

## Social and Cultural Factors Associated with Student Alienation (Case study: Kermanshah Azad University)

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### ABSTRACT

The term alienation which Raymond Williams calls it the most difficult vocabulary words, and has been proposed as one of the main concepts in sociology, psychology and social psychology, have been widely used in social science to explain the forms and types of actions and reactions used for events, facts about the psychological and social impose and is hardly associated with today social life.

This study aimed to investigate the effect of social self-alienation among students of Islamic Azad University branch of Kermanshah with the survey method done, which number of 400 samples were analyzed.

In order to answer the main question, this study is to analyze the relationship between variables such as use of foreign media, social participation, Social communication, economic statusand, gender, age as independent variables and social alienation as the dependent variable. The results suggest that, there is significant relationship between psychological use of foreign media, social participation, social communication, gender, age with social alienation. There is no relationship between economic statusand and age with social alienation.

**KEYWORDS:** alienation, cultural factors, Social factors, students, Kermanshah Azad University

### INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

The term alienation which Raymond Williams calls it the most difficult vocabulary words, and has been proposed as one of the main concepts in sociology, psychology and social psychology (Mohseni Tabrizi, 1991: 25), have been widely used in social science to explain the forms and types of actions and reactions used for events, facts about the psychological and social impose (Sotoodeh, 2010: 244) and is hardly associated with today social life.

The phenomenon of alienation that Marx, unlike that of limited means, is not only of the economic structure, but also have been a widespread subjective and objective orientation in human and economic structure is a part of it. Alienation of Iranian society as a society in transition is a sociological problem. In the past decades, especially in the sixties that rapid social changes undermined the traditional values and customs, modernism dealing with traditionalism without being able to create conceptions and cultural identity created two-fold condition which the result can be considered as social alienation (Iman and Ghaedi, 2004: 80).

In addition to exogenous growth, increased rural-urban migration, rapid economic- political development of Iran's cultural society, rapid modernization in recent decades in the aftermath of the sample (ie dualism exists in many aspects of social life) and transition state (impact on the values and norms of modern and traditional values and norms) make this duality in terms of conflict, crisis and stress occur in different dimensions which can be factors leading to the alienation (Piran, 1988 from the Chaldeans, 2002: 150).

The formation of the bureaucracy in all aspects of society, including education and academic affairs, has been the result of natural circumstances. So bureaucracy and heterogeneous systems is one of the biggest obstacles in the development of any individual as well as the socio - economic and cultural community. In other words, social structures, individuals and community groups, including students, have interactions that cause students to see no belonging to other groups, and this is associated with the phenomenon of alienation (Chaldeans, 2002: 150). It should be noted that, in the review of the student population, according to experts in development issues (Hozlits1986; Etzioni, 1987; Manfred, 1988; Midgoli, 1992 and others) sustainable and continues development in any society depends on the participation of all individuals in society and sections of society, especially the educated, academic and intellectual class. Lipset knows university as center of developments and new ideas and values, and the intelligent and educated classes as agents of changes and innovation and carriers of new values and ideas of the community (Mohsen Tabrizi, 2002 :120). Schumacher has made clear that any plan focused on development - whether it's regional or national level - is not possible without the active participation of the educated, scientific and efficient forces and development in the concept of

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inclusive social, political, psychological, cultural, economic participation of these forces can be significant (Schumacher, 1994: 141; derived from Mohseni Tabrizi, 2002: 120).

Therefore, to obtain experimental information about the attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, motivation, expectations and needs of the student population, not only will help the planners to focus on the development of higher education programs, but also defines defects, problems, failures and some respects, dimensions and presence of cognitive and learning environments level of students should and leads to planning for issues and problems and reduce development bottlenecks and eliminate obstacles to the implementation of sustainable development in higher education.

In this regard, a part of sociologists efforts should be engaged in the study and explanation of inconsistency governing relations between the individual and society, social functions, and moral internal organizations to identify one of the most moral result of unsuccessful treatability at the level of people and socialization of inefficient at the level of socializing institutions-the social and cultural alienation - which is used as a synonym for anomaly represented a suspension of belief systems, values, norms and patterns of action, objectives, cultural and social expectations - (Zaki , 2009: 26).

So regarding to alienation and its unique aspect such as powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, resentment and cultural estrangement and self-estrangement as a social phenomenon which in most cultures is known as a social problem is an important and inevitable issue.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The sense of alienation was entered to sociology from German idealist philosophy, especially by Hegel and the Young Hegelians. Perhaps the most important concept that has been the subject of alienation is Marx's theory. Marx believed that workers are alienated from the product of the production process and know that it has an independent and objective existence. In fact, he believes that during the production process, our workers are referred to as product development and production of products for which they have become attached entity .To Marx, the alienation of man is that he do not see himself as the agent to act based on their perception of the world, but the nature of these factors and others are alien to him and see himself facing to these factors, while they can be a vehicle for his creativity (Koser and Rozenburg, 2008: 401, retrieved from Fathi and Mohammadi, 2011: 160-161). Lukacs, of the Frankfurt School theorists, by studying the convergence of Marx's ideas about the commodification of human relationships through the money market and the influence of Weber's theory of rationality started to combine them. Borrowing from Marx's analysis of "commodity fetishism", he used the conception of reification instead of alienation. Lukacs follows the result of reification subjectively and objectively. The concrete aspect, commodification is to fall into reification or secondary nature which forms the capitalist society and hide the real relationships.

Of the objective aspect, reification means the alienation of human of self and to passive and confine in the secondary nature.

Adorno and Horkheimer, were very suspect about Lukac's Hegelian solution about meaning of object of reification and wisdom.

They asserted that "the realistic mind" developed by rational human being is limited. In this process, a double integration of the worlds of mental and material phenomena are caused by the fact that critical theory should be double-oriented and analyze how the human spirit and intellect means causes alienation (Turner, 1998: 555-554).

Marcuse believes that civilized societies have brought comfort to everyone. Sometimes it may seem unnecessary by the media that is a real need for humans to become worthless which turns human to alienation (Marcuse, 1983: 45 Retrieved from Iman and Ghaedi, 1383: 84). Other critical theorists, Habermas, in his Theory of Communicative Action, two of the environment and the system will be facing (Piouzi, 2000: 147-142). In his view, both the rational (bureaucratic rationality and instrumental rationality), is a very powerful technique, and even more has absorbed and eliminated the communication process which is resulted in the emergence of consciousness and instrumental culture. In this case, the rational inter-subjective understanding and communication is undermined, and thus the public arena is dwindling and the rationality of communication systems is dominated. The result is world environmental domination and technical superiority over other aspects of scientific rationality and reduction in objectively rational means to instrumentally rational means which is resulted in the loss of meaning, insecurity in collective identity and ultimate alienation in society (Holab, 1999: 6-5).

Erich Fromm looks at this issue from a different perspective. He finds estrangement in which person see himself in strange feeling of being alienated. In this situation, man does not see himself at the center of the universe and creator of his actions, but he missed practices and the result is death. He does not obey them, or even praise .To him, causes of alienation should be searched in social institutions - including corporate bureaucracy, property, etc. - (Marcus, 1964).

Durkheim and Merton seek causes of alienation in social – cultural structures, but to each, there is their own point of view on this issue.

According to Durkheim, this means that the relationship is between the individual and society, and raises the question of uncertainty which increases during the cohesion of social -mechanical to organic cohesion and undermine the values (Papenhaym, 1959). The consequences of this could be the moral development of the individual rather than collective morality and ultimately leads to alienation. The focus in this perspective is the evaluation of function in order to maintain and extend the institutions of social stability and order. This means that any crisis could cause serious problems in the balance of system (Rani, 1988).

Merton defines diversion as a form of alienation. Initial attempts to explain the alienation and main Merton discovery was the fact that how some social structures exert pressure upon certain persons in the society so that they can get deviant behavior (Merton, 1968: 186).

For Merton, the social de-organization is considered as a social functions abuse that specifically includes four sources:

1. Conflict between the interests and values
2. Conflict between the obligations of the base
3. Incomplete socialization.

4. Social communication is incomplete (Gerderz, 1981: 102 Taken from Iman and Ghaedi, 2004: 83).

According to Pierre Bourdieu's, sense of alienation is exclusion of the power of self-actors.

Ericsson, Goodman and Friedinberg like Durkheim and Merton alienation in social structures - cultural look. They are mentioned in the description of alienation and identity crisis. They believe identity crisis due to inappropriate alignment of the community; the one the one hand, the socio-cultural structures and values of independence and determination learns On the other hand, minimize individual errors are rebuked and punished. It's especially during socialization with a variety of demands and requests from the community, family, and school. Faces. (Mohseni Tabrizi, 1991: 35).

MacDill and Ridley aliens with socio - economic status has been associated, in this case much of the economic status and social - of lower effectiveness among people who feel less and much less social efficacy, feelings of alienation more persons (MacDill and Ridley, 1962: 206).

Bourdieu sees culture as the sole mechanism and its related entities, such as universities and government says it plays a role in two related areas.

1. Domain of cognitive structures and values : belief and value imposed cognitive structures or units similar to "logical conformity" and "moral conformity" leads.

2. Cognitive and behavioral domains: a common format to conform immediately perceiving and thinking and modeling cognitive behavior of buildings or similar causes (sotoodeh, 2008: 100-96).

There are two practical solutions to this role.

1. The unification of the cultural market: assimilation of the rules of law, languages, computing, communications, and government bureaucracy, including guidelines, manuals and training programs.

2. Classification: Classification of individual actors in terms of parameters such as sex, age, genetic predisposition, and features already built into the processes of education, training, and administrative law are written (Kalabrs, 1990: 154-148).

Thus, Bourdieu considers the processes at university as both functional and non-functional alienation and declares the mechanism of alienation of universities as follows:

1. Regardless of tastes and preferences of the actors, universities started to simulation and removed through degeneracy, resulting in a steady increase in the original difference between actors. In this sense, the selected students will be able to identify cost-conscious and to act according to reason, but they will be based on causes of action.

2. Priority to the universities is "social and cultural reproduction ",thus suppressed opposition movements and changes in mental structures derived from new and different students are engaged. Highly specialized training, on the other hand, to train the young wolves are given in bold free movement.

3. Universities which should select the student in the process of merit selection based on their individual talents and capabilities have become a system which the secret connection between academic intelligence and genetic characteristics of democratic government is leading to aristocracy (Bourdieu, 2002; derived from the famed 2008: 100-96).

Satsvel believes that alienation among younger age is more, no matter how well the people of this community are more pessimistic about politics; alienation matters more than it is (Satsvl, 2003: 101).

The overall concept and theory of alienation due to social conditions have been commensurate with the intellectual needs, but the core elements common to all theories is explaining the pathological and undesirable situations and conditions in the man;

As far as it is concerned to the sociological theory of alienation, characteristics by which alienation is defined are related to humans and social order.

Seeman is of the experts who explain the key concepts of alienation with psychological approaches in a complete framework. Seeman does not define alienation as unit cause. Regarding to this concept in the modern society, he focuses on this point that bureaucracy structure has created ne situations in which human is able to

learn to how they cannot control their behavior results. He refers to the key concepts of alienation by explaining any kind of alienation. To Seeman's, "way of managing society according to social rewards is so that the connection between their behavior and the rewards cannot be taken from society, in such a situation alienation feeling will prevail the individuals and leads him to passive and maladaptive in reaction to the society" (Seeman, 1957: 791-783).

Kenistone professor of psychology at Harvard University in his alienation theory considers alienated youth who consider the conflict with the established order and complete denial of what is called the dominant culture values as virtuosity. Kenistone young alien theory is based on empirical research and decades of foreign students in Harvard University on 60 and 70 AD. Although Kenistone mainly looking at social and cultural alienation, but in practice determined mental alienation and youth alienation in Society of Young Americans (Fathi and Mohammadi, 2011: 165-164).

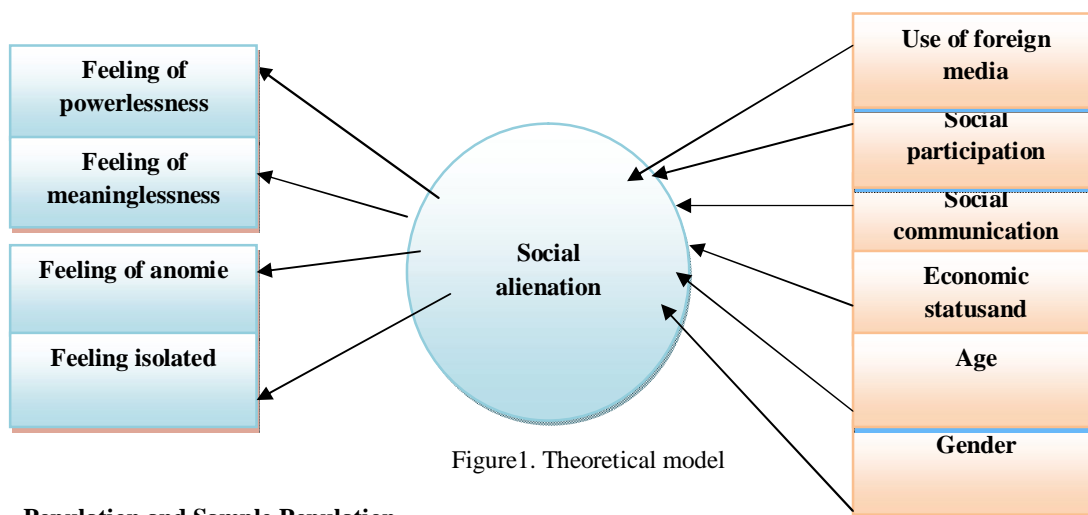
Kenistone describes the psychological alienation of the alienated youths is consequence of success and failure of children in conflict and confusion with identification with the parents. To Kenistone, slaughter of children in conflict is a kind of competition restraint and unwillingness to compete in them and makes them gradually marginalized, non-participatory and passive converts, so they become non-aligned strangers leading to the complete negation of the dominant cultural values of the society (Fathi and Mohammadi, 2011: 165).

Keniston Kent professor of psychology at Harvard University, his alienation theory of alienated youth in conflict with the established order, and considering that a complete negation of what is called the dominant cultural values, virtues know. Young Keniston alien theory is based on his experimental researches at Harvard University on foreign students in the decades of 60 and 70 AD. Although Keniston start looking mainly social and cultural alienation, psychological alienation and loss to explain the actions of the youth of America to pay (Fathi and Mohammadi, 2011: 165-164).

Keniston described involves the young stranger is the fact that mental alienation tragic result of the success of children in conflict and confusion and frustration odipal she is matched with parents. Keniston victory in fight to slaughter children odipal a refusal and unwillingness to compete in their competition and makes them gradually marginalized individuals, non-participatory and passive converts, the result of Non-Aligned alien to complete negation of the dominant cultural values of the society in which they engage (Fathi and Mohammadi, 2011: 165).

### Research hypothesis

- 1- There is a significant relationship between use of foreign media and social alienation.
- 2- There is a significant relationship between Social participation and social alienation.
- 3- There is a significant relationship between Social communication and social alienation.
- 4- There is a significant relationship between Economic status and social alienation.
- 5- There is a significant relationship between age and social alienation.
- 6- There is a significant relationship between gender and social alienation.



### Population and Sample Population

Populations: all the students of Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah Branch.

According to Cochran formula, 400 - represent the population - were selected as samples. Sampling method is "Simple random". Analysis of data was done using statistical software SPSS for testing hypotheses, statistical

tests appropriate for each hypothesis was used., To ensure sufficient funds for counseling and enjoying the views of teachers and test, Cronbach's alpha was used to determine reliability.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study is based on data collected and analyzed is a quantitative research, and of the kind of dealing with and entering to the problem is a field study. A questionnaire was used to collect the data required. Prior to the survey, the initial questionnaire was first tested using the results obtained, and the final questionnaire defects were formulated and solved.

### Findings

#### Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were obtained on 230 female and 170 male respondents are. Also, 73 of the respondents are married and 327 unmarried respondents.

In terms of age, the highest number of respondents aged 22-18 years (201 cases) and the lowest number of respondents aged above 60 years (2 cases) are located.

Respondents also mean alienation is too low and close to the average. ( $X = 2/89$ ). Among the most important aspects of Feeling of powerlessness, alienation and anomie is the lowest sentiment.

#### Inferential statistics

##### Testing hypotheses

##### 1- There is a significant relationship between use of foreign media and social alienation.

To investigate this hypothesis, the Pearson correlation coefficient is appropriate test.

$H_0: \rho = 0$

$H_a: \rho \neq 0$

**Table (1). Pearson correlation results of the fourth hypothesis**

social alienation		
-.456*	r	use of foreign media
.000	Sig	
400	N	

The results show that because the correlation coefficient values ( $r = -.456$ ) at a significance level ( $\alpha = .05$ ) is significant, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is confirmed with confidence level of 95%. So there is a significant relationship between use of foreign media and social alienation, and the relationship is Negative and Reverse. The relationship is Average.

##### 2- There is a significant relationship between Social participation and social alienation.

To investigate this hypothesis, the Pearson correlation coefficient is appropriate test.

$H_0: \rho = 0$

$H_a: \rho \neq 0$

**Table (2). Pearson correlation results of the fourth hypothesis**

social alienation		
.411*	r	Social participation
.000	Sig	
400	N	

The results show that because the correlation coefficient values ( $r = .411$ ) at a significance level ( $\alpha = .05$ ) is significant, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is confirmed with confidence level of 95%. So there is a significant relationship between social participation with social alienation, and the relationship is positive and direct. The relationship is average.

##### 3- There is a significant relationship between Social communication and social alienation.

To investigate this hypothesis, the Pearson correlation coefficient is appropriate test.

$H_0: \rho = 0$

$H_a: \rho \neq 0$

**Table (3). Pearson correlation results of the fourth hypothesis**

social alienation		
.314*	r	Social communication
.003	Sig	
400	N	

The results show that because the correlation coefficient values ( $r = .314$ ) at a significance level ( $\alpha = .05$ ) is significant, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is confirmed with confidence level of 95%. So there is a significant relationship between social communication with social alienation, and the relationship is positive and direct. The relationship is average.

#### 4- There is a significant relationship between Economic status and social alienation.

To investigate this hypothesis, the Pearson correlation coefficient is appropriate test.

$$H_0: \rho = 0$$

$$H_0: \rho \neq 0$$

**Table (4). Pearson correlation results of the fourth hypothesis**

social alienation		Economic status and
.171*	r	
.061	Sig	
400	N	

The findings show that there is no significant relationship between Economic status and social alienation. Since the significance level ( $\text{sig} = 0.061$ ) is more than 0.05, the assumption that there is a significant relationship between Economic status and social alienation is rejected. Accordingly, it can be stated that no significant relationship exists between economic status and social alienation, so the research hypothesis is rejected.

#### 5- There is a significant relationship between age and social alienation.

To investigate this hypothesis, the Pearson correlation coefficient is appropriate test.

$$H_0: \rho = 0$$

$$H_0: \rho \neq 0$$

**Table (5). Pearson correlation results of the fourth hypothesis**

social alienation		Age
.183*	r	
.059	Sig	
400	N	

The findings show that there is no significant relationship between age and social alienation. Since the significance level ( $\text{sig} = 0.059$ ) is more than 0.05, the assumption that there is a significant relationship between age and social alienation is rejected. Accordingly, it can be stated that no significant relationship exists between age and social alienation, so the research hypothesis is rejected.

#### 6- There is a significant relationship between gender and social alienation.

**Table (6) statistical indices of T-test to compare the mean of two independent variables**

Standard error of the mean	SD	mean	Number	Gender
.243	4200.	3.04	170	man
.227	0.410	2.75	230	woman

**Table (7). T-test to compare the mean of two independent variables (man and woman)**

SD	Difference of the mean	Significant level	Degree of freedom	t	Significant t level	F		
.17	.41	0.004	528	4.19	.584	.301	By the assumption of equality of variances	input
.19	.52	0.004	525.12	4.26			Without the assumption of equality of variances	

As can be seen, the calculated t with 528 degrees of freedom at the level of 0/05 for the gender variable is greater than the critical value t (98/1). Thus, this can be said with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between the mean observed. The significant difference is observed between women scores in social alienation and regarding to the average, this amount is more for men than women.

## CONCLUSIONS

As we have seen, the phenomenon of alienation that Marx, unlike that of limited means, is not only of the economic structure, but also have been a widespread subjective and objective orientation in human and economic structure is a part of it. Alienation of Iranian society as a society in transition is a sociological

problem. In the past decades, especially in the sixties that rapid social changes undermined the traditional values and customs, modernism dealing with traditionalism without being able to create conceptions and cultural identity created two-fold condition which the result can be considered as social alienation.

Regarding the importance of alienation, In this study we have assessed alienation among student's by using field method and survey technique. Such variables as independent variables were examined in this study including; use of foreign media, Social participation, Social communication, Economic statusand, gender, age. Thus the effect of each of these variables were assessed on alienation to show that is there any correlation between these variables and alienation of the students or not.

Here are the results:

- there is a significant relationship between use of foreign media and social alienation, and the relationship is Negative and Reverse. The relationship is Average.

- there is a significant relationship between Social participation with social alienation, and the relationship is positive and direct. The relationship is average.

- there is a significant relationship between Social communication with social alienation, and the relationship is positive and direct. The relationship is average.

- the assumption that there is a significant relationship between Economic statusand and social alienation is rejected. Accordingly, it can be stated that no significant relationship exists between Economic statusand and social alienation, so the research hypothesis is rejected.

- the assumption that there is a significant relationship between age and social alienation is rejected. Accordingly, it can be stated that no significant relationship exists between age and social alienation, so the research hypothesis is rejected.

- The significant difference is observed between women scores in social alienation and regarding to the average, this amount is more for men than women.

So the sixth hypothesis confirmed our research hypothesis 4 and 2 hypotheses are rejected.

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