

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

THE IMPACT OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL
INSTITUTIONS ON THE REPRESENTATION OF
LEBANESE WOMEN IN SENIOR PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION POSITIONS

by
SARAH GEORGES AL BOUERY

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Approved by:



Dr. Tania Haddad, Assistant Professor
Department of Political Studies and Public Administration

Advisor



Dr. Hiba Khodr, Associate Professor
Department of Political Studies and Public Administration

Member of Committee



Signature

Dr. Jamil Mouawad, Lecturer
Department of Political Studies and Public Administration

Member of Committee

Date of thesis defense: August 23, 2022

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August 23, 2022

Date

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Lastly, this thesis goes to all the women of my country Lebanon. You have been the product of institutionalized discrimination for decades, yet here you are trying to overcome the barriers of the past. May today be a new opportunity for you to bloom wherever you wish to excel.

ABSTRACT

THE THESIS OF

Sarah Georges Al Bouery for Master of Arts
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Title: The Impact of Formal and informal institutions on the Representation of Lebanese Women in senior public administration positions

Lebanese women remain underrepresented in politics in Lebanon in all parliament, cabinets, and senior public administration. In Lebanon, the government has not achieved a gender quota policy in high-level public administration positions nor in parliament during the post-war period until the present to guarantee a sound and equal representation of women in high-ranking governmental positions nor conducted reforms to the currently adopted electoral law that glorifies and maintains those in power.

Thus, women remain at the borders of formal politics in Lebanon, with a minimal role to play at the grassroots and party politics level.

This thesis will study the impact of formal and informal institutional barriers that have been endowed on Lebanese women for decades and centuries. It will draw on the major factors relevant to legal frameworks, patriarchy and religion, and informal networks. Nevertheless, it aims to debunk the enigma of having Lebanese women play an important role in the shadows of male elites and being confined to that role only.

Fourteen semi-structured interviews have been conducted with members of the Lebanese civil society, women director generals, and scholars/gender experts. The findings suggest that the absence of temporary special measures, a patriarchal culture entrenched in society, and an inaccessible political scene remain the most prominent challenges for women to mark their presence in politics. In addition, findings explain to us that women are seen better as workers and army bees rather than decision-makers in politics because it fits better their role in Lebanese society.

Even though this study is more of exploratory nature, it presents our recommendations on how women can break their silence and create a network of their own to start digging a loophole in a system that was for ages controlled and managed by male warlords. It also opens for further research by not only exploring the topic from a male's point of view but from a policy perspective through different policy approaches and frameworks.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CAS	Central Administration for Statistics
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
IOF	Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MP	Member of parliament
NCELR	National Commission for Electoral Law Reform
NCLW	National Commission for Lebanese Women
OMSAR	Office of the Minister of State Administrative Reform
PR	Proportional representation
UN	United Nations

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Women remain underrepresented in politics and public administration in Lebanon. The following is not only confined to parliamentary seats but has also extended to any decision-making position in the government, including and not limited to high-ranking positions (Class A employees) in public administration or directorates, bureaucracies, and cabinet members. On a global scale, it has been estimated that worldwide "male ministers make up 80 percent of ministerial positions globally and 181 out of 193 heads of state are men" (Khelghat-Doost & Sibly, 2020). Up until date since 1953 - when Lebanese women were granted suffrage (Schubert, 2020)- only 17 women have successfully secured a seat in the Lebanese parliament, with most of them having familial ties to current or former male ministers, presidents, and parliament members (Dagher, 2021). In addition, the number of Lebanese female ministers does not exceed 14 cabinet members in total throughout Lebanese history. Nevertheless, among more than 17 public administrations in Lebanon, to the exclusion of the parliament, the council of ministers, and the republic presidency, not more than public administrations six are headed by women.

Numbers have been retrieved from each public administration's official webpage.

This underrepresentation has been linked to multiple factors including and not limited to legal barriers, religious involvement, and patriarchal culture, all embedded within institutionalized frameworks, both formal and informal.

In Lebanon, the government has not achieved a gender quota policy in high-level public administration positions or parliament during the post-war period until the present (Kassem, 2012). According to international gender standards, the country ranks 145th

on the Global Gender Index and 149th on political empowerment (World Economic Forum, 2020). Despite civil society's constant initiatives to push for the adoption of a gender quota policy to guarantee a fair representation for Lebanese women in politics specifically at parliament and municipal levels, efforts have gone in vain on several occasions, the most important of which: the attempt led by the National Commission for Electoral Law Reform (NCELR) in June 2006 during the Fouad Siniora administration in 2005 and the second attempt led by the Council of Ministers in 2010 to allocate seats on the municipal councils for women (Helou, 2009). However, these remained attempts that did not materialize. The issue of the gender quota in Lebanon remains outside the bowl of priorities. For example, after being harshly dismissed by her male counterparts in parliament, a woman member of parliament withdrew from a parliamentary session after the refusal of several fellow members to discuss the item of the gender quota policy within the new electoral system in the wake of the coming parliamentary elections in spring 2022; noting that dismissal came from members of her party (Middle East Eye, 2021).

The Lebanese government has failed to ensure equal representation of women in public offices by resisting constant efforts in passing a quota law that ensures a decent number of women in decision-making positions in the public sector (Kassem, 2012). Lebanese women have long faced political and social segregation in Lebanon; despite achieving women's suffrage in 1953 i.e., receiving the right to vote and hold a seat in decision-making positions, the proportion of women securing parliamentary and ministerial seats is still very little (Hussein, 2017). Even though women had an instrumental role to play in engaging in conflict during the civil war, this role was only confined to participating at the grassroots level of the conflict and not in the decision-making phase impacting it:

some women were performing and participating in war tasks such as providing support to militiamen and taking on care work within the militia they decide to join (Nauphal 2001, as cited in Khatib, 2008). However, none or rare are the parties that have survived the war that currently have significant female leaders whether in parliament or public administration (Khatib, 2008). Women were given traditional respect for participating in the fifteen-year conflict and joining militias; however, the main product of the civil war was the further marginalization of women in politics, especially the ones not affiliated with any political color (Khatib, 2008).

Even though when it comes to informal networks, women have played a major role in certain political parties, campaigning for the party, and supporting it as a "bee army" as Saada Alwa refers to it, women remain absent in the formal framework in politics, policy, and decision making. Alwa gives the example of Hezbollah, a party that happens to have a grand coalition of women constantly working for its advocacy, especially during election time. However, the party happens to have zero seats allocated for women in Parliament. The following, as the party secretary general explains, is due to the "not very genuine political game that is currently taking place in the country and this will place the woman in an unpleasant position" (Alwa, 2018). This demonstrates that women cannot handle the weight of politics and public affairs compared to their counterparts, or just safeguard the pure image of women and keep it untainted.

Before delving into formal and informal institutions, it is important to define what institutions are, how they are brought about, and what are their functions. Institutions are norms -that are either formal or informal-, and their function is to organize and regulate relations whether they were political, social, or economic. Even though institutions and organizations are two terms used interchangeably, however, they are not

the same. Institutions are created by people and organizations, and they provide a predictable structure of people's choices, consequently shaping their behaviors (Carter, 2014). Some call institutions "the underlying rules of the game" whereby they influence organizations and in return, are influenced back by organizations too (North, 1990). North adds that institutions do create enduring behaviors in society, however, they can change and when they do, societies evolve in a certain direction, keeping in mind that this change does not come about easily (North, 1990). The outcome of institutions can be either positive or negative, depending on the relations and behaviors it activates, the resource allocation within said society, and the enjoyment of rights witnessed by the people (Leftwich & Sen, 2010). Formal institutions are written and enforced within the cadre of official authorities and include written constitutions, laws, policies, rights, and obligations. On the contrary, informal institutions -usually unwritten- and are seen as social norms, behaviors, customs, and traditions that have become embedded in the social fabric of society (Carter, 2014). It is argued that both types of institutions co-exist together, with one dominating the other depending on the strength of both. Some explain that informal institutions dominate when formal institutions are not well-enforced or implemented. Others say that informal institutions reinforce formal ones and consequently shape their implementation (Carter, 2014). However, this remains highly debated by scholars.

This thesis project looks at this underrepresentation from an institutionalist approach, particularly a historical institutionalist lens. Additionally, given that the theme of the thesis falls under a feminist topic, a feminist institutionalist conceptual framework will accompany historical institutionalism. Both frameworks highlight the importance of informal and formal institutions on policy outcomes, agentic behavior, and the shape of

society. The added value of feminist institutionalism is that these institutions are gendered and work in favor of a privileged group of people: men in power. Historical institutionalism is a relatively new approach derived from neo-institutionalism; it explains that history and path dependence affect institutions which in return, shape political, social, and economic behavior. It also sheds light on how new actors, interests, and challenges are a product of historical institutionalization and this influences future institutional design on a cultural, political, and social level (Voeten, 2019). Under this approach, it is important to give credit to historical factors that have produced the current policy dynamics and institutions, and most importantly, it highlights the persistence of these institutions throughout time because their alteration is not easy (Voeten, 2019). An important tenet of historical institutionalism is "path dependence". The latter is characterized by sequential unforeseen historical events that impacted institutions in certain directions and have given them a specific property. In that sense, to understand path dependence, it is imperative to trace it back to the historical incidents that have made it a precedent reproduced throughout history (Mahoney, 2000). Theorists have given path dependence several types, the most relevant of which is "self-reinforcing sequences" whereby institutional patterns are formed and reproduced throughout history within consecutive historical sequences. Under this scope, once an institutional pattern is adopted, its reproduction comes stronger every time with increased returns (Mahoney, 2000). In this current case, historically institutionalized gender discrimination is not only reproduced but is reproduced in a stronger wave. "Reactive sequences" on the other hand, posit that, unlike self-reinforcing sequences, institutional pattern happens as a reaction to an external factor and this reaction in return, is an action for another reaction. Consequently, historical institutionalist

theorists are very much interested in exploring path dependence because they believe that all present outcomes revert to historical sequences whether they were self-reinforcing or reactive (Mahoney, 2000). As previously stated, feminist institutionalism agrees with the tenets of historical institutionalism, their added value is that these institutional patterns are gender-biased. In a nutshell, feminist institutionalism posits that institutions are constructed in gender norms and these institutions produce and reproduce gender power dynamics. This conceptual framework seeks to make sense of how power dynamics are allocated with gender being the primary "unit of analysis"; consequently, it aims to challenge the current male-dominated status quo and ease structural change to overhaul barriers that have cemented intersectional gender discrimination (Holmes, 2020). More importantly, feminist institutionalism derives from new institutionalism and tries to understand how institutional continuity and alteration happen; however, it seeks to invigorate a gender lens into this institutional analysis (Holmes, 2020). Building on what was previously explained, feminist institutionalism, likewise, aims to understand how institutions, both formal and informal, have impacted the representation and the presence of women in politics and senior public administration. In addition, it holds a transformative arm that not only traces the roots of this underrepresentation but also aims to find sustainable mechanisms to enhance that representation and lift those institutional barriers.

A. Main research question

Institutions have played an instrumental role in affecting the representation of women in parliament, cabinets, and public administration in Lebanon. As later will present in Chapter 2, scholars spoke of institutions, some that are formal and others that are informal which have led to this current interplay. These formal and informal

institutions have been embedded under certain themes: legal framework, patriarchy, religion, and institutions. Consequently, some have pointed out the importance of formal and informal institutions in orienting this outcome after defining what each type refers to. Given that the latter remains an underexplored angle within the consociational outlook in Lebanon, the following research question: "how formal and informal institutions in Lebanon have impacted the representation of women in the Lebanese public administration senior leadership?" will help us explore this unconventional lens and to understand how has the current interplay of institutions impacted the product of underrepresentation of women in high-ranking positions in the Lebanese public administration despite their presence in certain informal networks.

B. Methodology

To answer the above research questions, a structured methodology is to be adopted. This thesis drew on multiple data collection methods. Firstly, it relied on secondary data collection and analysis and primary data collection. The latter was conducted using semi-structured interviews with women senior civil servants i.e., directors general heading the public administrations in Lebanon. Ministers were also considered within the pool of candidates to be interviewed, these ranged between current women ministers and former ones. To be able to conduct these interviews within safe and ethical standards, I have sought the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the American University of Beirut to align the thesis with the ethically accepted standards of research.

Given that this thesis aims to help us understand the nexus between formal and informal institutions and the underrepresentation of women in politics and the public administration and given that the essence of this thesis is to learn from the experiences

of Lebanese women in politics and the public administration, scholars and theorists have been included in the pool of interviewees. When needed, leaders within the non-profit sector were also interviewed to understand their perspectives on this phenomenon.

This primary data has been analyzed, and insights have been reformulated and integrated to answer the above research question we have.

C. Purpose of the study

The current study has multiple objectives, the most prominent of which is to understand an underexplored conceptual framework applied within the consociational system adopted in Lebanon. Institutions have generated a great impact on policy outcomes relevant to women's affairs, specifically the role they must play in senior positions in the Lebanese public administration. It aims to differentiate between formal and informal networks, formal and informal roles that women undertake, and the impact of these networks and institutions on the behaviors of actors and the behaviors of women. It aims to also put into perspective the experiences of current women in these positions and try to learn from their experiences. Nevertheless, the thesis' goal is to understand the possibility of women entering the political realm without having to seek informal networks with reigning male figures and what is the winning formula for women to successfully achieve triumph in politics and public administration.

Multiple authors and literature have pointed out the reasons behind the failure to grant Lebanese women equal access to participate in decision-making in the public sector. Some have related this to religious and confessional factors (Kassem, 2014), while others have looked at it from a cultural lens focusing on the role of a patriarchal system in shaping policies (Kassem, 2012). Some looked at the legal element whereby personal

status laws govern the private and public lives of women in Lebanon (Khatib, 2008) and some focused on the role of institutions in impacting the integration of women in parliamentary and public administrative roles, enveloping all other factors within an institutional framework (Geha, 2019).

D. Division of thesis

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter "Introduction" provided us with a glimpse into the general topic of the thesis with an overview of the case in Lebanon and the underrepresentation of women in politics and public administration, walked us through the primary conceptual definitions of institutions, informal and formal institutions, displayed the main research question of the thesis project, gave a general overview on the two primary conceptual frameworks used feminist institutionalism and historical institutionalism under a neo-institutionalist framework and how relevant they are to the thesis topic, then provided a small description on the methodology adopted to build findings and analyses and finally stated the purpose of the study and how it can be an added-value to the literature on the topic.

Chapter Two is divided into two main segments. It first delves into a well-developed literature review. It explores the multiple strands of literature that investigate the underrepresentation of women in senior public administration positions from differing lenses: cultural, religious, legal, and institutional. The second part of the literature review defines the main concepts of the thesis, such as institutions, institutionalism, and informal and formal institutions, and then dives deep into the two conceptual frameworks adopted in the thesis: feminist institutionalism and historical

institutionalism, and builds the nexus between the frameworks used and the topic of the thesis.

Chapter three juxtaposes the research design or methodology adopted in the thesis, focusing on qualitative research methods relying on secondary data analysis and primary data collection through semi-structured interviews with a multitude of participants ranging from the public sector, the non-profit, and academic realms. It then displays the ethical considerations considered to ensure the utmost safety of all participants and remain within the ethical standards of research laid out by AUB.

Chapter four tackles the case of Lebanon, bringing the theories mentioned in Chapter Two into practice within the Lebanese context. This section digs deep into how these theories are witnessed and how they materialize in Lebanon. It will discuss the legal, religious, and cultural aspects under an institutional approach that have resulted in the current political gender power dynamics in institutions and organizations.

Chapter five presents the findings gathered from the primary data collected divided and distributed according to the main themes of the thesis project.

Chapter six includes the analysis of the clean version of the aggregate data. In this section, the research questions are supposedly answered.

Chapter Seven concludes the thesis; it also presents recommendations, future research opportunities, and final takeaways on the topic that could potentially open new horizons for future research within the same theme.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Multiple debates have taken place on why the representation of women in politics and public administration remains weak at the level of parliament, cabinet, and public administration. Much work has been done on the underrepresentation of women in parliament; however, not much has been explored on the executive level of governance: only six public administrations have female general directors or presidents in Lebanon. This literature review looks at the underrepresentation of women both in the legislature and the executive, mainly focusing on the legislative branch. This can be potentially considered as one of the limitations of the literature collected and gathered on this topic. The below literature analysis will help us understand the multifaceted factors that have undergone extensive research by scholars on the representation of women in Lebanese politics and public administration.

A. Literature review themes: legal, religion, culture, and institutions

The literature covered looked at multiple questions to address such as (1) how the legal framework i.e., the adoption of gender quotas and the nature of the adopted electoral law weakened the representation of women in public administration. (2) what was the role of religion and party religiosity - known to be the extent to which religious factors meddle in political affairs - in undermining this representation? (3) how has the patriarchal culture played a role in affecting perceptions of women running for high-ranking positions in public administration? Yet, as mentioned, institutions were not put at the forefront of research until recently, when scholars started to address the role of formal and informal institutions in shaping policy outcomes. The following helps us

address the question of how have institutions, both formal and informal, impacted the representation of Lebanese women in public offices. The below supports us in developing a clear research question that we ought to answer through this thesis dissertation.

1. Legal framework: Electoral systems and gender quotas

It would be obsolete to say that legal frameworks do not have a strong impact on the inclusion of women in senior positions in public administration. Even though sometimes, high positions of public administration are done through either internal election within the administration or through ministerial appointment, it is worth looking at how electoral laws favor male elites, who in return, translate their gender and masculine dominance into administrative positions.

In their work on "Women, politics, and power", Paxton and Hughes (2014) explain the main three explanations for the representation of women: politics, social structure, and culture. They explain that ideally not practically, it should not matter whether a decision maker is a male or female. Likewise, ideally, laws are gender-neutral and should appeal to all constituents of society; however, feminist theorists agree that this sort of neutrality works in favor of significant gender inequality (Paxton & Hughes, 2014). Paxton and Hughes (2014) agree that one guarantee for women's formal representation is through "disrupting politics" by amending electoral laws, passing quota bills, and making legislatures accessible to women (Roberts, Seawright, & Cyr, 2012).

Krook defines three types of "quotas" that can enhance or guarantee the representation of women in politics and public administration: reserved seat policy that binds the constitution to reserve a specific number of seats for women, a method that is practiced in the Middle East and North Africa, quotas whereby political parties allocate

internally several women for their candidacy and finally legislative quotas which entail an amendment of the electoral law and sometimes binding political parties to appoint a specific number of women for candidacy (Krook, 2007). Gender quotas so far have been considered the most effective tools to enhance the representation of women in politics and public administration; overall, in most cases quotas have been successful in increasing the presence of women in the legislative branch; however, not all of these attempts are effective and sometimes they require several amendments and revisions to be implemented properly. It is also explained that quotas or "temporary special measures" in public administration are not well documented and consequently, it is very difficult to know which contexts or even countries are using quotas within their public administration and consequently, the knowledge of whether quotas are the right measure for public administration is limited (UNDP, 2021). Some add that quotas can be implemented anywhere in the world but may not be effective because the policy has to be tailored to accommodate the situational context it is in, its mere adoption solely may not be the answer to increasing the representation of women (Hughes, Paxton, Clayton, & Zetterberg, 2019). Josefsson (2014) explains that even though gender quotas can help enable women to participate in parliament and enhance their socioeconomic, cultural, and political status, they can also reproduce elitism by allowing unqualified women who are not representative of the needs of women and can contribute to the patriarchal system in place; hence women need to be as educated and as experienced as their male counterparts when elected. Many criticized gender quotas for being undemocratic as they favor women over other underrepresented groups in a specific society and produce tokenism i.e., allowing a group to participate in politics just because they are underrepresented not because they are competent and committed to the

political mission. Some even drew the problem of hierarchy among women who needed the quota to be elected and those who were being elected before it, creating a new problem of disadvantage among women themselves¹.

Aside from adopting gender quotas, Kenworthy and Malami argue that the electoral system adopted in a said country has to be the primary determinant of the representation of women (1999); and overall, women tend to do better in proportional representation systems women are twice more likely to be elected in a proportional representation system compared to majoritarian systems (Norris, *Electoral engineering: Voting rules and political behavior*, 2004). It is explained that voters are less likely to vote for women in a head-to-head election versus men and hence, parties in majoritarian systems are less likely to select female candidates. On the contrary, "rather than having to look for a single candidate who can appeal to a broad range of voters, party gatekeepers think in terms of different candidates appealing to specific subsectors of voters" (Matland, 2002, p. 6) as cited in Roberts, Seawright, & Cyr (2012). Norris (2006) adds that this phenomenon exists in democratic and undemocratic societies regardless; they explain that "within proportional electoral systems, the mean district magnitude has commonly been found to be a particularly important factor, with more women usually elected from systems using large multimember constituencies." (2006, p. 201). In a quantitative study, Andersson (2020) tests the representation of women in majoritarian, mixed, and proportional systems. The findings show that proportional systems scored the highest average of 25.11 compared to mixed electoral systems (24.71) and majoritarian systems

¹ European Parliament. DIFFERENTIAL IMPACT OF ELECTORAL SYSTEMS ON FEMALE POLITICAL REPRESENTATION. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/workingpapers/femm/w10/4_en.html

(14.98); thus, proportional representation electoral systems have a higher tendency of allowing women to be elected.

2. Religion and gender

Some literature considered religion among parties to be the main driver behind the low representation of women in leadership positions in public administration and politics. As feminism emerged within its first wave, one of its major criticisms was towards the institutionalization of religion that historically enforced the segregation and submission of women and subsequently, it rose as an anti-clerical ideology that fights religious customs as part of the dominant male-led system (Giorgi, 2016). Giorgi (2016) adds that even though males who shifted their religious beliefs towards secular ones were excluded and faced discrimination at a private level, women were at a more vulnerable place and were excluded from the public and political sphere as well for giving up their institutionalized religious practices.

Paxton and Hughes (2014) argue that cultural beliefs, in addition to religion, can be a great obstacle for women to achieve political equality and these are very hard and slow to change; even by 2000 when women began to make strides in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, Arab women remained on the borders of formal politics in the region. It has been generally believed that women's voices in the region should not be heard by nonrelated males, let alone enter any public discourse, as this is highly sacred by the dominating religion in the MENA region: Islam (Hegland, 1999). Religion, hand in hand with laws, has generated a product of personal status laws and shari'a laws, or Islamic laws that institutionalized women's segregation and kept them out of formal power in the MENA region. The following not only segregates women but places them in a subordinate position to men in all areas such as access to political participation,

inheritance, child custody, divorce, etc. (Paxton & Hughes, 2014). Despite the historical episodes that the MENA region has gone through, the latest of which is the Arab Spring, one constant remained untouched: the centrality of religion in politics: it is nearly impossible to analyze an event occurring in the middle east without having to reference at least once to religion because almost all Arab states have intertwined religion with their respective politics (Lee, 2014). In this context, religion has been a great hindering force in the face of gender equality and consequently, the equal representation of women in politics and public administration.

Some literature, however, states the opposite. Even though historically it was believed that conservative and religious groups condemned the participation and representation of women in politics and that secular, progressive, and left-wing parties endorsed it, some developments tell us that some religious parties started to recruit women and promote the role of women in politics: in the 2002 national assembly elections, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal which happens to be a religious political party coalition in Pakistan highly encouraged the participation of Pakistani women in the political and public life; in certain instances, these political parties use this promotion of women's representation to achieve victory in elections and attain leverage in politics (iKnow Politics, 2009).

Sbaity Kassem (2014) explains that one factor under this theory that impacts the representation of women in politics is party religiosity. She defines party religiosity as the exclusion of women from public arenas and the hegemony of male figures that are solidified by religious reasons. She explains that the more religious is the party, the less likely the representation of women is to be endorsed by it. She takes the example of municipalities and the gender dynamics within those, stating that Islamic parties, for

instance, are more likely to exclude women from taking up leadership positions because that contradicts the Shari'a laws (Kassem, 2012). Even though these parties are more likely to abuse women's rights, Sbaity Kassem (2014) adds that a big share of women end up joining them instead of civil movements, secular parties, and progressive blocs because of religion, conviction or commitment or what she refers to as "God's Sake" and the "Love of God" where they demonstrate little interest in achieving leadership goals in politics and public administration because they believe this is a good deed they are practicing as part of their faith. This in return, bolsters the idea of religion informally controlling the decision-making positions that could be potentially held by women and provides men in power an additional reason to keep women where they are, serving the party, supporting the group in periods of elections, and mobilizing voters in key party events (Kassem, 2014).

3. Patriarchy and gender

Within the lines of religion and culture, an important regard is to be given to the culture adopted by society that could potentially impact the representation of women in politics and public administration. Historically and originally, patriarchy was defined as the rule of the eldest male over younger members of a family irrespective of their gender. However, recent definitions took a more gender-nuanced definition by defining the patriarchy as a system of domination of men and subordination of women whereby oppression and subordination are feelings that translate rebellion into political practice (Khelghat-Doost & Sibly, 2020). Patriarchy is also defined as a "mental, social, spiritual, economic and political organization of society" that has been created through the gradual institutionalization of gender roles and political relations that are reproduced by various intertwined institutions to undermine the value of women (Facio, 2013).

Carol Christ defines patriarchy as "a system of male dominance, rooted in the ethos of war which legitimates violence, sanctified by religious symbols, in which men dominate women through the control of female sexuality, with the intent of passing property to male heirs, and in which men who are heroes of war are told to kill men, and are permitted to rape women, to seize land and treasures, to exploit resources, and to own or otherwise dominate conquered people" (Christ, 2016, p. 214).

Under a patriarchal lens, politics is a public sphere consecrated, controlled, and managed by men while women are expected to care for the private lives of families; gradually, the state has played an important role in categorizing men as breadwinners and decision-makers, which resulted in the culmination of knowledge in the hands of the powerful while keeping women at an inferior level in the labor market, society, and politics (Khelghat-Doost & Sibly, 2020). Wayan and Nyoman (2020) explain that political patriarchy is built on the principle that women's presence in politics is inappropriate and that they do not fit in the political sphere because they are more suitable for the household domestic realm. Politics is naturally a masculine activity that is evil and dirty and women are intellectually weaker than men with the latter being leaders over women and not the contrary.

In "Bargaining the Patriarchy" Kandiyoti (1988) explains gender relations as a "patriarchal bargain" whereby the status of women is the product of social and political bargaining and negotiation. However, even though this bargain segregates women from the political arena, it provides them with a space for them to work on their autonomy both in the public and private realms. Nevertheless, it uses an intersectional approach by explaining that patriarchy does not solely exclude women, but also ostracizes any group or individual who does not enjoy any informal networks with a patron. Kandiyoti's

(1988) approach was closely linked to institutional studies of political science as it demonstrates the importance of informal negotiation and bargaining and how strong actors negotiate these political institutions. It looks at patriarchy as multi-dimensional because it is not only constrained to gender equality but rather looks at various disadvantages between groups. Nevertheless, this approach shows that patriarchy changes over cultures and environments, which means that patriarchy within the Arab world can be different than what is seen elsewhere (Benstead, 2021).

In the Arab world, the patriarchy dominates. In her work on "Patriarchy and the Arab World", Suad Joseph (2010) distinguishes several types of patriarchies found in the Arab world: social patriarchy, economic patriarchy, religious patriarchy, and political patriarchy. The latter explicitly means that kin relationships are at the heart of politics; males in power informally grant government positions to members of their respective kinship groups, ultimately providing privilege to these relatives in access to resources and positions and is accepted as normal political behavior. Rights to access services or positions no longer come from merit and citizenship but from specific informal networks and relationships and consequently, a loop system has been created whereby only males and seniors control most of the power positions such as parliament, cabinets, public administrations, and political parties (Joseph, 2010). To this end, Moghadam has defined patriarchy from a different perspective, stating that this system is a "kinship-ordered social structure" (Moghadam, 1992) as cited in Khelgaat-Doost & Sibly, 2020.

In a different work, Joseph (2011) adds to patriarchy what she calls "political familism", which she defines as the public discourse that gives families "privilege". Political familism places the family at the center of social life and all political processes.

Accordingly, she explains that political parties originate from family allegiances, headed by political leaders called "zu'ama". Most of their successors happen to be their sons, brothers, or nephews; on certain occasions, wives are considered an option when the former is not present. Once these figures enter governments, they treat this entity as a generator of resources to solidify their relations and consequently, expect their following civil servants to achieve their respective ends.

4. Institutions: Formal and Informal

Many discussions on institutions whether formal or informal have taken place recently, especially by institutionalist scholars, highlighting the importance of institutions on policy outcomes, and historical and feminist institutionalist scholars emphasizing the importance of institutions in the realm of gender studies and the representation of women in politics. The main essence of these frameworks is the focus on institutions, both informal and formal. In its theoretical definition, institutions encompass the social, legal, political, and economic system of a state and consequently, they envelop the system in which social life exists; institutions can range from behavioral attitudes reaching up to the legal systems of a state (Dobler, 2011). Shand (2015) borrows a different definition of institutions stating that they are a system of made-up social rules that regulate social interactions, affect behavior in society, and can become grounded rules and routine norms that are widely accepted and not easily altered or changed. Dobler adds that institutions can be formal in the form of rules and laws and informal in the form of informal codes of conduct (2011). Waylen (2013) draws the difference between these two by explaining that formal institutions are the formal codified "rules of the game" which are mechanisms that are enforced, built, and communicated through channels that are considered official while informal institutions are socially constructed and shared norms and behaviors

occurring outside of these officially sanctioned channels. The problem with the latter is that they can be hard to uncover, and it sometimes requires ethnography and anthropology to truly understand them. Within the same lines, Azari and Smith (2012) consider informal institutions as unwritten rules and behaviors and agree that there is a grand difficulty in understanding their content, scope, and nature of deviance, unlike formal institutions. Peters (1999) defines institutions as a structural aspect of society that may be either the formal -a legislature or a legal framework- or informal -a set of shared norms and a web of interconnected organizations-. Waylen adds that informal networks have taken negative shapes as they materialized in favoritism, clientelism, nepotism, patronage, and illegal practices that have weakened formal codes and institutions (2013).

Some questions emerged on why informal institutions exist and several answers were raised: (1) if the formal rules are not comprehensive and complete; (2) when political actors have a certain preference that they cannot achieve through formal networks; (3) when political actors' ends are not considered public acceptable because they do not stand the test of time and scrutiny or because they will lead to international scrutiny (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004; Leach and Lowndes, 2007) in Krook & Mackay, 2011. It can be understood that, to a certain extent, formal and informal institutions co-exist together, sometimes one dominating the other. Under a gendered feminist lens, informal networks are used to keep women out of politics and to reinforce politics in the hands of the powerful advantaged groups i.e., men; for example, in systems where clientelism reigns, the dominance of men over informal networks has led to their dominance in formal political positions. Subsequently, the presence of women in these informal networks can enhance their reach to formal politics and their ability to implement policy change (Paxton & Hughes, 2014). Paxton and Hughes (2014, p.304) add that as strong as formal

institutions such as quotas and electoral rules, informal institutions can be a great obstacle for women to become leveraged leaders in politics and public administration. Feminist institutionalists opened a new Pandora box explaining how institutions have historically been gendered and that the state is essentially patriarchal; but even though state institutions produce and reproduce patriarchal bias, space for change is possible by shifting the engine from addressing simplistic gender discrimination towards addressing institutionalized barriers and access in the face of gender (Krook & Mackay, 2011). These scholars emphasized the role of informal institutions – which Krook and Mackay (2011) define as practices, norms, and discourses – that are used to undermine formal institutions. These informal institutions are political practices, parliamentary procedures, and culture that act as obstacles for women to participate in politics. Madsen (2019) explains instances of negative gender culture and verbal abuse against female MPs in parliament in Ghana as a tangible example of informal institutions that have become nationally accepted and practiced. Informal institutions have also been described as rule-breaking and de facto rules solidified by male individuals to reassert their dominance within the political realm (Krook & Mackay, 2011). They can be translated into bureaucratic norms and can lead up to clientelism (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004) as cited in Bjarnegård, 2013. Bjarnegård (2013) argues that informal institutions profiteer from a system that has weak formal institutions and clientelism is one of its most prominent examples. She agrees with Waylen (2013), adding that it can be difficult to pinpoint informal institutions because they are not enforced within official channels like formal ones and additionally, actors do not admit to practicing them. On clientelism being a form of informal institutions, Schedler (2002) provides a snapshot of elections and public offices by explaining that formal rules can be manipulated with informal institutions to achieve electoral victory;

especially in societies that are undemocratic and patriarchal, political parties heavily rely on informal networks to compete and persist and translate it in formal environments to secure seats in parliament.

B. Conceptual framework: Historical and feminist institutionalism

Going back in time, institutionalism – currently referred to as “old institutionalism” – emphasized on the formal de jure and administrative role of governments within the public sector. Even though this framework is still relevant, it is mainly confined to understanding legal, administrative, and constitutional studies. In that sense, understanding decision-making in governments today does not rely on formal arrangements solely, but on informal institutions characterized by behaviors, routines, and relationships which consequently, fuel political behaviors (Bell, 2002). In the wake of the following, post-World War II, a new form of institutionalism rose in institutional scholarship known to be “new institutionalism” or “neo-institutionalism”. The latter does not exclude formal institutions from the political game but rather emphasizes that this today are inevitably coupled with informal factors that shape policy outcomes. For example, in progressive secular societies, political outputs and experience are the results of not only natural laws but intentional human actions as well (March & Olsen, 2008). Steinmo (2001) argues that institutions, with emphasis on both formal and informal ones, are a prerequisite for organized politics because they define who can participate in the political procedures of a state, impact the political strategies of actors, and most importantly, influence the preferences of these political actors resulting in certain policy outcomes.

Institutionalism has been challenged and/or supported by key scholars, looking at it from a rational choice, sociological lens, and historical. Rational choice theorists

consider institutions to be either structures and forces that push actors to choose between one equilibrium or another, or equilibria which are a group of strategies that no actor can impact if no other actor impacts it as well (Farrell, 2018); this stream is rooted in economics and organizational theory that looks at institutions as rules and incentives, whereby the process of decision-making is explained through a quantitative modeling and game theory when political actors quarrel among each other (Beruning & Ishiyama, 2014). Sociological institutionalism scholars, on the other hand, explain that institutions are mythical structures, and these are different from human behavior. Farrell (2018) explains that sociological institutionalism deals with continuity rather than change as it is not interested in addressing institutional transformation. Moreso, this stream focuses on institutions as ideas and cultures in the sense that institutions are not rationally built rules and incentives but rather socially constructed norms and structures (Beruning & Ishiyama, 2014).

Historical institutionalism, at last, is a middle ground between sociological and rational choice institutionalism. It looks at institutions and the reactions to them as the primary driver behind the behaviors of political actors. More specifically, this stream aims to explain the outcomes of certain activities – be it elections, appointments, or policies – by analyzing the historical roots that led to it (Beruning & Ishiyama, 2014). Farrell (2018) adds that from this perspective, institutions are stable, enduring, and grand structures at the level of the nation-state that is not easy to challenge nor change and ultimately shape social and political behavior. Differently from sociological and rational choice theorists, historical scholarship focuses on approaching formal and informal institutions to understand historical inefficiencies in policies and decision-making that still impact current politics at present (Krook & Mackay, 2011).

On that note, it is argued that until present, the relationship between institutions and gender has been overlooked by scholars, mainly new institutionalist theorists. In this vein, women are still left out and overlooked by those scholars from formal institutions on a global level, examples include gender quotas, gender mainstreaming policies, and feminist initiatives (Krook & Mackay, 2011).

By definition, “gender is understood as a constitutive element of social relations based upon perceived (socially constructed and culturally variable) differences between women and men, and as a primary way of signifying (and naturalizing) relationships of power and hierarchy” (Hawkesworth, 2005) as cited in Krook & Mackay, 2011, p. 580. Krook and Mackay (2011) explain that gender relations have become institutionalized and included in political institutions and are cross-cutting across all institutional levels ranging from formal institutions that are legally binding to the ones that happen on a daily interaction and interpersonal level. Like new institutionalist scholars, feminist institutionalism posits the importance of formal and informal institutions; their added value is that these institutions are gendered. Even though research on formal gendered institutions such as party politics, electoral systems, and bureaucracies has been explored, feminist institutionalists highlight the importance of informal institutions characterized by norms and behaviors. These scholars add that feminist institutionalism looks at politics from a transformative perspective in the sense that the concern is not only to understand how institutions reproduce power dynamics between genders but also how these can be restructured and enhanced. However, when discussing gender and gendered institutions, it would be obsolete not to reflect on historical institutionalism, shedding light on the roles of historically enduring patterns that have resisted gender inclusion in decision-making, politics, and policymaking (Krook & Mackay, 2011).

Both historical and feminist institutional scholars agree that most of the norms that regulate formal politics are informal networks, or what they call “the boys club” and these informal networks are built according to three parameters: society, interactions, and politics. They also agree that because these institutions are informal and historically entrenched, they are hard to change (Krook & Mackay, 2011). Historical institutionalism scholars explain that political interests do come from historical norms and cultural values that have been embedded in a system that embodies these values. Consequently, borrowing from historical scholarship, feminist institutionalists explain that the historically prevailing norms, rules, and institutions determine the possibility or impossibility of promoting gender issues (Krook & Mackay, 2011).

Nevertheless, both historical and feminist institutionalists believe that institutions create a sort of bias to produce certain results, the only difference is that feminist scholars consider this bias gendered and creates gender power relations: male-oriented interests that segregate the representation of women or other gender minorities from the political sphere. In that sense, institutions privilege certain interests over others according to the group that is concerned. Additionally, both institutionalists agree that ideas also play an important role in shaping policies because institutions are gendered, and they are impacted by behavior just like they impact it in return; they also believe that even neutral ideas are biased. When an idea is neutral towards a historically gendered or ostracizing policy, it is automatically as gendered as others (Krook & Mackay, 2011).

Norris and Lovenduski (2004) present a supply and demand model to explain the relationship between gender and political recruitment. They consider supply to be the candidates wishing to hold a public office and demand representing the gatekeepers who will recruit those candidates. Within these lines, they consider gatekeepers to be the

primary actors within the equation since they hold the entrance card for any candidate, most particularly women. The authors explain that recruiters base themselves on informal and formal channels to select candidates; discrimination against women is at the top of the channels adopted (Kenny, 2013). Kenny (2013) explains that candidate selection and recruitment are highly dependent on a gap between formal and informal institutions and consequently, affect the implementation of these institutions on the ground. Looking at political recruitment through this institutionalist gendered lens helps us understand the importance of internal gendered dynamics of central actors at the governmental recruitment level, decipher the relationship between informal and formal rules that impact the underrepresentation of women in public offices, understand the historical roots of gendered political interactions that led to today's tensed and contradictory institutions and finally, explore the need for institutional change by conducting incremental change with regards to institutions, being formal or informal, providing access to women in politics and bureaucracies.

All scholars working on new institutionalism, historical institutionalism, and feminist institutionalism, agree that a lot of literature is still lacking concerning gender power dynamics and their relationship with formal and informal institutions. Historical institutionalism and feminist institutionalism agree on multiple arguments where they meet. Nevertheless, consociational democracies such as Lebanon remain an underexplored realm in the lens of feminist institutionalism as it is still not clear whether there is an equal interplay between formal and informal institutions or whether informal institutions are dominating when encountering a state like Lebanon.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter delves into the methodology to be adopted in this thesis project. The research that's adopted is qualitative descriptive and exploratory. According to Gerring (2017), qualitative methods unlike quantitative methods are expressed in language rather than statistics and numbers, focusing on specific individuals, contexts, and events, employing a small sample that gives it an "idiographic" attribute (Gerring, 2017). Qualitative methods envelop the methods and techniques that cannot be quantified or quantitative; in fact, qualitative research is used to translate and understand concepts and definitions instead of building inadvertent relationships to be generalized (Toloie-Eshlaghy, Chitsaz, Karimian, & Charkhchi, 2011). Zawawi (2016) explains qualitative methods as studies that constitute data built from various words; Maanen (1983) claims that qualitative methods can be a realm constituted of interpretive methods that aim to describe and debunk the meaning of certain phenomena that happen in the social world. They are merely structured and hold a flexible relationship with the respondents in the sense that the collected data is rich with depth and dimensions. Subsequently, it paves the way for innovative directions and points of view, primarily using interviews and observation techniques (Zawawi, 2016).

In addition, the qualitative research adopted is exploratory as it intends to explore a problem with no definite answer and with no clear conclusion. In other terms, exploratory research contributes to a better understanding of the problem at hand rather than giving it an answer. When conducting exploratory methods, it is expected to reach different directions because the new data that was generated has led to it (Thornhill &

Lewis, 2012). Another characteristic of exploratory research is that even though it is built on the absence or at least scarcity of previous information or data on the topic at hand, it has to be supported by a theoretical or conceptual framework. Vogt (1999, p.105) defines exploratory research as "a broad-ranging, purposive, systematic, prearranged undertaking designed to maximize the discovery of generalizations leading to description and understanding of an area of social or psychological life. Such exploration is, depending on the standpoint taken, a distinctive way of conducting science—a scientific process—a special methodological approach (as contrasted with confirmation), and a pervasive personal orientation of the explorer. The emergent generalizations are many and varied; they include the descriptive facts, folk concepts, cultural artifacts, structural arrangements, social processes, and beliefs and belief systems normally found there." (Stebbins, 2011, p. 3). Why is exploratory research important? When little knowledge exists about a particular aspect of the research at hand: people, phenomenon, or activity. To complete this task under an exploratory research method, two major tenants are essential: open-mindedness on where to collect this data and flexibility in searching for it (Stebbins, 2011).

This methodology fits well within this thesis because even though the topic of women's representation in the Lebanese senior public administration has been overlooked, looking at this theme from a historical and feminist institutional framework makes it valid to use exploratory research. In this vein, understanding and exploring the impact of institutions on the presence of women in senior public administration positions ought to be conducted under a such lens.

A. Unit of analysis

Broadly, the unit of analysis is defined as the entity or subject that is being analyzed within a study be it, longitudinal, cross-sectional, or even a case study. Berg (2011) defines the unit of analysis as what the case study revolves around and what it is focusing on specifically; these units can range from individuals to organizations, to groups, etc. (Grunbaum, 2007). As the unit of analysis is a necessary component of the research paper, it is what we wish to speak of entirely throughout the study and what we wish to conclude about by the end; nevertheless, the unit of analysis plays an important role in determining the research question of the paper (DeCarlo, 2018). The unit of analysis in this thesis project is Lebanese women who happen to be bound by institutional barriers keeping them at the borders of formal politics and public administration in Lebanon.

B. Research Population and Sample

Webster's (1985) dictionary defines a research sample as "a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole". Within these lines, researching a full population may be a complicated and nearly impossible project to embark on; thus, researchers pick samples, especially in groups that entail a very high number of units (Mildred L. Patten, 2017). What is more important in sampling from a population is to adopt unbiased sampling that happens to be representative of the population but at the same time, easy to tackle. "This method of probability sampling reduces bias by giving every member of the population an equal chance of being selected" (Mildred L. Patten, 2017, p. 89). There happen to be three major strategies of sampling for research: random sampling, purposive sampling, and convenience sampling. Random sampling is mostly found in quantitative research

whereby mainly surveys are distributed to a group of participants to support an empirical generalization (Flick, 2018). Purposive sampling, on the other hand, purposive sampling is mainly used in qualitative research because it seeks to collect from participants rich information that eventually provides an answer to the research question. As for convenience sampling, it draws typically on the availability of the participants to partake in the designated research project or study; however, this strategy is mostly looked down upon by quantitative and qualitative researchers because it does abuse the concept of representativeness in the sample (Flick, 2018).

The sampling strategy used for this thesis was purposive and convenient because it aimed to collect answers that respond to the research question and relied on the availability of the participants. The sample of participants for this thesis varies in terms of vocation and status. The sample includes persons from the Lebanese public sector, civil society, and academia. The group involved a total of 14 respondents: 9 women ministers current or former, women Class A employees in the Lebanese public administration. The data gathered from this group helped us understand from their perspectives and experience, why is it unlikely to appoint women as general directors and ministers in Lebanon instead of it being all male-dominated. The sample also involves 3 women leaders in the Lebanese civil society heading organizations and groups tackling women's rights and the advancement of women's role in politics and decision-making in public administration. The impact of this group is that it gave us an outsider's view of the lobbying that is pushed to change the current power dynamics in Lebanon. These groups helped us understand the challenges to overcome and break the barrier that the status quo has historically and institutionally safeguarded in the face of women taking on leadership roles in the Lebanese government and bureaucracy.

Finally, two academics and scholars sought to understand how all the findings fall under the conceptual frameworks of feminist and historical feminism.

C. Data collection

Data collection is the procedure of gathering information that should eventually answer the research question(s) of the research project we have at hand. Data collection means looking at data, not as just mere "texts and words" but rather as meaningful insights that play as evidence towards a witnessed phenomenon (Flick, 2018).

The data collection procedure in this thesis was bilaterally relying on two main sources. Firstly, a desk review has been conducted to collect secondary data from scholarly journal articles, books, reports and online publications. The main sources for these publications were online databases, libraries, archives, and organizational reports. The desk research has mainly fed into the literature review in Chapter 2 and does reinforce the primary data collection that will be displayed in Chapter 5.

1. Semi-structured interviews

Interviews in general are widely the most common data collection method used for qualitative research (Mildred L. Patten, 2017). Interviews have three types (1) structured; (2) semi-structured and (3) unstructured, with semi-structured being the most used as well in social sciences. In semi-structured interviews, even though the interviewers hold a previously prepared interview guide, interview questions follow the flow of the conversation and the discussion between the interviewer and the participants rather than religiously following the flow of the guide (Mildred L. Patten, 2017). Subsequently, in addition to secondary data collection, primary data collection has been administered through conducting semi-structured interviews with participants. Almost all

questions in the interview guide were flexible, with a previously determined guide to be supported and not followed.

D. Data coding

The interviews conducted with the participants were recorded and transcribed to optimize data clarity and to make sure that no valuable information has been missed out. After the transcription phase, the interview findings were coded to highlight important key takeaways from the interviews. According to Gibbs (2007, p.37), "Coding is how you define what the data you are analyzing is about. It involves identifying and recording one or more passages of text or other data items such as the parts of pictures that, in some sense, exemplify the same theoretical or descriptive idea". To bring value to the data collection and analysis, analytical coding was conducted. There exist three levels of coding. Firstly, open coding where data is divided and categorized into simple thematic sections or sub-codes. At the second level of coding comes axial coding which refines the open coding even further into codes. Selective coding, at last, is the final level of coding that takes the data into a higher and more "abstract" also known as "nodes" level that brings it closer and closer to the conceptual umbrella adopted in the research study (Williams & Moser, 2019).

After the coding procedures and after having built a code tree that visualizes our findings thematically and analytically, the phase of data analysis began. Through the codes that have been generated, the researcher was able to draw conclusions and build nexus between the different variables and concepts. The essence of this phase was to shed light on the relationship between the various conceptual definitions and frameworks that fit under the topic at hand.

E. Limitations of the research

A research study limitation is defined as a form of bias that the researcher cannot control and can consequently negatively affect the findings and results of the study (Price & Murnan, 2004). Dudovskiy (2022) presents five types of research limitations that can be relevant to these five areas: the formulation of the purpose of the study, sampling, the implementation of the data collection method, poor literature review, and the scope of discussions. It is imperative to present research limitations in studies for multiple reasons, the most prominent of which is continuity in literature. Researchers have a responsibility in pointing out limitations because literature is incremental, and many may base themselves on research that has limitations without prior notice.

Although the literature is a learning curve and plays an important role in the education of populations and writers need to acknowledge the importance of pinpointing pitfalls and shortcomings in their research (Price & Murnan, 2004).

The study worked on involves three major limitations, with two slightly interconnected. The first limitation revolves around the sample size of the respondents. The response rate was very low compared to what potentially could have been and this is related to multiple factors; the most important of which was conducting the thesis project during the Lebanese parliamentary elections of 2022, where many participants especially from the public sector could not and did not have the availability to partake in the study and that creates an opportunity cost to the findings.

The second limitation was not including current and former women members of parliament who have been members, have not succeeded in the current elections, and those who have. Even though this study centers on cabinet members and directors of

general women in Lebanon, it would have been interesting to listen to the insights of parliament members on the topic.

The third challenge was specifically related to the time of the thesis project data collection. During this phase, preparation for the parliamentary elections was peaking and availability was dropping. Nevertheless, the timing was critical because of the turnout of the parliamentary elections that were witnessed this year. Maybe if the data collection occurred after the results of the elections, the findings would probably have been different.

CHAPTER IV

CASE OF LEBANON: LEGAL SYSTEM, RELIGION, PATRIARCHY, AND INSTITUTIONS

During the second half of the 20th century, the topic of women's empowerment and gender equality rose on the agenda of the United Nations (UN), aiming to curb this inequity between the two genders. Consequently, Lebanon was among the countries that signed the Convention on Eliminating All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1996, according to Decree no.572 dated 24/7/1996. It also has committed itself to accomplishing the recommendations of the Beijing Conference on gender equality in 1995 (Makari, 2009). However, according to Hussein (2017), Lebanon failed to abide completely by these international agreements, especially concerning ratifying the gender quota for enhancing the representation of Lebanese women in decision-making positions which would improve their participation and curb their segregation from political life. Khatib (2008) elaborates that Lebanese law does not protect women or guarantee their representation; even though it does not explicitly discriminate against them concerning political participation and voting, their involvement in politics is minimal. Personal Status Laws discriminate against women vis-à-vis not only men but women from different confessional groups (Khatib, 2008). A report produced by the Euro-Mediterranean Women's Foundation claims that Lebanon, despite signing the CEDAW, has placed reservations on certain paragraphs (paragraph 2 of Article 9 and clauses [c], [d], [f] and [g] of Article 16) and paragraph 1 of Article 29 because they clash with personal status laws (Euro-Mediterranean Women's Foundation, 2017).

Subsequently, most ministries and public agencies disregard gender discrimination within their work because they are safeguarded by these laws (IWSAW, 2016).

Nevertheless, formerly, the Lebanese electoral system was majoritarian, and not until 2018 with the last parliamentary elections had the country adopted a proportional electoral law: Lebanese electoral law 2018: "Chapter One - Article 1: The Lebanese Parliament consists of 128 members, whose term of office is four years, elected based on the proportional system of which the voting shall take place in public, in secret and in a single session" (Ministry of Information Lebanon, 2018). However, despite adopting a more welcoming proportional representation electoral system in Lebanon, only six women made it to parliament in Lebanon that year. Ultimately, Roberts, Seawright, and Cyr (2012) argue that electoral laws and their amendments might not be a magic potion to guarantee the representation of women in parliament or senior public management positions because first, contexts change in terms of time and place, culture, social structure, and institutions also play an important role.

After conducting a statistical analysis of the different confessions in Lebanon, it was found that at least two confessions in Lebanon, for example, vary immensely from each other in their perceptions of gender equality as a whole and, the representation of women in the public sphere: A great gap was found between Sunni and Shi'a parties and Christian groups; the same gap exists between Sunnis and Druze. It has also been found that Muslim parties (both Sunnis and Shi'a) are less supportive of gender equality than Christian groups (Orthodox, Maronites, and Catholics). Consequently, "attitudes toward women thus only partially correspond to sectarian borders, forming a cultural fault-line separating the Shi'is and Sunnis from the Christians" (Moaddel, Kors, & Gärde, 2012, p. 17). In addition to party religiosity, it is argued that the overall sectarian outlook

impacts gender relations holistically and consequently, the underrepresentation of women in public administration and politics (Kassem, 2014). What is more important to understand between the legal factor and the religious one, is that in Lebanon, they are intertwined. The court system in Lebanon is dual, which means that there are courts for public law and courts for the personal status law that is dictated by the various confessional groups found in Lebanon. Shari'a courts dictate over the affairs of Sunni and Shia women and Ecclesiastical courts are founded by the differing churches in the country, to regulate the affairs of Christian women from different confessions; in this vein, religious courts are a "power base" in the personal affairs of citizens (Grung, 2018). Nevertheless, scholars argue that reforms have been rejected by the interests of political and religious authorities – who also happen to be an inseparable couple in Lebanon – to make legal issues relevant to divorce, child custody, inheritance, and political representation less discriminatory against Lebanese women. For example, Lebanese women cannot represent themselves as they are bound to a male member controlling their private affairs be it their father or husband (Grung, 2018). Citizenship also remains a grand obstacle for women married to non-Lebanese nationals and are stripped from their citizenship rights which ultimately limits and hinders so many rights they hold, among which is having to give up their run to right for the office or be appointed as a governmental leader (Grung, 2018). In conclusion, these personal status laws, "inspired by religious discourse, necessarily place women as second-class citizens, treating them as minors in decisions related to governing their own lives." (Salameh, 2014).

On a cultural level, the Lebanese system is highly entrenched in a patriarchal culture that impacts gender roles and political relations. In that sense, Khoury (2013)

insists that kin ties are an intrinsic part of politics in Lebanon, and for women to enter politics, political familism is the only way to achieve success. Sharif (2016) adds that there is a strong tie between political familism and clientelism in Lebanese politics and hence why political parties do not recruit women in politics or public administration, because women are less likely to accept delivering services such as men do and ultimately, they should be excluded from politics. This analysis comes from the fact that the representation of women is highly linked to low levels of corruption (Kassem, 2014). Bjarnegard (2008) gives empirical evidence by stating that as the representation of women increases, the levels of corruption decrease, claiming that women are essentially less corrupt than men; nevertheless, she explains that in most parliaments that are dominated by men, there is a more likely incidence of corruption and vote-buying, which in return inhibits the representation of women. Even though some exceptions exist with MP Inaya Ezzedine joining the Amal Movement and MP Dima Jamali joining the Future Movement, some women would not be even considered for a public office if they do not hold any familial relation to a male member of parliament, president or bureaucrat. In Lebanon, for example, Nayla Mouawad succeeded her late husband President Rene Mouawad; after being imprisoned, Setrida Geagea assumed a seat on behalf of her husband Samir Geagea; Bahia Hariri entered politics to support her assassinated brother former prime minister, Rafik Hariri. Nonetheless and at the roots of the Lebanese patriarchal society, women are seen to be confined to the domestic realm, a role that is not even financially compensated (Salameh, 2014), but automatically weakens women's prospects to participate in the labor force on the national scale. Another reason why this representation remains weak is that the kin ties that were abovementioned remain constant when it comes to males in a patriarchal society, unlike

women whose identity including religion, sect, lineage, family, and region, vary upon marriage and divorce. In a sectarian outlook like Lebanon's, this is deemed problematic as it could affect the overall national distribution of sectarian groups over parliamentary, administrative, and executive seats (Salameh, 2014). In 2013, an incident took place in the Nahr Ibrahim municipality where four out of nine members resigned and the fifth, who happens to be a woman did not. According to the law, if the majority of members of a municipality resign, then the council is dismantled, and the municipality is disbanded. The ruling led to the municipality being disbanded even though a quorum was achieved, but because the fifth member was a woman married to a man outside the region, her vote was considered void and was not considered into account (Salameh, 2014). The above example shows how kin ties are necessary to consider women in politics or administration in Lebanon as a voice that counts. If the latter is not applicable, then void reigns.

On the other hand, some looked at that underrepresentation from a social change lens. Khatib (2008) highlights the importance of constant change in shifting attention from matters relevant to women's rights and affairs. In addition to patriarchy and political familism, she addresses the "pressing political concerns" that are mainly overarching politics in Lebanon: war and conflict. Khatib (2008) explains that there is a stereotype reigning over the attitudes found in Lebanese society. It is stressed that the underrepresentation of women is not only a result of patriarchy, legal constraints, or social change but rather due to their lack of interest in public life in the first place. All these factors fall within the social fabric enveloping Lebanese women in Lebanon. Benoist (2014), for example, looks at this segregation from a citizenship exclusion lens

whereby women are not included within the formal rhetoric of citizenship in Lebanon at all.

All these institutional theories have impacted the representation of women overall in the Arab world and Lebanon. How these institutions translate in consociational, Middle Eastern, conservative and patriarchal societies is explained by scholar Dr. Carmen Geha. In her paper "The Myth of Women's Political Empowerment within Lebanon's Sectarian Power-Sharing System", Geha (2019) highlights the importance of institutions in undermining the representation of women in politics and the civil service in Lebanon. She argues that confessional power-sharing systems such as the one adopted in Lebanon enhance and activate institutional frameworks and/or barriers that deny women access to be represented. Geha (2019) goes further and highlights the importance of "informal" institutions in impacting this representation instead of "formal" ones. The former refers to the "practices, discourses, and norms" that are generally used by male figures to exert dominance on decisions and consequently influence formal institutions also known as rules, laws, and constitutions (Krook & Mackay, 2011). It is also argued that consociationalism in Lebanon is a combination of both informal and formal institutions that result in the current political power dynamics; this is the result of a tested assumption that the most important pillar of consociational systems is informal institutions with the tendency of becoming formal (Bogaards, 2019). The National Dialogue table is a concept that has been institutionalized in Lebanon and has become home to informal and secretive political decision-making outside of officially sanctioned channels. It is designed to come up with and manipulate most decisions, among which is keeping women away from formal politics; even when women are encouraged to join this formal realm, they become invested in the system that has been created by these warlords (Geha, 2020). It is argued

that formal and informal institutions that occur at the level of the political party produce and reproduce the political dominance of men and the segregation of women in politics and public administration (Bjarnegård & Kenny, 2016). The case in Lebanon is not any different, political parties undertake a high degree of informal practices with no respect or commitment to formal rules and even though they have internal party systems, they do not even abide by these bylaws as they follow what the leader of the group decides. Geha (2019) provides three institutional pillars that defy formal institutions in Lebanon. The first is the role of the *zu'ama* who happen to be the final decision-makers on any political matter. They do not adhere to formal procedures they control them, making state formal institutions weak and fragile, referring to the parliament as a "private club"; the second is the clientelist atmosphere in politics in Lebanon and the noncompetitive elections and electoral system (Geha, 2019).

“Women are nowhere near these axes of power and male *zu'ama* act as country representatives with foreign counterparts. Moreover, a powerful web of clientelistic relations secures votes by buying the loyalty of citizens with goods and services long before, and long after, elections take place. Men manage and organize this web of clientelism by appointing local level *zu'ama* at the grassroots and municipal level to confer goods and favors to citizens.” (Geha, *The Myth of Women’s Political Empowerment within Lebanon’s Sectarian Power-Sharing System*, 2019, p. 8).

The third institutional pillar that she addresses is the role of religious courts and personal status laws that control every detail of women's personal lives. Even though these laws do not discriminate against women when it comes to representation in politics; however, they do infringe on their daily life activities such as movement, freedom, and self-agency (Geha, 2019). Access remains a grand informal institutional barrier for women as they do not have the same leverage men do when it comes to reaching out to political figures to enter the political realm; meetings are closed and

informal, at night, safeguarded by the leader's group of male supporters and advisors. For women to reach a good position during elections, they need to dedicate a lot of time and effort which is not always possible because care work has been socially constructed as a woman's unpaid duty that takes up most of her day.

Paxton and Hughes (2014) have already talked about the absence of women in informal realms and how it impacts their absence in formal politics. Even though Lebanese women have been present in informal settings in political parties, working side by side with male leaders, and helping in campaigning and vote mobilization during elections, they remain absent from the formal institutional political realm (Alwa, 2018). The following contradicts the theory that Paxton and Hughes present and poses multiple questions: (1) Are Lebanese women only allowed to be active in informal politics that feed the formal politics of the current warlords and their parties? (2) Are informal institutional frameworks only an obstacle when the end contradicts the National Dialogue table that has been reigning for the past thirty years? (3) Why is it, that when women are allowed within informal networks, this is all they get?

New institutionalism, along with its derivatives among which is feminist institutionalism, remains an understudied and unexamined field in politics and governmental studies. Bogaards (2019) raises the concern that these frameworks have not been studied within the realm of consociational democracy cases such as the one found in Lebanon. In that sense, there is a lot to discover on the presence of women in the Lebanese public administration and key decision-making positions in the public sector overall and specifically, why they are allowed in certain informal settings and restricted in others and why they have been absent from formal institutions regardless of the two hypotheses presented.

Scholars have spent ample time exploring the role of the patriarchal culture inhibiting women to enter the realm of politics in Lebanon and have pointed out the socio-economic dynamics fueling this culture. Nevertheless, great emphasis has been placed on the legal framework that constrains women and not only discriminates against them in the face of male dominance but among women between different confessional groups. Religious factors, in addition, have been highly put in the spotlight, shedding light on the proportional party religiosity impacting the decisions that political blocs take regarding women's affairs. However, institutions both formal and informal have been overlooked by historical institutionalist scholarship and deserve to be debunked. Even though legal systems, patriarchal culture, and religion have been expanded in separate sections in this literature review, they all feed into the objective of this thesis project as all are intersectional and interrelated as will be discussed at a later stage.

In Lebanon, informal institutions embedded in personal status laws, religion, and patriarchy are difficult to reform. Bogaards (2019) portrays violence, among different Lebanese communities as a form of informal institution, for example. However, the interplay between formal and informal institutions regarding policy outcomes is still precarious in Lebanon; yet still, informal institutions tend to dominate the political arena given that Lebanon remains a weak state. Geha (2019) explains that political parties in Lebanon, demonstrate increasingly centralized informal practices that are glorified by the leader of the sect, denying and ignoring formal norms, rules, and practices. In this light, they benefit from these informal networks they have created to keep women out of decision-making positions in the public sector. She adds that informal institutions in Lebanon have mainly focused on clientelism, the role of the male leader of the sect/party/political bloc, and the religious courts.

CHAPTER V

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

To answer the research question of this research thesis, the below section dives into the diverse findings that were collected during the data collection phase whereby two main bodies of findings appeared. This phase entailed a series of interviews, semi-structured by nature, with female participants. The latter was a pool of current and former female ministers, current female Directors General in the Lebanese public administration, and experts in the realm of women's studies and gender equality. Interviews with participants were semi-structured and the questions revolved around two main parts. The first part embodies four themes on institutional barriers that women face to attain positions in formal institutions and the second part includes two themes on why women can be present in informal institutions but absent in formal ones.

The findings collected in this section harmonize the purpose of this thesis within the two grand themes; the first tackling the institutional barriers that have been engineered to keep women away from leadership positions within the Lebanese government and the second debunking the presence of women in lower-level positions within the government or political parties and being confined to the borders of politics solely in Lebanon. It would be interesting to note that there have been a lot of consensuses among my pool of participants regarding certain points; however, there have been some disagreements regarding others.

A. Part I: Institutional barriers against Lebanese Women to attain public office

Under Part I, I present the findings collected by my participants relevant to the institutional barriers and challenges that they have faced during their experience within the Lebanese government and/or challenges that women like them could and do face to reach these unattainable positions. The main five themes that were raised by the participants and that were most prevalent among the answers I collected were (1) legal institutional barriers; (2) the patriarchal culture prevailing within the Lebanese environment; (3) systematic barriers within the Lebanese political system; (4) religious barriers and (5) informal networks engineered by male counterparts.

1. Theme 1: Legal institutional barriers

Legal systematic barriers were among the most prominent factors that were listed as challenges against women achieving public office in Lebanon. Among fourteen participants, only two participants, P5 and P7, believed that the legal system is not discriminatory against women and does not place any hurdles in their way to attain a certain high position within the government. For the rest, firstly, personal status laws – known to be family laws and private laws – were considered a huge stumbling block for women to break through in Lebanese politics. Participant 1 believes that personal status laws "express a patriarchal and traditional society and attribute to women a set of gender stereotypes which hinder them from expressing themselves fully in the workplace or otherwise. In many situations and instances, we can see how gender bias can be a challenging factor limiting women from reaching certain spaces." Multiple participants such as P3, P9, and P10 who were married to non-Lebanese husbands or know women in the government married to foreigners expressed their anxiety towards the citizenship clause within the personal status law because it hinders their children

from receiving their Lebanese nationality, consequently denying them their fundamental basic rights such as partaking in the political process (voting, running for office, etc.). In addition, given that family laws place women at the second level of citizenship, they are discriminated against in areas relevant to inheritance, child custody, and divorce. With the former, when a daughter is denied inheritance, this places her at a disadvantaged economic level compared to her male siblings and she must start from scratch and without the necessary resources, politics can be an impossible goal for her.

Nevertheless, all other twelve participants spoke of how personal status laws work in favor of men in a different example: if a woman wishes to run for office and her husband is not supportive, she can be easily threatened with divorce and is deemed "an incalcitrant woman who shows no care nor sympathy to her family needs", as explains P12. P3 also gave regard to the labor law in Lebanon and how discriminatory it is; she draws a comparison on maternity leave between Lebanon and abroad according to her experience and explains how not incentivizing the Lebanese labor law is towards women when it comes to paternity and maternity leaves, paid and unpaid labor and how she is alienated when she returns from the leave. Some participants such as P11, P13, and P14 that the Lebanese constitution, even though it seems to treat men and women equally below the law, it is considered a gender-blind legal text as it does not consider the barriers that women face and how their starting point is not the same compared to men. The second legal barrier most participants referred to is the Lebanese electoral law. The electoral law in Lebanon is a "fake replica" as P2 claims of the proportional representation electoral law adopted globally. This law is designed to keep women and minorities out of the governance and to keep power within the hands of the powerful elites – Lebanese warlords. P2 adds "This is a pro-majoritarian proportional law. I

mean, it doesn't exist anywhere else in the world, it has been done, to suit the size of our politicians in established institutions and political parties, it's very clear, this is not a proportional law. It might give some chances to minorities, but it's like you give them something and they cannot reach the end of it [...] It's not friendly to women, neither, nor to new or minorities or new political parties." The third legal barrier, which comes hand in hand with the electoral law challenge, is the lack of adopting the gender quota. All participants, with no exception, insist on the necessity of having at least a 30 percent reserved seat policy that guarantees the presence of women in parliament and then adopting it across directorate generals and the cabinet. Nevertheless, participants defy the idea of considering the quota "undemocratic and allowing incompetent women to attain office" as the current status quo is in no way far from incompetence and that the "presence of the same group of men for the past 30 years and inheriting politics is what makes politics in Lebanon undemocratic and nepotist, and not the quota itself" as P9 claims. However, some participants such as P3, P5, P6, and P12 gave a different perspective, claiming that the electoral law already includes a religious, sectarian and regional quota, in addition to the preferred candidate quota, and believe that adding a new gender quota will most likely complicate the electoral law even further, placing additional barriers for women to break the ceiling. In this sense, these participants believe that the whole electoral system in Lebanon should be overhauled and reformed and then adopt a new proportional law with a gender quota that ensures a decent representation of women in politics and public administration.

2. Theme 2: Patriarchal Culture within the Lebanese Environment

All participants agree that the patriarchal outlook is dominating in Lebanon, starting at the household threshold and extending to the highest levels of the government. Lebanese women are not encouraged to take up leadership positions in general, let alone in the public sector and this defiance starts at the level of the family. P2 shared the story of a woman who was running for office and was ostracized by her own family for running instead of letting her brother do it; she was shamed and marginalized for "defying her family's honor and undermining her brother's capabilities". Family support comes at the forefront of prerequisites that a woman should have to feel capable enough for choosing a political path; here it is important to draw on the notion of unpaid care work that is consecrated for women in patriarchal societies. Participants all agreed that care work remains a big challenge in their daily lives as they need to cater to the needs of the organization or office they preside over but are also expected to do the care work that they are bound with by society. This adds a reason, why women avoid not only entering politics but sometimes unwillingly decide to be stay-at-home mothers to meet the responsibilities society, has endowed upon them. As women surpass the patriarchal household threshold, she is faced with the societal patriarchal challenge whereby the society she lives in is not supportive of the leadership of women. P1 even explained that the people who defied her most were not only men; but also, patriarchal women; she says "The gender dimension was not on our side. And during the discussion at Parliament, those who were the most ferocious opponents were women and not men. And that was really for me, quite perplexing. You would expect women to support women or women to support the good ideas presented by women. And it was exactly the contrary." As women surpass the societal barrier, they are faced with party patriarchy, where family and societal norms all join together

and create a "beast" against women, as described in P3. Kinship ties and political familism remain at the heart of politics in Lebanon: almost all women who have attained a certain position have direct relations with male elites within the government rectifies P12; as for independent women who do not share these ties, they need to have "patriarchal values and norms that align with the party's values for her to fit in and receive the blessing of the party leader" as P10 agrees. Additionally, to all these factors, when women enter the political realm, they are faced with detrimental behavior by their male counterparts; all participants, with no exception, demonstrated a sense of discomfort within meetings, average workdays, or even lunches. "We are mansplained, have to put up with sexist and misogynistic or homophobic jokes, bullied, silenced, complemented in the most discomfoting ways for our looks, clothes, hairstyle... and they think this is what got us to the position, our looks" P9 explained. Some even explained that sexual harassment often happens and consequently, some of them refrain from being in certain meetings to avoid these behaviors from their counterparts. This places them at a disadvantage because they feel disconnected from what is happening on the ground behind them, but at the same time, they do not feel safe enough being around these men. Many participants such as P11 and P14 shared some experiences, being referred to as hysterical when she is fighting for a cause or when she reacts to a detrimental decision being taken by someone unlike men who were seen as courageous and passionate about the country whenever they supported a specific decision, continues P3. Finally, many participants such as P1, P2, P3, P5, P8, P9, P10, P12, and P14 opened up by sharing that they had to put in a lot of effort to be taken seriously by not only their counterparts but by their staff within the administration, they are presiding over. "I should've had in my CV ten times more qualifications than other applicants to get the

position. I think many have told you that this is a requirement for women seeking higher positions, if not, she has to work 10 times harder. A woman needs more qualifications to attain a position any other applicant could've attained more easily, especially if the applicants were men or through other means like bribery" shared P3. In addition, P1 explained how "ruthless in a good way" she had to behave to mark her grounds as everyone around her was criticizing her reformist leadership. Nevertheless, double standards were not only vis-à-vis requirements, but also towards failure: "when a man politician fails, people blame the situation and the country outlook – especially after the outbreak of the economic crisis – but when a woman fails, not only they blame her personally, but they also blame all of the gender" she adds. Within the same line, P12 introduces the "women on the cliff" term whereby man politicians appoint women in key positions in times of crises when the stakes of failure are high, and it is easier to place the blame on the bad leadership of women in general.

3. Theme 3: Religious barriers

Religion remains one of the factors that many participants such as P1, P2, P5, P6, P8, P9, and P10 have mentioned when speaking of the challenges women face to enter the political realm. These participants agree that religion has played an important role in the underrepresentation of women in politics as parties use religion – interpreting it in different manners – to confine women at home as caregivers and caretakers. In addition to religion, P4 referred to the sectarian and confessional divisions in Lebanese society and how it prevents not only women but any competent minority from partaking in politics. Without a doubt, automatically a nexus was built between religion, religious courts, and the personal status laws discussed above and how this troika is designed to

keep women at a lower level in society compared to heterosexual men. Participants like P1, P2, P9, P11, P13, and P14 expressed repugnance on how personal matters are treated in private religious courts – where women are subject to legal, social, economic, and cultural marginalization – while all other matters are treated under a public constitutional civil code. P14 expressed "How do you expect women to excel in the public realm when they are weakened within the private one under the name of religion and patriarchy", added P2 that "women are paying the price under this fabricated fear of that religious person of a God discriminating against them"; P1 also continues "there is a problem with understanding the difference between faith and using religion to ostracize women". With religious courts regulating the affairs of the private lives of women, it would be inevitable to say that religion is complicit in enhancing gender inequality; many participants such as P9 and P14 even referred to marital rape, sexual violence, and domestic violence being protected within religious laws and how this detriment the state of women at first degree, let alone at the level of politics. Additionally, many participants like P8 and P10 highlighted how religious political parties, be they Christian or Muslim, play an important role in keeping women out for religious reasons as politics is a dirty place that is not fit for the purity of women. P1 adds that conservative ideologies, through her experience, have been more found in religious parties and concludes that the more religious is the party, the less likely it is to support female candidacy whether for parliament, cabinet, or heading a public administration. P5 went beyond and explained how women tend to join these parties for religious reasons only, without having any regard or interest in pursuing a career in politics. P5 links religion, religious parties in Lebanon, and patriarchy together,

claiming that religious groups place the head of the household on top of decision-making for religious reasons while the end is purely political, and interest-driven.

4. Theme 4: Informal networks engineered by male counterparts

As for informal networks, the fourteen participants were divided between those who thought that informal networks are dominant over official formal networks and those who thought that both impact equally the representation of women in politics in Lebanon. Most participants (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, and P12) believe that informal networks are necessary for women to enter for them to build their channel within the governmental apparatus; however, access to these informal networks is where lies the main problem. All participants believe that these networks are almost impossible in almost most times for women; in addition to the fact that they are not family-friendly or even women-friendly. "You have to go, into these political parties and have this network. And these established political parties, most of them are corrupt. The only way for women to start creating informed politics is to create a new network, where they can discuss, have alliances, etc." claims P2. P1 goes further to explain that not only do informal networks in Lebanon dominate over formal networks, but they precede them and they are the source of formal institutions. She adds that Lebanese politicians prefer these informal networks because it gives them that degree of loose boundaries where they can manipulate policy outcomes easily without being held accountable for their decisions. Nevertheless, given that the formal channels of enforcement such as laws are not supportive of women, women themselves cannot snatch their pieces through these official channels and need to go through those networks to mark a turf on the national dialogue table. As for informal networks,

dominated by "the big cigars club" is easily used by these men to keep women out, where they are not welcomed nor appreciated.

Other participants such as P8 and P9 add that these informal networks are designed in a fashion that is not easily accessible for women: the time and place for the meetings that happen late at night when most women are home doing the care work they were "culturally accustomed to doing", they happen in settings that are far and inaccessible, adding the problem of mobility in the face of women. P5 who attained a high-ranking pivotal position in the government explained how she would not feel welcomed in secretive inner circles of decision-making because she was just "a woman". She continues by explaining that male politicians when they "finally" decide to appoint women in key positions, give them positions where they cannot enforce instrumental decisions at the national level and where informal networks are not a necessary component of the decision-making process. P12 for example shared a fact stating that there are no advisors nor parliamentary committee members who are women, for example. Nevertheless, participants such as P9 shared that a big chunk of the job is to attend social events, parties, and meetings that again, happen in inconvenient situations where they cannot attend and when they do, they miss out on so much care work at home with their families and if they do not attend them, they are attacked for not taking their jobs seriously or they miss out on so many decisions taken within these events. Consequently, all participants agree that it is way easier for men to build these informal alliances with personnel from the inside because they do not carry care work responsibilities and they do not feel a sense of unsafety leaving their houses late at night, being surrounded by men in different places.

On the other hand, some participants believe that informal networks and official formal channels of enforcement work hand in hand in keeping women out of this realm. They believe that male politicians feed off detrimental laws and personal status laws to legitimize exclusion but claim that "organizational laws are equal for both men and women". Some participants such as P13 even believe that formal channels are more overbearing and more impactful as without legal support, women are not able to crack open this vicious cycle. They believe that when we have a legal system that treats men and women equally, that incentivizes women's work in politics, women would not fear breaking into those inner circles and proving themselves without having to compromise their values, their safety, and their comfort.

5. Theme 5: Systematic barriers within the Lebanese political system

The last barrier that most participants referred to is the prevalence of an interest-based relationship between the state and citizens instead of having a citizenship tie between the two ties. "There is no sense of citizenship between the Lebanese people and the government or the state – it is an interest and service-led relationship" explains P2. Consequently, this paves the way for clientelism and nepotism which incentivizes the exclusion of merit-based employment that works in favor of women and minorities: "And I, again, stress the importance of really seeing what politics in Lebanon means and also in government, you are recruited to serve, of course, those who have recruited you because it's not a meritocratic recruitment. And in Lebanese politics, you are recruited to serve the interests of your parties. And you will not be welcomed if you have a different agenda", affirms P1. Additionally, many women explain how security reasons remain a huge barrier. P5, upon her appointment, raised the concern of being

"assassinated or kidnapped" and she has a family to care for if anything happens to her. In addition to the above, many participants such as P5 explained how the current status quo is so occupied with solving more "important and system-related" issues than caring about the affairs of women and their fair representation.

B. Part II: Presence of Women in informal politics vs. formal politics

The second part of the thesis delves into a second Pandora box, one that aims at debunking the enigma of why Lebanese women are very much present at the lower level of decision-making and the lower level of party politics but when it comes to formal representation and formal political appointment, the number starts to decrease. Most participants agree with this statement and arguments were various. As one participant P3 explained, men use women as tools because they believe they are only capable of being soldiers on the ground instead of presiding over the "beast" called the government. P3 continues: "You would see some men who are progressive, and it gives the organization extra points to see many groups of women working hard, but, in reality, they wanted soldiers to work on the ground, and it proves that this is how women are usually perceived, while men are taught to aspire for power." She adds that men appoint women at lower levels to look "open-minded and progressive" while at the end of the day, they want things done, now and efficiently, "something women are good at doing". P12 adds that when looking at the Lebanese civil service, the base of the civil service is mainly women dominated and while gradually going up the latter, the number starts decreasing because this is when grand decisions start to be made and this is when men start to tighten their grip over these positions because there lies power and authority.

All participants believe that women are not encouraged to run for these positions, and they would rather stay in their confined lane, one that is in the background to avoid backlash if failure were to happen. They believe that with the previous examples of women in government and how they are ferociously attacked for being "bad leaders", they fear high-ranking positions because the stakes are higher. In addition to the gender stereotypes of female leadership in patriarchal societies, when women fail the normal reaction by society and male counterparts would be "See? This is why women are not meant to reach leadership positions, they are better at being soldiers, but not officers" as P3 points out and adds the following "this is how they perceive women: that they are better at being second class and not class A employees. They are convinced that it's true and they've reached a point where they even convinced us, and I'll tell you why, as a woman, you start working while knowing that everyone is waiting for you to fail to criticize and attack you, so you start believing that staying at a lower level is for your good to protect yourself from accusations and attacks and to avoid the blame and responsibility that comes with taking big decisions or the important policies that might end up failing, so you stay in the shadows".

P12 placed a finger on the incentivizing positions that the civil service used to provide for women and how family-friendly they were. She explained that these women sought these jobs for the sake of the convenience they entailed and not because they wished to go up the ladder and attain a decision-making position. She draws a comparison between the private sector and the public sector – specifically before the economic crisis – and how it was easier for women to have a work-family balance kind of life, as civil servants had flexible jobs and shifts through which they can still have time for her family and children.

Within the lines of leadership, many participants addressed the notion of "how women lead differently than men". Most participants such as P1, P5, P9, and P10 were referred to as "reformists" and they were attacked for being so. In addition to being seen as "bad leaders," women fought for their leadership style with its revamping component. P1 explains that when women join a political party as a member, they are expected to obey and fit in and not try to aim higher because the point of their membership is to support the party leader to achieve his end only and nothing further, "if she is lucky enough and has the blessing of the leader, he might give her a managerial position within the party lines; however, she is not given any more leeway to take decisions on her own", P2 confirms. P12 explained and gave the examples of women secretary generals of some political parties who explicitly stated that they do not care whether they elect women, they use their female working force to mobilize votes and expand the voting base of the political party. They have no gender empowerment agenda nor care to advance these goals at the time.

A final point regarding this tenet is the criticism of reformist ideas that women wish to advance in the government when they join key positions in the government. P1 shares her own experience where she was referred to as "crazy" and "delusional" for thinking that she is going to accomplish what she is aiming to achieve within the organization she presides over. Nevertheless, P3 and P9 believe that women are more detail-oriented, and technical, follow the rules, and are perfectionists in the way they lead and would not accept producing just "any work" unlike men. One of them states "I don't think men worry as much as we do about multitasking because they rarely care about perfecting everything. And I think that you find this in every organization, not just in ours"-P3. P1 and P9 explained that when they joined the administration as DG,

they were criticized by their staff for how they aimed at changing the mentality of the civil service. They were looked at as a weak link for introducing different strategies than their predecessors, they explicitly state that this kind of leadership is not recommended because it messes with the historically established interest-led leadership style adopted for ages by previous male directors.

In this section, I have presented the findings collected through fourteen different semi-structured interviews with participants. In the first part, the main themes addressed were in the form of challenges that women face to enter the political field in Lebanon. These mainly revolved around institutional barriers in the form of formal barriers such as legal system and personal status laws and informal institutional barriers relevant to patriarchal culture, religion, and informal networks. The second part delved into the reasons why women are endorsed at the lower level of participation while secluded from the formal channel of politics.

CHAPTER VI

DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I discuss answers to the research question of this thesis and triangulate a relationship between the interview findings, the research question, and the main themes addressed in the above literature review. Originally, four themes were raised in the literature review on the institutionalization of the exclusion of women from senior positions in the government: these revolved around legal institutional barriers, patriarchal cultures, religious intervention, and informal networks. Interestingly, these were the main findings that were also raised by the interviewed participants in this project. It is important to note that these findings have given us many more insights for many reasons: firstly, they addressed the case of Lebanon; second, they centered on women's experiences in cabinets and directorate generals in Lebanon and not just parliament; third, it took an institutional approach whereby participants addressed their answers and themes under an institutionalized framework of exclusion, which also places the theoretical framework adopted in this paper at the heart of its purpose. And fourth, what we could not find in the literature review is understanding the pattern of excluding women from formal politics while they happen to play a pivotal role at the level of informal party politics and civil service.

A. Legal formal barriers

The Lebanese legal system remains an immense barrier against women not only emancipation on the level of political representation but also on every social, economic, cultural, and psychological level. The Lebanese constitution is considered a gender-blind legal text stripped from equity clauses that incentivize women in every aspect of

their lives. One of the major obstacles that women face is the fifteen different personal status laws that discriminate against women vis-à-vis men in their family: father, brother and husband. These laws are designed to regulate the private lives of Lebanese citizens, while all other matters are resolved under a civil code within public courts. Women in Lebanon remain legitimately unequal and unprotected by the country's legal system: they are not protected from any sort of violence, are stripped from fundamental rights such as granting their children and foreign husband citizenship, economic rights in terms of inheritance, social rights in marriage and custody and many more. In addition, the legal system does not tailor to the disadvantaged section of society whereby no gender quota has been adopted for the legislature and executive and women are left to snatch their pieces by force, if ever. Within the same lines, the electoral system – supposedly proportional and presumably to be more open to women as international experience shows – is engineered in a matter that keeps the weak out and strengthens the grip of the elites over their seats. No gender quota, electoral law reform, nor the adoption of a civil code has been adopted in Lebanon. Women are considered second-level citizens and minors under the law and have no agency over their bodies, lives, and futures. How can we expect them to thrive at the public and political level when they are sidelined within their own private lives?

B. Patriarchy, religion, and informal networks

On an informal level, Lebanese women are informally discriminated against through informal channels of exclusion whereby a patriarchal, religiously sectarian mentality prevents them from becoming independent agents with autonomy over their bodies, fate, and life. The only identity that is attached to women in this society is

shame. In addition to the legal formal institutional barriers, Lebanese women are informally segregated in the name of patriarchy in their own homes and workplaces. Politics is not a safe place for Lebanese women as the political outlook does not cater to the "endowed" responsibilities that they were entitled to from the minute they are born. Lebanese warlords have created a closed web where only the privileged cigar club members can enter, placing women at the borders of Lebanese politics overall. Nevertheless, for women to attain certain positions, they are asked to let go of something in return whether it was their private lives, their values, or their families. Even when women join politics – regardless of the branch – they are treated as inferiors and incompetent. Unfortunately, these patterns have been produced and reproduced throughout Lebanese history as women have always been looked down upon, especially concerning their political participation on a formal level.

C. Present in informal but absent in formal

What we could not see in the literature review is an understanding of the presence of women in informal politics and party politics, their abundance at the lower level of civil service, and their absence in top management. Figure 1 below was presented and explained by P12 where Lebanese women occupy the base of the civil service leadership but gradually become absent as we reach the tip of the pyramid.

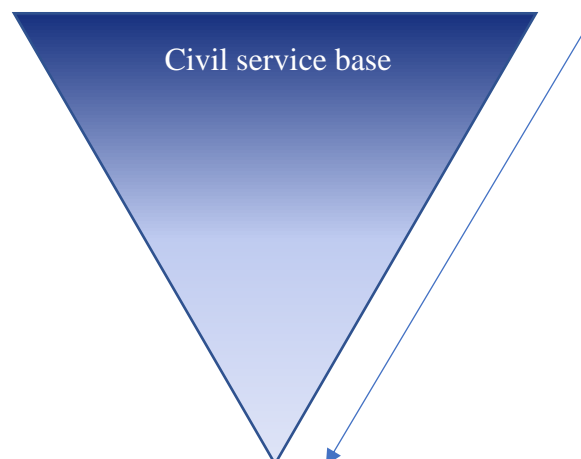


Figure 1: Pyramid representing the presence of women in civil service

As all participants agreed, women are more present at the base level of the civil service but absent in Class A positions – even Class B – in certain instances. We can draw an analysis that women are looked at as working bees who can get the job done instead of decision and policymakers. All the above-mentioned institutional barriers ranging from formal legal frameworks, patriarchal culture, religion, and informal networks have placed women as soldiers solely who receive commands from the commanders in chief, categorizing them as followers instead of leaders. This equation portrays the status of women in Lebanon not only at the political level but translates in their own homes and work environments overall. The institutional barriers that have been historically entrenched within the Lebanese system have cornered women in a position whereby they only need to go through those informal networks designed by warlords to secure a seat; they need to abide by the rules and the values of the reigning parties to have a voice and what is mostly obscene is that these two conditions do not guarantee their arrival to formal politics. This loop has also generated a conception in the minds of women where not only they are discouraged to run for such positions but are made to believe that they are not worthy of a high-ranking position in the government. In certain cases, women are appointed – usually in times of crises – a phenomenon known as the glass cliff. In these circumstances, the risks of governments failing are high and if women were appointed, it would be easy to point fingers at these women who failed just because they are mere women and do not belong in these places.

Without legal support, a revamping of patriarchal religious beliefs, and access to networks or maybe a formulation of a new progressive network, women will remain as comrade-in-arms or completely excluded from politics and public administration in Lebanon.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There exists a bouquet of recommendations that can address the underrepresentation of women in parliament, cabinet, and public administration. More specifically, recommendations that can provide women with a safe environment where they can prove their efficient leadership and management in the government.

A. Recommendations

1. Adopting a civil code that regulates the personal lives of Lebanese citizens

Firstly, a law governing the civil personal status must be voted on as soon as possible, and this is in the application of Order No. 60 LR of 18 March 1936, which dates from the time of the French mandate, and which constitutes a law supplementing the Constitution of 1926. This provides for the application of civil law to citizens who are not subject to the personal status of one of the faith communities. This consequently places personal status laws as irrelevant and alleviates the discrimination they pose against women from all different confessional groups. The civil code treats women as equal citizens among each other from all the different confessional groups and treats them as self-determined agents who take ownership of their fates and lives.

2. Adopting a gender quota

Secondly, positive discrimination measures should be taken to strengthen the presence of women in state institutions, particularly positions of power. In addition to reforming the current electoral law that has been designed to reinforce the status quo, a gender quota must be voted on to ensure a decent number of women in the legislature. Even though this measure remains temporary, it is until present the only structural method to guarantee the representation of women in politics until it becomes common practice. As for the electoral law, the current one must be dismantled as it privileges the current status quo and keeps them immune from public scrutiny and accountability. In that sense, a proportional system that is more welcoming to women, with a well-designed quota policy should be passed to fight the formal institutional barriers that women face.

3. Networks created by women for women

A final recommendation would be for women to start forming their networks for them to mark their turf within the political scene. For years, women have tried to break into the cycle that Lebanese warlords have created and safeguarded but have failed in doing so or have generated small gains here in there that did not materialize on a national level. Instead of trying to accompany current parties and movements, needs and agendas revolving around women should be unified under one purpose and formulated under one network for it to be able to face the "beast" called the current status quo. One of the major challenges that were raised in the data collection phase is that agendas raised by civil society or women leaders do not align with each other and consensus

over one voice or purpose still lacks. If women themselves do not collaborate on all fronts, efforts will shatter, and ends will not be met.

B. Concluding remarks

This thesis project looked at the underrepresentation of women in cabinets and senior positions in public administration from an institutionalist lens, particularly from feminist and historical.

It started with presenting a general overview of the topic in Chapter 1, giving us an outlook on the state of women in Lebanon and the historical episodes they went through from the Lebanese civil war until the present. In Chapter 2, we presented a comprehensive literature review that raises the major themes that arise when discussing the underrepresentation of women in politics and public administration. Within this chapter, the conceptual framework of institutionalism, historical institutionalism, and feminist institutionalism is conceptually explained to present the thesis under its umbrella. Afterward, chapter 3 presented the methodology adopted to collect data and analyze it within the conceptual framework. In this vein, chapter 4 showcased the key findings that were collected during the semi-structured interviews conducted with the participants where multiple themes have been raised that fortify and add up to the literature review presented in the previous chapter. In Chapter 5, data analysis has been conducted where the themes raised in the key findings have been coupled with the themes of the literature review and were followed by recommendations presented by some of the participants in this study.

The research question of this thesis aimed to understand the role of institutions, both formal and informal, on the representation of women in both cabinets and senior

public administration; consequently, it aimed to debunk why women are present and active in the lower backend of politics while absent in the forefront. Many themes were raised which mainly focused on the legal barriers, the patriarchal culture and religion, and the strength of informal networks historically planted in politics. Nevertheless, women are seen better as working bees rather than queen bees and consequently, they are seen more often as army soldiers rather than commanders in politics. All of this has culminated in a product of having a state that is mainly led by male figures while women at the lower base do the hard work. This exclusion has been historically institutionalized and normalized in an undemocratic and patriarchal society such as Lebanon and efforts to dismantle this challenge have gone in vain on multiple occasions. Hence, efforts have to be introduced differently and more efficiently whereby women start to support each other by creating their webs of connection to counter the hurdles that society, history, and men have placed in their way.

As for future research, given that this study held multiple limitations, it would be interesting to look at this representation from a grassroots level. This study focused on a high-level understanding where participants were women within the governmental sector sharing their experiences. This creates a funnel for further exploration by studying perceptions of female and male citizens towards this topic. Nevertheless, in addition to only taking up a grassroots level of participation, it would be interesting to look at this underrepresentation from the perspective of male participants as well.

In addition to the above, given that this underrepresentation has been explored through an institutionalist lens, it would be interesting to draw on the theory of social change developed by Lina Khatib (2008) to explore how policies relevant to women, children, and gender minorities never take up priorities on policy agendas. On another

hand, it would also be interesting to adopt a policy-driven approach to study legal frameworks and the adoption of the gender quota, examples include the multiple stream framework approach (John Kingdon, 1984) or maybe the policy diffusion and adoption approach (Berry & Berry, 1990). These frameworks would focus more on the failure of adopting sustainable policies related to women in Lebanon.

APPENDIX I

Script sent to participants:

My name is Sarah Al Bouery, MEPI TLG graduate scholar at AUB and currently working on my master's thesis for the program of public administration. I am writing to seek the participation of X in the thesis dissertation I am working on centering on the representation of women in leading positions in the public administration in Lebanon and how have formal and informal institutions impacted this representation.

AUB Social & Behavioral Sciences Invitation to Participate in a Research Study

**This notice is for an AUB-IRB Approved Research Study
for Dr. Tania Haddad at AUB: th18@aub.edu.lb**

It is not an Official Message from AUB

Hello. My name is Sarah Al Bouery, an M.A. student at AUB pursuing my master's in public administration. I am inviting you to participate in a research study about the role of institutions, both formal and informal, in the representation of women in leading decision-making positions in Lebanese public administration.

You will be asked to participate in an interview to give your opinion on how you would think that institutions impact the representation of women and whether you think informal institutions and formal ones have an equal degree of influence or the possibility of having one dominating the other.

You are invited because we are targeting women senior civil servants, women current and former ministers, scholars in the field of gender, and experts from the non-profit sector. You are eligible for this study because you meet the eligibility criteria of this study.

The estimated time to complete this interview is approximately 20 mins. The research is conducted online and is hosted on the AUB server.

Could you kindly forward this email to fellow scholars, experts in the field of gender, or senior women civil servants? If they are willing to participate, they can reply to the email.

Please read the consent form and consider whether you want to be involved in the study.

If you have any questions about this study, you may contact the investigator/research team: Dr. Tania Haddad - th18@aub.edu.lb for further information regarding the study. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Most sincerely,

Sarah Al Bouery

APPENDIX II

Interview questions:

- Can you walk me through the procedure you followed to reach the current leadership position you currently hold?
- Were you recruited through elections from your internal organization or through ministerial appointment?
- Can you list some of the challenges that you faced to achieve the current position you are holding?
- Do you feel like you need to invest an additional effort in your position considering you are a woman in a sector that is dominated by men?
- Can you describe your role in taking decisions within the public administration or ministry you are currently leading or have led during your tenure?
 - Disclaimer: For the sake of safety and protection, and in line with principles of confidentiality and anonymity, we invite you to make sure not to disclose any information that can directly or indirectly identify you.
- Can you walk me through the factors that limit the representation or appointment of women to your current position?
- Do you think that legal factors such as the personal status laws are the only challenge against women to run for office or to be appointed such as yours?
 - Probe: Can you walk me through the other factors that have challenged your appointment, or could challenge other women were they in your shoes?
- Can you describe some of the behaviors or norms that are demonstrated by male counterparts that have affected the representation of women in public administration or cabinets?
- Multiple efforts have been pushed to implement a gender quota for women in parliament, cabinets, and bureaucracies but none materialized. To what can you link this pressure and/or rejection?
- Studies have shown that the representation of women is highly linked to lower levels of corruption in the public sector. How can you interpret the following in the context of Lebanon?
- Formal institutions such as laws, rules, and regulations and informal institutions such as behaviors, and norms have impacted the representation of women in positions like yours. Do you feel the interplay between these two is equal or do you feel like one dominates over the other? Kindly elaborate and justify your choice.
- Studies explain that the presence of women in informal politics guarantees their presence in formal ones. How applicable do you think this is in Lebanon?
 - Probe: would you agree that women are only allowed in informal politics when they only support the current status quo?
 - Probe: Multiple political parties in Lebanon have women working for them in informal politics, however, are not seen in the formal channels of politics. To what can you relate that?
- Do you think there are structural methods to adopt to overcome informal barriers that have been engineered by male politicians in Lebanon? Can you list them?

- Tentative question: In the wake of the coming parliamentary elections, do you consider yourself optimistic towards the representation of women after the several dismissals pushed by male leaders in the government?
- If you wish to add anything that was not probed in the above questions, kindly feel free to share your idea(s).

APPENDIX III

Participants in the study:

<i>No.</i>	<i>Participant</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Job position</i>	<i>Interview details</i>
1	Participant 1	P1	Director General	In person, April 20 th , 2022
2	Participant 2	P2	Gender expert	In person, April 26 th , 2022
3	Participant 3	P3	Director General	In person, May 23 rd , 2022
4	Participant 4	P4	Minister	In person, May 17 th , 2022
5	Participant 5	P5	Minister	In person, May 10 th , 2022
6	Participant 6	P6	Gender expert	Zoom, May 5 th , 2022
7	Participant 7	P7	Director General	Written answers, June 6 th 2022
8	Participant 8	P8	Director General	Zoom, May 17 th , 2022
9	Participant 9	P9	Gender expert	Zoom, May 23 rd , 2022
10	Participant 10	P10	Director General	Zoom, May 19 th , 2022
11	Participant 11	P11	Gender expert – NGO	Zoom, May 26 th , 2022
12	Participant 12	P12	Gender expert – NGO	Zoom, June 6 th , 2022
13	Participant 13	P13	Judge	Written answers, June 19 th , 2022
14	Participant 14	P14	Minister	Zoom, June 16 th , 2022

Table 1: Matrix of participants

APPENDIX IV

Consent Form for Interview including Taping of Interview

Understanding the impact of formal and informal institutions on the representation of Lebanese women in public administration

Principal investigator: Dr. Tania Haddad, Assistant Professor

Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Department of political studies and public administration

Consent Form for Interview including Taping of Interview

As part of the Master's in Public Administration program at the Department of Political Studies and public administration at – the American University of Beirut, we are conducting a study that involves research that focuses on the representation of Lebanese women in public administration. This study aims to understand the impact of formal institutions (laws, rules, and constitutions) and informal institutions (norms, behaviors of actors) on the representation of Lebanese women in senior positions in the Lebanese public administration.

Please read the below carefully before providing your consent and if you have any inquiries, kindly reach out to the research team at any point using the mentioned below contact information.

Participation

We have reached out to your organization with an interest to interview with you for this study. The purpose of this study is about the representation of women in public administration and the impact of informal institutions on this representation.

Participation is on a purely voluntary basis.

The targeted sample size for this research project is up to 15 participants. Participants must be Lebanese. Participants should come from different public administrations with each having played a different role in the Lebanese bureaucracies and should come from different civil society organizations and academia. This will help the co-investigator understand the reason behind the current gender power dynamics in the public administrations in Lebanon and how it resulted in the current underrepresentation of women in public administration. For public sector participants, they should have a leadership or managerial role i.e. be Class A employees within the organization as the study does not focus on lower-level employees but rather women who have attained a leadership role within the organization were the participant from the public sector. Participants must have worked at the chosen organization for at least one year, and the higher the level/position they occupy the more years would be preferred. Participants do not necessarily need to be residing in that leadership position during the time of the data collection and they can be former bureaucrats, public administrators, or ministers.

This consent form is to explicitly request your help in disseminating information on the topic of this research project while clearly stating your rights and receiving your consent for participating.

You have been recruited after you agreed to conduct this interview when an email was sent to you and the organization or when we contacted you via phone call.

I will interview you for about 20 minutes. It will be conducted either face-to-face or virtually. If face-to-face, the interview will be taking place in a safe environment where you feel comfortable answering the prepared list of interview questions. If virtual, the interview will be done on Zoom, in a locked meeting that only the research team and the participant will be able to access.

Participating in this research project does not generate any monetary or non-monetary benefit for the participant.

Withdrawal

If you do not wish to answer any particular question in the interview, you may skip the question by saying “skip” during the interview. All data collected are treated as confidential information. Your name is not included in my research analysis. Likewise, you are not required to provide names in certain events that occurred with you.

If at any time and for any reason, you would prefer not to answer any questions, please feel free not to. If at any time you would like to stop participating, please tell me. We can take a break, stop and continue at a later date, or stop altogether. You will not be penalized in any way for deciding to stop participation at any time. It is important to also note that no direct benefits should be anticipated from participating in this study.

Refusal to participate or decide to withdraw from the study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled and will not affect the participant’s relationship with your work environment, the research team or AUB and AUBMC.

Data storing

All data shared with my advisor are aggregated data and have no identifiers that could be linked to your personal responses. The completed interview will be kept on my password-protected computer. Three years after the end of the research study, the taped interviews will be destroyed. I will keep aggregated research data on my computer files for future use in other research studies on the mentioned topic.

I would like to tape record this interview to make sure that I remember accurately all the information you provide. I will keep these tapes in a locked file on my password-protected computer. They will only be used by me. The interview tapes will be shared with my advisors. Only the aggregated data from the interviews (which will have no identifiers) will be shared. You may still participate in the interview if you do not want to be taped.

Records will be monitored and may be audited by the Institutional Review Board while assuring confidentiality.

Research team contact information

If you have questions, you are free to ask them now. If you have questions later, you may contact me at sga34@mail.aub.edu, Department of political studies and public administration, American University of Beirut, telephone: +961 71 65 3576.

You can also contact the primary investigator Assistant Professor of Public Administration & Nonprofit Management Dr. Tania Haddad by email: th18@aub.edu.lb

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, you can contact the following office at the American University of Beirut:

Social & Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board

American University of Beirut

Riad El Solh, Beirut 1107 2020, Lebanon

Phone: 00961 -1-350000 or 1 374374, ext: 5445

Fax: +961 1 738025

Email: irb@aub.edu.lb

Do you voluntarily consent to take part of the study? – Oral consent

Consent to Record Interview

Do you also voluntarily consent to this interview being recorded?

Consent to Quote from Interview before starting

I may wish to quote from this interview either in the presentations or articles resulting from this work. A made-up name will be used to protect your identity.

Do you agree to allow me to quote from this interview?

Please tick the boxes below to confirm your choices:

Consent for participation

Consent for taping of interview

Consent for quoting from interview

If you chose to be interviewed, you will be given a copy of this consent form.

Confirmation of Consent to Record Interview before starting the recording.

Do you voluntarily consent to this interview being recorded?

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