



CONSEQUENCES OF ETHNIC RELATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE OF TAKAB

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ABSTRACT

The coexistence of diverse ethnic groups—such as Persians, Turks, Kurds, Baluchis, Turkmens, Arabs, and Lors—within a single political geography highlights the cultural and ethnic diversity of Iranian society. Accordingly, this study aims to explore ethnic relations and their impact on the economic and social life of Takab County. The research employs a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative data from questionnaires (survey study) and qualitative insights from interviews (field study). This correlational study examines the relationships between various variables. The statistical population includes all male and female residents of Takab city, with a sample size of 381 individuals selected through Cochran's formula and stratified sampling. Data collection was conducted using a researcher-designed questionnaire, and the analysis was performed using SPSS software, applying Pearson correlation, multiple regression, and independent t-tests. Findings indicate a significant negative correlation between ethnic relations and ethnic convergence, alongside a significant positive correlation between ethnic relations and ethnic divergence. No significant difference was found between Turkish and Kurdish groups regarding their control over social and economic power centers. Additionally, there is a significant positive correlation between the influence of ethnic elites and ethnic relations, as well as between ethnic and social justice and ethnic divergence. The study also shows no significant relationship between increased ethnic fertility and the control of social and economic power centers. Lastly, a significant negative correlation exists between the rational actions of ethnic groups, relative deprivation, and the sense of ethnic injustice with ethnic convergence.

Keywords: Ethnic relations, inter-ethnic relations, economic and social life, Takab County

INTRODUCTION

Ethnicities reflect individuals' social identities, which are shaped by their connections to place,

language, race, social structures, and intellectual and epistemological orientations. This construction forms the basis of one's self-awareness and the way they present themselves to others. Modern definitions of ethnic identity emphasize cultural markers such as language, religion, customs, and historical heritage, all of which are analyzed within a cultural framework that shapes social relationships. Essentially, an ethnic group is a community of people who share a common origin, a shared destiny, collective emotions, and exclusive access to valued resources. Through interactions with other groups and adherence to shared cultural codes, they develop a collective identity within the context of intergroup relations. Ethnicity embodies the defining traits of a group that sees itself as distinct from others. Once individuals recognize their belonging to an ethnic group, a persistent identity emerges that is transmitted across generations. Language, religious beliefs, and unique cultural institutions become integral parts of this ethnic legacy. An ethnic group is essentially a human-racial community united by common language, culture, lifestyle, and collective aspirations within a broader racial category, so much so that it can be distinguished from and separated from other groups of the same race. The issue of ethnicity and ethnic groups has drawn considerable attention, especially after the collapse of communism in the former Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. Today, nearly 180 countries around the world are ethnically diverse, displaying varying levels of ethnic and racial heterogeneity. Iran is among these nations and reflects this diversity through its multiple ethnic and cultural groups. It is commonly described as a "multi-ethnic" and "multi-racial" society—an undeniable reality that profoundly shapes its social fabric.

New concepts of ethnicity and ethnic identity appeared in the 1960s, following the third wave of the formation of nation-states in former colonial countries after World War II and the decline of Western military power. On the other hand, events after the collapse of communism (1989) in countries like Yugoslavia confronted many observers with the emergence of a group of collective feelings and behaviors that were once thought to have disappeared forever from Europe. Ethnicity and ethnic nationalism emerged in opposition to the concept of nationality, which was a manifestation of the nation-state. Nevertheless, since the mid-20th century, ethnicity has become one of the fundamental concepts in the social sciences. Yousefi and Asgharpour (2009), in their study titled "*Ethnocentrism and Its Effect on Inter-ethnic Relations in Iran*," define ethnocentrism as a cultural attitude where members of an ethnic group view their values, norms, and way of life as superior, judging other ethnic groups through stereotypical lenses. In another study, Yousefi (2001) titled "*Inter-ethnic Relations and Their Impact on the National Identity of Ethnic Groups in Iran*," explores the intensity and closeness of inter-ethnic relations across economic, political, cultural, and social spheres, and how these relations affect ethnic groups' attachment and loyalty to the national community. The findings reveal that increased inter-ethnic cooperation, which combines intellectual, emotional, and economic interactions, strengthens ethnic groups' loyalty to the nation. Conversely, heightened ethnic conflicts and hostilities weaken this attachment and loyalty. Chelbi and Jenadeleh (2007) conducted a comparative study among the Lur, Arab, and Dezfuli ethnic groups in Khuzestan province, focusing on cultural factors that influence economic success. Additionally, Tavassoli and Qasemi (2002), in their study "*Ethnic Relations and Its Relationship with the Transformation of Collective Identity (Case Study: Ilam)*," investigate the potential for rich social interactions among groups and how these relate to the transformation of broader collective identities—regional and national—testing hypotheses on social relations in economic, political, intellectual, and emotional dimensions. Following the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the vulnerabilities in the country's identity and cohesion—exacerbated by changes occurring at the revolution's margins and the rise of ethnic movements in neighboring regions—intensified the discourse around ethnic demands within Iran. During this period, ethnic movements manifested in two distinct ways: some leaders aimed to construct and promote a new ethnic identity, while others focused on articulating specific ethnic demands. The essence of ethnic and local demands can be categorized into four main areas: the preservation and protection of local culture and language; the achievement of full legal equality and equal opportunities for advancement at all administrative and governmental levels, irrespective of ethnic background; decentralization, which includes calls for greater

participation of national elites, reforms in the administrative system, and increased provincial autonomy; and finally, the pursuit of higher status and additional privileges (Shirin Bayani et al., 2005: 279). Except for the initial demand with an ethnic emphasis, the other demands are neither extraordinary nor outside the general framework of the national plan, and pursuing them remains within the bounds of the country's laws. This raises the question: why has the issue of ethnicity become so prominent in this context? It is possible that the indifference of critics and scholars toward these fundamental national concerns, along with the failure to adequately address them, has played a significant and decisive role in creating this problematic situation. Given the ongoing ambiguity and uncertainty surrounding the core issue of ethnicity and ethnicism in Iran, how can we expect to avoid related challenges? Unfortunately, in recent years, the response to the issue of ethnicity has been dominated by policies of homogenization and, to some extent, stagnation, with minimal effort to address the underlying problems caused by ethnic tensions and conflicts. Nonetheless, paying serious attention to this matter is essential, given Iran's diverse ethnic composition. Perhaps the only viable solution is not to erase the religious, ideological, and ethnic identities in Iran, but rather to reconstruct and reshape them based on contemporary concepts emerging in the modern world.

Ethnic diversity represents a significant opportunity for the Islamic Republic of Iran. By leveraging this vast and rich resource, Iran can safeguard both its Islamic and Iranian culture and civilization amid various cultural movements. The ethnic diversity within Iran's population offers new possibilities for effective national governance. Through careful and strategic macro-level management, society can not only navigate dynamic transformations within its political boundaries but also strengthen the country's regional influence by harnessing the impact of ethnic groups whose languages and cultures often transcend national borders. Since ethnic languages extend beyond political boundaries, transnational political, cultural, and economic developments within these ethnic groups can profoundly affect communities on both sides of the border. The city of Takab, situated in the southern part of West Azerbaijan province, exemplifies a multi-ethnic society, hosting Turkish and Kurdish ethnic groups alongside Shiite, Sunni, and Ahl-e-Haq religious communities. This diversity highlights the rich cultural, ethnic, and religious mosaic of the region. However, ethnic and religious conflicts and tensions at international, national, and local levels heavily influence the relationships between these groups. When interactions become distorted, they can lead to uncontrollable and harmful consequences for all parties involved, affecting both personal and public spheres, including the national level. Therefore, it is crucial to delve deeper into ethnic and religious issues to foster meaningful and constructive communication among ethnic actors. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the interactions between the Turkish and Kurdish ethnic groups and their effects on the economic and social aspects at the local level. We intend to explore both the convergence and divergence of these ethnic groups and evaluate how their interactions and distinctions influence the economic and social life of the Takab region.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Interethnic Relations

Humans have traditionally lived within a wide range of diverse societies, embracing multiple identities. This societal diversity and identity variety have generally been maintained without significant difficulties or conflicts. Individuals have been identified through various affiliations—families, villages, cities, regions, age and gender groups, social classes, religious, ethnic, and national communities, as well as by their common humanity. These affiliations serve different purposes depending on the context. Typically, these identities coexist peacefully, and only in specific situations, such as during war, does loyalty to one identity surpass others. In essence, identity is often situational. At the social level, however, collective identities and the communities they encompass gain greater importance than individual preferences. Here, the strength of collective cultural identities becomes the primary focus. The

sociocultural identity discussed here refers specifically to ethnic or ethnic community identities (Smith, 2004: 185). Breton also acknowledges that "identity can exist at multiple levels, and individuals may simultaneously hold several identities without conflict," but he cautions that pinpointing ethnic identity is complex. He notes that "social and ethnic groups often belong to ambiguous, fluid collections that do not fit neatly into fixed categories" (Breton, 2001: 23). Due to such ambiguity and the lack of consensus surrounding the concept of interethnic relations, a detailed analysis is necessary to clarify the term and improve understanding of related issues.

Ethnic Competition

Ethnic group identities tend to become more pronounced and intensified when neighboring groups compete over scarce resources. This competition helps explain not only the formation and dissolution of ethnic groups but also why ethnic identities hold significance in certain contexts and fade in others. The theory of competition seeks to identify the conditions under which ethnic identities take precedence over other forms of identity. In developing countries, especially during modernization, ethnic groups frequently engage in competition for limited economic and political resources. It is during such conflicts that ethnic identities gain heightened importance, serving as the key factor distinguishing one group from another—whereas before such competition, these distinctions were often less critical (Olzak, 1985: 25). Consequently, the presence of competing ethnic groups vying for access to resources—whether opportunities or material goods—amplifies ethnic identities and triggers behavior rooted in these identities. According to this perspective, the scarcity and unequal distribution of resources fuel inter-ethnic competition, which, in turn, elevates the prominence of ethnic identity, leading to increased ethnic demands and influencing the behavioral patterns of these groups.

Pluralism

The cultural presence of ethnic groups has consistently enriched the vitality and dynamism of nations. However, social, political, and economic factors can sometimes lead to tensions and conflicts worldwide. Among the most influential elements affecting ethnic groups in any country are government policies and practices, which can either strengthen national unity or contribute to its fragmentation. Anthony Elliott highlights that modern states have advanced and facilitated cooperation among ethnic groups by implementing new educational systems, transforming ethnocentrism into ethnic nationalism (Smith, 1983: 29).

Ethnic Conflict

Ethnocentrism has long played a crucial role in shaping relationships within ethnic and racial groups. When a group views its way of life as superior and its members as more intelligent than those of other groups, it becomes challenging to acknowledge and appreciate different lifestyles. This mindset often hinders both dominant and minority groups from achieving reconciliation, leading to a lack of constructive and meaningful interactions (Benton, 1980: 78). Many scholars argue that because ethnocentrism is typically learned early in life and resides largely in the unconscious, it poses a significant barrier to effective cross-cultural communication. Stewart and Benton have highlighted the detrimental effects of ethnocentrism on intercultural exchanges:

1. Ethnocentric beliefs about a person's culture create a very limited and defensive social identity.
2. Ethnocentrism requires the perception of members of other cultures based on stereotypes.
3. The dynamics of ethnocentrism are such that comparative judgments between one culture and others are made with a hostile attitude, wherein the individual considers their own culture superior and looks down on other cultures (Smith, 1993: 124).

Jandt states, "Strong ethnocentrism leads to protests and the rejection of the richness and knowledge of other cultures. This prevents communication and the exchange of ideas and skills between people. Because ethnocentrism does not consider other perspectives, it tends to be limiting and exclusive" (Fisher, 1984: 145). Beyond being "limiting and exclusive," Jandt explains that strong ethnocentrism fosters individualistic ideologies. When people view their own culture as the only true culture, they discriminate against others whose cultural norms conflict with their values and behaviors. Ethnocentrism is often the root of various forms of fanaticism, even if one's culture seems natural and normal to them. Consequently, ethnocentric judgments frequently rely on comparing one culture to another.

Competence and Bias in Elite Competition

Bias or prejudice refers to the tendency to support a theory or proposition without critically examining its truth or falsehood. It is often accompanied by a refusal to consider alternative, logical perspectives. Bias typically influences a person's judgment unconsciously, leading to misunderstandings and conflicts. People may develop biases in favor of or against individuals, ethnicities, nations, religions, social classes, political parties, or theoretical and ideological frameworks within scientific fields. In essence, bias reflects a one-sided perspective, lacking impartiality or openness. It can manifest in various forms and is closely related to preconceptions and intuition (Shahari-Nejad, 1985: 128). The influence of stereotypes, biases, and prejudices extends far beyond what we might expect in our daily lives, decisions, and reactions. While overt bias against racial, ethnic, religious, or gender groups is largely rejected and even legally prohibited in many societies, stereotypes and prejudices persist beneath the surface. Hidden biases significantly affect educational systems, healthcare, and individual decisions in professional and interpersonal contexts. Although overt ethnic and racial biases have declined considerably in recent decades, covert biases have become more prevalent and entrenched. Overt and covert biases differ fundamentally in their processes. Overt prejudice involves conscious awareness of bias, where an individual believes their evaluation is fair and justified. They possess reasons that seem logical and are motivated to act accordingly. In contrast, hidden biases operate unconsciously and involuntarily. This form of prejudice often goes unnoticed by both the individual and others. However, upon encountering related situations or subtle cues linked to the target group, the biased response is triggered automatically, influencing perception, memory, and behavior silently.

Hidden bias occurs when individuals consciously reject stereotypes, promote anti-discrimination, and even support equality, yet unconsciously retain negative associations. This does not mean that individuals deliberately conceal their prejudices; rather, they are unaware of these unconscious processes. Both overt and hidden biases manifest in Iranian society, affecting attitudes and behaviors toward women, religious and ethnic minorities, various Iranian ethnic groups, gender minorities, speakers of different languages and dialects, and individuals with physical disabilities or mental health conditions.

Relative Deprivation

Until recent decades, most theories regarded uneven development and regional inequalities as inevitable consequences of capitalism. Lenin was among the first theorists to articulate this concept, formulating the "law of uneven development of capitalism," which views such disparities as inherent to the capitalist system. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the exposure of stark regional inequalities between its European and Asian territories, it became evident that socialist systems were not immune to these processes. Roger Bartra, in his book *An Introduction to Ethnic Relations in Asia and Oceania* (published by UNESCO in 1979), argues that ethnic crises in the contemporary world are significantly influenced by the capitalist economic system. He explains that capitalism operates in a contradictory manner: on one hand, it drives the movement of labor and capital from underdeveloped regions to more developed areas, thereby accelerating development in the latter; on the other hand, this same movement exacerbates problems in the underdeveloped ethnic regions. Despite various

interventions, capitalism has thus far failed to resolve the challenges faced by these marginalized ethnic areas. Bartra summarizes this contradictory dynamic as a vicious cycle that commercializes ethnic relations, deepens backwardness, and ultimately lays the foundation for ethnic conflicts (Ahmadi, 2013: 141).

Table 1: Summary of the Theoretical Framework of the Study

Level of analysis	Theory	Summary of the Theory
Social	Competition over resources	According to this theory, the political integration of ethnic groups within a nation-state provides a framework in which competition over resources, especially government jobs, becomes a major source of interethnic conflict.
	Elite competition	Ethnic elites, by using cultural elements, not only create a distinct ethnic identity separate from the rest of the population but also deepen divisions in the competition for political power between ethnic groups.
	Pluralism	This theory views the state as a tool of domination by one group over others and does not consider the possibility that the state could be composed of autonomous ethnic groups.
	Fertility behavior	To explain ethnic differences in fertility and the mechanism by which ethnicity affects fertility, the hypotheses of characteristics assimilation and ethnic/cultural hypotheses are proposed. This perspective assumes that a homogeneous and cohesive ethnic composition, along with exposure to a shared set of conditions and experiences, leads to the development and internalization of ethnic values and norms.
Economic	Rational choice	Based on this theory, individuals' membership in ethnic groups results from ethnic awareness, which in turn arises through individual and collective choices.
	Internal colonialism	This theory extends classical notions of colonial relationships into domestic contexts, emphasizing the existence of unequal cultural relations between dominant and subordinate cultures within societies.
	Relative deprivation	Relative deprivation implicitly refers to unequal conditions within a society, where some citizens enjoy more privileges and resources than others. The disadvantaged group, when comparing their situation with that of the privileged, develops a sense of deprivation.
	Ethnic conflict	Economic growth and development weaken ethnic conflict. When there are more resources to share, everyone benefits, material scarcity is reduced, and the factors contributing to conflict are diminished.

It is undeniable that regional inequality and disparities in development levels exist worldwide. For example, in northeast Brazil, per capita income is one-third lower than in the southern regions; in Mexico, the wealthiest areas have per capita incomes twelve times higher than the poorest. Similar patterns are evident in countries such as Egypt, Pakistan, Thailand, and Indonesia. Even industrialized nations are not exempt from regional inequalities: the southern United States has historically lagged behind other regions economically; southern Italy has long experienced persistent recession; and comparable disparities exist in countries like Australia, France, and Britain.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is applied in nature and employs a mixed-methods research design. The statistical

population consisted of residents of Takab city. According to the 2016 census report by the Iranian Statistical Center, Takab's population was 49,677, comprising 24,878 males and 24,799 females (Iranian Statistical Center). Using Cochran's formula for sample size determination with a known population, a sample of 382 individuals was selected. Data collection involved a researcher-designed questionnaire developed based on the theoretical framework, hypotheses, and variables of the study. Out of the distributed questionnaires, 381 were completed. After excluding 21 questionnaires due to distorted or incomplete responses, the final valid sample size was 360, evenly split between the Kurdish ethnic group (180 respondents) and the Turkish ethnic group (180 respondents). Two data collection methods were employed: quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interviews). Given the study's objectives and scope, closed-ended, researcher-developed questions were used. Questionnaires were administered in person to ensure direct engagement with respondents. The research focuses on individuals as meaningful social actors within their groups rather than on isolated individuals, positioning the level of analysis at the micro level relative to the study's subject and location. Content validity was established through consultation with academic experts, including the research supervisor, Dr. Naqdi, ensuring that the questionnaire items sufficiently measured the intended concepts. The overall reliability of the questionnaire, assessed by Cronbach's alpha, was 0.83. Reliability coefficients for specific variables were as follows: ethnic relations (0.81), competition over resources (0.73), competition among elites (0.69), pluralism (0.89), group beliefs (0.73), rational selection (0.91), internal colonization (0.76), relative deprivation (0.74), and ethnic conflict (0.74). Since all coefficients exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70 (except competition among elites, which is marginally lower but still close), the scales are considered reliable. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS software, version 22.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is a significant relationship between ethnic relations and ethnic convergence and divergence.
2. There is competition between ethnic groups over the control of social and economic power centers.
3. There is a significant relationship between the influence of ethnic elites and ethnic relations.
4. There is a significant relationship between ethnic and social justice and ethnic divergence.
5. The higher the ethnic birth rate, the greater the control and ownership of social and economic power centers.
6. The greater the rational action orientation of ethnic groups, the higher the ethnic convergence.
7. There is a significant relationship between relative deprivation and ethnic convergence.
8. There is a significant relationship between ethnic grievance and ethnic divergence.

Findings

The results indicated that 76% of the respondents were male, while 24% were female. In terms of marital status, 29.7% were single, 69.3% were married, and 1% were divorced. The sample was evenly divided ethnically, with 50% identifying as Turkish and 50% as Kurdish. Regarding religious affiliation, 50% of respondents identified as Shia, 47.3% as Sunni, and 2.7% as adherents of Ahl-e-Haq. It is important to note that adherence to the Ahl-e-Haq religion is not exclusive to any ethnicity; individuals from both the Turkish and Kurdish ethnic groups share this religious belief. In terms of educational attainment, 13.7% had an education below a high school diploma, 26.3% held a high school diploma, 10.7% had an associate degree, 39.7% had a bachelor's degree, and 9.7% had a master's degree or higher. Regarding income levels, 39.3% earned less than one million Toman, 48.3% earned between one to and two million Toman, 5.3% earned between two to and three million Toman, and 7% earned between three to four

million Toman. Employment status was distributed as follows: 23.7% held government jobs, 38.3% were employed in the private sector, 7.3% were housewives, 9.7% were unemployed, and 21% were engaged in other occupations.

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for the key study variables, including mean, standard deviation, and minimum and maximum values. The mean scores for ethnic relations, competition over resources, competition among elites, pluralism, fertility behavior, rational selection, internal colonization, relative deprivation, and ethnic conflict were 89.33, 24.04, 41.35, 35.41, 35.67, 33.92, 20.41, 17.82, and 11.81, respectively.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

	Ethnic relations	Competition over resources	Elite competition	Pluralism	Fertility behavior	Rational choice	Internal colonialism	Relative deprivation	Ethnic conflict
Mean	33/89	04/24	35/41	41/35	67/35	92/33	41/20	82/17	81/11
Standard deviation	6/9	56/4	97/8	104/5	693/8	39/6	81/3	010/7	784/4
Minimum	00/62	00/8	00/18	00/17	00/12	00/16	00/7	00/6	00/4
Maximum	00/123	00/53	00/71	00/56	00/85	00/63	00/35	00/30	00/20

As shown in Table 3, the Pearson correlation coefficient between ethnic relations and convergence is -0.275, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$). Therefore, the research hypothesis is supported, and the null hypothesis is rejected. This result indicates a significant inverse relationship between ethnic relations and ethnic convergence; in other words, as the quality or intensity of ethnic relations increases, ethnic convergence decreases.

Table 3: Correlation Between Ethnic Relations and Ethnic Convergence

		Ethnic relations	Ethnic convergence
Ethnic relations	Pearson correlation	1	**275/-
	Significance level		000/
	Number (N)	300	300
Ethnic convergence	Pearson correlation	**275/-	1
	Significance level	000/	
	Number (N)	300	300

On the other hand, as shown in Table 4, the correlation between ethnic relations and ethnic divergence, calculated using the Pearson correlation coefficient test, is 0.644, which is significant at the 0.01 level ($P < 0.01$). Therefore, the research hypothesis is confirmed, and the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant positive correlation between ethnic relations and ethnic divergence. In other words, as ethnic relations increase, ethnic divergence also increases.

Table 4: Correlation Between Ethnic Relations and Ethnic Divergence

		Ethnic relations	Ethnic divergence
Ethnic relations	Pearson correlation	1	644/**
	Significance level		000/
	Sample size	300	300
Ethnic divergence	Pearson correlation	**644/	1
	Significance level	000/	
	Sample size	300	300

According to the descriptive statistics, there is no significant difference between the Turkish and Kurdish ethnic groups regarding the possession of social and economic power centers. As shown in Table 5, the mean score for possession of social and economic power centers is 23.77 for the Turkish group and 23.31 for the Kurdish group.

Table 5: Descriptive Results of the Test for Differences in Ethnic Relations Based on Ethnicity

Significance level	T value	Standard error of the mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Count	Gender	
735/	025/1-	389.	772.4	77.23	150	Turk	Ethnicity
		354/	33/4	31/24	150	Kurd	

Given the T-value of -1.025, with a significance level greater than 0.05, we can confidently conclude at the 95% confidence level that there is no significant difference between the Turkish and Kurdish ethnic groups in their mean scores for possession of social and economic power centers. In other words, the mean scores of these two ethnic groups do not differ significantly in terms of social and economic power center possession. As shown in Table 6, the Pearson correlation coefficient between the influence of ethnic elites and ethnic relations is 0.343, which is significant at the 0.01 level ($P < 0.01$). Therefore, there is a significant positive correlation between the influence of ethnic elites and ethnic relations, indicating that ethnic elites have a positive impact on ethnic relations.

Table 6: Correlation Between the Influence of Ethnic Elites and Ethnic Relations

		Ethnic relations	Elite influence
Ethnic relations	Pearson correlation	1	**343/
	Significance level		000/
	Sample size	300	300
Elite influence	Pearson correlation	**343/	1
	Significance level	000/	
	Sample size	300	300

As shown in Table (7), the correlation between the level of ethnic and social justice and the level of ethnic divergence, calculated using the Pearson correlation coefficient test, is 0.361, which is significant at the 0.01 level ($P < 0.01$). Therefore, we conclude that there is a significant positive correlation between the level of ethnic and social justice and the level of ethnic divergence. In other words, as the level of ethnic and social justice increases, ethnic divergence also increases.

Table 7: Correlation Between the Level of Ethnic and Social Justice and Ethnic Divergence

		Ethnic divergence	Ethnic & social justice
Ethnic divergence	Pearson correlation	1	**361/
	Significance level		000/
	Sample size	300	300
Ethnic and social justice	Pearson correlation	**361/	1
	Significance level	000/	
	Sample size	300	300

As shown in Table (8), the correlation between the level of ethnic fertility and the possession and control of social and economic power centers, calculated using the Pearson correlation coefficient test, is 0.215, which is not significant at the 0.01 level ($P > 0.01$). Therefore, we conclude that there is no significant relationship between an increase in ethnic fertility and the possession and control of social and economic power centers.

Table 8: Correlation Between the Level of Ethnic Fertility and the Possession and Control of Social and Economic Power Centers

		Increase in ethnic birthrate	Seizure and control of power centers
Increase in ethnic birthrate	Pearson correlation	1	215/
	Significance level		124/
	Sample size	300	300
Seizure and control of power centers	Pearson correlation	215/	1
	Significance level	124/	
	Sample size	300	300

As shown in Table (9), the correlation between the rational action of ethnic groups and ethnic convergence, calculated using the Pearson correlation coefficient test, is -0.326, which is significant at the 0.01 level ($P < 0.01$). Therefore, we conclude that there is a significant inverse correlation between the rational action of ethnic groups and ethnic convergence. In other words, the more the rational action of ethnic groups increases, the higher the ethnic convergence will be.

Table 9: Correlation Between Rational Action of Ethnic Groups and Ethnic Convergence

		Rational action of ethnicities	Ethnic convergence
Rational action of ethnicities	Pearson correlation	1	326/-
	Significance level		000/
	Sample size	300	300
Ethnic convergence	Pearson correlation	326/-	1
	Significance level	000/	
	Sample size	300	300

As shown in Table 10, the correlation between the level of relative deprivation and ethnic convergence, calculated using the Pearson correlation coefficient test, is 0.423, which is

significant at the 0.01 level ($P < 0.01$). Therefore, we conclude that there is a significant positive correlation between the level of relative deprivation and ethnic convergence. In other words, as the level of relative deprivation increases, ethnic convergence will increase as well.

Table 10: Correlation between Relative Deprivation and Ethnic Convergence

		Sense of relative deprivation	Ethnic convergence
Sense of relative deprivation	Pearson correlation	1	423/
	Significance level		000/
	Sample size	300	300
Ethnic convergence	Pearson correlation	423/	1
	Significance level	000/	
	Sample size	300	300

As shown in Table 11, the correlation between ethnic injustice feelings and ethnic divergence was calculated using the Pearson correlation coefficient as -0.614, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($P < 0.01$). Therefore, we conclude that there is a significant inverse relationship between ethnic injustice feelings and ethnic divergence. In other words, as the level of ethnic injustice feelings increases, ethnic divergence decreases, and the individual is more likely to accept ethnic convergence and regard their ethnic group as superior.

Table 11: Correlation between Ethnic Injustice Feelings and Ethnic Divergence

		Degree of ethnic divergence	Sense of ethnic injustice
Degree of ethnic divergence	Pearson correlation	1	614/-
	Significance level		000/
	Sample size	300	300
Relative deprivation	Pearson correlation	614/-	1
	Significance level	000/	
	Sample size	300	300

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to investigate ethnic relations and their impact on the economic and social life of Takab County. The results revealed a significant negative correlation between ethnic relations and ethnic convergence, and a significant positive correlation between ethnic relations and ethnic divergence. These findings align with previous studies by Wendy Timmen (2014), Ferron and De Leiten (2010), Bart (2011), Yousefi and Asgharpoor (2009), Yousefi (2001), Nagdi, Ali-Ahmadi, and Soltani-Ezzat (2013), Tavasoli and Ghasemi (2002), and Maleki (2007). This suggests that as ethnic interactions increase, ethnic convergence tends to decrease while ethnic divergence rises. Put simply, increased interaction and relationships among different ethnic groups in a multi-ethnic city promote mutual understanding and respect, while reducing ethnic prejudices and ethnocentric attitudes. The results indicated no significant difference between the Turk and Kurd ethnic groups in their average scores for acquiring social and economic centers of power. In other words, the mean scores of these two groups regarding the acquisition of such power centers were not significantly different. These findings align with the studies of Ferron and De Leiten (2010), Tavasoli and Ghasemi (2002), and Maleki (2007), who concluded that as interethnic relations and interactions increase, opportunities for

ethnocentric individuals to dominate social and economic power centers diminish. Furthermore, these individuals tend to recognize and accept those who are truly qualified and deserving of such positions. Additionally, the results revealed a significant positive correlation between the influence of ethnic elites and the strength of ethnic relations. That is, elites positively contribute to improving ethnic interactions. This outcome is consistent with the research of Wendy Timmen (2014) and Tavasoli and Ghasemi (2002). It can be explained by the fact that elites within a society or ethnic group are generally free from ethnic prejudices and perceive societal progress as dependent on fostering interaction and cooperation among different ethnic communities. The results showed a significant positive correlation between the level of ethnic and social justice and the degree of ethnic divergence. In other words, as the level of ethnic and social justice increases, ethnic divergence also increases. The findings of this study are consistent with those of Wendy Timmen (2014), Ferron and De Leiten (2010), Bart (2011), Yousefi and Asgharpour (2009), Yousefi (2001), Nagdi, Ali-Ahmadi, and Soltani-Ezzat (2013), Tavasoli and Ghasemi (2002), and Maleki (2007). To explain this hypothesis, it can be said that when an ethnic group believes in social cohesion, interethnic justice, and the acceptance of other ethnic groups in all aspects, they undoubtedly acknowledge ethnic divergence and wholeheartedly respect the principle that justice is equal for all. The results indicated that there is no significant correlation between the rise in ethnic birth rates and the acquisition or control of social and economic centers of power. These findings align to some extent with the research by Mohammad Jalal Abbasi and Rasoul Sadeghi. To clarify this hypothesis, it is important to recognize that ethnic differences in fertility are an undeniable fact. Such differences arise partly from varying immediate fertility patterns across ethnic groups and partly from each group's unique culture, social history, values, norms, and beliefs. However, contrary to the assumptions held by many ethnic leaders, an increase in population and birth rates within an ethnic group does not necessarily translate into gaining power, wealth, or decision-making influence.

The results indicated a significant negative correlation between the rational behavior of ethnic groups and the degree of ethnic convergence. In other words, the more rationally ethnic groups behave, the lower the level of ethnic convergence tends to be. These findings are somewhat in line with those of Ferron and De Leiten (2010) and Maleki (2007). This can be understood by recognizing that when ethnic issues are approached rationally, they move beyond emotional responses, while it is primarily these emotions and feelings that drive ethnic convergence. Therefore, it can be concluded that rational behavior promotes acceptance, interaction, and communication between ethnic groups. The results revealed a significant positive correlation between the sense of relative deprivation and the degree of ethnic convergence. In other words, as the feeling of relative deprivation rises, ethnic convergence tends to increase as well. These findings align with previous studies conducted by Wendy Timmen (2014), Ferron and De Leiten (2010), Bart (2011), Yousefi (2001), Nagdi, Ali-Ahmadi, and Soltani-Ezzat (2013), and Tavasoli and Ghasemi (2002). This outcome can be explained by the fact that the primary cause of relative deprivation is the perception of inequality and discrimination. An ethnic group that perceives its rights as being violated is likely to see itself as superior and more significant than others, thereby strengthening its ethnic convergence. Consequently, it can be concluded that the sense of relative deprivation plays a crucial role in promoting ethnic convergence.

The results showed a significant inverse relationship between the sense of ethnic grievance and the level of ethnic divergence. In other words, as the sense of ethnic grievance increases, ethnic divergence decreases. The findings of this study are consistent with those of Bart (2011), Yousefi (2001), Nagdi, Ali-Ahmadi, and Soltani-Ezzat (2013), as well as Tavasoli and Ghasemi (2002). This finding can be explained by the fact that a sense of ethnic grievance arises from oppression or injustice toward another ethnic group and involves perceiving one's group as superior. Undoubtedly, a sense of ethnic grievance leads to ethnic convergence, because it is through ethnic convergence that a group considers itself superior to another and justifies the oppression of the other group. Therefore, it can be concluded that a sense of ethnic grievance essentially reflects the rejection and exclusion of other ethnic groups, which in turn

reduces ethnic divergence and increases ethnic convergence. The study's sample is limited to the ethnic groups living in the city of Takab, so any generalization of the findings to ethnic groups in other cities should be approached with caution.

Based on the results, it is recommended that government officials and non-governmental organizations organize meetings and conferences under the theme "Ethnic Solidarity" to strengthen ethnic relations and promote ethnic and religious interaction and tolerance. Additionally, it is suggested that government officials hire qualified and deserving individuals in public offices and organizations regardless of their religion or ethnicity. Furthermore, it is advised to fully leverage the influence of city elites to improve ethnic relations and interactions, as these individuals play a crucial role in fostering inter-ethnic communication and understanding.

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