and low-ranking professions); *educational achievements* (including components such as literacy rates and women's educational status in primary, secondary, and academic levels); *health and lifetime*; and *political capability* (number of women in parliament and their actual number in such positions).

Inequality In Economic Opportunities And Remunerations

Iran is ranked 139th among 142 world states in economic opportunity sub-indices. This holds that Iran is one of the most unequal countries in the world regarding economic opportunities. According to the World Economic Forum, rate of women's participation in Iran is 23 percent, and women's level of remuneration is 41 percent less than men—the amount which is reduced to 17 percent when Purchasing Power Parity (PPP)

is entered into calculations. That is while, women, according to this report, constitute 46 percent of Iranian professional workforce.

Political Inequality

Iran is one of the most unequal countries in the subscale *political capacitation*. Women possess only 3 percent of Iranian parliamentary seats. Although women's presence at the cabinet is better off than theirs in the parliament, this has ranked Iran no better than the 105th country worldwide (World Economic Forum, Annual Report, 2014).

In the latest report by the UN Development Plan respecting human development in 2014, Iran is ranked 75th worldwide in Human Development Index (HDI): a two-step downfall comparing the previous year. Iran's sexual human development ranking is 128, which introduces a considerable 53-step distance from the state's human development. This is an indication of the fact that women's development indices are lower than those of men (Human Development Report, 2014).

4.2 Interpretation

1. What the story is about? (Achievements regarding women's sociopolitical rights)
2. Who are social actors? (Which groups are more active in women's affairs?)
What the story is about? (Achievements regarding women's sociopolitical rights)
Here, we are going to interpret and provide replies for our questions using above-mentioned statistical tables and figures.

This is possibly safe to say that the foremost attainment in women's rights after the Revolution has been a particular feminine attention paid by the Constitutional Law. Respecting health, education, awareness raising, and civil and social rights, women's and men's rights are identically and equally observed. According to above tables, women's life expectancy has encountered with an increase in the health field. Regarding educational improvements, there has been a reduction in the cavity between the number of literate men and literate women. This is the same for the number of female students and graduates in occupational and economic aspects. Such increases in women's level of literacy finally led to a feminine incursion onto the professional arenas, especially in services section.

Respecting women's political participation and decision-making, this is noted that their participation is investigable in three macro-mid -, and micro-levels. In macro-level, Marzieh V. Dastjerdi, PhD, has so far been the only woman who has assumed the position of ministry for a while as a type of political participation—here, taken to mean making decisions as a leader, president, or minister. In mid -level, however, there has been a rise in women's level of political participation, especially since May 1993: selection of women as the president's advisor and assistant, head of the Center for Women's Participatory Affairs, manager of the Department of Environment, parliamentary deputyship, two research assistants to the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance, two Ministers to the Department of Health, and more than ten managing directorate positions in such sectors as Municipality and State Divisions in the Ministry of Interior Affairs (Women's Participation and the Eighth Government, 2006,p76).

Here, the reply to the question "Who are the social actors in women's affairs?" is answered: Social actors are distributed in two governmental and non-governmental sectors. Governmental sector includes those individuals, groups, and organizations which are located within the governmental organs and departments such as political, cultural, social, and economic positions whose holders are female advisors, assistants, managing director representatives, etc. Of the same categorization are organs like the Center for Women's Affairs and Family to the Presidency, centers for women's affairs to the governmental ministries and organizations, women's journals and associations, etc.

In non-governmental sector, women's rights activists outside the country, interior non-governmental organizations, and some inactive intellectual figures are enumerable.

As to go on with the interpretation phase in the critical discourse theory and as said earlier, woman has a high-ranking position in the Quranic view. In the political-jurisprudent Islam, women are compeers with men in their human rights—the viewpoint which is cited in the Constitutional Law as well. However, the problem why the issue of women's rights and presence comes along with such words and phrases as *according to the holy Sharia*, *as per the Islamic principles*, *no derogation of expediencies of the Islamic Sharia*, etc., is a moot point.

In fact, although, there is evidence bearing on existence of enlightened views in the political-jurisprudent Islam regarding women's rights, this is far from what happens in reality and women's rights are defined based on their gender roles. In the Constitutional Law, likewise, some ambiguous principles such as allowance or disallowance of women to become a president or an Assembly of Experts representative have

paved the way for restriction of women's presence in making macro-level decisions. Such ambiguities are largely a repercussion of gender segregation perspective.

4.3 Explanation Phase

Structural factors of a society can be results of its history and governments. All historical periods of the Iranian society have witnessed and reported a masculine authority. Gender-based attitude to women upon division of works has left its remarkable impacts upon determination of rights. During the history of Iran, women have mainly been regarded as inferior to men, while a short survey of our history signposts a large-scale presence of women upon history-making incidents. Before advancing into the conclusions, this is important to highlight some points:

In transnational level, we are living in the age of globalization with its very distinct characteristics: broad communications, high-speed information exchange, easy accessibility to world news, advent of different international organizations engaged in diverse activities as human and civil rights whose impacts on their internal affairs are beyond the control of governments, introduction of new movements in the political firmament of countries' internal affairs which are mainly influenced by external and international factors, importance of public opinions both inside and outside the countries, globalization, and so on are unwanted trends which willingly or unwillingly leave their impacts on states and peoples.

There are some noteworthy points in domestic arenas. According to available information, women constitute more than a half of the Iranian community, and the number of young individuals is on the rise. Improvement of health levels under the aegis of regulations has elevated women's life expectancy levels. Moreover, an increase in education tiers has uplifted the number of graduated women. In fact, performance of the government respecting improvement of women's health conditions demonstrates a desirable standard. But, does it include all women's rights? Paradoxically, there is a conflict between what is said and what is performed: women are declared to possess rights equal with men, but only some aspects of their rights are attended. Another paradox is observed in improvement of women's health and awareness levels, the issue which provokes a growth in women's demands for increased participation in the society, while an inaccessibility of women to other aspects is what really happens.

An active gap in the Iranian society is a structural cavity known as gender, which has divided the society into two segments: men and women.

Iranian society is a transitional community that possesses components of both a traditional society and a modern one.

Iranian women have attained a more desirable level of awareness and intellectual development compared to previous decades. However, while they are confident of their capabilities in different arenas, they tangibly feel several deficiencies and discriminations.

Ideological, traditional, and religious government of Iran cannot undergo all innovations, including those associated with religious rethinking and women's affairs.

Gender, generation, identity, tradition, and modernity gaps reinforce one another; they can be entitled as *jamming gaps*.

According to what was argued hereinabove, this is concluded that women have not managed to arrive at their appropriate positions at all respects and fields despite favorable opinion of Iranian discourse builders and their own capabilities and self-confidence. This is, consequently, maintained that based on current conditions in Iran and the world and presence of multiple gaps respecting interwoven, while different, issues, outburst of women's rights-related challenges is not unexpected.

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