

Women's Political Participation In Kurdistan Region Of Iraq From The Viewpoint Of University Students

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Summary:

The aim of the research is to identify the university students' point of view on women's political participation in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. And the significance of the differences in that according to a number of demographic variables represented by: (social gender, age, housing location). The research relied on the comparative descriptive approach due to its suitability to the nature of the research, and the sample consisted of (140) male and female students who were randomly selected from the students of the Department of Sociology at the University of Duhok. The researcher used a questionnaire prepared for the purpose of the current research, consisting of (25) paragraphs, and in front of each paragraph there are five alternatives for the answer, which are (very agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and do not agree at all). The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were verified.

The data contained in the research were processed statistically using means, standard deviations, t-test for one sample and two independent samples, and one-way analysis of variance.

The results showed that the level of political participation of women in Iraqi Kurdistan is low from the point of view of university students, and it was found that there is no statistically significant difference in the students' views on women's political participation in Iraqi Kurdistan due to demographic variables: gender, age, and residence location. In light of the results, a set of recommendations and proposals were presented.

Keywords: participation, political participation, women, Kurdistan Region of Iraq, university students.

Introduction:

Recent years in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq have witnessed an unprecedented interest in women's political participation. This interest comes in the context of the role played by social networks in influencing social and political life. Which came within the framework of a more comprehensive and broader global phenomenon. Call it digital democracy. It is a relatively recent concept used to describe involvement in the political process. This is done by empowering women to express their opinions, enlighten them and provide them with a huge amount of information through information and communication technology. The techniques helped criticize some of the tribal customs and traditions that limit women's participation in political activities.

It is worth noting that in the era before the Internet and the spread of communication networks. Kurdish women were reluctant to talk about politics, whether in public places, within the family, or with their colleagues in the field of work. However, following the cultural openness and the massive development in the Internet, the situation changed and opportunities became available for women to discuss all aspects of life, including political issues and women's participation in them.

In recent years, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq has witnessed great social, cultural and political changes, and social media has become a new window for political participation, enabling women to enter political life. As social media has played a fundamental role in consolidating political awareness and political values among the Kurdish citizen in general and among women in particular, the means of communication have provided the opportunity for women in Iraqi Kurdistan to express their opinion, but rather to use these means in social and political movement, and to break the barrier of fear and shyness. she has. There were many motives behind women's use of social networking sites, which are women's interest in engaging in social and political life, their desire to break the routine they live in daily life, their search for a professional life and work outside the family, their discussion of policies pertaining to Kurdish society, and their criticism of the process of making And making decisions, especially those that concern women in Kurdistan.

The new media has contributed to the resurrection of new patterns of political participation within a diverse agenda of interests and activities. It opened the way for various platforms to discuss issues of public interest, dialogue, and exchange views. These media outlets were characterized by interactive, immediate, diffusion, fast, low-cost, and participatory properties that freed the audience (the audience) from the hierarchical, patriarchal, and monopolistic nature of traditional media. Which renewed the contents of contemporary media practice. Where the new media provided technical applications that established a level of a clear and insightful relationship between the audience and the content, and devoted an effective activity to the audience that goes beyond the meaning of receiving in its negative context (Al-Anazi, 2016: 302).

The political participation of women is an essential feature of advanced societies, especially since women play a pivotal role in comprehensive social development. Their psychological, emotional, and behavioral charges towards political matters, through actual practice, make them feel reassured and able to influence the course of political life. Also, through political participation, individuals achieve their political and social demands (Al-Suwailimeen, 2016: 3). And if the political participation of women is an important matter in modernization and political development, then they play an important role in presenting plans and visions necessary for the development of society, but rather in influencing public policy in society, because political participation does not mean participation only in elections. The political participation of women is also a reflection of the social and political awareness in developed and developing societies, because of their great impact in establishing the institutional building of the state on the political, social and economic levels. Researchers in political science and political sociology have given much of their attention to the subject of political participation, due to its great importance in consolidating democratic construction, inspiring the patriotic spirit imbued with the values of citizenship and participation in the decision-making process and drawing up public policies (Ben Ali, 2016: 85). Hence our interest in the current research on the issue of women's political participation in Kurdistan from the perspective of university students, where the focus was on the theoretical side on the problem of research and its importance and defining the concept of political participation and its types and its connection to political upbringing, as well as our presentation of some efforts made in the study of political participation. As for the field aspect, we initially sought to clarify the methodology used in the study and to identify the research community and sample, then the tool used in data collection, and the statistical methods used in data analysis, and then a detailed presentation of the results obtained. At the end of the study, we presented a set of conclusions, recommendations and proposals.

Research problem:

The transition to democracy began in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in 1991 after the uprising and as a result of internal, external and regional pressures. The response of the political system and the ruling system in Kurdistan was consistent with the demands of the masses and political parties. The region witnessed a development in the transition to democracy and political life. Which contributed to achieving stability in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. In the light of the political administration of the state, the first democratic and political participation took place in the Kurdistan Parliament elections in (1992). And then the parliamentary elections were repeated, as the second session came in (2005). And the third session in (2009). And the fourth session (2013). The best example of plurality of participation is the fifth session of Parliament, which began in 2018, in which (111) male and female parliamentarians belonging to (29) lists and political entities participating in the elections were elected. (16) lists were able to obtain parliamentary seats. A total of 1,845,979 citizens participated in the last round elections. Women won (34) seats in the Parliament of Kurdistan, with (12) seats for the Kurdistan Democratic Party. And the Change Movement (8) seats. And the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (6) seats. And the Kurdistan Islamic Union (3) seats. And the Islamic group is two. And the Turkmen quota is one. The quota for Christians is two (Parliament of Iraqi Kurdistan, 2018).

And if these numbers reflect an important stage in the process of democratic transformation and the development of political life and political pluralism in terms of the strength of the House of Representatives in its formation in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. And manifestations of partisan pluralism within it. Which brought together the colors of the political spectrum, with the active participation of most of the political currents in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Women's participation in political life has become an urgent and inevitable necessity imposed by democratic practice in a society where women constitute half or more of society. It can be said that women participated in decision-making and in issuing legislation of concern to society. However, there is a social debate about the reality of women's political participation and their future prospects in meeting the aspirations of the masses. Thinking about women's political participation in Iraqi Kurdistan is also an important issue. The problem is mainly related to the nature of the political forces that make up the Kurdistan society. It is known in the political literature that political participation in any society is linked to the extent of the political awareness of the political forces. In light of the foregoing, we can formulate the current research problem in the following two questions:

1. What is the level of women's political participation in Iraqi Kurdistan? From the point of view of university students?
2. Do demographic factors affect university students' views on women's political participation in Iraqi Kurdistan?

Research importance:

The topic of political participation is one of the old and modern topics. Many philosophers throughout history have been preoccupied with what is the ideal form that governs the relationship between the state and the people. Perhaps the interest in political participation results from the controversy over the nature of the relationship between the people and the state. Among the most prominent philosophers and thinkers who dealt with this topic, we mention Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and others. Those who dealt with the issue of power and the extent of the people's freedom to choose their rulers and representatives. The subject of women's political participation has received great interest among those interested and

researchers in human rights. Where these concerns were translated into the issuance of legal texts recognizing the role of women in the advancement of society and recognizing them as a participating force in various social activities.

The importance of the current research is highlighted by the importance of women's political participation. Because it reflects the extent of political awareness enjoyed by citizens in the state. This is through their awareness of the rights and duties of citizenship. Through their view of the existing authority in society, the nature of the relationship with it, and how to influence its policies to achieve the interests of citizens.

The importance of the study is also evident in its attempt to shed light on the issue of women's political participation in the Kurdistan society. Which reflects the level of social awareness. This is because political participation is a positive indicator and a sound and healthy political phenomenon. It indicates the civilized progress of society. Especially since the Kurdish society witnessed important political transformations at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century. Those transformations that support societal participation in political issues and enhance the role of women and their participation in political action.

Research limits:

1. Human limits: The current research is limited to a sample of students from the Sociology Department.
2. Spatial boundaries: represented in the College of Humanities at the University of Duhok.
3. Time limits: The study covers the academic year 2022-2023.

Research aims:

The study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. Identifying the level of women's political participation in Iraqi Kurdistan from the viewpoint of university students.
2. Disclosing the significance of differences in the level of political participation of women in Iraqi Kurdistan from the viewpoint of university students, according to demographic variables: (social gender, age, and residence location).

Define concepts:

Political participation :

Political participation includes a set of direct (primary) political activities and indirect (secondary) political activities. Examples of direct political participation include: holding a political position, party membership, running for elections, voting, discussing public matters. As for examples of indirect participation, they represent knowledge and standing on general issues, membership in voluntary bodies, and some forms of work in primary groups (Al-Jawhary, 1985: 72).

And there are those who define political participation as: "the activity that would influence the work of the government directly through the implementation of public policies, or indirectly by influencing the group of actors that formulate these policies" (Verba & Others, 1995: 38).

He also defined (Fouad, 1995) political participation as: "It is those activities of an official nature that are practiced by concerned citizens, and which aim, in one way or another, to influence the process of choosing ruling men or influence the actions they undertake" (Fouad, 1995: 84).

Laroussi (2007) defines political participation as: "the way and means through which a citizen can express his position on various issues of concern to him and the public interest, and through which he participates in political decision-making through representation in elected political institutions that may express his interests or part of them." Political participation is a phenomenon that exists in all political systems in one form or another, according to the nature of the existing political system" (Laroussi, 2007: 6).

For the purposes of the research, the researcher defines the political participation of women as: the participation of women in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in the political process in its various forms and types. And its contribution to political decision-making through representation in the political institutions of society. It is measured by the total score obtained by the respondent for his answers to the items included in the questionnaire used as a tool in the research.

Theoretical background:

Political participation is the process through which the individual plays a role in the political life of his society (Al-Wedidi, 2007: 25). Political participation in its various forms and types is affected by various factors. The effect of these factors differs from one country to another in many cases due to the different characteristics of the people of each country. Where these factors contribute to crystallizing the size of political participation by citizens. The establishment of democratic political participation requires the provision of certain objective conditions, cultural, economic, social and political. In the sense of the availability of a cultural framework that includes a set of values and attitudes that guarantee individuals a minimum level of political knowledge and a reasonable amount of political interest. There must also be a social economic framework that guarantees liberation from need, want and dependence. It guarantees a minimum level of education. Then there is a political legal framework that guarantees freedom of expression and opinion and regulates forms and methods of political participation (Al-Suwailimeen, 2016: 15). Political participation is the basis of democracy and a clear

expression of the principle of people's sovereignty. Political participation requires the presence of a human group of citizens who have a sense of belonging and interest in public affairs. Sociologists view political participation as that process through which the individual plays a certain role in societal political life. With the aim of achieving the goals of social and economic development (Al-Nowaihi, 2014: 1).

Cultural variables are one of the factors affecting mainly the process of women's political participation in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. This factor can be measured by the increase in the number of females in education and the fact that a large number of them have obtained academic degrees in the last ten years. It is recognized that a higher level of education means an increased interest in and participation in political issues. The school plays an important role in political upbringing by indoctrinating the individual with the prevailing political values and trends in society. Transfer of different experiences. Implementing the educational role that society wants and believes in. By reading books on history and national education, the student learns his political values and gets acquainted with the laws and regulations of the country. The courses also aim at deepening the sense of belonging to the homeland and society. Emphasizing the importance of the spirit of citizenship and introducing students to their political rights and the rights of other members of society, whether male or female. After moving to the university, the student will be introduced to the behaviors of constructive dialogue, the promotion of participation, state institutions, and democratic lifestyles (Al-Miqdad, 2003: 25).

Political upbringing is then part of the process of socializing individuals in society. It cannot be done by one means or one method. Considering that this process begins with the individual from his birth and continues with him until his death. During that, the individual takes from sources and means that may differ in their methods. But it eventually pours in one goal. It is the upbringing of the individual, a political upbringing. To be an active member of the community.

He lives in it (Al-Tayyib, 2001: 75). The school curriculum helps in the process of political upbringing by containing information, facts and concepts aimed at creating national loyalty and upbringing on the values of society and the foundations of the political system. The literature used in the school reflects a positive form of the history of the nation and the state. These different perceptions are presented in order to educate the citizen. In general, the political and educational leaders view the curriculum as a tool for transferring knowledge and values that lead to building the belonging citizen (Al-Anati and Taraba, 2007: 37-459).

Universities play a fundamental role in the development of society. Comprehensive political, social, economic, cultural and educational development. The university is responsible for renewing and modernizing political thought in line with the political nature of the state. As for the educational perspective, its responsibility is more important and stronger than any institution of political education. This is because it is the first incubator for political thought and the student's political orientations. This requires that universities play an important role in educating students politically, considering universities as the place where students meet their knowledge and life sciences (Al-Sulihat, 2014: 814).

The media plays a prominent role in the political upbringing of individuals. The role of media institutions lies in political upbringing. When you raise and discuss political issues related to democratic and political vocabulary, such as the importance of political participation. And pluralism. Participation in political parties and civil society organizations. It sheds light on democratic practices such as expressing opinions and giving citizens the opportunity to express their opinions when discussing issues related to democracy and human rights. The importance of the media in political upbringing emerges from the position it has become occupied by the media as a force to be reckoned with a thousand accounts, because of the influence it has on the orientations of individuals and their political positions, and the influence on their tastes and lifestyle (Al-Miqdad, 2003: 25).

Political parties are also considered one of the most important sources of political upbringing that affects individuals. Especially at a young age. Political parties have a political function, which is access to power. Hence, the parties play a fundamental role, either in serving the political system, supporting it, or opposing it. As for opposing the political system by inflaming and increasing popular demands and inciting public opinion against the authority (Al-Azzam and Al-Sharaa, 2006: 483).

Political parties have an important role in the process of social and political upbringing of individuals, especially in democratic countries. It is one of the most important means of socialization in which the individual participates politically. Through it, he adopts certain political trends in which he believes and contributes to their implementation in order to achieve democracy in his society. Especially if the party is used in the right way as a political institution that contributes to the establishment of various links between the government and the people. It affects the course of political events in society and the effects that these events leave.

Political participation is a pattern of democracy, as it contributes to motivating people to participate in political decision-making, and it is a basic criterion that distinguishes between societies in all their forms and degrees of development. There are two types of political participation: free participation of a democratic nature, and mobilized participation of a coercive nature. The first type refers to the democracy of the political system, while the second type refers to the authoritarianism of the political system (Murad, 2006: 78). On this basis, political participation can be divided into two forms or two types: 1. Voluntary political participation: it means independent, positive or democratic participation. Where the participation of the people as a whole without discrimination or groups within a democratic political system. This means that the

democratic political system provides the opportunity for citizens to express what is on their mind. In addition to providing channels that respond to that. Because the democratic political system is built on noble values such as equality, dialogue, acceptance, approval, and others (Botros, 2007: 209). In this type of participation, the participants believe that they can bring about major changes in the political system. Whether in the selection of persons to assume official positions or in the formulation of public policies. Which is reflected in the political, economic and social life (Jazouli, 2000: 182).

2. Negative political participation: It means non-democratic or negative participation, as it is participation that does not aim to support the process of democracy. Rather, it is to achieve sectarian or regional goals that often occur as a result of coercive reasons. influence of political money. This type of participation is linked to the nature of the political, economic and social conditions that reflect that participation. The nature of the social reality, which is based on multiple social affiliations, because it contains tribal, sectarian, or religious sub-values, affects political participation (Baghdadi, 1993: 281).

All types of political participation are based on four principles:

1. Political participation should be horizontal and formal between the different levels and bodies. And not be limited to people of one nature.
2. That a group does not consider itself a privileged elite in society and that it is worthy and entitled to set priorities and take decisions for the sake of planning. Rather, participation must be broad, as it touches the broad base of citizens, and not only the participation of the elite.
3. Planning should reflect the needs of the people in general and the broad segment in particular. The existing segments of society must participate in describing and discussing development plans.
4. The process of participation must include the process of control, monitoring, and participation in decision-making along with opinions from the bottom up and back (Houriya, 2019: 59-60).

Previous studies:

A large number of researchers paid attention to the issue of political participation. The study (Marei, 1996) aimed at analyzing the political participation of young people and its impact on different family circumstances. Whether economic or social, and to find out if there is a relationship between the social and economic conditions of youth and their level of political participation. As well as the extent to which the political participation of youth is affected by the political climate available in Jordan. The randomly selected sample consisted of students from the four Jordanian public universities (University of Jordan, Mutah University, Yarmouk University, and the University of Science and Technology). The results indicated that (50.5%) of the respondents are afraid of political participation, as they believe that the general atmosphere is not conducive to participation. It was found that there is a relationship between the economic status of the student and the level of his political participation. Those with low and medium economic level participate more than those with a high economic level. The results showed that (6.6%) of the respondents do not participate because they do not believe in politics. The results indicated that (49.81%) are not convinced of political parties, and (9.1%) do not participate for reasons related to family opposition. (56%) of the sample believes that the available political environment represents an obstacle to political participation. While (16%) believe that the family is the reason, and (21.2%) are convinced of the futility of political action.

The study (Thomas, 1999) sought to explain the importance of pluralism and the rotation of power. It mentioned that the character of partisan pluralism and the alternation of power prevent one political party from being singled out with power and influence. The opposition plays an accurate, transparent, continuous and scientific oversight role. It counts the government's lapses in order to overthrow it and take its place. However, this opposition must be positive. As soon as you find a government error revealed. She must come up with an alternative. This behavior prompts the government, based on the principle of self-preservation, to improve its performance in order to remain in possession of people's satisfaction and thus be re-elected.

The study (Al-Sharaa and Firas, 1999) focused on the attitudes of the Jordanian rural population towards political participation. And knowing the effect of some personal, economic and social variables: (age, educational level, marital status, family size, occupation and average monthly income) on that participation. The sample consisted of (1084) people who were randomly selected from four villages in the Bani Ubaid district, which are: (Nuaimiya, Kutum, Shatana, Alia). The results indicated that there is a difference between the attitudes of males and females towards political participation. The differences were in favor of males. The average score for males was (14,175) degrees, while the average score for females was (12,928), which indicates a relationship between the gender factor and political participation. It was found that there is a relationship between the level of education and the level of political participation. It was found that those who hold an academic qualification had more political participation than those who hold a secondary school certificate or less, and the level of political participation is affected by the variable of the monthly income level.

The study (Al-Smadi and Al-Omari, 2012) aimed to reveal the role of Jordanian universities in encouraging their students to practice democratic principles and values. Participation and responsibility), in addition to developing a questionnaire

to reveal the degree of encouragement of democrat practices by Jordanian universities among its students, consisting of (20) items distributed over two areas: laws, instructions and university activities.

The results indicated that there is a medium positive correlation between the role of Jordanian universities and student practices of democratic principles and values. The study concluded that there was no statistically significant effect of the gender variable, the type of college, and the academic year on student practices of democratic principles and values. The presence of a statistically significant effect of the geographical location variable, and the study showed that there is a specialistly significant effect of the geographical location variable on student practices of democratic principles and values. The study (Al-Sulaihat, 2013) aimed to know the implications of the Arab Spring revolutions on the political awareness of Jordanian university students in the central region. The results confirmed that the effects of the Arab Spring revolutions on the political awareness of the students of the University of Jordan in general were high. The sex and college variables did not have a statistically significant effect, while the university type variable had a statistically significant effect. The differences were in favor of public universities.

Research methodology and procedures:

First: research methodology

There is no doubt that every research depends on a method. The scientific method is defined as: “a set of general rules and regulations that have been developed for the purpose of reaching acceptable facts about phenomena that are of interest to the researcher in various fields of human knowledge (Obeidat et al., 1999: 35). (Ingres, 2008: 98).

In order to achieve the objectives of the current research, which aims to identify the university students' viewpoint on the level of women's political participation in Iraqi Kurdistan. And the significance of the differences in their views according to demographic variables (gender, age, housing location).

The researcher used the descriptive research method in the comparative method in his study, because it is the most widely used approach and capable of studying problems, phenomena, and events related to man, his opinions, viewpoints, and attitudes. And in its relationship to social and behavioral sciences, their means and message (Kashroud, 2017: 234).

This approach is the most appropriate for the study.

Because it “focuses on describing phenomena in the present by collecting data about them, trying to interpret them, and determining the relationship between their elements or other phenomena” (Al-Munaizil and Al-Atoum, 2010: 269). And because the descriptive approach is considered one of the most common approaches in the humanities and social sciences, the researcher resorted to it because it is: “a form of organized scientific analysis and interpretation to describe a specific phenomenon or problem, and quantitatively portray it by collecting codified data and information about the phenomenon or problem. Classifying, analyzing and subjecting it to for careful study” (Melhem, 2000: 324).

Second: the research community

The current research community, which is represented by the students of the Department of Sociology at the College of Humanities at the University of Duhok, has been identified for the academic year (2022-2023 AD). The size of the research community was (188) male and female students distributed in four classes, with (24) male and female students in the first grade. And (52) male and female students in the second grade. And (62) male and female students in the third grade. And (50) male and female students in the fourth grade. According to the gender variable, with (56) males and (132) females. As shown in Table (1).

Table (1) Distribution of members of the research community according to class and gender

Classroom	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
first	5	19	24
second	17	35	52
third	15	47	62
fourth	19	31	50
Total	56	132	188

Third: the research sample

In order to choose the sample that accurately represents the community and to achieve the objectives of research and data collection. The researcher chose the sample in a stratified random way. By selecting a number of individuals from each of the four classes in the Department of Sociology at the College of Human Sciences at the University of Duhok. Thus, the study sample consisted of (140) male and female students, constituting (76%) of the community. Table (2) shows that.

Table (2) Distribution of the sample members according to the academic grade and gender

Classroom	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
first	4	13	17
second	13	26	39
third	11	36	47
fourth	14	23	37
Total	42	98	140

Fourth: the search tool

For the purpose of collecting information and measuring students' viewpoints about women's political participation in Iraqi Kurdistan, the researcher prepared a questionnaire. This is after reviewing many previous studies and research related to the subject of the research. In preparing the questionnaire, it was taken into account that the paragraphs are clear and understandable in their formulation. And not amenable to more than one interpretation. And follow several steps in that, which can be summarized as follows:

1. Reviewing the literature related to political participation. And review previous studies related to political participation.
2. Determine the concept of political participation accurately, based on the definitions contained in the literature.
3. In the light of the foregoing, the researcher was able to prepare the initial version of the questionnaire paragraphs, which numbered (28) paragraphs.
4. The initial version of the questionnaire was shown to a number of arbitrators specialized in sociology and psychology to express their opinion on the validity of the paragraphs in measuring the university students' viewpoint on women's political participation.

The validity of the questionnaire:

What is meant by truthfulness is the extent of the measure's ability to measure what was set to measure it, i.e. it measures what was set to measure it. In the sense that an honest measure is a measure that measures the function that it claims to measure and does not measure anything else instead of it (Odeh, 2000: 270). The apparent validity is one of the important characteristics in judging the validity of the scale (Al-Zaher et al., 2002: 133).

In order to ensure the validity of the questionnaire that was prepared for the purposes of the research, the researcher presented the questionnaire to a number of arbitrators specialized in the field of sociology and psychology, in order to express an opinion on the validity of the paragraphs to measure students' views on women's political participation. For this matter, the researcher relied on a percentage of agreement among experts (80%) or more as a criterion for the validity of the paragraphs, because it is a percentage that many researchers relied on. In the light of the experts' opinions, (3) paragraphs were deleted because they did not reach the experts' agreement according to the approved standard, and Table (3) shows this.

Schedule (3) The percentages of expert agreement on the validity of the political participation questionnaire paragraphs

Agreement ratio	number of experts		Paragraph numbers
	disagree	agree	
%100	-	10	27, 26, 25, 24, 23, 21, 19, 18, 17, 16, 12, 4
%90	1	9	22, 20, 14, 10, 8, 7, 3, 2, 1
%80	2	8	28, 11, 9, 6
%70	3	7	15, 13, 5

Thus, a questionnaire consisting of (25) items was obtained. In front of each paragraph, there are five alternatives to the answer, which are: (very agree, agree, neutral, disagree, totally disagree), and they are corrected by giving weights to the alternatives. In the case of choosing the first alternative, the respondent is given (5) degrees, and in the event that he chooses the second alternative, he gets (4). degrees, and when choosing the third alternative, he gets (3) degrees, while he is awarded two degrees when choosing the fourth alternative, and one degree if he chooses the fifth alternative. Accordingly, the lowest score he can obtain is (25) degrees, and the highest score is (125) degrees, with a hypothetical average of (75) degrees. After that, instructions were set on how to answer, as well as urging the respondents from among the sample to answer accurately and frankly without neglecting any paragraph, with reference to the lack of the need to mention the name.

Resolution stability:

A good tool is stable. Consistency means that the tool is reliable and reliable. And the individual's score does not change substantially when the test is repeated on the same individuals and under the same conditions (Al-Kawafha, 2003: 71). The fixed measure is the one that gives the same results, or close results, if applied more than once in similar circumstances. Reliability is defined as the accuracy in estimating the individual's true score on the characteristic measured by the scale (Al-Tal and Qahl, 2007: p. 83).

It should be noted that there is more than one method for estimating the stability coefficient, due to the multiplicity of sources of measurement errors, and therefore one method is affected by one or more types of error, meaning that some errors appear in one type of stability coefficient and do not appear in another type. For the purpose of determining the stability coefficient for the questionnaire that was prepared, the researcher used two methods in calculating the value of the stability coefficient:

A. Retest method:

By applying the questionnaire to a sample consisting of (16) male students who were chosen randomly from the students of the Department of Sociology, half of whom are males and the other half are females, with (4) male and female students from each of the four grades, then the questionnaire was re-applied to the same individuals after passing (14) days. After correcting the answers of the respondents in the two applications, the correlation coefficient was found between the scores of the first and second applications using Pearson's correlation coefficient, so the correlation value was (0.84). It is a value indicating high stability

B. Cronbach's alpha method:

In order to calculate the stability value according to this method, the researcher benefited from the data obtained from the first application of the stability sample of (16) male and female students, which was referred to in the first method. And by using the statistical bag for social sciences (SPSS) in the application of Cronbach's alpha equation, it was found that the value of the stability coefficient is equal to (0.84), which is a high value indicating that the prepared questionnaire has the stability characteristic.

Statistical means:

The data contained in the research were processed using the Statistical Bag for Social Sciences, which is abbreviated as (SPSS), and by applying the following methods:

1. The arithmetic mean and standard deviation.
2. Pearson correlation coefficient.
3. Cronbach's alpha equation.
4. T-test for one sample.
5. The t-test for two independent samples.
6. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Research results and discussion:

Since the first objective of the research seeks to identify the level of political participation of women in Iraqi Kurdistan from the viewpoint of university students.

In order to achieve this goal, data were entered into the calculator and processed statistically using the Statistical Bag for Social Sciences (SPSS) program. This is done by calculating the arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the scores of the sample members, who are (140) male and female students in the Department of Sociology, College of Human Sciences, University of Duhok, and comparing them with the hypothetical mean of the research tool.

The results of the statistical analysis showed that the average achieved scores of the respondents on the political participation questionnaire amounted to (70.778) degrees, with a standard deviation of (9.498) degrees. When comparing the average achieved with the theoretical average of this questionnaire of (75) degrees, using the t-test for one sample as a statistical means. The results showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the two means, in favor of the theoretical mean. As the calculated t-value was equal to (5.259), which is a function of the level of significance (0.05) and the degree of freedom (139), and this result indicates that the level of political participation of women in Iraqi Kurdistan from the viewpoint of university students is low, and Table (4) shows this.

Schedule (4) The results of the t-test indicate the difference between the achieved and theoretical average of women's political participation

significance level	T value		theoretic al mean	standard deviation	Arithmetic mean	number	variable
	Tabular	calculated					
0.05	1.960	5.259	75	9.498	70.778	140	Political participation

This result can be explained by saying that despite the progress made in women's participation in political activities, the level of women's participation is still below the level of ambition or expectation.

Women are still excluded from decision-making processes and are prevented from contributing the necessary inputs to decision-making and public policy formulation. The indicators of the gender gap are still high, especially in the field of women assuming leadership positions. This applies to national political positions such as parliament and the government, as well as to political fields such as parties, trade unions and political organizations. In this context, it becomes necessary to think about the availability of real opportunities for women's participation in political life.

In addition, the poor economic situation of women in Iraqi Kurdistan weakens their political participation, as the subordination of women to men in the economic aspect makes them more vulnerable to violence, discrimination and exploitation, and to assuming higher positions at the productive and economic levels. This is because the subordination of women in all areas of life is based on relations between the sexes. The empowerment of women on which the political frameworks work is limited to the traditional context, i.e. activating participation within the existing systems. The political frameworks did not succeed in creating an environment responsive to gender equality. Rather, social norms and traditions still govern the relationship between the two sexes and define each gender's roles.

Since the second objective of the study seeks to reveal the significance of differences in the level of political participation of women in Iraqi Kurdistan from the viewpoint of **university students, according to demographic variables: (social gender, age, residence location)**. Accordingly, the data contained in the research were processed statistically as follows:

A. Significance of differences in political participation according to gender:

In order to reveal the significance of the differences in the students' viewpoints about women's political participation in Iraqi Kurdistan according to gender, the average scores of males from the sample of (42) students and the average scores of females from the sample of (98) students were calculated, and it was found that the average The arithmetic scores of males on the political participation questionnaire equaled (70.888) degrees, with a standard deviation of (9.783) degrees, while the average scores of females in political participation were (70.688) degrees, with a standard deviation of (9.322) degrees. And when processing their data statistically using the t-test for two independent samples as a statistical means, the results of the statistical treatment showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the students' views on women's political participation in Iraqi Kurdistan due to the gender variable, as the calculated t-value was equal to (0.124), which is smaller than the value The tabular t of (1.960) at the level of significance (0.05) and the degree of freedom (138), and table (5) shows this.

Schedule (5) The results of the t-test for the significance of the difference in political participation according to gender

significance level	T value		standard deviation	Average score	the number	the group	variable
	Tabular	calculated					
non d	1.960	0.124	9.783	70.888	42	Male	Political participation
			9.322	70.688	98	Female	

This result can be explained by saying that both sexes of the sample live in the same environment and are exposed to the same cultural and social influences, and that is why their views on the political participation of women in Iraqi Kurdistan came to be similar.

B. Significance of differences in political participation according to age:

In order to reveal the significance of the differences in students' viewpoints about women's political participation due to the age variable, the sample members were divided into four age groups. The first category included (65) male and female students whose ages ranged between (18-19) years. The second category consisted of (38) male and female students, whose ages ranged between (20-21) years. As for the third category, it consisted of (23) male and female students, whose ages ranged between (22-23) years. While the fourth category consisted of (14) male and female students whose ages were (24-25) years. And when processing their data statistically using one-way analysis of variance as a statistical method, the results showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the respondents' views on women's political participation in Iraqi Kurdistan, due to the age variable. As the calculated p-value was equal to (0.536), which is smaller than the tabular p-value of (2.680) at the level of significance (0.05) and degrees of freedom (3, 91). Table (6) shows that.

schedule (6) The results of one-way analysis of variance indicate the difference in decision-making according to age

significance level	f value		mean of squares	degrees of freedom	sum of squares	source of contrast
	Tabular	calculated				
Non D		2.406	210.708	3	632.124	between groups
			87.559	136	11908.012	within groups
				139	12540.136	Total

This result indicates that respondents of different ages agree on the low level of women's political participation in Iraqi Kurdistan. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the research sample are university students and are distinguished by a level of cultural, social and political awareness. All of this raises the level of their expectations for women's political participation. They do not only look at the issue of the presence of a number of women in Parliament, but rather they look at all levels and forms of political action, including Women's participation in parties, government positions, and so on.

C. Significance of differences in political participation according to the place of residence:

In order to reveal the significance of the differences in the students' viewpoints about the political participation of women in Iraqi Kurdistan, according to the variable of the residence location (rural - city). The mean scores of the individuals who live in the countryside were calculated out of the (56) male and female students in the sample, and the average scores of the (84) male and female respondents who live in the city were calculated. It was found that the arithmetic mean of the scores of the rural group on the political participation questionnaire is (71.03). A degree with a standard deviation of (8.689) degrees. While the average score of individuals from the city in political participation was (70.595) degrees, with a standard deviation of (10.048) degrees. And when processing their data statistically using the t-test for two independent samples as a statistical method, the results of the statistical treatment showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the students' viewpoints about the political participation of women in Iraqi Kurdistan due to the variable of residence location. The calculated t-value was equal to (0.279), which is smaller than the tabular t-value of (1.960) at the level of significance (0.05) and the degree of freedom (138), and table (7) shows that.

Schedule (7) The results of the t-test for the significance of the difference in political participation according to the place of residence

significance level	T value		standard deviation	Average score	the number	housing location	variable
	Tabular	calculated					
Non D	1.960	0.279	8.689	71.053	56	Rural	Political participation
			10.048	70.595	84	Urban	

This result can be explained by saying that despite the difference in the housing location of the sample members, they are currently studying in the same major and are exposed to the same cultural and educational influences, and this would lead them to agree in their views on the subject raised in the study, which is the political participation of women in Kurdistan. In other words, the viewpoint of rural students does not differ from the viewpoint of their peers from the city, and this may be due to the influence of the school curricula, which is among the factors influencing political upbringing and the formation of attitudes and opinions, as well as the influence of social networks and the influence of modern media.

Recommendations:

1. The need to develop social awareness of the importance of women's political participation in Iraqi Kurdistan, through investing in social media and modern technologies.
2. Granting the female element more freedom and allowing her to participate in political work and political activities.
3. Work to integrate the concepts of gender equality in all local policies, strategies and measures.
4. Achieving the economic empowerment of women in Iraqi Kurdistan and reducing marginalization and poverty by searching for new patterns of development that would reduce the gender gap at the economic level and ensure social protection for women.
5. Addressing the social factors that hinder women's access to justice, and confronting traditional stereotypes based on prejudices, prejudice against women, and gender discrimination.
6. The need for political parties to support the policies, measures and decisions that the government intends to adopt to empower women and enhance their presence in the political arena.
7. Work to enhance technical skills and provide expertise to governmental and non-governmental institutions that seek to promote gender equality and women's political participation.

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