The Role of Art in the Sociological Explanation of the Participation of Lor Bakhtiari and Arab Women in Gaining Social and Political Standings

Abstract

In Iranian society after the Islamic Revolution (۱۳۵۷ AH), women assumed an important role in social developments, including political participation. In the interim, this involvement is reflected in various aspects of cultural, artistic and political life. Based on this, the main goal of this research is to sociologically explain the political participation of the women of Lor Bakhtiari and Arab tribes in Khuzestan province in ۲۰۱۸. The research method is of a descriptive-correlation type uses a questionnaire tool; moreover, the validity of the questionnaire has been confirmed by the opinion of experts and its reliability is measured by Cronbach's alpha test which shows the number of ۰٬۷۷. The statistical population of this research are female citizens over ۱۸ years old; also, the sample size is determined based on Cochran's ۵۸۴ formula and is based on simple random sampling. Data analysis showed that the average political participation of Lor Bakhtiari women (۳۹٬۷۲) is more than Arab women (۳۲٬۰۱). Single women (۳۵٬۰۱) have a greater tendency to political participation than married women (۳۳٬۱۰) and finally, in terms of ethnicity, Lor Bakhtiari women (۳۳٬۵۶) have a greater tendency to political participation compared to Arab women (۲۷٬۱۵).

Research aims:

۱. Sociological explanation of political participation of the women of Lor Bakhtiari and Arab tribes of Khuzestan province in ۲۰۱۸.

۲. Exploration of the role of art in understanding societies and their coordinates.

Research questions:

۱. How can the role of the women of Lor Bakhtiari and Arab tribes of Khuzestan province be explained in political developments with a sociological approach?

۲. What role do works of art play in the sociological explanation of a nation or society?

Introduction

Political participation is a voluntary and conscious act that is completed directly through legal and peaceful ways in order to influence the decisions related to the administration of society. Political participation as an administrative method has special practical benefits, the lack of which harms both the political system and the long-term goals of the government. Political participation can be defined as a set of activities and actions by which private citizens seek to influence or support a certain government and policy (Firehi, ١٩٩٨: ٤٤). Among the most concrete manifestations of political participation, features such as participation in elections, membership in political organizations and membership in trade unions can be mentioned. In today's world, the basis and direction of movement of the systems, both at the national and international level, are determined by the participation of the people in the political arena of that system, to the point that when the amount of participation increases, the credibility and political power of that system in the international arena will intensify. It provides a support to achieve the expected goals of the political system and the statesmen of that system. Political participation is one of the main indicators of political and social development in modern and democratic societies. One of the objectives of political development is to expand the participation and competition of social groups in political life, and in order to achieve administrative development, the level of political participation of the people must increase (Ali Laimat, ٢٠١٩).

Political participation in the country in terms of gender and diverse ethnic structure and the Iranian society represents a diverse and heterogeneous group of different ethnic groups; moreover, this ethnic diversity can be seen along with religious, linguistic, and cultural differences. The presence and life of different ethnicities such as Persians, Turks, Kurds, Baluchs, Turkmens, Arabs and Lors together and within the framework of a single political geography shows the cultural-ethnic mosaic of Iranian identity and civilization. Although the official statistics of Iran's ethnic composition are not available; estimates show high ethnic diversity and heterogeneity in Iranian society, so that according to the ethnic fragmentation index, Iran ranks ٤٧th among the most heterogeneous countries in the world in terms of ethnic diversity and ranks ٢٩th in terms of linguistic diversity.

This diversity has been effective in different trends of the country, and elections are one of these fields. Examining the voting patterns of the ethnic groups in the ethnic provinces of the country clearly shows a kind of orientation in the electoral behavior of the ethnic groups (Mojtahedzadeh, ٢٠١١: ٤٥).

Khuzestan province, especially the city of Ahvaz, known as a treasure of cultures due to its ethnic and cultural diversity, consists of various ethnic groups, including areas that have undergone changes and transformations throughout its contemporary history; additionally, its resident ethnic groups play a significant role in such changes and transformations and behold a fundamental role. The political participation of ethnic groups in this province has been different throughout the ٤٠-year history of the Islamic Revolution. This difference can be expressed in the way that at the beginning of the revolution, the participation rate of the ethnic groups of the province in participation and political elections was ٦٧٪, and this rate has reached ٥٧٪ since the beginning of the revolution until ٢٠١٤, and its growth rate was negative ١٠٪. which shows the decrease in the political participation of ethnic groups in Khuzestan province. Identifying the bases and factors of convergence and the challenges facing it is one of the important necessities of policy making about national solidarity and political participation in any country. In this regard, considering that Khuzestan plays a very important role in the economic and geopolitical structure of the country, the city of Ahvaz has experienced a high population growth due to its economic importance in recent decades, which economic growth in turn has caused a large trend of migration to this city. Consequently, the population of the city has increased from ٤٠٠ thousand people in ١٩٧٦ to more than one million two hundred thousand people in ٢٠١٦. The extensive migration of the Lor people (especially the Bakhtiaris) from the northern and eastern regions of Khuzestan and the native Arab people on the one hand and social problems such as the expansion of informal settlements and unprincipled physical expansions have caused social and political problems in the city. Based on this, the hypotheses of the research are as follows:

- There is a difference between women's political participation (Lor Bakhtiari and Arabs of Khuzestan province) and ethnicity.

  - There is a difference between the political participation of women (Lor Bakhtiari and Arabs of Khuzestan province) and the level of education.

- There is a difference between women's political participation (Lor Bakhtiari and Arabs of Khuzestan province) and marital status.

- There is a difference between women's political participation (Lor Bakhtiari and Arabs of Khuzestan province) and national identity.

Research history shows that so far no independent work with this title has been published, nevertheless, a number of studies have investigated women's political participation. Bagheri et al. (۲۰۱۸) in a research entitled "Investigating the relationship between political socialization and political participation of Ahvaz city women using the structural equation modeling approach" concluded that political socialization, age, social class, and ethnicity have a significant effect on political participation. Pournemat (۲۰۱۵) in a research titled "Relationship between social capital and women's political participation (case study: women over ۱۸ years of age in Shiraz city)" which was conducted using a survey method, came to the conclusion that there is a significant correlation between social capital and women's political participation. Shakur and colleagues (۲۰۱۳), in a study entitled "Evaluation of factors affecting the participation of Yasi women (case study: Jahorm city)" using a survey method, came to the conclusion that there is a meaningful relationship between the variables of education level, job type, social class of women and their political participation.

Samso and colleagues (۲۰۱۰), in a study entitled "The relationship between financial barriers and women's political participation in Iran" in a descriptive and analytical method, came to the conclusion that there is significant relationship between insufficient financial resources (job-income) as a structural barrier and the political participation of women in Iran. Rojo (۲۰۰۶), in a research titled "Gender and Political Discourse", argues that the low participation of women in political affairs fosters a kind of political culture that creates obstacles for women's participation. These cultural and linguistic barriers are rooted in structural social barriers. Rojo's research, while emphasizing the different communication styles of men and women, demonstrates how these gender communication styles affect the political arena. Age-old gender and cultural stereotypes influence how women should be evaluated and how they should act in political arenas. When the roles of men and women are not equal, the participatory political culture is endangered and new ideological positions, speech methods, ideas and participatory values cannot be created (Imam Jumezadeh et al., ۲۰۱۳: ۱۲۵).

Tong (٢٠٠٣) in a research entitled "Gender Gap in Political Culture and Political Participation in China", using data collected in ١٩٩٤, has studied the effect of this gap on political culture and political participation in China; and the research confirms the effect of gender differences on variables such as attention to the media, political awareness, political participation and internal and external political effectiveness; accordingly, the level of these dependent variables were higher among men than women. Regarding the gender gap, this research attempts to use sociological, situational and structural theories. In terms of sociological analysis, the findings show that female respondents are calmer when they are successful and more pleasant in stressful situations; also they were more interested in solving problems through old traditions. Also, it seems that there is a negative relationship between political culture and participation criteria in the studied society. The empirical findings also show that ١- higher socio-economic groups are more politically active; ٢- women who have a higher social and economic status play a role in politics more than men and women from lower classes. The existing findings based on structural and sociological theories about the issue of gender gap show that even when the socio-economic base is controlled, similar and identical results are still created. The study of the theory of the situation regarding the influence of having children on the political culture and the political participation of meaningful women reported that women with children have a deeper gender gap in culture and political participation.

Nelson (١٩٨٠), in a research titled "Political culture and the entry of women into government legislative departments between ١٩٧١ and ١٩٧٧" investigates the type of political socialization of women in the United States of America and argues that based on the type of political socialization in the United States, politics is considered a male-controlled domain. The researchers of this investigation use Elazar's conceptualization based on which there are three ideal subcultures in this field that dominate the different states of America. Elazar shows that the ethical and religious subculture has a more open view of women's participation since the citizens and political representatives who believe in it define politics as a healthy activity to create a good society. In other words, every citizen has the duty to participate in political activities. Nonetheless, societies that are dominated by individualistic subculture consider politics as a "dirty" field. Based on this, it is thought that professional politicians can perform better in the world of political competition. Finally, the traditionalist subculture that prevails in the south of this country emphasizes that politics should be limited to preserving political patterns and traditions. In each of these political cultures, identifying what politics is and who should play a role in it is a very important issue; but

then again, in many of these subcultures, there are female stereotypes that show that women may have lower capacities in terms of culture and politics; thus, their ability for political competition is less. In this context, using Elazar's cultural concepts, as an environmental and independent variable, Nelson points out many differences in women's activity between ١٩٧١ and ١٩٧٧. The findings of this research show that cultural barriers for women were less in religious and ethical states.

Conclusion

Political participation means the existence of competition and peaceful conflict between different parts of the political society to gain power and manage the society and define public interests, in addition to being a fundamental issue among societies and one of the main components of development. People's motivation for political participation under the influence of the prevailing political environment (as the individual's motivation to participate in elections under the influence of the electoral environment) is another factor that some researchers have mentioned as an important and influential factor in people's political participation. In the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran, women's political participation means their right to interfere in determining their own destiny according to political and religious teachings. This partnership is based on the legal, religious and customary principles governing the social relations of the Iranian people and is necessary for the preservation and coherence of the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In this system, the presence of women in the political and social arenas for the establishment of justice and righteousness are the religious duty of the citizens. Based on this, the main goal of the current research was to explain the political participation of women among Lor Bakhtiari and Arabs and the factors affecting it. The results of this study show that:

- A number of ٢٦٣ of the respondents were single (٠,٤٥), ٣٠٠ married (٠,٥١), ٢١ were divorced/widowed (٠,٤). Thus, most of the respondents were married and their percentage equal to ٠,٥١٪.

- A number of ٣٠١ of the respondents were Lor Bakhtiari (٠,٥٢), ٢٨٣ were Arab (٠,٤٨). Thus, most of the respondents were Lor Bakhtiari in terms of ethnicity and equal to ٥٢٪.

- A number of ١١٩ people had less than a diploma (٠٬٢١), ١١٢ people had a diploma (٠٬١٩), ٧٠ people had an higher-diploma degree (٠٬١٢), ١٣٢ people had a bachelor's degree (٠٬٢٢), ١١٢ people had a master's degree (٠٬١٩) and ٣٩ people had a doctorate (٠٬٧).

- The average scores of the dimension of political participation with a standard deviation of ١١٬٨٩٧٦٥ were equal to ٣٢٬٦٣٢٨; So, the lower limit of scores is ١٢٬٠, the upper limit is ٦٠٬٠, and the range of changes is ٤٨٬٠. Also, the amount of political participation among ٢٠٬٨٪ of the studied sample is estimated as low, among ٣٥٬٩٪ as average and among ٤٣٬٢٪ as high.

- The results of the independent t-test indicate that the average political participation for Lor Bakhtiari women is ٣٩٬٧٢ and for Arab women it is ٣٢٬٠١ and its significance level has been confirmed. This means that Lor Bakhtiari women have a greater tendency to political participation than Arab women. In terms of cultural and social context, the difference goes back to the structure of the male-controlled system of these two societies. In other words, women in the Arab society don't have that much freedom of action in cooperative and civil matters, and in this regard they refer to the clan system and male votes more, but in Lor Bakhtiari's society, the level of patriarchy and its effect on women's behavior and actions is relatively low, and women in a range perform their actions relatively freely, the difference of which is evident in the issue of political participation. This result is in line with and confirms the studies of Bagheri et al.

- The independent t-test results indicate that women's political participation differs according to marital status (single/married) and this difference is significant. The average difference between single and married groups can be concluded that single people have more political participation. In the difference between these two groups regarding political participation, the reason can be seen in the motivation and goals of the single groups in social developments and its impact on the social situation in terms of employment, marriage, improving the social base and attempting to participate in the political process of the society. These issues increase the motivation of single groups and provide them hope to feel more responsible for their future. This result is in line with and confirms the studies of Tong (٢٠٠٣), Bagheri et al.

- The results of the independent t-test indicate that women's political participation differs according to ethnicity, and this difference is significant. The average was ٣٣٬٥٦ and ٢٧٬١٥ for Lor Bakhtiari and Arab women, respectively, and this relationship was confirmed. Based on this, the ethnic structure, cultural affiliations in the heart of ethnic socialization, customs and norms governing

women in this society have left their impact on political participation. The existence of a free cultural structure, relatively tolerant norms and tolerance among Bakhtiari in socio-political discussions, have made women feel themselves as operative and effective activists in the society, and this can be seen in political participation. This result is consistent with the studies of Milbrath and Goel (٢٠٠٦), Olson (٢٠٠٥), Bagheri et al. (٢٠١٨), Nelson (١٩٨٠) and Rojo (٢٠٠٦).

References

Abracrombie, Nicholas; Hill, Stephen and Brian, S. Turner. (١٩٨٨). Culture of Sociology, translated by Hasan Pouyan, Tehran: Chapakhsh Publications. [In Persian].

Alelaimat, M. S. (٢٠١٩). Factors affecting political participation (Jordanian universities students' voting: field study ٢٠١٧-٢٠١٨). Review of Economics and Political Science. www.emeraldinsight.com/٢٣٥٦-٩٩٨٠.html

Athari, Hossein; Shahriari, Abulqasem. (٢٠١٤). "Investigation of the effective factors on women's political participation, a case study of women in Bushehr city", Women in Development and Politics, No. ٢. [In Persian].

Bagheri, Masoumeh; Hossein Zadeh, Ali Hossein. (٢٠١٨). "Investigation of the relationship between political socialization and political participation of Ahvaz city women using the structural equation modeling approach", Women and Family Cultural-Educational Scientific Journal, No. ٤٩, pp. ٥٨-٥٥. [In Persian].

Biro, Alan. (٢٠٠١). Dictionary of social sciences, translation: Bagher Sarokhani, Tehran: Kayhan Publications. [In Persian].

Chabaki, M. Albanin. (٢٠٠٢). "Gender and political participation, a comparative study of political participation of female and male students in Tehran", Journal of Humanities of Al-Zahra University (S), No. ٤٥ and ٤٤. [In Persian].

Chalabi, Masoud. (١٩٨٨). Ethnic identities and their relationship with social identity in Iran, Tehran: Ministry of Interior, Social Affairs Office. [In Persian].

Dezhem Khoi, Sadeq. (٢٠٠١). "Ethnic tendencies in Tabriz, General Directorate of Islamic Guidance of East Azerbaijan, series of lectures of the Ethnic and National Studies Group, first and second meeting, Basic Research Center, Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. [In Persian].

Finer, H. (١٩٧١). the Theory and Practice of Modern Government, ٤th ed, New York

Firhi, Dawood. (١٩٩٨). "The Concept of Political Participation", Political Science Quarterly, No. ١. [In Persian].

Gholami, Mohammadreza; Araf, Jamal. (٢٠١٤). "Semantic Model of Electoral Behavior in Religious Democracy", Strategic Studies Quarterly, No. ٣. [In Persian].

Hafez Nia, Mohammad Reza (۲۰۱۲). Electoral geography of Iran, edited with additional revisions, Tehran: Samt. [In Persian].

Hosseinpour, Siros. (۲۰۱۸). "Sociological explanation of the political participation of ethnic groups in Khuzestan province (case study: Ler Bakhtiari and Arab ethnic groups)", doctoral thesis, sociology, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Social Sciences, Islamic Azad University, Naraq branch. [In Persian].

Imam Jumezadeh, Seyyed Javad and colleagues. (۲۰۱۳), "Investigation of the role of structural and relational dimensions of social capital in explaining political participation (a case study of Isfahan University students)", Strategy Quarterly, No. ۷۰. [In Persian].

Khoshfar, Gholamreza; Jandaghi Mirmohalleh, Fatemeh. (۲۰۱۵). "Media Consumption and Political Participation (Case Study: Citizens of Gorgan)", Socio-Cultural Development Studies Quarterly, No. ٤, pp. ۱۰۵-۱۲۸. [In Persian].

Mojtahedzadeh, Pirouz. (۲۰۰۲). Political geography and geographic politics, Tehran: Somit Publications. [In Persian].

Moore, Barrington. (۱۹۹۰). The social roots of dictatorship and democracy, translated by: Hossein Bashirieh, Tehran: Jihad Academic. [In Persian].

Mirmohammadi, Amin. (۲۰۰۲). Speeches about national identity in Iran, Tehran: Institute of National Studies. [In Persian].

Nelson. A. J. (۱۹۸۰). Political culture and women's representation in lower state legislative chambers: ۱۹۷۱ and ۱۹۷۷. International Journal of Intercultural Relations, ٤(۳-٤): pp. ۳٦۷-۳۷۷

Nowruz, dream; Solati, Ali. (۲۰۱۷). "Effect of art and artist on individual and society", the first national conference of art and health. [In Persian].

Pournemat, Arash. (۲۰۰٦). The relationship between social capital and women's political participation (case study: women over ۱۸ years of age in Shiraz), master's thesis, Shiraz University. [In Persian].

Qazlsafli, Mohammad Taghi. (۲۰۰۹). "Aesthetics and politics; Reflection of politics in the realist approach to art", Journal of Political Science, No. ۱۷. [In Persian].

Safari Shali, Reza. (۲۰۱٤), "Investigating the voting behavior of Iranians in the Islamic Council elections", Strategic Studies Quarterly, No. ۳. [In Persian].

Samsu, K. K., Hasnita and S. N. and Shojaei, H. Asayesh. (۲۰۱۰) the financial obstacles of women's political participation in Iran, report and opinion, Vol. ۲(۱۰), pp. ٤۱-٤۹

Shakoor, A. and A. Shamsoddini, N. Karami, A. Modabri, M. Hatami. (۲۰۱۳). "Evolution of factors affecting women's political participation in society; case study women's population in Jarom city, Iran", research journal of recent sciences, Vol. ۲ (۲), pp. ۲۳-۲۷.

Soroush, Maryam; Hosseini, Maryam. (۲۰۱۲). "Youth, youth and political participation; A comparative study of the role of socialization factors in the political participation of young

people in Shiraz", Journal of Social Sciences, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, No. ٢, pp. ٩٣-١٢٥. [In Persian].

Taheri, Mahbubeh; Afzal Toosi, Efat Sadat and Nozdari, Hossein Ali. (٢٠١٩). "Analysis of critical theory in postmodern socio-political art discourse", Journal of Fine Arts-Visual Arts, No. ١, ٥-١٦. [In Persian].

Tong. J. (٢٠٠٣). The gender gap in political culture and participation in China. Communist and Post-Communist Studies, ٣٦(٢): pp. ١٣١-١٥٠.