

Investigation of the Presence of Women in Political Positions in the Kurdistan Regional Government

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Theoretical framework

Women's political participation

Public participation of the people in political affairs, which is itself a result of their desire to seek participation in the political system, is one of the results and achievements of the advanced stages of democracy. Participation can be considered one of the success criteria of comprehensive development. The snake brought women as half of Human resources in human societies, which are one of the most important sources of development, play an important role in the development of human societies. So far, men have not wanted or have not been able to support the interests of women sufficiently. As a result, women's participation in all social activities, such as the field of politics, is necessary, in such a way that it can be said that the minority role of women in political affairs causes democracy to remain sterile in society. The Human Development Report of the United Nations Organization, which ranks the various countries of the world in terms of action to prepare in its latest report in the year 2022, identifies the human development report of the actions of the countries under study. Regarding the level of adherence and importance of the governments in the show It is

Although the current study about the relative position of women will focus on economic and political variables, this does not mean that the position of women in any society can be determined only by referring to political and economic measures. It is explained this issue is also important that the position and rank of the desired woman is not static and dynamic and in addition to the fact that due to the time and place conditions are changing and the position and position of the woman should always be among the conditions that shape the economy and politics. New The world will be re-evaluated. The basis and conditions against which the relative position of women is measured are in constant instability and, under the influence of technological advances, existing relations between the government and the market, education, upbringing, and change, the attitude is extremely unstable. It will be will take (Johnston and others 2004, 293)

Women and democracy

The category of women and democracy deals with the roles of women, especially their political roles, in democratic societies. In the 19th century, even with the beginning of the flourishing of democracy in the world, most women were prevented from meaningful participation in the political processes of the countries in which they lived. Legal obstacles as well as norms and customs of the community deprived women of the rights granted to men.

It was only in the 20th century that women were granted the right to vote and the right to hold office in democratic systems and the society allowed them to enjoy these rights. At the end of the

20th century, in most countries of the world, women enjoyed the same citizenship rights as men. Women's participation in the democratic process, like men's participation, is typically characterized by the right to vote in parliamentary groups and to assume political leadership roles. (Saward 1998, 101)

For most of the world's history, political activity was considered inappropriate for women. In fact, until the 1960s, gender divisions were rarely considered significant from a political point of view, and these differences were considered more natural. (Haywood: 2013, 410) But what is gratifying and hopeful is that nowadays it is generally accepted that there should be equality between men and women in social activities and women should no longer stay away from the political scene like other aspects of life. It can be said that women should have at least 50% participation in all social levels and dimensions compared to their population. To achieve this justice, it should also not be overlooked that if women do not participate in decision-making positions at all or do not have sufficient presence, the principle of democracy and the legitimacy of democratic systems will be violated and public trust in organizations will be lost. It can even be claimed that "if women are removed from powerful positions, democracy in its true sense has been undermined." (Hetig R. Hetig 2004, 166-167)

The Convention on the Political Rights of Women approved in 1952 is the first specialized international document that guarantees the right to vote, to be elected, and to perform public duties for women and men under equal conditions. Women's political rights include the right to participate in elections, work in government jobs, and participate in governance and political organization in 1995, when the document of the Fourth World Conference on Women was approved, the Beijing Declaration on the Equality of Women and men in sharing power and decision-making at all levels as one of the serious problems and twelve critical areas of women's life. In paragraph 186 of the first document, it is stated: "The low percentage of women among economic and political decision-makers at the local, national, regional and international levels is a reflection of structural and attitudinal barriers that must be tackled through positive measures. Conferences and announcements are taken from the Persian website of the United Nations. (United Nations: 2000)

Gender empowerment index

This index is a composite index that shows gender inequalities in the three main dimensions of programs

Empowerment measures.

- 1 Political participation and decision making
- 2 Economic participation and decision-making
- 3 Dominating economic interests (Pishgami Fard & others 2009, 35)

Political participation involves social participation, non-mass active, equal and non-authoritarian from top to bottom of individuals and groups, especially) subordinate individuals and groups in an organized and measured effort to guide their destiny and improve their living conditions in terms of involvement in decisions and increasing It is control over political institutions. (Pishgami Fard & others 2008,15)

It should not be overlooked that political rights and participation in government are established based on political freedoms. If political freedoms are not recognized in the political and value system governing the society, there is no place or opportunity for citizens to enjoy political rights, and these rights are always vulnerable to damage. (Kar, 2013, 43)

Obstacles to women's political participation

Various theories have explained the obstacles to women's political participation, some of which are mentioned.

Socialization theory: It explains the differences in the behavior and political beliefs of men and women based on their behavior and political habits. Political socialization is a process by which people learn political attitudes and develop patterns of political behavior. The main agents of socialization are the family, school, and mass media which socialize the boys and girls of society. These agents influence people's political thinking and behavior. (Hodgson 2009)

Situational view: He believes that since women are involved in household and family affairs, they have less opportunity for political activity or pay less attention to it due to their limited political experience. with political activity - which is an external matter.

Functional point of view: He considers women's work to be limited to family affairs and believes that assigning economic and political roles to women will destroy the current functions of society. According to Parsons' belief, women play an emotional role in the family and because women's freedom from the family leads to chaos in society. It has no function (Salehi 2016, 115-133)

Different points of view such as socialization, situational, functional, and structural point of view consider various factors as obstacles to women's political participation. Despite this, all of them in some way consider institutions as obstacles to women's political participation. In other words, institutions such as values, culture, customs, etc., with the socialization of women, cause the institutionalization of women's participation or non-participation. And they create an inappropriate situation and also a non-participatory function for women.

Gender cooperation or conflict

Emphasizing the existence of unequal and asymmetric relationships due to patriarchal domination over societies does not make us free from paying attention to cultural, class, and racial origins and the need to examine and give importance to the differences between women in different social contexts. Different social structures were considered in the analysis. The problem that has been the biggest concern of black feminists is represented in Crenshaw's conceptualization as intersectionality or intersectional analysis. Black feminist theorists argue that the concept of whiteness and male supremacy has silenced black women throughout history (Collins 1990, 121).

In his book *Intersectionality and Feminism*, Carastathis sees intersectional analysis as a way of looking at all the factors that together shape our political identities, gender, race and ethnicity, class and social position, sexuality, physical abilities, age, national position... in fact When racial oppression and sexual oppression are defined opposite to each other, not along with each other, then the person who defines himself under sexual oppression is unable to understand racial oppression towards himself or the association of the two, as Mohanty points out. slow, here the two categories of race and class must be invisible and hidden to reveal gender (Carastathis 2014, 3).

What the intersectional analysis wants to show is how women's experiences are connected within power systems. According to Carastathis, intersectional analysis is a strategy that can reveal real connections between women's seemingly unrelated experiences.

Considering that gender is what we do or perform, Eggert and McConnell provide evidence that the differences between men and women arise to a significant extent from people's beliefs about

gender differences and their interpretations. The reason for men's higher social positions in society, they have more privileges in speaking (Mc Connell-Ginet & Eckert, 2003, 38).

While masculinity and as a result dividing the world into men and minus men is one of the most important semantic rules in it, therefore, as a result of this division and by placing objects and elements of language in this format, logic and reasoning are in favor of Male supremacy or other words patriarchal order are regulated. If someone opposes this order, which everyone has a role in stabilizing and structuring, he is called irrational and unreasonable (Spender 1980, 87).

The dominance continues when the dominant person strives for dominance and considers the dominant person's point of view as her own (Bourdieu, 2001, 119).

Being a foreigner and having a distance from the language can lead to the weakening of the human capacity to realize and express oneself. The importance lies in the existence of resistance against domination and in the power of strategizing, where subjectivity and agency can be realized and manifested. Strategy in Bourdieu's theory means that actors have goals and interests that are rooted in their practicality and sense of practicality. By building the strategy model, Bourdieu wants to show that action is neither completely conscious nor completely unconscious and is rooted in learning and practical action conditions; Also, it is guided not only by pre-existing rules but also by the interpretive and strategic perceptions of profits and languages. For him, individual action is not a rational, rule-subordinate, and self-defining action that is "intuitive, strategizing, and innovative" (Seidman 2008, 132).

Patriarchy has grown in a non-democratic culture where people are encouraged to adapt and conform to power, and as a result, an adapted person instead of arguing and participating, demands the concentration of power and has a non-critical frame of mind (Freire 1998, 54-55).

Radical feminists considered all the world's existential structures to be masculine and believed that the root of the world's disorders is one of the consequences of its masculinity if one of the manifestations of women's rights in liberal feminism was women's access to the right to education. Radical feminists criticized this demand; Because they considered the foundation of science and knowledge to be masculine, and even if women achieve it, they will remain under the subjugation of male structures. If the Marxist and socialist feminists believed that the liberation of women depends on the liberation of the working class and the abolition of the capitalist system, the radical feminists believed that solving the problem of women's exploitation should be the starting point of all social transformations and that sexual exploitation is the basis of capitalism; In other words, radical feminists considered all forms of exploitation arising from the masculinity of the world, and their elimination also required a gender revolution on a global scale, and they considered the freedom of the female sex as the basis for a global revolution (Dunbar 1970, 150).

Therefore, based on the perspective of radical feminism, women are located in an environment of gender inequality that has affected all aspects of their lives, and the political, cultural, and economic conditions are designed in such a way that the entry of women into these fields, especially the political field compared to men, it has faced a lot of inequality, and the ruling patriarchal system prevents women from being able to bring their activism to the fore in various fields, including politics. (Bagheri, 2002, 87).

He has also examined the activities of women in patriarchal governments and thinks that they can expand their choices in such conditions. According to him, in these types of governments, women have resisted the policies that have been adopted against them; not with deliberately targeted

campaigns, but mainly through normal daily behaviors in the public realm such as the workplace, sports, studying, or holding positions, political women by imposing themselves as public activists were able to create an important shift in gender dynamics and themselves empower them with education, employment and family law and raise their prestige. Scattered and every day in the public realm has been able to transform aspects of their lives. According to him, the activity of Iranian women mainly indicates "non-movement, which is the manifestation of a multitude of scattered feelings, demands, and daily behaviors in various gender issues and mainly the expression of women's individuality. (Bayat, 2010,115-130) According to the approach, women's stubbornness did not derive its power from the threat of disruption and creating insecurity, but relied on the power of presence; That is, the ability to express the collective will despite all the obstacles, bypassing the limitations, taking advantage of the existing facilities and discovering new spaces, the freedom to be heard, seen, felt and realized in this immovable women, to force the authorities to give concessions, they usually resort to extraordinary measures. In a sense, the daily behaviors they did were considered real achievements. Not only did the everyday element make the movement practically insuppressible, but it also allowed women to gain more achievements without being threatened. (Bayat: 1390,133-134)

A new era for women

At the end of the 20th century and with the expansion of the process of globalization and after it, the movement of people in various societies towards political movements by women to involve them in the matter of democracy, politics, and intervention in the decision-making process. Various celebrations took place. Although women's participation in political affairs is expanding as a phenomenon in human societies, its quantity and quality are different in different societies.

In most countries of the world, even though they face legal obstacles, women have a small role in political arenas. Some governments use special criteria to improve the political situation of women to increase the number of women who hold the position of innovation. and: For example, a special number of the candidates for the position must be women. It is decided in the structure of the political party, that a special number of the members are women. Some seats are reserved for women, or the head of state appoints women to positions. Affirmative action for women, like other forms of affirmative action in political and commercial affairs, is a place of difference of opinion.

The idea of independence and decision-making power has been formed in the women of today's world, that intervention in social affairs and participation in life activities is one of their primary demands, in such a way as to obtain social, economic, and political power. Of course, it must be said that women's liberation struggles have not achieved complete equality with men in any country (Kurdi, 2002, p. 220), however, at the end of the 20th century, in most countries of the world, women enjoy the same citizenship rights as men. Women's participation in the democratic process, like men's participation, is usually characterized by the right to vote, activity in parliamentary groups, and the fulfillment of political leadership roles.

However, in many countries, despite overcoming legal obstacles in the way of women's presence in democratic processes, there are still some restrictions on their participation as full political entities, and there are few places for women at high levels of power. Annie is not. In most countries of the world, women have a secondary role in political arenas, but in democratic societies, the right to vote is one of the established rights of all women.

Women in development and politics

From the middle of the 20th century, due to the clarification of the importance of the issue of gender equality in various fields, including politics, according to the report, the realization of democracy and the achievement of various developments. This is the internationalization of women in different countries of the world, of course, considering the related obstacles. , with different qualifications (they have entered the field of decision-making and policy-making and political positions; from participating more and more in the parliament to taking the positions of the cabinet and the head of the government. Since then, in a general sense, the trend of the presence of women in political positions in the world has been increasing, and women obtaining political positions in terms of the number (quantity) and the importance of the positions (quality) in democratic systems. And the advanced ones have been more successful It is mentioned that sometimes the growth trend of the presence of women in political positions did not correspond with the type of political system; for example, the number of women in the parliament and cabinet in some Islamic systems is now 2. Islamic neo-patrimony has overtaken the republic type. To compare step by step the global trend of the presence of women in political positions with the contemporary situation of the presence of women in political positions at the global level and then at the level of advanced Islamic countries and the level of the Middle East and neo-patrimonial systems of the Persian Gulf basin is compared.

In the world:

Since 2000, according to the report of the World Economic Forum on the gender gap, which was obtained after studying the situation of women politicians in 146 countries, 68 countries, 35% of all independent countries in the world have been governed by at least one woman in the last fifty years, and in more than 95% Among the countries where women are present in the government cabinet, in the four countries of France, Finland, Sweden, and Norway, the number of women in the government cabinet compared to men is 50% or more than 50%, and Rwanda and Bolivia are two countries where the number of women in their parliament is more than 50%. It was from men. All over the world, women make up 20% of the composition of governments and 6.22% of the composition of the legislature. In the general view, Europe is a continent where women share power in most of its countries, and there are more women politicians in the countries of the northern European continent. In this context, Ireland, Iceland, Norway, Finland, and the Baltic countries of Lithuania, Latvia, and (Estonia) are at the top; As in Ireland, power has been in the hands of women for 21 years, and in Iceland for 20 years, and in Norway and Finland, the reign period has been in the hands of a female head of state for 13 and 12 years, respectively. (2018 Euro news) According to the 2020 and 2021 reports on the global index of gender gap in the world, the top countries in the world are the developed countries of Northern Europe, and the first four ranks are given to the Northern European countries of Iceland, Norway, Finland, and Sweden. In a regional comparison, it can be said that most of the countries According to the gender gap index, are in a better position, that is, the developed countries of Europe and North America have more closed gender gaps, and the Middle East and North Africa have a bad position compared to other regions. The order of the regions from the best position to the worst position has been as follows. 1. Northern Europe 2. North America, 3. Latin America 4 Eastern Europe and Central Asia 5 Eastern Asia and Oceania 6 Sub-Saharan Africa 7 South Asia and The Middle East and North Africa means that women in the countries of our region are in a worse situation in terms of gender gap, even compared to sub-Saharan African countries. In Islamic countries, mostly from the 1980s onwards, about two decades later than the first experiences of women reaching the

positions of president and prime minister in the world, the presence of Muslim women in political positions at the highest level of the country's leadership took place.

Women in Kurdistan Regional Government

Kurdish women's activists would claim that these existing achievements are significant. If we consider Kurdish women's representation in the public sphere, this is true to some extent. However, figures matter. Of the 682,000 permanent public servants in the KRG, only 157,000 are women—around 23 percent. At the highest levels of politics, these numbers are even worse. No woman has ever led the KRG as President or Prime Minister. The KRG Presidency has 619 permanent employees; however, only 83 of them are women, and no women hold top positions. Women are better represented in parliament thanks to a law mandating a 30 percent quota for women. Out of 684 employees, only 205 are women. (www.rudaw.com)

The implementation of new laws and policies is another area where women remain vulnerable in Iraqi Kurdistan. This is true in part because the reference to sharia law in the Iraqi Constitution is very vague. This leads to different interpretations of Islamic rules, which makes unitary legislation difficult and leaves spaces open for patriarchal interpretations. Men and male judges govern most courts and often do not implement new gender-sensitive laws. The first female judge in Iraqi Kurdistan, Nigar A. Muhammed, stated that out of 250 judges in Iraqi Kurdistan, only 12 of them were female in 2014. Even when women are better represented in governing institutions, this does not always lead to significant gains. Despite women's presence in the parliament and local councils, the number of women occupying executive positions remains very small. Among the 21 ministries in the current Kurdish government, there is only one female minister (municipalities and tourism). Most female representatives rely on securing the nomination of male party leaders for their positions. This means they are forced to act by their party's attitude on women's issues and do not or cannot initiate more profound change. (<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/174194/>)

Accordingly, in Iraqi society, in which women had a significant role on the frontline of conflicts as fighters, the gaps in the effective implementation of the constitutional rules would leave women disadvantaged when seeking to exercise gender equality as their primary right. Despite the innovative concepts of the Iraqi Constitution and the Kurdistan Region's Draft Constitution, particularly in terms of gender equality and the empowerment of women, the evidence shows that the KRG and the Iraqi central government are still male institutional edifices. Although women have a presence in the parliament, they still fail to fully represent women's interests. This is most likely because a 33 percent gender quota in governmental agencies which was adopted by the KRG in 2012 (gender quota system), has depoliticized the Kurdish women's struggle for political participation. There is a strong assertion that political parties in Iraqi Kurdistan have conditioned women who would like to be in power to compromise their identities. In other words, women fall under the shadow of their male-dominated political parties because they are not allowed to use their connections and, therefore, lose aspirations for gender equality which explicitly represents women's interests as a whole. There can be no doubt that the most important method of representing women's interests is the visible presence of women in the parliament because it raises the aspirations of other women to participate in public life. While the representation of women's interests could be achieved through equal participation of women in decision-making processes as legislators who reflect women's anxieties from a 'female perspective', a male-dominated representation does not guarantee such interests. (Bagheri 2022: 239)

The bottlenecks of women's political participation in Kurdistan

Traditional social classes and tribalism inequality:

Tribalism looks at the impact of specific geographical and spatial elements, which prefers values related to the perception of the place and the situations arising from it over the values beyond the place.

Thinking of politics as masculine: One of the obstacles that exists in the path of women's political participation is a mental obstacle that considers politics as a contaminated field belonging to men. According to traditional cultural beliefs, women consider politics to be the domain of men.

Men perform better in political matters because men have higher spiritual ability in political matters and can handle them better. Based on this, many women have a passive attitude towards politics. From their point of view, politics belongs to men and is suitable for them, and it has no effective achievements for women. This view is not exclusive to common people, but it is also seen in professional women and business owners. From "contradiction of purity of women and impurity of politics", "necessity of hypocrisy in political affairs", and "pollution of politics" are subcategories of this concept.

Marginalization of women: the institutional and cultural obstacles in the way of women, either from the realm of women's values and beliefs or imposed by social and external institutions, are factors in marginalizing them. Baloch-driven women "are a product of the structures of inequality that were explained in the previous categories" clearly. The process of marginalizing women is a process that is realized by men and women in the shadow of ethnic culture. The existing normative and value pressures work in such a way that women decide to remain in the margins in many cases. Men are actors of progress/lack of progress of women: The dominance of men in decision-making processes, both in official institutions and in the family, has turned them into the main determinants of women's professional destiny.

Traditional social classes and inequality and tribe: Tribe is the orientation of the influence of specific spatial and geographical elements, which prefers the values related to the way of perception of the habitat and the situations arising from it over the values beyond the location. (Flick Ove 2013, 27)

Gender socialization and women's self-doubt: The main theme of gender socialization and women's self-doubt has two subcategories: "parents' role in socialization" and "women's lack of awareness and self-confidence". It is almost the same because both groups consider the main causes to be cultural, religious, and political assumptions of men and even women.

The influence of ethnic narratives and beliefs on the role of women: The main theme of the influence of ethnic narratives and beliefs has two priority subcategories: "weakness of rationality in women" and domestic duties for women. Women are considered to be weak, emotional beings and have less logic than men. and, on the other hand, and the other hand, they confirm this claim by emphasizing extreme religious traditions and hadiths. They categorize it as a political arena and assume another rational statement that a woman will not be able to stand in this valley.

The traditional model of division of labor in the family considers the area of women's responsibility at home and related to domestic work and taking care of children. The stereotypes of women's gender roles, which result in the small presence of women in society, social isolation, and women's dissatisfaction, are under the category of thinking that the presence of women is bad. In public opinion, the concept of "public arena" has been proposed by thinkers such as Jürgen Habermas,

Hannah Arendt, Charles Taylor, etc., whose design and expansion are based on the efforts of contemporary man to achieve social justice and the realization of democracy. First of all, Habermas sees the public sphere as a social life in which free and equal citizens are recognized and the political community is formed. From the perspective of Habermas, the public sphere is the basis of dialogue and interaction, and social democracy with the development of the public sphere. (Hodgson 2009, 77)

Socio-political structure: The participation of social groups such as women in the socio-political context in which they are located, participation is an essential and essential part of human growth and the development of self-confidence, initiative, pride, activity, responsibility, and social cooperation without such development and A transformation within the people, efforts, and actions to eliminate poverty and underdevelopment, if not impossible, will at least face many problems (Raisi & others 2019, 325-326)

Conclusion

Looking at the cultural and social situation of Iraq in the world ranking of democracy, it is easy to see that the social structure in it and the Kurdistan region is authoritarian, and by matching the form of government and the political and economic status of women, it is easy to see the direct relationship between authoritarianism. He realized that there is social and low participation of women in political and economic activities.

A democratic government relies on people's participation, and to achieve widespread participation of citizens, social conditions that meet the needs of the population must be created, which means that social inequalities - between women and men - are less in societies with a democratic system.

On the other hand, in societies with a non-democratic culture, the logic of the society is not to provide public goods, but to increase the level of growth and improve the welfare of a small group of people of their tribe and party, and to attract their participation.

The lack of culture and democratic outlook is a phenomenon that not only affects women, but all residents. There are many reasons for the low presence of women, the most prominent of which is the patriarchy of the political structure as well as customary and religious restrictions that prevent the colorful and impressive presence of women in various aspects, but perhaps it can be said that apart from these obstacles, the biggest obstacle that is very difficult to remove is the society's attitude towards the presence and activity of women in the political and economic fields, which requires an all-round and inclusive effort from all members of the society, in which the main task is on women themselves.

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- Women seek 30 percent share in new Kurdistan Regional Government. <https://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/120620193>
- <https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ot/spender.htm>