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Research Paper

Female Students and Reflection in Care Ethics: The Case Study of Guilan University Students

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Care is a multidimensional concept that has been reflected in the process of modernity. The aim of this study was to investigate care ethics among female students of Guilan University.

Methods: In this research, a qualitative method based on semi-structured interviews and purposive sampling was used. The statistical sample includes 33 students of Guilan University. In total, 11 interviewees were interviewed as a group and 22 interviewees as an individual. The analysis method in this research was thematic analysis.

Results: In data analysis, twelve basic themes, three organizing themes, and one global theme were obtained. The first type was autonomous girls: these types of girls are less inclined to marriage and maternal roles and less interested in circular motherhood and more inclined to linear time and they believed that a circular mother is a boring role that will reduce their agency. The second was heteronomous girls: these types of female students were in maximal motherhood level because they have known a mother with the semiotic such as sacrifice, kindness, self-sacrifice, altruism, etc. Third types of girls were eclectic: this type of female student has both a tendency to linear time (employment and education) and a cyclical time (marriage and motherhood).

Conclusion: Among the existing types, the ideal form was eclectic ethics in which female students have two ethics of heteronomy and autonomy (semiotic and symbolic).

1. Introduction

Man has two important tendencies entitled selfishness and altruism. These tendencies have been considered as an interdisciplinary field of different scientific branches of philosophy, psychology, education, sociology, cultural studies, ethics, etc. The care ethics approach can be traced back to the utilitarian ideas of Jeremy Bentham, the moral development of Lawrence Kohlberg, the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud, and the philosophy of Emmanuel Kant. In addition, Kant emphasized autonomy, which means "independence" and "independence from others," meaning both free from dependence and self-regulation. On the contrary, actions are performed through external coercion, which means heteronomy or legislation through another (Kant, 1999). Heteronomy is closely related to the concept of care ethics, to which later moral feminists paid much attention. One of the first moral feminist thinkers was Carol Gilligan, who developed her theory entitled care ethics, in which, contrary to rationalist (autonomy) ideas, she focused on women's

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feelings (heteronomy). Gilligan believes that Kohlberg's method has a masculine bias. She emphasized that Kohlberg's methodological ears are tuned to male voices, not female ones (Tong, Williams & Dunchin, 2016). gillig an's care ethics is a kind of feminine approach to ethics, which looks at ethics from the perspective of feminine thoughts and feelings. According to Gilligan, masculine thinking is abstract, formal, and logic-oriented (autonomous), and feminine thinking is text-dependent, caring, and compassionate (heteronomous) (Gilligan, 2003).

Gilligan's view of care ethics was later developed by some thinkers. One of the closest theorists of care ethics to Gilligan's thought is Nel Noddings' theory. She believes that women basically identify and define themselves in the context of care and that the ethics of care is a morality that is specific to women, and if men have this trait, they will have it in little amounts (Noddings, 1992; Karami & Akhbari, 2017).

In addition to moral feminists, Kristeva believes in three narratives of feminism. In the first generation narrative, feminists rejected the narrative that considers women as different from men and instead it sought to identify with the masculine symbolic order. The first generation, primarily located prior to 1968, was the movement in which women sought all the same rights and prerogatives that men had. This was the movement that called for equal rights and equal treatment. Its central tenet was women who deserved such things beca4se really they were "just like" men.. In the narrative of the second generation, they emphasized the difference and, inspired by the psychoanalytical and aesthetic t. ought, hhas sought to return to women's archaic, cyclical time, as well as to the mnonumental" time of the species (McAfee, 2004). Kristeva, as a representative of the third generation of feminism, believes that feminism should try to reconcile mother tongue or motherhood with linear historical-political order. She calls on men and women to rethink their more fundamental views on care ethics and motherhood so that a reconciliation can be made between the semiotic (mother) and the symbolic order (Kristeva, 1995, McAfee, 2004 & Bert, 2018). So far, there are two readings of care ethics. Some agree with the reading of care ethics and do not consider it as binding and restrictive but as an opportunity. Others, especially feminists such as Sarah Hoagland, have criticized care ethics. According to them, the person who has to take care of others has the same traditional role as women in life that they do not receive anything in return (Hoagland, 1991).

In addition to theoretical discussions, the results of the work of Kohlberg & Kramer (1969), Wark and Dennis (1996), Tulviste and Kor (2005), Mirzanejad (2009), Khosravi and Abbaszadeh (2015) showed that women rely on care ethics and men emphasize social justice. Conversely, the results of research by Shimizuo (2001) and Juujarvi, Myry & Pesso (2010) showed that men and women have a common care ethic, and this is not a purely feminine issue. Also Mohammadi Fesharaki (2013) in a study entitled " Investigating the concept of motherhood between two generations of women " shows mothers have chosen strategies such as change, preference, procrastination, and withdrawal.

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the reflection in care ethics among female students of Guilan University. What doubles the necessity of this research among female students was this fact which most researches on care ethics are theoretical and have quantitatively, positively and indirectly addressed the issue of care ethics under the motherhood concept. In addition, the vaste majority of students are female in Iran and they are exposed to all kinds of socialization inside and outside of university system and have many life experiences that have a major impact on the social sphere. The University of Guilan included 10 faculties and one campus unit, 2 research institutes (Caspian Sea water basin and Guilanology), more than 600 faculties members, amounting to 7271 male (42.2%) and 9947 female (57.8%) students (as the largest higher education center in the northern region of Iran). The research questions include; what was the experience of female students in the field of care ethics at the University of Guilan? In addition, how was this ethic constructed and reflected among students? What were the different types of care ethics among students?

2. Materials and Methods

In this study, a qualitative method based on semi-structured interviews has been used. Purposive sampling was used to select people. The statistical population was all female students of Guilan University. The statistical sample includes 33 students. The main reason for the adequacy of data collection was the logic of theoretical saturation in qualitative research (Zokaei, 2022). In total, 11 interviewees were interviewed as a group and 22 interviewees as an individual. The method of analysis in this research was the method of thematic analysis of Braun and Clarke (2006). In this method, the intention was to find, analyze and report patterns; that is, the main purpose of this method was to compress information (Zokaei, 2022). Braun and Clarke's thematic networks include text familiarity (reading and revision of data repetitive), creation of first code (data encoding), basic themes search (sorting codes into themes), and organizing themes (resulting themes) from the composition and summary of

the basic themes, the global theme (excellent theme containing the principles based on the text as a whole) and preparation of the last report (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

The recorded interviews were transcribed and the text was reviewed several times. Phrases, explanations, and statements that narrated the mentality of the girl's students were extracted from care ethics; then based on the common semantic categories, the groups were classified. Finally, the basic, organized and inclusive categories were identified.

In evaluating qualitative research, the issue of credibility was given more importance than reliability. Regarding validity, different strategies such as long-term contact with the research environment, use of different theories and research, data control by interviewees, and similar research were used. Regarding dependability (reliability), various measures such as taking notes, implementing recorded interviews on tape, compiling an interview handbook, preparing a list of interviewees, and lecturers and researchers were used in constructing categories.

Table 1. Introducing the characteristics of the interviewees

Code	Name	Age	marital status	Grade	Fields of study	Year of University entrance	Type of interview
1	Nasrin	19	Single	Bachelor	Law	2017	Individual
2	Fatemeh	21	Single	Bachelor	Russian language and literature	2018	Individual
3	Setareh	24	Single	Master	Agriculture	2018	Individual
4	Fatemeh	19	Single	Bachelor	Geography	2017	Individual
5	Zahra	31	Single	Master	Iranology	2018	Individual
6	Niloufar	19	Single	Bachelor	the mechanic	2018	Individual
7	Arezoo	20	Single	Bachelor	Textile engineering	2018	Individual
8	Shirin	19	Single	Bachelor	Law	2015	Individual
9	Maryam	23	Single	Bachelor	Counseling	2018	Individual
10	Elnaz	20	Single	Bachelor	Counseling	2017	Individual
11	Mahnaz	21	Single	Bachelor	Economy	2018	Individual
12	Leila	21	Single	Bachelor	Islamic theology	2018	Individual
13	Nazanin	25	Married	Master	Law	2016	Individual
14	Sarah	26	Married	Master	Law	2016	Individual
15	Sheida	20	Single	Bachelor	Accounting	2017	Individual
16	Atefeh	19	Single	Bachelor	Counseling	2018	Individual
17	Shiva	20	Single	Bachelor	Tourism	2018	Individual
18	Samira	24	Single	Master	Law	2017	Individual
19	Mahtab	24	Single	Master	Textile engineering	2018	Individual
20	Shabnam	22	Single	Master	Arabic language and literature	2015	Individual
21	Soraya	18	Single	Master	Geography	20`8	Individual
22	Sadaf	20	Single	Master	Counseling	2016	Individual
23	Narges	29	Single	Master	Geography	2016	Group
24	Afsaneh	27	Single	Master	Geography	2016	Group
25	Somayeh	27	Single	Master	Geography	2018	Group
26	Nasim	24	Married	Master	Geography	2017	Group
27	Marziyeh	24	Single	Master	Sociology	2017	Group
28	Parisa	34	Single	Master	Sport management	2017	Group
29	Azadeh	24	Single	Master	English language and literature	2017	Group
30	Mitra	28	Single	Master	Iranology	2017	Group
31	Zhaleh	24	Single	Master	Chemical engineering	2017	Group
32	Sahar	28	Single	Master	Water engineering	2017	Group
33	Zainab	24	Single	Master	Iranology	2017	Group

3. Results

Among the samples studied at the University of Guilan (33 students), 16 students were studying at the undergraduate level, 17 students were studying at the master's degree, and their entrance year was from 2015 -2018. The age range of the students was from 18 -34 years old, of which 3 were married and 30 ones single. The interviewees were from different cities of Iran. Then, the interview questions were conducted in line with the aims of the research and the following types of care were obtained.

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Table 2. Identification of basic, organized and global themes (Different types of care ethics)

Rank	Codes	Basic themes	Organized themes	Global theme
1	Reluctance to sexual intercourse, low self-confidence, negative attitude toward marital life, fear of marriage norms	Rejection of marriage	Autonomous girls	Different types of tendencies to care ethics
	Reluctance to have children, belief in the difficult responsibility of having children, dislike of a child, no increase in world population, negative view to the world	Disobedience to the motherhood		
	Negative effect on the shape of the breasts, dislike of breastfeeding, Hatred of breastfeeding	Breastfeeding refusal		
2	Being kind, patient, self-sacrifice, self-giving, sensitivity	Maternal schemas	Heteronomous girls	
	Desire to institute a family, love a child, start a new life, experience another stage of life, fear of loneliness, meet emotional and sexual needs, reduce stress, have a companion in life, age and need to form a life, to get tired of being single, and marriage as a religious matter	Desire to get married		
	Interested in children, maternal sanctity, acquiring the role of mother, Special statues of motherhood, existential belonging, maternal experience, the joy of motherhood, the monotony of childless life, the sweetening of life, the change of meaning of life, the division of gender work	Desire to motherhood		
	The effect on the child's intelligence and health, strengthening the child's immune system, meeting the child's emotional needs, transferring mother-to-child love, and forming a deep emotional relationship between mother and child	The desire to breastfeeding		
3	Happiness, taking care of your appearance and health, paying attention to your needs and interests, taking care of your personal life, exercising, having personal friends, refusing to sacrifice too much, valuing yourself, having self-esteem, self-confidence, having education, having financial independence, reading books, communication with society, familiarity with modern technology and software in the world, the willingness of men to cooperate in household chores	Being modern	Eclectic Girls	
	Being a good teacher for the child, having general information, guiding the child correctly, teaching the child to plan, leaving the child free to gain different experiences, teaching the child etiquette, teaching the child to love nature and the environment, teaching human issues to the child, giving importance to raising children	Being a coach		
	Understanding children, meeting the emotional needs of the child, being friends with the child, using the right methods of punishment, do not make the child rude, supporting children, not making the child dependent, not neglecting the child, Independent training, giving the child confidence.	Being a supporter		
	Finding the ideal person, being young and achieving the suitable age, achieving self-awareness, achieving mental readiness, intellectual maturity, reaching single entertainments, finding financial independence, gaining single experiences	Delay of marriage		
	Improving job status, achieving intellectual maturity, achieving mental readiness	Maternal delay		

3-1. Different types of tendencies toward caring

Marriage, motherhood, and parenting are important characteristics of the care ethic that has a heteronomous nature in which female students live in a range of autonomy and heteronomy. Care ethic overlaps with Gilligan's stages of moral development and Kristeva's narrative of feminism. These are three types:

a. Autonomous girls

Some interviewees, based on the view of Kristeva (Kristeva, 1995), emphasized more symbolic order and less semiotic order and want to be the subject and negation of parental contamination. Parisa, a 24 years-old graduate student in sports management, criticizes the maternal ethics of some mothers and believes: "Our parents are very sensitive and comment on our personal work, but if I become a mother, I do not want to have so much influence over my children, I want them not to be dependent but to be trained as an independent"".

Girls want to experience more and motherhood is not just an abstract concept but a concrete and living thing in everyday life. Narges, 29 years old, a graduate student in geography and urban planning, said"" In general, a mother should train her child in such a way that she/he is not alone in the community, does not spoil her/him. Let the child experience whatever he/she wants, but not the unusual things. It will make him/her regret in future if I had done this a few years ago, I would have reached a certain point. Let the child experience a series of issues to become more mature".

- **Refusal to marry:**

nn e of Kristeva's most important concepts is refusal, and one of its meanings is violated of a prohibition matter. sis obedience to marriage means hhere-now", as opposed to the generality of marriage. In this regard, some subjects of research are opposed to marriage and, according to Kristeva, they have a linear tendency (employment and education) to live. In this process, they prefer the real and symbolic order to the maternal and the semiotic order.

Azadeh, 24 years old, a graduate student of English literature, opposed marriage:" I do not like to get married, I am not very optimistic about married life. I prefer to live alone. Now the situation has become such that you can't really trust anyone, let alone choose someone as a life partner..

Maryam, a 23-years-old undergraduate student in counseling, said, "I have always been against marriage because I do not like sex. I always think of getting married without sex intercourse".

These types of girls do not want to get married. Reasons for this include reluctance to have sexual intercourse, pessimism about married life, the unreliability of boys for cohabitation, social restrictions, preference for single life, and fear of marriage norms.

- **Refusal of childbearing:**

One of the main reasons for caring ethics is childbearing and motherhood, but some girl students tend to disobey maternal responsibilities. The main problem of this type of girl is that they have high autonomy but low heteronomy. They cite physical, economic, and social (symbolic) reasons that make them less likely to childbearing.

Somayeh, 27 years old, a graduate geography student, refuses family and maternal order: "Imm not interested in; I think a child is not valuable for all the trouble, and that when you tend to bear a child, you must secure him in every way, and besides that, it is born in a society that "There is no confidence..

Instead of having children, some students considered alternative methods such as adoption and the role of a teacher, and they believe that these roles fill the void of the mother's role.

Azadeh, 24 years old, a graduate student of English literature, believed: "I do not have a very positive view to the world, I feel, being in this world is not a very nice experience to birth another one to it, that's why I do not think to be a mother in future, but if I have to raise a child, maybe I adopt her/him from an orphanage. I may not be able to accept the responsibility of a child, I may find the intention to spend time with children as a teacher or in any other way and help them to grow and improve their live...

- **Breastfeeding refusal:**

Some students had more individualistic morals than motherhood; they place more importance on embodiment between maternal values and personal or physical values and tend to reject breastfeeding and homogenous identities in the Kristeva sense.

In this regard, Zeinab, 24 years old, a graduate student in Iranian studie:" Imm sensitive to the form of my breasts, which is why I do not like breastfeeding..

This type of woman denies the imaginary and motherly matter, and the female subject is assumed to be identical to the male subject, and according to Kristeva (1995), masculine characteristics are important only as the original and normal criterion of the human subject.

Elnaz, 20 years old, undergraduate student"" Breastfeeding is easy in appearance, but it takes a lot of time and patience, I do not have the patience of the baby, let alone want to breastfeed every minute..

b. heteronomous girls(Care- thinking)

- **Expressing motherhood**

According to the schemas, mothers are always known for traits such as kindness, care, compassion, etc. They try to conform to the expectations of the female role. According to Kristeva (1995), motherhood is defined by a trait or a semiotic (emotional) than a symbolic (rational) matter. Most interviewees believed that a mother should play an expressive and emotional role.

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In this regard, Atefeh, 19 years old, a bachelor's degree student in counseling, defined a mother with traits such as kindness and adjustment to the social structure of society and also said, " A good mother is a kind mother who cares about her family, cares about her life, does not take part in cyberspace that to neglect her child and keep him hungry..

Therefore, this type of woman believed in the division of gender work based on the dual division of men for instrumental and suitable roles and women for expressive (emotional) roles. Arezoo, a 20-years-old undergraduate student, described motherhood with an emotional and caring element: “The ideal mother is a loving and forgiving mother, her child is a trust, and she should take good care of herhim..

Sarah, 26 years old, married and a master's student in the field of law emphasizes the roles, norms, and behaviors of mothers: ” In general, a person who becomes a mother must be self-giving, which means that she cannot do many things that she could do before. In my opinion, a woman should be able to forget herself and spend more time with her child. She should be patient and not selsish..

- **Agree to marriage:**

Heteronomous girls, besides the maternal schemas, consider the importance of marriage as a function and a shelter for women in social life. Heteronomous girls deal with the social aspect of marriage and believe marriage always eliminates loneliness and develops one's personality.

Samira, 24 years old and law student, said: “I would like to marry with an ideal person. I think marriage is so important that everyone should marry with an honest person. You become perfect with the other person and that person can help you achieve much of your goals..

It seems that girls suffer from a social problem, which they are more passive subjects in choosing a spouse, and the lack of agency in choosing a spouse and undecided situation puts them in an anxious place. Sheida, a 20-years-old accounting student, said: “If a suitable case is found, I will get married. I would like to institute a family. I feel that every woman needs a man in her personal life that one can rely on him in all cases and he will sspport her..

Sahar, 28 years old, single, and a graduate student of water engineering, had a similar opinion: “I would like to get married, a person can live alone for a while, but then he will feels empty..

- **Agree to childbearing:**

Some participants, like Kristeva, believed that motherhood is a source of vitality in life, meaningfulness, and the preservation of generational survival. Based on the archetype of motherhood, they consider the demand for birth in women as a real and objective thing that leads in the survival of a generation where symbolic order is incapable of understanding. In this regard, Afsaneh, a 27-years-old graduate student in geography, believed that the relationship between mother and child is an existential one: “The child really gives another type of vitality to life, it changes the meaning of life. The least benefit is continuation of generation..

Although due to the structural limitations that cause barriers to childbearing, from mentally point of view, many students in the research sample believed that motherhood is intrinsic, objective, and real, that is, parenting is unique to women.

Sahar, 28-year-old, a graduate student in water engineering, believed: “I would love to be a mother, the feeling of belonging someone to you and raising successful person in society are very singular..

- **Tendency to breastfeed:**

Students who want to breastfeed their children and want to have an physical relationship with them often believed in maternal schemas, the tendency to marriage, and having children, and look at breastfeeding in terms of usefulness. Therefore, they used logical (symbolic) reasons for it.

Sarah, 26 years old, a married law student, said: “Yes, I will give my milk to my baby because the benefits are more than the difficulties, of course, if I have the physical ability..

Because doctors emphasize on breastfeeding, I think the percentage of it has come down..

Nasim, 29 years old, fiancé, a graduate student in geography and urban planning”” I will definitely breastfeed. Today's mothers are very sensitive, they think that their milk is low and the baby should drink a lot of milk, while babies survived with a little milk in the past. Many people say that the baby should be fat, that's why they give powdered milk..

Niloufar, 19-year-old a bachelor's student in mechanics, emphadideddd I will wefinitely breastfeed my baby, he must drink breast milk to be healthy. A mother who does not breastfeed her child is not a good mother”.

This group of students had a strong tendency toward motherhood. Not only they believed in the instinctive and biological relationship between mother and child, but they were also eager to care and did not limit the desire for motherhood to just having a child.

c. Eclectic girls (autonomous/heteronomous)

In the third type, some female students, tend to combine autonomy and heteronomy, they want independence, self-esteem, and scientific processes, as well as altruism and heteronomy. Mahtab, a 24-years-old textile graduate student, believed in an eclectic maternal role"""" n ideal mother should be educated or at least a knowledgeable person and read a book etc. It's not necessary to sacrifice herself completely for her family. Excessive sacrifice is often seen in traditional women role and they forget themselves; on the other hand, being too self-giving makes her forget her role as a wife, a sister, and a mother. A woman must be between tradition and modernism, take care of herself and at the same time take care of her family..

- **Being a coach and a supporter**

Based on the approach of girls to childbearing and motherhood, they learn how to behave like a mother based on modern maternal knowledge:

Shirin, 19, a law student, considered a mother as a mentor: "The ideal mother is someone who, before deciding to have a child, read psychology books on how to raise her child If the child is a girl she must teach her how to love others and if the child is a boy, how to treat others and preserve the dignity of women are important?"

- **delay of marriage:**

Some have an intermediate view. According to Kristeva (1995), on one hand, they have both tendency to live a linear life (such as education and job) and circular life.

Nasrin 19 –years old an undergraduate law student said: "I do not think about marriage now, because I have other priorities in my life. Other girls may feel that they are not ready, they must first do something in their lives that is a priority for them..

Human behavior is often based on social interaction and situations. They adjust their plans according to the situation. Thus, they define, interpret, or delay their actions in the face of external stimuli. They postpone their semiotics in order to make a symbolic system.

Shabnam, a 22-years-old undergraduate student of Arabic literature believed: "Not now, but I would like to get married in future, because I have been studying for a few years now, and I prefer to have some fun..

Therefore, female students do not tend to leave the role of maternal but postpone the role of mother to do social benefits such as economic and cultural capital.

Niloufar, a 19-years-old undergraduate student in mechanics, said: "Yes, I like to get married when I reach a certain age, for example 26 years old. Because intellectual maturity makes the marital relationship stronger and wiser..

Thus, although these girls have achieved physical maturity, they are not emotionally ready for marriage (social maturity), they consider marriage as a precondition for economic maturity and access to cultural capital. Fatemeh, 21 years old, a Russian language undergraduate student, said" "I would like to get married, but not now. We have to achieve a certain age for marriage, 25 years old and above, for example, ages of 26 and 27 are suitable. We must first be independent, get a good job in life and continue our education..

- **Maternal delay:**

Some of the interviewees have a mixed view. In some ways, they want to postpone motherhood to achieve cultural and economic capital, and in other ways, they think about motherhood, and after achieving social benefits, they want a motherhood experience.

Sarah, a 26-years-old married law student, said: "I do not want to be a mother now, because my job and study conditions are not available, but after I achieve stability, I will definitely take action..

According to the feminist view, women should give more importance to the job role than the role of motherhood, but many students want to harmonize and reconcile the job with motherhood roles. This means providing conditions for women to make scientific and educational advancements without having to give up the motherhood role.

Parisa, 24 years -old student of sports management, had a generational view of motherhood and said""I am interested in becoming a mother. Of course, not to have a child a year after marriage, but in my opinion, sometime should pass a.ter marriage".

According to Kristeva (1995), these types of people tend to balance the processes of nature and the constraints of culture; That is, they adapt to the desire for motherhood and the desire for social activities outside the home. Fatemeh, 21years-old, an undergraduate student, believed: "Being a mother is not necessary, but it is not bad for life either. This is good after a person has achieved a number of things financially and intellectually..

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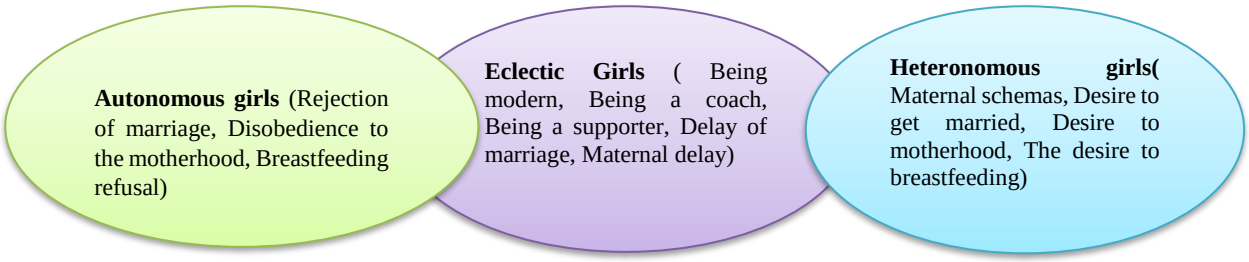
Figure 1. **Inductive model resulting from research findings**



4. Discussion and Conclusion

The results showed that there were three types of care ethics among the studied students. The First type was autonomous girls: This type of girls was less inclined to marriage, maternal roles, interested in circular motherhood and more inclined to linear time. They had also refused to accept responsibility for their spouses and motherhood, and had reflected care ethics (symptomatic) more than any other type. They believed that motherhood is a boring role that would cut their agency. These types of girls often "identified" themselves with men and were subject to the symbolic order. They were more "autonomous" and less "heteronomous". This type was associated with the first generation of Kristeva (1995) feminists. They did not live within the framework of a destiny predetermined by their role and gender, did not consider themselves obliged to have children and raise them and set new plans and tasks for themselves that were in line with their personal development and progress. According to Gilligan (2003), these types of women pay more attention to themselves. Non-acceptance of motherhood in them was a more individualistic aspect and they were in the first stage of moral development.

The second type was heteronomous girls: These types of female students were maximal motherhood; although they were not completely opposed to girls' education and employment, they had "identified" a mother with schemas such as sacrifice, kindness, self-sacrifice, altruism, and sensitivity. They believed in marriage and married life and were more inclined to become mothers and breastfeed their children. According to Kristeva (1995), their view of motherhood was not merely a description of motherhood but a performance of motherhood; because these girls believed that men do not have the necessary skills to take proper care of their children and women are better able to do these tasks. For them, maternal duties were largely inherent and "naturalized." These types of girls were more likely than others to adhere to the roles, values, and norms of femininity and motherhood because their actions were more subject to structures. This is in line with Gilligan (2003), who considers women's ethics as a motherly, care ethics in which women tend to be mothers and care for their children, and they devote all their energy and attention to care and development of their children and ignore personal interests for the benefit of them. In this regard, the findings of this research are consistent with the research results of Mirzanejad (2009), Khosravi and Abbaszadeh (2015) in Iran, Kohlberg (1969), Wark and Dennis (1996), Tulviste and Kor (2005).

The third type of girls were hybrids and formed the main form of the girls studied which was reminiscent of the third type of Kristeva (1995) feminist. On one hand, they believe in both autonomous and heteronomous motherhood. Although they were not opposed to caring ethics, they did not limit it to women, but also considered it as a part of the duties of men. Not only they encouraged men to take part in household chores, but they also invited their children to take part. This type of woman wanted a balance between individual (autonomy) and collective morality (heteronomy). They constructs a mother in the sense of being a mentor and supporter of the child. This type of female student had both a tendency to linear time (employment and education) and a cyclical time (marriage and motherhood). So, they believe that not only is there no contradiction between the two semiotic and symbolic demands but also the complementary relationship between two types. The combination of two ethics of care (semiotic) and justice (symbolic) in this research is consistent with the research results of Mohammadi Fesharaki (2012), Shimizu (2001), and Juujarvi et al. (2010).

Based on the research data, the ethics of care for maternal values and norms among female students in the study population have been reflected**.** Considering the cultural conditions of Iran, it is desirable for female students to have a combination of heteronomous and autonomous ethics (semiotic and symbolic). Therefore, it is suggested that the relevant institutions, in order to allow women, take steps to expand educational and employment opportunities (full-time and part-time) for female students, and give them the necessary to play the role of care and maternal ethics (heteronomy). Importantly, the current qualitative research has certain capabilities and limitations. Although it has more

internal validity and depth, but it should not be extended to all female students in the country. Undoubtedly, quantitative research fills the gap and limitations of qualitative research to a significant extent.

5. Ethical Considerations

Compliance with ethical guidelines

All ethical principles were considered in this article. The participants were informed about the purpose of the research and its implementation stages. They were also assured about the confidentiality of their information and were free to leave the study whenever they wished, and if desired, the research results would be available to them.

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Authors' contributions

All authors have participated in the design, implementation and writing of all sections of the present study.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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