

Islamic Movements and Political Parties (The Dialectic of Social Acceptance and Rejection)

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The study aimed to identify the views and positions of Iraqi society members towards the Islamic movements and political parties participating in the political process. These parties represent a complex political phenomenon that has contributed to shaping the political landscape of Iraq, as well as their role in supporting and enhancing stability or exacerbating sectarianism. The study also sought to explore the behaviors and stances of these parties in managing state institutions, their role, and the societal implications that arise from this. Furthermore, the study examined the social capital these Islamic political movements and parties possess, their ability to deepen and accumulate this capital in society, and their capacity to mobilize and utilize it during political and international crises. Additionally, the study aimed to explore the future political prospects of these movements and parties in light of societal and political changes, as well as the effects of cultural invasion and soft power campaigns led by major powers and regional countries on the Iraqi political reality.

To achieve the study's objectives, the descriptive method was adopted. This research method is used to study phenomena as they exist in reality without intervention or alteration, by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to provide a precise description of the phenomenon and identify its characteristics and relationships without aiming to influence it directly. The study was conducted on a sample representing the city of Baghdad, including both the Karkh and Rusafa sides, with a total of 492 Iraqi citizens from various orientations, academic backgrounds, and job functions. The data collection was done through a validated questionnaire designed according to the scientific methodological steps for conducting surveys.

The study reached several conclusions, the most important of which are:

1. The majority of participants (51%) believe that the excessive plurality of Islamic political movements and parties had a primarily pragmatic and utilitarian goal: to gain political gains and power.
2. Participants' responses (67.7%) revealed that the political behavior of these Islamic movements and political parties does not reflect the true face of religion.
3. Approximately 41.5% of participants believe that the popular base of these movements and political parties will shrink and decrease in the coming years.

4. Around 77% of participants confirmed that there is a conflict between the projects of these religious movements and parties and the establishment of a fully integrated state.
 5. About 80% of participants pointed out a relationship between the new political system in Iraq and the emergence and formation of a large number of Islamic political movements and parties.
 6. The majority of participants (60%) believe that religious movements and Islamic political parties cannot offer a common benefit to Iraq due to a lack of trust between their factions, their inability to make decisions, and their lack of freedom to act.
 7. About 88% of participants confirmed that these religious movements and Islamic political parties have a direct influence on the adoption of certain laws and legislations in Iraq.
 8. Most participants (56.3%) observed a negative impact on the building of the state and social cohesion due to these movements and parties.
 9. The majority of participants (64%) stated that the general discourse of these religious movements and political parties in Iraq has been sectarian, radical, and aligned with the interests of religion and sect.
 10. The existence of deviant religious movements and factions in Iraq, whether in the public or political arenas, was confirmed by 85% of participants.
 11. About 61% of participants expect the contributions of Islamic political movements and parties to have been negative in the post-2003 democratic process in Iraq.
 12. The areas most negatively affected by the influence of these religious movements and Islamic political parties on the management of the country were the reputation of religious institutions (48%) and the economy (40%), while the most improved areas were services and reconstruction (42%).
 13. Around 51% of participants confirmed that Islamic political parties have played a supportive role in the formation and persistence of anti-American military forces in Iraq.
- The most widely adhered to and applied concepts by these movements and parties are pluralism (42.9%) and democracy (32.4%), while concepts they reject entirely include freedom (32.1%) and equality (30.5%).

The study concluded with several recommendations, the most important of which are:

1. Religious movements and their parties should adhere to Islamic Sharia and use it as a standard in their dealings with others.
2. Religious movements and their parties should work on rebuilding trust with the Iraqi citizen by implementing the political programs they promised.
3. Religious parties should distance themselves from all issues related to financial and administrative corruption and actively support the state's efforts in combating it.
4. Political movements and forces should develop clear, public programs for the Iraqi citizen, allowing them to distinguish between what is valuable and what is not.
5. Religious movements should reframe and build their religious discourse in a way that aligns with the significant changes in Iraqi society, making it inclusive and focused on their political programs and beliefs, rather than speaking in the name of religion, Sharia, or religious authorities. This would prevent negative perceptions of religion, Sharia, and religious leadership.
6. Religious forces and their movements should establish a higher institution to oversee them, such as a Supreme Council for Religious Political Parties, with the blessing of the highest religious authority in Najaf.
7. Religious parties should renounce all foreign loyalties and affiliations, placing the interests of the country above all others.