Sectarian Model of Power Distribution and Political Efficiency in Governmental Structure of Iraq and Lebanon

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Abstract

As a result of to the colonial experience, there is very little overlap between geographical and identity boundaries in the Middle East countries. Most countries of the region like Iraq and Lebanon are a heterogeneous mix of different ethnicities, religions and races with a history of identical crises. This situation has led to the emergence and spread of sectarianism in society and the political structure of Middle Eastern countries. Hence, the political structure of Iraq and Lebanon has been consolidated based on the identical distribution of power in which each identity base assumes a share of power. An important issue is the inefficiency of the identity-based power distribution system. The key question, therefore, is: why is the political structure based on identical power distribution in Iraq and Lebanon inefficient? To answer this question, using a comparative method, the mechanism of power sharing referring formal documents and constitutions of the two countries, six indexes of political efficiency, and also the reasons of inefficiency has been analyzed.

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1. Introduction

Political system is a framework in which political actions and interactions among people and politicians are taken. Though political efficiency is one of the important indicators of a political system's success in achieving its goals, this topic is less comprehendible in the Middle Eastern countries. The sociopolitical agitations and political behaviors differ by the geographical and sociological power distributions. Within the authoritarian systems it's common to observe that power is monopolized by specific ethnicity or religious identity. This circumstance causes a chain of political and security crises in some countries in the region with identity frictions, for example during the civil war in Iraq, hundreds of thousands of people were killed due to competition and identity discrimination. Even within the multi-identical countries although the political system is democratic, the tyranny of majority and democratic suppression is quite probable.

In order to settle the identical challenges and specially sectarianism, political system has been modified by the identical divisions in some countries. New political system has been applied in Iraq by the new constitutional enact in 2005. In Lebanon since the Taif Agreement in 1989 the political power has been distributed to the different identical groups (Taif Accords,1989). After 32 years of implementation of Taif Agreement and 16 years of fulfillment of new constitutions in Iraq the both countries are still among the nations with the highest level of conflict in the Middle East. Within this article has been attempt to have a comparative analysis on the practicality of political systems based on distribution of power among identical groups in Iraq and Lebanon. Firstly, the power distributions within both countries are briefly elaborated and secondly the functions and practicality of that in political and economic development are discussed.

2. Sectarianism

One of the situations that a number of countries face is the phenomenon of sectarianism; a phenomenon according to which the political structure doesn't distribute power, resources and opportunities to everyone equally. The Ottoman Tanzimat was one of the most important models of political sectarianism in the history of the Middle East. This model was a response to European colonialism which was based on religious sectarianism (Makdisi, 2000). The main basis of sectarianism in modern times is based on identity differences, whether these differences are based on religion or other

identities such as ethnicity, nationality and even gender. Sectarianism, in fact, creates a situation in which identity affiliations at the sub-national level will take precedence over larger affiliations at the national level.

Despite the pervasiveness of sectarianism at the societal level, political systems based on sectarianism have been established and sustained to a lesser extent. Sectarianism in political systems can lead to mounting conflicts along with shrinking social participation. These indicators, in turn, can challenge the credibility and efficiency of different political institutions and systems (Al Wekhian,2015). Sectarianism is also at odds with democracy because it causes groups to prioritize their individual interests over collective and national interests. In such a situation, pursuing development goals at the senior management levels will also face major challenges (Butcher and Clarke,2002).

Sectarianism is more prevalent in some countries such as Iraq and Lebanon, because the political structure of these countries is based on sectarianism. In fact, Lebanon and Iraq are among the most important countries in which sectarianism has been established due to its high ethnic and religious diversity. Ethnic, political and religious Differences in such countries have a long history and sometimes even led to the institutionalization of discrimination (Dickson and Hargie,2006).

Although sectarian-based political systems were initially able to reduce identity tensions and conflicts, decades after the establishment of such systems, their strengths and weaknesses have become increasingly apparent. One of the most important weaknesses of sectarian type of political systems is the continuing political and economic inefficiency.

3. Distribution of Power in Political Construct of Iraq

Iraq independence of UK backs to 1932 and had monarchy system till 1958. Although the republic government started in 1958, Iraq was ruled by an authoritarian regime during the entire 20th century. During this period the political system was advocating the pan Arabism, So the most identical and political pressure was on Kurds in Iraq. 4000 villages were ruined and evacuated among 1963 to 1988 by Iraqi government on the borders with Iran in order to separate and make further distance through the Kurds on the other side of the borders. Approximately 25% of the Kurdish population were forced to go in exile and at least 300 thousand of them were massacred. Kurdish movements and protests mostly took place in this era.

During the attacks of the US-led coalition in 1991, Kurdistan was considered as No-fly zone which helped the Iraqi Kurds to gain limited autonomy (Kutschera,2012). In addition to the ethnical conflicts in Iraq there has been several other identical conflicts such as Shia and Sunnis or among Muslims and other religions (Kazemi,2017:156). In contrary to the first Persian Gulf War in the second war the allied forced over throw the political system of Iraq in order to establish a new political system based on distribution of power through different identities. Distribution of power in this system can be categorized and studied within two parts of "Power Distribution in Iraqi Constitution" and "Power Distribution based on political norms and procedures".

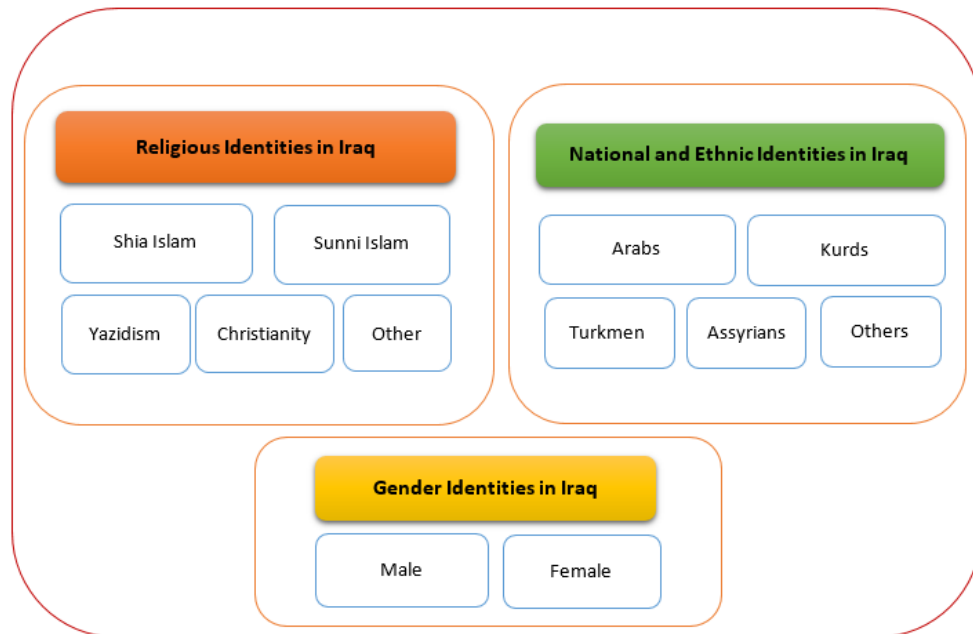**3-1. Distribution of Political Power in the Constitution of Iraq**
Even though the politics of Iraq was influenced by the first Persian Gulf War, the current political system of Iraq is mainly the result of the second war which caused the over throw of Saddam Hussein in 2003 (Joukar and Sazmand,2020:152), and new constitution of Iraq was ratified in 2005 which the role of identity within is tangible. In the preamble of the constitution has been written: "we sought hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder to create our new Iraq, the Iraq of the future, free from sectarianism, racism, complex of regional attachment, discrimination, and exclusion."
In the article 1 and article 47 of the constitution of Iraq, federalism has been considered as a key element in political structure of Iraq. There must be a representative in parliament based on 100 thousand of people according to article 48. So, each group of ethnics, religions and sects have representatives in parliament according to their population. Federal government's duties are individually and distinguishably noted in article 110. According to the articles 54, 59 and 74 in the Iraq constitutions; Iraq has parliamentarian political system within the head of parliament, prime minister and president are directly elected by the parliament (Iraq's Constitution of 2005: Articles 1,47, 54,59,74,110).
Parliamentarian and federal system in Iraq pave the road for the necessary elements of identical distribution of power within the country. Three main identities which conforms the power distribution in the constitution of Iraq are: religious identity, ethnic identity and gender identity. Power distribution in post Saddam Iraq is dependent to the identical bases. Generally, the alignments are mainly summarized in three groups of Shia Arabs, Sunni

Arabs and Kurds. Meanwhile Kurds can be sub-group in Sunni sect too but due to the bitter experience of Saddam Hussein, their ethnical identity is much comprehensive. So, the ethnic identity is more dominant than the religious identity. Along the main identical groups there are also other minorities including Turkmens, Assyrians and Yazidies that are eligible to participate in sociopolitical procedures in Iraq (Jacoby and Nassima,2018).

According to the article 114 of the Iraq's constitution, Kurdistan is recognized as a federal region, and also states that other federal regions can be formed under the constitution. base on article 123, any sorts of change in constitution needs two thirds of parliament's representative votes with the vote of majority of people. Also, any other changes in federal regions (like Kurdistan) must be accepted by the regional jurisdiction power and local people. The two mentioned articles are the most important bases of identity-based power distribution in Iraq. Iraq's constitution notes that any sort of modifications in constitution must be accepted by the federal region on the other word constitution gives veto permission to this region.

The main political agitators in Iraq are not only categorized in three alluded branches in constitutions but also the women rights to conform at least 25% of the parliament is guaranteed by the article 49 and women participation in parliament's seats cannot be less than 25%. In other words, women always hold a quarter or more of these seats in the Iraqi parliament, which is very important in parliamentarian political systems like Iraq's political system. (Iraq's Constitution of 2005: Article 49) Although this mechanism has improved the gender equality, has got some back slides by entering representatives to the parliament who had received less than 1000 votes while in a normal situation, every member of the parliament should represent nearly 100 thousand people. In the other word this article has helped some representatives to be elected who are representing a very small group of people. On the other hand, this article has positive point that is capable to improve women's participation in political construct in the long term.

Figure (1): Main Recognized Identity Bases in Iraq's Political Structure

(**Source**: Iraq's 2005 Constitution)

3-2. Identity-based Power Distribution in Iraq's Political Procedure

Although the main mechanism of identity-based distribution of power are noted in the constitution of Iraq including the minimum percentage of women's share in parliament and federal authorities like Kurdistan; political procedures and processes after 16 years has been relatively stabilized and has created a different mechanism of distribution of political power according to the main identity bases such as Shias, Sunnis and Kurds (McEnvoy and Wassim Aboulatif,2020). Base on these norms key official administrations are divided to three identity alluded groups:

➢ **Prime minister (Shias)**: prime minister is the most important political official in executive branch, two deputies and 22 ministers are under his or her commend. In order to conform the government, the prime minister needs two thirds of parliament's vote. Although the prime ministry is given to the Shias, for the other members of the cabinet it is crucial to have the support of the other identity groups. As a result, the presence of Sunnis and Kurds

within the government cabinet is a common situation (Islami and shamsabadi,2018:72).

➢ **President of Iraq and President of the Kurdistan Regional Government (Kurds)**: president has less responsibilities and authority in comparison to the prime minister in executive branch and has stronger ceremonial position. The president of Iraq has the legitimacy of presenting or suggesting articles to the parliament, requesting the parliament for resignation of prime minister, dissolving of parliament (by having the support of one third of parliament's vote), guarantee of loyalty to the constitution, confirmation of accords and agreements after parliament's acceptance, crediting or admitting ambassadors and declaring presidential orders. Two thirds of parliament votes are needed to designate in this position. Presidency of the federal Kurdistan is on Kurds. President of the Kurdistan Regional Government has high authorities within the region.

➢ **Head of the Parliament (Sunnis)**: although authority of this position is more limited than the two mentioned official positions; but due to the parliamentarian political system of Iraq, the head of Parliament has a wide range of political authorities (Iraq's Constitution of 2005).

4. Distribution of Power in Political Construct of Lebanon

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Lebanon had a limited autonomy under direct influence of France. Lebanon was conformed as a State during the Second World War and declared its independency in 1943. After the withdrawal of foreign military forces in 1946 till 1975 Lebanon has experienced the stability and development. Lebanese civil war started from 1975 lasted to 1990 and during this war, 120 thousand of people were killed, hundreds of thousands wounded and hundreds of thousands of the Lebanese people became homeless (Human Rights Council, A/HRC/3/2).

Under foreign and internal pressure on October 22 in 1989 the "National Reconciliation Accord" which is known as Taif Agreement was assigned among Lebanese representatives and foreigner politicians. Despite of some modifications of Taif Agreement, this accord is still the bed rock of political fragmentation of power in Lebanon. According to the Taif Agreement the executive power of president is transmitted to the cabinet members, half of the members are Christians and the other half includes Muslims. At the time of the agreement, Christians under leadership of Michel Naim Aoun, Shias and Druzites were the main opponents of the Taif Agreement. However, this

agreement was taken to action and initiated a new political era of Lebanon known as the Second Republic (Rolland,2003).

Religious identity, denomination or sectarian identity are the most important forming elements in the identical structure of power fragmentation in Lebanon. Power distribution is also figured by these identical bases. Because of the multi-identity feature of Lebanon, the parliamentary system has been materialized to respond this plurality. Generally, Taif agreement has over shadowed the political institutions like parliament and bureaucracy of Lebanon. According to the Taif agreement which was applied in 1990, the president is chosen among Maronites Christian, prime minister from the Sunni Muslims, vice prime minister from the orthodox Christians, and chief of parliament from the Shia Muslims. This mechanism is also applied in other parts of the government (Taif Accords,1989).

4-1. Identity-based Distribution of Political Power in the Parliament of Lebanon

Power distribution in political structure of Lebanon and specially parliament of this country is related to identical bases of members or candidates. Two main identical groups are Christians (Maronites, Orthodox, Armani, protestant) and Muslims (Shia, Sunni, Druzites and Alavis). Political alignments within Lebanon are mainly Categorized among 8 March alliance (Shias, some Sunnis and Druzites) and 14 March alliance (Sunnis and some Christians). However, these alliances has been relatively changed in the past years (Al Khazen,2003:605-608).

As an obvious point the parliament is the most powerful political institute of the parliamentarian political system of Lebanon. On the other word if an alliance can gain the majority of the parliament will be capable of forming the government. Lebanon parliament has 128 seats, 64 of them are for Christians and the other 64 seats are for Muslims. It should be noted that the mention distributions were according to the demographics of Lebanon in 1990 and Taif agreement and now the percentages of population have changed. For some time, the distribution of power in Lebanon was based on the 5-3-2 formula, in which 50 percent of power belonged to Christians, 30 percent to Sunnis, and 20 percent to Shiites. Now that the demographics of Lebanon has changed, the distribution of power is having also been changed to this: 50 percent for Christians, 25 percent for Sunni Muslims, and 25 Percent for Shia Muslims (Surhone and et al,2010).

Table (1): Distribution of Power (128 Seats) in Parliament of Lebanon

Christians							Muslims			
64 Seats (50%)							64 Seats (50%)			
Maronite Catholic	Eastern Orthodox	Melkite Catholic	Armenian Orthodox	Armenian Catholic	Protestant	Other	Sunni	Shi'ite	Druze	Alawite
34	14	8	5	1	1	1	27	27	8	2

(**Source:** Taif Accords,1989)

4-2. Identity Sharing of Power in the Lebanese Government

As the political system in Lebanon is parliamentarian, this power fragmentation has been driven to the government as well. Main political officials of the country are president and prime minister. The president is chosen by parliament among the Christians while the prime minister is opted from the Sunnis. Cabinet of government is equally chosen among Christians and Muslims. The role of alliances is crucial within this procedures. For example, in presidency although the president is Christian there are always competitions among the political Christian parties. For gaining prime ministry position and other political positions there are the same attempts (Salamey,2013).

Another point is that smaller identity groups, such as Protestants and Shia Alawis, have very little chance of holding a ministry. Noticing the importance of coalitions, these groups usually play a small role in agreements and coalitions and therefore will have a small share in the cabinet.

Table (2): Distribution of Power in Lebanon's Government (2019) – 30 Ministries

Christians							Muslims			
15 Ministries (50%)							15 Ministries (50%)			
Maronite Catholic	Eastern Orthodox	Melkite Catholic	Armenian Orthodox	Armenian Catholic	Protestant	Other	Sunni	Shi'ite	Druze	Alawite
6 (20%)	4 (13.3%)	3 (10%)	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (20%)	6 (20%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)

(**Source:** The Telegraph,2019)

The division of ministries, as shown in Table (2), also took place with minor changes in previous years. Since 2020, after nationwide protests in Lebanon and the formation of a new cabinet, the number of ministries has dropped from 30 to 19, however, the share of identity groups in the distribution of ministries is still observed.

Table (3): Distribution of Power in Lebanon's Government (2020) – 19 Ministries

Christians							Muslims			
10 Ministries (52.6%)							9 Ministries (47.4%)			
Maronite Catholic	Eastern Orthodox	Melkite Catholic	Armenian Orthodox	Armenian Catholic	Protestant	Other	Sunni	Shi'ite	Druze	Alawite
4 (21%)	3 (15.7%)	2 (10.5%)	1 (5.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (15.7%)	4 (21%)	2 (10.5%)	0 (0%)

(**Source:** Naharnet, 2020)

The above-mentioned power distribution, which has been applied to ministries, also applies to other administrational and even non-administrational positions, this means that even in the employment of government institutions, each identity group has an appropriate share in the political distribution of power.

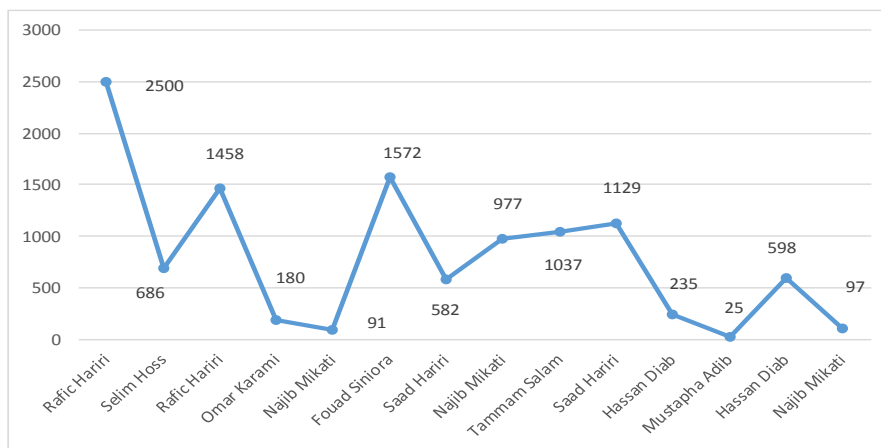## 5. Does Identity-based Distribution of Political Power in Iraq and Lebanon Work?

In the previous part, the structure of identical power distribution in Iraq and Lebanon was briefly explained. Since the main issue of the present study is not to know how the power is distributed, but measuring the effectiveness of this political structure does matter. The efficiency of the political structure, and especially the type of ruling political regime, has a great impact on the stability and development of countries. (Przeworski and Limongi,1993) So, in this section has been attempted to answer the fundamental question of whether the political structure based on the identical distribution of power in Lebanon and Iraq has been efficient or not? In order to answer this question, 6 important indexes in the field of efficiency of political systems including "political and governmental stability", "political and social protests", "economic and political corruption", "economic recession", "employment or

unemployment" and " Political and economic services" in Iraq and Lebanon were measured by applying the method of comparative analysis.
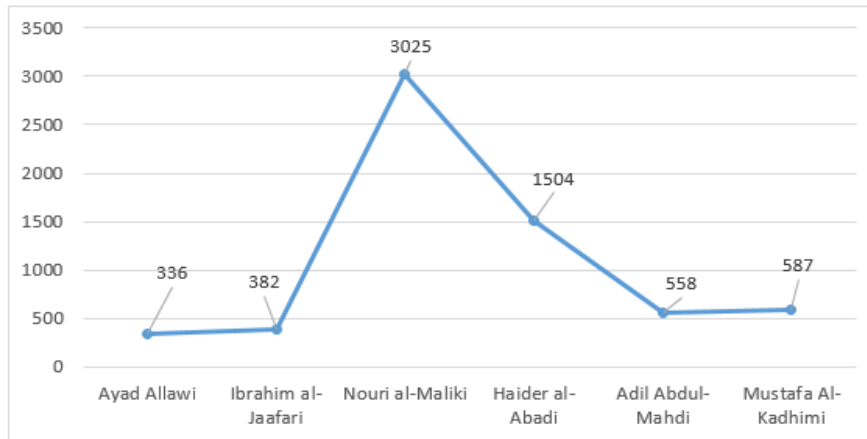
5-1. Political and Governmental Stability
Political and Governmental stability is one of the most important indicators in the field of the efficiency of a political system. Different governments in both countries are usually less stable and the central government has less authority. During the last three decades, the tenure of various governments in Lebanon has decreased from 2,500 days for Rafiq Hariri to 25 days under Mustafa Adib. One of the main issues facing the new generation of prime ministers in Lebanon is the lack of strong identity support, which has weakened their political position as a prime minister. The decline in economic indicators has also been one of the main reasons for the failure of governments. The situation is similar in Iraq. The Iraqi government has not only failed to establish stability and security in the country, but it has been less stable in each period than in previous periods.

Figure (1): Number of days of Lebanese Prime Minister tenure (31 Januray, 1992 – 15, December 2021)
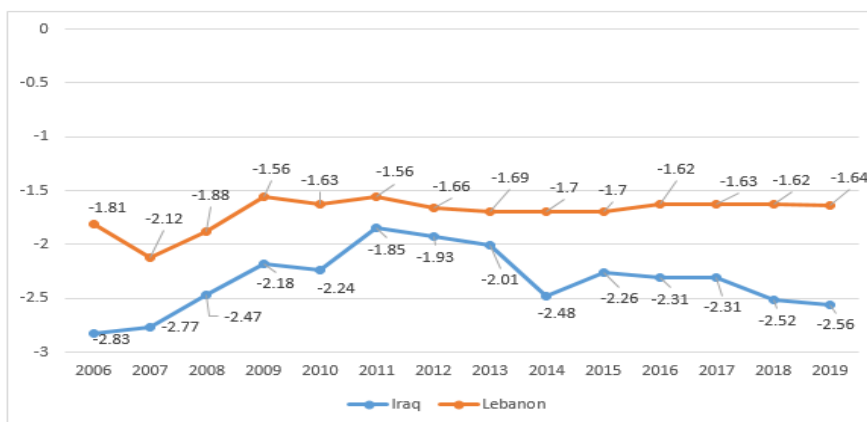

(**Source**: World Atlas,2020)

Figure (2): Number of days of the Prime Ministers of the Republic of Iraq (1 June, 2004-15 December 2021)

(**Source**: United States Institute of Peace, 2021)

The countries of Iraq and Lebanon in terms of political stability index (Political stability index) during the last 16 years (from 2005 to 2021) have always been among the 15 most unstable countries in the world. Although Lebanon is in a better position than Iraq, it has also experienced a lot of instability, especially since 2019 (The Political Economy,2019).

Figure (3): Political Stability Index in Iraq and Lebanon (2006-2019)

(**Source:** www.theglobaleconomy.com/rankings/wb_political_stability)

Economic protests have a higher level of inefficiency within themselves. In this regard, both Iraq and Lebanon have been involved in widespread protests over the past 20 years. In particular, Lebanon has experienced five rounds of widespread protests from 2006 to 2020, and has spent seven of the last 15 years in the middle of the political protests:

- The 2006 to 2008 protests planned by the March 8 Alliance;
- Intifada of Dignity in 2011, which was affected by the Arab Spring;
- Protests from 2015 to 2016 aimed at combating Garbage problem, Sectarianism, Corruption and Unemployment;
- The 2019 protests, known as the October Revolution, were aimed at countering government efforts to tax tobacco, gasoline, and Internet voice calls.
- The protests of 2020, which was a continuation of the protests of 2019 and intensified after the explosion in the port of Beirut (Beirut explosion protests).

In Iraq, political and civil protests have been on the rise, too. After the over throw of Saddam Hussein in 2003, the country went through a period of stability for several years and did not face widespread protests until 2011. (Mossalanejad,2019:2) But since 2011, after the start of the Arab Spring, Iraq has also been involved in protests. The country experienced four rounds of mass protests between 2011 and 2020, and has been involved in relatively large-scale protests for 9 of the last 10 years:
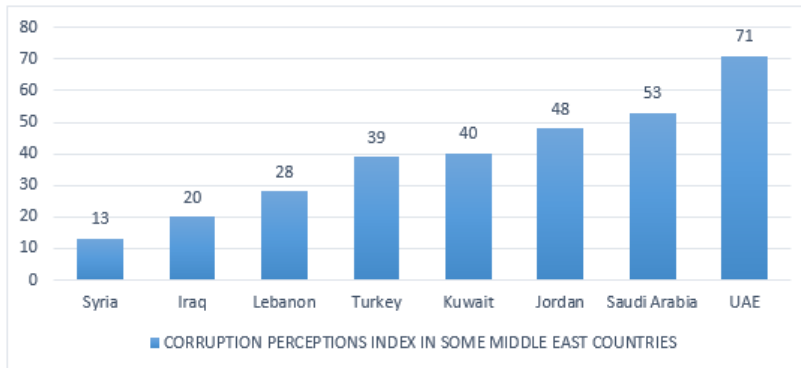
- The 2011 protests that followed the Arab Spring protests. The protests lasted from February 2011 to December of that year. The Kurdish areas of Iraq were also involved in the protests.
- Protests from 2012 to 2013, which were mainly carried out by Sunni Arabs. This identity group in Iraq, which used to be in power, has been marginalized in the new era.
- Anti-corruption protests from 2015 to 2018: These protests took place during four years in Iraq and at different times in major cities of this country.
- 2019 to 2020 protests, which began on October 1, 2019 and continued until November 2020. The protests took place mainly in the Shiite-dominated central and southern provinces, although they later spread to other areas, including Kurdish areas.

5-3. Economic and Political Corruption of the Government

One of the most important causes of structural inefficiency in political systems is the high level of corruption. Part of this corruption in Iraq and Lebanon is due to the mechanism of distribution of power among different sections of society, which is based on religious, denomination, ethnic and sectarian affiliations. According to the Global Corruption Perceptions Index provided by Transparency International, Iraq's index is 20 (out of 100) which means the rank of 162nd (out of 198 countries) and Lebanon's index is 28 (out of 100) at 137th (out of 198 countries). In other words, the perception based on the existence of corruption in these two countries is higher than all the countries in the region, with the exception of Syria, which is involved in crisis and civil war (Transparency International,2019).

This has made the fight against corruption as one of the most important slogans of the protesters, both in Iraq and in Lebanon. In particular, the Lebanese government has received more than 17 different financial aids over the past few decades to improve the Lebanese people's access to electricity, but it is still unsuccessful in supplying electricity to the country. A significant part of the economic corruption in Lebanon is done through the funds that have been established in this country. Lebanon's special banking and financial system has prevented these funds providing their financial information and is also tax-exempt. The political and economic turmoil in Lebanon has always made the country's political figures one of the richest people in the country.

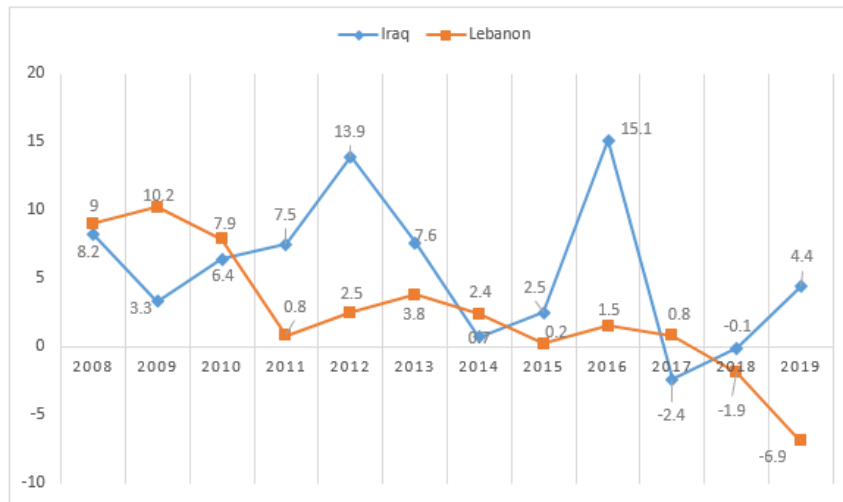**Figure (4): Corruption Perceptions Index in some Middle East Countries**

(**Source:** Transparency International, 2019)

5-4. Economic Growth or Recession

The economic growth of both Iraq and Lebanon has been declining over the past few decades and has experienced much of fluctuations. The Lebanese economy grew by 44% and 38% in 1984 and 1991, respectively. Between 1985 and 2015, Lebanon's average economic growth was 3.9 percent. Even in 2009, Lebanon's economic growth rose to over 10 percent. The growing state of the Lebanese economy has stalled since 2011 after the start of the crisis in Syria, falling below one percent in 2011 and negative in 2018 and 2019. The Iraqi economy has also experienced many fluctuations and has experienced a significant decline in the years leading up to 2020. The Corona crisis has also posed new challenges for the economic growth of Iraq and Lebanon in 2020 and 2021. (World Economic Outlook Database, October 2020 Edition)

Figure (5): Gross Domestic Product of Iraq and Lebanon Constant Prices, Persentage Change (2008-2019)
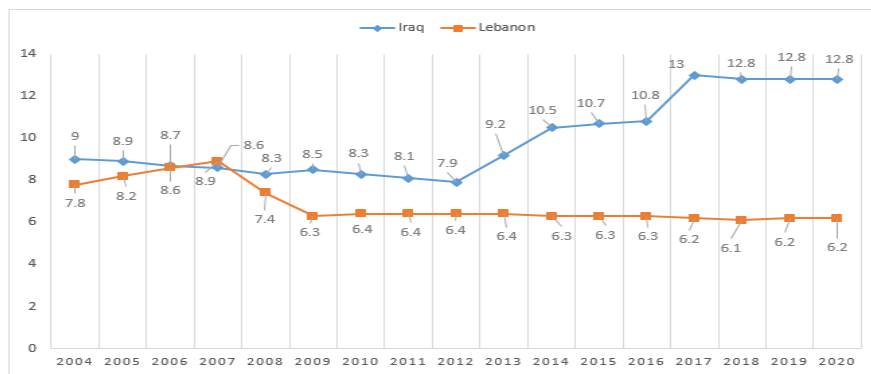

(**Source:** World Economic Outlook Database, October 2020 Edition)

5-5. Employment or Unemployment

The high level of employment in developing countries is not only an economic indicator but also a sign of political efficiency. In contrast, high unemployment rates are an important indicator of government inefficiency. Unemployment in Iraq has risen to 12.8 percent in recent years. In Lebanon,

although official statistics put the unemployment rate at around 6.2 percent, (World Bank,2020) independent institutions estimate that the unemployment rate in Lebanon is much higher than the official figures as well.

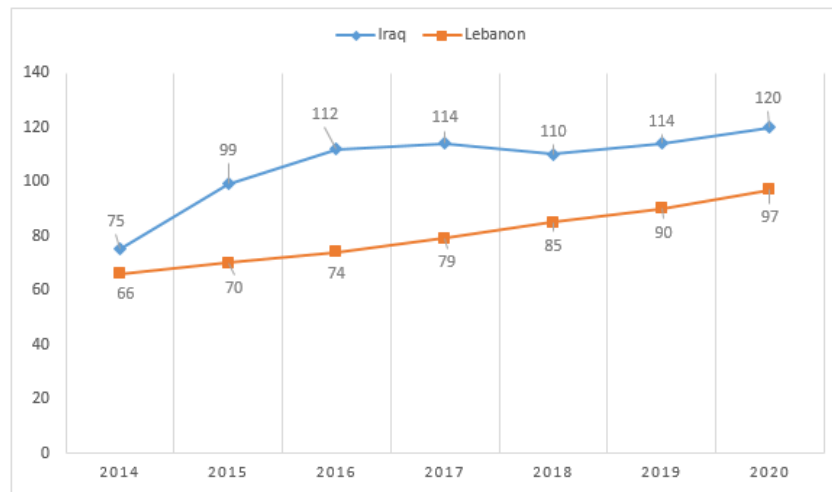**Figure (6): Unemployment Rate in Iraq and Lebanon (2003-2019)**

(**Source:** World Bank,2020)

5-6. Infrastructure and Public Services

The sectarian nature of the government in Iraq and Lebanon has led to the distribution of budgets and infrastructure development not based on national needs, but on political relations between identity groups. This situation has caused major problems for the development of infrastructure. In addition, public services should be distributed unequally in different regions. Government debt in Iraq and Lebanon has been rising in recent years. The government debt index has increased to more than 120 billion dollars in Iraq and to about 97 billion dollars in Lebanon. In 2012, Lebanon's GDP was about 44 billion dollars and government debt was 131 percent of the country's GDP. Although Lebanon's GDP increased to 60 billion dollars in 2019, government debt also increased to 150 percent of total GDP (www.statista.com). The increase in the debts of the Iraqi and Lebanese governments has had a direct impact on the reduction of the level of public services in these two countries. In Lebanon, for example, fuel prices have risen sharply, and the purchasing power of the Lebanese people reduced. Both Iraq and Lebanon face frequent water and electricity goes off in their country. In some areas of the Lebanese capital, electricity is cut off,

sometimes 17 hours a day. Municipal services in these two countries are also in a very unfavorable situation.

Figure (7): National Debt of Iraq and Lebanon (2014-2020)

(**Source:** www.statista.com)

6. Why the Political System based on Identical Distribution of Power Is Inefficient in Iraq and Lebanon?

An examination of various indicators of political efficiency showed that sectarian-based political structures in Iraq and Lebanon have not been successful so far. Although only six important indexes of the political and economic efficiency of Iraq and Lebanon were examined, the study of other indicators also confirms the inefficiency of these two countries in achieving national goals, especially in the field of political stability and economic development. Despite having abundant oil resources, the Iraqi government has not been able to meet the basic needs of its citizens in the economic field yet. In the meantime, it is obvious to note that the identical distribution of power is one of the causes of the inefficiency of these two political systems. Emerging this type of political structure in Iraq and Lebanon has led to the rise of some political processes, which the inefficiency is one of its direct consequences. The Identity-based distribution of political power in Iraq and Lebanon has led to some dysfunctional political processes in these countries:

- Monopoly of power in certain identity groups or political parties: one of the consequences of the fragmentation of power in Iraq and Lebanon is the monopoly of power in the hands of certain identity and political groups that neither accept responsibility nor see the need to respond to public demands. This situation has raised the high level of economic and political corruption in these countries, which the elimination of this corruption requires structural changes in the political system of these countries. But because of the plural nature of the society of these countries, any sort of changes seems very difficult and even impossible. In such circumstances, paradox of interest may arise between different identity groups (Baizidi, 2019).
- Cross-border identical dependencies versus internal identical dependencies: The Identical distribution of power has also made some transnational identical ties stronger than national ties between different identities within that country. Inside Iraq, for example, Sunni Arabs are often more inclined toward Saudi Arabia and Turkey than Shia Arabs inside Iraq; Turkmen identical ties with Turkey are also greater than internal dependency to other identities in Iraq. The Iraqi Shias and Kurds are in a similar situation, and their transnational identical tendencies are stronger than their internal ties to other identity bases. The pluralistic identical structure in Lebanon is similar to the Iraqis, which has led Lebanese to have political leanings toward different countries.
- Weakening the atmosphere of political and economic competition: The monopoly of power in the hands of identical groups will weaken the competitive political atmosphere of the country, which will cause a static political structure within countries. In fact, political groups that have gained power based on identical affiliation within the political system always have a level of confidence in maintaining the power. This situation makes power-based identical-sharing structures ineffective in achieving developmental goals.
- The vicious circle of inefficiency and protest: Iraq and Lebanon are embroiled in a vicious cycle of protest and political inefficiency. This means that on the one hand, inefficiency leads to protests and on the other hand, protests lead to further weakening of the political system of these countries. And this vicious circle can lead to two completely different destinies: that is, either these systems go to the threshold of failed states or

they can stop the process of political inefficiency by making fundamental reforms or structural changes .

Despite the lack of political and economic success, political systems based on the identical distribution of power have been relatively successful in the solving one issue, and that is the reduction of identity tensions within the two countries. Although the division of power between different identity groups, it may have many disadvantages, has led to a significant reduction in civil wars in these countries. But the fundamental remaining question is whether the removal of identity wars from the internal equations of countries enough or not?

The 40-year experience of sectarian political structure in Lebanon and the 17-year experience of sectarianism in Iraq are clear examples of the failure of this type of political structure. Accordingly, the argument is reinforced that the sectarian political system is efficient only for the transition from identity wars and not as a stable political system.

7. Conclusion

The heterogeneous combination of religion, sectarianism and ethnicity has established a special political structure in Iraq and Lebanon, based on the identical distribution of power. Lebanon has a longer history in this field, and its political structure has been based on the identical division of power for more than three decades. Iraq has experienced this kind of political structure for more than 15 years as well. One of the main reasons for these countries to move towards the identical division of power was the political and security challenges, as well as widespread religious, sectarianism and ethnic conflicts between different identity groups in these countries (Haji Naseri,2019:37). The political structure based on the identity division of power, although it has not eliminated the differences, has been somewhat successful in resolving intense conflicts (such as war) between different identities in these countries.

More importantly, the political goals of governments cannot be limited to reducing identical tensions and conflicts. In other words, the success of governments requires them to achieve other national goals, including growth and development. In this regard, it was concluded that the political systems of Iraq and Lebanon have failed to achieve some of the most important indicators of political efficiency. So, to answer this question of whether a political system based on the identical distribution of power is an efficient

system or not? It can be said that in reducing identical conflicts, yes, it is a relatively efficient system that has reduced ethnic, religious and sectarianism tensions; But in general, these systems have failed to achieve other national goals, including stability, growth and development.

One of the most important reasons for the inefficiency of political systems based on the identical division of power is the monopolistic nature of power in this political system, which reduces the level of political and economic competition in these countries and ultimately prevents the rotation or shifts of power. In addition, the multi-identity and multi-ethnic nature of Lebanon and Iraq has strengthened cross-border identical affiliations, which has challenged the internal cohesion of these countries. The combination of these factors has reduced the level of efficiency of these political systems and led to rapid changes of government, as well as widespread protests in both Iraq and Lebanon.

Eventually, the accumulation of political inefficiency in Iraq and Lebanon due to the political structure of these countries, along with some international developments, including the emergence of new communication technologies, has led to the intensification of protest movements in these countries. A significant portion of the protesters and dissidents in the Iraqi and Lebanese governments are young people who do not have a clear experience of past identical crises and for whom welfare issues are more important than identity issues. In other words, Iraq and Lebanon are a manifestation of the Paradigm Shift from the Identity Paradigm to the Wealth Paradigm, and as long as the political structure of these countries does not change in line with paradigm shifts, the possibility of stability, growth and development will be very low as well.

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