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RECRUITMENT AND STAFFING IN THE LEBANESE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: THE CASE OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION

by
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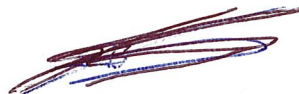EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION

by
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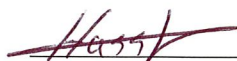
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

<u>Hassan Hafez RImmani</u>   for   <u>Master of Arts</u>
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Title: <u>Recruitment and Staffing In The Lebanese Public Administration: The Case of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education</u>

The Lebanese Public Administration has long been subjected to many problems and conflicts all over the years, especially when it comes to political interference. In particular, recruitment and staffing are a huge issue in the administration. Therefore, the thesis poses the question: What role do both the Civil Service Board and political interference play in recruitment and staffing in the Lebanese Public Administration, and what human resources practices can be used to improve staffing? This thesis follows the critical theory and semi-structured interviews in order to answer the question posed. The interviews were conducted with civil servants and experts, and their answers gave birth to the challenges that the applicant/civil servant faces in the process of recruitment and staffing in the public sector, as well as recommendations in order to help adjust the public administration as a whole, and the recruitment and staffing in particular.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Lebanon has always faced a lot of issues in terms of economy, finance, social security, and politics. More particularly, Lebanon is on the verge of a huge crisis in our time, with the absence of good leadership and strategic planning for the present and the future playing important roles in reaching this stage, according to experts in the Lebanese Public Administration. Lebanon is known worldwide for its variety of sects and religions (Henley, 2016). However, Lebanon has long been suffering negatively of this variety of sects. Recounting the history of Lebanon, it can be clear the crises that the country has been through are primarily because of failure to co-exist. Moreover, sectarian politics stand out as main reasons for this failure, for every political party represents a certain single sect, and the head of this clan is "coincidentally" a politician as well (Henley, 2016). Politics interferes with our everyday life; so it evidently does interfere with public administration everywhere in the world. Let us take the United States of America as an example. Across all levels of its public administration, there is a high political influence when it comes to appointments (Matheson et al, 2007). The appointments across all levels of administration are political, even though on the lower levels (4 and 5) there are administrative considerations, but the political considerations seem to be more prevalent (Matheson et al, 2007). However, when the involvement becomes excessive, this is where the problems arise. In Lebanon, every politician is the head of a certain group or party, and understandably they seek what is best for them and their party. I have seen this trend existing throughout the history of this unfortunate country, and decided to look into one particular issue that falls underneath the problems that Lebanon is facing. For this reason,

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in this thesis I have chosen to explore the recruitment and staffing processes in the Lebanese Public Administration.

In Lebanon primarily, and since its establishment in 1959, recruitment in the public administration is done by the Civil Service Board, excluding the Lebanese Central Bank. The government also gave the power for each minister to recruit employees upon their needs, and after reviewing his request starting the year 2008. However, the situation in recent years has gone out of hand, so the Council of Ministers has decided to put a stop to recruitment. To make matters worse, there is no reliable database that has recorded the number of civil servants currently in the public administration. The question here is: is there no administrative or judicial control over the situation? Why is this matter not handled appropriately? What is the reason behind the absence of human resources practices that handle such issues in all organizations and in all countries elsewhere?

These questions open the door to my set of objectives and thesis question. Seeing as there is limited empirical research on the situation of staffing and recruitment in the Lebanese public sector, I have set out to examine this topic. The literature I found that are presented regarding the issue were conducted by Hamzeh in 2001 titled "Clientalism, Lebanon: Roots and Trends" where he discusses "Clientelism" and "Wasta", Bassel Salloukh and Co under the title "The Politics of Sectarianism in Postwar Lebanon" which identifies sectarianism in Lebanon, Kamal Salibi from way back in 1966 under the title "Lebanon Under Fouad Chehab 1958–1964", Ahmad and Al Maghlouth in "Lebanese Political Parties and Administrative Reforms: An Impossible Dream?" where they specify what the political and sectarian parties believe in regards to public administration. My work explores how the literature relates to the Lebanese civil servant daily life in public administration in terms of staffing and recruitment; how much do both politicaland

sectarian interferences affect the Lebanese Public Administration? We have been presented by the literature that politics and sectarian considerations do affect the recruitment and staffing. However, what my study adds to the literature is how much is politics interfering, and this is from the civil servants' perspective themselves who have been exposed to the reality shaping public administration in Lebanon. Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to explore the role that both the Civil Service Board and political interference play in recruitment and staffing in the Lebanese Public Administration, as well to identify human resources practices, which can be used to improve staffing.

The thesis takes the Ministry of Education and Higher Education as a case study to explore recruitment and staffing. In general, all ministries in Lebanon have similar structures. As mentioned earlier, ministers, in accordance to law and in cooperation with the Civil Service Board (CSB), are allowed to recruit and staff civil servants whom they deem worthy and qualified, from the year 2008. The staffing by the ministers is strictly done on contractual basis. Seeing that ministers are generally political appointees, it is not surprising the political affiliations and considerations influence recruitment decisions. Looking at the matter from this perspective, the ministers who are appointed in their respective cabinets will bring their own people who follow them and their party's agendas with them. Therefore, what happened as a consequence is that the ministers started recruiting randomly into their respective ministries, neglecting in the process the effects that these recruitments might inflict on the Lebanese Public Administration and the country as a whole, both on the social level and economic level. As political appointees, ministers will want to hire from their constituency and use recruitment as a means of becoming more popular. This exuberant influence of the political elite in Lebanon has undermined the role of CSB and human resource practices and policies almost irrelevant in the public sector.

As a result of all that has happened in terms of recruitment in the ministries, took the power to recruit in collaboration with the Research and Guidance Department within the Civil Service Board the situation escalated quickly out of control, and with no punishment present, finally the government took a decision to stop the recruitment processes in all of its aspects in 2017, until any further notice. Any single recruitment or appointment must be agreed upon by the Council of Ministers in coordination with the Research and Guidance Department within the Civil Service Board (Subject Law 46 Decree 21, 2017). One major need for conducting this empirical qualitative study is the absence of sources on numbers within the public sector. Neither the Central Inspection Board, nor the Lebanese Central Administration of Statistics, nor the ministries and public institutions themselves have a one certain numerical number of the civil servants. It is said, however, that the number has surpassed the 200,000 in the Lebanese Public Sector, and this is excluding the military sector. This number across a small country like Lebanon, with its relatively small population and the economic problems it is facing, is huge. Therefore, I looked into the situation and came up with a question to ask about this matter.

In this chapter, I will introduce the role, history and significance of CSB. In addition, and because the thesis is about recruitment which is one function of the human resources, I will talk about defining human resources and going in depth in the Lebanese human resources, exploring how it is applied differently in the public sector compared to the private sector. Moreover, this chapter will introduce the situation of public administration in Lebanon, highlighting the case study under review which is the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the reasoning behind choosing it as a case study.

A. Lebanese Civil Service Board

The Civil Service Board, alongside other public administration bodies, was established in 1959. The president at that time was Fouad Chehab. President Fouad Chehab was the Chief of the Army, and he was elected to become President in 1954. Coming from a military background, he strived to see a politically neutral Lebanon, with no favors for any political party or religion sect.

On June 12, 1959, Legislative Decrees 111, 112, 114, 115, and 116 were issued by the Council of Ministers. The Legislative Decrees were issued to establish: The General Organization of the Administration, The Civil Service Regulation, the Civil Service Board, the Central Inspection, and The Administrative Organization of the Republic of Lebanon, which divided the country into provinces and districts, respectively. Our research focuses more on a single body from those mentioned, which is the Civil Service Board. The Civil Service Board is an independent body that, technically in our current terms, operated as the sole body concerned with human resources of the public administration of Lebanon. The main and most prominent function of the Civil Service Board is staffing successful applicants into the Lebanese Public Administration. Before the Legislative Decrees were issued, the public administration entities used to hire their own employees. In other words, each ministry for example used to recruit its own staff members. However, President Chehab saw that it is fitter to establish a single independent public entity in order to oversee the process of recruitment and staffing. Other functions that the Civil Service Board is concerned with are the following:

- Conducting pre-entrance competitive examinations
- Responsibility for designing and following up on the implementation of the performance appraisal system

- Approving requests for promotion

- Approving the transfer of employees from one public administration to another

- Responsibility for job description of the vacant position available at any given public administration

In brief, the Civil Service Board is concerned with staffing, describing job vacancies, designing examinations, and transfer of employees from within or different departments, which all technically fall under the human resources. However, it has become more evident that the powers and authority of the Civil Service Board are being drained for many reasons. The primary reason for what is happening is political interference in decision making and appointments. Politics is interfering in the Civil Service Board's functions. The interference can be seen by the mounting rise of the number of civil servants in the Lebanese Public Administration. In fact, there are no records of the exact number of civil servants in Lebanon, but what is known and seen is that the number of civil servants is increasing. Despite every attempt by the Council of Ministers to put a stop to the rising number of staffing, there is always a certain loophole that the minister is being able to bypass to recruit. While there is no hard evidence of illegal staffing after 2017, the increasing number of staffing remains a mystery. What we can infer from the whole situation is that every time a minister is appointed, they tend to bring their own people and followers into the ministry. This is something usual in every country of the world; when someone new is elected or appointed, there is a high probability they bring their followers to office, and offload some of the people who are currently there. This can be explained in a sense that the followers and the newly appointed / elected official have good

communication, and they would work with them better than working with the previous staff.

B. Defining Human Resources

Human Resource Management is a term that was first coined by the economist John R. Commons in his book "The Distribution of Wealth", and it has been considered the pillar of any organization and institution because of its various and valuable assets that help the company cope with fast-changing environment also acquire the ultimate quality needed for the sustainability. Commons was a pioneer in this field but he barely got recognition for this due to his lack of work in behavioral sciences (Kaufman, 1998). Human Resources inscribes a lot of functions, such as taking care of the job recruitment and staffing (selection, screening, interviewing and so on), job safety (occupational health and safety measures), employee relations (mainly employer-employee relations), compensation and benefits, labor law compliance, and training and development. Up until the year 2000, Human Resources was viewed as a non-productive department only dealing with employees payrolls, complaints and social security, and other basic administrative duties (Afiouni and Nakhle, 2016).

1. Human Resource Management – Private VS Public Sectors

In the private sector, the organization cares more about the profit than the customer service, and in order to ensure competitiveness and enhance performance, the companies implement a high standard hiring process that revolves around the employee's competencies. Therefore, it is important for the private organization to tie down and promote the skilled individuals who are doing well (Osoian & Zaharie, 2014). Also in the

private sector, there are two types of recruitment processes: formal and informal. The formal includes media and employment agencies, whereas the informal is through employee or acquaintance's referrals from within the organization (Osoian & Zaharie, 2014). On the other hand, if we look at the public sector, the public entities where there is job vacancy inform the government about the vacancy, and the government announces the vacancy. There is no internal referral; an examination has to be done to all applicants in order to determine who best suits the vacant position. Upon checking the Lebanese Civil Service Board website, a list of jobs poops up, with the conditions to apply, and the deadlines as well as the dates for the examinations, before recruitment has been stopped in 2017.

In general, the public administration is viewed as more bureaucratic than the private sector. Max Weber identified bureaucracy in the public administration and differentiates it into two types: democratic bureaucracy, which is a legal-rational staff functioning within a pluralistic power structure, and totalitarian bureaucracy, which by definition is a totalitarian organization resulting from the institutionalization of charisma in a bureaucratic direction (Constas, 1958). Max Weber introduced the concept in order to restore objectivity as much as possible in the workplace, in terms of avoiding interference of external forces like politics and sectarianism.

Accountability also seems to differ between the public and the private institutions. In the public administration, a civil servant is accountable to the ministry, which by extension, to the government and the people themselves, whereas in the private sector, the employee is accountable to the company itself only, and there seems to be more flexibility in terms of accountability than in the public sector (Mulgan, 2002). In many cases, having a public administration influenced largely by politics, public accountability will not be as

strict as it should, because at the end of the day, the employee has been appointed according to his political view or sect. The political, social, and economical aspects of Human Resource Management influence highly the process of recruitment, and alongside other features, usually shape the success of the process of recruitment of dedicated and talented individuals into the public service. In some cases, the personnel system is run by privileged groups and classes without rightful and just political institutions. In this aspect, talent might be staffed, but mainly through political or family ties or connections. However, this does not only apply to the public sector. In the private sector there is also staffing through patronage and connections, and referral can be the primary example. Also, nations unable to pay good salaries for their civil servants, or those that follow rigid Human Resource Management policies, face certain obstacles in luring applicants in the contemporary labor market (Lavigna & Hays, 2004). Simply put, recruitment and selection, unless there are precursors set, will not be successful, regardless of how ingenious or clever a public agency might be in luring applicants and regardless of how many Human Resource Managements actions it applies (Lavigna & Hays, 2004). With respect to Lebanese literature that probe around Human Resources, there have been studies recently conducted, which will be highlighted in the following section.

2. Human Resource Management in Lebanon

In recent years the concept of Human Resources for the Lebanese companies and managers is changing (Afiouni and Nakhle, 2016). In Lebanon, there is research conducted in the field of Human Resources. However, there are two fields where human resources is most researched about, which are healthcare and banking sectors (Afiouni &Nakhle, 2016). Articles that discuss human resources include Fida Afiouni's "Human Resource

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Management and Strategy in the Lebanese Banking Sector: Is There a Fit?" which

examines human resources strategies and management in the banking sector, in addition to

Rola Chami-Malaeb & Thomas Garavan's "Talent and Leadership Development Practices

as Drivers of Intention to Stay in Lebanese Organizations: The Mediating Role of

Affective Commitment" which discusses investing in talents and developing leadership in

the Lebanese organizations, among others. If we go further in depth into the literature,

human resources is studied in the private much more than in the public sector.In fact, there

is no literature about human resources management in the Lebanese Public Sector. The

only literature present that discuss human resources in the public administration in

Lebanon can be found in UNDP and OMSAR reports, both of which are discussed later in

my thesis. In the public sector in Lebanon, there is an independent body that deals with

human resources practices that have to do with recruitment and staffing, which is the

Lebanese Civil Service Board. When a public entity is in need of staffing, it informs the

Lebanese government embodied in the Civil Service Board, which takes matters into its

own hands.

3. Public Administration in Lebanon and the Ministry of Education and Higher
Education Case

Unlike the private sector, there are independent bodies in the countries that govern

the recruitment and staffing processes in the public sector, in countries like United

Kingdom, France, New Zealand, and Lebanon in specific, whereas in the private sector,

there exists a Human Resource Department in almost all the organizations and businesses.

Back in 1959, President Fouad Chehab had a lot of reform plans in order to fix the

situation in Lebanon, and one of his most known actions was establishing the Civil Service Board.

In the Lebanese Public Sector, there have been two types of recruitment. The first one is the recruitment for full time positions, whereby the civil servant ends up becoming a member of the Lebanese CADRE. In other words, the civil servant guarantees tenure. The second type of recruitment is the recruitment on contractual basis. The civil servant signs a contract with the public institution, be it a ministry or a directorate, which is only for a single year, but can be renewed. If we look at the history of the Lebanese Public Administration, along the years there have been some mild changes, very shallow and only scratching the surface. However, it remains striking that there have not been any major structural reforms or even some development in the process of recruitment and staffing in the Lebanese Public Administration ever since the Civil Service Board establishment in 1959. The only modifications were shallow ones, as described by experts interviewed for this research. Moreover, according to the United Nations Development Programme, there was indeed an attempt which includes establishing a human resources department in every ministry, but it remained only a draft and was never taken into consideration. Perhaps the reason behind remaining a draft is the unfortunate reality of political interference in influencing recruitment decisions into the public administration. An absence of a significant reform in the public administration highlights how rigid the system is.Before 2008, any minister had the right to recruit civil servants on contractual basis for a year, with the chance to renew if the civil servant exhibits good performance and provides the outcome needed. But due to the fact that there has been an exuberant increase in the number of civil servants who are on contractual basis, and because the situation has gone out of hand, a modification to the law of recruitment has been implemented, which allows

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for recruitment on contractual basis only through the body that is responsible for it, which is the Civil Service Board. We will be exploring this issue later on in this thesis, as well as seeing the Civil Service Board's point of view on the matter, along with other experts.

This thesis tends to explore the staffing processes in the Lebanese Public Administration in general, and goes in depth into the case of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education as a case study. In the process of digging for some valuable outputs and information, I have personally conducted various interviews among most of the departments in the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and more specifically between different grades of civil servants, ranging from the fourth grade to the second grade, and from regular staff members who are part of the departments or directorates they work at, to the heads of certain departments and directorates. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education demonstrates a valuable case study in that it is one of the biggest and most funded ministries in the Lebanese Public Administration, so it was best to explore the situation over there seeing as the ministry has been involved in increasing its number of staff. Moreover, interviews were conducted with Civil Service Board supervisors because the institution is the Lebanese public administration's body that governs and supervises the recruitment and staffing in Lebanon. The interview gave a further insight on how the processes of recruitment and staffing in the Lebanese Public Administration are done, as well as providing us with information regarding some certain changes that occurred in recent times in terms of staffing. In addition, experts who have experience and knowledge in the Lebanese Public Administration were consulted, people who have done extensive research and studied how the Lebanese Public Administration is structured, how it operates, and what can be the main challenges and problems faced by the Lebanese Public Administration in terms of recruitment and staffing. Last but not least, we have asked for

the opinion and insight of a very high profile civil servant working currently at the National School of Administration. This civil servant at the National School of Administration belongs to a high level, and has vast experience in this field when it comes to training new recruits or ones aiming to get promoted to a higher grade, along with his economical background and his researches conducted about the situation in Lebanon in both the public sector and the private sector.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The chapter presents and analyzes the relevant literatureto the topic at hand, which are Politics Administration Non-Dichotomy, Political Interference, Clientelism, Public Administration in Lebanon During and After President Fouad Chehab Era, Paris I, II, II, and CEDRE Conferences, and UNDP and OMSAR reports. In doing so, I will highlight those dimensions and variables from the literature which are relevant to my case study. I join leading scholars who debunked the politics-administration dichotomy and explain how political interference and specifically clientelism has been studied in the literature.

The chapter provides an insight about the history of clientelism and the Lebanese administration that was hugely reformed in 1959 during Fouad Chehab's reign. It also highlights some of the key developments and challenges to the administration mentioned in reports by UNDP. Moreover, the chapter shows key modifications to laws pertaining to recruitment and staffing, plans to rejuvenate the Civil Service Board in the Office of Minister of State for Administrative Reform, as well as the Paris I, II, III, and CEDRE conferences held in the French Capital of Paris in order to provide aid for the Lebanese government. The chapter finally, includes how political actions and affiliations affected the recruitment procedures in the public administration, before the 1975 Civil War and after the Taif Agreement until the 2017 when all staffing has been stopped by a decision from the Council of Ministers.

A. Part 1

The first part of this chapter deals with the politics – administration non-dichotomy. The question posed in this chapter is not whether there exists a politics – administration dichotomy in the government and public sector as a whole; the question posed is how much is there political interference on the administrative level in public administration. Therefore, the two sections below will debate the different perspectives throughout history about the politics – administration dichotomy by the brightest scholars and researchers, in addition to examining politics interference more in depth. How do politics and administration intertwine together in governmental activities?

1. Politics-Administration Non-Dichotomy

Over the years, there has been an ever existing talk about the intertwining of politics and administration, and if there exists a dichotomy between the two fields. Many scholars and administrators, or in our case civil servants, have tried to separate politics and administration, but did their attempts succeed? The literature provides some insights of different scholars who debated this issue; some were with the interference of politics, being that the interference of politics is technically inevitable, whereas others were against this notion, and they attempted to find solutions to fight this belief. The discussion about the politics and administration dichotomy is not a recent one; it actually goes way back in time, in specific to the times of the American Woodrow Wilson. As mentioned earlier, there have been many different scholars and administrators and politicians who spoke about the politics – administration dichotomy; some people who have done their research claim that there is actually a dichotomy between the two fields, whereas others have also done their research but believe that the two fields are actually so related that they can never

be separated. Early theorists who have worked for the evolution of public administration realized a policy role for an administrator which was usually neglected (Svara, 2001). However, for years Max Weber has attempted to detach administration from politics, attempting to make the government politics-free, but in the end it has proven that administration and politics can never be separated. Woodrow Wilson mentions that "administration is a part of political life only as the methods of the counting-house are part of the life of society; only as machinery is part of the manufactured product" (Uwizeyimana, 2013). Politics is considered to be the state activity in huge and worldwide things, whereas on the other hand, administration deals with the personal and small things. In other words, politics deals with the macro aspects whereas the administration deals with the micro aspects. As per Woodrow Wilson, "Politics is thus the special province of the statesman, administration of the technical official. Policy does nothing without the aid of administration; but administration is not therefore politics" (Uwizeyimana, 2013). There has been a realization that administrators do have a role to play in policy making. There was an instant insistence on breaking up and isolation of administrators from political intervention on one side, and synergy and inclusion of administrative input in the design and the execution of public policy, on the other side (Svara, 2001). The link between elected officials and the public administrators could be viewed basically as the synergy between political control and professional autonomy. Control includes the ability to establish the course and keep oversight, whereas autonomy includes affirming professional views in policy formation and complying with professional standards in execution (Svara, 2001).

Regarding what Woodrow Wilson wrote during his time, some of the scholars who debated his point of view, whether there is administration – politics dichotomy or not

are the following: Karl Marx, David Rosenbloom, Marshall and D. Dimock, Larry O'Toole Jr., Wallace Sayre, and James Svara. Others who have discussed the politics – administration dichotomy include: Martin, Christopher Pollitt and Geert Bouckaert, Dwight Waldo, Paul Appleby, Robert Cameron, and even Aristotle.

Karl Marx imagined the nonpolitical public employee at public administrations. Max Weber's bureaucratic structure was defined by a coherent division of labor, explicit authority hierarchy, high formalization, career trails for the workers, and most valuably, "impersonality" and a wholly disengagement of members' personal lives and interests from the organizational one. "Nonpolitical bureaucracy" was crucial so in order to match the economic and efficient execution of the popular will (Uwizeyimana, 2013). On the same side of the coin stands Rosenbloom who talked about the dichotomy, saying that its purpose was supporting separating partisan politics and patronage from healthy public management. On the other side of the coin stood Marshall Dimock and D. Dimock. They both mention that Wilson did not mean to support a distinctive disengagement between administration and politics (Uwizeyimana, 2013).

Wallace Sayre revealed that public administration, as designated by the dichotomy, was a self - curbed realm on its own, with its own independent beliefs, regulations, and approaches. Sayre was also worried in particular with the implementation of assignments delegated from the world of politics (Svara, 2001).

In contrast, O'Toole went all the way and stated that Wilson's statements included a lot of contradictions, and also they were poorly written, to the extent that it was incredibly vague and not understandable what message Wilson was trying to deliver. Probably this is an explanation as to why so many scholars interpreted his message differently (Uwizeyimana, 2013).

Moving on, Svara refuted the concept of dichotomy between politics and administration altogether, on the grounds that whoever presented the idea of dichotomy between politics and administration model as historically compelling have not noticed two basic points: the first is that theorists of the classical school like Wilson were not openly proposing or supporting clear distinction between public administration and politics. The second point is the fact that the word "dichotomy" itself was barely used pre 1950 (Uwizeyimana, 2013). Therefore, Svara concluded that the "founders" of this field, the ones who allegedly came up with the idea of politics – administration dichotomy, could not have possibly used this specific term back then in their writings (Uwizeyimana, 2013). Svara believed that the dichotomy concept protects administrators from auditing and acts in the benefit of the elected officials who can delegate responsibility for unpopular decisions to administrators (Svara, 2001).

Pollitt and Bouckaert in their writings included Finland, Sweden, and Netherlands into their studies in order to show that "political and civil service top class have kept their grip, and the politically led state is still viewed as a big socially mixed forced that needs to be acknowledged" (Uwizeyimana, 2013). Waldo raised a question regarding the concept of politics – administration formula, where the traditional model of public administration had already been based.

Paul Appleby in his literature claimed that the government is distinct from the other organizations since it is politics itself (Uwizeyimana, 2013). According to Appleby, government was by nature a "blatant political enterprise" due to the fact that every public worker staffed, every worker demoted, moved, or dismissed, every efficiency ranking, every assignment of responsibility, and every alteration in the administrative shape, is always politically driven (Uwizeyimana, 2013).

Long before that, Aristotle in his writings stated that "the city belongs among the things that exist by nature and that man by nature is a political animal". What he meant by that statement is that human beings are only able to live the "good life" at the condition that they live and interact in a political community or organization (Uwizeyimana, 2013).

Cameron warned against any effort made to merge both administration and politics by having a wholly politicized administration. The jeopardy of a wholly politicized administration is that it can open up the path for bureaucratic corruption and administrative malfunction, laziness and absence of accountability to the people. According to Cameron, the finest way to escape unwanted results of a wholly politicized and wholly non-politicized public service was to discover harmony or a middle ground between the two poles of the spectrum (Uwizeyimana, 2013).

The dichotomy discussion opened up the path for what is known as the "politics – administration complementarity". For instance, Leonard White pointed out that "the administration cooperates indispensably with the legislature, and that without its assistance, the task of legislation would become much less informed and much less effective" (Svara, 2001). Excess politics can have the same dangerous effect as the lack of it in the business government (Uwizeyimana, 2013). Svara offers an explanation and a discussion as to how administration and politics can complement each other. Svara cites that the convergence of politics and administration is present on the grounds that elected officials and administrators work in unison for the sole goal of chasing sound governance (Svara, 2001). This complementarity signifies interdependence in addition to various duties:

1-   Conformity along with autonomy

2-   Respect for political conduct side by side with dedication to shape, and also executing policy in means that raise the public interests

3-   Compliance to elected occupants in addition to devotion to the law and assistance for just electoral competition

4-   Gratitude of politics along with backing for professional standards

Complementarity acknowledges the linkage and opposite effect between elected officials and administrators. Elected officials and administrators keep independent parts on the grounds of their distinctive views and beliefs, and the differences in their formal positions. However the roles they play surely overlap (Svara, 2001). This complementarity can be viewed in the following case: administrators assist in forming policy, and they provide it specific essence and meaning in the process of execution, whereas elected officials supervise execution, explore particular complaints about weak performance, and try to fix issues with performance through calibration. Alteration in the governmental operation that considerably widens political control and cripple the administrative autonomy, in turn, cripple the communication between elected officials and administrators. Applying privatization by contracting out destroys the communication paving the way for contract specification and compliance reports to take over. According to Svara, the complementarily of administration and politics maintains that administrators and elected officials require and aid each other in a partnership for governance. Breaking up the partners or distorting the relation in different directions both imply that there is a lack of a crucial contribution (Svara, 2001).

In short, the politics – administration dichotomy is a debate that has been around for a long time, and many argue that it exists and it is inevitable, and they try to see how both sides complement each other for the betterment of the government, whereas others try

to isolate them from each other, and maintain that administration should be wholly independent of politics and politicians. But the question here posed remains the following: how much does politics affect administration at the governmental level, especially when it comes to recruitment and staffing processes? In the next chapter, I will talk about the political involvement on the governmental level in terms of appointments.

2. Political Interference

In the earlier section, the thesis explored the debate probing around the existence or absence of the politics – administration dichotomy in the public administration. In almost all countries, politics and administration interfere and interact with each other, even if there is the slightest interference. Looking at the industrialized democracies, the goals of the political interference in top level appointments are often politically responsive policy and execution, instead of the patronage in the shape of jobs to party dedicated or family members, or nepotism in other words (Matheson et al, 2007). In earlier times, the career civil servants were actually not responsive to the citizens. However, responsiveness to the elected officials at the moment is broadly viewed as a legal way to be responsible to the people. So the "neutral competence" of public servants is converged with a bit of contradicting value which is "responsive competence" (Matheson et al, 2007). While it is well known that Max Weber aimed for a politically-neutral public administration, he actually viewed administrators as important and underlings to politicians. Weber saw the administrators as technical specialists who should be consulted and who efficiently implement the decisions of politicians as the independent representatives. He viewed "neutral competence" as a deciding trait of the administrator, and highlighted the concern that career civil servants might actually command politicians through their dominant

knowledge, technical abilities and longer expertise, in contradiction with the temporary ministers (Matheson et al, 2007). Matheson et al add that politicians' alternatives become narrower when the civil servants themselves do not feel unrestrained to give out loose and honest advice, and do not "speak truth to power", belittling the important "challenge" action in policy assessment. In addition, it is also noted that it makes the career civil service less appealing due to the fact that the supremacy is intercepted more and more by political appointees (Matheson et al, 2007). In the OECD report published by Matheson et al in 2007, the authors highlight the principle of neutrality in public administration. The study selects some countries from the OECD and checks two criteria. The first one is the principle of political neutrality being spelled out in the constitution, law, or regulation of each country, whereas the second one is whether administrative law places limits on political involvement in public service administration (Matheson et al, 2007). The countries taken into account are: Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, South Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States, and South Africa. Regarding the first criterion, all the countries include a principle of political country except for two, which are Denmark and Sweden. Regarding the second criterion, all the countries have an administrative law, except for Sweden which has a partly-associated law, and South Korea where there is no information provided (Matheson et al, 2007). The result of this study indicates how important it is for all the countries to maintain political neutrality when it comes to public administration in order to prevent a lot of wrongdoings on the governmental level.

Going deeply into the recruitment and staffing processes, in the nations where there are powerless government systems, politicization in civil service staffing and management gives way to bigger risks, and unmasks the system to the concerned problem

of the top level officials who are competence deficient to do their functions. This can be seen in the Lebanese Public Administration, which I will discuss later in this thesis. The OECD report provides some insight as to how the appointments in the public administrations of the OECD countries take place, and how much of political involvement there is in each country. The report cites that the country with the most political interference in terms of appointments is the United States, whereby all of the levels of the hierarchy are politically appointed, though in the levels 4 and 5 there is some administrative interference, but politics remain the dominant determinant in this procedure. Most top levels in the civil service in the United States of America work "at the pleasure of the President" and are in the danger of being dismissed on the spot, in principle. The sole non – political actor linked is the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the body that performs background check up on candidates, but on the other hand has a null influence in the appointment process. On the opposite end of the spectrum is the United Kingdom, where all of the appointments happen from an administrative point of view, with little to no political involvement. A Civil Service Code and Civil Service Management Code in the United Kingdom propose many different restraints on interference in political action. In the United Kingdom the highest top level positions are occupied by purely administratively appointed career officials who are proposed to comply with any elected minister in the exact same dedication (Matheson et al, 2007). Some countries include both administrative and political criteria, with Belgium being at the center of the spectrum from level 1 to level 5. In Lebanon, levels 3 to 5 are recruited based on examinations conducted by the Civil Service Board, which is politically neutral and impartial. The Lebanese case will be discussed in the thesis in the next chapter.

Appointment is ultimately the dominant personnel instrument that politicians can employ, even though appointing political advocates will not ensure they will follow that exact party path, the same as the fact that administrative appointment does not necessarily avoid the courting of political favor. Arguably, influence could also be forced through management processes such as termination, promotion, or even shifting from one position to another. In Westminster systems, shifting from one place to another is at times used to move top level civil servants who for a certain reason or another are not capable of working efficiently with a specific minister (Matheson et al, 2007).

In the end of their OECD report, Matheson and the other contributors mention several findings from their study:

1) At the time where principles of civil service impartiality (nonpartisanship) are advocated by all the nations included in the study, this does not necessarily mean that there is a non-political procedure for top level appointments (Matheson et al, 2007).

2) OECD countries have a wide range of rules and regulations, conventions, and processes that specify division of responsibility between public servants and ministers, and at times by forbidding either public servants or politicians from interfering in specific areas (Matheson et al, 2007).

3) Restrictions on party political influence on the civil service range according to the constitutional type which is specific to each country, and administrative history (Matheson et al, 2007).

In the second part of this chapter, I will talk about the Lebanon case. It will include clientalism all the way back to the mid twentieth century, and the implications that the political interference has posed on Lebanon's public administration and security, from the reign of president Fouad Chehab and his highly important administrative reforms and

establishments, to the inevitable Civil War back in 1975, to the Taif Agreement which will be briefly brought into discussion as well, to the different mild modifications of some laws and decrees related to recruitment and staffing. Due to the unfortunate problems that have hit Lebanon over the years because of many different reasons, be it economic or political or social, four conferences have been conducted which are: Paris I, Paris II, Paris III, and CEDRE. Moreover, I will bring forth reports conducted by the Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR), another report published by the UNDP which highlight the problems and some suggestions that could save Lebanon's serious crisis, as well as the decrees issues over time between 2004 and 2017 that relate to the staffing in Lebanon.

B. Part 2: The Case of Lebanon

1. Clientelism

The first section of this part discusses clientelism in Lebanon. After exploring the literature cited in the previous section, the thesis dives more into Lebanon's case. Clientelism is deeply rooted within Lebanon's traditions from long ago, even before Lebanon's full independence. Clientelism defined as "a social order which depends on relations of patronage", especially political and sectarian patronages. In the Lebanese context, there is a term called "Wasta" which is equivalent to patronage. Wasta falls within the term "Clientelism". Therefore, clientelism is used more, because the patronage is sectarian and/or political, and it is the most abundant. Because Lebanon has always been based on settlements and clans / big families, it is still hard in our current times to eliminate it, even if some attempts have been put forth and clientelism has been diminished to some extent. In Lebanon clientelistic settlements are not supposed to fade away or hang

on the edge of the society with the foundation of new regimes. Instead of deteriorating, the patron – client relationship was seen to be fixed even more in numerous ways. Moreover, patronage and clientelism take the form of a specific logic in social exchange; the relationship settlements orbit around unbalanced but reciprocal helpful and unrestricted transactions. Third, the relationship either has for long times infiltrated the middle core of the society, or have become an appendix to the central institutional form of organization, interaction and exchange (Hamzeh, 2001).

In the Lebanese society, clientelism is also entrenched specifically in sectarian or confessional identity in a way where the lord widened his clientelistic boundaries to include personal, sectarian obedience also. If we look at the history of Lebanon, we find certain key terms that designate the true meaning of clientelism in the Lebanese society. For example, the word "Iqta" designates a socio-economic and political scheme made up of "Muqata'as", whereby political powers were divided across independent feudal clans (Muqata'jis). The "Muqata'ji" served for the "Prince" (Amir) who was a powerful ruler, and settled an office in the family. Examples for such case are the Shihabs who were the number one across feudal families in the region of Mount Lebanon. Second in line were Abi al-Lama and Arslans who were given the title "Amir". Even though the administrative discord of Mount Lebanon back in 1841 was not able to cripple the strength of the feudal families, it disconnected Lebanon into isolated Druze and Christian districts (double Qayyim Maqamiyyah), each with its inherent sub-governor. Being at the moment compatible in their sectarian construction, patron – client relationship became entirely sectarian. Mutasarrifiyah asked for administrative assembly made up of twelve members and ruled by a Christian governor who is elected by endorsed powers. Afterwards there was the "Shaykh" title given to Jumblats and Talhuqs of Druze, Khazins of Maronites,

Hamadeh of Shiites in Jabal-Amel, and Khuri and Karam Shaykhs as well. The allocation of seats inside this assembly was only based on a confessional ground: each major sect was given two seats (Greek Orthodox, Druze, Maronites, Shiite, Sunni, and Catholic). At that time the sectarian identity strengthened special or ascriptive connections to feudal families (Hamzeh, 2001).

In his studies, John Waterbury wrote about patronage being just a path of security for both the weak and politically strong people, and the politically prone (Hamzeh, 2001). In a way, they are both dependent on each other, because the strong political figure gains his strength from his followers. Moreover, when we view the situation where a strong political figure is present, most of the time the political figure will be the one who makes the decisions, since he has a big influence and a lot of power that mainly comes from his followers. The way "Zu'ama" were formed in present day Lebanon have been most strongly troubled not solely by kinship or clan / tribe system as many witnesses claim, but by confessional relationships (Hamzeh, 2001). The modern first class were individuals who came from distinguished large land heirs, wealthy urban brokers, and bankers who obtained political power in the late Ottoman reign periods or under French rule. The modern "Zu'amas" were swayed to work through kinship connections and confessional relationships. In addition to that, they were leaning towards implementing patronage which was much more bureaucratic than feudal in nature (Hamzeh, 2001). The clientelistic web of the "Zu'ama" is more related to bigger institutional framework of Lebanon's central administration. The client is restrained to his "Za'im" by a web of transactional relations, in which economic and other service are divided to clients as a swapping for political allegiance.

Consociational democracy confessional portrayal gave entry to governmental patronage since 1943; and to be able to keep a huge audience, it became vital for the "Zu'ama" to be always elected as appointees and selected as ministries. Being a component of a confessional equation, the Maronite Christians kept the office of the president for themselves, the cabinet premiership was given to the Sunnis, and finally the head of the parliamentary was given to the Shiites. Similarly, the parliamentary distribution was corresponding to the sects' size (Hamzeh, 2001). When we look at the matter politically, there has been a major change from old times until the administrative reforms during Fouad Chehab's reign and civil war until now. In old times, the usual political clash used to happen within the sect rather than with different people of different sects.

Usually, the "Za'im" retains his stronghold via two important ways. The first way he does that is by being always restored to the office so that he can be able to control the administration and keep giving his clients the governmental services. In other words, the "Za'im" should always get reinstated or reelected in order to keep his administrative position, which is considerably a high level one, and this way he can maintain control over the administration he is at, and this way he can keep giving his own specific clients special services that he can provide through the government. The second way he keeps his strong position is by being rich in order to take advantage from his financial contact to provide his clients with job employment, contracts and capital. Having money and being rich always gives the upper hand to the "Za'im", because he can influence many decisions through monetary means, mainly bribes and "gifts", to help provide his own clients with constant job opportunities. Many of the Lebanese "Zu'ama" formed what Roniger states as "complicated network of brokers and clients", which have infiltrated Lebanon's administrative machinery. Through this complicated network, the "Za'im" can hardly be

moved from his stronghold, because the Za'im now has a huge number of connections from the upper levels and the lower levels, which make him popular and worth considering. However, with this power that the "Za'im" has developed come severe consequences on the public administration and the government in Lebanon; the "Zu'ama" clientelism has hindered the importance of the legislature and ruined the power of the state. The state now technically has no say on what happens and what decisions that should be taken at all levels, because the Za'im, in consensus with his "Zu'ama" compatriots, now has all the influential power to make decisions.

In modern times and technically after the civil war, a new form of clientelism emerged, which is the party-directed clientelism. There have been many parties formed in the Lebanese region, and each party has a certain recognized "Za'im". Clientelismused to contain the sectarian aspect only, whereby the country was operating in the public administration based on sectarian considerations, with the "Za'im" being the leader of the sect itself. However, it has become more apparent that there are even more "Zu'ama" in the same sect, like the Shiite sect which has two recognized political parties, for example, as well as the Maronite sect.

The political parties have become much more powerful than ever and it can be seen through the way the government is operating at the moment. The powers of political parties have two different functions. First, the political parties become the way where the dealing over resource quota can take place. Political parties are the ones who ae in charge of the resources in the country, and through deals they distribute the quotas amongst each other, whether the parties are in agreement or in feud. In addition, the second function is that they also act as a ground for the emergence of a new type of identity, a sense of affinity to an abstract community (Hamzeh, 2001).

In Lebanon, the militias were not only military institutions; but by using their military force they were able to acquire control of revenues that previously used to go to the government coffers. Clientelism did not show democracy or modernization in Lebanon. On the other hand, it gave a restrictive effect on the ratification of universalistic laws and dismayed the advancement of Lebanese citizen participation in an already broken consociational kind of democracy. Clientelism has changed to be between the political party and the citizen instead of being between the sectarian "Za'im" and the citizen (Hamzeh, 2001).

Furthermore, Bassel Salloukh and other authors contributed to publish a book titled "The Politics of Sectarianism in Postwar Lebanon". The book mainly talks about the political conflicts throughout the history of Lebanon, not just the recent history. It cites what happened in many eras, starting from before independence, to Bechara El Khouri's reign, reaching Fouad Chehab's reign and his Lebanese Public Administration Reforms, to the politics of the Civil War and its repercussions on the country. The authors have studied the history of the Lebanese politics and public administration, and as we surf through their findings, it becomes more and more obvious and factual that Lebanon is politically affected deeply within the roots. The Lebanese Public Administration structure remains until this day in general the same as it was back in 1959 during the Fouad Chehab era. However, what did change is that politics highly interfered with occupying the positions in the administration. The Politics of Sectarianism in Postwar Lebanon highlights a simple example of how politically affected the country is. Salloukh and his colleagues detailed almost every Level 1 position in the Lebanese Public Administration and to which sect and religion each position belongs. The agreement to distribute the mentioned positions among the different sects and religions came after the Taif Agreement (Salloukh et al, 2015).

The first sect is the Maronite. The Maronites have been known to occupy the majority of the High Level positions in the Lebanese Public Administration before. After the Taif Agreement, the positions belonging to them are twelve, and they are:

- President of the country

- Lebanese Armed Forces Commander

- Director of the Lebanese Armed Forces' Intelligence Directorate

- Governor of the Lebanese Central Bank

- Head of the Higher Judicial Council

- Head of the State Consultive Council

- Director General of the Ministry of Finance

- President of the Constitutional Council

- Director of the Casino du Liban

- Director General of the Customs

- Director General of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education

- Vice President of the Council of Development and Reconstruction

The second sect is the Sunni of the Muslims. According to the Taif Agreement, the Sunnis occupied eleven different Level 1 positions, and they are:

- The country's Prime Minister

- Director General of Internal Security Forces

- Second Deputy Director of the Lebanese Armed Forces' Intelligence Directorate

- Director General of the Ministry of Justice

- Prosecutor General

- President of the Council of Development and Reconstruction

- Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates (alternates with Maronites)

- Third Deputy Governor of Central Bank

- Director General of Presidency

- President of the Civil Service Board

- Governor of Mount Lebanon

The third sect on the list is the Shiite. The Shiites mainly have the highest number of positions, occupying fourteen Level 1 positions, and they are:

- Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament

- Director and Deputy Director of the General Security

- First Deputy Director of the Lebanese Armed Forces' Intelligence Directorate

- First Deputy Governor of the Central Bank

- Director General of the Ministry of Economy

- Vice President of the Council of Development and Reconstruction

- Director of the Social Security

- President of the Council of the South

- Director General of the Council of the South

- Chief Comptroller

- Chairman of the Finance Bank

- Governor of Nabatiye

- Head of the Embassies Security Unit

- Director General of the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities

The fourth sect is the Greek Orthodox. This sect occupies six Level 1 positions, and they are:

- Deputy Prime Minister

- Governor of Beirut

- Director General of the Council of Development and Reconstruction

- Head of the Central Fund for the Displaced

- Director General of the Ministry of Labor

- Head of the Educational Center for Research and Development

The fifth and final sect that occupies the remaining five Level 1 positions in the Lebanese Public Administration is the Druze. The Druze occupies the following positions:

- Lebanese Armed Forces Chief of Staff

- Second Deputy Governor of the Central Bank

- Director of the Judicial Police

- Director General of the Ministry of the Displaced

- Governor of the South

The whole clientelism issue shows how bad and actually corrupt the country was on the political, administrative and governmental, as well as social levels. It entails how politics has always intervened in the government's administrative activities across the years, and there is nothing that validates the notion of politics – administration dichotomy. Rather, it is inclined and clearly settled underneath politics – administration non-dichotomy. From this point forward, it is obvious that in administration, and in particular when it comes to top level appointments/staffing, the Lebanese Public Administration knows nothing about neutrality, especially after when the top level positions are, as exhibited before, divided upon the different major sects, instead of being chosen based on

merit, skill, and expertise. In return, there has been a lot of attempts to fix this situation and to clear the administration from any political interference. The election of Fouad Chehab in 1959 opened the door for some improvements to be considered to be done for the situation. The following section will highlight his achievements and their implications on Lebanon.

2. *Lebanese Public Administration During and After Fouad Chehab Era*

It is important to recall the history of the Lebanese Public Administration in order to make the picture clearer about the topic. It should be noted that the Lebanese Public Administration is actually filled with sectarianism and political affiliations since before the establishment of the Civil Service Board. After the country's independence, President Bechara El Khoury was elected, and during his reign and his successor's (Chamoun), Maronites were overabundant in the Lebanese administration, whereas Christian citizens were townsmen and city people. Maronites before them were considered "peasants and poor" and the public sector seemed perfect to enhance their condition. Muslims and Druze always mentioned that the main defect in the administration was the corruption of the Maronites being in control unjustly (Salibi, 1966).

After Khoury and Chamoun came Fouad Chehab in 1954. Coming from a military background, and having been exposed to all the sectarian backgrounds because he was the Lebanese Army General, he only saw fit that there should be equal distribution in public administration positions between Muslims and Druze on one hand, and the Christians on the other hand (Salibi, 1966). The problem relies in the fact that political parties view the Lebanese Public Administration primarily as a tool to recruit and manage civil service according to sectarian groups. Earlier and up till now, the public officials are staffed among clients of powerful politicians, and the staffed individuals were usually unqualified

(Ahmad & Al Maghlouth, 2016). Political loyalty earlier was more important than administrative potentials (Ahmad & Al Maghlouth, 2016), so President Chehab tried his best to avoid contact with politicians in order to maintain objectivity in the process of staffing in the public service.

During Chehab's reign, the appointments became more dependent on competitive examinations with fixed minimum qualification standards and eligibility, but also maintaining the sectarian balance (Salibi, 1966). But unfortunately, despite Chehab's immense efforts, the problem of staffing according to sects persisted. Sectarian loyalties kept affecting the process of staffing of public officials in Lebanon and restricted the civil service to elements that don't have anything to offer than connections. Public officials staffed because of connections usually use administrative power for their interests. So it was difficult to implement actual enhancements on inefficient practices and sectarian considerations that were more important for recruitment than other requirements (Salibi, 1966). After the Chehab era, president Franjieh was elected, and he was obviously against the bureaucratic system that Chehab implemented. Franjieh saw that the reforms applied by Chehab diminished the politicians' capabilities to provide public opportunities for supporters, so the patron-client relationship before Chehab's reign was reinstated. To make matters worse, after the Civil War in 1975, and in order for fire to be ceased, the Taif agreement assured that sectarianism in public service remains (Ahmad & Al Maghlouth, 2016). The Taif Agreement had its fair share of reforms in the Lebanese political and administrative systems, especially parliamentary reforms that had to do with equality between sectarian and religious representation. The Agreement stressed on eliminating confessionalism, or clientelism in other words (Taif Agreement, 1989). The Agreement in this section focused on:

1) Dismissing the sectarian representation base and depending on competence and specialization in public jobs, the judiciary, the military, security, public, and mixed institutions, and in the independent agencies, in accordance with the dictates of national accord, excluding the top-level and equivalent posts which shall be shared equally by Christians and Muslims without allocating any particular post to any confession (Taif Agreement, 1989).

2) Avoiding mentioning of confession and sect and denomination on the identity card (Taif Agreement 1989).

Regarding the administrative part of the agreement, the Council of Ministers is granted the authority to appoint, dismiss, and accept the resignation of civil servants in accordance with the law (Taif Agreement, 1989). In addition to this, the agreement has an independent section under the title "Administrative Decentralization", which includes several points such as:

1) Lebanon shall be a single and unified State with a strong central authority (Taif Agreement, 1989).

2) The privileges of the governors and district administrative officers shall be enlarged and all State administrations shall be represented in the administrative provinces at the highest level possible in order to ease serving the citizens and meeting their needs locally (Taif Agreement, 1989).

3) The administrative division shall be reevaluated in such a way that reflects national unison while retaining coexistence and unity of the soil, people, and institutions (Taif Agreement, 1989).

4) Developed administrative decentralization shall be followed at the smaller administrative unit levels (district and smaller units) by means of an election of a council

for every district, headed by the district officer to maintain local participation (Taif Agreement, 1989).

5) An extensive and consolidated development plan that is able of enhancing the Lebanese provinces economically and socially shall be adopted and the resources of the municipalities, unified municipalities, and municipal unions shall be strengthened with the necessary financial resources (Taif Agreement, 1989).

The separation of powers meant that public policy making was based on the agreement of both the legislative and executive authorities that represent the sectarian communities. The agreement alongside the National Accord's rule of equal distribution of posts by sects produced sectarian quotas in public administration through clientelistic procedures of staffing and promotion (Ahmad & Al Maghlouth, 2016).

There are different political parties' points of view regarding the public administration's hiring process. For example, Kataeb and Lebanese Forces cited that excessive jurisdictions of governmental institutions were problematic (structural), whereas Al-Jama'ah mentioned that the problem with governmental institutional relates to hiring staff according to sect or political affiliation (functional) (Ahmad & Al Maghlouth, 2016). On the other hand, Hezbollah saw that the best to be done is a merit-based sectarian system, where the sect provides the platform for the best they have. However, Kataeb argued that if administrative reform was not done alongside judicial and political reforms too, then merit-system is the only solution (Ahmad & Al Maghlouth, 2016). Hezbollah was trying to see the least worse solution out of the problem at hand as it has seen that the sectarian problem in the process of staffing is deeply rooted and, just like it failed before during Fouad Chehab's era, it will fail to be eradicated once and for all.

There exists a recent trend where there were processes of recruitment by ministers without referring to the Civil Service Board, so the Lebanese government issued a decree in 1996 which halted formal civil service recruitment (European Training Foundation, 2015). But hiring resumed normally on contractual basis, and in 2008 there was a small scale formal recruitment. Because there was an increase in the random recruitment in the Lebanese Public Administration, there have been four different modifications to the law that related to recruitment:

1) The Subject Law number 54. It states that in accordance with the provisions of appointment and contracting in the public administration and independent enterprises, and the provisions of the laws and regulations including the salaries and wages governing the public entities that are not under the supervision of the Civil Service Board, appointment and contracting in the aforementioned (except Bank Du Liban) take place through examination process that the Civil Service Board conducts.

2) The Subject Law number 23, which includes a modification on decree number 87 in decree 112 that dates back to June 12th, 1959. The modification states that a minister can recruit and staff Lebanese citizens for a fixed duration of time to do specifically mentioned jobs. The Lebanese citizen is recruited through and examination process conducted by the Civil Service Board.

3) The Subject Law 46, which includes a modification on decree 21. The modification states that all recruitment processes are to be forbidden including the education and military sectors with all their levels and specifications, in addition to the coordinated projects with international organizations except by a decision released by the Council of Ministers based on an assessment conducted by the Research and Guidance department in the Civil Service Board. The government should conduct a wholesome scan

that shows the positions in the CADRE and other positions that the administration requires to do the functions assigned to it. Moreover, it needs to identify the number of civil servants, and the contractual-based employees in any year, as well as the needs, the excess number of civil servants, the current and future expenses of human resources including the retirement packages, which would help estimate the average-income expenses and the rightful suggestions to reduce, control, and steer the spending on salaries and wages. Moreover, the government assigns specific parties in the private and public sectors to complete the aforementioned in 6 months, along with designing the job descriptions in the administration structure, developing it, and finally submitting a report to the Council of Ministers and the Parliament.

4) The Subject Law 46, which includes also a modification on decree 35. The modification states that in 6 months after this law is put in motion, the government should design a new system for evaluating performance in light of the job description in the CADRE, taking into consideration expertise and efficiency.

Up to this day it is unknown what is the exact number of civil servants in Lebanon due to the absence of statistical approach to the matter, and due to the fact that there was a high number of recruitment until 2017 by ministers on contractual basis. When the number of civil servants increases, it is only logical to assume that more money from the public budget will be allocated to their salaries, even if they are recruited on contractual basis. Due to the increased number, the government has found itself yet again in financial crisis, whereby it is unknown when the salaries will not be earned. The crisis has hit Lebanon in terms of finances. However, the country has been facing a lot of different crises than this one, and therefore there needed to be aid sent to Lebanon from other donor countries in order to solve the problems. In order to help resolve the problems, the

international donors organized four different conferences across 18 years, which will be discussed next.

3. Paris I, Paris II, Paris III, and CEDRE Conferences

Across the years, four different conferences were conducted in order to rejuvenate the economy in Lebanon and to eliminate the problems and fix the situations in the country in terms of everything: economy, finance, social, political, and so on. Only in recent history, with the turn of the century has there been aid sent to Lebanon, particularly starting 2000 when the assassinated Rafic Hariri was prime minister. In the year 2000, the former minister at the time Fouad El Saad published a report that shed some light on the problems he saw that were present in the Lebanese Public Administration, which are the following: inadequate organization and structures, weak policy making, unsuitable Civil Service, poor governance, absence of accountability, as well as lack of client orientation and responsiveness (El Saad, 2000).

All these problems and alarming indicators led to the formation of the four conferences that were each stationed in the French Capital of Paris. The first conference conducted was Paris I, back in 2001. After being formed in November 2000, Rafic Hariri's cabinet started working on reviving the economy of Lebanon by resuming the political, social, economic, administrative, financial, and social reforms which was initiated by Hariri himself in his three previous cabinets that he formed since late 1992 until late 1998. The government back then started working on resurrecting the economy which entered a period of recession between 1999 and 2000 despite all the attempts that Salim El Hoss's cabinet made to control the economic losses in the budget and reducing the national by reducing the trade balance deficit (Annahar, 2018). In the year 2000 the Lebanese

economy entered a phase of shrinkage in terms of investment and consumption, which affected the economic wheel and the revenues collected from the national treasury. In regards to this declining in the economic performance, the budget loss and national debt increased by 151% at the end of year 2000 (Annahar, 2018). After the formation of Rafic Hariri's cabinet, a reform program was planned, which focused on inducing the private sector to be the primary drive for growth, and to enhance the financial signs, as well as putting a limit for the national debt increase, along with stabilizing the currency and controlling the inflation. From this point, the government proposed a national conference to support Lebanon economically and financially, and the international community welcomed the proposal, and Paris I conference was held in February 27, 2001 in Champs Elysees under the sponsorship of the French President Jacques Chirac, and in the presence of: the world bank leader, the European Commission leader, the Vice President of the Euro Bank for Investment, and the French Minister of Finance. The Lebanese delegation that day proposed what was known as "The New Economic Strategy for the Lebanese Government". The result obtained from this conference is an international pledge to give 500 million euros as loans to Lebanon and as initial help, and they all agreed to hold another conference with the participation of the European Commission and the International Financial Institutions, as well as the participation of the donor countries, a conference known as Paris II which was held in November 23, 2002 (Annahar, 2018). There have been certain economic indicators in that period, and they are the following:

1- Economic growth declination to 1% in 1999

2- Economic growth recorded a very low percentage that did not pass 1.2%

3- Decline of the foreign currency reserves in Bank du Liban to US$ 5.7 billion (lowest since 1996)

4-   Increase of national deficit to 23% in 2000

5-   By 2000 the Lebanese national debt reached 151%

In Paris I conference, the Lebanese government presented a draft that showed the economic vision of the government in full. It discussed five elements which are:

1-   Developing the Economy: to facilitate and encourage the national trade by fusing Lebanon in the international economy, which gives Lebanon access to new international markets and producing suitable frameworks to attract investments, in addition to providing the right environment which allows the private sector to grow and prosper and hold the national economy by maintaining the legislative settlement and respecting all its rules and regulations, and providing incentives for the private sector by reducing production costs.

2-   Privatization: the goal behind this reform is to enhance the economic growth and reverse the debt. Privatization can be done by following the best international means and procedures that guarantee open competition and equal participation for all citizens.

3-   Fixing the Financial Condition: the government planned a strategy to fix the financial problems and started executing it 3 months prior through:

        a.   Improving the real economic situation to enhance its growth which consequently leads to improving the governmental revenues, which in turn decreases the governmental support for some sectors that result finally in decreasing the financial deficit.

        b.   Following a number of structural modifications which gives the country revenues, so that the overall revenues can increase.

c. Containing costs by controlling spending and deficit in the balance sheet, and adopting privatization to improve the performance and level of the institutions that can be privatized. This in turn helps in reducing the national debt, and as a result, the government expects the national deficit to decrease gradually to average. This decreases the government's need to finance, thereby the national debt stabilizes and the interest rates decrease.

4- Administering the Debt: the increase in the interest rates halted the previous governments' efforts to apply a strict financial policy to decrease the balance deficit. The percentage of the national debt increased vastly in the last decade, and this one of the major problems that the Lebanese government is facing in its effort to escape the gradual increase of deficit and the incrementing debts. In this regard, the government's target is to administer the debt in a professional way by decreasing the national debt service, and, on the long run, to limit the government's need for finances, in synchronization with the monetary policy of Bank du Liban.

5- Maintaining the Financial and Monetary Stability: the government aims to apply reforms that would help enhance the orderly framework of the monetary regulation to secure its parallelism with the international guidelines. The government will also take certain measures to induce the investors' market activities. Even though the country's strategy was wide, it showed the focus on the right approaches, as well as paving the way for a more conclusive plan being followed later in Paris II.

The attendants had seen that privatization, decreasing the balance deficit, guiding spending, and the procedures followed to encourage foreign investments and lowering customs' deficits and fighting money laundering, will help Lebanon regain its growth (Annahar, 2018). The agreement to a partnership with the European Union will continue

with those measures, and will give Lebanon a new role as a regional monetary and economic point. The participants saluted the Lebanese government's will to continue executing its program which targets allowing the economic to become dynamic again (Annahar, 2018).

Following the first conference (Paris I) which was held in 2001, another conference was held one year later on November 23, 2002, under the title Paris II. The second conference was conducted in a bid to ask the international countries and organizations for more funds to help reduce and manage the huge public debt the government has fallen into (Ministry of Finance, 2003). The monetary packages received came in the following order:

a. Incomes amounting US$ 2.4 billion allocated for debt overhauling have been collected by the Lebanese Treasury.

b. Equaling US$ 4.1 billion was collected also by the Central Bank of Lebanon made up of: around US$ 3.6 billion from Lebanese commercial banks, as well as a US$ 10.1 billion worth package.

The fast implementation of the mentioned measures had received a positive feedback by the market and caused in a sequence of positive developments on the large scale aspect. Several weeks after conducting the Paris II conference, interest rates on government Treasury bills dropped exceedingly, by more than 30 percent compared to their level before the convening of Paris II (Ministry of Finance, 2003).

After the first two conferences Paris I and Paris II, a third conference was conducted under the title Paris III in January 2007, hosted by France's Jacques Chirac. The conference had been conducted after a series of bad events, mainly the July 2006 war with Israel. The war turned the government's eyes towards the humanitarian problems that have

resulted as a consequence of the war. The direct costs of what happened in July 2006 reached US$2.8 billion (Lebanese Republic, 2007). Those direct costs included reconstruction that comprised the cost of rebuilding and repairing private and public infrastructure, replacing lost assets, and compensating for private housing, which is by far the largest component of the losses. However, what made matters worse were the indirect costs which were much more than damaging; the GDP was supposed to reach 5 to 6% by the end of 2006, but it became more likely for the GDP to reach -5% growths by the end of the year (Lebanese Republic, 2007). If we look at the national debt (excluding interest) between the year 2007 and the year 2010 later on, it began at US $ 15.9 billion, increased a further US$ 8.9 billion, to reach a whopping US$ 24.8 billion by the end of 2010 (Lebanese Republic, 2007). Seeing as how the economy had been crashing after 2006 and during those years and how astonishingly the debt has risen, the demand for outside backing to accomplish a sustainable debt scenario has increased even more.

Excluding the July 2006 war with Israel, and with the assassination of Rafic Hariri in February 2005, political conflicts were prevalent. Lebanon has failed to reach its full potential because of the political conflicts, complex macroeconomic circumstances, and structural stiffness. Knowing Lebanon's meaningful human resources, well-educated workforce, huge spread of people, well-advanced banking sector, and attractive climate and location, Lebanon must be able to accomplish better economic act and a higher level of living. But due to political conflicts, this has been ceasing to exist (Lebanese Republic, 2007).

The primary goal of the amendment program is to provoke growth, produce job opportunities, decrease poverty, and keep social and political stability. The amendment

program consisted of the following pillars in order to be achieved (with the help of the international communities):

- Growth-enhancing reforms encompassing a large number of measures and laws that would increase productivity and reduce cost, which would enhance the competitiveness of the Lebanese economy;

- A social sector reform agenda to improve social indicators and strengthen (develop) social safety nets to protect the most vulnerable segments of the population;

- A strong phased fiscal adjustment that aims at increasing the primary surplus through streamlining expenditures—including by reducing waste (including legalized waste) and reforming state owned enterprises (SOEs) more specifically Electricité du Liban (EdL)— and raising revenues in ways that minimize the negative impact on the poor;

- A privatization program directed primarily at increasing investment, reducing the stock of public debt, and spurring economic growth;

- A prudent monetary and exchange rate policy aimed at maintaining price stability (and with it social stability), facilitating credit to the private sector, and maintaining a sound banking system;

- International financial assistance to help Lebanon finance the direct and indirect cost of the July war as well as to complement the domestic adjustment efforts, primarily by reducing interest payments on public debt and creating the kind of confidence that would encourage private sector investment and ease the pain of a domestic adjustment after the war.

Focusing on the public sector, the latest decision by the government to have a clear, quality-based, and rightful methods for public sector staffing is a highly crucial step in setting staffing apart from political and confessional considerations(Lebanese Republic, 2007). Despite the political and sectarian prevalence over the staffing processes in the Lebanese public administration, efforts were still dedicated to ensure the best qualified individuals are recruited. At the time where there is an obvious confessional division of especially high public sector positions, as assigned by the constitution which cannot be altered at the moment, every work exerted will be put in place to hire the most suitable and to do away with practice of accrediting particular spots to particular confessions, as long as the power sharing agreement is respected (Lebanese Republic, 2007).

Therefore, the duty of the Civil Service Board will be strengthened and suitable, and clear assessment mechanisms will be implemented to enhance selection. The Civil Service Board's role will be given more recognition (Lebanese Republic, 2007). It will oversee the extensive study of the overstaffing in many ministries and in several public institutions that do not function anymore. Overstaffing is abundant basically in the Ministry of Education and Higher Education due to the fact that public education in Lebanon has one of the lowest teacher-to-student ratios worldwide. Exuberant workers in the public sector in general will be analyzed through a civil servant agreement, and will be placed under the Civil Service Board with a chance of redistribution to other ministries after performing suitable training to enhance their capabilities (Lebanese Republic, 2007). In the later chapters we will bring forth the opinions and feedbacks of the employees in the Ministry of Education and Higher Education on the situation regarding the excess staffing in some departments and the lack of staffing in others.

The fourth and the most recent conference conducted was CEDRE, conducted in April 2018. In this conference, it was agreed that the government was devoted to amendments required to tackle structural hardships and glitches, and promote public and private investment in viable means. As for structural amendments, the Lebanese government insisted on combating corruption that is present in the Lebanese Public Administration, enhancing governance and accountability, especially public finance management, improving procurement regulations, amending customs and developing public investment management that are massively crucial (CEDRE, 2018).

Lebanon is destined to resume bolstering their anti-money laundering efforts and enter phases to fight financing terrorism in accordance with worldwide guidelines. Concerning sectoral amendments, three aspects are seen as vital, to make the Capital Investment Program (CIP) an accomplishment: as regards to electricity, a determined cost amendment as well as increased power production; on the water management aspect, the execution of the water code is important; in the waste management a new planning, based on decentralization is in process. At last they concurred that an inclusive manner that takes into consideration effects on females would also boost worldwide support. Knowing Lebanon's huge debts, compromised financing and private investment are the best tools to spend on infrastructure and produce job opportunities, in addition to the execution of a stable budgetary and fiscal modification program (CEDRE, 2018).

The international countries and organizations made a vow to reinforce Lebanon investment and amendments program for Phase 1:

- "US$ 10.2 billion loans have been pledged, including 9.9 billion in concessional terms

- US$ 0.86 billion grants (including grants to subsidize loans)"

They have also persuaded the private sector to take part in financing the CIP on a project basis. In the CEDRE conference, the attendants allocated the highest priority to a powerful follow-up mechanism for this conference, to secure that pledges, amendments, and obligations will be executed. In this aspect, attendants embraced the Lebanese government's devotion to enhance execution capacity, with worldwide backing, making sure that it meets worldwide guidelines on transparency, accountability, anti-money laundering and fighting financing of terrorism (CEDRE, 2018).

4. Technical Assistance: Evidence from UN and OMSAR

In addition to the Paris I, II, III, and CEDRE conferences, the United Nations looked into the situation in the Lebanese Public Administration, and published a report in the year 2013 to conduct reforms in the Lebanese Public Administration, and it highlighted a lot of aspects. The UNDP highlighted the obvious weaknesses in the Lebanese Public Administration, especially that the structure has become stale, being the same as it was ever since Fouad Chehab established the administrative bodies back in 1959. There were obvious weaknesses in the public administration such as: weak coordination between ministries and overlapping procedures, old regulations, outdated control and audit methodologies as well as procurement operations, little to no trust and transparency regarding the public service, and last but not least, an ineffective Human Resource system (UNDP, 2013). Public provision is disintegrated and poorly regulated, from delivery schemes, to training curricula and certification. They are not in harmony across the agencies providing training programs (European Training Foundation, 2015). In a study conducted by Fida Afiouni and Sinine Nakhle about the Human Resources Management in Lebanon, it was concluded that the country as a whole, and not just the public sector, lacks

professional bodies that regulate the profession itself to maintain the standardization of the practices, as well as dissemination of the best practices in this domain. In addition, in Lebanon anyone is being able to employ the Human Resource jobs, people who never even learned about Human Resources during their education (Afiouni and Nakhle, 2016). This is a big red flag when it comes to administration because it symbolizes incompetence at the governmental level. It also depicts, to some extent, the effects that political interference has done to the governmental administrative activities, which is leading to huge major issues to be resolved. Therefore, as the thesis will provide later, it is viewed by individuals interviewed in the research that the Lebanese government should try to lure human resources strategists and planners in order to set plans for the modernization of the Lebanese Public Administration as a whole. The UNDP's report aimed to enhance the Lebanese Public Administration in a number of ways, some of which are:

a.   Governance, accountability and transparency enhanced in the Public sector.

b.   Capacity of Public administration developed through the adoption of modern techniques and tools.

c.   Human resources management modernized and developed

d.   Public services efficiency enhanced and the administration/citizens relationship improved

e.   Enhancing the use of ICT tools and establish an E-Government Portal

f.   Introducing change management techniques arid Promote OMSAR reform programs

g.   Technical and Administrative support provided to ensure the proper execution of awarded contract with the scope of the following specialized projects: Solid Waste, AFKAR and LOGO.

The UNDP's report also proposed reform programs to enhance the situation in the Lebanese public administration. The programs included strengthening governance, accountability and transparency, building the capacity of the public administration, creating tools to manage change and exchange experiences and best practices, as well as developing human resources management (UNDP, 2013).

But most importantly, the Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR) had drafted a law that establishes Human Resource units in ministries, so that the Lebanese ministries and the civil service in Lebanon can be on par with recent Human Resource Management developments (UNDP, 2013). According to them, upon being officially approved by the Lebanese parliament, the legislation will be a huge critical point in changing the course of public personnel management in the history of the public administration. In addition to that law, there has also been a number of draft laws awaiting their enactments which relate to public procurement, conflict of interests, access to information, and fighting corruption (UNDP, 2013). So it can be concluded that the idea of having Human Resource departments in ministries has been on the agenda, and a draft law has been made to see this through, but it is still until this moment a draft, waiting to be enacted.

In addition to what is stated, the Office of Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR) had published a report on their website in which they mention different programs designed to enhance the Lebanese Public Administration for the year 2014-2015. One of the programs included deals with the Civil Service Board, and it is named "Building Capacities for Public Administration". The program was designed due to several reasons such as: inability of public administration to adapt to new administrative changes because it is old and rigid, presence of vacancies in the leading positions, and the absence

of strategic planning and policymaking (OMSAR, 2015). The objectives assigned to this program include: updating public administration policies, focusing more on strategic planning, improving human resources management, enhancing partnership with the private sector and the civil society sector, and last but not least, modifying the roles of auditing bodies and the public entities in general as well as their structures (OMSAR, 2015).

As mentioned, the program intends to restructure the Civil Service Board. To be more specific, the program targets upgrading to make it handle the regular human resources practices in the Lebanese Public Administration following the newest trends. Moreover, the program insists on moving on from the old understanding of "personnel management" to include more human resources practices such as strategic planning (OMSAR, 2015). The new functions include forming policies, identifying vacancies present in the public administration, and identifying the trainings needed (OMSAR, 2015). With the program objectives set, the program insists on keeping the Civil Service Board's supervisory role. Moreover, the program cites the adaptation to new challenges that might arise in the public administration such as competition with the private sector, financial issues that would force reduction of number and size of civil servants and public administration, recruitment of strong youth potentials, and improving the skills and expertise of the employees currently present that would lead consequently to higher efficiency and less expenses (OMSAR, 2015).

5. Conclusion

To sum up the second chapter of the thesis, I will explain the reason behind digging deep into such literature, so that all the dots are connected. In Lebanon it is clear that the Public Administration is suffering from huge problems in terms of mismanaged

recruitment and staffing, and in terms of economy and finance. As mentioned, there has

been no significant reform in the public administration ever since the year 1959, when the

Civil Service Board was established. This poses a lot of questions as to why this is

happening. Moreover, throughout history it has been debated whether politics and

administration are independent or codependent; is there a dichotomy or not? Politics is, as

provided, linked to administration even in the slightest and most implicit means. Politics

have shaped the government of all countries, but the difference between each country is the

percentage of involvement in administration. Moreover, sectarianism and religious

calculations infiltrate the Lebanese society, which make it even more logical to see

corruption in the public administration. Clientelism has existed from a long time, even

before independence. Throughout the years, political parties, or militia, in terms of

"Zu'ama" have led the country, which brought the inevitability of the 1975 Civil War.

  To settle the Civil War, the Taif Agreement was signed in Saudi Arabia, and it

was unfortunately based on sectarianism, especially when granting Level 1 positions in the

Lebanese Public Administration. This brings us to further economic problems which rose

as a result, and therefore the Paris I and Paris II conferences were conducted in 2001 and

2002 respectively to ease the problem on Lebanon by providing aid.

  Next, there was the assassination of Rafic Hariri that shook the country in 2005,

and a year later the July 2006 war with Israel. Because of that, Paris III conference took

place to also give aid to Lebanon and help its economy rejuvenate again. Because, as

mentioned earlier, politics play the biggest part in Lebanon and especially is running the

government, huge numbers were being recruited into the civil service, to the extent that

there is no numerical value that specifies the number of civil servants in Lebanon up to this

moment. As a result, more money would be allocated to the increased number of salaries

form the public budget, which would consequently lead to the budget deficit. Therefore, a fourth conference in 2018 was conducted titled CEDRE, also stationed in Paris, to help Lebanon once more. If we want to trace the problems that have been happening in Lebanon, they all come back to one main source: political involvement. The thesis, as mentioned in the introduction, has set its sight on the Ministry of Education and Higher Education as a case study in order to understand the situation behind the problems of recruitment and staffing in Lebanon, with the aim to understand how big the politics is involved in recruitment of civil servants. The next part of the thesis talks about the methodologies followed to conduct the study, as well as mentioning the groups of units of study, and what they had to say regarding the matter at hand depending on their own experience as well as knowledge and expertise.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

For my thesis, I have chosen a qualitative research method in order to conduct the research, since it depends in depth understanding of information rather than looking up statistics. Moreover, the topic of the thesis relates to politics interference, and in Lebanon it is a taboo topic that tends to be spoken about in secrecy, so this makes the topic even more fit for a qualitative method analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 2017). In this chapter, I will go over the method I followed by identifying the research design and instrument, interview protocols, participants selection, and data analysis.

A. Research Design

The thesis also uses the critical theory as the research design in order to examine the topic and answer the questions posed. Critical theory poses questions aimed at the social structure and action, whereby it is a "foundational perspective" that entails studying social action, politics, and science among others, manifesting social and political behavior. (Budd & Given, 2012). In the interviews, the respondents are asked to reflect and examine their experiences based on what they have encountered. Using this approach allowed me and the interviewed individuals to interpret the situation and to address the challenges and propose suggestions as to how to improve the current state, since the questions target the aspects of politics and interference in public administration in the Lebanese government (Budd & Given, 2012).

B. Interview Protocol

The research instrument followed in this thesis is semi-structured interviewing. In the interview, I asked both binary questions (yes/no questions), as well as open-ended questions in order to give more freedom for the respondent when they reflect on the question asked. Interviewing can be done in two ways: face to face or virtually by phone call or video call. Interviewing subjects required first the approval of the Institutional Review Board at the American University of Beirut in order to protect the subjects from any type of harm that it might cause. The IRB's approval has been granted mid-March, and I have gone through with the interviews. It is important for the interviewer to prepare for the interview in all aspects, such as the structure, clarity, and steering. Moreover, the interviewer must be knowledgeable of the subject he is interviewing in, and he also needs to take into consideration the ethical aspects so as to ensure safety for the interviewee, and that the latter will not be harmed, such as citing the purpose of the interview itself. The semi-structured interview method can have its own drawbacks in the sense that there might be a loss of track or an error arising from the transcribing or recording. Moreover, there is also the big possibility that interviews might be scheduled on a specific day might be rescheduled to another day, in addition to having a hard time reaching the right people to conduct interviews with. The interviews were conducted in the Arabic Language, and each one lasted between 15 minutes and 45 minutes. Some of the interviews were recorded, and accordingly were transcribed verbatim, whereas the rest were not recorded. Instead, I jotted down notes of their responses.

C. Participants Selection

       The target population of the research were civil servants in the Lebanese Public Administration, as well as independent experts who have the necessary knowledge and expertise related to the structure and functions of the public administration in Lebanon. The semi-structured interviews were conducted on a number of experts and civil servants in the Lebanese Public Administration. Since the research is focused on the Ministry of Education and Higher Education as the case study, the majority of the interviewees have been from the ministry itself. The individuals that have been interviewed were of different ages ranging from young people to old ones. Moreover, they were both males and females, with different levels of expertise, and the purpose behind this diversity is to collect as much data as possible from different point of views among newcomers and the old generation, the highly skilled and the newly experienced, and males and females. The departments from which I have interviewed the individuals are the following: the Directorate of Joint Ventures, the Department of Vocational Education, the Primary Education Directory, the Department of Private Education Directorate, the Primary Private Education Unit, and last but not least the Secondary Private Education Unit. Up to 20 individuals have been interviewed throughout the process, and they were from the Civil Service Board, the National School of Administration (ENA), the different departments of The Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Office of Minister of State for Administrative Reform, and an independent expert who has knowledge about the topic.

Table 1: Distribution of Number of Interviewees

Civil Servants									EExpert
Ministry of Education and Higher Education						Office of Minister of State for Administrative Reform	Civil Service Board	National School of Administration	
Directorate of Joint Ventures	Department of Vocational Education	Primary Education Directory	Department of Private Education Directorate	Secondary Private Education Unit	Primary Private Education Unit				
7	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

D. Data Analysis

The process of analysis was done through following the critical theory. My analysis was based on relating the answers obtained from respondents to the literature provided. The process of interviewing individuals did indeed provide a better insight on how the recruitment and staffing in Lebanon are applied as well as suggestions and solutions that might be of high benefit for the Civil Service Board and the Lebanese Public Administration as a whole in terms of recruitment and staffing, and human resources management. The questions revolved around the following topics (check appendix for the questions):

1. The fairness of the process of recruitment and staffing during the time of application of the interviewees, and recently before it being stopped in 2017

2. The relevance and presence/absence of expertise in the public administration

3. The Role of National School of Administration

4. The Civil Service Board status with respect to its duties and functions

5. The challenges faced in the process of recruitment and staffing in the public administration

6. Recommendations to help improve recruitment and staffing processes in the public administration

In the first stage of analysis, I went on to perceive the experiences of the interviewees expressed by their own words in the Arabic Language so that they can express freely and better. I went through the data obtained and familiarized myself by reading the transcripts and the notes. This paved the way for me to visualize their different and similar perceptions of staffing, recruitment, and challenges. Then I conducted thematic analysis by coding the responses I received, which I then congregated underneath different themes: recruitment, expertise, ENA & Civil Service Board, challenges, and recommendations. Afterwards, I related the findings I obtained with the literature I went through to diagnose theoretical concepts which could aid me in giving value to the data I obtained. I used axial coding in order to see if I can relate the different themes I discovered and how they relate to the literature I dug.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter includes findings collected after adopting the methodologies

mentioned in the earlier chapter. The findings include answers from interviewed

respondents after meeting andinterviewing them face to face. This part of the thesis will

talk about the findings discovered while doing the research on the ground.

The number of individuals interviewed are a total of 20 interviewees divided

among the following: 16 civil servants at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education

civil servant of second, third, and fourth levels, a high level civil servant from the National

School of Administration (ENA), one expert in the Lebanese Politics and Public

Administration, a civil servant at Office of Minister of State for Administrative Reform

(OMSAR), and finally a Civil Service Board supervisor.

In brief, the vast majority of the individuals interviewed in the process provided

precise and rich answers. There were both expected and unexpected results discovered

after conducting the interviews. There is a conflict in opinions among each civil servant,

whereby some believe that the process of staffing has been fair and just, and some do not.

Some view that at their time (1990s and early 2000s) the process was fair and just, and

right now (before the staffing has been blocked in all its forms) it is not fair at all. In

addition, some individuals view that the Lebanese Public Administration has the necessary

expertise, whereas others believe that it lacks it. Moreover, each individual views different

ways of enhancing the staffing processes in the Lebanese Public Administration. It should

be noted that almost all of the employees have agreed that the process of staffing includes

some sort of "wasta" and that this "wasta" should be ditched if we want to enhance the

entirety of the Lebanese Public Administration, and not just the Ministry of Education and Higher Education itself.

As for the Civil Service Board supervisor, they have informed me of the means of recruitment and staffing from the very first step until the end and the steps will be explained shortly after. At the National School of Administration (ENA), the supervisor has notified me about the means of training and staffing of employees too, and gave me their own insight regarding the Lebanese Public Administration in general.

Finally, the expert I got to interview in this research guided me through their experience and knowledge about the general aspect of the Public Administration in Lebanon. They have also provided recommendations and solutions that can be implemented in order to help solve the problem in Lebanon. The expert suggested some realistic approaches that can be followed, but they sounded somewhat pessimistic overall in the sense that they believed that those approaches will most probably not be followed because of the political powers and will that are ruling over the country and that refuse to change the state in Lebanon. All of the findings resulted from conducting the interviews with various individuals will be exhibited below.

Before I started, I asked about the hierarchical structure of the civil service in Lebanon. The answer I received from the OMSAR civil servant is that there are five levels to which the civil servants across Lebanon belong to[1]. The levels are ranked in the following order:

1)   *Level 1:* Director General is politically appointed; this position is filled by a selection panel consisting of the chairperson of Civil Service Board, the minister concerned, and the Minister of the Office of Minister of State for Administrative Reform.

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[1] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author, in Beirut, Lebanon on July 5th, 2019

2) *Level 2:* Director and Head of Service (The latter reports to the director, but some report directly to the director general)

3) *Level 3:* Head of Bureau, nourished by people from outside the Public Administration, Head of Section.

4) *Level 4 and Level 5:* Rank-and-file positions; non managerial positions.

A. Recruitment Process: Is It Fair?

Resuming from the hierarchy of Civil Service, the first question I asked the civil servants is*"How did you start in this job?"* All of the respondents had similar answers; yes it is fair.They believed that the fundamental process at the beginning was fair. Almost all of the civil servants there have been admitted through the CADRE of the Lebanese Public Administration by means of examination conducted and supervised by the Civil Service Board, regardless of what may have happened to each civil servant after being recruited in the Lebanese Civil Service after passing the examinations and occupying the vacant positions over the years. However, some employees have been transferred from one department to another within the same ministry, or from schools where they were working at to a department in the ministry, or from one ministry to another. Ind06 who belongs to Level 5 was previously in the Customs and later on transferred to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education[2]. Another respondent, Ind01, was previously in the Ministry of Finance on contractual basis and moved later on to the Accounting Department in the Ministry of Education and Higher Education after passing an examination conducted

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[2] Ind06 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE. Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019.

by the Civil Service Board[3]. Ind13 was in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Level 4 civil servant, and then passed an examination conducted by the Civil Service Board in 2001, but his staffing came late (in 2004) because the issuance of the decree was late[4]. Finally, Ind07 was at first in the Regional Education Office, and transferred to the ministry itself to work administratively. The latter noted that the vacant position required someone from the Shiite sect[5].

In addition, the question was also directed to the OMSAR civil servant, who workson contractual basis. They revealed that they were a university student, and had an advisor in the ministry as their instructor. The advisor would recommend only the top students to be invited to work as Research Assistants on contractual basis. The students recruited would only come from the top two universities back then: American University of Beirut, and USJ. The OMSAR civil servant is on a contractual basis with the ministry, and they renew their contracts yearly in agreement with the Council of Ministers, the Civil Service Board, and the minister concerned[6].

Finally, this question was also asked to the supervisor at the Civil Service Board, and they had a similar answer to what the respondents in the ministry said. They attained a degree in Law, and heard about vacancy in the National School of Administration to which they applied through the Civil Service Board. After passing the examination, they were sent along with their colleagues to the National School of Administration first to train, then staffed there as third level, "Later after passing the exam, the government sent us for

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[3] Ind01 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE. Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[4] Ind13 - Primary Education Directory – MEHE. Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[5] Ind07 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE. Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[6] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author, in Beirut, Lebanon on July 5th, 2019

training for one year to the National School of Administration, and afterwards the passing staff was distributed according to the qualifications and the grades attained"[7].

The second question the civil servants were asked is ***"Do you think the process was fair at the time when you started?"*** All 15 out of the 16civil servants at the ministry responded positively, insisting that the process of recruitment and staffing being fair and just. When trying to ask Ind02 about the reason behind this opinion, the respondent preferred not to answer[8]. I also asked this question to the Civil Service Board supervisor, and they had the same response, reiterating that the process was fair and just. Unlike the ministry interviewees, the supervisor went deeper to explain more, revealing the subjects on the examination and how and when the questions were put, and the number of applicants, "The staffing procedure back in the day was fair and just among everyone applying and going through the processes from the first stage, since it is all based on the grades scored by the citizen applying, as well as on the qualifications of the individuals applying. There were more than 3,000 applicants applied alongside her; they all went through the same process which consisted of: Several interviews made by more than 8 panelists, and examination including the following subjects: Administrative law, Constitutional law, Finance, Foreign Language (English or French depending on the education of the individual), and International Organizations such as UN, UNESCO, UNRWA, UNICEF…The questions of the examination are put on the night right before the day the exam is conducted and the results came out on the same day the exam was conducted. The whole process of setting up the exams and correcting them was done in full confidentiality"[9].

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[7] CSB, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon on March 29th, 2019

[8] Ind02 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE. Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[9] CSB, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon on March 29th, 2019

Moving on, the next question asked to the interviewees was ***"What about the process now?"*** Answers to this question varied, with some being very brief, and others being very detailed, and again Ind02 also refused to answer for an unknown reason[10]. Ind13 discussed the current process from a financial point of view. As mentioned earlier, there is a difference between staffing any certain public institution and a ministry, financial wise. They also suggested a reformation for the structure of the examination process conducted by the Civil Service Board, "Staffing in a public entity is different from staffing in the ministry, although they are both considered civil servants in general. However, there is an evident difference in salaries between the two types of staff, as well as the examinations and the process of entering the public sector. So all the processes of staffing everywhere should be united into one undisputed process, and even before uniting them all, you will need to have a modernized and developed structure for the public sector. "[11].

If we are to argue regarding fairness between before and recently, it can be viewed that political interference plays a bigger role now in determining whether the recruitment process is considered to be fair or not, as almost all the 20 the interviewees have highlighted. I have asked the civil servants at the ENA and OMSAR, as well as the expert about their opinion of how politics affect the process of staffing. The civil servant at OMSAR assures the presence of political interference in the first level appointments, as well as the promotion from the third to the second level in the public administration. Moreover, it is more present in the contractual basis than in the CADRE[12]. The ENA employee also underlines clearly that politics do really affect the staffing process, and it is

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[10] Ind02 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE. Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[11] Ind13 - Primary Education Directory – MEHE. Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[12] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author, in Beirut, Lebanon on July 5th, 2019

not something that is unusual if it is in the top levels positions. However, they differentiate between those positions at the top levels which are related to policy-making, and the positions that are at the lower levels that have to do with the daily issues and services provided that are related to regular citizens, "Politics play a role, and the justification is very simple: I need someone to implement my vision and my public policy. What should not happen is at the lower levels politics should not be involved, and this was the case during the Fouad Chehab era. I would like to have people who would implement my policy here, not to fight it. But regarding daily work and the people's access to services, there should not be politics or discrimination. I separate it personally between 2 levels: policy and day-to-day work. The second one should be totally non-political"[13].

The expert's answer was a bit similar, but they go more into details. In general politicians are elected to hold the administrators accountable for their actions, but what is happening in Lebanon is that there is no referral to the Civil Service Board that is concerned with staffing, which has inflicted a lot of problems on the structure and more specifically the budget, "Even though politicians are allowed to hold civil servants accountable to their work, which is natural because that is why we elect them, taking the responsibility of appointing public employees without referring to the central human resource agency in the country has led to a place where now we have a public sector which is running with no control from any central agency. This has caused a lack of detailed statistics on the number of civil servants, type of compensations, distributions in public institutions versus ministries. So I would advocate for a system where political appointments have to be at least suggested by the Civil Service Board and the ministers are allowed to only select from among candidates by the Civil Service Board who go through a

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[13] ENA, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon on April 13th, 2019

screening process by the Civil Service Board. I am also for screening contractual basis

employees (temporary appointments, contractuals, etc); all of them should be screened by a

central agency. Or else, such as currently, we are not anymore capable of paying salaries

for the public employees. This is a result of the weakening of the Civil Service Board and

of limiting its powers and depriving it from oversight of nearly 90% of public institutions

and agencies and more than 95% of municipalities in Lebanon, who are also hiring without

any screening process by the Civil Service Board"[14]. So this raises a big question on

whether the process of recruitment is in fact fair or not. Despite the procedure being

followed at first, what is happening in later stages eclipses unfairness, especially when it

comes to vastly different salary ranges among same level civil servants present in different

public entities or ministries. When there are political decisions interfering with the

promotion from the third level to the second level in civil service, then there is a very high

probability that the process is in fact not fair towards some civil servants as opposed to

others benefiting from it. Moreover, the financial differentiation between one public

institution and the other despite being technically in the same level symbolizes unfairness.

Despite 93% of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education respondents

saying that the process is fair, many of them do, in addition to the expert, civil servant at

OMSAR, Civil Service Board supervisor, and civil servant at ENA, mention the political

interference. Ind01 indicates how chaotic the process is, "The current recruitment and

staffing process is in chaotic mode"[15], Ind11 cites that "It is a hard process right now"[16].

However, the majority reiterated the fact that recruitment right before 2017 has mostly

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[14] Expert, Interviewed by Author in Beirut Lebanon on April 9th, 2019

[15] Ind01 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE. Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[16] Ind11 - Department of Vocational Education – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon. on April 4th, 2019

been on contractual basis with the approval of the Civil Service Board. Ind01 reveals that "The new civil servants joining the public administration are on contractual basis only"[17]. After 2017, the recruitment happens only by approval of the council of ministers, as per some of the documents obtained and mentioned in earlier chapters. Ind14 maintains that "In other aspects, the recruitment and staffing processes are done by the council of ministers and ministers themselves"[18]. While some respondents believed that the recruitments done by the Civil Service Board examinations are 100% fair and just like Ind09, "I believe that everyone recruited and staffed by the Civil Service Board deserves their position. The process of recruitment and staffing by the Civil Service Board is just since it does not look into the individual's affiliations"[19], some respondents implied the presence of political, sectarian, and religious powers influencing recruitment and staffing, such as Ind15 "I support the current process because it is all under the supervision of the Civil Service Board. However, in the contractual based recruitment, there are some affiliations that can be sectarian, religious, or political. But in terms of full time basis, I fully support the current process…Currently the recruitment and staffing processes from outside the reach of Civil Service Board are being done by contractual basis employment. This process, even after 2017's decision to halt recruitment into the Lebanese Public Administration, increases the political, sectarian, and religious affiliations, and diminishes the knowledge, experience, and expertise needed in the public administration"[20]. Even so, Ind16 declared that sectarian considerations SHOULD be looked into, "Recently and for

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[17] Ind01 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE. Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[18] Ind14 - Department of Private Education Directorate – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[19] Ind09 - Department of Vocational Education – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon. on April 4th, 2019

[20] Ind15 - Secondary Private Education Unit – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

years up until the recruitment process was stopped in 2017, the staffing process was done on contractual basis. If the recruitment process was done by a Civil Service Board examination, then the sectarian balance should be taken into consideration, knowing that in all the grades staffing (except level 1), the sectarian balance is not looked at by the law; it is rather ignored. In addition, in earlier times only examination was done in order to recruit and staff. However, now with law 46, recruitment and staffing are forbidden, both on full time and contractual bases"[21]. Ind07 discloses their concern regarding their own status, whereby they mentioned how they have been working solely on contractual basis for the past 20 years, and how they desire to become member of the CADRE so that they can earn the retirement package, "At the moment, it is not fair. I personally would like to become a full worker and enter the CADRE, because I have now acquired 20 years of experience and I still am currently on contractual basis, and the contract is renewed every single year, with the approval of the Civil Service Board because I want a retirement compensation"[22].

B. Recruitment: How Is It Done?

I also asked this question to the supervisor at the Civil Service Board, and their response was quite extensive. They demonstrated the whole recruitment process from the moment the public entity announces its vacant position to the Civil Service Board, all the way until the chosen civil servants get staffed into their respective positions. The first step is when a public entity that is by law governed by the Civil Service Board (regarding recruitment and staffing) announces that it has some vacancies that need to be occupied. So it sends a statement to the Civil Service Board asking them to recruit. The Civil Service

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[21] Ind16 - Primary Private Education Unit – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[22] Ind07 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE. Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

Board consists of two departments which are the Personnel Administration, and the Research and Guidance departments. After the concerned public entity alerts the Civil Service Board regarding vacancies, the statement is sent to the Personnel Administration. The latter reads the statement and then sends someone to visit the public entity concerned to check for real that the public entity has vacancy and requires staffing.

Afterwards, the Personnel Administration sends the statement to the other department in Civil Service Board, which is the Research and Guidance Administration. The Research and Guidance Administration also itself studies the need for staffing in the public entity concerned, and later forms different councils and committees, and itself also in turn sends a supervisor to watch over the public entity concerned. **If it sees that there is no need for staffing, then the whole process is cancelled, and the request gets rejected by the Civil Service Board.**

If it sees that there is indeed a need for staffing, then the Research and Guidance Administration returns the statement to the Personnel Administration. Before conducting an exam, the Personnel Administration checks for the possibility of transferring staff from other public entities. Other public entities might be overstaffed, so the Personnel Administration would transfer the excess number of staff to the public entity that is in need of staff. If that is not possible, then they move forward with trying to conduct an examination. The Civil Service Board then itself signs and sends a statement to the public entity concerned.

In turn, the public entity goes to the council of ministers and presents what it had in order to gain acceptance. The council of ministers then meets in order to discuss the issue. **If there is no approval, then the whole procedure gets cancelled.** If the council of

ministers gives the thumbs up, then it issues a decision regarding the matter, and sends it to the Civil Service Board as well as the public entity concerned.

The stage is set for the exam to be prepared and conducted by the Civil Service Board to fill up the vacancies that are present in the public entity concerned. The things to look at in the examination procedure are the following:

1. The job functions and duties of the employee (or employees depending on the number of shortage)

2. The number of vacancies present, so the number of employees needed for the vacancies announced

3. The terms and conditions of recruitment

4. The qualifications of the applicant that are required for the job

5. The subjects that the applicants will be tested in in the examination.

After the exam requirements are prepared, there will be a committee formed in order to put the questions in the examination. The committee consists of highly qualified and educated individuals who have attained PhD's and occupy major posts in highly reputed universities such as the American University of Beirut, Lebanese American University and the like. The committee also consists of people with high level of expertise that will assist in setting the exams. It will be formed a day before the exam will be conducted, with every individual in the committee coming forward to the Civil Service Board headquarters, which is located in Verdun, Beirut. There, the committee will stay up all night until the next morning, with no communication devices, in order to set the exam. This procedure is taken in order to prevent any leakage of information and questions that will be in put forward in the examination, in order to ensure equality, confidentiality, and justice amongst all the applicants.

The exam is conducted, and there are applicants who pass the exam, and other applicants who fail it. The list of passing applicants will be published by the Civil Service Board, in specific by the head of the Personnel Administration. The list of passing applicants is arranged from the highest to lowest grades in descending order. The staffing process remains legit and legal for as long as two years, and during this span of time, the Civil Service Board sends along the passing applicants to the vacancies according to their levels after the whole procedure is over. In other words, if the list includes 200 passing applicants, and there are no more than 50 vacancies, the Civil Service Board sends over the applicants with the 50 highest grades on the list. The others remain on the list, enlisted under the title of "excess" (فائض).

When the list of passing applicants is out, there is a second round which consists of one or more than one interviews, and that is to ensure objectivity and to study the character of the applicant. The interview is conducted face to face, and it consists of a panel that includes between 6 and 12 interviewers from different specializations and sects, and under the supervision of an objective Civil Service Board supervisor who will be present in person during the interview. The applicants go through the interviewing process that analyzes their character and traits, and accordingly pass or fail the interviews.

The Civil Service Board sets out another list, which this time includes the applicants who passed the round of interviews, so technically, who passed everything and are ready to be staffed. After they are assigned to their positions, they go for training in the National School of Administration for a year and then start their work in the public entity.

This whole process is done for applicants who wish to be in the CADRE in the Lebanese Public Administration. There is another type of recruiting and staffing, and the one that is being more prevalent than the previous type mentioned, which is hiring on

contractual basis. For contractual recruitment, almost the same procedure is followed, but it is more detailed when it comes to the need and requirement of the public entity. The excessive detailing in contractual basis is because many public entities can then have the right to recruit as much employees as they want on contractual basis. Being much more detailed prevents this problem from occurring.

The contract is given for not longer than the duration of a single year, and extension is provided upon the need of the public entity concerned. Due to the excessive number of contract based recruitment, which got out of hand and highly affected the national budget, two modifications were introduced to halt this phenomenon:

a. A modification for subject 54 in 2004, which now states in the public entities, committees, councils, and national treasuries (except the Lebanese Central Bank), recruitment processes for CADRE and contractual basis are done through examinations conducted by the Civil Service Board following the rules and regulations and conditions needed for the vacant positions at hand.

b. A modification for the law number 23 was issued by the prime minister in 2008 Fouad Sanioura, whereby it ensures any minister has the right to recruit on contractual basis, through set limits and limited numbers, ONLY through an examination conducted by the Civil Service Board[23].

Last but not least, the civil servant at OMSAR conveyed their opinion on staffing at the moment. They speculate that the procedure is actually lengthy because of the waiting for the Civil Service Board approval and examination results. They also point out that while it is good that it is in compliance with the Civil Service Board and there is minimum political intervention, they believe that contractual basis is better because it is more flexible

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[23] CSB, Interviewed by Author in Beirut Lebanon, on March 29th, 2019

and mush faster. In addition, signing on contractual basis shows that the needs are known, and not just randomly recruiting. They describe the contractual recruitment as being a "double-edged sword", because just as the minister knows the needs better and it is considered more flexible and faster, the political aspect may be the downside. If the minister is objective, then there will be no politics involved and consequently higher competence is achieved. However, if the minister has political considerations, then they would use the ministry for self or political service, and there would be abuse witnessed if there is no control. At the same time, the civil servant at OMSAR presumes that because there are so many rules and regulations, there is a presence of an incredible constriction, because the government wants to fight political intervention and wants what is most politically neutral at the public entities. However, this constriction will lead to corruption consequently. Therefore, there should be a bit of flexibility, and making the ministry more involved in the process of staffing alongside the Civil Service Board, who should inevitably respond to the ministry needs, especially in terms of job description; a ministry knows better than the Civil Service Board about its needs. Therefore, the interviewee proposes centralization in this procedure because there needs to be a balance in choice and decision making when it comes to staffing between the ministry and the Civil Service Board. There needs to be a human resources department established in every ministry that deals with the career needs, instead of the currently present "personnel administration"[24].

C. Relevance of Expertise

The fourth question that I directed to the interviewees was **"Does the Lebanese Public Administration have enough expertise in terms of people? If yes, why?If no,**

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[24] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 5th, 2019

why?" in a bid to see the employees' perspectives themselves on the public administration and, by extension, their colleagues. The answers for this question can be grouped on either sides of the spectrum, with 10 interviewees being positive about it (50%), while 8 others being negative (40%), whereas the rest (10%) did refrained from responding, maybe because they thought the question is sensitive and they may be held accountable for their answers. On the first end, there are a number of respondents, such as Ind07, who acknowledges that the citizens recruited do indeed have the expertise to occupy their positions in the public administration, "Yes there is good enough expertise and skills, and especially the newly recruited civil servants. They are highly qualified, they finished university and earned degrees and they are skillful and dedicated to their work"[25]. In addition, Ind12 maintains that experts and strong employees are not getting the rewards they deserve for their good work "Not every expert and skilled civil servant is getting his rightful reward for his work"[26]. Ind16 observes that in their respective ministry there are employees who actually train themselves even if there aren't any training workshops at the time, "Some civil servants even train themselves and attend private training sessions to enhance themselves. However, there are also other civil servants who do not train themselves whatsoever"[27]. The civil servant in OMSAR confirms that there actually is good expertise in the public administration, but this expertise is sometimes under-utilized, which explains why there is a negative image propagated to the citizens[28]. The Civil Service Board supervisor suggests that there should be additional training workshops, other

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[25] Ind07 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE. Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[26] Ind12 - Department of Vocational Education – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, On April 4th, 2019

[27] Ind16 - Primary Private Education Unit – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[28] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 5th, 2019

than the mandatory training at the National School of Administration when the civil

servants have just been recruited, "I encourage ongoing trainings instead of a single

training that takes a year at the National School of Administration at first upon being

staffed"[29]. On the other hand, Ind08 believes that "There is actually good experience and

expertise, but they are not followed by monitoring or evaluation, because of their absence,

there must be monitoring, following up, as well as supervision for the civil servants

through conducting training programs all the time. In addition, the civil servants need to be

up to date on what is new, what is happening in the administration, and also they need to

be trained and familiar with the modernized technological evolving in the public

administration"[30]. When asked, the supervisor of the Civil Service Board also highlighted

the aspect of technology, saying that e-governance should be initiated, "There needs to be

an initiation of e-governance that goes beyond replacing the excessive paperwork present

in our Lebanese Public Administration"[31]. There are others, like Ind05, who insist that the

teachers who are transferred from their respective schools to the ministry itself do not have

the expertise required, and this is without me asking them if it was due to political

interference, "Regarding the teachers who later join the public administration as

administrators, if they were not lazy already to work in their schools or have some skills to

give for the administration, they would have stayed in their schools…So their choice might

be down to the fact that the teacher has a couple of more years to go into retirement at the

age of 64…They are not giving the administration enough expertise and skills. They are

merely here as surplus additions. At the same time, if the teacher who joins the

administration later does not have affiliations or 'wasta', they would not be entertaining the

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[29] CSB, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on March 29th, 2019

[30] Ind08 - Department of Vocational Education – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[31] CSB, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on March 29th, 2019

possibility of joining the administration in the first place. There are many other teachers who are also in the same situation, but they do not have any affiliations or 'wasta', so they cannot join the administration. The teacher who has 'wasta' can guarantee themselves a position in the administration, even if the school they are in at that moment is understaffed and cannot afford letting them go. Now this is all about the regular civil servants who are in middle level grades, I do not even **dare** to speak of the high level civil servants who are in the first grade or possibly the second grade, although I believe that if the civil servant occupying their current job is not qualified, they would not still be present there"[32].

Resuming from the last statement, the other end of the spectrum disagrees with the idea that there are experienced and expert individuals in the Lebanese Public Administration. Reasons for each respondent differ from the other. One of the reasons highlighted by Ind15 is that the experienced individuals are retiring, and they are not being replaced, which means that the vacancies in the CADRE in terms of experienced civil servants are increasing, "All the experts and experienced civil servants are going off for retirement, so the CADRE is being emptied as a result of their retirements. To replace them, someone gets 'assigned' to 'ease operations', be it from another ministry or from the teachers' pool (like myself). There are vacancies that must be filled by people who are knowledgeable and have got the right expertise required for the positions"[33]. Another reason highlighted by Ind14 is the absence of supervision needed, as well as the absence of training programs, especially trainings that have to do with Information Technology and how to use electronics ie computers, "As you can see the number of paperwork here on the desk. I personally was able to move the department from documents and paperwork to

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[32] Ind05 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[33] Ind15 - Secondary Private Education Unit – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

automation, and I am trying to further enhance this method. However, this method requires civil servants who have the qualifications and are capable to work in this automated method. As a result, I have a computer and I know how to work on it, but I have some civil servants who do not know anything about digitalization. If there needs to be any recruitment of new civil servants, then having the technological skills must be a vital requirement, be it from using a computer or sending an email or work on Microsoft Office programs. Those things are basics, and some civil servants lack them"[34]. A third reason, cited by Ind01, why the interviewed civil servants believe that the public administration lacks both experience and expertise is down to the fact that the newly recruited employees are just randomly staffed and they do not have any basic knowledge about administration and law, especially the teachers who get transferred from schools to the ministry to do administrative work, "The ones being recruited and staffed here in the Ministry of Education and Higher Education are originally teachers who do not have any background information about the administrative work"[35]. Ind13 perceivesthe lack of strategic planning as being the reason behind the absence of expertise and experience, as well as the big absence of an incentive system and reward / punishment ones which would raise the civil servant's motivation to perform better and to train themselves to become more skillful and better at their jobs, "When we develop and modernize and start setting conditions for the job positions we develop, starting from units to departments to directorates and schools, we will not have any more individuals who lack the required qualifications and skills. There need to be some basic requirements present for every civil servant regardless of the occupation and the level. There are at the moment many duties that some civil servants do

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[34] Ind14 - Department of Private Education Directorate – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[35] In01 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon on April 4th, 2019

not perform because they actually lack the skills and qualifications required to perform them, and they do not have the will to acquire them to perform their duties. This is a problem in the public administration in Lebanon in general, which is not following the reward and punishment program. There is no incentive program for the civil servants, whether it is promotion or monetary. There is also absence of a punishment system"[36].

D. The Role of National School of Administration (ENA)

In regards to the National School of Administration (ENA), and to get more insight about it, I have interviewed a high level employee there who provided some insights into what the ENA does in details. The National School of Administration was one of the bodies that were established during the 1959 Chehabist era. It was under the name of National School of Administration and Development. They train newly recruited civil servants, focus more on the third level, and more importantly, they train the ones who want to get promoted higher in the public administration ladder, "Its role is to train government employees. They have initial training for those who successfully pass the government examination enrollment, and continuous training that is aimed for people who want to move up in the ladder of public administration… when they want to move up to the second level رئيس مصلحة, they have to follow a training here also to qualify, or to be on the promotion list"[37]. Moreover, they are the ones to decide the two thirds of director generals among level 1 civil servants, "two third of director generals will be nominated from there,

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[36]Ind13 - Primary Education Directory – MEHE. Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[37] ENA, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 13th, 2019

because it is the law, which says that two thirds of first category should be from within the public sector hierarchy"[38].

The training of the newly recruited civil servants at the ENA takes around 2 years: one year of teaching and one year of training. There is also a 6 months training to get promoted from the third level to the second level, "The regular third grade civil servant spends around 2 years. They used to be kept longer, but now do not do that anymore. There is basically one year of teaching and give 1180 hours of training, which is a lot, then later the training (Internship-esque) in the public administration, so it lasts around one and a half years. From the third category to the second category, it is around 6 months, and we have small models of mainly 10 to 15 hours which consist mainly of management, with some courses of course. But we no longer focus on the long term courses like academia; these people are professionals, so it is not a degree they are getting; they are being trained, so it is more convenient"[39].

E. Civil Service Board: A Good or Bad Verdict?

In addition, I have asked the ENA employee and the expert about their opinions regarding whether the Civil Service Board is doing a good job or not. The ENA employee advocated the way the Civil Service Board is operating, mentioning his own experience when he was staffed, "Yes of course because through them many people are given opportunities to serve our country…Personally I got the position in an interview through the Civil Service Board, and this was the major factor in my selection. For Level 1 there is an interview only"[40]. As for the expert, they deem the Civil Service Board as not being

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[38] ENA, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 13th, 2019

[39] ENA, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 13th, 2019

[40] ENA, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 13th, 2019

empowered, and the politicians are neglecting the agency with no evident modifications to it. All this negligence and ignorance, especially when it comes to the number of civil servants has brought the government to reduce salaries, "There has been no clear decision to empower the Civil Service Board, to give it enough power to do what it is supposed to do. For this administration to be able to do what it is supposed to do, some serious revision of its mandate needs to take place. Revision of mandates means a total revamping of the law that established the Civil Service Board. Political authority do not seem to be going that way, although at the moment there are a lot of studies in the parliament that are suggesting some partial amendments of the Civil Service Board law within the parliament, but it does not come within any management vision of a new role for the Civil Service Board, or to strengthen it to be able in a way to stand up to political dominance over appointments in public administration. As a result of lack of political will, Civil Service Board is de facto weak and not capable of even doing what the law mandates it to do. This is evidenced in, for example, vacancies, at the Civil Service Board itself. They are functioning at the level of vacancies that exceed 30-40%. They are not even being able to fill their organization structure that was designed back in 1959. This tells you that they are not being able to implement their bylaws. So it is weak because of its design now because of the lack of political will, and at this level of functioning there is no hope of establishing a professional and flexible human resource management system within the Lebanese governance…No one has a clear number on the counts of the civil servants, or any understanding of the cost of those employees, and the last law passed last year to decrease their salaries has showed that legislators and the parliament were not aware of the cost of what they were doing, because no clear number existed"[41].

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[41] Expert, Interviewed by Author in Beirut Lebanon on April 9th, 2019

F. Dismissal

In addition to that, I have asked the civil servant at OMSAR about *the dismissal procedure* in the Lebanese Administration. In Lebanon, the dismissal of a civil servant is dealt with by the Higher Disciplinary Board, regardless of the different types of violations that might be reported. Both the minister and the Central Inspection Board refer the violation and the civil servant to the Higher Disciplinary Board. What happens sometimes for the first level civil servants is that some ministers use the "placement at the disposal of the Council of Ministers" as an indirect method of removing the civil servant[42].

G. Challenges

The next question involved challenges, **"In your opinion, what are the challenges to proper staffing in the public administration?"** This question was also asked to the ENA employee, the experts, and the Civil Service Board supervisor and it yielded a lot of different answers depending on every respondent's point of view, though some are logically common. Therefore, I will include all the respondents' answers below. The challenges according to the responses are briefly summarized into the following:

1. The civil servant at the ENA summarized the challenges into the following categories:

a. Not being able to recruit the best talents, "Attracting the most qualified people to serve in the Lebanese Public Administration"[43]

b. People in the private sector (business, engineering, marketing, etc) are not at all exposed to the public sector. Practically other than one course, they do not know much about the public sector, "Presence of a big dichotomy in the

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[42] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 5th, 2019

[43] ENA, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 13th, 2019

universities in Lebanon between the private sector oriented jobs and the public sector" [44]

2.   The expert consulted summed up the challenges into the following: There is no strategic planning concerning the human resources in the public administration of Lebanon, "Absence of central planning system that would plan for human resources within public administration"[45]. Moreover, the expert was asked about possible challenges for attempts to improve staffing, and they explicitly mention that the challenges are political, "It is a political challenge because we are at a time where our public budget is not being able anymore to cover salaries…All international donors are asking us to reform our retirement systems, take a look again at the salary increases, and re-examine what is provided to the public sector employees. It is because simply our government is not able to pay the salaries of some 200,000 employees in the public sector, and definitely not being able to now pay their retirement packages. So now for everyone reform now is not a luxury anymore; reform is a must. This is the time where the Civil Service Board should ask for more roles, and this should pass through revamping all its bylaws and the laws that established it to provide it with some exclusive powers to hire and fire civil servants, whether on part time basis or on full time basis, and to redesign the financial incentive systems in public administration, and gear it more towards performance than towards seniority. At this moment there is no performance based system in public administration for public employees. This means that we are not looking now at small reforms because it is not functioning anymore; it is either now you revamp the system, or at some moment in time our government would tell our public employees that they do not have any money to pay the salaries, which is the case now"[46].

3.   The Civil Service Board supervisor had their own view of challenges which are:

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[44] ENA, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 13th, 2019

[45] Expert, Interviewed by Author in Beirut Lebanon on April 9th, 2019

[46] Expert, Interviewed by Author in Beirut Lebanon on April 9th, 2019

a. Absence of cooperation with the administration itself[47]

b. The way the examinations are currently being done is going backwards, and still rigid and not updated from 60 years ago[48]

c. The absence of incentives system in the Lebanese Public Administration[49]

d. Not following any right procedure to evaluate the work being done, from[50] Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to annually written and submitted reports[51]

e. The absence of rotation in the department itself. That there should be a rotation of roles in the one department itself among the staff present[52]

4. The civil servants at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education have shed light on the following challenges:

a. The interference of politics

b. High and uncounted number of civil servants, "The excess number of civil servants being recruited and staffed" (Ind02)[53]

c. Lack of skills and expertise, "The absence of expertise and skillful talents among the civil servants pool" (Ind04)[54]

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[47] CSB, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on March 29th, 2019

[48] CSB, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on March 29th, 2019

[49] CSB, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on March 29th, 2019

[50] CSB, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on March 29th, 2019

[51] CSB, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on March 29th, 2019

[52] CSB, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on March 29th, 2019

[53] Ind02 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[54] Ind04 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

d.   Restricting age of admission, "Age, whereby the limit for the age for an applicant to be eligible should not be restricted to the age of 35" (Ind12)[55]

e.   Lack of development of structure, financing, and job description, "The fourth and fifth grades have common problems lying in developing the structures, financing, and the necessity of improving job description as well as the examinations conducted by the Civil Service Board by being more oriented towards the specific job potion the candidate is applying to" (Ind13)[56]

f.   Sectarian balance in the second and first levels, "In the higher levels, there is the problem of the sectarian balance, knowing that the constitution emphasizes that the balance should be 50:50 in the first grade… when some third and second grade civil servants apply for higher positions, and there is also the sectarian balance to be kept in mind, we might be affecting the expertise and qualifications" (Ind13)[57]

5.   Last but not least, the civil servant at OMSAR exposed the following challenges:

a.   The absence of an agreement among the political factions on one single reform vision[58]

b.   The presence of political division as well as confessionalism[59]

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[55] Ind12 - Department of Vocational Education – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[56] Ind13 - Primary Education Directory – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[57] Ind13 - Primary Education Directory – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[58] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 5th, 2019

[59] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 5th, 2019

c. The doubts prevalent about seriousness and real commitment, where we see that some politicians have actually given up[60]

d. More responsiveness to party constituents and voters instead of needs[61]

e. The dominance of clientelism, which symbolizes social backwardness in the Lebanese mentality[62]

f. The "shortage" of law enforcement[63]

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[60] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 5th, 2019

[61] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 5th, 2019

[62] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 5th, 2019

[63] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 5th, 2019

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

This last chapter focuses on discussing how empirical findings from interviews relate to the broader literature on recruitment and political interference in Lebanon. It also demonstrates suggestions put forward by the interviewed respondents. As mentioned at the beginning of the thesis, the objective of my research is to explore the role that both the Civil Service Board and the political interference play in recruitment and staffing in the Lebanese Public Administration, as well as the human resources practices to improve staffing. According to my findings, political interference clearly plays a huge role as opposed to the Civil Service Board. The process revolves in a high proportion around the political interference, and as cited by Lebanese authors like Salloukh, Salibi, and Hamzeh, political and sectarian interferences are very abundant. Moreover, the findings strengthen the notion that there is no such thing as politics - administration dichotomy; in fact, it is politics - administration non-dichotomy, as per the scholars that I advocate in this aspect like O'Toole and Svara, to name a few (Uwizeyimana, 2013). Moreover, as per Matheson, the civil servants are serving the political/sectarian parties and voters, rather than the actual needs of the state. Responsiveness is towards political agenda instead of citizens' needs (Matheson et al, 2007). Human resources management should be more introduced to the public administration as well, especially for recruitment and staffing because that is where the government is facing hardships. Despite them affirming that the process is fair and just, the respondents in later questions, especially regarding challenges, imply how politics interfere in the process of staffing. In the introductoryquestions, they all agree that the

examination and interviews are fair. However, the interviewees also cite how political affiliations may favor some civil servants over others. So in fact, reading between the lines drive us towards the conclusion that the process is actually not fair, especially in recent times. There is also some stark difference in opinions when it comes to the presence of expertise in the public sector. In addition, the challenges laid forth by the interviewed individuals are common, and they go way deeper than first perceived, and they bring the public administration and the country as a whole down towards huge crises. In fact, the most critical challenges mentioned revolve around political and sectarian interferences. There are also other challenges such as absence of human resources management, absence of Key Performance Indicators, and others.

I inquired about known attempts to improve the staffing in the Lebanese Public Administration from the expert, and the entry points to make those attempts. The first question was whether there are any attempts of improving staffing. The expert informed me that there are actually attempts for improvement on the ground. Projects funded by International donors like the World Bank and the EU, as well as local attempts by the parliament to amend the law which established the Civil Service Board. But the problem lies in lack of vision of the legislators present, especially when it comes to human resources planning, "There have been attempts funded by World Bank and EU at OMSAR to restructure all ministries and to strengthen the capacity of the Civil Service Board. There are also current attempts now at the Lebanese parliament to amend the law establishing the Civil Service Board, so as to give it more powers and to address the gaps that were found in 1959 law that established the Civil Service Board. However, all those attempts in the parliament are being conducted by legislators who lack any vision on the management of the human resources sector in civil services. So there is nothing like a strategy for human

resources in public sector, and the indication of that is the role of the Civil Service Board

in implementing the strategy and developing it. So given this lack of vision and the lack of

strategy on manpower planning in Lebanon for the next 5 years, the parliament is just

doing some patchwork. In other words, it is amending certain articles in the law as per the

request of the Civil Service Board officials. But this falls very, very short of the strategic

change that needs to take place within the Civil Service Board. I do not know whether at

this moment the impediments are technical or political, because technically speaking, this

should not be very hard to plan. But this begs the following question: if this is not very

hard to plan, why isn't it happening?"

A. Structure-Related Reforms

One of the main contributions of this work is that the interview respondents had

practical recommendations on how to improve recruitment by strengthening human

resource practices and streamlining processes. Some important recommendations falling

under this category are:

1.   Introduction of New Public Management[64]

2.   Overhaul of the Civil Service Board itself, the law governing its

functioning, widening its mandate, automating its operations and getting all Lebanese civil

servants, into automated and integrated system that would provide decision makers at the

Civil Service Board with the power to instantly real time discover excess employees in this

place, discover vacancies in that place, without really having to go through too much

paperwork and communicating with ministries, as well as centralizing the responsibility of

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[64] ENA, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 13th, 2019

recruitment within the Civil Service Board[65].

3. Enhancing job description by the public entity itself, as well as enhancing examination processes on all levels[66]

4. Place a higher weight of the grading in the evaluations on the face to face interviews rather than the examinations because the interviews are the most prominent and idealistic ways to decipher and analyze the applicant's character and traits[67]

5. Recruitment should be based on the actual needs of the ministry, and the ministry should have a say in recruitment[68].

6. Examinations conducted by the Civil Service Board should include more analysis of case studies rather than memorization of laws and other things, since all the materials that should be memorized will be present in the office anyway and the employee can just flip the pages to check them[69].

7. The system should accommodate all the universities in Lebanon; at the moment, it is not accommodating the American universities because it is not open for diversity. There is a difference in perception between the American and the Lebanese systems. The American system cares more about the management aspect, unlike the Lebanese which has its mind set to be legalistic only[70].

8. Politics-free examination (Ind06)[71]

[65] Expert, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 9th, 2019

[66] CSB, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on March 29th, 2019

[67] CSB, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on March 29th, 2019

[68] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 4th, 2019

[69] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 4th, 2019

[70] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 4th, 2019

[71] Ind06 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

9.   Introducing training programs, setting up evaluation procedures annually, and enhancing supervision in the Lebanese Public Administration (Ind04)[72]

10.   Planning for the right person for the right job that suit their qualifications, skills, and expertise (Ind07)[73]

11.   Scan all ministries for vacancies and understaffing (Ind13)[74]

12.   Attract skilled and knowledgeable experts from outside the public sector through incentive systems (Ind08)[75]

13.   Establishing a ministry specifically for strategic planning, filling vacancies in other ministries, and balancing staffing (Ind14)[76]

In addition, the expert suggests two different entry points towards improving staffing, even though they believe that Lebanon does not have the know-how. The first one is to design a human resources management strategy for the short term to reduce the number of civil servants into the half, if possible. Reduction can be done through restructuring and also through introducing IT. In addition, standardizing salaries is also needed, "A human resources management strategy for Lebanon for the next 5 years. It will aim at reducing the numbers in public administration from 200,000 employees that we have now to around 100,000 employees. This is very doable: introduce IT and start restructuring. So we need to put some strategic objectives for us in terms of number of employees who would remain in the public sector. We also need to have strategic

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[72] Ind04 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[73] Ind07 - Directorate of Joint Ventures – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[74] Ind13 - Primary Education Directory – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

[75] Ind08 - Department of Vocational Education – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon on April 4th, 2019

[76] Ind14 - Department of Private Education Directorate – MEHE, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 4th, 2019

objectives when it comes to standardizing salaries in the public sector. For example, you have a director general who makes 3000$ per month, and you have another director general who makes 15,000$ per month. You would have to start putting some Key Performance Indicators for human resources in Lebanese Public Administration and getting the government to approve those key performance indicators"[77].

The second entry point is to revamp the law that established the Civil Service Board, making it up to date and welcoming and supporting young applicants because of the high age average, "You want to immediately revamp the law that established the Civil Service Board, to make it more modernized, get young specialists and experts to come to it, because the average age of staff there is more than 50 years at the moment, which is pretty unhealthy. You need fresh blood to come in, work on a strategy, start implementation, empower them, give them budget, because whatever budget you give to the Civil Service Board, you will save it from what you will do in the restructuring of the human resources or manpower in Lebanon. This is nothing; we spend $1M or $2M or $3M on a strategy. The amount of waste we are putting on employees in Lebanon is in hundreds of millions of dollars in a year. That is just wasted money on human resources that are sitting there and not doing anything"[78]. As promising as these two entry points might sound, such reforms require politicians to sit around a table and agree. Without the political will, these actions cannot be done, "As much as these are technical solutions, usually such reforms need political consensus. So you would have to get the political consensus, so that the government would allow such revamping to take place"[79]. Moreover, the civil servant at OMSAR suggested that the human resources would help the Civil Service Board with

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[77] Expert, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 9th, 2019

[78] Expert, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 9th, 2019

[79] Expert, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on April 9th, 2019

recruitment and staffing. Moreover, the human resources department would help identify the trainings needed for a certain positions, in coordination with both the ENA and the Civil Service Board[80].

B. Culture and Mentality Reforms

In addition to the structural aspects, there is also the cultural and mentality category which the respondents have addressed. The civil servant at OMSAR recommended two entry points related;the first entry point is finding the political commitment and will to adjust the public administration. The external pressure is very helpful in such situations, as witnessed in CEDRE conference, whereby the international donors are refusing to provide donations if they do not see with their eyes that there are actually some reforms occurring. The second entry point should be raising the citizen awareness on public administration. There is a lack of awareness from the citizens, and more focus on the political aspect, so this thought should be changed, and they should focus more on voting for people who would actually do well for the administration as a whole, and not just their own needs.

Many of the recommendations provided by the interviewees are practical and can be done on earth. However, there are some recommendations that are very theoretical and unrealistic, such as introduction of new public management. This suggestion was put through for the short range instead of the long range, and this is practically impossible.

Everything that the findings and the literature have brought through proves that indeed there is no such thing as politics – administration dichotomy, a claim that this thesis has advanced through this case study. What is unique in my case study is the overbearing

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[80] OMSAR, Interviewed by Author in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 4th, 2019

influence of politics which overshadows the role of CSB and of human resource practices. This is not to ignore the sectarian considerations as well, from which political issues stemmed in this country. It is quite clear how the high level positions are divided amongst the different sects in Lebanon (Salloukh et al, 2015), from the President of the Lebanese Republic to the military sections, to the Banking sector (governor of the Central Bank), and so on. The fact that there is clientelism amongst the majority of the citizens in Lebanon makes the solution harder to find. Even now there is the idea of "Iqta'a" and political leaders are seen as "Zu'ama" (Hamzeh, 2001). Yet, in the last 3-4 years the citizens are becoming more aware of that, and more awareness should be raised towards the situation in Lebanon. The mistakes that the ancestors have done in earlier in the 20th century do not have to be repeated, because the country is on the verge of falling apart.

The government has published reports that highlight steps and measures that need to be taken in order to fix the situation through the Office of Minister of State for Administrative Reform, but they are yet to be followed. There have also been various amendments to the recruitment process over the years until it has been stopped in 2017. The reason it stopped is because the random recruitment has caused the government to include a massive number of civil servants who have been brought on contractual basis, and, as the OMSAR civil servant specified, the contractual basis recruitment is mostly political because the minister would like to bring their followers.

In general, the original recruitment process to join the Lebanese civil service has been somewhat similar for a long time that it has become rigid and old. After explaining in details the whole process of recruitment by the Civil Service Board supervisor, it is quite clear that the process is extremely lengthy and lacks flexibility whatsoever. For this reason, most administrations are opting for the contractual basis recruitment, because it is more

flexible since it is on a yearly basis and can be renewed or not renewed, depending on the

needs of the ministry and the performance of the employee. Another problem arising from

the recruitment in the Lebanese Public Administration is the fact that the Lebanese system

is designed based on law rather than management. It is not appealing anymore to the

students coming from American universities, which focus on management more than law,

because there is no diversity academically. So there must be a new system to integrate both

fields in order to have a wider pool of potential youth prospects to join the public sector.

The problem also affects the expertise present in the public administration, which brings us

to the next point. There seemed to be different opinions regarding the presence or absence

of expertise in the Lebanese Public Administration. Most of the individuals interviewed

asserted that there is expertise in the public administration. However, the expertise there is

being mismanaged, so the potentials are not being fulfilled, and therefore there is no

development.

   The various challenges that had been laid out by the interviewees sum up the

situation in Lebanon: nothing will be done without a political commitment towards

adjusting the system. Even with the international conferences set up to aid Lebanon in the

last 2 decades were not enough to take the country out of its own misery. The latest

conference, CEDRE, put forth certain conditions that the country must stick into in order to

be granted the donations. The financial donation should be invested in human resources

management and strategic planning in order to help the country stand again.

   To sum up all of the above, political interference unfortunately has a huge role to

play in the recruitment of civil servants into the public administration, with a minimal

authority given to the Civil Service Board. Introduction of human resources department

into the public administration would be one of many measures followed in a bid to help

mend the problem. In addition, due to lack of literature regarding this topic in Lebanon, future research should focus more on exploring this topic, especially when it comes to statistics databases. A colossal issue going under the radar is how the country lacks any official statistics that explicitly states the exact number of civil servants occupying positions in the Lebanese Public Administration. This is an area worth examining. Moreover, it would be beneficial to investigate whether the old generation and the new generation of civil servants encounter the same experiences or different ones, and also whether gender difference (male and female) imposes different experiences among civil servants in the Lebanese Public Administration.

APPENDIX

Questions Asked:

1. Ministry of Education and Higher Education:
   a. How did you start in this job?
   b. Do you think the process was fair at the time when you started?
   c. What about the process now?
   d. Does the ministry have enough expertise in terms of people? If yes, why? If no, why?
   e. In your opinion, what are the challenges to proper staffing in the ministry?
   f. In your opinion, what can be done to improve staffing in civil service?

2. Civil Service Board Supervisor:
   a. How did you start in this job?
   b. Do you think the process was fair at the time when you started?
   c. What about the process now?
   d. Does the public administration have enough expertise in terms of people? If yes, why? If no, why?
   e. In your opinion, what are the challenges to proper staffing in the administration?
   f. In your opinion, what can be done to improve staffing in the civil service?

3. National School of Administration (ENA) Senior Administrator:
   a. What do you think are the main challenges in staffing in Lebanon?
   b. What do you think in your opinion can be done in order to improve staffing in the Lebanese Public Sector?
   c. Can you tell me more about the National School of Administration?
   d. How many years do newly recruited civil servants spend at the National School of Administration?
   e. What do you think about the involvement of politics in the staffing process?
   f. For the lower levels you have spoken about, do you think that there should be any improvements? Do you know any attempts for improving this situation?

     g. Regarding the Civil Service Board, do you think that they are doing a good job in terms of staffing?

     h. Do you think that the Lebanese Public Administration has the expertise and qualifications that are good enough?

4. Office of Minister of State for Administrative Reform:

     a. How did you start in this job?

     b. Do you think the process was fair at the time when you started?

     c. What about the process now?

     d. Does the public administration have enough expertise in terms of people? If yes, why? If no, why?

     e. In your opinion, what are the challenges to proper staffing in the administration?

     f. In your opinion, what can be done to improve staffing in the civil service?

     g. What is the process of Dismissal?

5. Expert:

     a. What do you think are the main challenges in staffing?

     b. In your opinion, what can be done to improve staffing in civil service?

     c. Do you think the Civil Service Board is doing a good job? Why? Why not?

     d. In your opinion, how does politics affect staffing processes?

     e. Do you know of any attempts to modernize/improve staffing?

     f. What are challenges to improve staffing?

     g. What do you think are the entry points to improve staffing?

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