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Understanding Corruption in Iraq: A Theoretical Perspective

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Abstract

This paper aims to improve our understanding of the causes of corruption using five theoretical frameworks: rational choice theory; principal-agent theory; rent-seeking theory; organisational culture theory; and situational context theory. These theories were chosen because they are the most frequently used theories in the literature on the causes of corruption. They are listed in this paper roughly on a continuum from the most individualistic explanation to the most social explanation. We use Iraq as a case study to test the applicability of these theories. Our finding is that none of the five theories provides in isolation a definitive explanation of the causes of corruption in Iraq, but each of them contributes some valuable insights into those causes. We conclude that the most satisfactory way to understand the causes of corruption in Iraq is to recognise that there are both individualistic and social factors at work, and of crucial importance is the interaction between them. In short, without corrupt individuals, there would be no corruption in Iraq; but without corrupt cultures, there would be few corrupt individuals.

Keywords:
Causes of corruption; theories of corruption; Iraq; corrupt individuals; corrupt cultures.

(1) Introduction

Corruption is endemic in the majority of countries across the world and it appears to be growing rather than receding (Transparency International, 2022). It is generally viewed as a scourge in that it undermines the prospects of economic development and the principles of good governance (Gray and Kaufmann, 1998). However, attempts to root it out are fraught with difficulties, one of which is to determine precisely what causes it. As Heywood (1997) argues, corruption is a complex phenomenon and this makes it hard to adequately explain its causes. There are ambiguities inherent in the conception of 'the causes of corruption' in the social sciences; at present, it seems that there is no consensus on the answer to this question. Corruption may be defined as 'an intentional act for more or less private gain' (Brooks 1909). This paper aims to examine the five main theories that purport to explain the causes of corruption in an attempt to understand which theories fit the context of Iraq. The five theories are rational choice theory; principal-agent theory; rent-seeking theory; organizational culture theory; and situational context theory. The order in which these five theories are listed below is a con-tinuum between the most individualistic theory and the most social or cultural theory.

(2) Rational choice theory

This theory is the most individualistic theory and traces the cause of corruption in individual psychology. The rational choice theory postulates that people make rational decisions based on a cost-benefit analysis of the pros and cons of the choices available to them (Dimant, and Schulte, 2016). Concerning corruption, this theory analyses the cost and benefit of corrupt acts by focusing on incentives for, and punishment of, corrupt behaviour by following Becker's crime and punishment approach in 1968. The central idea of this theory is that corrupt officials who try to maximize their utilities at the expense of public utilities expect that advantages outweigh disadvantages, and rationally decide to become corrupt. In other words, it is the calculation of arguments for, and arguments against, that leads individuals to act corruptly (De Graaf, 2007). According to Rose-Ackerman (1997), public officials can be corrupt when they see that the potential advantages of corrupt behaviour are greater than the potential disadvantages. Likewise, Klitgaard (1988) argues that individuals may become corrupt if they perceive that the potential benefits are greater than the potential penalties. The core issue centres on the probability of being caught versus the gains obtained by corrupt behaviour (Dimant, and Schulte, 2016). According to this theory, therefore, the cause of corruption is individuals knowingly and delib-erately choosing corrupt options when they make decisions.

Critics of the rational choice theory say it is too simplistic because it ignores the social context in which most corruption takes place. The causes of an individual's corrupt behaviour cannot be analysed in isolation from the social context. According to the critics, an individual's willingness to be corrupt may derive from their

social perception and depend on corrupt acts by other individuals in their society (David, 2010; Dong et al., 2012). The theory does not describe the conditions in which corrupt behaviours occur, and neither does it consider the contextual features that encourage the individual to become corrupt; it is instead focused on corrupt officials as though they chose to be corrupt in isolation.

In the case of corruption in Iraq, we can see both the plausibility and the deficiency of rational choice theory. The plausibility lies in the fact that individual officials do make conscious decisions to engage in corrupt activity (Abdullah, 2019). The deficiency lies in the fact that such decisions are made in the context of social networks which strongly influence individual behaviour. For instance, in Iraq, individuals are members of groups which are divided along political, ethnic and religious lines. These sectarian and factional affiliations, which are called in Arabic muhasasa, protect each other from accusations of corruption launched by other groups. Trust between groups in power increases members' chances of obtaining the benefits of corruption and reduces the chances of being caught. Collusion between groups to protect or to hide each other's corruption constructs a shield to protect each other from accountability. Living within this social context, therefore, people are more likely to be corrupt. This process can be labelled as 'solidarity of corruption' (Abdullah, 2019). In the absence of this enabling social context, there would be much less corruption in Iraq. Corrupt activity has been normalised by the muhasasa system. Corruption is therefore less an individual choice than a group norm.

(2) Principal-agent theory

This theory is less individualistic than the rational choice theory. It is also less materialistic in that the main objective is to wield power rather than obtain wealth (Groenendijk, 1997; Walton and Jones, 2017). The principal-agent theory consists of two key components: principals who are politicians or government ministers and agents who are are bureaucrats at lower ranks. Principals may use their agents as conduits to engage in corruption. Alternatively, or in addition, clients may engage in corruption by using discretionary power given to them by their principals (Klitgaard, 2008; Marquette, and Peiffer, 2018).

For this study, the principal is the party (political elites) given the legal authority to appoint an agent to work in the public administration on behalf of the principal. According to principal-agent theory, the monopoly of power within institutions is crucial to the explanation of the incidence of corrupt behaviour. Rose-Ackerman (1997) and Klitgaard (1988) both draw heavily on the principal-agent model. For example, Klitgaard (1991) holds that "corruption equals monopoly plus discretion, minus accountability". As can be seen from this equation, if a principal is given a monopoly of power over public resources and in turn gives officials discretionary power on how public resources are distributed - i.e. how much a particular client should receive - and the

.principal and agent are not accountable for their actions; then the system is prone to corruption

Discretionary power is particularly important in this theory. Within government regulations, officials have a degree of discretionary power in implementing and interpreting the rules. This is because regulations require some flexibility, and thus some discretionary power is needed to facilitate administration. So regardless of how rigid rules and regulations are designed to be in administrative systems, there is often sufficient room for personal judgments to be made (Myint, 2000), and this can present opportunities to become involved in corrupt practices. Jain (2002) explains that "discretionary power includes the authority to design regulations as well as to administer them …and corruption may occur when higher rents are associated with misuse of discretionary powers". Note that the discretionary power may be used for corrupt purposes by either the principal or the agent or both. In the case of the agent, if there is no proper check exercised by principals over their agents' .actions, the agents may use their discretionary power to engage in a wide range of corrupt practices

However, critics of principal-agent theory claim it lacks clarity (De Graaf, 2007). For example, the distinction between the monopoly of power and discretionary power is not very clear. Another problem is the difficulty of measuring discretionary power (Jain, 2002). A third criticism is that not every use of discretionary power constitutes corruption. Fourth, discretionary power depends on the design of regulations and sometimes these .(regulations are so rigid that they rule out any discretion (Goudie and Stasavage, 1998

In the case of Iraq, principal-agent theory helps to explain corruption that existed for many decades before the Iraq wars. Long before 2003, the Baath party built its centralized machinery which restricted power to the inner circle of Saddam's family (Tripp, 2002). Strong principal-agent relationships were constructed within the Baath party, and the state had become a family fiefdom. The principal offers public benefits to the agent in exchange for their electoral or political support (Rothstein, and Varraich, 2017). Concerning the case of Iraq after 2003, this principal-agent network was not destroyed but only changed in form. The new form of the principal-agent network was divided into two party groups based on the muhasasa system of 'sectarian appointments' shared between groups in power. This system gives political elites (principals) enough power to employ as many people as they can from their supporters. In return, political principals expect to obtain enough political support from their agents (clients) to win elections. Through this system, party affiliations have become means for exerting influence and obtaining employment, financed from state funds. After 2003, a party's capacity to obtain state funds depends on the extent to which the party influences government. Through this system, the political factions reward their political supporters through the public payroll and they use public contracts to enrich businessmen close to the political elites. Nevertheless, there is little focus on the accumulation of wealth, and there are few reports of bribes: the misuse of power is not driven by the desire for personal economic benefit, but for electoral gain, yet it remains corruption (Abdullah, Gray, and Clough,

2018). Motivation for corrupt acts in Iraq does not, therefore, always derive solely from rational choice but a myriad of power-based networks such as political, factional, ethnic or religious affiliations.

However, the principal-agent theory does not explain all corruption in Iraq. Much corruption has little to do with the monopoly or discretionary use of political power. For example, it may arise from the monopoly of economic power, as the theory of rent-seeking explains.

(3) Rent-seeking theory

Rent-seeking theory moves further than the principal-agent theory does from the individualistic format of rational choice theory, in that it presupposes a complex social context in which to operate. To understand what rent-seeking is, we must explain its relation to profit-seeking. In some competitive models of the market, profit-seeking is simply entrepreneurship or income maximisation and as such is a perfectly normal and wholly productive activity (Buchanan et al., 1980). Profit-seeking activities by, for example, shopkeepers, produce results which would not be deemed by anyone as socially bad activity. However, such profit-seeking becomes problematic when externalities are taken into account. For instance, profit-seeking by an industrialist would be regarded as socially harmful if it resulted in pollution of the air or land or water resources adjacent to their industrial plant, and this social harm outweighed the private marginal benefit. So profit-seeking may be benign, or malign, depending on its circumstances. Rent-seeking is a form of profit-seeking that falls into the category of causing malign externalities when it involves seeking an unfair advantage – i.e., an advantage that is denied to other competitors. For example, some groups within a society may organize themselves as special interest/pressure groups to increase their influence over distributional outcomes. According to Mbaku (2000), this process of attempting to impact public policy outcomes is called rent-seeking if it entails obtaining some advantage that is not available to competitors (see also Hartle, 1983).

Rent-seeking can be created when lawmakers use contrived scarcity to favour special interest groups (Lambsdorff, 2002). This can be observed in sectoral economic activities such as foreign exchange, where licences are given to actors who are engaged in some aspects of economic activities which serve to create a 'rent haven' that can be captured by mainly business people Here, the fight for the privilege can be called rent-seeking (Hutchcroft, 1997), and it is an activity that may be precipitated by interest groups either legally by lobbying, or illegally by paying bribes (Rose-Ackerman 1999, pp. 15-24). Such rent-seeking commonly arises because politicians seek to be re-elected by securing interest groups to finance their electoral campaigns, and these interest groups do so to improve their ability to obtain valuable economic rents once the politicians take office.

The critical test of corruption is whether rent-seeking arises out of a monopolistic situation. According to

Coolidge and Rose-Ackerman (2000), rent-seeking by state actors is synonymous with corruption because it is harmful to national wealth in that it is unearned personal gain extracted from public resources by self-seeking politicians and bureaucrats. But harm to the national wealth is not sufficient reason to designate rent-seeking as corrupt: there has to be an element of monopolisation enjoyed by the rentiers. The necessary and sufficient element of monopolisation is recognised by many other commentators, including Klitgaard (1991), according to whom corruption occurs when governmental intervention in the economy creates long-term artificial scarcity by conferring monopolistic rights on economic actors (see also Williams, 1999; Lambsdorff, 2002; and Jain, 1998). Corrupt rent-seeking has only one condition – a monopolistic situation – and issues of legality/ illegality or private/public interest is not relevant to the definition of corrupt rent-seeking but only to its justi- fication. We may condemn corrupt rent-seeking behaviour more if it is illegal or serves some private good such as favouring politically connected firms or diverting public resources from procurement contracts towards specific suppliers, but we call it preferential, discriminatory and therefore corrupt treatment whether it is legal or illegal (Sawaan, 2012). A rent-seeking act does not become corrupt unless it results from a privileged or monopolistic position.

A famous example of monopolistic rent-seeking corruption is that presided over by Benazir Bhutto, the former Prime Minister of Pakistan when her husband obtained a licence as a monopoly importer of gold into Paki- stan. Another case is in Saudi Arabia when the son of the interior minister obtained a car repairs monopoly license, by benefiting from his father's position. His father convinced the king to issue a decree in which the annual inspection of 5 million registered cars should be carried out solely by his son's car repair business (Lambsdorff, 2005).

In the case of Iraq, monopolistic rent-seeking has become endemic as the political parties have taken control over oil revenues and used them to benefit their supporters. A unique feature of rent-seeking corruption in Iraq is the fractionalization of the political system based on the muhasasa principle which makes sectarian divisions the basis of the formation of the government (Dodge, 2013). As a result, political/factional groups extract monopolistic rents through two main sets of actors: state actors and market actors. State actors are political factions inside the government i.e. they have positions such as ministers, vice-ministers, general di- rectors, and heads of the commissions who have the legal power to access public resources and allocate state contracts to generate personal rents exclusively for favoured bidders (Abdullah, 2017). Through this sharing of power/wealth, there has been a dramatic expansion of self-enrichment of many political elites and civil ser- vants in Iraq. This has taken place through government elites controlling the banking system to transfer large amounts of oil money to private contractors outside Iraq. For instance, over the last decades, around US$6.5 billion were transferred from the Iraqi central bank to three fake companies (Rudaw Arabic, 2015).

Market actors are members of politically connected companies who receive more credit than other companies because of preferential treatment. These market actors have control over markets through imperfect competition, and their corrupt rent-seeking is less apparent and ironically legalized which makes the behaviour more complicated and harder to identify. However, following Tanzi's definition of corruption, it can be classified as corrupt behaviour. Tanzi (1998: 564) argued that corruption is like an elephant: while it might not be easy to describe, it is not difficult to identify when observed. We can see two categories of market actor behaviours: the first is privileged treatment given to firms that are owned by political parties directly; the second is privileged treatment given to firms that are owned by political parties indirectly(Abdullah, 2017). The direct category entails each political party in power possessing its firms which are sources of income needed for the party's survival. Public contracts are given to these companies granting them monopolies with no competition. Through this strategy, parties in power have generated large amounts of cash, helping them to establish mass media, institutions and militias which have reinforced their strong patronage system (Al-Mljawi, 2009). The indirect category is more prevalent than the direct category but it is less apparent, more hidden and harder to identify, though not difficult to recognize. This kind of network between politicians and businesses is formed within complicated sets of firms that are owned by businesspersons and their activities are secretly controlled and protected by politicians.

The consequence of these discriminatory practices is therefore monopolization and unfair competition. One Kurdish economist described it as 'muhasasa monopoly capital" through which elites have become millionaires over a short period (Abdullah and Gray, 2022). Such monopolization at both high (state) and low (informal) levels are closely linked to Iraq's factionalized political system whereby power is divided between groups (i.e. parties/sectarian affiliations). State and bureaucratic positions have been distributed based on factional/ethno-sectarian affiliations, called in Arabic muhasasa (sectarian appointments). The highest levels of the state have become fragmented between groups based on sectarian affiliations. Bjorvatn and Selvik (2008) label such high-level rent-seeking as 'regulatory rent-seeking'. Concerning market actors, a large monopoly may be allocated to firms that get support directly or indirectly from political groups in power. This form of corrupt rent-seeking can be labelled 'preferential treatment with politically connected firms. We can observe many of these politically connected firms in the Kurdistan region. However, not all corruption in Iraq is rent-seeking, and not all rent-seeking in Iraq is corrupt.

(4) Organizational culture theory

Organizational culture theory is the third least individualistic of the five theories of the causes of corruption because it focuses entirely on the context of corrupt practices, especially the complex institutional framework that often lies behind systemic corruption in societies. It reminds us that corruption is not only associated with

individuals' intentions but is also related to the culture within organizations. Salanki (2010) points out that "organizational culture refers to a system of values and beliefs that is shared by a particular group of members in lasting homogenization of their concepts". According to Hofstede (1980), organizational cultures are "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one organization from another." For organisational culture theory, the social context creates the environment or condition to support, promote and give rise to corruption. Myrdal (1968) argues that if people see those around them being corrupt, they are more likely to adopt the same behaviour. People who live in a group culture where corruption is normal to find it hard to resist it. When corruption becomes institutionalised in a society it is difficult for officials to remain incorruptible.

Hofstede (2005) theorized that organisational culture contributes to corruption through four dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individual collectivism; and masculinity. Power distance reflects the relationship between those who do not have power in an organization and those who do. The more power-ful people in an organization hold the key to access to wealth, and a large power distance in an organization entails fewer checks and balances against power abuse. People with higher power are rarely asked questions and are virtually inaccessible to those with lower power (Hofstede 2005). This is fertile soil in which corrupt practices can grow (Theobald, 1999). In Iraq, clientelism and nepotism, the patron-client relationship, is a form of power distance, though one that entails reciprocity between the powerful and powerless. Persons of high-level status (patrons) attempt to form relations with people of relatively lower-level status (clients), based on their ethnic or religious ties or even personal ties of reciprocity (Abdullah, Gray, and Clough, 2018). According to Hofstede's analysis, the power distance in Iraq is 80 compared with Iran at 58, Turkey at 66, and Germany and the United Kingdom at 35 (Power Distance Index, 2019). This metric of power distance refers to the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions perceive that power is distributed unequally, scoring them on a scale from 0 to over 100, 0 being the less power distance country and over 100 being the highest power distance country. Countries with high power distances are more corrupt than countries with low power distances. For instance, by looking at Iraq, in the index of Transparency International TI, we can observe this reality. TI produces an index every year called the Perception of Corruption Index (CPI) which ranks countries from the least corrupt to the most corrupt, scoring them on a scale from 10 to 0, with 10 being the least corrupt and 0 being the most corrupt. According to TI in 2003, out of 133 countries, Iraq was ranked 117th and the perception of corruption was 2.2.   In 2021 Iraq was ranked by TI as 157th out of 180 with a score of 23. (see Table 1)

Table 1: Perception of Corruption Index. Source: Transparency International. http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/cpi (Accessed: 13 July 2022).

year	Total number of countries	Rank of Iraq	Score of Iraq
2003	133	113	2.2
2004	145	129	2.1
2005	158	137	2.2
2006	163	160	1.9
2007	179	178	1.5
2008	179	178	1.3
2009	180	176	1.5
2010	178	175	1.5
2011	182	175	1.8
2012	174	169	18
2013	175	175	16
2014	174	174	16
2015	168	168	16
2016	166	176	17
2017	169	180	18
2018	168	180	18
2019	162	180	20
2020	160	180	21
2021	157	180	23

Two observations can be drawn from the above analysis. The first is that Iraq was ranked as a very highly corrupt country. Although the TI index focuses on bribery as the main form of corruption, whereas there are many other forms of corrupt behaviours, it shows the extent of corruption in Iraq. Second, concerning power distance in Iraq, the above analysis shows a high correlation between power distance and pervasive corruption. Typically, countries with high power distance are more corrupt than countries with lower power distance. His- torically, in a country like Iraq, power distance has a legacy with the Baath regime, in which Saddam's power was unquestioned. After 2003, the culture of the Baath party still plays an important role but the patronage system changed from a centralized dynastic form into a decentralized sectarian form (muhasasa) in which elite leaders established their patron-client networks. In this system, because people depend on leaders for jobs and social and economic benefits, they are unwilling to question their leader's actions, and so leaders have few .(restraints on their corrupt behaviour (Abdullah, 2019

The second dimension, uncertainty avoidance, refers to the extent to which individuals feel uncertain about unknown circumstances, and this uncertainty results in situations that stimulate corruption (Husted, 1999; House et al. 2004). Hofstede (2005) says that because ambiguous situations are threatening to individuals, they may respond by resorting to corruption to insure against possible future threats. In the case of Iraq, uncertain- ty avoidance is linked to the informal services of a wasitta or mediator. Iraqis perceive that it would be better to avoid uncertainty by working through informal links to gain positive responses from formal authority. This is because applying for public benefits through formal channels is unlikely to gain personal objectives. Wasitta has become a popular practice in Iraq and it sometimes induces people to pay bribes (Adi, 2014). Since wasitta

has become very popular, people are reluctant to apply for public benefits through official channels. This is also true for private sector companies where they have established links with key political elites or public officials through a series of bribes or to give a percentage of business in a hidden way to secure a licence. Firms without such informal political links are most likely to lose in the local market. Further, people tend to be very conservative concerning risk-taking such as leaving jobs, changing political environment, or even moving house. This is symptomatic of their insecurity which is linked to a fatalistic culture in which people feel unable to control their destiny. As a result, they take every step they can, including corrupt steps, to reduce uncertainty and avoid unexpected situations.

The third dimension, individual collectivism, is defined as ties between individuals who are integrated into strong and cohesive groups, which throughout their lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. It does not refer to the power of the state but the power of the group over the individual. Members of the group have strong expectations of each other and they may break the law in response to peer pressure (Sims et al., 2012). Tribal societies and strong relationships between family members are familiar illustrations of the effects of individual collectivism (Marr, 2012). Clan cultural organizations are characterised by family-type organizations, in which the organization has developed a system of teamwork, shared values, cohesion and collective action. In this culture, members of these organizations are perceived as partners, and leaders attempt to empower them in return for commitment and loyalty to the group (Cameron and Quinn, 2006). This may lead to law-breaking and engaging in corrupt behaviour to satisfy relatives, friends and family, and communities (De Graaf, 2007). The stronger the ethnic ties, the greater the tendency for the members to be more supportive of each other and to become involved in corrupt acts (Duggar and Duggar, 2004), and under these circumstances corruption becomes normalized. For example, gift-giving and nepotism, arising from the social norms of groups and communities, exemplifying the persistence of family, tribal, ethnic, and religious loyalties (Williams, 2000), are forms of corrupt behaviour (Montinola and Jackman, 2002).

Individual collectivism can be seen in Iraqi society where tribal and family traditions impact all aspects of life and, as a result, the administrative behaviour of employees from high levels to low levels is highly personalized and characterized by close relations within organizations. In Iraq, there is a network of friends, family and tribal connections and an orientation toward creating lasting relationships that would facilitate abnormal or illegal practices. Thus, this social connection may have an impact on public officials in that officials may incline to favouritism the members of their community or social group. In Iraq, if you visit an administration, your work is more likely to go well if you know somebody in the department. People say do not visit any administration if you cannot find a mediator (wasita).

The fourth dimension of organisational culture theory, masculinity, focuses on gender division within society. In masculine culture, gender role is more significant than in feminine cultures. People tend to respect masculine values such as assertiveness, aggression, autonomy and competitiveness. In masculine culture, success is measured through advancement in the commercial sphere (Getz and Volkema, 2001). In this culture, the ultimate achievement is more significant than how the goal is achieved. So ends can justify means even if illegal or informal channels would be used to achieve the ends. By contrast, in feminine culture people tend to respect so-called feminine values such as affiliation, nurturance, helpfulness and humility. In this culture, the creation of harmonious relationships within various societal institutions is more important than ultimate success in the commercial sphere (Getz and Volkema, 2001). Swamy et al. (2001) argue that unequal opportunities for different genders in society promote corrupt behaviour because men are more likely than women to be corrupt (see also: Eckel and Grossman, 1998). Therefore, countries with higher gender gaps in public administration are likely to be more corrupt: this is typically true in middle eastern countries. In Iraq, official data published recently by the Commission of Integrity found that women in public administration in Iraq are less subject to corruption charges. And corruption is less in ministers or general directors when women hold these top positions. An effort was made in 2005 to reduce gender inequality in Iraq by requiring that 25% of the parliamentary seat should be filled by women and that women could become general directors, ministers, police officers, and judges.

(5) Situational context theory

In the fifth theory of corruption – situational context theory – the extent of individual agency is at its lowest: social context is dominant, suggesting that corruption is essentially a social phenomenon. This claim is a central element of Bourdieu's theory of social action, which focuses on a relational perspective. Bourdieu's concepts of 'habitus', 'practice' and 'disposition' lie at the heart of this theory (Bourdieu, 1990), as Dicks (2010) explains:

Formally, Bourdieu defines habitus as a property of social agents (whether individuals, groups or institutions) that comprise a 'structured and structuring structure'. It is 'structured' by one's past and present circumstances, such as family upbringing and educational experiences. It is structuring in that one's habitués help to shape one's present and future practices. It is a structure in that it is systematically ordered rather than random or unpatterned. This 'structure' comprises a system of dispositions which generate perceptions, appreciations and practices. The term 'disposition' is, for Bourdieu, crucial for bringing together these ideas of structure and tendency.

Habitus is a concept that Bourdieu uses to stress that individuals who live similar lives share the same habitués

(Bourdieu, 1977). He found a mediating link between individual action at the micro level and social structure at the macro level (De Graaf, 2007). The study of corruption from Bourdieu's perspective focuses on the regularities of corrupt behaviour and also on the process of the internalisation of regularities. For Bourdieu, the study of corrupt behaviour should concentrate on perception, appreciation and the everyday life experiences of bureaucrats (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). This is called a disposition analysis, in which the habitus of a bureaucrat's corrupt behaviour is analysed (De Graaf, 2007).

Applying situational context theory to Iraq, we can find evidence of it in the 'socio-culture' of Iraqi public space, which is legitimised by social practice. The famous Iraqi sociologist, Ali Al-Wardi, in the 1960s and 1970s argues in his two books The Nature of Iraqi Society and The Sultan's Preachers that in Iraqi society there are two fundamental value systems: the religious and the social. The religious value system is Islam, while the social value system is constructed from the Bedouin culture, according to which, individuals have to give full respect to, and be proud of, their Sultan, and there is no adverse judgment of the Sultan for his accumulation of wealth. Both these value systems have helped to support dictators, such as Saddam Hussein and Iraq's political elites after 2003, in each of which, corruption was rife.

However, although Bourdieu's theory of social action offers some insight, it does not show why corruption is "culturally integrated". Moreover, if corruption is 'culturally-based,' we must question whether it exists outside individuals' willingness. In other words, is the theory one of cultural determinism? Dong et al. (2012) argue that the social context creates the environment or condition to support, promote and give rise to corruption, rather than corruption being culturally based. Note that cultural determinism is not the same as genetic determinism. As Andreski (1969) argues, corruption cannot be genetically determined because levels of corruption vary from time to time. For example, Hong Kong used to be massively corrupt but is now very uncorrupted.

(6) Discussion and Conclusion

Each of these five theories provides some interesting insights into the causes of corruption. They interpret those causes from different perspectives which enrich our understanding of the concept. For instance, rent-seeking theory focuses on the financial benefits of controlling state resources, including obtaining inflated salaries, and personal expenses. Through this system, the political factions reward their political supporters through the allocation of public contracts to enrich businessmen close to the political elites. By contrast, principal-agent theory focuses on political benefits for state actors. The principals are political elites, who appoint agents in one-to-one interaction through public sector jobs and welfare benefits. Through these means, political principals expect to obtain enough political support from their agents to win elections. In contrast to both,

rational choice theory focuses on hijacking the accountability process by political elites to protect actors from accountability. caught. Collusion between groups to protect or to hide each other's corruption constructs a shield to protect each other from accountability. In contrast to the above theories, organizational culture theory focuses on collective bargaining characterized by diffuse connections using a wider range of inducements. Here, corruption is characterized by the complementary rights and duties of a model of social ties. It depends on societal trust in the compensation mechanism of social relationships. This kind of connection required officials to favour friends, family, and tribal members. This is a fertile ground for petty corruption which we called mediator or wasita. Finally, situational context theory concentrates on perception, appreciation and the everyday life experiences of corruption. In this environment, individuals have to give full respect to elites in power, and be proud of the Sultan as a charismatic leader, beyond the judgment for his accumulation of wealth. This social environment makes a fertile ground for a popular theme of "patrimonial administration" where political elites remain in power for a long time.

In conclusion, the purpose of this paper was to assess five theoretical models to improve our understanding of the causes of corruption. The results of the analysis show that none of these five theories can individually provide a comprehensive explanation of the causes of corruption, though each of them offers some insight into the causes of corruption in Iraq. Perhaps the answer is that a combination of factors is needed to explain why corruption is so endemic in Iraq. This answer would imply that both individualistic and social factors must be present for corruption to flourish. There must be individuals willing to choose corrupt strategies; and at the same time there must be organisational cultures which promote corrupt practices, before corruption on a large scale can occur. It seems that the interaction between individuals and the social structure in which they live provides the best explanation of the incidence of corruption.

فهم الفساد في العراق: منظور نظري

تهـدف هـذه الورقـة إلى تحسـين فهمنـا لأسـباب الفسـاد باسـتخدام خمسـة أطـر نظريـة: نظريـة الاختيـار العقـلاني، نظريـة علاقـة الوكيـل بالزبائـن، نظريـة البحـث عـن الريـع، نظريـة الثقافـة التنظيميـة ونظريـة السـياق الاجتماعيـة. تـم اختيـار هـذه النظريـات لأنهـا النظريـات الأكثر اسـتخدامًا في الأدبيـات حـول أسـباب الفسـاد. هنـاك سلسـلة متصلـة مـن التفسـيرات حـول اسـباب الفسـاد مـن نظريـات الأكثر فرديـة إلى التفسـيرات الأكثر اجتماعيـة. نسـتخدم العـراق كدراسـة حالـة لاختبـار إمكانيـة تطبيـق هـذه النظريـات. مـا توصلنـا إليـه هـو أنـه لا توجـد أي مـن النظريـات الخمـس تقـدم بمعـزل عـن تفسـير محـدد لأسـباب الفسـاد في العـراق ، لكـن كل واحـدة منهـا تسـاهم ببعـض الـرؤى القيمـة حـول هـذه الأسـباب. نسـتنتج أن الطريقـة الأكثر الواقعيـة لفهـم أسـباب الفسـاد في العـراق هـي أن هنـاك عوامـل فرديـة واجتماعيـة و التفاعـل بينهـما تسـاهم في تفسـير الأسـباب الفسـاد. باختصـار ، بـدون الفاسـدين ، لـن يكـون هنـاك فسـاد في العـراق.

لکـن بـدون ثقافـات فاسـدة ، سـیکون هنـاك عـدد قلیـل مـن الأفـراد الفاسـدین.

الكلمات الرئیسیة (المفتاحیة): أسباب الفساد، نظریات الفساد، العراق، الأفراد الفاسدون و الثقافات الفاسدة

تێگەیشتن لە گەندەڵی لە عێراق دا: تێڕوانینێکی تیۆڕیی

ئـەم تـوێژینەوەیـە ئامانجـی باشترکردنی تێگەیشـتنمانە لـە هۆکارەکانـی گەندەڵی بـە بەکارهێنانی پێنـج چوارچێـوەی تیـۆری: تیـۆری هەڵبـژاردەی عەقڵانـی؛ تیـۆری پەیوەنـد نێـوان سـەرۆك و بریـکاری ؛ تیـۆری کـرێ خـۆری؛ تیـۆری کولتـوری ڕێکخراوەیـی؛ و تیـۆری لایەنـی کۆمەڵایەتـی. ئـەم تیۆوارانـە ریزکـراوون لەسـەر بنچینـەی ئـەوەی کـە تێگەیشـتن لـە هـۆکاری ئـەوەی تـاك بۆچـی ئەچێتـە نێوگەندەڵیـەوە دواتـرە پاڵنـەرە کۆمەڵایەتیـەکان چیـن. عێـراق وەك کەیـس بەکارهێـنراوە بـۆ تاقیکردنـەوە و کاڕیکردنـی ئـەم تیۆریـانـە. دۆزینەوەکەمـان ئەوەیـە کـە هیـچ کام لـە پێنـج تیۆرییـە بـە بەتهـا ڕوونکردنـەوەیەكـی یەكلاکـەرەوە لەبـارەی هۆکارەکانـی گەندەڵی لـە عێراقـدا نـادەن، بـەڵام هەریەکەیـان بـە چەنـد تێڕوانینێکـی جیـاواز ڕاقـەی هۆکارەکانمـان بـۆ دەخاتـە ڕوو. ئـەم تـوێژینەوەیـە بـەو ئەنجامـە گەشـتووە کـە باشـترین ڕێگـە بـۆ تێگەیشـتن لـە هۆکارەکانـی گەندەڵی لـە عێراقـدا ئەوەیـە کـە دان بـەوەدا بنێـن کـە هـەم فاکتـەری تاكگەرایـی و هـەم فاکتـەری کۆمەڵایەتـی ڕۆڵـی خۆیـان دەگیـرن لـە هـۆکاری گەندەڵی. بەکورتـی، ئەگـەر تاكـی گەندەڵ نەبوایـە، لـە عێراقـدا گەندەڵی نەدەبـوو؛ بـەڵام بەبـێ کولتـوورە گەندەڵـەکان، تاكـی گەندەڵ کـەم دەبـوون.

وشەی سەرەکی: هۆکارەکانی گەندەڵی؛ تیۆرییەکانی گەندەڵی؛ عێراق؛ تاكی گەندەڵ؛ کولتووری گەندەڵ

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