

# Women In Conflict Areas And Their Support In Peace Construction

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## Abstract

The study aims to identify the role of women in conflict-affected areas and the importance of providing social support to enhance their participation in peace construction. The study population consisted of (110) female breadwinners. To achieve the objectives of the study, the social support scale was used. After verifying the reliability and validity of the tools, they were submitted to the study sample. The results showed a medium level of support from parents, relatives, and acquaintances, while the level of support from social institutions was low. Furthermore, The results showed that there were no statistically significant differences between social support and the woman's assistance to her family, according to the housing type and age variables. However, there are differences according to the profession variable and in favor of independent work. The study revealed that there are no statistically significant differences between social support and women's assistance for their families according to the family size variable. The study clarified the importance of women's contributions to peace negotiations and the importance of their participation in the post-conflict transitional process in shaping the future of post-conflict countries.

**Keywords:** Women, Conflict Areas, Peace Construction, social Support, Iraq.

## Introduction

The effects of conflicts and wars extend beyond the disputed parties to reach all components of society. Such consequences leave behind victims of all classes and ages, particularly females whose lives greatly affected by these conflicts at social and economic levels. Females encounter many human violations and various types of persecution.

During the conflict, females carry out tasks that were previously performed by males. This major change in the gender role greatly increases the workload of females during the period of conflict, and they assume double responsibilities imposed on them by conflict circumstances. As they are forced, most of the time, to support the family in the absence of the

family head in carrying these responsibilities, females are forced to submit to various types of exploitation and violent practices at work without any kind of protection available to them. This role may also enhance the capabilities of females and encourage them to assume more roles during and after the conflict (Mcdevitt, 2009).

Although females bear the most tragic consequences of wars and conflicts, and their lives are severely affected by the consequences of the practices committed against them; however, the participation of females in peace building processes enhances the capacity of peacemakers. That is, females are the most representative of the social reality during and after the conflict period as they are fully aware of the urgent needs posed by the precarious conditions of life in light of the suffering imposed by war. Then, it is important to

include females in peace building and negotiations to achieve the concept of social justice and equality. It is also essential to reach results and goals that affect the actual needs raised from the actual reality (Walsh, 2001).

Changes like conflict, there has been an increasing need to consider its effects on females and address their needs before, during and after conflict. There is also a growing awareness to involve females in peace and security processes, as they play a significant role in society without whom sustainable peace cannot be achieved. Not just victims of conflict, females have active roles as combatants, peace builders, politicians and activists. They are often in the strongest position to achieve peace in their communities. However, their participation in these processes remains limited and there are barriers to participation (Arostegui, 2013).

Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Security and Peace was adopted on October 31, 2000. It is a document consisting of 18 basic points, which includes the significance of females' participation in political and social life. It also includes the necessity of female presence in peace building negotiations, mediation processes, and political decision-making. Furthermore, the document addresses the negative effects of armed conflict on females, in particular, the violations they may be exposed to, the need to protect their rights in times of conflict. It focuses on the need to mainstream the sexual perspective in the reporting and implementation systems of the United Nations. Lastly, the resolution calls for the adoption of a gender perspective; considering the needs of females during conflict, reintegration, rehabilitation, and post-conflict resettlement operations (Nduwimana, 2006).

### **Roles of women during conflict and post-conflict**

Females, in particular, are vulnerable during times of war. Despite the dangers of the probability of being injured, females have to take the responsibilities due to the death of the heads of household or one of the family members. Such consequences expose them to emotional and financial harm, especially in a patriarchal society like Iraq, which made them lack economic,

material, and social protection (UN Women, 2015).

Sexual assault is one of the risks females face during armed conflict, as they suffer from a double trauma: the attack itself, and the associated shame and social stigma. Researchers have found that there is increased domestic violence in the aftermath of armed conflict, which makes females victims of war in multiple ways. Violence against females has been increasing today as a result of various factors, directly or indirectly generated by the war. Therefore, it is necessary to mobilize and provide resources to manage conflict, transition, and reintegration into society. This can be achieved through the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 at the national level and the abolition of legal texts that violate women's rights and the enactment of legislation that protects them and strengthens their status (Elshtain, 1995).

Females have important roles during the conflict period concerning the multiple functions they occupy in society. Females represent an integrated element that protects the construction of family and social cohesion during the period of conflict and war. Such roles performed by females during the conflict period are as follows: (Arab Women Organization, 2018):

- Providing several services to combatants, including nursing, shelter, and supply.
- Participate in defence and combat.
- Protect family from disintegration and carry the duties of males in their absence; such as maintenance, earning money, and protection.
- Participation in political and social life: access to leadership and decision-making.
- Peace building and Conflict Resolution.
- Mobilize the popular base and advocate stopping the violence.
- Participation in movements calling for change.
- Sources of social support for female heads of households in conflict-affected regions

Due to sanctions, war, and conflict, the collapse of the social safety net in Iraq has reflected the decline in the rule of law on the socio-economic status of women. The Iraqi

constitution states that women enjoy equal rights to work without discrimination, yet Iraqi legislation itself includes discriminatory laws, which limit women's economic options, especially female heads of household who lack financial resources and social benefits such as social security and pensions (UNDP Iraq, 2011). Thus, they are the most affected, as many of these families lack someone to provide a basic income which thereby exposes them to poverty (Obaid, 2021).

Issuance of laws that complement the constitution needs to be expediting, such as the Law on Political Parties, Social Security, and Protection from Domestic Violence. It is essential to ensure the full participation of women in public and political life and to empower them and promote their rights. Also, it is important to protect females from gender-based violence and to provide safe shelters for female's victims and survivors. This leads to ensuring their rehabilitation and reintegration into society during the transitional stages of armed conflicts and beyond. Moreover, it ensures fair proportional representation and full participation of females in all reconciliation committees, peace-building negotiations, and conflict resolution (National action plan, 2020).

Family, relatives, friends, colleagues, and others are some of the most important sources of social support and assistance as individuals receive feelings of warmth, friendliness, and love. They help in overcoming crises, adversities and misfortunes, yet it depends on the depth of the assistance and the individual's belief that it is sufficient (Asnani & et al, 2004).

Widowed females, in specific, need care and attention as they go through sadness, isolation, pessimism, lack of self-acceptance, and others. It is even bitter when a widowed female has children and their income is limited, feeling of fear from the unknown future that awaits her and her family members begin to arise. However, after a while, such females start working to restore reassurance, social stability, and self-interest and build social relationships and perseverance to achieve their goals (Zettel & Rook, 2004).

The issue of losing the heads of households has become a serious threat, especially in conflict-affected areas. Such areas

have been subjected to many violations by terrorist groups who killed young men, leaving their wives and children behind (Obaid, 2020). This is reflected in females who bear additional burdens, thus they need social support to alleviate psychological, social and economic pressures and strengthen their resilience during and after the conflict (Al-Halloul & Muheisen, 2013).

Among the most important sources of social support for females, which have an active role in their adaptation to life, are:

1/ family: the family has a fundamental and important role in supporting children since early childhood as it represents a network of social relations. It is where children grow up shaping their characters and refine their capabilities. Children are affected by many feelings and emotions such as feelings of love, anger, and sadness, and they learn to express or suppress them (Nikitina & et al, 2015). The sources of social support provided by the family, whether material, moral or educational, depend to a large extent on several matters, such as the cultural background of the parents, the surrounding environment, the family pressures, and the nature of the family. Psychologists indicate that individuals who grow up in a close-knit family dominated by affection and intimacy become better able to assume responsibility, and have skills and leadership qualities (Kirk, 2003).

2/ Friends: Friends provide each other in distress and challenges which leads to increased self-confidence and confidence in others. It preserves elements of friendship and affection from disintegration and collapse. It develops feelings of sharing with others, and thus satisfies the needs of belonging to the surrounding environment and relieves negative psychological effects (Wolin & Wolin, 2010).

3/ Society: Society has an important role in providing social support of all kinds, both material and moral, more effectively than what is provided by family or friends. Social relationships are among the most important sources of social support and protection from various pressures. Thus, they form a protective shield for the individual from deviations and isolation. Also, it helps individuals to be active and productive people in society. The support that an individual receives from others is related to health, psychological, and social stability, and it

consists of distinct social relationships represented in affection, friendship, appreciation, and respect for the individual (García-Martín & et al, 2016).

Explained models of social support:

Gentry et al (1995) state that a distinction can be drawn among four different theories of social support, these are the following:

**1- Protective Impact Model** (Pressure Relief): It is assumed that social support can relieve psychological pressure until individuals regain the deficiencies that they have as a consequence of distress (Stroebe & et al, 1992). Such theory introduces a new theoretical concept (model buffering) which means that high social support prevents the control of psychological pressure and its negative impact on individuals' mental health. In other words, this model relates mainly to health only for individuals who are under stress and protects them from the potential harmful effects (Jerjees& Abdul Jalil,2017).

**2- Main Impact Model:** This model assumes that social support has a beneficial effect on an individual's life and happiness, regardless of whether an individual is under pressure or not. This model stems from the statistical analysis that showed the existence of a major effect of the support variable and the absence of an effect of the interaction between pressure and support (Irwin & Barbara , 2013). There is a general beneficial effect of social support on physical and psychological health because social networks can provide individuals with regular positive experiences and a set of roles that is approved by society. This kind of support is associated with happiness and it avoids negative experiences that increase the likelihood of a psycho-social disorder. It is related to physical health as it examines the effects of emotion on neurohormones or the effects of health-related behaviour patterns (Buunk & Hoorens, 1992).

**3- The Correlation model:** Bowlby, the founder of the correlation theory, believes that social support from family and friends does not compensate for a great deficiency that an individual suffers due to the loss of a dear person who represents the connection. There are two types of psychological loneliness: feeling of emotional loneliness and feeling of social isolation, thus social support affects the latter

only (Abdel-Rahman, 2000). As for the marital status (married - widowed), it affects the feeling of emotional loneliness because the absence of emotional connection with the form to which an individual is attached influences the feeling of social unity. Some studies supported the correlation model in that an individual writing or talking about their emotional experiences leads to mental improvement, more specifically the words used to describe shock help in the extent of improvement in physical and psychological health (Brahim, 2001).

**4- The Comprehensive Model:** This model was developed by Lieberman and Berlin and then redeveloped in (1989). It is believed that social support can achieve its effect and reduce the likelihood of stressful situations. Support can also modify or alter an individual's perception of the event and then cut down any potential stress. Social support can also develop strategies for coping or dealing with a stressful event, thus diminish the relationship between the event and the factor of stress causing it. By the degree to which the stressful event descends, personal factors such as self-esteem make the possibility of support accelerate these effects (Viswesvaran, 1999)

Methodology:

A simple random procedure is used to represent the sample of the study who are all female heads of households. Data is collected from October 2020 to January 2021 using the 30-paragraph social support scale that measures the sources of social support. It includes three items, 1-10 represent family and relatives support, 11-20 friends and acquaintance support and 21-30 represent social institutions support. Mosul, being one of the cities that have been exposed to armed conflicts by ISIS terrorist organizations, is from where the sample participants are selected, and interviews are also conducted with them at their homes.

#### Demographic characteristics

Table 7 shows the demographic characteristics of the sample. The mean age is 32-46, a standard deviation of 1.83, and the age groups are 18-47 years. The study includes only women of different educational levels.

#### Hypotheses:

1. There are no statistically significant differences at the level of (0.05) between social support and women's support for her family, depending on the housing type variable.
2. There are no statistically significant differences at the level of (0.05) between social support and a woman's support for her family, according to the age variable.
3. There are no statistically significant differences at the level of (0.05) between social support and a woman's support for her family, depending on the profession variable.
4. There are no statistically significant differences at the level of (0.05) between social support and women's support for

her family, depending on the variable of the number of family members.

### Results

Table (1) displays the items of the social support scale statistically analysed using the correlation between the item score to the total score method. The findings reveal that all the items are significant as their values are higher than Pearson's tabular value at the level (0.05) and the degree of freedom (108), except for the items (13) and (15). Such results indicate that females had had access to sources of social support during armed conflicts through family, friends, acquaintances, and social institutions.

**Table 1: The discrimination of the social support scale using the two peripheral groups**

items	Correlation relationship	significance
family and relatives help when facing financial hardship	0.53	significant
My family and relatives help to find solutions to problems.	0.69	significant
Relying on family and relatives in meeting the requirements of daily life	0.48	significant
Family and relatives support gives self-confidence.	0.63	significant
Family and relatives support helps to move on.	0.57	significant
Receiving consultation from family and relatives.	0.65	significant
Friends and family help get legal rights.	0.60	significant
Support from family and relatives gives safety and comfort ability.	0.68	significant
Supporting family and relatives gives satisfaction.	0.55	significant
Family and relatives share sweet and sour moments.	0.61	significant
Needing help, friends, and acquaintances are ready to support.	0.61	significant
When sick, friends and acquaintances help pay for the treatment costs.	0.58	significant
Losing sources of support from friends and acquaintances in the time of the conflict.	0.09	insignificant

Well treated by friends and acquaintances.	0.33	significant
Lost friends and acquaintances who are trusted and are open to listening to problems.	0.11	insignificant
When distressed, friends and acquaintances are ready to offer help.	0.50	significant
Friends and acquaintances give guidance to financial and emotional support during and after conflict.	0.64	significant
Friends and acquaintances help encourage them to enrol and pursue studying.	0.58	significant
Emotional support from friends and acquaintances is important in facing family problems.	0.55	significant
Friends and acquaintances help encourage them to participate in training courses for future job opportunities.	0.50	significant
Receiving health care from hospitals and medical clinics during the conflict period.	0.52	significant
Receiving government support through social benefits.	0.22	significant
Receiving government support through training and qualification for occupation after the conflict.	0.36	significant
Receiving government support by setting up small enterprises after jobs.	0.32	significant
Receiving food aid from the government during conflict times.	0.57	significant
Obtaining health, educational, and financial services from charities during the conflict period.	0.59	significant
Receiving health, educational and financial services from international organizations during the conflict period.	0.55	significant
Receiving material assistance from religious institutions during conflict periods.	0.48	significant
Receiving free healthcare from hospitals and medical clinics during conflict times.	0.59	significant

Table (2) illustrates the statistical analysis of the social support scale items by using the method of the correlation between the item score to the total score of the field. It is concluded that all the items have statistical significance as

their values are higher than Pearson's tabular value at the level of (0.05), and at the degree of freedom (108). To put it in other words, the relationship of each item to its domain is greatly valuable.

**Table 2: The statistical analysis of the social support items using the relationship of the item score to the total score of the field method**

items	Correlation relationship	significance
<b>Family and relatives support</b>		
family and relatives help when facing financial hardship	0.53	significant
My family and relatives help to find solutions to problems.	0.69	significant
Relying on family and relatives in meeting the requirements of daily life	0.48	significant
Family and relatives support gives self-confidence.	0.63	significant
Family and relatives support helps to move on.	0.57	significant
Receiving consultation from family and relatives.	0.65	significant
Friends and family help get legal rights.	0.60	significant
Support from family and relatives gives safety and comfort ability.	0.68	significant
Supporting family and relatives gives satisfaction.	0.55	significant
Family and relatives share sweet and sour moments.	0.61	significant
<b>Friends and acquaintance support</b>		
Needing help, friends and acquaintances are ready to support.	0.61	significant
When sick, friends and acquaintances help pay for the treatment costs.	0.58	significant
Losing sources of support from friends and acquaintances in the time of the conflict.	0.09	insignificant
Well treated by friends and acquaintances.	0.33	significant
Lost friends and acquaintances who are trusted and are open to listening to problems.	0.11	insignificant
When distressed, friends and acquaintances are ready to offer help.	0.50	significant
Friends and acquaintances give guidance to financial and emotional support during and after conflict.	0.64	significant
Friends and acquaintances help encourage them to enrol and pursue studying.	0.58	significant
Emotional support from friends and acquaintances is important in facing family problems.	0.55	significant
Friends and acquaintances help encourage participating in training courses for future job opportunities.	0.50	significant
<b>Social organizations support</b>		

Receiving health care from hospitals and medical clinics during the conflict period.	0.52	significant
Receiving government support through social benefits.	0.22	significant
Receiving government support through training and qualification for occupation after the conflict.	0.36	significant
Receiving government support by setting up small enterprises after jobs.	0.32	significant
Receiving food aid from the government during conflict times.	0.57	significant
Obtaining health, educational, and financial services from charities during the conflict period.	0.59	significant
Receiving health, educational and financial services from international organizations during the conflict period.	0.55	significant
Receiving material assistance from religious institutions during conflict periods.	0.48	significant
Receiving free healthcare from hospitals and medical clinics during conflict times.	0.59	significant

Table (3) shows the statistical analysis of the items of the social support scale using the domain-to-domain relationship and domain-to-total-score method. This is done by using the (Cronbach's alpha) constancy of the social

support scale after deleting the two items (13-15) that fell into discrimination. The results showed that the value of Cronbach's alpha constancy for the social support scale is (0.91).

**Table 3: The statistical analysis of the social support items using the domain-domain relationship and domain-level relationship method**

Sources of support	Family and relative support	Friends and acquaintance support	Social organization support	Social support
Family and relatives	1	0.68	0.45	0.89
Friends and acquaintance	--	1	0.39	0.84
Social organizations	--	--	1	0.73

Table (4), shows the measurement of self-focused attention and according to its dimensions, using the relative importance index RII. The results showed that the level of support from family and relatives and that from friends and acquaintances is average among the research sample, while the level of support from social and governmental institutions is weak. As a whole,

the social support is average, according to the index of relative importance (Akadiri, 2011). Such results indicate that the sources of social support that female heads of households receive from (family and relatives, friends and acquaintances) is conflicted areas is better than support from social institutions.

**Table 4: Measuring attention focused on the self as a whole based on its dimensions, using the relative importance index.**

	items	Relative importance	Importance level
<b>Family and relative support</b>			
1	Family and relatives help when facing financial hardship.	68.75	Average
2	My family and relatives help in finding solutions to problems.	73	Average
3	Relying on family and relatives in meeting the requirements of daily life	53.5	Average
4	Family and relatives support gives self-confidence.	82.75	High
5	Family and relatives support helps to move on.	85.5	High
6	Receive appropriate advice from family and relatives.	74	Average
7	Friends and family help get rights.	68.75	Average
8	Support from family and relatives gives safety and comfort ability.	78.75	High
9	Supporting family and relatives gives satisfaction.	86.25	High
10	Family and relatives share sweet and sour moments.	87.5	High
	Average significance for family and relatives	75.88	Average
<b>Friends and acquaintance support</b>			
11	When I need help I find my friends and acquaintances around me.	75.5	Average
12	When sick, friends and acquaintances help to pay for the treatment costs.	49.5	Low
14	Well treated by friends and acquaintances.	89.5	High
15	Lost friends and acquaintances who are trusted and are open to listening problems.	59.75	Average
16	When distressed, friends and acquaintances are ready to offer help.	74.75	Average
17	Friends and acquaintances give guidance to financial and emotional support during and after conflict.	59.75	Average
18	Friends and acquaintances help to encourage them to enrol and pursue studying.	59.25	Average
19	Emotional support from friends and acquaintances is important in facing family problems.	72.25	Average
20	Friends and acquaintances help to encourage participating in training courses for future job opportunities.	53.5	Average

	Relative importance average of friends and acquaintance	66.75	Average
<b>Social Organizations Support</b>			
21	Receiving health care from hospitals and medical clinics during the conflict period.	42.5	Low
22	Receiving government support through social benefits.	38.25	Low
23	Receiving government support through training and qualification for occupation after the conflict.	36.5	Low
24	Receiving government support by setting up small enterprises after jobs.	33.75	Low
25	Receiving food aid from the government during conflict times.	38.25	Low
26	Obtaining health, educational, and financial services from private institutions during the conflict period.	39.5	Low
27	Receiving health, educational and financial services from international organizations during the conflict period.	45.5	Low
28	Receiving material assistance from religious institutions during conflict periods.	38.25	Low
29	Receiving free healthcare from hospitals and medical clinics during conflict times.	41.5	Low
	Relative importance average of social organizations	39.33	Low
	The relative importance of social support as a whole	60.99	Average

Table (5) shows the criterion of relative importance index of the alternative quadruple scale. to verify the first hypothesis, the T-test was used for two independent samples to identify the

differences in social support according to the variable of housing type (shared or not shared), as illustrated.

**Table5: The relative importance index criterion for the alternative quadruple scale.**

	Relative importance	Importance level
1	$0.78 \leq RII \leq 1$	high
2	$0.52 \leq RII \leq 0.77$	medium
3	$0.26 \leq RII \leq 0.51$	low
4	$0 \leq RII \leq 0.25$	Very low

In table (6) the results indicate that social support does not change according to the housing type variable, as the calculated T value is less than the tabular T value of (0.05), and at the degree of freedom

(108). This result confirms whether housing is shared or not, this does not affect social support for female heads of households.

**Table6: The T-test for two independent groups used to identify the differences in social support based on the variable of housing type (shared, independent).**

sample	housing	number	average	standard deviation	Computed T	significance
110	Shared	40	67.35	16.58	0.86	significant
	Not shared	70	65.01	11.89		

Table (7) shows the average and standard deviations of the social support scale according to the age variable. As to verify the second hypothesis, a unilateral analysis of variance was used to identify the significance of the differences in social support according to that variable, as illustrated.

**Table 7: The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the social support scale according to the variable of age.**

Age group	number	arithmetic average	Standard deviation
18-27	41	69.78	14.42
28-37	28	63.71	14.01
38-47	41	63.41	12.23
total	110	65.86	13.75

in Table (8). The results showed that no statistically significant difference is found in social support according to age variable, as the calculated target value reached (2.74), which is less than the tabular FQ value at the level of (0.05) and the degree of freedom (2-107). The age of female heads of households has nothing to do with their access to social support resources.

**Table8: The statistical analysis to reveal the significance of differences in social support according to the variable of age.**

Source of variation	Sums of squares	Degree of freedom	Average of squares	F value	significance
Across groups	1004.265	2	502.132	2.74	Insignificant
Within groups	19600.690	107	183.184		
total	20604.955	109	--		

In the table (9), the arithmetic averages and the standard deviations of the social support scale are shown according to the occupation variable.

**Table 9: The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the social support scale according to the variable of occupation**

occupation	number	average	Standard deviation
An employee	51	62.96	11.20
Housewife	26	64.23	16.41
others	33	71.64	13.69
total	110	65.86	13.75

To verify the third hypothesis in table (10), a unilateral analysis of variance was used to identify the differences in social support according to the mentioned variable. The results indicate that the difference is statistically significant in social support according to the variable occupation, as the calculated final value reached (4.50) which is higher than the tabular F value at the level (0.05) and the degree of freedom (2-107).

**Table 10: The statistical analysis of variance used to reveal the significance of differences in social support according to the variable of occupation**

Source of variation	Sums of squares	Degree of freedom	Average of squares	F value	significance
Across groups	1598.781	2	799.391		
Within groups	19006.173	107	177.628	4.50	significant
total	20604.955	109	--		

To find out the significance of the variation between the two kinds of occupations, a Scheffe Test is performed for dimensional (bilateral) comparisons identifying the differences in social support according to that variable in Table (11). The results indicate that the variable is significant and that they are in favour of working in freelance work, as the calculated value is (71.64) and is higher than the critical Scheffe' value (7.38) when the significance level (0.05). Female entrepreneurs in these conflicted areas entrepreneurs receive no fixed income as they perform simple labours such as selling vegetables or sewing and making bread. Thus, they need much more support than those females employed whether in governmental or private sector institutions.

**Table 11: Difference values between means and Scheffe values to identify the differences in social support according to the variable of occupation**

comparison	number	average	Difference between the to mediums	Scheffe value	significance
An employee housewife	51 26	62.96 64.23	1.27	7.96	Insignificant at 0.05
An employee entrepreneurs	51 33	62.96 71.64	8.68	7.38	significant at 0.05 for others
Housewife entrepreneurs	26 33	64.23 71.64	7.41	8.66	Insignificant at 0.05

Table (12) shows the averages and standard deviations of the social support scale according to the variable of family size. For the verification of the fourth hypothesis, a single analysis of variance was used to reveal the significance of the differences in social support based on family size.

**Table 12: The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the social support scale according to the variable of family size.**

Family size	number	average	Standard deviation
2-4	53	64.79	13.37
5-7	44	65.25	13.37
8-10	13	72.31	15.81
total	110	65.86	13.75

As illustrated in table 13. There is no statistically significant variation in social support based on that variable. The computed F value (1.65), which is less than the tabular F value at the level (0.05) and the degree of freedom (2-107), indicates that the female heads of households receive social support regardless of the number of family members.

**Table 13: The statistical analysis to reveal the significance of differences in social support according to the variable of the family size**

Source of variation	Sums of squares	Degree of freedom	Average of squares	F value	significance
Across groups	617.218	2	308.609		
Within groups	19987.736	107	186.801	1.65	insignificant
Total	20604.955	109	--		

## Discussion

The study clarified the importance of women's contributions in peace negotiations, their participation in the post-conflict transition process in shaping the future of countries emerging from conflict, and studying the importance of social support for women breadwinners for their families in areas of armed conflict. The findings revealed that there is a middle level of support from family, relatives and acquaintances to female heads, and support from social organizations is critically low. Such results indicate that support for female heads of households in areas of armed conflict is generally vulnerable. This can be contributed to several reasons, among which is the subsequent wars,

displacement, and the control of terrorist groups of ISIS in those areas. Thus, the role of social institutions in handling the situation of female heads has been weakened as there is no access to provide services to all segments of society, female heads of households as an example, in these areas.

The results also showed that it is important to provide social support to female heads of households during and after armed conflicts. This is due to the merits of such support as it motivates female heads to move on in their lives, to encounter the problems and to meet the psychological, social and economic needs. This result goes in line with the main impact model view that social support plays a paramount role in the way people feel. When individuals, females,

in particular, receive support from those around, this gives reassurance and a sense of security.

The findings also showed that the housing variable indicated no significant differences between social support and females' support for their families. Whether female heads reside in a separate or shared house with relatives, there is no effect the support female heads receive from family or relatives.

About the age variable, the findings revealed no statistical significance between the social support and the females' support for their family. Such results confirm the crucial roles that females, whether young or old, play during times of conflict as they occupy multiple functions in protecting family and social cohesion during the period of conflicts, thus females must be provided with social support. The more support they are given, the more female heads of households grow stronger in encountering challenges during tough times. Such support makes them feel secured, allows expressing themselves, and builds confident characters. These results conform to the protective trial model that states the more support individuals receive; it can protect them from stress and its subsequent effects on their psychological and mental well-being.

The findings revealed that the occupation variable shows a significant difference between social support and females heading their families. When a test was performed to find the differences between the two types of occupations, they, indeed, differ and the results were in favour of entrepreneurs. Female who do freelance work have no steady outcome and have challenging circumstances, thus supporting them empowers them to deal with life pressure during and after armed conflicts. Therefore, supporting them is essential to be focused on than those who have a steady job and monthly income.

Also, the results showed that there are no statistically significant differences between social support and female heads of households, based on the variable of family size. Such findings can be attributed to that all family members share the same psychological, social and economic conditions. Women in these circumstances take over the role of the family heads, who are supposed to be males, in earning money and protecting their families from dysfunction. Thus, female heads of households must be provided

with all sources of social support whether that support comes from family, friends, or social institutions as they live difficult conditions and challenges, they need the support to reduce the psychological pressure placed on them from the armed conflicts.

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