

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE SOCIAL PARTICIPATION OF RURAL WOMEN IN SELECTED REGIONS OF DUHOK GOVERNORATE / IRAQ

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ABSTRACT: This study was designed to determine the level of social participation of rural woman in Duhok governorate of Kurdistan region of Iraq. A total of 474 of respondents are selected by Random Stratified Sampling. The collected data were statistically analyzed including (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation correlation, and regression) using SPSS software program. The perception level of social participation of respondents was moderate. The correlation was used to examine the association between independent variables and social participation degree of respondents. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between some social, demographic variables and degree of social participation of respondents. It is recommended that agricultural extension in the targeted area should encourage the formation and membership of cooperative organizations (such as civil society institutions, NGOs and community-based organizations)

KEYWORDS: Rural women, participation, social, Duhok.

I. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development has gained the growing research interest in different aspects of life. It is the basis of progress and growth interest in the rural sector and its development. The rural population represents the vast majority of the world's inhabitants. In general, the development has an impact on the society and on the rural population in particular. Agricultural extension is considered one of the most important rural development organizations. One of its activities aims at bringing about development, social and economic changes, and provides the ground for development, as it improves the people via joint work. However, many governmental and civil parties also contribute in such activities. Women occupy an important position in every society. The development of status of women is considered as an important condition of the social development. This condition varies from country to country, state to state and region to region depending upon their culture, power of adoption of modern changes and education [1].

In rural areas of the developing country, women play a key role in running households and make major contributions to agricultural production. However, the gender inequality that exists is the main obstacle for women to fulfill their potential [2]. Participation means doing things together, exchanging ideas and experiences, consulting and considering all views, sharing in decision making, complementing, co-operation, sharing and learning, empowerment, democratic risk sharing, collective ideas and efforts, getting involved, sharing ideas, opinions and experiences, doing things together in work, analysis and decision making and consulting together all views in survey or interview and other activities [3].

Rural women's participation in the development process has been the focus of intensive debates of most international forums in the past years [4].

According to the philosophy of these forums, each member state should promote women's economic independence, which includes the creation of employment, access to resources and credit, the eradication of the persistent and increasing burden of poverty, malnutrition, poor health and illiteracy on women. Although such declarations have been able to increase an awareness and understanding of the problems that facing women and their needs, as such they have not yet resulted in significant development priorities for rural women [5].

This could be achieved through the efforts of the members of the community in which the rural women are an

important part of the system of work and production. They should therefore have an enough opportunity to effectively play their roles and contribute to build a better future for the country [6].

Rural women receive insufficient attention from counseling work and are not invited to attend meetings in the village despite to the roles that they play in both field environment and home. It cannot be overlooked that with the awareness and providing the right information and knowledge, rural women would do their job better which may in turn affect the rural upgrading and productivity [7], [8, 9, 10, 11]. Women farmers are under-served by extension services worldwide. On the average percentage, only 5% of the total extension time and resources were allocated to the women worldwide [12].

Most of the rural women have less opportunities to participate in intra-household, socio-economic and political decision-making processes as well as to the very limited interaction with people outside of the home. These factors isolate women from development activities as well as from acquiring income, knowledge, skills, etc., which make it difficult for them to be economically and socially independent. Therefore, this study come to The Level of Social Participation of Rural Women in Duhok Governorate in Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Objectives of the Study

The main Objectives of this study is to:

1. Determine the social participation level of rural women in Duhok Governorate.
2. Identify the correlation between some personal and social characteristics of rural women (Age, Number of year's study, marital status, Number of family members, Ability to solve problems, Satisfaction with services in the village, urban openness) in the targeted area and their social participation.
3. Determine the effect of all independent variables on social participation facing rural women in Duhok governorate/ Kurdistan region of Iraq.
4. Diagnose the obstacles of social participation that faced the rural women in Duhok governorate / Kurdistan region of Iraq

II. METHODOLOGY

Total of (474) respondents were randomly selected from different rural areas of Duhok governorate as shown in table (I). The data has been obtained from a face-to-face interview based on a structured questionnaire from Duhok which has been held from April to June 2018. Three Likert

scale was used to identify the level of social participation of respondents. The Cronbach alpha value obtained for the scales was (0.751) exceeding. The collected data were subjected to data analysis including statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, correlation, and regression using SPSS software.

Table I: The population and sample size of the study

No	Area (districts)	Number of women above 18 years of age	Size of Sample
1	Center of Duhok	505	50
2	semel	674	67
3	zakho	400	40
4	amedî	557	55
5	Shekhan	464	47
6	Akre	632	64
7	bardarash	1508	151
8	Total	4740	474

The names of the rural women in the targeted village were obtained from the local Administrations. A total of (474) women were randomly selected.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Determination the social participation level of rural women in Duhok governorate.

Table (II) shows that the participation level of rural women in Duhok is divided into three categories. It reveals that about (45.781%) (217) of the respondents were highly participated in social activities. Whereas about (46.624%) (221) have moderate level of social participation. However, only (7.595%) (36) of the respondents have the low participation level. This could be largely due to the extension workers who have good efforts in participating extension activities in the targeted area.

Table II: Distribution of respondents according to the level of their Social participation

No	Social Participation	Frequency	%	Participation Mean
1	(18-29) Low	36	7.595	25.444
2	(30-41) Moderate	221	46.624	36.470
3	(42 or more) High	217	45.781	46.760
4	Total	474	100	

$$\bar{X} = 40.343,$$

$$sd. = 7.380$$

According to Table (III), items of respondent's participation in social work were ranked based on their mean values. Respondent's participation degree towards the item, "I join the village women in their joys and sorrows" was ranked the highest mean value which was (2.698). This is interpreted that most of the respondents have good relationship with each another in joys and sorrows. While

such item as, "I participate in clearing roads and filling ponds or marshes inside the village" ranked the lowest mean value (1.676). This means that most of the respondents don't participate in clearing roads and filling ponds or marshes inside the village. However, the official workers do participate.

Table III: Distribution of respondents according to the Scale of Social participation

No.	Items	Degree of participation						Mean	Rank
		High		Medium		Less or No			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
1	I join the village women in their joys and sorrows	357	75.3	91	19.2	26	5.5	2.698	1
2	I help my neighbors if someone's crop is burned	350	73.8	91	19.2	33	7.0	2.668	2
3	I participate in the decision to continue children in education	337	71.1	101	21.3	36	7.6	2.635	3
4	I participate in family planning decision	319	67.3	119	25.1	36	7.6	2.597	4
5	I provide assistance to those who need it from the people of the village	311	65.6	134	28.3	29	6.1	2.594	5.5
6	I participate in public events for the people of the village	312	65.8	132	27.8	30	6.3	2.594	5.5
7	I work on exchanging farm machinery between me and my neighbors	220	46.4	173	36.5	81	17.1	2.293	7
8	I participate in the marriage decisions of the sons and daughters of the family	225	47.5	152	32.1	97	20.5	2.270	8
9	I discuss my friends' problems in the village	205	43.2	187	39.5	82	17.3	2.259	9
10	I participate in giving advice on some general matters to those who need them	173	37.5	245	51.7	56	11.8	2.246	10
11	I help my neighbors in various agricultural	183	38.6	213	44.9	78	16.5	2.221	11

	operations								
12	I Participate my friends in the education and education of children	153	32.3	180	38.0	141	29.7	2.025	12
13	I participate in resolving disputes between village women	145	30.6	183	38.6	146	30.8	1.997	13
14	I participate in educating women on social issues	120	25.3	212	44.7	142	30.0	1.953	15.5
15	I participate women to find solutions to some negative social phenomena in society	117	24.7	218	46.0	139	29.3	1.953	15.5
16	I am involved in buying household and household items for my friends in the village	108	22.8	201	42.4	165	34.8	1.879	16
17	I participate in activities and programs adopted by associations and organizations in the village	89	18.8	189	39.9	196	41.4	1.774	17
18	I participate in clearing roads and filling ponds or marshes inside the village	87	18.4	148	31.2	239	50.4	1.679	18

2. To identify the correlation between some personal and social characteristics of rural women in the targeted area and their social participation.

Pearson's correlation was used to examine the association between the independent variables and the degree of social participation of respondents. Based on the results presented in Table (IV), Based on the data that is presented in Table (IV), there is a significant positive correlation between each of (age, number of family members, ability to solve problems, satisfaction with services in the village, urban openness) with the social participation degree of respondents in the study area. Age has a significant correlation with the social participation of respondents because older women have more awareness to participate. Followed by, (the number of family members) which was positively correlated with the social participation of respondents in the study area. According to the obtained results in the current study, it could be stated that how bigger the size of the family is how more participation in social activities because of social ties. *(it can be said that whenever a larger family size was greater participation)*

Among the examined personal characteristic, was the ability to solve problems which has positive correlation with the social participation of respondents in this study. This means that when respondents have high ability to resolve problems they will highly participate in social activities.

Satisfaction with services in the village was also one of the personal characteristics that has been studied which has shown a positive correlation with the social participation of respondents. This could be attributed to the good offered services to the village that allowed the respondents to be more participated.

The further studied personal characteristic was (urban openness) which also shows a positive correlation with the social participation of respondents in this study. This may be due to that the participated respondents are more knowledgeable about the social life and other activates when they have high level from urban openness.

The results also showed that there is no significant correlation of social participation with the personal characteristics such as "number of years study" and "marital status

Table IV: Correlation between some personal and social characteristics of rural women and their social participation

No	Variables	Person's correlation value	Spearman's correlation value	Sigma value	Significance
1	Age	0.138		0.003	**
2	Number of years of study	-0.087		0.058	Ns
3	Marital status		0.071	0.122	Ns
4	Number of family members	0.149		0.010	**
5	Ability to solve problems	0.106		0.021	*
6	Satisfaction with services in the village	0.179		0.000	**
7	Urban openness	0.498		0.000	**

3. To determine the effect of all the studied independent variables on Social participation by rural women in Duhok governorate / Kurdistan region of Iraq.

In order to determine the relationship between social participation and all the studied independent variables, a

multi-step-wise regression analysis was used to explain the amount of variance in the dependent variables by the sum of the independent variables in existence and isolate their mutual effects, and then rank them according to their contribution to the interpretation of social participation. The following table illustrates this.

Table V: The effect of all the studied independent variables on social participation

No.	Variables	R	R Square	R Square change	F value	Significance
1	Urban openness	0.498	0.248	0.248	155.432	**
2	Age	0.527	0.278	0.030	90.462	**
3	Satisfaction with services in the village	0.536	0.287	0.009	63.119	**
4	Number of family members	5.544	0.295	0.008	49.174	**

$$Y = 15.905 + 0.958 \times 11 + 0.094 \times 1 + 0.260 \times 9 + 0.253 \times 4$$

This analysis shows that the independent variables of significance relationship in the model are (Urban openness, Age, Satisfaction with services in the village, Number of family members). These four factors are used to explain variance by interpreting (29.5%) of the variance of social participation. It was found that the R Square coefficient in the first phase of the multiple regression model was (0.248). This means that urban openness contributes to the interpretation of (24.8%) of the variance of the social participation of the respondents. In the second phase of the analysis, the R Square coefficient was (0.030). This means that the age variables contribute to the interpretation of (3.0%) of the variance. In the third stage of the analysis, R Square (0.009) this means that the independent variables

Satisfaction with services in the village contributes to perception (0.9%) of the variation, in the fourth stage of the analysis, the R Square coefficient was (0.008), which means that the independent variables Number of family contributes to the interpretation of (0.8%) of the variance.

4. To diagnose the obstacles of social participation by rural women in Duhok governorate / Kurdistan region of Iraq

Table (VI) shows that the obstacle (The prevailing social norms and traditions limit the participation of women in community work) is ranked first with an arithmetic mean (2.409), and that of (Commitment to career) and (Women's unwillingness) occupied the last rank with an arithmetic mean (1.949) for both.

Table (VI) The Obstacles of Social participation facing rural women

No.	Paragraphs	Degree of obstacles						Mean	Rank
		Big		Medium		Few or No			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
1	The prevailing social norms and traditions limit the participation of women in community work.	241	50.8	186	39.2	47	9.9	2.409	1
2	The low education level and illiteracy among rural women	226	47.7	199	42.0	49	10.3	2.373	2
3	Customs and traditions and their impact on the role of women in the political arena.	231	48.7	167	35.2	76	16.0	2.372	3
4	The weakness of the society's attention to the training of women compared to men.	228	48.1	188	39.7	58	12.2	2.358	4
5	Most men do not prefer women to social roles.	224	47.3	195	41.1	55	11.6	2.356	5
6	Low level of social services.	210	44.3	216	45.6	48	10.1	2.341	6
7	The ineffectiveness of women's organizations.	234	49.4	167	35.2	73	15.4	2.339	7
8	Women's poverty.	221	46.6	192	40.5	61	12.9	2.337	8
9	The social upbringing of women in obedience and obedience to men's orders.	221	46.6	190	40.1	63	13.3	2.333	9
10	Customs and traditions prevent women from taking leadership positions.	240	50.6	150	31.6	84	17.7	2.329	10
11	Weak role of civil society institutions and local means.	221	46.6	186	39.2	67	14.1	2.324	11
12	Male relatives (fathers and husbands) are involved in women's participation in community issues.	225	47.5	176	37.1	73	15.4	2.320	12
13	Lack of confidence and conviction in the decisions and views of women.	211	44.5	201	42.4	62	13.1	2.314	13
14	The role of women is concentrated in traditional work (procreation and family care only).	222	46.8	177	37.3	75	15.8	2.310	14
15	The decline of women's motivation towards work.	207	43.7	203	42.8	64	13.5	2.301	15
16	Income inequality between men and women.	213	44.9	184	38.8	77	16.2	2.286	16
17	Feeling tense when facing problems.	201	42.4	196	41.4	77	16.2	2.261	17
18	Limited qualifications and experience of women.	174	36.7	243	51.3	57	12.0	2.246	18
19	Objection guardian husband or father.	201	42.4	183	38.6	90	19.0	2.234	19
20	Weak control of emotions.	182	38.4	217	45.8	75	15.8	2.225	20
21	Lack of laws and legislation for women.	160	33.8	238	50.2	76	16.0	2.221	21
22	Early marriage of women.	187	39.5	200	42.2	87	18.4	2.211	22
23	Weak social responsibility.	159	33.5	251	53.0	64	13.5	2.200	23.5
24	Poor leadership skills of rural women.	183	38.6	203	42.8	88	18.6	2.200	23.5
25	Negative attitudes towards women's participation in public life.	144	30.4	271	57.2	59	12.4	2.179	25
26	Fear of large gatherings.	184	38.8	140	38.0	110	23.2	2.156	26
27	Weak women's ability to learn about their community issues.	148	31.2	237	50.0	89	18.8	2.124	27
28	Feeling frustrated.	151	31.9	197	41.6	126	26.6	2.052	28
29	Women's self-confidence is weak.	139	29.3	219	46.2	116	24.5	2.048	29
30	Lack of confidence in women themselves.	127	26.8	214	45.1	133	28.1	1.987	30

31	Women's unwillingness	101	21.3	248	52.3	125	26.4	1.949	31.5
32	Commitment to career.	137	28.9	176	37.1	161	34.0	1.949	31.5

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study showed that the majority of rural women in Duhok governorate (46.624%) (221) had a moderate participation level. Additionally, the study results revealed that the 5 greatest variables that hindering the rural women to participate in the targeted area, were (age, Number of family members, Ability to solve problems, Satisfaction with services in the village, Urban openness). Consequently, it becomes clear that the participation of women in most areas is still lower than the expectations, from through the results and the observations which were made during the survey.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations were made. Agricultural extension in the targeted area should encourage the formation and membership of cooperative organizations (such as civil society institutions and NGOs and Community based organizations). Moreover, the extension agencies should have a re-orientation of their programs and activities, where women will be treated equally with their male counterparts. This will ensure more rural and agricultural development in the targeted area. Create an environment that encourages rural women's to increase their participation in extension, household decision-making and political aspects. Furthermore, awareness raising program about the importance of rural women's participation should be made both for males and females. Religious and rural leaders, women associations, civil societies, NGOs and mass media can play vital roles and raise awareness to enhance women's exercise of their political rights.

Develop and promote personal skills training courses for rural women on leadership, public speaking, family planning, decision-making, and self-assertion.

Finally, research needs to be conducted on the economic and social empowerment of rural women. Also, the expectations are necessary to improve their participation in decision-making to enhance their empowerment as well as their status in the community.

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