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Youth unemployment in Duhok and the capacity of sociology department to improve students job skills

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Introduction

The young labor market is highly fragile in all around the world; Since the previous year, Iraq's young unemployment rate has dropped by one percentage point. The overall percentage of youth unemployment decreased, reaching 34.59 percent in 2022, for young people aged 15-24. This situation is even worse if we enlarge the age group to 32 which is the age limit to gain entrance into a public sector employment.¹ The situation of unemployment youth, in Iraqi Kurdistan (KRG), due to the economic and financial crisis after 2014, the coronavirus pandemic, and growing unemployment, people and unemployed youth in the Kurdistan Region blame the government for their current situation. We were not able to find the exact statistic regarding unemployment youth in this region but the reality reinforce the idea that young unemployment is a serious issue that requires action. In addition about two thirds of the population in Iraq and KRG is under the age of 35, making it a country with a young demographic. This situation has undoubtedly mounted enormous pressure on educational resources and the fragile labor market economy.

Regarding the connection between education and the possibility of being unemployed, research has demonstrated that education significantly affects results on the labor market, such as landing a job and earning money. The argument for education is that it improves people's skills, makes them more productive, and raises their chances of finding work. Since more educated people have greater and wider opportunities to search for openings than less educated people, education will also boost the intensity and effectiveness of job searching. More educated people also frequently outperform less educated ones in the face of scarce work chances, even for positions that call for fewer skills. This aggravates the unemployment gap between the various education qualifications or levels.

¹ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/812116/youth-unemployment-rate-in-iraq/>

Statement of problem

When it comes to their integration into the labor market and their search for quality and enjoyable employment, youths in Kurdistan region in general and in Duhok region in particular face numerous challenges. Young people in this region, like those in the majority of countries that are developing, face an important obstacle in finding jobs. According to information from the Statistics Office for the Kurdistan Region, after invasion of ISIS in 2014 and economic crises the unemployment rate has raised and it was 9% in 2018. As well numerous residents of the Kurdistan Region and Iraq were forced into poverty and unemployment as a result of the coronavirus's arrival in 2020 and a difficult economic climate brought on by a decline in oil prices. Since the previous year, Iraq's young unemployment rate has dropped by one percentage point. The overall percentage of youth unemployment decreased, reaching 34.59 percent in 2022.²

Objective of study

Various government agencies, academic institutions, the commercial sector, and society must collaborate in order to successfully prepare graduates for the workforce.

This study aims to examine the relation between higher education (graduated from sociology department at Duhok University) and youth unemployment rates in the Duhok Region. More specifically, this study looks at the relationship between education level and unemployment as well as whether or not field of study affects adolescent unemployment rates.

We focused on department of sociology in Duhok university. Because it is the only department of sociology in all region of Duhok which established in 2011. Sociology graduates may be qualified for a variety of occupations, especially those that focus on how individuals or groups interact socially in general society.

² <https://www.statista.com/statistics/812116/youth-unemployment-rate-in-iraq/>

Research questions:

The main question of this research is:

1. Up to what degree has Sociology department improve the capacity of students, to fit in the work market in Duhok?
2. What skills did they learn from department of Sociology?
3. Did English language help them to have job opportunities?

Hypothesis

The chances of students graduating from the sociology department are higher than those of other departments due to the following factors: community needs, knowledge and skills acquired while studying in English, and the greater number of local and international organizations in Duhok governorate.

Chapter 1

1. Conceptualization

The term **Unemployment** refers to a situation where a person actively searches for employment, but is unable to find work, unemployment is considered to be a key measure of the health of the economy.

Defining unemployment in more broadly is the term used to designate the situation of those who are able to find employment only for shorter than normal periods—part-time workers, seasonal workers, or day or casual workers. The term may also describe the condition of workers whose education or training make them overqualified for their jobs.

According to the **International Labor Organization (ILO)** Define unemployed person is a person aged 15 or over:

- Without a job during given week.
- Available to start a job within the next two weeks.
- Actively having sought employment at some time during the last four weeks or having already found a job that starts within the next three months.

1.1. Understanding Unemployment

Unemployment is a key economic indicator because it signals the ability or inability of workers to obtain gainful work and contribute to the productive output of the economy, more unemployed workers mean less economic production

Statistics on unemployment are collected and analyzed by government labor offices in most countries and have come to be considered a chief indicator of economic health. Trends in unemployment and statistical differences among groups in the population are studied for what they may reveal of general economic trends and as bases for possible governmental action. Full employment has been a stated goal of many governments since World War II, and a variety of programs have been devised to attain it. It should be pointed out that full employment is not necessarily synonymous with a zero unemployment rate, for at any given time the unemployment

rate will include some number of persons who are between jobs and not unemployed in any long-term sense.

2.1. Overview about Unemployment

The phenomena of unemployment is not just a phenomena in our country, through reading the history we saw that many other country over the worldwide are suffer from this issues which have bad consequences.

The U.S. government began tracking unemployment in the 1940s, the highest rate of unemployment to date occurred during the Great Depression, when unemployment rose to 24.9% in 1933. Between 1931 and 1940, the unemployment rate remained above 14% but subsequently dropped down to the single digits. It remained there until 1982 when it climbed above 10%.

In 2009, during the Great Recession unemployment again rose to 10%. In April 2020, amid the Coronavirus pandemic, unemployment hit 14.8%. As of April 2023, the unemployment rate was 3.4%, a slight drop from the previous month.

2. Theorization

Sociology is a science that studies the society as a whole, this includes studying and investigating the status of employment and unemployment in any given society. As we examine the issue of unemployment from a sociological perspective, there are two main theories that we consider, which are both the Functionalism theory and Conflict theory. The connotation of unemployment is mostly understood in terms of economies that have a market for wage labors. This does mean that unemployment is explained, in a way that excludes people who only provide unpaid household services (household chores). According to Pramod N. Junankar (2016), unemployment is defined in terms of “not being employed while being available and looking for work.” (p.42). Industrialization has created this form of labor, which requires employment and payment for the services provided by individuals. As the industrial revolution started, the social structure we knew previously changed and it formed what we know now as industrial societies. This is an era, where even Sociology as a science, along other social sciences, developed. In this component, we will try to understand unemployment from a sociological perspective, considering both the functionalism and conflict theories.

1.2 Capitalism Theory

Prior to the industrialization, preindustrial societies completely depended on land, and it was the main source of income and wealth. The bigger the lands people owned, the wealthier they were. The industrial revolutions around Europe and USA, changed this truth for the whole world and its societies. Individuals and institutions needed to take on different paths in life, now including new finances for inventions, entrepreneurship, machines, and business companies. Leading to social structures, where the industrialists replaced the landowners, becoming wealthier and holding more power. This led to the arising of the capitalist economic system. Capitalism, as defined by Rosenberg (1991), is “an economic system in which the means of production are largely in private hands and the main incentive for economic activity is the accumulation of profit”. (p.451). In the past two centuries, under the old capitalism, people could act freely, with very little government intervention. However, capitalism has taken a different form now. It’s true that increasing profit is still the most significant feature, but there is a more extensive government regulation of economic relations. Without such regulations, there was a higher risk of fraud and lying to the costumers of the products made by large firms, in order for them to gain more profits. As a result, the government in the capitalist societies tend to monitor prices, the safety procedures, and protecting the rights of the workers and consumers. In the capitalism system, unemployment is undesirable. Businesses require certain levels of labor, depending on the type of products that the firms are producing. However, according to Karl Marx, unemployment is caused by the capitalists, in order to affect the wages. Institutions tend to develop their businesses and as a result their tools and machines. In such cases, workers switch to using more efficient machines, then of course fewer workers are required to produce any given number of products. In a capitalist system, “labor-saving” technology necessarily destroys the jobs of some workers. This doesn’t mean that the number of jobs falls continuously. Particular industries can find new markets and expand; new industries can be created that need workers; the demand for labor rises and falls with changes in the business cycle. But it does mean that capitalism has an inbuilt tendency to drive workers out of production. Capitalism is in one way or another, the developer of employment and unemployment.

2.2 Functionalism Theory

Functionalism as a theory, developed by Emile Durkheim, focuses on the functions performed in the society, through its institutions, hierarchies, and norms. In this theory, function is any act that promotes or interferes with the maintenance of the system. In other words, functionalism believes that everything serves a purpose in the society and its continuous equilibrium. This does, in fact, apply to every aspect of life in the society, including unemployment. Functionalists do believe that unemployment is necessary! As strange as that may be, functionalism believes that unemployment serves a purpose in the society. That it is needed, to play its own part. Functionalism does not say that there aren't enough job opportunities, but it's likely to conclude that unemployment bases itself on social Darwinism. That is, individuals who are more intelligent than others have better-paying jobs, as opposed to those who are less smart with low-paying jobs. This creates a battle of life and brings disadvantage to all individuals who do not put a significant amount of effort into the labor market. According to functionalism, this is considered as normal. Because it's serving the purpose of bringing the society to the state of equilibrium.

Chapter II

Methodology of Research

In this research, we have utilized both qualitative and quantitative approaches, to reach the desired outcomes. To better understand the students' perspective, we distributed Google forms on 135 graduates from Sociology department of the university of Duhok. This sample makes up to 27% of the total of graduates from our department over the past years, since 2011. Such insights enriched our research by better understanding the impact of sociology on students, the compatibility of the subjects given in our department and the link between the skills that students gain and the work market.

As we acknowledge the importance of internal and external viewpoints on the subject matter, we also conducted interviews with different relevant personnels. An interview such as the one with Mr. Salih Yaseen Barwary, the head of Harikar organization (NGO), provided us with a perspective, that focused on the role that graduates from Sociology department have in local organizations. Harikar organization is the largest local organization in Duhok since the 90s, it has provided job opportunities for thousands of youth, especially during crisis.

Mrs. Faiyza A. Wahid, (Senior Sociologist), was one of the first 11 social workers in Duhok governorate. She concentrated a lot on the crucial role of social workers and the need of Duhok society for such field of work. Mrs. Samiya Saeed, lecturer at sociology department of university of Duhok and one of the first founders of this department and also one of the 11 social workers in Duhok during the 90s. Her experience and advocacy led to the opening of sociology department in the university of Duhok. Mrs. Samiya's role is visible for more than 20 years as a lecturer in the department of sociology, as well as a social worker in different institutions and organizations in Duhok city.

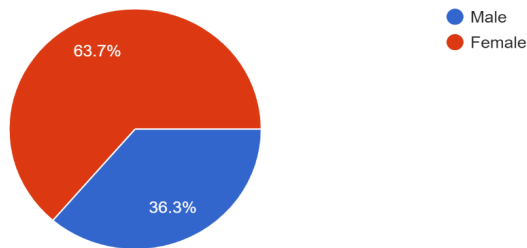
Of course, we cannot forget the importance of our graduate students' perspective and as a result, the interviews with our previous students Sipal Kamal and Thamer Alyas, were a crucial added value to this research. These two students have transferred the knowledge they gained from this department, into real life experience, by creating their own business, after graduation and were able to pave the way towards their futures.

During our research, another important tool for data collection was also our own observations. As professionals in social sciences and specifically sociology, we also used our own observation of the students, graduates, and their work in different places.

1. Data Collection

- The following pie chart indicates the number of males and females who participated in this survey questionnaire as the sample of this research, these were graduated students from Sociology department of the university of Duhok.

Gender:
135 responses



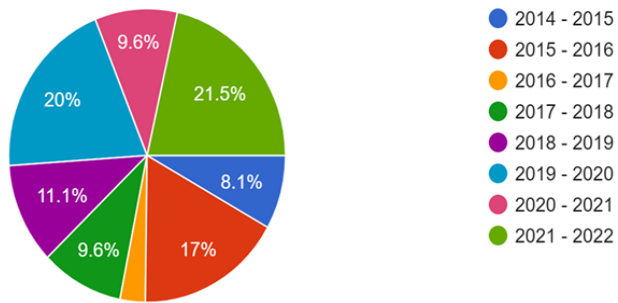
N.1

As shown in the pie chart, 36.3% of respondents were males and 63.7% of respondents were females. This goes back to the fact that the majority of sociology department students are females.

- Since we wanted to get a broader perspective of the students' opinions, we made sure to include graduates from different years in our research. The following pie chart clearly shows the different percentage of students, based on their years of graduation.

Year of graduation:

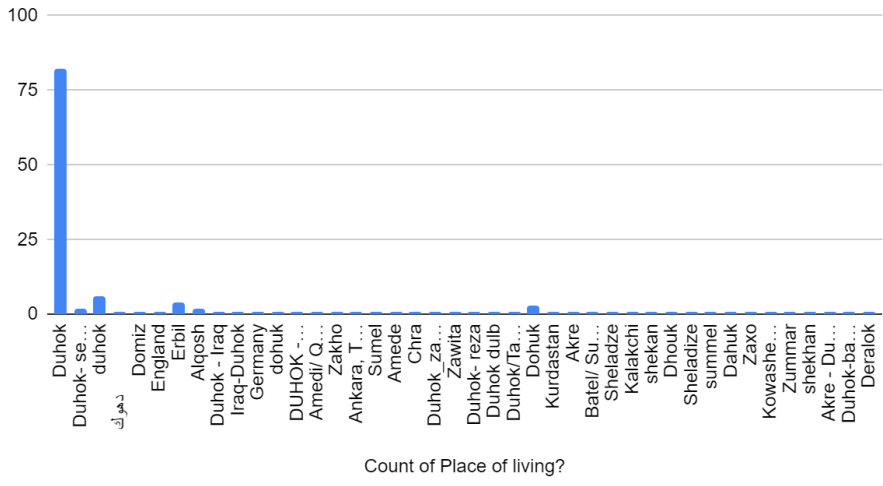
135 responses



N.2

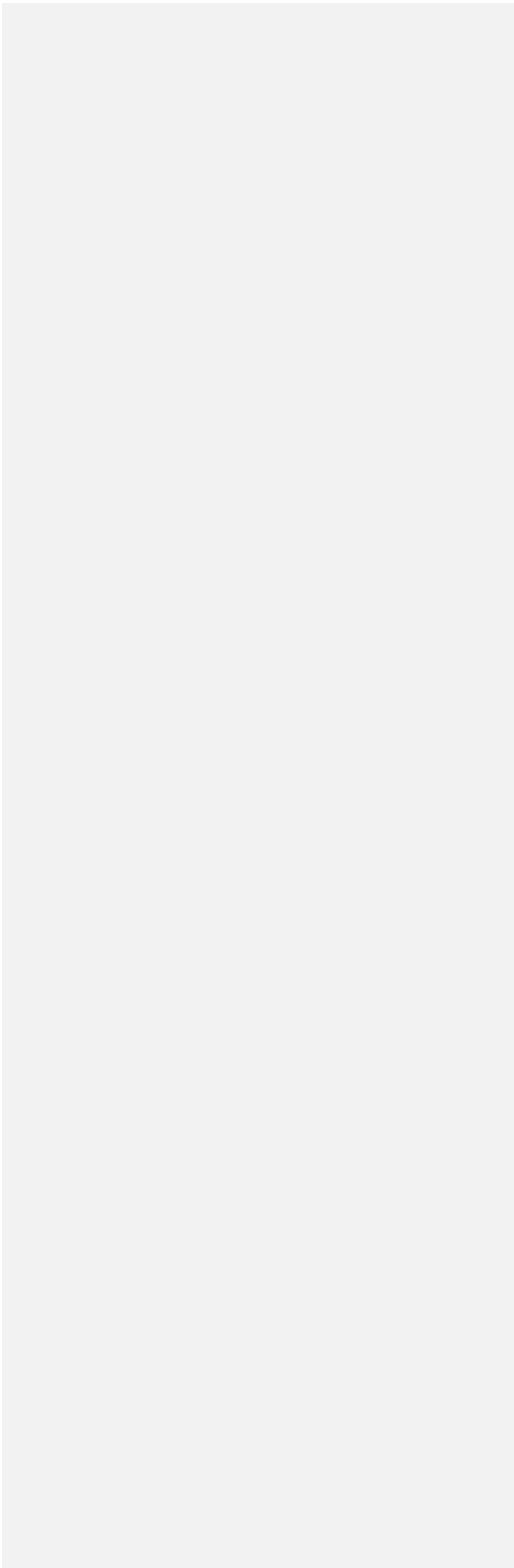
- For the purpose of more inclusiveness, we made sure to reach out to our graduate students from different areas around and inside Duhok. The following pie chart shows the areas of which the graduated students from our department live.

Place of living?



Count of Place of living?

N.3

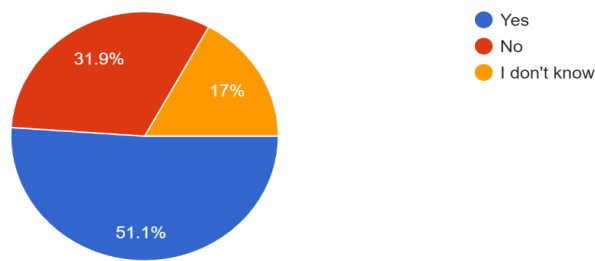


2. Data Description

1.2. First Theme-The importance of Sociology department and meeting the needs of the society.

As we dive into the needs of our society, we can't deny the large number of problems and negative phenomena that require our research and recommendations of healthy methodologies to resolve these problems. Considering that our society has lived through wars for such a long time and all the traumatic experiences and social issues, it's crucial to have sociology department and utilize sociology to make scientific research, provide social work, and engage all governmental institutions in the process of this social reconstruction. Both Mr. Samya and Mrs. Fayiza, two of the first 11 social workers in Duhok, emphasized how they saw the necessity for this department, right after they started working in Duhok governorate. It has always been a huge need, because the changes that took place in our society, urgently needed the intervention of individuals specialized in social sciences.

Regarding this question, as shown in the following pie graph, 51.1% of respondents agreed that what they have studied in sociology department supported them to find a job. While 31.9% disagreed and said it didn't support them and 17% didn't know.

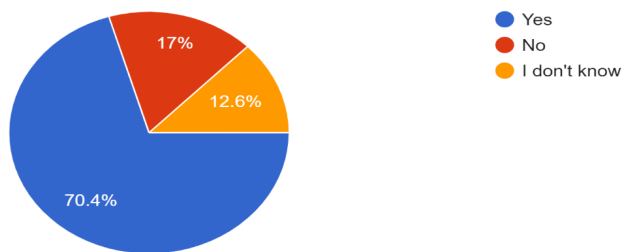


N.4

According to the students' answers, most of the graduates found that this department changed their perspective about life, accepting the different cultures and becoming more tolerant. In addition,

some of them mentioned that sociology helped them understand their society better and improved their critical thinking skills, whereas they could find solutions for social problems.

- 70.4% of the respondents said it's true that their scientific and linguistic skills changed and better than other departments' graduates in terms of finding jobs, 17% said no it didn't help and 12.6% said that they don't know.



N.5

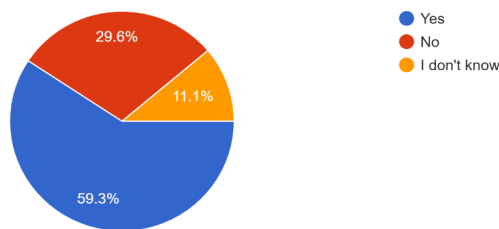
As we can see, most of the students agree that sociology as a science, the subjects they have taken and English, were all advantages to improve their skills and capacities. At the same time, also as shown in the above pie chart, 17% of the students said that English language was an obstacle and prevented them from improving their skills and knowledge in this field.

2.2. Second Theme- Sociology department and the creation of job opportunities

The opening of sociology department is recent compared to the establishment of higher education in Duhok. It's established in 2011 and it's the only sociology department in all Duhok governorate. Our society has been through tens of wars and conflicts, which had an effect on the fabric of society and caused many social problems. During the period when sociology was established, it was the peak of refuging and internal displacement from other countries and parts of the region to the city. During which many national and international organizations opened their offices in this area, that's

why one of our questions was concerning whether or not sociology helped them find job opportunities or create their own businesses or jobs.

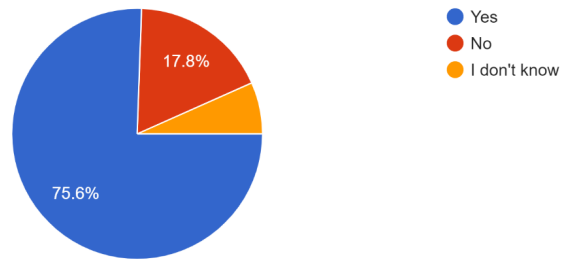
The pie chart N.6 shows that 59.3% of the respondents answered that sociology department generally improved their skills to find or create job opportunities, 29.6% said no and 11.1% answered that they don't know.



N.6

As it's clear from the pie chart, around 60% of the graduates confirmed that sociology did improve their skills to find or create job opportunities. However, within the students who disagreed, we found the reasons including a lack of the practical aspect of the sociology courses they took during their studies.

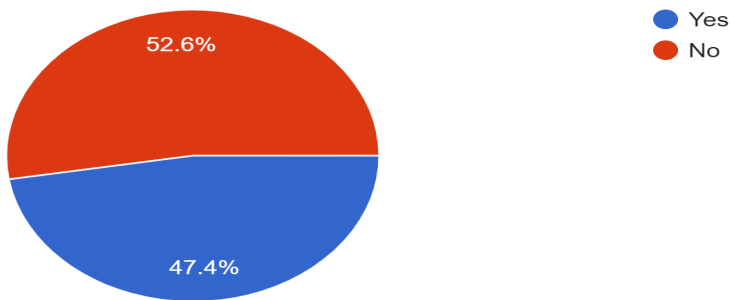
As we previously mentioned, sociology department is in English language. Therefore, one of the questions that we addressed to the graduate students was if English languages was a supporting factor to help them find jobs. The following pie chart shows that majority of students agree. 75.6% of them think that studying in English language was a supporting factor to find a job. And 17.8% said it's not and 6.7% said that they don't know.



N.7

With the presence of many international organizations and companies in the area, studying in English language was crucial for finding job opportunities. Despite this truth, some of the graduates believed that the English they learned wasn't efficient and didn't help them find job opportunities.

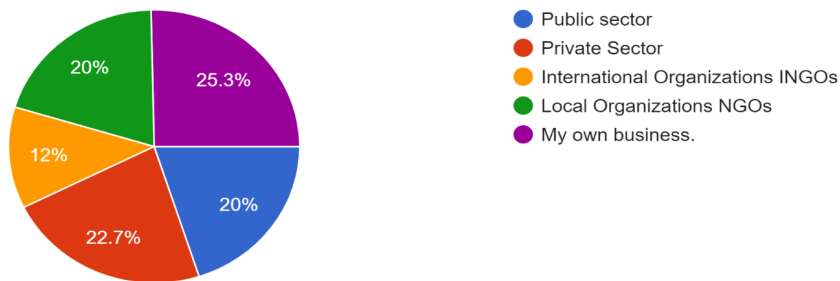
✚ Pie chart N.8 show that 47.4% of graduated students from sociology department are working, and 52.7% are jobless.



N.8

Even though the higher percentage of the participating graduates are currently jobless, it's impressive to see that a good percentage of our students have found job opportunities. Because we should however consider the current economical situation and the difficulties of creating job opportunities whether in the private or public sector.

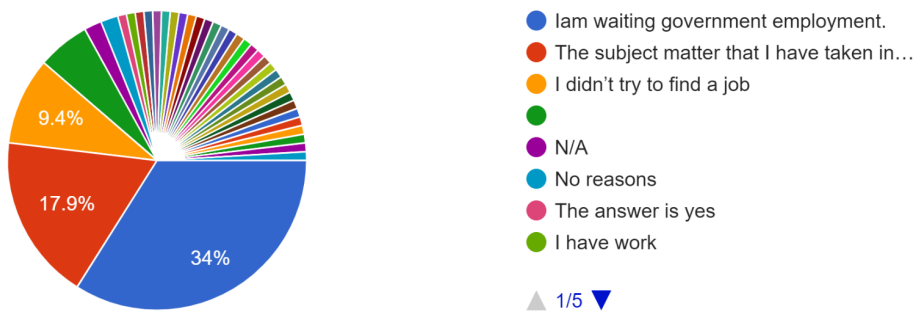
- Our graduates work in different public and private sectors as following: 25.3% have their own business, 22.7% work in private sector, 20% in public sector and local organizations, and 12% work with international organizations.



N.9

The private sector has a higher possibility of attracting our graduates, as we can see in the above pie chart.

But as we can see in the following pie chart (N.10), 34% of the graduates who didn't find jobs, are waiting for and depending on the public center to provide them with job opportunities.



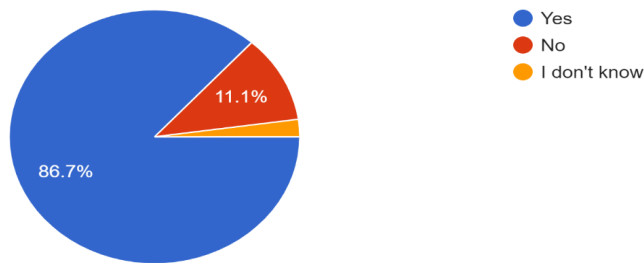
N.10

Students also expressed in their answers that some things that can help improve their skills to increase their chances for finding job opportunities is learning more in detail about case management, better English language skills and taking classes for a longer period not only during the first stage. Learning how to deal with the clients' problems better and advanced problem-solving strategies. More practical lessons or field visits will give them a clearer insight, they would also prefer working as volunteers in the related institutions and civil society organizations to gain experience before graduation. To learn about social psychology and psychosocial support for cases, and to have an independent department of social work as well as offering training programs beside their study to learn more. This is specifically understandable, because skills in providing psychosocial support are an important requirement in many NGOs working in Duhok.

3.2. *Third Theme- Youth capacity building in sociology department.*

Sociology department doesn't only focus on the scientific aspects, it also emphasizes on building the personal and social skills and capacities of the students, raising their awareness, improving their tolerance and their acceptance of different cultures. Therefore, in our questionnaire we focused on the capacity building of students in personal, social, and professional levels.

✚ This pie chart shows that 86.7% respondents' personalities developed during their studying in sociology department in terms of personal, social and communication skills, and 11.1% answered that no changes happened.



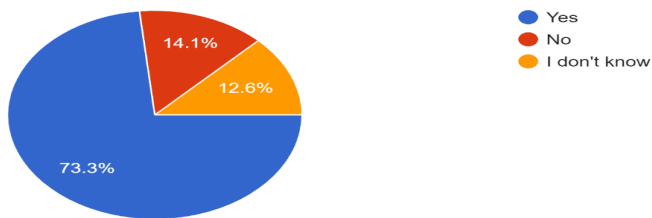
N.11

✚ This pie chart indicates that 51.9% respondents' vision of life expanded after they came to sociology department in terms of taking responsibility, being optimistic toward life, accepting different cultures, seeing people as human beings regardless of their culture, religion, and background.



N.12

Based on the pie charts (N.11 & N.12), we can see that a large number of graduated students notice a change in their personalities after coming to sociology department. In total, sociology provides 48 subjects, in which most of them focus on humanity, tolerance, responsibility, personality development...etc.



N.13

In the below pie chart, we can see that 73.3% of graduates want to complete their higher education in sociology department. 14.1% said no, and 12.6% said that they don't know.

Chapter III

Field Work Analysis

1.4 - Government policy (the unemployment of sociology graduate students).

Studying sociology provides a better understanding of the society as a whole and the individual life. It helps the students to know how to build a strong and professional personality, as its aim is to help and serve their communities to overcome their problems and the issues they face in their everyday daily life. Mrs. Samiya, one of the founders of sociology department in the university of Duhok and one of the first social workers worked in Duhok government institutions specially the directorate of social affairs, said that before opening the department and graduating students in sociology “The directory of social affairs at the time, was hiring people with no specialty to work as social workers and they did not know anything about the job. As we were evaluating their work with the vulnerable people, we could see a big lack in their knowledge, and they did not know how to work professionally and according to standards with people. People with other degrees, were not filling the need gap for such services, because they were barely given some training courses and did not get into the deeper knowledge of such a science”.³

On the importance of Sociology and the need for it, she mentioned that any society that has been through a lot, such as our Kurdish society has been a victim of many genocides attempts and more, and has left many victims behind, leaving people with many psychological and social problems. It was necessary for this society, to have specialized workers, to work with its people and environment. Mrs. Fayza, who was one of the 11 social worker who worked in different sectors of the directory of social affairs, when she talked about the need of sociology she mentioned in her discussion that society and people should be aware of the needs and the importance of social work and sociology, for the establishment of any government strategies. Since these are needed in building the infrastructure, during emergencies and development. Because we have sociology

Commented [V1]: Should we mention it here? Aren't we going to give her a footnote?

³ Mrs Samy Said Khalid, Lecturer in department of sociology, department of sociology, 27-5-2023.

graduates, who have taken different courses in political sociology, urban planning, legal sociology, cognitive sociology, criminology...etc. Such specializations are the core of strategic planning in any governmental office, therefore, it's crucial to include such specialized individuals in every step of the planning process. ⁴

When sociology students graduate, it's recommended to the government to give them the opportunity to open their own independent social work offices. It does cost a lot, but with dedication they can work very well. These offices help families who are facing problems, like divorce, families who have children with disabilities, or autism...etc.

Another important point which displays the need for sociology, is that there is hardly anything written scientifically about the Kurdish society. Sociology department prepares professional sociologists, who can write and conduct research about our Kurdish society. For example, Ali Al-Wardi wrote about the Iraqi society, so sociology needed to develop sociologists who can study their own Kurdish society, instead of strangers always writing about us.

There are tens of governmental institutions and directories that need social workers and sociologists. The following is a list of all the institutions:

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No.	The places which conducted for Summer Training\ Governmental
1.	General directorate of Care and Social Development in Duhok Governorate, with all directorate and centers which are related to it (Duhok- Sumel- Amedia- Aqrah- Bardarash- Zakho- Shekhan).
▪	General directorate of Care and Social Development\ Elderly home
▪	General directorate of Care and Social Development \ Girls home (Teenagers)
▪	General directorate of Care and Social Development \ Boys home (Teenagers)
❖	Directorate of Family Care (Duhok- Sumel- Amedia- Aqrah- Bardarash- Zakho- Shekhan).
▪	Minor Care in Duhok
▪	Hana Centre
▪	Haval Centre
▪	Zewa Centre
▪	Social Centre for women\ Bersive.
▪	Autism Centre
▪	Nawa Centre

⁴ Mrs Fayza A.Wahid Ali, Senior Sociologist (Child protection Programs), Her office, 24-5-2023

2.	Directorate of Combating violence against women and family_ offices of (Duhok- Sumel- Amedia- Aqrah- Bardarash- Zakho- Shekhan).
3.	Directorate of combating violence against women and family_ Family Counselling Centre.
4.	Directorates of Health with all centers related to it (Duhok- Sumel- Amedia- Aqrah- Bardarash- Zakho- Shekhan).
5.	Court of (Duhok- Sumel- Amedia- Aqrah- Bardarash- Zakho- Shekhan).
▪	Presiding Duhok Court of Appeal \ Domestic Violence Investigation Court
▪	Presiding Duhok Court of Appeal \ Juvenile Court \ Personal Study Office
▪	Presiding Duhok Court of Appeal \ Court of First Instance in Sumel.
▪	Presiding Duhok Court of Appeal \ Personal statement Court
6.	Reformatory Directorate
▪	Reformatory Directorate of Huvenile and Women in Duhok – Etit Reformatory
▪	Zrka Reformatory Directorate
7.	General Directorate of Duhok Education
8.	General Directorate of Cultural and Youth
9.	Directorate of Migration and Immigrants
10.	Civil Community Organizations – Camp (Refugees- IDPs)
11.	Duhok Governorate (Humanitarian Development Section)
12.	Independent Commission for Human Rights – Duhok\ Near to Judy Mosque

The places which conducted for Summer Training\ Private
Civil Community Organizations
Harikar Organization
Alind Organization
Jiyan Foundation
Louts Flowers Organization
Step Organization
Women Empowerment for Peace Building
Spring Hope Foundation
DAK Organization

2.4 - Local and international organizations (the unemployment of sociology graduate students).

Following the humanitarian and displacement crises brought on by the conflict with the Islamic State of Iraq in 2014, civil society organizations (CSOs) in KIR have become more crucial to region's recovery from war and displacement since 2003. Duhok CSOs organized across the nation to assist IDPs and their host communities in addressing new humanitarian needs, service delivery gaps, and social tensions. Following the political conflicts in Syria in 2011, Duhok became a refuge for thousands of Syrians, and following ISIS attacks, it served as a sanctuary for people of Shingal and other southern Iraqi communities. For instance, the Duhok Governorate's population expanded from 1.2 million individuals in 2010 to 2.2 million in 2014.

In Duhok one of organization (NGO) is Harikar. The Harikar was founded on May 30, 2004, by a group of social activists. It is an impartial, non-governmental, nonprofit humanitarian organization. According to its mission statement, the Harikar NGO works to uphold human and women's rights in Duhok Governorate as outlined in the new Iraqi constitution that was adopted on October 15, 2005.

According to Mr Salah, director of Harikar : Our region lacks political stability, and every few years, battles bring with them social and psychological issues. Harikar organization, which has greatly expanded in Duhok over the last year, hundreds of young people have had the chance to obtain jobs. We work closely and have relationships with the majority of the directorates, institutions, and refugee campuses in Duhok. My personal experience and my work with the majority of them lead me to believe that there is a limited availability of social workers and psychologists in our society. These offices employ other individuals who are not experts in this field as assistance. Sociology is an important field and has been tackling the needs of society, it has improved the skills and capacities of its students and have made them effective members of their working places. We need the graduated from department of sociology for theirs knowledge and information, but universities and public sectors should have plans and find more effective mechanisms to be in contact with NGOs, to contributed and engaged in the different fields of the development in the various main areas. ⁵

3.4 Creation of job opportunities (building the capacity of sociology students)

⁵ Salah Yasin Barwary, Director of Harikar organization, office of him, 15-5-2023.

To understand the situation of our graduated students, during our field work, we interviewed some of whom were able to initiate and establish their own jobs. Our aim from such meetings with them was to understand the impact that sociology had on improving their skills academically and empirically. One of them was Sipal Kamal, who graduated from sociology department in 2021. She has started her own business before even graduating from college, where she started a handmade items business. She has participated in many different workshops and events and has won several awards, such as with Rwanga foundation and in different cities like Duhok, Hawler, Halabja, Mosul and Bagdad.

According to Sipal, lack of female participation in entrepreneurship and the job market, is because of their fear and lack of trust in themselves. In her case, she took advantage of studying in sociology department. She says “Before coming to Sociology department, I did have the desire to study a completely different major which was Law. But after coming to Sociology and getting a degree here, I am so happy that I got here. Because this department taught me a lot about the human psychology, which was very helpful in marketing business. And now that I am also a case worker, I feel happy that I have been taught all the steps of case management, to help me support building individuals once again.” In her work as a case manager now, her department has received around 99 cases that they have been able to treat well. Sipal mentioned that “This all goes back to what I have learned from Sociology department. The degree I got from this department did give me the opportunity to be accepted in the case worker position. Because as a specialty, it’s always more desirable. English language was also an advantage to get from this department because many working places today require knowing English language. For many positions, the tests are in English language”.⁶

Another graduated student from sociology department, Thamer Alyas, who has graduated in 2016. He co-founded Humanity-NGO with a number of sociology and other departments’ students in 2014, to work directly with internally displaced people and refugees in Kurdistan region. The idea started after the internal displacement of thousands of Yazidis from Sinjar to Duhok, as students they felt the need to transfer their theoretical knowledge into something practical. With the motto of no-discrimination and equality of rights for everyone, despite their ethnical, religious or any

⁶ Sipal kamal, graduated from department of sociology-college of humanities science in 2020, sociology department office, 21-5-2023.

other differences, the organization was established in Duhok and worked with vulnerable communities. Thamer confirmed that sociology department taught him basic sociology skills and the knowledge about local and international organizations. It improved his personal capacity and helped him find his strength points and working on them. Sociology department also improved his English language, which opened many different doors towards international donors and funders.⁷

These were two examples of many other graduate students, who were empowered by sociology department and the skills they gained capacitated them to establish their own job opportunities. In addition to these, sociology department, as one of the youngest departments in Duhok university, has built the capacity of many of its students to be able to observe and study their societies, learn better communications skills, and establish strong networks nationally and internationally. Another graduated student from sociology department, has been Vajeen Shawkat, who was also one of the co-founders of Humanity-NGO. According to her, sociology department has improved her communication and networking skills, in such a way that she was encouraged enough to participate in an international program in the USA and also work in Humanity-NGO to support vulnerable communities. As a young female, sociology department gave her enough strength and knowledge to work with local and international organizations, in several leadership positions, the most recent of which was Protection Program Manager. Vajeen also pursued her master's degree from the university of Pavia in Italy, majoring in international cooperation and development, a specialization joining both her college and work experiences.⁸

To reinforce what has been said by these graduated students, we can go back to the pie chart N.11,⁹ where it showed that 86.7% respondents' personalities developed .

Conclusion

⁷ Thamer Alyas, graduated from department of sociology-college of humanities science in 2015, sociology department office, 22-5-2023.

⁸ Vajeen Shawkat is one of the writers of this research and is an assistant researcher in sociology department at the university of Duhok.

⁹ Look at (page)

The establishment of the Department of Sociology was one of the necessities of the Dohuk region because of the shortage that exists in terms of research and studies of sociology and in terms of social worker, which is needed by the majority of governmental and non-governmental departments and institutions. Unfortunately, despite the need for such a department, its establishment came late in comparison with other departments of the university of Duhok. Just as we know that our society has gone through difficult circumstances, because there are hundreds of social and individual problems that have not been studied or resolved. In addition to the presence of dozens of camps for refugees and displaced persons, and the presence of dozens of foreign organizations that require the employment and assistance of sociology graduates.

Despite the seriousness of the social challenges and after the establishment of Sociology department, from a total of 409 graduates, only 9 have been employed in the governmental sector. Alas, in many governmental institutions individuals with different educational backgrounds are taking the roles of social workers, while they don't have any professional methods to be in such positions.

According to the data we have collected, the majority of graduates from different academic years have found more job opportunities in the private sector, especially with international organizations, due to the fact that they study and learn English language in sociology department. During our interviews with some of organization's leads, they confirmed that graduates from our department have more specialized and professional skills, in addition to their English language capacities.

In this research, we realized how impactful are our method with the students. This was through the interviews we had with some of our graduate students who have found their own businesses and organizations. They affirmed that studying in sociology department has built their capacities as such, that it opened their minds and it gave them the tools that made it possible for them to conduct social researches and understand their communities better.

For a huge society as Duhok, which has a population of around 1.5 million people, and hundreds of social problems caused by wars, conflicts and economic crisis. There needs to be a higher attention on the social work and researches that is crucial. Therefore, the presence of sociology department is necessary, but there should be a more sustainable attention and work with this department from the government side. The graduates need to be hired in their required and

designated positions within the different governmental institutions. Sociology department itself also needs to develop its own coordination and communication with other governmental and non-governmental institutions.

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Websites:

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/812116/youth-unemployment-rate-in-iraq/>

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2. Salah Yasin Barwary, Director of Harikar organization, office of him, 15-5-2023.
3. Mrs Fayza A.Wahid Ali, Senior Sociologist (Child protection Programs), Her office, 24-5-2023.
4. Sipal kamal, graduated from department of sociology-college of humanities science in 2020, sociology department office, 21-5-2023.
5. Thamer Alyas, graduated from department of sociology-college of humanities science in 2015, sociology department office, 22-5-2023.

Appendix

1. Curriculums of Sociology department

College of Humanities, Department of Sociology

Semester 1															
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk		Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS
										Theoretical	Practical				
	INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	INTRODUCTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	ACADEMIC DEBATE	Required	4	4				2		2	2	4	104	3.9	4
	Computer Skills	Required	4	1	2			3		3	2	3	110	4.1	4
	ENGLISH/READING & WRITING	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
Total		Total	30	16	2	0	4	23		17	4	22	811	30.0	30

Fields to be filled
Fields that will be calculated

Study wk/Term	##	Total Workload hr/day	8.23
Exam wk/Term	5		
hr/1 ECTS credit	##		

Semester 2															
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk		Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS
										Theoretical	Practical				
	SOCIAL CONCEPTS	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIALWORK FIELDS	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	GENOCIDE	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	HEALTH & SOCIETY	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	KURDISH SOCIETY	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	ENGLISH /SPEAKING & LISTNING	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
Total		Total	30	15	0	0	6	24		18	0	21	813	30.1	30

Semester 3															
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk		Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS
										Theoretical	Practical				
	SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6

	GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIAL STATISTICS	Required	6	3	2			4		3		5	158	5.9	6
	PHILOSOPHY	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIAL CASE WORK	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	Total	Total	30	15	2	0	5	23		18	0	22	808	29.9	30

Semester 4															
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk	Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS	
									Theoretical	Practical					
	SOCIOLOGY OF RELEGION	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	ACADEMIC WRITING	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIAL CHANGE	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIAL GROUP WORK	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	Total	Total	30	15	0	0	6	24		18	0	21	813	30.1	30

Semester 5															
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk	Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS	
									Theoretical	Practical					
	RURAL SOCIOLOGY	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIOLOGICAL CLASSICAL THEORIES	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIOLOGY OF DEMOGRAPHY	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIOLOGY OF COMMUNICATION	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIOLOGY OF FAMILY	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	Total	Total	30	15	0	0	6	24		18	0	21	813	30.1	30

Semester 6														
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk	Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS
									Theoretical	Practical				

	URBAN SOCIOLOGY	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIOLOGICAL CONTEMPORARY THEORIES	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIOLOGY OF ENVIRONMENT	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	RESEARCH DESIGN	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	MIDICAL SOCIOLOGY	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	Total	Total	30	15	0	0	6	24		18	0	21	813	30.1	30

Semester 7															
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk	Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS	
									Theoretical	Practical					
	POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIAL WORK AND CONSELING	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIAL PLAANNING	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	CRIMINOLOGY	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIAL LAW	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	Total	Total	30	15	0	0	6	24		18	0	21	813	30.1	30

Semester 8															
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk	Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS	
									Theoretical	Practical					
	SOCIOLOGY OF RACE AND ETHNICITY	Elective	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	FAMILY COUNSELLING	Elective	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION	Elective	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	CRIMINALS CORRECTION	Elective	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	STUDENTS PRACTIC WORK	Required	7	1				8			3	1	178	6.6	7
	GRADUATION PROJRCT	Required	12	4				13			2	4	322	11.9	12
	Total	Total	43	17	0	0	4	41		12	5	21	1152	42.7	43

College of Humanities, Department of Sociology

Semester 1													
Course Code	Course name	Type Requi red/	ECTS	Lecture Lab. hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial	Seminar	Self-study	Final Exam hr	Contact Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded	

									Theoretical	Practical				
	INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY	Required	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6
	INTRODUCTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY	Required	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6
	INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK	Required	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6
	ACADEMIC DEBATE	Required	4	4				2	2	2	4	104	3.9	4
	Computer Skills	Required	4	1	2			3	3	2	3	110	4.1	4
	ENGLISH/READING & WRITING	Required	4	2			1	3	3		3	108	4.0	4
	Total	Total	30	16	2	0	4	23	17	4	22	811	30.0	30

Fields to be filled
Fields that will be calculated

Study wk/Term	##
Exam wk/Term	5
hr/1 ECTS credit	##

Total Workload hr/day	8.23
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Semester 2														
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk	Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS
									Theoretical	Practical				
	SOCIAL CONCEPTS	Required	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIALWORK FIELDS	Required	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6
	GENOCIDE	Required	4	2			1	3	3		3	108	4.0	4
	HEALTH & SOCIETY	Required	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6
	KURDISH SOCIETY	Required	4	2			1	3	3		3	108	4.0	4
	ENGLISH /SPEAKING & LISTNING	Required	4	2			1	3	3		3	108	4.0	4
	Total	Total	30	15	0	0	6	24	18	0	21	813	30.1	30

Semester 3														
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk	Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS
									Theoretical	Practical				
	SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER	Required	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6
	GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY	Required	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIAL STATISTICS	Required	6	3	2			4	3		5	158	5.9	6
	PHILOSOPHY	Required	4	2			1	3	3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIAL CASE WORK	Required	4	2			1	3	3		3	108	4.0	4

	SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	Total	Total	30	15	2	0	5	23		18	0	22	808	29.9	30

Semester 4															
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk	Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS	
									Theoretical	Practical					
	SOCIOLOGY OF RELEGION	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	ACADEMIC WRITING	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIAL CHANGE	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIAL GROUP WORK	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	Total	Total	30	15	0	0	6	24		18	0	21	813	30.1	30

Semester 5															
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk	Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS	
									Theoretical	Practical					
	RURAL SOCIOLOGY	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIOLOGICAL CLASSICAL THEORIES	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIOLOGY OF DEMOGRAPHY	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIOLOGY OF COMMUNICATION	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIOLOGY OF FAMILY	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	Total	Total	30	15	0	0	6	24		18	0	21	813	30.1	30

Semester 6															
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk	Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS	
									Theoretical	Practical					
	URBAN SOCIOLOGY	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIOLOGICAL CONTEMPORARY THEORIES	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	SOCIOLOGY OF ENVIROMENT	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6

	RESEARCH DESIGN	Required	4	2			1	3		3		3	108	4.0	4
	MIDICAL SOCIOLOGY	Required	6	3			1	5		3		4	163	6.0	6
	Total	Total	30	15	0	0	6	24		18	0	21	813	30.1	30

Semester 7															
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk	Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS	
									Theoretical	Practical					
	POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY	Required	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6	
	SOCIAL WORK AND CONSELING	Required	4	2			1	3	3		3	108	4.0	4	
	SOCIAL PLAANNING	Required	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6	
	CRIMINOLOGY	Required	4	2			1	3	3		3	108	4.0	4	
	SOCIAL LAW	Required	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6	
	DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY	Required	4	2			1	3	3		3	108	4.0	4	
	Total	Total	30	15	0	0	6	24	18	0	21	813	30.1	30	

Semester 8															
Course Code	Course name	Type Required/ Elective	ECTS	Lecture hr/wk	Lab. hr/wk	Tutorial hr/wk	Seminar hr/wk	Self-study hr/wk	Final Exam hr		Contact hr/wk	Total hr/term	ECTS	Rounded ECTS	
									Theoretical	Practical					
	SOCIOLOGY OF RACE AND ETHNICITY	Elective	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6	
	FAMILY COUNSELLING	Elective	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6	
	SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION	Elective	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6	
	CRIMINALS CORRECTION	Elective	6	3			1	5	3		4	163	6.0	6	
	STUDENTS PRACTIC WORK	Required	7	1				8		3	1	178	6.6	7	
	GRADUATION PROJCT	Required	12	4				13		2	4	322	11.9	12	
	Total	Total	43	17	0	0	4	41	12	5	21	1152	42.7	43	

2. Questionnaires that addressed to graduated students of sociology department

“ Youth Unemployment in Duhok governorate and the capacity of Sociology department to improve job skills ”

Gender:

Male Female

Year of graduation:

2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
2020-2021	2021-2022	

*Place of living:

.....

1. Are you currently working?
Yes No

A. If the answer is "YES", where are you working?

- Public sector
- Private sector
- INGOs
- NGOs
- My own business

B. If the answer is " NO ", what are the reasons?

- I am waiting government employment.
- The subject matter that I have taken in Sociology department were not beneficial.
- I didn't try to find a job
- Others.....

2. Did the scientific subjects that you have studied in Sociology department, support you to find job opportunities?

3. Did Sociology department generally improve your skills to find a job?

4. Was studying in English language a good supporting factor for you to find a job?

5. Do you feel that your scientific and linguistic skills are different than the other graduates from other departments, when it comes to finding a job?

6. As a sociology graduate, which sector are you interested in more for work?

- Public sector
- Private sector
- INGO

- NGO
- My own business

7. Did your study in Sociology department affect your personality development, such as in terms of (personal skills, social skills, communication skills.... etc.?)

8. Did studying in Sociology department expand your vision of life?

- For taking responsibility.
- Being optimistic towards life.
- Accepting different cultures.
- Accepting people from different religions
- Others.....

9. Would you like to continue higher education study in Sociology department?

10. What is something else that you would have loved to learn in Sociology department that could have supported you in finding a job, or in your job?
.....

11. What is your overall opinion or comments on Sociology department?
.....

4. Depth interviews Questions

For all the interviews, keep in mind to ask the interviewees to introduce themselves and write down notes about their work, so this can be mentioned in the footprints.

Interview Questions/Mr.Salah

Initially get general information about Mr. Salah and Harikar organization, this will be written in footprint in the report.

1. What percentage of Sociology graduates work/ed with your organization? (2015-currently)
2. How do you evaluate our graduates? In terms of English language skills, personal skills, communication.
3. Do you see a difference between our graduates and graduates from other departments?
4. Do you see the impact that Sociology department on our society? Does it cover the needs of the society?

5. Does Sociology department fill in the needs of the national and international organizations?
6. Which of your organization's unit require Sociology graduates?

Interview Questions/Dr.Samiva Sa'id

1. What is the need for social work in the community? Which are the communities that require social work the most?
2. Before the establishment of Sociology department, who were the ones filling the gap of sociologists and social workers in different agencies?
3. What difference did the establishment of Sociology department make?
4. What are some interdisciplinary gaps that we as a department can fill in?
5. What are some factors of unemployment in our society? And what are some solutions?

Interview Questions/Mr. Thamer Alyas and Sipal Abdulazeez (Ask About their Jobs)

1. Did Sociology department help you to establish your own job?
2. Was Sociology an important factor for your communication? (Especially English language)
3. Do you think establishing your own work was fully because of your own capacities or do you think all Sociology graduates have such capacities?
4. Did the environment of Sociology department motivate you to become more independent?