

IRAQI WOMEN IN THE CIRCLE OF COMBATTING A STUDY OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT: *The current research includes a look at the participation of Iraqi women in the combat roles, which starts from the assumption of the democratic transition that must be led - in one of its aspect - until the army or the military foundation to become a "citizen army," the matter which is represented a demand increasingly needed in the experiences of Democratic transformation that facing serious security challenges such as in Iraq, this means that the army or security foundation - which is involved in counterterrorism - should not reflect a specific group in society , and hence embody the most important democratic principles, which are equality and equal opportunities, especially gender equality.*

On the other hand, the influence of armed conflict on the whole community ,its values and its attitudes, which is mainly related to the method in which the military and security organizations deal with the community in the context of armed conflict.

So the women's participation has a very positive impact on peace building in conflict and post-one , specifically the women's involvement in the military and security operations against terrorist operations, thirdly,

A military Foundation is considered one of the most important official establishments that reflect the identity of the community,

which requires that all community sectors must be broadly represented which is reflecting positively on the success of the democratic transition process in any country .

The matter which has been largely neglected , till now , in the Iraqi experience that is the participation of women in the military and security roles especially in combat roles,

which requires great efforts for the purpose of achieving the sound establishments of civil-military relations from the perspective of gender in Iraq, so as to advance the process of democratic transformation relying on the security and political stability through the great participation for all community ' segments .

Keywords : Iraqi women , Iraq After 2003

INTRODUCTION

After 2003, the democratic experiment in Iraq has faced big and multifaceted challenges, perhaps the most important challenges are mainly concentrated in the security aspect, which are basically related to part to the perspective of civil-military relations, specifically the relationship between the military forces / community related to the relationship between the military forces and the democratic values on the other hand with the necessity of mentioning that the other security forces which were part of confronting the terrorist operations, because of the nature of the confrontation and the special circumstances of Iraq during this stage . It is noticed , as well , that the following three factors (military-security Forces, community , and the Democratic values) were in lack for the most important and least interested is the gender gap in civil-military relations. Women , in Iraq , represent more than half of the population and she is responsible for socialization in several stages on the other hand. In addition to her own central role in peacekeeping and peace-building operations.

Despite the importance of involving women in military-security tasks, especially confronting terrorism, but the attention to this field is so little , and on the level of scientific researches , on the other hand.

Therefore, there is scarcity , perhaps a complete lack of studies in the field of civil-military relations from Gender Perspective , at the Arab level in general, and the Iraqi in particular, as this study is done in order to fill a big gap in this field.

A Theoretical Framework

In recent decades, gender has become an essential aspect of civil-military relations in democratic societies. So many researchers believe that military effectiveness and compatibility between armed forces and democratic social values can be better achieved if gender issues are addressed and military gender integration is enhanced especially with regard to the principles of equality, equal opportunities and citizenship. Furthermore , in wider context the relationship between the armed forces / community.

What are mentioned above means achieving the effectiveness and legitimacy of civil-military relations, this requires responding in the same context to two interrelated demands: ensuring the military effectiveness of the military forces in order to achieve their tasks and responding to changes in the strategic context; On the other hand, the military foundation must be responsive to broader social values, and thus to the society in which they are integrated in and who are paying for them¹.

Perhaps the most important issue is that the awareness of the gender dimension of armed conflicts , and the need to mainstream a gender perspective in international peace support operations that has emerged over the past decade as a key condition on the international political agenda.²

All these developments are accompanied by discussions on the so-called "feminization" of the army ³ . So the gender gap in public opinion on military and defense issues has gained considerable importance. Some authors have confirmed that

a fourth wave of civil-military affairs emerged immediately in the wake of the events of September 11th, 2001, through a combination of civilian and military attitudes which are complicated by a gender policy gap⁴.

The traditional theories of Civil-military relations exclusively concentrated on Civil-Democratic domination case towards Armed Forces, but the alternative theories confirmed the critical need to expand the scope of those traditional concepts so as to contain modern analytical prospectives. Burk had called for further imagination towards Civil-Military relationships throughout three factors that do not depend only in Military Forces and Political elites but also to involve, as well, citizens as they're part of Modern Democracies as it is important that the civil-military relations actively support and protect democratic values⁵. While Forster suggested, "to concentrate that the analysis should focus on the governance of the armed forces, in order to ensure the legitimacy and effectiveness of civil-military relations⁶. However, the discussion is still revolves around the contradiction between a party that believes that the role of the army is to provide security as a first priority, not to turn it into a laboratory for social experimentation, and that women's access to combat jobs is a threat to the security of the nation because of the physical and psychological characteristics of women. ⁷

Whereas the other party considers the rights and responsibilities of citizenship are paramount importance and must have priority, As well as discrimination and contradictory restrictions are detrimental to efficiency, and they affirm that arguments to exclude women from the military or limit their roles remind us of those used arguments in the past to exclude entire segments of particular occupations, and that the army is in a democratic system that must to be a reflection of community and core values, most importantly - citizenship and equality, that community that is supposed to defend it as well as protect it by the armed forces.⁸

Despite the above mentioned, the number of women in many armies of the world has increased in recent years⁹. On the Arab level, studies are so rare about this subject. There are conflicting estimates about the numbers, conditions and jobs of women in Arab armies¹⁰. Tunisia, as an example, is one of the few countries in the world in where women participate in commandos and Special Forces of the army, as well as participate in the battles fought by the state for years against terrorist organizations. While Algeria is considered as one of the best Arab models regarding the status of women in the military establishment, whereas the Jordanian army includes about ten thousand women, a good number of them participate in a training and fighting camp, furthermore, Jordanian women are participating in a United Nations tasks. Whilst in Morocco, a woman in Moroccan Army, in 2012, has been upgraded to the rank of General after parliamentary protests denouncing the lack of women in senior army ranks ¹¹.

At the level of Iraq, the gender perspective in civil-military relations is not limited only to the armed forces / army, but includes the other security forces, especially the forces involved in the fight against terrorism in the police, as the security forces have participated against terrorist operations

supporting the military forces. Moreover, the nature, and situation of treatment with female members of the security sector are mainly linked to the same factors that relate to their counterparts in the armed forces, which assists to give a clearer form of the experience of women's participation in the military establishment. So, we will discuss within the current research the role of woman and her situation at the level of the army and other relevant security forces in Iraq.

Iraqi Woman in the Military institution

The modern Iraqi army has inherited its military traditions from the British army. So, the joint service for the two armies since the British occupation until the independence of Iraq (1921-1932), then the British influence had continued at various and different levels until it was completely subsided after the declaration of Republic of Iraq in 1958.

During that period, the role of the feminist element in the Iraqi military medical service remained, for a long time, limited to civilian nurses, as was the case with the British nurses at the British military hospital in Basra in 1917-1918, the period of the mid-seventies of the last century had witnessed the emergence of beginnings of promising cultural, social and economic developments as a result of the clear improvement in the living standards of large sectors of Iraqi community. Then the Gate of travel was opened to all, which opened the minds for what was happened in the modern countries of civilized practices that facilitated the acceptance of many Iraqi families of new practices emerged in Iraqi community, where the women were used for the first time to work as a traffic police, and to drive the buses of the State Company for Passengers Transportation, including that idea the women entering into the army with the rank of military. ¹²

In this context, the Ministry of Defense started to integrate women in the military into the professions of medicine, science, engineering and management so as to serve in the Iraqi armed forces as officers, In 1979 The Iraqi women were allowed to enter the Air Force College and began in a training group on combat aircraft. ¹³

Thus, the number of courses that they graduated from and awarded military ranks to the participants has three courses. The first course was called First Woman Course for female graduates in 1978, the second woman for female graduates in 1979, the third woman and it was the latter for female graduates in 1980.

At the beginning of the Iraq- Iran- which was in 1980, a decision was issued to suspend the granting of military ranks to the women's, and only to appoint the contracted women to study at the Ministry of Defense's expense in civilian form after graduation. ¹⁴

In late 2005, after 27 years for the first women's military course, Women was invited to volunteer in the Iraqi armed forces again. According to MP (Member of Parliament) Sarwa AbdulWahid, it was another vision of how women participate in military forces after 2003, she accordingly added: "For example, we have women in many fields such as in security forces, in the intelligence, and in the police, but we have no woman in the army or in the combat force except with regard to the subject of medicine, and the highest

rank reached by the Iraqi woman at this stage is Brigadier, who worked in Medical Department in the Ministry of Defense, also the Iraqi woman could not have the ability to enter or reach to high military ranks in the Ministry of Defense, or National Security Institution, Despite it was easy in Iraq after 2003 a woman to be, for example, the Minister of Defense because the minister of Defiance is not necessary to be a military but it could be a civilian, as well". 15

In this context, the National Plan for Security Council resolution no. 1325 (Women, Security and Peace) was emerged, which was approved by the Council of Ministers in April 2014, that concentrated strongly in its first pillar on the importance of involving women in military raids as well as inspections for houses and women, that issue was confirmed by Security Council resolutions following resolution 1325 in many of its paragraphs see the proportion of women in military and security forces, with fully preparation, and training them at the highest levels of skill and professionalism. Although Iraq is the first Arab country to have a national plan to implement resolution 1325, but Non-Governmental Organizations "NGO" believe that the initiatives pursued in the implementation of that plan by the government and stakeholders were futile and not serious on the ground. 16

However, the report on the implementation of the Iraqi National Plan of Action for Security Council Resolution 1325 about Women issues, Peace and Security (2014-2018) issued in 2018, stated that qualitative progress in the participation of women in the security ministries, may reach to the level of excellence at the level of Arab countries. According to the report, the actual preparations of working women in the Ministry of Defense and for both categories (civil and military) in accordance with the latest statistics amounted to (1491) women as officers, and (537) of the other ranks. Additionally to that, (3) women had got high positions in civil status with the rank of assistant director general, (15) senior managers, (78) assistant directors and (772) civil employees of various degrees 17.

The report added that gender mainstreaming has been done through the establishment of the Gender Unit within the Department of Women's Affairs, which is considered the responsible for supporting and developing the work of women in the Ministry of Defense, women members of the Department of Women and Gender were also included in the Working Group for the Implementation of the Plan of National Action no. 1325 .. as there are (32) member associations representatives of all departments and directorates of the ministry, where periodic meetings for them, are held at the headquarters of the Human Rights Directorate at the Ministry of Defense So as to share their opinions and suggestions on how to find mechanisms and action plans that will increase the effectiveness and empowerment of working women in the Ministry. 18

However, if the total number of women in the Ministry of Defense, which is 2028 women, is compared the total number of Iraqi armed forces, that is estimated (271,400) at 2016/19, the proportion of women is less than 1%, matter that strengthens the view that the initiatives of the government

and the concerned authorities in this regard are sterile and not serious on the ground.

Iraqi women in the security institution :

On the other side, in Ministry of Interior, the idea of working women in the field of police was not new in Iraq, as the experience of women's police started in Iraq in 1978, throughout the opening of courses for the rehabilitation of women to become policewomen like the men, but the experiment failed because of the social factor was in the forefront, which led to the transfer of female trainees to work in other departments of the Ministry of Interior, where the work of women restricted to the traffic police²⁰, in where the laws established by the former regime prohibit the status of women officer of the Ministry of the Interior, although Iraq since the 1950s became the first Arab country that has a women minister (Naziha al-Dulaimi), and has an advanced law on personal status that gives women many advantages, including the ability to seek divorce, but the work of women in the police was prohibited because of the negative view of the society.

"Abu Ismail's profession (the Iraqis call Abu Ismail's name on the former policeman) was restricted to men", a police officer said, and added "We were surprised to see in foreign films or even Arabic that there were women with high rank doing dangerous duties alongside men in pursuing criminals and arresting them". 21

After 2003, as a result of the emergence of the suicidal women in 2007 that causing heavy human losses, the presence of women in the security scene became necessary. As a result, the security forces tended to think seriously to allow women protecting institutions from suicide attacks. It is worth mentioning that Brigadier General David Phillips, the chief US military police commander in Iraq, was the first to coordinate the joining of women to police in December 2003 at Baghdad Police Academy to promote the principle of equality and to support the police's ability in frisking and suspicious interrogation. 22

Then, women showed a great aptitude in this field, hence Colonel Ghaleb al-Jubouri, who was The media spokesman of Diyala police, proved the great role of police women in security field, confirming that they are participating in more than (30) civil governmental institutions in Baqub, in addition to dozens of other institutions in other cities.

"The self-sacrificing of policewomen in their work has prompted supervisors to give them more authority, especially after the opening of a women's police department recently, which is a qualitative achievement for women in Diyala," al-Jubouri said. "Women began to engage in security duties, such as the information collection, supporting anticipation operations against terrorist groups with intelligence efforts, as well as accompanying in searching and checking because of the nature of society. 23

Despite the above, the proportion of women in the Iraqi police is low. According to UNDP estimates in 2013, women represent only 1% of the total police force which estimated by 500,000 persons working at different levels. 24

While subsequent estimates by the Directorate of Police Affairs of the Iraqi Interior Ministry indicate that the women

represent about 2% of the total police force. 25

Percentage (%)	Repetition	Data / Ranks
0	0	Captain
4.4	2	First lieutenant
2.2	1	Second lieutenant
8.6	4	Commissioner of Police
8.6	4	Sergeant
26.7	12	Corporal Police
22.2	10	Lance Corporal Police
26.7	12	First policeman
-	-	Policewoman
100%	45	Total

Source: Dr. Abdul Redha Kitan, *Policewomen and Mechanisms in Adaptation and Confrontation / Field Study in Diwaniyah City, Ibid., P. 16*

Whereas, at the level of military ranks , a study conducted in Diwaniyah governorate indicates that there are only three female police officers in the Diwaniyah Police Directorate in southern Iraq for in 2015, (which were a part of a total sample of 223) knowing that the age of the experiment is over a decade, as shown in the table below:Some officers who are responsible of policewomen emphasize wearing uniforms only during working hours, replacing them with civilian clothes before returning home, also gender discrimination in policing does not stop at this procedure , but usually the duties of policewomen are restricted to administrative works as well as checking points , while breaking into houses duties are restricted to policemen because of a prevalent opinion that policewomen can't implement such as these duties .

In the end of 2007, Interior Minister , at that time, Jawad al-Bolani decided to withdraw the weapons from Iraqi policewomen and hand them over to their male counterparts, justifying that leaving some policewomen their work without handing over their weapons, which caused a stir among civil society and women's rights activists, it is noteworthy that the decision was taken under the pressure of religious parties, which belonged to the Iraqi Minister of Interior at the time represented by, "the United Iraqi Coalition," but the ministry declined in its decision after the secular MP of the Coalition, "Iraqia" Mayson Damluji, stimulated the issue in parliament and demanded a clarification from the Ministry of Interior on the subject ." 26

There are many impediments and problems facing the job of women in this field, "At first there was a great rush among my female colleagues to continue, but a small percentage of them managed to complete the path. Many of them turned to civil work because of the pressures and viewpoint of the society as well as other issues ," said Batul Mohammed Kazem, a police officer , adding that" the disturbances that

facing the policewomen is not confined to the street, neighbors and residential areas in case of discovering the nature of their work, but also many of them are subjected to harassment by male colleagues, many of whom do not accept the work of women in this field, some of them describe their female colleagues as "Masculine" .

Lieutenant Flamina Wahid Fakhri said that " Women officers working in the Ministry of the Interior are not allowed to carry their military rank during work, like men, and you can't distinguish between a lieutenant colonel and a lieutenant of policewomen, adding that " the Iraqi Interior Ministry has chosen to abide by a decision issued under the former regime that prevented the women officers from carrying stars on their shoulders, and replaced them with monthly financial allocations called "rank allowance"²⁷, all of which resulted a disrespecting from policemen officers towards a higher ranking policewomen officers, which called on the Iraqi Interior Ministry to issue a circular in March 2014 vowing hard penalties to policeman who declines or disdains performing the greetings and respect for women officers in the police.

The undersecretary of the Iraqi Interior Ministry, at the time, "Adnan al-Asadi", in a speech during a celebration held in Baghdad on the occasion of Iraqi Women's Day, said that "there are some of security elements of the men who are objecting to perform the Greeting to the higher rank women officers adhering to the mentality of the difference between men and women, and who disobeys will be punished extremely".²⁸

In this context, the National Plan for Security Council Resolution 1325 (Women, Security and Peace) between (2014-2018) , that the Ministry of Interior worked to establish a special institute for women (for Women's Development Institution) under the Directorate of Training and Rehabilitation . The Institute aims to ensure that all services provided by the Ministry are gender responsive , as well as work to ensure the principle of equal opportunities for both sexes, it is also responsible for providing opportunities for training and continuous development of female employees, and to increase the number of female employees with different ranks and jobs . The number of females in all ministry formations was approximately 10059 (officers: 295, civil employees 2522, commissioners 1303, policewomen 5903, female students 25, and contracts 11) ²⁹. However, the report indicates that the percentage of Women General Managers in the Ministry of Interior for 2015 represents (0%) ³⁰.

It seems that the concept of equality is still not understood even by many feminist elites in Iraq, as well as military and security institutions.

At the first quarterly meeting of 2018, that held by the Directorate of Human Rights in the Office of General Inspector of the Interior Ministry for the female elements working in the Ministry, in the presence of the member of the High Commission for Human Rights Dr. Basmah Mohammed , who said : " We do not demand equality between women and men, but we demand justice, since there are jobs and actions that can only be done by men, as is the

case for women ... with justice, the country will prevail, stability will be achieved and countries will be built". Which was a clear violation of the principles of the Iraqi permanent constitution of 2005, as it mentioned the principle of equality (Article 14 of the Constitution), and equal opportunities (Article 16 of the Constitution). 31

CONCLUSION :

Iraq was one of the first countries in the Arab region that granting women's rights, as well as their participation in military and security institutions, but this reality subsequently encountered several obstacles led to a decline, whereas the research found that there were many obstacles in involving women in fighting roles even the supporting of military operations in both military and security institutions . From a side they are political and cultural obstacles, and there are cultural and social from another side . While the economical factor was one of the motive factors for their involving in working in military and security institutions due to weak job opportunities for women.

However, this factor impact has diminished due to the aforementioned obstacles , noting that this research does not primarily focus on the study of these factors, as far as giving a general perception of the participation of Iraqi women in the military and security roles at the level of combat, or even supporting combat roles.

Which requires further research and study of these factors for the purpose of building an integrated vision of civil-military relations in Iraq from a gender perspective

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