Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION
A: INTRODUCTION

“The advancements of women and the achievement of equality between women and men are a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and should not be in isolation as a women’s issue.” Beijing Declaration and platform for action, chapter III, Article 41

The broad canvas of politics is inclusive of wide variety of issues, institutions and activities. It includes human and women rights as well. Human rights as a multi-conceptual, multi-dimensional and multi-consequential phenomenon are located at the epicentre of vertical and horizontal politics. It has stretched, broadened and deepened the divergent yet convergent sights of politics. It has traversed and trespassed almost all boundaries of life in the universe. hence, politics stemming from and surrounding various sections of population like women, ethnic groups, religious, linguistic and cultural minorities, strong and vulnerable alike cannot be insulated from the spell bound influence of human rights. Structural, functional, process and organizational entities of polity, society and economy of states and regions situated in the global system derive their legitimacy for existence from human rights. Structural or individual attempts to neglect, violate and deny them naturally invite people’s wrath and resistance. Consequently, the very system and its fabrics will be blown in to fragments. world in 21st century is also witness to this happening especially in post 9-11 ghastly incident which shook the high power nation namely United States.

Human rights may be construed as innate, inherent and inalienable power bestowed upon individual both by nature and recognized by the state and society for the overall development of the personality of the individual and nation building. They are in fact, soul and source of state and institutions’ power for existence and governance mediating through the noble idea of consent. In a way, they are the valuable bunch of ideas capable of getting rendered in to action for the realization of best selves for the transformation of oneself or others. By virtue of their content, forms, context, reach, disciplinary, practical and potential significance, they have become global phenomena.

They are the unpacked and unleashed sources of individual and collective strength, animating spirit and motivation for liberation which depending upon the
purposes for which they are exercised, make or mar the civilizations and cultures. Notionally, ethically, and emotionally too they are highly sensitive, benign, explosive and overpowering.

Almost all revolutions and liberation movements which world witnessed over centuries occurred for the attainment of the human rights of the people of their times also represent the spirit of both implosion and outburst. They inspire visionaries, leaders and freedom loving peoples of different times and climes to mobilize and unite their forces to fight for their rights and get emancipated from shackles of autocracy and regimentations. Wars of different magnitudes thrust upon the peoples and anti colonial national liberation movements in 20th century especially, proved the futility of violence and violations. To prevent the future occurrence of violence and violations the visionaries and tall leaders of the time created United Nations. Its member’s states and several nongovernmental organizations have the obligations to “protect succeeding generations from the scourge of war” by maintaining peace, harmony and protecting human rights for men and women alike of the whole humanity.

Under the umbrella of United Nations, human rights found their opportune moment to grow in leaps and bounds in 20th century to give relief to the millions of peoples who were suppressed under the various forms of dominations and deprivations during colonial and dictatorial regimes. Infinite number of human rights laws in the form of declarations, covenants, conventions and programme of actions have been adopted by the general assembly and ratified by the various governments. Hence a scholar rightly observed that, “Much of the twentieth century of the Christian era, especially its later half, stands justly hailed as the age of human rights.”

True to him, No preceding century in human history witnessed such a profusion of human rights enunciations on a global scale. Never before have the language of human rights sought to supplant all other ethnical languages. No previous century has witnessed the proliferation of normatively endless human rights standards as a core aspect of the politics of intergovernmental desire. Never before has this been a discourse so varied and diverse.
Yet the world and the minds of people have not been free from agonizing tyranny of state and non-state actors sponsored visible and invisible violence and violations. Politics springing and compounding luminous spirit of human rights is in continuous flux to witness the process of conflict and resolution even in post war/cold war era. While the world politics was experiencing the unprecedented turbulence on account of integrating and fragmenting processes, human rights once again came to occupy a pride of place. The then secretary general of the UN rightly observed (in his message to the Vienna conference 1993 on Human rights) that “Human rights constitute a common language of Humanity”\(^3\) hence, it has become one among the dominant issues of contemporary relevance.

Human rights discourse is closely linked with feminism too. Growth of feminism in to a global magnitude is the consequence of many factors including the impact of factors and forces of globalization democracy and human rights. Feminist movements believe that gender is a critical factor in the formation of people’s social, economic and political lives and processes. Right from the days of Mary Wollstonecraft the first ever feminist who wrote a book entitled on “A Vindication of the Rights of Woman”, her famous statement is in fact a valuable source of guidance and inspiration for millions of women who live in servility in practical order of the society. Therefore her statement is worth producing: “I earnestly wish to point out in what true dignity and human happiness consists. I wish to persuade women to endeavour to acquire strength, both of mind and body, and to convince them that the soft phrases, susceptibility of heart, delicacy of sentiment, and refinement of taste, are almost synonymous with epithets of weakness, and that those beings are only the objects of pity, and that kind of love which has been termed its sister, will soon become objects of contempt.”\(^4\) Down to the present day feminists many women have contributed to energies the movement for feminism and women’s rights. Feminism defined in terms of political and social movements of women for conscious assertion and articulation of their right to life, liberty, equality, dignity, development and identity. Feminists’ main objective is to mobilize essential support to fight for women’s right to justice and equal opportunities at par with their male counterparts. Some of them strive to promote women’s awareness in societies. They differentiate between human body and its role in the society. It means that birth of a male or female baby is not in the hands of the human beings. It is natural phenomenon. But
the social roles are more important than the mere fact of birth. Gender determination and subsequent termination upon knowing that it is a female fetus is too inhuman to digest. Simone de Beauvoir is one of the most well-known theoreticians of feminism who believes that woman is not created but made.\(^5\)

Their struggle coupled with United Nations intervention has helped in gaining ground for women’s rights. Therefore, in this perpetual patriarchal order of societies and in post war cold war scenario as well, human rights discourse is addressing sex and gender related issues. In a way, the relationship between them is thick and deep. Their mutually penetrative and overlapping nature is complementary to broadening and stretching the liberal agenda of human rights and gender justice.

Among the reckonable initiatives of the United Nations toward creating a space for women’s rights is adoption of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979). One of the purposes of the United Nations, as stated in Articles 1 and 55 of the Charter is to promote universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction as to any kind, including sex. Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights also proclaims that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration without distinction of any kind including sex. According to Article 1 of the Universal Declaration all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Thus discrimination against women is incompatible with human dignity and the welfare of the society and constitutes an obstacle to the full realization of the potentialities of women. The general assembly on November 7, 1967 adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against women. Finally the general assembly on December 18, 1979, adopted the convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. According to Article 27 of the Convention, for coming into force a lapse of thirty days after the deposit of twentieth instrument of ratification or accession was required. This requirement having been fulfilled, the convention entered into force in 1981 and at present it has as many as 163 state parties. This convention is described as the bible of women’s rights as on 2001, 168 members state ratified\(^6\).

Over and above, it is desirable to focus on world conferences on women to prove as to how women’s rights agenda gradually expanded. The first world conference on women was held in Mexico City in 1975. It highlighted the themes of
equality, Development and Peace. These themes were further developed during the UN Decade for women (1976-1985). The Second world conference on women convened in Copenhagen in 1980 which added three sub-themes: “Education, Employment and Health”. The Third world conference on women, held in Nairobi in 1985, incorporated those themes into the Nairobi Forward-looking strategies for the advancement of women to the 2000. The fourth conference held at Beijing (china) from 4th to 15th September, 1995 carried forward the themes of “Equality, Development and Peace”.

The forward-looking strategies provided a framework for action at all level to promote empowerment of women and their enjoyment of human rights. This strategy had the significant goals. They may be mentioned as equal rights for women, the abolition of slavery and prostitution, establishment of a legal minimum age for marriage and punishment for female infanticide. It may be remembered that these goals were to be implemented by the year 2000.

Thus in 1990s itself, global community declared and accepted that ‘women’s rights were human rights’. Its international impact is tremendous. It took almost fifty years for international community to acknowledge that women rights were also human rights.  

It may be recollected from a hind sight that In 1940s, many governments did not have the magnanimity to recognize this fact. Hence, women’s rights got very little importance both at the national and the international level. The United Nations not only adopted universal declaration of human rights but also established the Commission on the status of Women. UDHR did not include many issues concerning women. Therefore, it was not perceived as a satisfactory document for women across the world. Then, in World Conference on Human Rights, in Vienna Declaration and Program of Action in 1993, the United Nations expressed its dismay over increasing violence and incidents of violation of women’s rights as a result of escalating arm conflicts. This led to the Declaration on the Elimination of the Violence against Women in 1993 in Vienna. In 1995, at the Beijing Declaration, the UN recognized the significance of protecting women during armed conflicts. The UN has also effectively worked on protection of refugee women at the level of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. In fact, a lot of work has been accomplished to protect women from
specific laws which have been created for this purpose a lot more has to be done to protect women completely on a global scale having humanitarian laws as the basis.

Yet, even in this age of human rights, women’s victimization and marginality are visible in almost all countries in general and Persian Gulf region and Kurdistan Iraq in particular. Perspectives of both international relations and human rights cannot ignore the heard and unheard voices and desires of women counterparts. This is so because, the Almost half of the global population is constituted of women. In comparison with men’s status, Women’s subordinate status has brought about anxiety in every society. Various forms of discriminations continue to persist on the basis of biological strengths and weaknesses even in Twenty First century. Incidents of structural and unstructured violence against women have generally increased in the world and developed and less developed societies affirm to their vulnerabilities. Hence, Women’s rights referred to as the distinct set of adaptable standards have found a niche in global agendas in second half of the Twentieth century. Even though, all notions of human rights have developed and empowered such rights and security, conventions and conferences, their outcomes are inadequate. As a consequence, different perspectives of human rights have emerged to occupy pivotal place in constitutionalized and institutionalized politics of the day. Politics of ethnic minorities’ nationalism, feminism as a dominant process perspective within the context of women rights naturally gravitates attention for penetrative investigation. Therefore, in the current study, status of Women’s rights in Persian Gulf region with special reference to Kurdistan in Iraq has been chosen as researchable problem.

1.1. Statement of the problem

The research problem formulated for this study is: the status of women’s rights in Persian Gulf with special reference to women in Kurdistan Iraq. It is based on some important assumptions. Societies in Persian Gulf region are highly traditional and conservative. The violent and aggressive nature of men is responsible for low status of women’s rights. Religious traditions and tribalism often prevent women from moving ahead of males. Kurdish community’s history, language, culture and identity are different from the mainstream Arab Islamic following. Iraqi and other states religious and racial intolerant policies toward Kurdish ethnic people have created crises and tensions in societies. Iraqi state sponsored violence and violation in the form of
genocide, ethnocide and genocide and war with neighbouring states and big powers aggravated their woes. Consequently, status of women’s rights in Persian Gulf region and in Kurdistan Iraq is lower than in rest of the world. Over the centuries, Kurdish women have been forbidden from pursuing their comfort, embellishment and happiness. To chart a path of progress has always been a difficult task for them. Their journey through the centuries has been one of constant struggle against odds imposed by the tradition and politics of the states they inhabit. In Kurdish ethnic community in Iraq and elsewhere, women are facing many problems in attaining and realizing their full freedom. Rights of the Kurdish women in Iraq continue to be violated, abused, and discriminated in private and public sphere as elsewhere in the world. Therefore this problem has been selected for a thorough probe.

1.1.1. Location of the Problem

This study is located in estimating the status of women's rights in Persian Gulf in general, and the problems and prospects of women's rights in Kurdistan of Iraq in particular. Seven Arabian states in the Persian Gulf region have been subjected to intense investigation. Status of women’s rights in Kurdish region of Iraq is the microcosmic universe of this study. Hence, this study has attempted to take cognition of the status of the rights of Kurdish women living in three provinces of Kurdistan region of Iraq. These are none other than Duhok, Sulaymaniyah and Erbil.

1.1.2. Context of the Problem

The context of this research problem is determined by some significant factors like global, national and regional politics. Human rights in general and women rights in particular in the context of Kurdish women in Iraqi state have wider global, regional, national, scatological and ethnic ramifications. As noted earlier, World has ushered in an age of globalization, democracy and human rights. Globalization as a phenomenal political process has expanded the agenda of women’s rights and paved the way for the growth of global feminism. Democratization of global and domestic politics followed its way to kindle hopes and desires among Kurdish women as well for the attainment of freedom from fear and regimentation. In divergent political systems characterized by the blend of monarchical, theocratic, dictatorial and democratic elements in Persian Gulf region, women’s rights are foreshadowed by
patriarchical and religious domination of the majority on the one hand and historically pursued ethnic cleansing policies against Kurdish population on the other hand. Kurdish women settled elsewhere outside Iraq and other Persian Gulf region are ahead of their ethnic fellow beings in adapting to the process of globalization as larger space is available for them to enjoy freedom in countries like USA and other European countries. but, Kurdish women in Iraqi state have been battling since decades for attaining their rights even to this date to see the light of democracy and development in midst of tensions between state’s rights, Kurdish regional rights and their own rights. Thus, the ethnic nationalism and feminism within the Kurdistan Iraq besides globalization and democratization constitutes the context of this research problem.

1.1.3. Rationale of the problem

The justification for the current study is based on some discernible reasons. A brief focus on them is warranted for coherent and consistent study.

1. Post cold war global politics is witnessing profound emphasis on moral and ethical considerations of doctrines of human rights and humanitarian interventions. Human rights doctrine enunciates that people everywhere enjoy the same moral status and entitlements. Therefore, doctrine of humanitarian intervention has been popularized to enforce human rights wherever they are violated. It was invoked in countries including Iraq to safeguard the rights of Kurdish ethnic population during 1990s and after. But, major powers are alleged to have used these doctrines as instruments of their foreign policies to sub-serve their self interests at the cost of states’ sovereignty, order and security. They exercised right to intervene militarily in the domestic affairs of other states to protect their citizen from their abuse and possibly death, often at the hands of their own government. This has created tensions in global and domestic politics. A scholar’s observation in this context is rationally quote worthy, “Tensions between state’s rights and human rights have become particularly acute since 1990s through the growth of so called ‘humanitarian intervention.’”
2. Discourse on women’s rights and their violation can also be located at the center of gender politics. Quite often it was lamented that Women’s voices were rarely heard and represented in domestic politics and military. The policy decisions of the leaders affect the women’s lives in many ways. Women are not only majority of the world’s poorest population but also they suffer the 90% of the civilian casualties resulting from war. Kurdish women are not exception to this reality. Therefore, women related issues also have a place in determining the core content and scope of global politics to expand its framework. Focus on Kurdish women’s plight and progress is also part of this global gender politics.

3. Feminism is closely related to gender politics and women’s rights. Feminism opposes to define human rights merely from men’s perspective. According to it, human rights treaties language has to be changed. Human rights treaties conventionally embodied that the rights bearer was a man and the head of a household. Many feminist argue that this kind of conventional expression reflects more than an old-fashioned linguistic convention. The crux of political and civil rights has always been that right holder leads or wish to lead a life of active citizenship. But, almost all women in all countries have been denied such a life. Therefore issues like rape, atrocity, forced marriage; domestic violence honor killing and forceful confinement of women in house and soon have become controversial issues. Women’s situation in non western countries is more deplorable than in west. If the Liberal feminists advocate for the extension of rights of men to women, the radical feminist wish to promote a new model of what it is to be human that privileges neither men nor women. Therefore it is suggested to employ a genuinely gender neutral account of human rights it is possible to analyze their situation without a bias.

4. Iraqi policy. Although Iraq has ratified Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against women and many more significant human rights treaties, it followed structural violence policy. Its policy toward women in general and Kurdish women in particular, is fraught with discrimination, dehumanization, genocide and gendercide. Iraqi state during Saddam Hussein’s regime especially, carried out a ruthless policy toward Kurdish
population. Its ethnocide and war policies in 1980s and 1990s proved to be a source of human and women rights violation. Hence, it attracted United Nations and major powers’ interventions only to its doom and for the relief of Iraqi Kurdish ethnic minorities. That’s why; world conference on human rights in Vienna in 1993 adopted a resolution calling upon all states to end their ethnic cleansing policy. It expressed dismay at massive human rights violations, especially in the form of genocide, “ethnic cleansing” and systematic rape of women in war situations, creating mass exodus of refugees and displaced persons. It strongly condemned such abhorrent practices and reiterated its call that perpetrators be punished and such practices must be stopped immediately. It further stressed persons involved in criminal acts associated with ethnic cleansing were individually responsible and should be brought to justice. It affirmed that victims were entitled to appropriate and effective remedies, and called on all states to take immediate measures, individually and collectively to combat the practice of ethnic cleansing to bring it quickly an end

5. Kurdish women’s movement for nationalism and feminism. The crucial reason for this study lies in the fact that the pattern of interaction between Iraqi state and Kurdish population is characterized by constant strife between Arab nationalism and Kurdish ethnic nationalism and feminism. Historic collective suffering, persistent demand for rights and tenacious consolidated fight always develop spirit of we feeling and nationalism. This is what happened in Kurdish women’s case also. It is observed that “Kurdish girls and women live in a double bind.” One source of suffering is identified with Saddam Husain and his government’s Arabization and ethnic cleansing policy toward them. The clouds of sadness loomed largest over the firmament of Kurds because, Hundreds and thousands were victimized on Saddam orders. Secondly, Kurdish girls and women suffer the effect of being female in a heavily male dominated society in which their movements and achievements are restricted.

However, the Kurdish woman’s struggled for Kurdish regional autonomy in Iraq was motivated by Kurdish ethnic nationalism. Since 2003, they have begun to
fight for their rights in a spirit of feminism. The relation between their nationalism and feminism is in one sense concomitant. This can be substantiating with a scholar’s argument: “women’s rights activists in Iraq Kurdistan were involved in narrating the nation through the claims for particular rights and recourses.\(^\text{14}\) Despite it is not free from obstacles.

For instance, one scholar argues that Islamist and nationalist movements and secular nationalist movements stand in the way of transformative gender relations. They hinder political and feminist analysis of struggle against gender based violence and inequalities.\(^\text{15}\)

Similarly, Bexal abubakir, director of the sisters of the Islamic union, was also quick to register her dissatisfaction. Reasons for her dissatisfaction are also noteworthy to give credence to Kurdish feminism. She revealed that “women took part in the liberation movement but that was mostly through the social relationship to men, through their fathers, husbands and brothers.”\(^\text{16}\) Although Kurdish women in Iraq have succeeded in winning autonomy and freedom, their feminist movement has still scope to fight for parity in the region and the nation. Low presence of women at the helm of affairs despite large number women supporters in political parties is worrisome.

The majority of women who reach decision making position are chosen because they do not pose a threat to the system. As a result, patriarchical system even Kurdistan Iraq has conceded to cosmetic changes.

The legal reforms that promised protection and equality to women have not been implemented. Finally, she registered her anguish by stating that, “despite 21 years of hard work, women’s efforts are ‘sabotaged’, real changes prevented and the achievements are not according to expectation.”\(^\text{17}\) Thus the status of women’s rights in Persian Gulf region with special reference to Kurdistan Iraq is rationally worthy of investigation.

**1.1.4 Scope of the study**

Women’s rights as an olive branch of human rights are very vast in its scope. Kurdish women as ethnic minorities inhabit in various countries inside and outside
the Persian Gulf region. Status of their rights differs from country to country. It is well nigh impossible to deal with everything about either women’s rights or those of Kurdish women’s rights. Therefore, for the purpose of convenient and precise understanding, the scope of this study embraces status of women’s rights in Persian gulf region in general and status of Kurdish women’s rights in Kurdistan Iraq in particular. The study focuses more on the rights of the Kurdish women inhabiting in three provinces of Iraq namely: Erbil, Duhok, and Sulemanya in Iraq.

1.1.5. Need for the Study

The need for the present study arises from the conviction that the human rights cannot be comprehensive and complete as a multi disciplinary discipline without an authentic representation for gender and ethnic perspectives. While Kurdish population is majority ethnic group in Turkey, it is a miniscule minority in Iraq. Its numerical minority status has exposed it to several vulnerabilities. The clash of interest between the dominant and subordinate groups has often led to fears conflicts in Iraqi society and polity. The scant respect shone to the rights of Kurdish people came into sharp focus in post cold war international politics. Kurdish women are being more vulnerable than their male counterparts or victimized disproportionately both in times of peace and war. The authentic representation of needs, problems, prospects and challenges from Kurdish gender perspective is essential to situate women rights in larger ethnic and democratic discourse.

1.1.6. Relevance of the study

This present study is focused on the vital yet normally inquisitive question, why women are generally face disadvantage in the world? How traditional roles are created for women? Why women are generally excluded from access to power structures and participation in decision-making with regard to armed conflict? Why the gender roles were neglected in the Persian Gulf region? Why women are still powerless in socio religious decision making structures of Persian Gulf regions? In Which regions women have better human rights situation in the Persian Gulf? What is the status of Kurdish people in the international community? What are problems of Kurds in local and national politics? What is the Kurdish women’s status and rights in Iraqi Kurdistan?
The problem of this study is significant because Kurds constitute largest minorities in the Persian Gulf regions. Its numerical minority status has exposed it to several vulnerabilities. The perennial clashes of interest between dominant and subordinate groups have often led to fierce conflicts in Iraqi society and politics. The scant respect shone to the rights of Kurdish people came into sharp focus in post-cold war international politics. Kurdish women are being more vulnerable than men counterparts or victimized disproportionately both at the times of peace and war. Until 1991, men and women’s Kurds in Iraq was mainly focused on gaining national rights. In 1991 with the creation of the ‘safe haven’, new political organizations were established, the previously-exiled Kurdish people return, and the international NGOs were formed. So, women rights appear as specific issues in Kurdistan in Iraq.

1.1.7. Contribution of the study

This study contributes to the understanding of the women rights mediating through the International Human Rights Laws and Conventions pertaining to women and also to the understanding of the human rights of Kurdish women of Iraq. This study contributes to broadening deepening and strengthening minority, ethnic, gender feminist perspectives of women’s rights within the regional and global contexts of human rights.

1.1.8. Limitations of the study

Whatsoever be the contribution of this study to the human rights, it has its following limitations: the first limitation of current study is that it is focused merely on women’s rights. The second limitation is that it is limited to the analysis of the status of women’s’ rights in Persian Gulf with special reference to Kurdistan in Iraq. Thirdly, access to precise and adequate information about the Kurdish population in Iraq and other Gulf countries is not easier because of governments’ official secrecy and ethnic cleansing policies. Inadequate time, resources and literature is the fourth limitation.
Part B:

1.2. Review of literature

"Encyclopaedia of the Peoples of Africa and the Middle East" \(^{18}\) consists two-volume set that provide basic historical and present information of peoples in the world, the peoples who have common language, ethnicity, Nationality, race, colour, sex, and religion. As well as Kurds as minorities groups in the Middle East.

"Encyclopaedia of women in the Renaissance: Italy, France, and England" \(^{19}\) collected by Robin, Maury, Larsen, and Levin in 2007. This women Encyclopedia is the first comprehensive reference of European culture in the period between 1350 and 1700 with centralizing mostly on early modern women in England, France, and Italy. It prepares over one hundred and thirty five biographies of the well known women during those times like Catherine of Siena, Joan of Arc, Mary Queen of Scots, Christine de Piza, Elena Lucrezia Cornaro\(^{20}\), Artemisia Gentileschi\(^{21}\), and Louise Boursier\(^{22}\). This Encyclopaedia investigates women’s lives and roles in Renaissance history and culture.

"The Kurds: a contemporary overview" \(^{23}\) examine major aspects of the life and recent history of the Kurds in Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Syria. Most of the information on this book was taken from seminar on the Kurdish problem organized in June 1989. The objective of this book is to delve deep in to Kurdish history, politics and culture which help in locating their homeland. This book point the Kurds is the largest ethnic group in the world without self-determination \(^{24}\). Until recent times, they struggle for autonomy. Kurds also suffer from central governments which repressed Kurdish culture, language, and politics. The book concludes Kurds as a key to the stability of the Middle East is important in international politics.

Al-Ali & Pratt in “Between nationalism and women's rights: the Kurdish women's movement in Iraq” \(^{25}\) explored an aspect of the micro-politics of the 'new Iraq' by examining the understudied topic of the Iraqi-Kurdish women’s movement. Drawing on interviews with women activists in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, since 2003, they described and analyzed their activities, strategies and objectives in relation to Kurdish nationalism and feminism. Rather than conceptualizing nationalism and feminism as either contradictory or compatible frames of reference for such activists,
they understood debates among women activists as attempts to narrate the Kurdish nation, particularly in response to the realities of the new Iraq. They contended that nationalism was not an obstacle to women’s rights in Iraqi Kurdistan. It was the failure of women activists to engage with the disjuncture between nation and state in limiting the achievements of their struggle. Consequently, women’s rights organization in Kurdistan in Iraq encountered with two elements such as lack of political freedom because of dominating two main political parties in Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and widespread corruption by KRG.

Al-Azzawi in “The human rights of women and social transformation in the Arab Middle East” reported that Iraqi women struggled for their human rights. During the seventies and eighties, women's rights improved significantly in providing better educational opportunities, political involvement, equal job opportunities, health care and development of laws and regulations to ensure a better life for Iraqi women and girls. They indicated most of educated Iraqi women are unemployed; also others have led without income or a very low income. Furthermore, victims of occupation forces or sectarian violence are on the increase. The mortality rate is widespread amongst the migrated and displaced population. They argued Iraqi women under occupation need the help of their sisters in international women's organizations abroad to protect them and their rights.

Al-Azzawi, in “Deterioration of Iraqi women's rights and living conditions under occupation” examined for centuries, Iraqi women struggled for their human rights. Since 1960's, constitution was implemented some improvements in women's rights such as providing better educational opportunities, political involvement, equal job opportunities, health care and development of laws and regulations to ensure a better life for Iraqi women and girls. Deterioration of women's rights in Iraq began during the nineties due to economic sanctions imposed on Iraqi. In 2003, USA occupation impact on women's rights and living conditions. She examines the occupier role in the deterioration and destruction of women's lives and rights in Iraq. Al-Azzawi concludes Iraqi women under occupation has improved and protected.

Asma Barlas in “Believing women in Islam: Unreading patriarchal interpretations of the Qur'an” states Islam forbidden the oppression against both gender men and women. She demonstrates in this book how non Islamic regulation
under Muslims point has influenced many Muslim countries. Especially the Qur'an has wholly different view, and demonstrates the radically egalitarian and anti-patriarchal nature. She recommends reread the Qur'an's position and a variety of issues. She argues Qur'an's teachings do not support patriarchy. Barlas convincingly asserts the Qur'an affirms the complete equality of the sexes, thereby offering an opportunity to theorize radical sexual equality from within the framework of its teachings. This new view takes readers into the heart of Islamic teachings on women, gender, and patriarchy, allowing them to understand Islam through its most sacred scripture, rather than through Muslim cultural practices or Western media stereotypes.

Choman Hardi in "Women’s activism in Iraqi Kurdistan: Achievements, shortcomings and obstacles"\textsuperscript{29} discusses women’s activism in Iraqi Kurdistan since 1992. She focuses on the effect of 21 years of struggle against discrimination on the status of women. Hardi argues as a result of the patriarchal system’s resilience and the women’s movement’s internal shortcomings, achievements have been limited. The paper draws on 7 in-depth interviews with women activists, written sources, personal communications and my observations while participating in activities organized by women’s groups. Although women’s situation is improved in many ways almost globally, negative societal factors are still impeding the full and immediate implementation of human rights legislations and policies for women all over the world.

Christina Jones-Pauly and Abir Dajani Tuqan in their book “Women under Islam: gender justice and the politics of Islamic law”\textsuperscript{30} deliberate Islamic law and its influence on status of women in Arab and non-Arab cultures (with special case in Tunisia and Egypt). They highlight the multiplicity of background relating to as well as the personal status laws. They conclude the Islamic law follows the Qur’an and the Hadith. The family-planning policies have been determined by religious commentators, the conservative institutions of the society, and judiciary. So, women and gender politics in the Islamic world have been affected by them.

David McDowall in his book “Modern History of the Kurds”\textsuperscript{31} examines comprehensively historical development of Kurds. McDowall states the Kurds inhabit a marginal zone between the power centres of the Mesopotamian plain and the Iranian and Anatolian plateaux. He laments that they continue to be marginalized
geographically, politically, and economically. The Kurds are divided in three states Iraq, Turkey and Iran. They struggle for national rights. He argues the Kurds lost their opportunity for statehood, and became minorities in the new state system during 1918-25. So, the Kurds struggle for their rights and autonomy. He observed that first decade of the twenty-first century would open up a new chapter in Kurdish history. The Kurds of Iraq and Turkey had achieved a significant measure of the autonomous development, due to US President Wilson’s affirmation in 1918. But, Only Kurds in Iraq achieve semi-autonomy of late. The European Union and the US support and protect this Kurdish autonomy.

David McDowall in his book “The Kurds: A nation denied” explains the history of the Kurds in Iraq, Turkey and elsewhere. McDowall examines the structures of Kurdish society and the growth of Kurdish nationalism. He mentions in present there is no Kurdish state. Kurds disperse within/among the nation have their own language, culture and way of life. So, they face political repression, cultural assimilation and economic deprivation. McDowall wind up the Kurds suffered human rights abuses since the Treaty of Sevres in 1920 to the aftermath of the Gulf War.

Denise Walsh in her books “Women’s rights in democratizing states: Just debate and gender justice in the public sphere” explains women’s rights in democratizing states with focus in Poland, Chile and South Africa. So, Walsh states women’s ability has been not considered in the public sphere. She analyzed the content of public debate and the role of the state in the public sphere. She stated the importance of just debate for securing gender justice is limited. She also maintained that counter publics in the leading institutions in the public sphere are crucial for expanding debate.

Haleh Afshar in her book “Women in the Middle East: perceptions, realities and struggles for liberation” investigates Middle Eastern women. She draws the long-term women struggles for political and economic liberation as well as peace and progress in these areas. This book discusses how the Islamic regulation affects on women issues. She wrap up women and the Islamic laws have common goal in personal and public lives, both try to improve personal and public conditions toward global system.
In 2010, Freedom House Published “Women's rights in the Middle East and North Africa: progress amid resistance”. Freedom House is independent NGOs and advocates democratic change, monitors freedom, and support democracy and human rights. In this book compares evaluation of women conditions in seventeen countries and one territory. It assess each country in five subject areas consist of Non-discrimination and Access to Justice; Autonomy, Security, and Freedom of the Person; Economic Rights and Equal Opportunity; Political Rights and Civic Voice; and Social and Cultural Rights. It concludes the statuses of women’s rights in these regions are based on gender inequality, so some recommendations provides to improve and develop the women condition in these regions.

Kerim Yıldız in his book “The Kurds in Iraq: The Past, Present and Future” outline of some of the issues affecting the Kurds in Iraq. He investigates the Kurds issues aftermath of the US-led invasion and disarray of the occupation in Iraq. Yıldız mentions the condition of Kurds in northern of Iraq is developed through links with international relations. He explores in his books the impact of Baath regime policy and denies autonomy on Kurdish like military assaults, economic embargoes, and the destruction of their native regions due to Arabization policy, as well as genocide and Gendercide, Al-Anfal Campaign, and civil war. This book explore the impact of the First Gulf War and the 2003 US-led war against Saddam, that finally established a democratic administration in north of Iraq. Also, he states the vital role of the oilfield in Kirkuk and disputed on it in past and present. He also examines the UN potentially role that affect the Kurds. Yıldız in this study proposes recommend the Kurds should continue to have full and equal participation in the reconstruction of Iraq.

Kevin McKiernan in “The Kurds: A people in search of their homeland” report on the Kurds of Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Syria since 1991. He compares the Kurds experience with Native Americans history in armed confrontations case. He states Kurds look for their homeland, culture, and language. McKiernan explores the Kurds with more than twenty-five million populations, recognize as the largest ethnic group in the world without their own state. Until recent day, they have long struggle for autonomy. Since collapsed World War I dreams for a homeland, outside powers was repressed Kurdish culture, language, and politics, destroyed thousands of Kurdish villages, disappeared and even gassed the Kurds. McKiernan's coverage of the war in
Iraq and examines the U.S. role in preoccupation. He concludes the Kurds and their communities achieve semi autonomy in Iraq due to evaluate the situation as soon as possible and took advantage of it to improve their conditions.

Lynn Welchman in “Women and Muslim family law in Arab states” explain women’s rights under principles of Muslim family law. Family law in Muslim states contain subject like marriage, divorce, personal maintenance, paternity, and child custody. Today, family law systems widely codify on the most of Muslim countries. These countries recently apply significant amendments in Muslim family law toward globalization especially in Arab states across the Middle East. Welchman illustrate the legal, social, and political dynamics on the women issues in the public debates. So, she investigates laws from the Gulf States to North Africa. She concludes the contemporary global contexts are improving the rights of women in this region and also internationalizes the domestic and regional Muslim family law.

Nikki Keddie in her book “Women in the Middle East: past and present” explain the history of Middle Eastern women since the rise of Islam. She examines status of women within their individual economic conditions, identities, families, and geographies in the past Ottoman Empire and Turkey, in Iran, and in all the Arab countries and in modern nationalist, socialist, and Islamist movements. Keddie argues the interaction as a result of political, cultural, and socioeconomic changing Islam toward male superiority -like the most of religions- cause to faceless of women in Middle East, while, women's suffrage, education, marital choice, and health have been significant developed in Middle East.

Shahrazad Mojab in her article "Kurdish Women in the Zone of Genocide and Gendercide" depicted patriarchal violence as vital issue in Kurdish society. When women were not constantly targeted as individuals, and encountered with Gendercide. Thus, KRG policy must be support and promote women issues. The government must struggle with discrimination and violence against women. She described two significant issues related to Kurdish women in Iraq are the honour killing and self-immolation which the Kurdish administration condoned. Mojab conclude the government and religious communities have effective roles on women life.
Shahrzad Mojab in her article "Vengeance and Violence: Kurd Women Recount the War" explored the role of internal and external war on women conditions. The society had been largely dominated by male politics. Women have fundamentally participated in those politics. The status of Kurdish women during time of war and post war was visible. In her article, she emphasize on significant function of Kurdish women to conduct of war and politics in Iraq. Finally, she explicated her hardship life in the camps and Diasporas Kurdish women life.

Shahrzad Mojab in her article “Nationalism and feminism: the case of Kurdistan” indicated comparison with feminist movement in the West, the Kurdish feminist movement did not occur. National injustice conceals gender oppression. Mojab argue the central government cruel policies have been affected on Kurdish nationalism and feminism. Kurds have always struggled to the central government to achieve the social, economic, cultural, and political rights. Kurds suffer from Linguicide and ethnocide on in different countries such as Turkey, Iran, and Syria. She concludes Kurds have absorbed on national rights in all the time. The Kurdish women movement has also contributed to them. But, the feminist movement has not been seriously considered in Kurdistan. Survey of literature confirms that there is no dearth for literature on gulf region and Kurdish ethnic population. Yet, it is found exponential to examine status of women and their rights in Persian Gulf region in general and Kurdistan Iraq in particular. Such a study is found sine qua non to bridge the prevailing research gap between oriental and occidental, Islamic and non Islamic local and international perspectives of human and women rights in the selected area of this problem.

1.3. Conceptual framework

Every study is constructed on some key concepts. Subsequent interconnectivity among them gives a framework for the study. therefore, concepts like ‘state’, ‘human rights’, ‘women’s rights’, Minorities’ rights ‘human rights laws’, ‘Kurdish people’ ‘Kurdistan’ ‘movement’, ‘Kurdish movement’, Persian Gulf’ are not only repeatedly used but also are defined in this study. Each one of them has a distinct connotation. Therefore, they have been properly defined for coherence, consistency, precision, emphasis and comprehensive understanding in this study.
1.3.1. State

The term state may be defined as a political organization of society, or the body politic, or, more narrowly, the institutions of government. The state is a form of human association distinguished from other social groups by its purpose, the establishment of order and security; its methods, the laws and their enforcement; its territory, the area of jurisdiction or geographic boundaries; and finally by its sovereignty. The state consists, most broadly, of the agreement of the individuals on the means whereby disputes are settled in the form of laws.  

Aristotle defined state as: “The state is a union of families and villages and having for its ends a perfect and self-sufficing life by which we mean a happy and honourable life”.

According to Woodrow Wilson, state is nothing but "a people organized for law within a definite territory." for Bluntschli “state is a politically organized people of a definite territory.” According to Harold Laski state is: “a territorial society divided into government and subjects claiming within its allotted physical area, a supremacy over all other institutions”. Burgess defined state as a “particular portion of mankind viewed as an organized unit”. According to Gamer, "The state is a community of persons, more or less numerous, permanently occupying a definite portion of territory, independent (or nearly so) of external control and possessing an organized government to which the great body of inhabitants render habitual obedience”.

1.3.2. Human rights

Human rights are also a broad concept. Usually it defies a clear-cut definition. Yet it has been attempted to give general definition of human rights. Generally, it seems that the Human Rights may be defined universal legal guarantees, belong to all human beings, and protect individuals and/or groups, from actions and omissions of the State and some non-State actors which affect fundamental human dignity.

According to, Dr. Justice Durga Das Basu: “Human rights are those minimal rights, which every individual must have against the State, or other public authority, by virtue of his being a member of human family, irrespective of caste, colour, creed, place of birth, sex, cultural differences, or any other consideration”. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) defines: “rights derived from the
inherent dignity of the human person." Justice M.H Beg defined: “Human Rights imply justice, equality and freedom from arbitrary and discriminatory treatment”.

1.3.3. Human rights law

The interests and claims of the individuals or group of individuals or even states require not only social recognition and political support but also national and international legal sanction behind them. Although human rights are natural, interrelated, interdependent and indivisible their legitimization and institutionalization will give right bearers promise of protection and enforcement against inhuman laws, fellow individuals, leaders, states and parastatal organizations from within and outside the state. Thus the legal framework is necessary for human rights protection and promotion. Bitter experiences in the form of violence and crude violations of human rights both in domestic and international contexts helped in the creation and multiple growths of human rights laws especially in 20th century. A definition of human rights law is necessary for this study. Human rights law is the law that promotes and protects the natural rights of human beings at the international, regional, and domestic levels by international conventions, treaties, and organizations, particularly the United Nations. Human rights laws are enforced by international laws and pressure.

1.3.4. Women rights

“Legal, political, and social rights for women that are equal to those of men”. “Rights that promote a position of legal and social equality of women with men” Hillary Rodham Clinton in Beijing conference in 1995 states: "human rights are women’s rights and women’s rights are human rights once and for all”.

1.3.5. Gender justice

Gender justice may be defined: “the protection and promotion of civil, political, economic and social rights on the basis of gender equality. It necessitates taking a gender perspective on the rights themselves, as well as the assessment of access and obstacles to the enjoyment of these rights for both women, men, girls and boys and adopting gender-sensitive strategies for protecting and promoting them”. It means “equal treatment and equitable value of the sexes. Therefore, gender equality is
a fundamental human right that is guaranteed in international and regional treaties, conventions, and national legislation”.56

1.3.6. Minorities’ rights

The word minority is used to show numerical strength and status of any group of people of any denomination in society. it is diametrically opposed to the concept of majority. Anyone is not part of a majority are identified as minority or non-dominant group. So, it is defined as the standard rights of individual that apply to racial, ethnic, class, religious, linguistic or sexual minorities groups. According to Francesco Capotorti definition: “A group numerically inferior to the rest of the population of a State,

In a non-dominant position, whose members—being nationals of the State—possess ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics differing from those of the rest of the population and show, if only implicitly, a sense of solidarity, directed towards preserving their culture, traditions, religion or language”.57

According to United Nations article 1 of Minorities Declaration: “minorities as based on national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity and provides that states should protect their existence”.58

Louis Wirth defined a minority group as “a group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination.”59 According to Prof. Richard T. Schaefer: “A minority group is a subordinate group whose members have significantly less control or power over their own lives than the members of a dominant group have over theirs”.60

1.3.7. Social and Political movement

According to Paul van Seeters and Paul James: a “social movement is a form of political association between persons who have at least a minimal sense of themselves as connected to others in common purpose and who come together across an extended period of time to effect social change in the name of that purpose.”61
According to the free dictionary Political movement means: "a group of people working together to achieve a political goal".\(^62\)

1.3.8. Persian Gulf

The Persian Gulf is located in the heart of the Middle East. It connects through the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf of Oman to Indian Ocean. The Persian Gulf has the most vital bodies of water, gas and oil. It has important positioned in international relation due to supplying much of the world's energy requirements. So, it has generally been controversy situate in the world politics due to control and protect the flow of oil.\(^63\)

Encyclopaedia Britannica states Persian Gulf is:

“Shallow marginal sea of the Indian Ocean lies between the Arabian Peninsula and south-western Iran. The sea has an area of about 93,000 square miles (241,000 square km). Its length is some 615 miles (990 km), and its width varies from a maximum of about 210 miles (340 km) to a minimum of 35 miles (55 km) in the Strait of Hormuz. It is bordered on the north, northeast, and east by Iran; on the southeast and south by part of Oman and by the United Arab Emirates; on the southwest and west by Qatar, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia; and on the northwest by Kuwait and Iraq.”\(^64\)

1.3.9. Kurds

The Kurds are ethnic groups who are living in the Middle East, but do not have an independent nation. They have their own language, culture, traditions, and history. The Kurdistan means “land of the Kurds” where is divided among Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria -four southwest Asian countries. Approximately, twenty million Kurds live in these areas as minorities groups. So, their significant goals are to achieve independence and self-determination. Only Kurds in northern of Iraq first gained self-ruled or semi autonomy in 2005.\(^65\) There is a Kurdistan province in Iran where rule by central government.

1.3.10. Kurdistan

Kurdistan may be defined as a land of the Kurds".\(^66\) Roughly it refers to geo-cultural Kurdish region where the Kurdish people are prominently formed a majority
of population with same culture, language, and national identity. It geographically 
covers the north-western Zagros and the eastern Taurus mountain ranges. Kurdistan 
encompasses to four parts south-eastern Turkey, northern Syria, northern Iraq, and 
western Iran.

1.4. Conceptual Interconnectivity

The vocabulary of human and women rights discipline is rich on account of 
various concepts defined above. Exposition of their interconnectivity is essential to 
lay a strong foundation for this study. Basically, state is a sovereign entity capable of 
creating, legitimizing, institutionalizing guaranteeing and protecting claims and 
interests of its people in accordance with its established laws and ratified international 
treaties. It is a supreme political institution equipped with various branches of 
government possessing authority to govern people inhabiting its territory to protect 
their life, liberty and property from external and internal threats. In other words, state 
is a sovereign entity capable of reconciling people’s liberty with its authority for 
better harmony order and peace within and outside its border. In fact, nature and 
standard of states and governments are ultimately determined by the rights guaranteed 
to the people. For instance, liberal democratic states give ample space for rights. But, 
totalitarian socialist and dictatorship kind of states limit the space for rights. Nazi and 
Fascist regimes in Germany and Italy literally murdered human beings and their rights 
in the name of superiority of race and state. Theocratic states constrict space for 
rights. Religious obscurantism reigns over rational secular choice of individuals. In 
sum, the nature, form and extend of rights given to the people in a state mirror the 
gender-sensitivity and human and inhuman faces of that states and government.

Human and women rights are closely linked with broadly defined notion of 
state. They are although natural and universal they depend upon state for their 
sustenance and stability. In other words, they are the just and humane conditions 
created and maintained by the state and society for the overall development of the 
individuals in free, fearless, and non-discriminatory atmosphere.

Human rights laws are also connected with rest of the concepts defined in this 
framework. In fact they are the legitimate sources of rights. Human rights laws are 
none other than constitutional provisions, legislations and statutory provisions,
international declarations, covenants, conventions and programmes of actions adopted and ratified by the states to guarantee and protect certain rights without which people cannot lead a happy, healthy and peaceful life in their society and world. Although they are created by states and international organizations they are enforced by the government and their compliance is monitored by interstate governmental and non-governmental organizations. Gender justice is the true vision, mission and goal of women rights. It is the logical corollary of gender equity and equality. Gender equity and equality are in consonance with the spirit of rule of law and principle of equality enshrined in human rights laws. Hence it is related to state/par states and their mechanisms. Modern democratic states, global and regional organizations in their formation and management are forced to include it as an essential goal. As a result, the locus of local, domestic and global gender and feminist politics is found in pursuit of gender equity, equality and justice.

Similarly, the concepts of minority and minority’s rights also constitute the significant portions of human rights. They are present in almost all nations in the modern world. The multicultural complexion of the nation-states and their societies is in fact the result of their presence. Their rights, roles and contributions are also key determinants in making a nation. But unfortunately, the tyranny of majority or dominant group’s rule quite often pushed them to the marginality. Because, their religious, racial, ethnic, linguistic and cultural characteristics usually are different from the characteristics of their majority counterparts. Lack of tolerance has created conflicts and tensions leading to the violence and violation of their rights. Therefore, in domestic and global setting rights of the minorities are placed at the centre of politics. Minorities’ rights as set of standards seek to govern the determination, preservation and protection of their distinct identities including their rights to life, liberty and property in state and society they live.

Political and social movements which originate in society are essential means of various groups of people. By virtue of leadership, ideology, strategy, programme and organizational capacity they too try to fight and negotiate for rights of their constituencies. They are also important in articulating the demands of the people and resisting the repressive policies which hurt the life of the people. If they take up the issues concerning human rights as part of the civil society, they can be equated with
human rights movements. In their interaction with the state, they may empower the individual and disempower the state and vise-versa. Mixed role and effect of these movements is well brought out by scholar as under: “Human rights movement, while seeking to disempower the state in relations to the individual human being power also seek to re-empower it in the context of ameliorating, even eliminating, some systemic patterns of social, economic and cultural domination that result in human and social suffering, but as is well known the re-empowerment of the state for even just Human rights causes does not always lead to the real life achievement of ‘emancipation’ from the oppressive structures of power and domination.”

Persian Gulf Region is politically, economically, strategically and culturally significant region in the world. Countries situated in the region occupy prominent place in oil and energy centric world politics. Iraq is known for war, occupation and human rights violation of ethnic minorities like Kurdish in its territory. Kurdish is distinctly nomadic ethnic race without own state, inhabiting in Middle East region very much vulnerable to the state sponsored repression. Hence Kurdish men and women have often risked their life and liberties at the altar of their ethnic nationalism for the attainment of independence from the repressive states. Alas! Kurdistan is still unrealized dreamland of Kurdish population for which they have been fighting since centuries. Thus the above concepts are related to one another.

1.5. Hypothetical assumptions

For the purpose of this study following hypothesis has been formulated.

Hypothesis 1:

$H_{01}$: There is no significant difference between women’s rights in Gulf region and Kurdish women.

$H_{a1}$: There is significant difference between women’s rights in Gulf region and Kurdish women.

Hypothesis 2:

$H_{02}$: Iraqi policy towards Kurdish Women and Arab women is not discriminatory.

$H_{a2}$: Iraqi policy towards Kurdish Women and Arab women is discriminatory.
Hypothesis 3:

H₀₃: the Personal Status Law is different between Iraqi and Kurdish regulations.

Hₐ₃: the Personal Status Law is same between Iraqi and Kurdish regulations.

Hypothesis 4:

H₀₄: The religious regulations about rights of women are different between Iraqi and Kurdish region.

Hₐ₄: The religious regulations about rights of women are same between Iraqi and Kurdish region.

Hypothesis 5:

H₀₅: Kurdish women have not adequate space for the enjoyment of the rights.

Hₐ₅: Kurdish women have adequate space for the enjoyment of the rights.

1.6 Objectives of the study

For the purpose of setting a direction, this study has been guided by the following important objectives. They may be mentioned as under:

1. To know the evolution of Women Rights.

2. To understand gender equality.

3. To know international legal instruments for protection of women's rights.

4. To study the status of women in Quran and Islamic laws and countries and to understand their impact on women’s rights and status.

5. To examine the status of women’s rights in Persian Gulf region.

6. To know life and problems of Kurds in Iraq.

7. To estimate the status of Kurdish Women and their rights in Iraq.

1.7 Methodology

This study is based on primary and secondary sources. Data has been generated from the interviews with Kurdish women, women rights activists and human rights officers and scholars. Field work was also undertaken in Kurdish region of Iraq in May 2012. Six hundred questionnaires were supplied in three provinces,
namely, Irbil, Duhok and Sulemanya of Kurdish region of Iraq. Out of which 525 Kurdish women responded.

Data collection instruments were based on Quantitative data. It was gathered from multiple choice questions. The qualitative data was gathered from responses to the questionnaire and the transcripts from individual interviews. Data collection procedures of this research have been executed in the following manner:

Data collection procedure included supply of questionnaire and conduction of interviews individually to the various sections of Kurdish population in Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok in Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Iraqi Kurdistan Parliament (IKP), and in their office and University.

The respondents were teachers, office workers, lawyers, soldiers, politicians, doctors, University lecturers, engineers, and housekeeping between 18 up to 50 years old. They were invited to participate in the study voluntarily and anonymously. They were informed about the objectives and significance of this study before giving their responses to the questionnaires. The questionnaires were supplied to them personally and with the help of women NGOs to ascertain the responses face to face. Collected data has been analyzed with the help of SPSS software. Secondary sources like Books, articles, published and unpublished studies on the human rights issues and movements have also been consulted.

**Methods for writing research report:** For accomplishing this study, the following methods have been employed depending upon the content and context of the data under analysis and interpretation. Historical/documentary methods legal and constitutional methods, politico-sociological methods structural and functional approaches, statistical and comparative methods, descriptive and analytical methods have been employed for data analysis and interpretation.

**1.8. Variables**

Gulf regent, Iraq and Kurdish regent are the geo-political and ethnic variables. They are in a way are independent variables. International laws, Islamic laws, conventions and charters of human rights -women's rights, Kurdish movement are all dependent variables of this study.
1.9. Social utility

The current study’s findings, derivatives, suggestions and recommendations intended to reform women’s rights situation in Kurdistan in Iraq and elsewhere will be useful to all societies in similarly placed situation.

1.10. Plan of the study

The thesis entitled, “the status of women’s rights in Persian Gulf Region with special reference to Kurdistan Iraq” is written in six chapters.

Chapter 1: is introduction. It focuses on statement of the problem, review of literature, conceptual framework and their interconnectivity, hypothetical assumptions, objectives of the study, methodology of the study, variables, social utility and finally, plan of the study.

Chapter 2: is evolution of women’s rights. It throws light on status of women in ancient time, treatment of women in religions and religious scriptures, the status of women during medieval era, women in modern time, genesis of women’s rights, UN convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, gender equality index, the inter-parliamentary union, international conference on women’s rights, contemporary movements for women’s rights in new and old politics, and summary.

Chapter 3: is the status of women’s rights in Persian Gulf Region. It discusses the significant aspects like status of women in Persian Gulf region in the context of human rights laws and their implementation. The significance of this chapter lies in the fact that there is an objective analysis of the status of women and their rights in seven countries situated in Persian Gulf Region. It also unfolds the bitter and better sides of the women rights situation existing in these states. Persian Gulf states attitude toward international human and women rights conventions is also analyzed. Attention has also been paid to focus on civil rights, political rights, economic rights, social and cultural rights in Persian Gulf region and summary.

Chapter 4: is Kurdish people’s struggle for independence and human rights. The origin and growth of this nomadic, tribal, ethnic population is itself suggestive of
victimization in the hands of king by name Zahhak and other regimes in subsequent centuries. Although the history of Kurds dates back to 2400 BC they have no state of their own. Their struggle for the attainment of independence and other rights has been throttled by the host states. Therefore, in this chapter, care has been taken to analyze and interpret general information about Kurds, origin of the Kurds, geography and population, dialects religious cultural, social, economic, politic, the historical review of host Kurdish people in different countries, Kurds in Iraq, the treaty of Sèvres and creation of Iraq, Autonomous Regions In Iraq, the Ba‘ath regime, treaty of march manifesto, the Iraqi government programs, the Anfal: the Kurdish genocide, Democracy in Iraqi Kurdistan, and Human rights situation in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Chapter 5: is status of women’s rights in Kurdistan in Iraq. This is the core chapter of this study. Gender politics of Kurdish ethnic nationalism and feminism within the context of Iraqi state and Kurdistan is a source of curiosity for reflection and rumination from human rights and gender perspectives. This is so because; Kurdish women had to fight battles from two fronts for their reckonable status and respect for their rights and worthy place in Iraqi and Kurdish state and society. They fought along with men for Kurdish autonomy with a spirit of ethnic nationalism till 1992. Thenceforth, they have been forced by circumstances to fight for their own rights in consonance with the noble principles and purposes of Kurdish feminism. Their struggle is the cumulative effect of many factors. Erstwhile colonial rule, subsequent independent regimes, especially, Ba‘thist regime under Saddam Hussein in Iraq had created conditions for the marginality of Kurdish women. State sponsored violence in Iraq was literally responsible for the pathetic sight and plight of Kurdish women’s rights and low status. Kurdish regional government is yet to take still more initiatives to improve Kurdish women’s rights and elevate their status. Women rights activists and organizations are to play much more positive role within the framework of feminism instead of being hijacked by the patriarchal and male dominated political parties which are known for their tribalism as well. Therefore, in this chapter, attempt has been made to examine the following aspects: women in Iraqi Kurdistan a historical insight; impact of war and occupation on women; political organization of the Kurdish community in Iraq; women’s position in Kurdish society; Kurdish women’s struggle for rights ETC. Status of Kurdish women’s civil, political,
economic, social and cultural rights has also been examined. Responses of 525 Kurdish women respondents have also been analyzed.

Chapter 6: is conclusion. This chapter is equally important as it focuses on the findings, suggestions and future areas of research. The study undertaken on the basis of micro and macro level analysis has helped in generating some important derivatives which have their bearing on the theoretical and operational dimensions of Kurdish women’s rights and their status.

The findings demonstrate that the women’s rights situation in the Gulf region is not satisfactory. It can be concluded that Iraqi policy towards Kurdish Women is discriminatory and dehumanizing. The status of Kurd women and their rights is yet to be improved under the KRG regime and Iraqi regime.


8. Universal Declaration of Human Rights

9. Andrew Heywood, Global Politics, Uk, Palgrave pub, 2011, P303


13. Diane E. King

14. Diane E. King 340

15. Diane E. King 339


17. Bexal 61


20. She was the first woman in Europe to obtain a doctorate.

21. She was the renowned Renaissance painter.

22. She was midwife of a French queen and the acclaimed author of medical textbooks.

24 Following World War I, the Kurds were guaranteed a homeland, but collapsed. Kurd in Iraq achieved semi autonomy up to now.


36 It is abbreviation of nongovernmental organization.

37 These regions include Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine (Palestinian Authority and Israeli-Occupied Territories), Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.


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