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Analyzing Social Disparity: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Hosseini's And the Mountains Echoed

Arshad Hussain[1]

ABSTRACT

Hosseini's fiction deals with the themes of displacement, human sufferings and inequality which make his narratives the valuable texts for analyzing linguistic choices. Although a few studies have been conducted to explore his texts linguistically, yet certain areas like CDA are still unexplored. This study aims at investigating how language has been exploited and manipulated to portray social disparity in Hosseini's And the Mountains Echoed. The selected text is explored through the lens of Fairclough's Tri-Dimensional Model (1989) and Ridgeway's (2014) Theory of Social Inequality to delineate three different stages for analyzing a text, each facilitating a systemic evaluation, analysis, and interpretation of the text. The first stage, description, engages with the grammatical level of text, offering a deep understanding of text's lexical, structural and syntactic features. The second stage, interpretation, focuses on to provide an analytical acumen in interpreting the text according to its linguistic feature and author's ideology behind constructing it. The third stage, explanation, encompasses an extensive discipline of explanation that considers the social norms and ideologies aligned with the text. The results of the study reveal that the author has highlighted the dominant issues of society like gender inequality, economic inequality, ideological inequality, status inequality and healthcare inequality. Furthermore, it also exposes the reasons behind inequality such as gender differences and social stratification. The study seeks to present a meaningful understanding about how language can be exploited and manipulated to construct power and ideology.

Keywords: *Critical Discourse Analysis, Social Disparity, Tri-Dimensional Model, Social Inequality Theory, And the Mountains Echoed, Khaled Hosseini*

[1] MPhil scholar, Department of English, University of Sargodha, Sargodha

Corresponding author:
Mr. Arshad Hussain, MPhil scholar, Department of English, University of Sargodha, Sargodha
Email: engl62bs21r007@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Social disparity remains a significant social concern, as unequal access to resources, opportunities, and social privileges can shape individuals' experiences and relationships within society. These inequalities have been explored by numerous scholars and literary writers who examine their effects on human lives and social structures. Khaled Hosseini, an Afghan-born American novelist, is among the writers whose works explore social inequalities and their consequences for individuals and communities. Through his literary narratives, Hosseini highlights the ways in which differences in social status, wealth, and privilege influence human relationships and individual experiences. This critical discourse based study has been conducted to examine the linguistic exploitation in Hosseini's And the Mountains Echoed. The main focus of the study is to investigate how language has been used to portray different characters belonging to different gender or social class. In order to draw a qualitative descriptive analysis, the study adopts Hosseini's And the Mountains Echoed as primary data and utilizes Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model (1989) as methodological framework in addition to Ridgeway's Social Inequality Theory (2014). Findings of the research reveal that the text is overloaded with the ideologies related to social and gender disparities.

2. Research Questions

The study focuses on to answer the following questions:

- How does the writer construct the text to portray the theme of social disparity?
- Which kind of explanation of above mentioned theme can be given through CDA?
- What ideologies does the author portray in the text?

3. Research Objectives

The study focuses on to answer the following questions:

- To explore how the given text has been constructed to portray the theme of social inequality.
- To uncover the hidden ideology of the author behind constructing the text that offers diversity of socio-cultural identities.
- To draw an interpretation of bracketed theme contextualized in the text.

4. Methodology

The study focuses on examining the text through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective in order to find out the embedded theme of social inequality. Therefore, the study employs Fairclough's Tri-Dimensional model from the broad field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as its theoretical framework, alongside inequality theory, with purpose of analyzing and examining social inequality within the text. Moreover, in order to support the arguments related to social inequality, Ridgeway's ideas about inequality have been employed. Cecilia L. Ridgeway is an American psychologist and a professor of social sciences. Her fields of interest are to underscore the dominant issues like inequality in society, gender issues and status problems.

5. Theoretical Framework

In this study, Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model and Ridgeway's Social Inequality have been used a theoretical frame work to analyze and explore the selected text. Fairclough is a prominent scholar among the pioneers of Critical Discourse Analysis. His works are notable as theoretical frameworks for researchers of CDA. His Tri-Dimensional model is much popular among the researchers. Tri-Dimensional model was introduced in his work Language and Power (1989). In this book, the author discusses discourse and its relationship with power, identity, social practices and ideology. Furthermore, a comprehensive theoretical framework has been developed in the book for analyzing and interpreting any discourse for exploring embedded power relations, identity and ideology in the language. The model provides three dimensions of the text for interpretation.

- **Description**: At the level of description the model suggests to explore linguistic features, grammar and vocabulary of the text at micro level.
- **Interpretation**: At the second level of analysis, the model focuses to investigate how a discourse can be produced, distributed, consumed and interpreted.
- **Explanation**: This dimension of the model aims to uncover the context of the discourse at broader level. It looks how discourse shapes or shaped by social and power relations

5.1. Social Inequality

Fitria and Danu (2024) explain that social inequality can occur due to gender, race and economic imbalance among people. Ridgeway (2014) critically examines the causes and effects of social inequality and concludes that along with numerous other reasons, social status is also a crucial factor behind social inequality. She focuses on how status matters and effects social inequality. In her views, status is the main cause of social inequality.

6. Literature Review

In order to achieve a fruitful analysis of the study, previous literature has been explored and reviewed methodologically. Bloor and Bloor (2013) investigated the practice and study of Critical Discourse Analysis. They argued that this practice mainly focused on exploring social goals and their link with language and discourse. Furthermore, they elaborated that it provides numerous methods, techniques, and tools in order to explore social relation, societal structures, human psychology, cognition and behavior. Similarly, Ahmad and Khan (2020) conducted a study to explore the ideology embedded in Hosseini's And the Mountains Echoed which challenges and opposes the norms of patriarchal society. Additionally, they highlighted the ideology of liberal feminism through the character of Nila Wahdati. The study revealed how she resisted her father and opposed the idea of male dominancy. It also revealed how the author opposed the norms and tradition of the patriarchal society. The cited study was conducted through Critical Stylistic perspective with the purpose of exploring how women showed their power through the use of language. Linguistics tools like noun, pronoun, modality and use of clauses were explored to find out the clashes between feminist and patriarchal ideologies.

Fareed et al. (2022) argued that the text has been composed for justifying and promoting American invasion in Afghanistan. The researchers elucidated that the author portrayed Afghanistan as a deserted and abandon place where western intervention is necessary to trigger novelty and independence in the society. Through qualitative subjective analysis, the study explores that the author represented Afghan society and Islam as pitiable and miserable. In this way, he made the way for Western scholars to portray an erroneous identity of the culture and religion of Afghanistan. The study argued that the depicted Afghan society in the text is totally different from that of the real one and the author's representation is based on biasness.

Gender roles and power dynamics are commonly observed across various societies. Literature often highlights the social issues embedded within these structures and helps to expose the so-called civilized façade of seemingly well-developed societies. In this regard, Christopher et al. (2018) explored and analyzed the power relations and gender issues in Hosseini's And the Mountains Echoed. The study focused on to examine how gender role and power were embedded in the text through the lens of patriarchy and masculinity. The study revealed how male dominancy and female limitations were implanted in the text. The results of the study exposed that patriarchy has strong impact on both men and women and it influences the gender role in the given society.

Hosseini's literature not only encapsulates human problems but is also relates humanity to ecosystem in order to convey aesthetic sense. Shah & Kumari (2019) conducted a study to examine the ecocritical perspective of Hosseini's And the Mountains Echoed. It is the study of relationship between literature and concrete environment. The researcher utilized Glotfelty's views about Ecocriticism, in order to find out how the author has connected human beings with natural environment. Their study described Hosseini as a representative of Afghan society with its relation to nature and in his works he depicts the ecological issues. The representation of Oak tree and its pain has been made so realistically as if writer himself is feeling the pain of the tree. Furthermore the author also highlights the environmental problems faced by the people of Afghan society. The text starts with an allegory that narrates the story of natural effects on humans and throughout the plot different symbols of natural influence on human beings have been shown. The novel also represents the liberal feminist and patriarchal ideologies.

Literature always explores various human problems and inequality is one of them. Multiple studies have been conducted to analyze such literature. Difa & Tarihoran (2020) conducted qualitative descriptive study to explore inequality in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer to analyze how principal characters strive to wipe out social inequality. Structuralism theory has been used as theoretical framework in order to analyze the text objectively, independently and separately from its context. It has been explored that the main character of the novel Tom adventurously struggles for equality and he does not discriminate people. Moreover, the researchers also focused on to explore which type of social inequality is found the text and came up with the findings that inequality based on race, social strata and slavery is found in the text.

Likewise, another study has been conducted to examine A Thousand Splendid Suns, through Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, in order to investigate the hidden powers and ideologies behind discourse (Khan, 2016). The researcher employs Fairclough's three dimensional model from the field of Critical Discourse Analysis for examining and analyzing discourses. Furthermore, he also adopts Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis perspective with the purpose of interpreting power exercise against women. The analysis has been conducted through socio-political and socio-cultural milieu of Afghanistan. The study sums up the analysis with the results that power depends upon the context. It is not merely the matter of gender but it can be associated with wealth or political power. The text reveals that Taliban have the power and dominancy upon other people while Rasheed has power and tries to suppress his wives. At the end, his wives resist and take control over power.

Marginalization of women is also a common problem in different societies which has always been unveiled by various writers to highlight this critical issue. Shakeel and Shaheen (2024) examined the translated texts of Khadija Mastur The Women's Courtyard (2018) and A Promised Land (2019) through the lens of Fairclough's three dimensional model. Their study uncovered the way female characters of the novels resist typical female role and challenge the stereotypical norms of the society through language choices. Furthermore, use of language is considered the bedrock of social interaction which unveils the social status of different characters. In this regard certain studies have been explored. Firstly, Shafak's Three Daughters of Eve has been examined through the lens of Fairclough's three dimensional model. The study aims at exploring how the linguistic choices of different characters reveal their religion, identity and the power within the text (Bilal et al., 2021). Secondly, Hadi's The Black Eyes has also been critically analyzed through the lens of Fairclough's three dimensional model as theoretical framework in order to investigate the role they have to play in the society and the hurdles they have to face (Rahim, 2024). All the above discussed studies reveal two relating aspects of this particular study. The first one is that various studies have been conducted to explore nearly similar objectives by using similar model, but in different texts. Secondly, it has been explored that up till now, no study has been conducted to this particular text using same model to explore same objectives.

7. Analysis and Discussion

The study utilizes six excerpts chosen from the text in order to analyze how language has been exploited to portray the theme of social inequality. From the six elected excerpts, four have been analyzed comparatively in form of pairs. Excerpts 3, 4, 5, and 6 have been respectively analyzed in pairs which represent status disparity. While the other two excerpts 1 and 2 have been analyzed separately and they represent gender disparity.

7.1. Excerpt 1

"[…] not accustomed to talk back […] had rows […] what I wear, […] went, […] said, how I said it, who I said it to. I had turned bold and adventurous, […] he […] ascetic and emotionally austere. We […] natural opponents […]" (Hosseini, 2013, p. 119).

7.1.1. Description

This excerpt underscores a clash between a conservative father and a modern, bold minded daughter who has rebellious nature and stands against the stereotypical customs of society. She is bold, brave and strong enough to stand against patriarchy and male chauvinism. The lines are articulated by Nila Wahdati and she is elucidating the ups and downs of her relationships with her father. She describes that her father had aggressive nature and was not accustomed to listen talk back instead he only used to speak in authoritative and orderly manners. Pronouns like 'he", and 'I' are used which represents different identities. 'He' is used by the narrator for her father which shows her deficient relations with her father while 'I' is used to portray empowerment and independency. Logical Connectors "Over what", "where", "how" have been used to develop a strong cohesive relation and sequence in the language of the excerpt. Ideological words such as "bold" and "adventurous" are used to describe the novelty and modernization of the society in which a female character is portrayed as bold and adventurous unlike to the typical traditions of the society. Mode and tone: Declarative mode of the narration makes the tone descriptive and informing. Tense: Past tense has been used to describe that in past there were conflicts and clashes between stereotypical and modern people. Syntactic structure: Compound sentences reveal the empowered and independent nature of the character

7.1.2. Interpretation and explanation

The extracted part of the text is ideologically loaded with the problematic condition of gender discrimination and male chauvinism in the society. It proclaims that when the main character of the novel, Nila Wahdati, was young, her father divorced her mother and forced her to live with him but she did not possess sufficient capability to put up with his father's ferocious behavior. Consequently, she stood against his will and started to retaliate against societal barriers imposed on her. Moreover, she explains how her father was careful about her activities. He craved to be informed about everything she did or said and who to say it. On the contrary, she did not expect any interference in her personal life. Metaphorically, she represents the new generation which is striving for liberty and personal freedom in congested and stereotypical society. In addition, the implementation of ideologically loaded words like, 'bold' and 'adventurous' represent her powerful and strong will. These words are usually associated with men but in this particular context the narrator portrays the character of Nila as a bold and adventurous woman. On the other hand, she uses the words 'ascetic' and 'austere' for her father which represent his aggressive and stern behavior. It also depicts certain negative aspect of men and portrays them as inexorable and impatient. Deployment of pronominal reference is another aspect of the text which portrays the authoritative and confident modality of the speaker. She is frequently using pronoun 'I' which depicts her authority, confidence, boldness and empowerment. Moreover, instead of saying 'my father'

or according to social and cultural ideology ‘baba’, she employs third person pronoun “he” for her father. It represents her hidden hatred for her father. Furthermore, the employment of advance vocabulary characterizes her character strong willed, and socially and economically powerful. Words like, ‘ascetic’ and ‘austere’ represent the social status of Nila Wahdati that she is bold and strong enough to use advance and complex vocabulary as compared to the other socially lower characters of the novel. As noted in the Literature Review, this linguistic defiance directly supports the findings of Ahmad and Khan (2020), who highlighted Nila's resistance to patriarchal constraints through her expressive choices. This structural polarization between her modern vocabulary and her father's traditional stance mirrors the foundational concepts of description and interpretation outlined in Fairclough’s (1989) model established in the methodology.

7.2. Excerpt 2

“Father had sold […] his muse […] Gone […] Vanished […] nothing left […] the finger cut, to save the hand […] panicking. […] shrieking […]” (Hosseini, 2013, p. 33).

The excerpt has been drawn from the second chapter of the text which narrates the pathetic story of love empathy between Abdullah and his sister Pari. In the selected text, Abdullah’s feelings have been described after when his sister has been sold by his father to a wealthy family

7.2.1. Description

At the level of description, Fairclough’s three dimensional model provides a deep insight in the used vocabulary, grammar and the textual structure of the text. Tense: Past simple and past perfect tense symbolically reveal that the author is trying to expose the bitter reality of destruction that has happened in Afghanistan during numerous foreign invasions. Mode and tone: Declarative and exclamatory sentences reveal the wistfulness of the narrator which makes the tone of the text gloomy and melancholic. Sentence Structure: Simple, Compound and Complex sentences make the situation perplex, chaotic and pathetic. Ideologically loaded Words/Phrases like “Div”, “Muse”, and “The finger cut, to save the hand” depict the influence of supernatural entities on human life. Symbolically, ‘Div’ represents powerful and wealthy people who exploit the poor and loot their resources. Logical connectors such as “but’, ‘and’, ‘that’, and ‘so” show the narrator’s reluctance and resilience towards a particular ideology. Pronouns like “he and she” have been frequently used to reveal that the author is much concerned about third persons who are facing different challenges.

7.2.2. Interpretation and Explanation

The excerpt illustrates the profound and unwavering bond of love between brother and sister. Abdullah and Pari belong to lower class family and both love each other passionately and cannot live without each other. But their father is facing financial difficulties and sufferings therefore he has to sell her daughter ‘Pari’ to a wealthy family. The narrative vividly depicts the dire circumstances of an impoverished family and their exploitation by an affluent and opulent family of Kabul named ‘Wahdatis’. The author uses the metaphoric expression of “Div” for cruel creature that abducts the daughter of a poor father. This metaphor is used for Wahdatis who purchase Pari from her father. Moreover, this event also exposes the unequal

treatment of females who are sold and purchased as an object of business. Another metaphor of "Muse" has been used to emphasize the innocence and integrity of Pari. Furthermore, the constraints of the poor have been described critically and logically in order to reveal social inequality among Afghans. The author uses an ideologically teeming phrase, "The finger cut, to save the hand" to expose how poor people manage their problems and issues in critical circumstances. They have to sell their each and everything, even the most beloved, children, in order to earn their bread and butter. In addition, the author symbolically associates 'Pari' with a finger that has to be cut for protection and preservation of hand. The hand is also used as symbol for the impoverished family of 'Pari'. In this way, the author embeds the idea of social inequality found in Afghan society. This systemic commodification of female characters underscores the broader societal hierarchies investigated by Christopher et al. (2018) regarding deeply rooted masculine dominance. Furthermore, this economic desperation demonstrates the micro-level grammatical 'description' phase of the Tri-Dimensional framework, pointing back to the core research objectives to uncover how socio-cultural identities are structurally constrained by material poverty.

7.3. Excerpt 3 & 4

- **Excerpt 3** "[…] the beautiful, graceful creature […] big house. […] lit a cigarette and smoked without hurry […] bewitching grace […] cupping her hand before her mouth […] slender wrist […] a long-lashed woman with flowing dark hair […] pale delicate fingers […]" (Hosseini, 2013, p. 51).
- **Excerpt 4** "[…] a thickshouldered […] rough-skinned […] stubby fingers […] puffed, rounded face […] possessed none of the grace […]" (Hosseini, 2013, p. 18).

7.3.1. Description

In the process of description, the researcher uses the proposed theoretical framework based on Fairclough's three dimensional model (Fairclough, 1995). In these extracted parts of the text, Parwana and Nila, two major characters of the novel, have been introduced. Nila's character is unveiled when she is smoking and enjoying her life freely, while Parwana is introduced when she is making bread on tandoor and paying her duties as a working woman. As she belongs to lower class family she is being portrayed through informal and simple language. Mostly, the narrator uses negative adjectives for the portrayal of Pari's character. Quite the opposite, Nila's character has been drawn from the elite class, so she is portrayed with positive adjectives and through attractive, embellished and formal language

In this part of the analysis, two different extracts from the text are being analyzed comparatively. One is related to the description of Nila's character while in the other text Parwana's character has been introduced. The language that has been used to display Parwana's character is far different from that which is used to portray Nila's character. It is obvious that the author uses absolutely different language for portraying different characters from different strata. The discrimination of language will be explored in this analysis

- **Description of the text 3: Ideologically loaded words and phrases** such as "beautiful", "graceful", "whore", "bewitching grace", "slender wrist", "pale delicate fingers", and "Big house" reveal a different identity of a woman who belongs to upper

class. She is portrayed as elegant, exquisite and enchanting lady. **Mode and tone:** The use of Simple and declarative mode of the sentences with polished and standard language makes the tone of the narration sensual, attractive and charming. **Tense:** The use of present tense portrays the intentions of the writer behind constructing a different ideology. It shows his obsession with a particular image of Afghan society and its people. **Syntactic Structure:** The use of compound and complex sentence makes the narration attractive and cheerful. **Pronouns** such as **'I', '**my' and 'me' reveal that the author is more declined toward a particular ideology.

- **Description of the text 4: Ideologically loaded words and phrases** such as "daily naan"**,** "thick shouldered"**,** "rough-skinned"**,** "stubby fingers" and "tandoor' all reveal the culture and identity of the society. It is also embedded with the ideology about the sufferings and difficulties of Afghan women in rural areas. **Mode and Tone:** Declarative mode of the selected text makes the tone reflective, observant and gloomy. **Tense:** The use of past tense in this particular excerpt shows author intentions behind the discourse. It seems he wants to turn his back on the stereotypical and traditional role of women. **Syntactic Structure:** Compound and complex sentences make the situation serious and critical which show the significance of language that imparts the hidden ideologies. **Vocabulary:** The use of simple and informal vocabulary reveals the fact that the excerpt has been narrated by a lower class person, resulting into the development of identity. Moreover, the frequent use of **pronoun 'her'** reveals the supremacy, authority and empowerment of the character

7.3.2. Interpretation and Explanation

In the handpicked excerpts, narrator's embedded ideology of power and identity is quite apparent. Both excerpts introduce two major characters but from different social stratum. It is evident that the language which has been leveraged for the portrayal of lower stratum character contains different ideological perspective; while on the other hand, the language which is leveraged to introduce upper class character contains different ideological perspective. Different adjectives have been incorporated for both characters according to their social stratum. Ideologically loaded words also make it evident that there is manifested discrimination between the two characters. Nila Wahdati belongs to upper class and spending a luxurious and lavish life. She has been introduced as heroin and presented as valiant and audacious lady. While introducing her, the author uses the adjectives like "beautiful, graceful creature" which embellish her identity. Additionally, these adjectives make her more attractive and socially high standard woman who has the vigor of grace and beauty to impress, attract and dominate others. It shows her dominancy and importance in social strata. Moreover, the phrase like "big house" makes her personality more formidable and exceptional and it also denotes that she ascribes to upper echelon. Furthermore, she has been praised through certain more vivid adjectives like "long-lashed woman", "dark hair" and "delicate fingers" which represent her identity as beautiful, elegance and suitable for suitors. Moreover, these words make her a perfect woman as these qualities are considered necessary for women. Parwana belongs to lower class. She has been described with negative adjectives.

Her identity has been constructed less attractive and remarkable as compare to that of Nila. The author uses adjectives; "rough-skinned, puffed face and stubby fingers" to portray her character. She possesses no other qualities beyond those that portray her elegant and exquisite and esteemed. Consequently, her identity has been constructed as she has no concern with being beautiful or graceful like Nila. She is really a working women belonging to lower class and has no concern with her outer look. Moreover, she has been introduced while making daily 'Naan' on 'Tandoor'. However, Nila has been introduced while smoking and enjoying her life. It shows a massive discrimination between the two characters. This stark linguistic divergence in characterization serves as a prime empirical example of Ridgeway's (2014) status inequality theory discussed earlier, where material and social standing dictate perceived societal worth. It also provides a direct answer to Research Question 1, showing exactly how the writer constructs textual descriptions to institutionalize class boundaries.

7.4.Excerpt 5 & 6

- **Excerpt 5** "[…] thin waist […] pretty mouth […] arched eyebrows […] pink toenails […] lipstick. […] peach dress without sleeves […] dark sunglasses […] She smiled […] high-heeled shoes […]" (Hosseini, 2013, p. 28).
- **Excerpt 6** "Parwana […] pregnant […] shrouded figure […] sitting […] stiff silence, shriveled up into a ball. […] shoulders gathered, feet tucked beneath her swollen belly […] disappear into the wall. […] shielded […] soiled veil. […] shame rising from her, like steam, the embarrassment, how small she felt, […]" (Hosseini, 2013, p. 28).

The above mentioned extracted parts of the text represent Abdullah's views about the two major characters of the novel; Nila and Parwana. Both characters represent different social stratum and the author usually uses distinctive language for portraying either of the two. In the previous texts, it has been investigated how both are introduced to the audience but here it is explored the way they behave to each other and how much difference is there in both. Moreover, it has also been tried to explore how they encounter to each other.

7.4.1. Description

At the description level, it is evident that both characters have been portrayed through different language. The author uses ideologically loaded words with different perspectives to display the exact situation of the characters.

- **Description of the text 5:** Ideologically loaded words such as "thin waist", "pretty mouth", "arched eyebrows", "pink toenails", "lipstick", "sunglasses" and "high-heeled shoes" are the words that reveal the ideology about beauty, attraction, modernity, liberty, and empowerment. Use of such fascinating and reflective words for an elite class woman reveals the discriminated ideology about portraying different characters. Syntactic Structure: Complex sentences make the narration more embellished for a character that belongs to upper class. Mode and tone: By using declarative sentences, polite, admiring and praising has been developed to portray the character sophisticated and commendable. Pronouns: Frequent use of the pronouns 'her' and 'she' for a rich lady uncovers her authority and empowerment.

- **Description of the text 6:** Ideologically loaded words like “pregnant”, “shrouded figure”, “stiff silence”, “shriveled”, “shoulders gathered”, “feet tucked”, “swollen belly” and “veil” encapsulate the ideology behind a specific characterization. Mode and tone: The use of declarative sentences and pitiable words make the tone of the narration pathetic and gloomy and invoke empathy in readers for the character. The use of figurative language such as ‘like’ highlights the status of the character that is always compared with different things that are socially and cultural less important and are considered as the symbol of rough and tough. Additionally, logical connecters like ‘how’, ‘and’, ‘but’ are used as cohesive devices to construct clash, conflict and relationship in between the sentences and ideas.

7.4.2. Interpretation and Explanation

The excerpts are embedded with numerous ideologically embedded words that reflect the social system of the given society. Conjointly, the texts depict contrastive culture and society in which two female characters are living a life that is totally opposite to one another. First extract represents the upper echelon in which Nila’s character has been presented with highly prestigious status. The words like, “thin waist”, “pretty mouth” and “arched eyebrows” represent her physical beauty, remarkable look and standardized social status. Thin waist and pretty mouth are regarded as the crucial parts of women’s beauty and attraction. Moreover, arched eyebrows add much more to polish it. Whereas, the words like, “pink toenails”, “lipstick”, “sunglasses” and “high-heeled shoes” represent her economic standard. She possesses proficient wealth to apply these ornaments. Moreover, these things represent liberty, authority, superiority, autonomy, and boldness of Nila. In addition, these things are also regarded as mandatory for women. In many societies they are suppose to apply these ornaments. In the second extracted part of the text a lower class woman has been portrayed that is no longer enjoying prestigious and standardized social status. She belongs to a village where women are suppose to work all the day and take care of their children, Furthermore, the people of that village are not much wealthier to provide any kind of facilities to women. Therefore, women have no chance to embellish their beauteous features, look more attractive and utilize ornaments. The words like, “Pregnant”, “shrouded figure” and “swollen belly” depict the supposed role of women in villages particularly when they belong to lower stratum. These words reflect Parwana’s social role and her poor condition. Moreover, she represents all the women of her village and stratum. She has no concern with her beauty and outer look. Whether she is carless about it or not, it is equivocal, but the way the narrator ignores to portray her beauty, shows that lower class women are deprived to enjoy the right to look elegant and exquisite and are bound to live woeful and poignant life. Likewise, the words, “stiff silence”, “shoulders gathered”, “feet tucked”, and “veil” depict Parwana’s cultural obligations. She has covered herself with veil. Her cultural and social stratum does not allow her to unveil her face. Moreover, the sense of inferiority before an alluring, pulchritudinous and affluent lady makes her more submissive and fragile. Likewise, her silence adds more to her socially and economically docile and deferential condition. Throughout the scene, she remains silent in the presence of an opulent and enchanting woman. She lacks the supplies to

decorate herself and look more attractive and exquisite, so she seems unpretentious and modest. This submissive silence and spatial marginalization align heavily with Khan's (2016) observations on context-dependent power dynamics, where wealth explicitly determines discursive dominance. Geographically and culturally, this matches the macro-level 'explanation' stage of Fairclough's model, satisfying the final research objective by illustrating how the text reproduces localized stratification within the broader post-war Afghan milieu.

8. Conclusion

The main focus of the study is to explore social inequality through the lens of Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model and Ridgeway's Social Inequality Theory in Hosseini's And the Mountains Echoed and the analysis reveals that various types of social inequality have been portrayed through the language. Moreover, various causes behind social inequality have also been explored. Following types of social inequality and their causes are evident in the text:

Types of social inequality found in the text: The analysis of the text from the perspective of Tri-Dimensional model reveals that there are two major types of social inequality that have been portrayed in the given text. These types are being elaborated in the following section:

- **Gender Inequality**: A burning issue of every society, gender inequality, has been explored from the given text. The author has portrayed the unequal treatment of different female characters in the text. The major female character, Nila, faces various difficulties in her life and due to her worse treatment and for the sake of her daughter's secure future she flees to France. She stands against the so called norms and traditions of the society which makes her an iron lady. Excerpt 1 and 2 reveal that she has been treated unequally by her father and other 'Patriarchs' of her society. All these aspects of her life have been portrayed through the use of specific language that reveals her strong and determined willpower and empowerment. Moreover, another character can also be seen as the victim of gender inequality that is 'Pari' who is sold for the sake of money. Pari's pathetic story has been revealed through her brother's character that uses unequivocally different linguistic choices to describe the challenges faced by his sister. The phrase 'finger cut to save the hand' reveals the how peripheral she is for her family that she has been sold only to get some money.
- **Status Inequality**: Inequality on the basis of social status and class difference is also evident in the given text. Characters from different social status adopt different linguistic choice in their communication to each other. The excerpts 3, 4, 5, and 6 expose the fact the class distinction and status issues exist in the given society. Through the use of language the author has embedded the ideology that lower class people are always misbehaved and marginalized by the wealthier and the upper crust.

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