



# Ethnopolitics

Formerly Global Review of Ethnopolitics

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/reno20>

## The Role of Academic Institutions in the Development of a Political Economy in the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan in Iraq

Karwan Kocher

To cite this article: Karwan Kocher (2021) The Role of Academic Institutions in the Development of a Political Economy in the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan in Iraq, *Ethnopolitics*, 20:2, 203-215, DOI: [10.1080/17449057.2020.1838162](https://doi.org/10.1080/17449057.2020.1838162)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449057.2020.1838162>



© 2020 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 05 Nov 2020.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



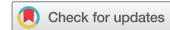
Article views: 3085



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



# The Role of Academic Institutions in the Development of a Political Economy in the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan in Iraq

KARWAN KOCHER  <sup>\*,\*\*</sup>

\*Wageningen University, Netherlands, \*\*University of Zakho, Iraq

**ABSTRACT** The Kurdistan in Iraq (KRI) is a constitutionally recognized autonomous region that aspires to become an internationally recognized state. In the literature on nation-building and state formation, the role of academia in developing a political economy and governance structures is emphasized. Thus, this research examines the performance of academic institutions in the autonomous region of KRI regarding their advisory and application roles in the structure of governance and the political economy over a ten-year period (2007–2016). Employing a range of variables and other measures, a survey is conducted and other information gained from two state university faculties and people employed at a government ministry and in the parliament. Overall, the results are found to be poor for the faculties but better for the ministry and parliament.

## Introduction

In Iraqi or southern Kurdistan (Başur), the autonomous region of Kurdistan in Iraq (KRI, *Herêma* Kurdistan), we see a process of proto state formation and soft nation-building. This is occurring under the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) following the revolutionary movement first led by Molla Mustafa Barzani and organized through the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP; *Partiya Demokrat a Kurdistanê*, PDK).

The general aim here is to investigate the development of the political economy in southern Kurdistan by examining the issue of whether/how *academic institutions* are contributing to the formation of an independent state. Within that broad remit, the following specific question is investigated:

- How is the development of the KRI as a political entity being supported by its academic institutions now with regard to their advisory and application roles?

Overall, we can say that education helps to construct the very subjectivities of citizenship, justifying the ways of the state to the people and the duties of the people to the state.

---

Correspondence Address: Email: [k.kocher@live.nl](mailto:k.kocher@live.nl)

Educational discourses have played an important role in the consolidation of the modern nation-state and naturalization of the idea of national belonging (Green, 2013). Particularly, education is explicitly deployed at times when a new national identity is to be fostered as a way to secure the ideological basis of the polity. Through its curriculum and officially sanctioned textbooks, the national education system plays a significant role in national identity construction, the portrayal of the 'other', and international relations (Green, 2013).

There are countless ways in which academic institutions play a role in nation-building, which are both theoretical and practical, direct and indirect, formal and informal, and also through omission (a state lacking educational excellence can be known as such; countries gain international reputations in such areas that can have wide and unpredictable consequences for development). Among these many ways, we see in the theory that education can support and explore a political economy through sequencing and planning. The most commonly used tasks and priorities include management training, planning and budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation. We see also in the theoretical literature that education can support state-building from the bottom up. First, immediate planning is made for long-term state-building, and education service delivery is supported through working with *de jure* and *de facto* government structures. Then, moving from the immediate to the medium-term, local initiatives are scaled-up to support system-wide planning; state-building is supported through contracting out to non-state providers; alternative routes to sustainable solutions are sought where necessary; decentralized plans are made for system-wide development; and planning at scale is developed through a sector-wide approach. Next, opportunities for cross-sectoral convergence are developed and challenges in blended approaches addresses (Green, 2013).

### **Education and State Formation**

In this research, I look first at the definition of state-building and self-government, at what these are, then at the relationship between these two concepts and how they come about, and finally at is the role of academic organizations in relation to these. This is done to identify the actual participation of the academic institutions in the governance of Kurdistan, focusing on their advisory role and organizational participation.

Regarding the relevance of education for government systems and political economy, the following concise observation may be offered: theory shows that education provides a basis for state formation. We see in many countries that education has been an important factor in the formation of the state in the past and that this remains the case today. State formation theory emphasizes the significance of the nature of the state and state formation processes when examining and explaining the establishment of national educational systems. More specifically, education works primarily through ideas and therefore corresponds most closely to that aspect of state formation which concerns ideology. Further, it determines the formation of the state at different levels and across a variety of areas, and it also operates as a mirror for public administration. The KRI has a very old education system and a very complicated governance that needs to be developed and modernized. It is, therefore, necessary for the academic institutions to play a role in reflecting lack in the education system and to seek solutions and alternatives for the modern and effective education system needed for better state governance. With this in mind, we can say that

the education and training of professionals is another task of academic institutions that play a role in the governance of a state.

Addressing the question of what this theory does when it comes to the role of academic institutions in state formation in Kurdistan, we note that research is being conducted into the level of studies carried out or applied so far and what has been further achieved with regard to the training of professionals by the academic institutions. In other words, the role of the academic institutions is considered in research examining what is being done in respect of administrative organization that is necessary for the creation and formation of a state. Similarly, there is an engagement with the economic or capital investments and interventions needed, for example, to educate professionals.

In general, the state can be characterized as a set of rules and their administration in an area. Grzymala-Busse (2008), for example, describes the state as the set of formal institutions that administers citizen obligations (taxes, military service, etc.), enforces legal sanctions, and regulates public provisions (infrastructure, welfare, rule of law, defense, etc.). It comprises both public finances and the channels of their distribution, including institutions that provide education.

Concerning the relationship between education and state formation, many authors emphasize that education has been a basis for the formation of states throughout history. The task of education has always been a mirror to the public administration (Fenger & Derksen, 2007, p. 134). Over recent decades, state formation theory as advanced by Andy Green (2013), for example, has emerged as one of the most influential ways of understanding the rise of national educational systems.

According to Green, he clearly indicated the very close relations between state and all aspects of society. For him, the state was an educator in the ideological realm but it was also an organizer and initiator in production. The relationship between the two was one of reciprocal determination. Clearly, education is central to the whole concept of hegemony in Gramsci's work. The process of winning consent and transforming the consciousness of the people to conform to modern conditions of production is precisely a process of education, and schools, therefore, comprise a crucial instrument in the process of state formation. If one of the most important functions of the state is to raise the great mass of the population to a 'particular cultural and moral level,' writes Gramsci, the two most important institutions are the courts and the school, 'the school as a positive educational function, and the courts as a repressive and negative educative function' (quoted in Green, 2013, p. 101). The exact location of the school in the social formation is somewhat ambiguous in Gramsci's writings. At some points, it is referred to as part of the state and at others it is in civil society, one of those 'so-called private organizations, like the church, trade unions, schools and so on' (Green, 2013). Regardless, however, it is clear that the school is a site where the state intervenes and through which it attempts to accomplish its objectives.

State formation theory involves an attempt to explain the developments of national educational systems and their key driving factors (Green, 2000). This theoretical framework was applied in various forms by Miller (1986), Curtis (1988), and Boli (1989) and further delineated by Green (2013). Its key postulate is that the development of educational systems is determined by the characteristics of the state and the process of state formation. Adopting this perspective, scholars have emphasized how states create educational systems to produce qualified workers and national citizens. Consequently, in this literature, education is posited to exert a significant influence on the development of nations in

sociocultural, political and ethical terms. The specific tasks of education, then, are varied, but they certainly span, subject to historical context, the promotion of national languages, moral discipline, patriotism and national religions (Green, 2013). Thus, national educational systems can be further extended to accomplish a wide variety of specific objectives, such as the assimilation of immigrants, creation of diligent workers, fostering of patriotic soldiers, and transforming of peasants into citizens, to paraphrase Weber (1976).

In the general theory of the state derived from Karl Marx, we see that Marx signalled the singularity of different national forms of state formation. In fact, he substantially prepared the ground for an analysis of differential educational development. Education works primarily through ideas and therefore corresponds most closely to that aspect of state formation which concerns ideology. It is essentially a part of that process of state formation that Corrigan and Sayer (1987) refer to as ‘cultural revolution.’ It should not be surprising, then, that educational development through the state was at its most dynamic in precisely those countries where and during those periods when the state was most intensely involved in this kind of cultural transformation. We can see from Marx and Gramsci’s work how this occurred differently in different countries (Green, 2013, p. 112).

Beadie (2016) claims that education came to play a role, both directly and indirectly, in the federal acts in the United States establishing territorial government and thus charting paths to statehood. These acts referred in complex and various ways to race, citizenship, language, and literacy in defining who could be recognized as electors and office-holders under the new structures of government. In particular, this enables us to see connections between education-based restrictions on political power and other aspects of colonial conquest and national political economy, such as land and labour policy, resource extraction and industrial capitalization. Bourdieu (1991, p. 25) saw the process of sector formation as being fundamental to the state’s modernization project, advancing ‘the differentiation of distinct spheres or fields of practice, each involving specific forms of capital and value ... as well as institutional mechanisms.’ Many contemporary public sectors were dominated by private actors prior to the modern era. Education was pursued, for example, by better-off parents who could afford to purchase the services of private tutors or by local churches that supported village schools (Mitch, 1992).

### **Higher Education in the KRG**

Iraq as a whole—so also the KRI—has two kinds of higher education institutions: technical institutes and universities. The technical institutes provide higher-level professional education in two variants: there are two-year programmes that lead to a technical diploma and four-year ones leading to a bachelor’s degree. Universities provide bachelor’s, master’s and PhD programmes. Iraq has both state universities and private universities, the latter since the 1980s and mostly accredited in the KRG by the Ministry of Higher Education and Academic Research (MoHESR). The curricula of these programmes are highly centralized. Students who obtain their Secondary School Certificate with marks clearly exceeding the pass mark of 50% may be admitted to an initial university programme, where the standard sciences-arts distinction is made. Also, per the usual standard, a bachelor’s degree is representative of a completed qualification that allows graduates to enter the labour market or to continue on to further study (Nuffic, 2015). Most BA and BSc programmes have a nominal duration of four years. Architecture programmes have a

nominal duration of five years (reduced from six); dentistry, pharmacology and veterinary medicine have a nominal duration of five years, while medicine takes six.

From the literature, can we see that the education sector in the KRG has been growing rapidly but at the expense of quality, especially in higher education. The number of students has clearly increased, but there has been less improvement in infrastructure and educational reforms. This has incapacitated the system in keeping up with the quality demands of educational globalization and global transformation (Ahmed, 2015, p. 14).

Nevertheless, there are various interventions and initiatives underway to improve educational structures and the quality of service delivery. For example, the KRG asked the RAND Corporation to advise on improving quality through several analytic efforts that involved assessing ongoing teacher training, designing a quality assurance programme for schools, advising on monitoring, incentivizing the private school sector, and proposing a new Ministry of Education administrative structure to support its multiple growth initiatives (Vernez et al., 2016, p. III).

## **Methodology**

This investigation was undertaken as a quantitative study, because it is easier to gather information in southern (Iraqi) Kurdistan through this method. Conducting qualitative research in government organizations in the KRI is quite problematic because these organizations are not very accessible and they are very new and prefer to work with quantitative information. It is also much more effective to compare this data in the SPSS program to see how much time and work is spent on roles in government development and strengthening institutions. Thus, the educational political economy and relations between education and government were operationalized through an investigation into the role of academic institutions with a survey.

This instrument was specially prepared and then conducted in the Faculty of Politics and Law (FoPL) at the Salahaddin University, in Erbil, and the Faculty of Agriculture and Water Resources (FoAWR) at the University of Dohuk. Further information was also gathered from the politicians, advisers and managers working at the KRG Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources (MoAWR) to see the economic role of higher education. I also looked at the role of academic institutions in the government, gathering information from politicians, advisers and managers in the IKP to examine the role of higher education in this organization.

The survey sought political, economic, social and demographic information through 16 questions, seven for the FoPL and nine for the FoAWR. Each question had five parts, or sub-questions (A–F). These two parts comprised, respectively, a descriptive analysis and hypotheses tests. The first part focused on the items (advisory role) and the second on the aspects (application role). The final psychometric characteristics were divided or worked in the 16 questions, derived by analyzing the viability of the answers provided by the participants and confirming these by various methods, including reiterating the questions and examining inconsistencies. In order to learn about the advisory role of the academic institutions for the development of the state in Kurdistan, the following variables were specified:

- (1) Research
- (2) Evaluation of rules and procedures

- (3) Evaluation of methods
- (4) Giving advice in legislative questions.

For the application role, the following were specified:

- (1) Educating professionals
- (2) Development of methods, instruments for government use (including ICT)
- (3) Organizing seminars and courses.

These variables were applied to the survey of 16 questions, which were presented in a suitable combination to representative groups of people working in the institutions identified (above). The questions were divided into two. Questions 1–7 were asked to the FoPL (with each question covering one of the seven variables) and Questions 8–16 to the FoAWR (with the seven variables applied to nine questions).

The data collected by the survey were processed and the counts and percentages of the results per item calculated to show the participation grade of the academic institutions in the state formation. The goal was to test the hypothesis that the academic institutions are playing a role in the state formation in the different areas considered. This method was used in order to demonstrate whether sufficient studies have been carried out to advise government organizations. For example, item one and question one were conducted to see how many studies had been made to advise government institutions and to give an idea of any administrative problems and how they should be approached and solved. Another goal was to show whether enough professionals have been trained to strengthen and run government organizations. Thus, the fifth item and question were investigated to ascertain how many professionals are trained by scientific institutions.

After preparation of the questionnaire (checking for validity, expert feedback and comments, revision and redesign) and approval of the research protocol, the research was conducted with a randomly selected sample of lecturers, politicians, parliamentarians and advisers (male and female). A total of 125 questionnaires were distributed, from which 58 fully answered questionnaires were gathered and checked.

Upon verification of the main sample, statistical analyses were performed on the results by SPSS and Excel. Also used for analysis were descriptive statistics (percentages), frequency, one-way ANOVA to test the significant differences in the questionnaire and some of the variables, as well as a t-test for one sample and two independent samples to check for significance and those participating or not in the survey and interviews.

## **Results and Data Analysis**

### *Faculty of Law and Politics*

Firstly, the results and data gained from the lecturers at the FoPL are considered. The survey looked at seven levels of orientation towards state formation, worked and divided into the seven questions, thus:

- (1) Academic research
- (2) Responsibilities and tasks carried out by academic institutions
- (3) Evaluation of methods

- (4) The legal system
- (5) Training staff and officials
- (6) Responsibilities and tasks carried out by academic institutions
- (7) Discussions, seminars and panels.

Regarding a general descriptive of the total of all the questions answered, the results were not very positive (Table 1). Very few studies or work had been carried out on state formation. This was born out by the results of the interviews. Little time is spent on this topic in general. The cooperation between this faculty and the government administration was found to be very weak, according to the results of the survey.

*Faculty of agriculture and water resources.* The results and data at the FoAWR were found to be not much better than those of the Faculty of Law and Politics. Here, too, it was found that little research or other work has been carried out on state formation. The cooperation between this faculty and the government administration is not better than the FoPL.

Table 2 presents a general descriptive of total of all the questions from the FoAWR. Here, the seven items were worked and divided into nine questions to reveal areas of orientation toward state formation, thus:

- (1) Academic research.
- (2) What is the contribution of science to the structuring of the practical and academic education in agriculture?
- (3) Which disciplines are in agriculture or rural development in Kurdistan?
- (4) What is education/research area of academic institutions in agriculture?
- (5) What policy research/policy support research is carried out in relation to agriculture by academic institutions?
- (6) Are there academic studies done on the economic problems in Kurdistan when it comes to agriculture?
- (7) Have institutions played a role in the development of new tools and resources that promote and strengthen the agriculture of Kurdistan?
- (8) Have the academic institutions played a role in the economic entity that is based on agriculture in Kurdistan?
- (9) Have the academic institutions played a role when it comes to the training of staff and officials that are necessary for a strong agriculture in Kurdistan?

**Table 1.** Descriptive of total ( $n = 27$ )

	Frequency/%	Yes	No
A1	Frequency	1	26
	Percent	3.7	96.3
A2	Frequency	1	26
	Percent	3.7	96.3
A3–A7	Frequency	0	27
	Percent	0	100

**Table 2.** Descriptive of total ( $n = 23$ )

	Freq. / %	Yes	No
A1	Frequency	15	8
	Percent	65.2	34.8
A2	Frequency	4	19
	Percent	17.4	82.6
A4	Frequency	1	22
	Percent	4.3	95.7
A6	Frequency	1	22
	Percent	4.3	95.7
A3, A5, A7–A9	Frequency	0	23
	Percent	0	100

*IKP.* Thirdly, the responses of KRI politicians, advisers and managers are given. The seven items were worked and divided into seven questions given to IKP employees. [Table 3](#) presents a general descriptive of total of the seven survey questions (as listed above, for the FoPL). The KRI results were much better than those of the two faculties (FoPL and FoAWR), because much research and other work have been done here and assignments have been carried out on the problems with the state formation.

The data collected from the IKP and shown in [Table 4](#) give the numbers of people working there who have a university degree or higher.

*MoAWR.* Below are listed the academic assignments and academic research undertaken between the Kurdish parliament and the academic institutions:

- Agreement made between MoAWR and MoHESR, on agricultural development in the KRI

**Table 3.** Descriptive of total ( $n = 8$ )

	Freq. / %	Yes	No
A1	Frequency	5	3
	Percent	62.5	37.5
A2	Frequency	7	1
	Percent	87.5	12.5
A3	Frequency	6	2
	Percent	75.0	25.0
A4	Frequency	8	0
	Percent	100	0
A5	Frequency	6	2
	Percent	75.0	25.0
A6	Frequency	6	2
	Percent	75.0	25.0
A7	Frequency	7	1
	Percent	87.5	12.5

**Table 4.** Academic qualifications

Year	BA	MA	Doctor
2007–2016	230	45	9

- Academic research carried out by the above institutions and the universities in the KRI
- Participation in courses, training, workshops and seminars
- Participation in academic meetings involving the two ministries.

Table 5 shows data collected from MoAWR on the numbers of people working there who had a university degree or higher for the years 2007–2016.

**Discussion**

Education is explicitly deployed at times when a new national identity needs to be promoted to secure the ideological basis of the polity. This is currently the situation in the KRI as a regional autonomous territory transitioning into an independent state. We see in the theory that education can support the political economy by, among other things, sequencing and planning in various ways (as described, above). Regarding the questions of how the KRI has developed as a political entity and its academic institutions played a role in this during the period 2007–2016 with regard to the advisory and application roles can we give the below answers.

First, little appears to have been done to support the development and strengthening of the administration. In the area researched, few studies had been made. Perhaps this was because probably there are insufficient lecturers with specific expertise in this subject area. We see also that the cooperation between the academic institutions and government organizations is not strong and well regulated. There appears to be a lack in the policy of academic institutions concerning the specific area of state formation. Also, obtaining information from and access to the government organizations seems very difficult, which leads to a reduced implementation of research by the academic institutions. Another result of this research is that the significance or concrete value of such work is not yet appreciated. Thus, training and teaching are the main activities of the academic institutions in the KRI.

**Table 5.** Academic qualifications

Year	Employees	BA	MA	Doctor
2007–2008	0	0	0	0
2009	2,937	25	19	0
2010	3,635	37	30	0
2011	3,402	38	48	1
2012	3,461	40	61	2
2013	3,798	39	86	4
2014	3,596	53	119	5
2015	3,443	57	166	7
2016	3,435	59	207	7

On the training, seminar, workshop and media area, rather few activities are performed externally. This seems to be because the attention of the academic institutions is focused internally. Most of the academic institutions are financed by the state, which thus have few finance possibilities or incentives to invest in other activities. Only in the media is there a significant interest in seminars and workshops. The results of this research show this very clearly, especially in the interviews conducted in the parliament and with politicians.

The results and data gained from the IKP were much better than those from the FoPL and FoAWR. It was found that much research and other work has been done here and assignments have been carried out on the problems with state formation. This is according to the results of the survey. This means that more time is automatically spent on this topic. The cooperation between this institution and other government institutions is much better than that of the FoPL and FoAWR. These results may have been caused by the following:

- (1) One of the main tasks of parliament is to do research in the state and society,
- (2) There is more internal and external controls in and at parliament,
- (3) Parliament has more financing options for investments in research and other activities, it can make independent decisions,
- (4) Obtaining information from and access to government organizations is enabled,
- (5) The media pays a lot of attention to parliament and its activities,
- (6) A relatively high number of people working in parliament have a university degree.

The results and data from MoAWR were generally positive, with some investigations and assignments carried out and cooperation between this ministry and other government institutions. In addition to the agreement with MoHESR on agricultural development in Kurdistan, there has also been shared organization of and participation in courses, training sessions, workshops and seminars. We see also that there are many people with a university degree working in MoAWR, and the number of employees with higher degrees there is gradually increasing. Two possible reasons for this are, first, there is a great need for capable staff due to demand from this ministry, and, second, it has to comply with the agreements made with academic and other governmental institutions.

These results stand in some tension with the literature portraying the KRI as very active in its use of the education system to improve government institutions. A new vision for the future of higher education in the KRI was adopted by the KRG in 2009 as a part of its implementation of reforms in all areas of its functioning, with commerce, openness and citizen involvement along with education as the core items on the main agenda (MoHESR has the responsibility for education and research). Currently, there are approximately 95,000 students in KRI institutions of higher education, with a male-to-female ratio that is close to 50:50 attesting to the success of the improvement programme (Hashmati et al., 2013, p. 256).

As my personal reflection on this research, I can report that the process has been very slow due to the way of working in the KRI, but I was finally able to obtain the information sought. I learned that time and more personal connections with different actors and figures were essential. It was evident, however, that the various KRI organizations and people employed in them were generally working hard to improve the education and administration of the region.

The quantitative method limited the type and extent of information collected, but it did produce data in a closed system. Other research limitations included time, resources, and

accessibility. I propose that an investigation into the reasons for the small contribution of the FoPL and FoAWR to research in this field may be useful.

## **Conclusion**

The main purpose of this research was to investigate the role of academic organizations in the advisory and application roles they can play in the governance structure and economic development of the KRI. The main focus for this was that of nation-building. Thus, it was necessary to employ the term 'nation-building' with a description in the theoretical framework. Nevertheless, it is important also to refer to 'state-formation' and emphasize that nation-formation and state-formation overlap.

A state refers to a piece of land with a sovereign government. It is monopoly of authority in a particular territory (Sassen, 2006) or of the legitimate use there of physical force (violence) (Weber, 1976), a coercion-wielding organization with clear priority over other organizations (Tilly, 1990). A nation, on the other hand, generally refers to a group of people bound by a shared culture, values, religion and/or language. This article is about the KRI and its settings, where a Kurdish nation formation and state-building within Iraq are closely intertwined.

Since most of this article examines the role of scientific institutions in state formation, the findings are consistent with the theoretical framework in the field mentioned. However, there is weak participation and influence. The findings reported here, therefore, do suggest that the academic institutions in KRI are active in building governance and the economy and contributing to state formation, albeit in a limited way. This confirms the theory that is used and treated in this research.

We see in the theory that education and educational discourses help, on the one hand, to construct the subjectivities of citizenship and justify the ways of the state to the people and the duties of the people to the state, while, on the other hand, playing an important role in consolidating the modern nation-state and naturalizing the idea of national belonging. In particular, education is explicitly deployed at times when a new national identity must be promoted to secure the ideological basis of the polity, as Green (2000, 2013) suggests. We see in the findings of this research that the scientific institutions do this by activities such as research, training, seminars, and reporting.

Green (2000) clearly indicates the very close relations between a state and all aspects of society. For him, the state is an educator in the ideological realm but also an organizer and initiator in production. Here, we see a difference with other cases, or with the European cases on which most state theory rests, since in the KRI there is hardly any production! The KRI is essentially a rentier state, so many of the people graduating do not contribute to the development of productive forces and instead become unemployed or take a government job. We do see in the findings that the scientific institutions are active in organizing the state in KRI in various ways.

Adopting this perspective, scholars as Miller (1986), Curtis (1988), and Boli (1989) emphasized how states create educational systems to produce qualified workers and national citizens. Consequently, in this literature, education is posited to exert a significant influence on the development of nations in sociocultural, political, and ethical terms, and its key postulate is that the development of educational systems is determined by the characteristics of the state and the process of state formation. In the KRI, we see that the scientific institutions are active to educate the qualified staff and citizens. We also

see, as Beadie (2016) claims, that the scientific institutions come to play a role, both directly and indirectly, in the KRI to establish a territorial government and thus chart paths toward statehood.

After the positive finding, the most important result of this research is that the activities and contribution of scientific institutions to state-formation in the KRI are rather slight. At least, this is valid for the faculties and organizations where this survey was conducted and interviews made. We can state that there is clearly a large gap in the implementation of current methods by the academic institutions and governance structures in the KRI. However, there are numerous tasks and priorities, as Green (ibid.) suggests—such as management training, planning and budgeting, monitoring and evaluation—which can be employed to support bottom-up state-building and also plan improvements to develop state institutions and administration. This should, in turn, be expected to contribute to nation-building.

Another point is the problem areas to be explored and tasks that should be performed have become increasingly clear: there is an obvious need to strengthen the role of academic organizations as the theory and findings suggest—for example, by conducting scientific studies, supporting educational services, working with *de jure* and *de facto* government structures such as parliament, as well as planning and providing supportive state-building by outsourcing to non-governmental providers, with decentralized planning for system-wide development and scale-planning through a sector-wide approach to play the necessary social and academic role in practical governance.

Concluding, we can suggest that the information gained from this research provides empirical evidence for how academic organizations can further contribute to establishing and strengthening a state in Kurdistan.

## ORCID

Karwan Kocher  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1441-7213>

## References

- Ahmed, F. (2015). *Kurdistan region-Iraq. An education sector diagnosis of secondary education assignment for the course educational planning*. Stockholm University.
- Beadie, N. (2016). War, education and state formation: Problems of territorial and political integration in the United States, 1848–1912. *Paedagogica Historica*, 52(1–2), 58–75. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00309230.2015.1133672>
- Boli, J. (1989). *New citizens for a new society: The institutional origins of mass schooling in Sweden*. Pergamon.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Harvard University Press.
- Corrigan, P., & Sayer, D. (1987). The great arch—English state formation as cultural-revolution. *Political Studies*, 35(1). <https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.1987.14.2.02a00210>
- Curtis, B. (1988). Patterns of resistance to public education: England, Ireland, and Canada west, 1830–1890. *Comparative Education Review*, 32(3), 318–333. <https://doi.org/10.1086/446780>
- Fenger, M., & Derksen, W. (2007). *Liefde voor Liefde voor het Openbaar Bestuur en Liefde voor de Bestuurskunde*. Eburon.
- Green, A. (2000). Education and state formation revisited. In R. Lowe (Ed.), *History of education: Major themes. Vol. 2, education in its social context* (pp. 303–321). Routledge.
- Green, A. (2013). *Education and state formation; Europe, East Asia and the USA*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Grzymala-Busse, A. (2008). Beyond clientelism: Incumbent state capture and state formation. *Comparative Political Studies*, 41(4–5). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414007313118>

- Hashmati, A., Dilani, A., & Baban, S. (2013). *Perspectives in Kurdistan's economy and society in transition: Volume II*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Miller, P. (1986). *Long division: State schooling in South Australian society*. Wakefield.
- Mitch, D. (1992). The rise of early literacy in Europe. In B. Fuller & R. Robinson (Eds.), *The political construction of education* (pp. 5–31). Praeger.
- Nuffic. (2015). *Education system Iraq described and compared with the Dutch system* (2nd ed., December 2010, version 3, January 2015). At <https://www.nuffic.nl/sites/default/files/2020-08/education-system-iraq.pdf>
- Sassen, S. (2006). *Territory, authority, rights: From medieval to global assemblages*. Princeton University Press.
- Tilly, C. (1990). *Coercion, capital, and European states, AD 990–1990*. Cowley Road.
- Vernez, G., Culbertson, S., Constant, L., & Karam, R. (2016). *Initiatives to improve quality of education in the Kurdistan region—Iraq*. Rand.
- Weber, E. (1976). *Peasants into Frenchmen: The modernization of rural France, 1870–1914*. Stanford University Press.