

# The Impact of Informal Institutions in the Absence of Strong Formal State Structure: The Role of “Tribal Houses” in Chamchamal, Kurdistan Region-Iraq

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**Abstract**—In assessing a political system, emphasis is often placed on formal state structures and institutions, including multi-party systems, elections, the executive and legislative branches, and judicial bodies. Accordingly, political systems are frequently assessed through the lens of formal institutions. However, in many developing countries in the Middle East, this formal perspective alone fails to capture the full complexity of political dynamics. Informal institutions, which play a crucial role, are often overlooked. In such contexts, regimes, elite decision-making, and citizen behavior are all influenced by informal institutions. Unlike many studies that emphasize formal institutions in the region, this research focuses on the role of informal institutions, specifically examining the influence of “Tribal Houses” in Chamchamal District. The study explores how tribal houses impact governance, with a focus on their effects on political engagement, court decisions, and accountability of officials. Using a questionnaire for data collection, the study aims to assess the influence of tribal houses on these three key pillars of governance in the city.

**Keywords**—Accountability, Court decision, Informal institution, Political engagement, Tribal house.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Most Middle Eastern countries often have weak formal institutional structures. Developing countries generally lack effective mechanisms to prevent corruption and ensure government officials are performing their duties effectively. In such contexts, democratic institutions that enable citizens to hold local politicians accountable are frequently weak, untrustworthy, or even non-existent in certain situations (Tsai, 2007). Under these circumstances, there must be an instrument to compel government officials to take responsibility, organize, and support the public goods and services. Therefore, it is essential to comprehend and discuss informal institutions as they may either support or contradict the operation of formal state institutions.

In Iraq, the significant political transformations in 2003 brought democratic institutions; however, the effectiveness and caliber of these institutions have fallen short of expectations for both researchers and decision-makers. Legislators often appear to prioritize personal financial gain over the formulation of meaningful policies. Corruption and clientelism persist on a large scale, and in numerous rural

as well as certain urban areas, the rule of law is effectively absent (Massoudi, 2023). This raises the question of the roles played by formal and informal institutions in shaping policy within the country. In rural areas, informal institutions or norms and procedures established and enforced outside officially sanctioned channels are frequently as significant as their formal equivalents in shaping the rules of the game. Regimes, the decision-making of elites, and the behavior of citizens are all influenced by informal institutions. Hence, this project explores the function of “Tribal Houses” as an informal institution in the rural town of Chamchamal, Sulaimaniyah, Iraq. In the District, one can find over ten tribal houses dedicated to assisting the community with their social and legal concerns. These houses maintain connections with government institutions and even have the capacity to influence the decisions of recognized state authorities. This study aims to scrutinize the impact of tribal houses on three key areas of democratic politics: political engagement, the rule of law (as reflected in court decisions), and the accountability of officials.

The purpose of this study is to examine how, and to what extent, informal institutions affect formal state structures in

the region. It further aims to provide a deeper understanding of how “Tribal Houses,” as informal institutions, influence political engagement, the enforcement of laws, and the accountability of government officials.

This study seeks to address the following questions:

1. What are the positive and negative effects of Tribal Houses in Chamchamal?
2. To what extent do informal rules bind officials to provide the minimum level of public goods needed to maintain social stability?
3. What is the impact of Tribal Houses on the enforcement of law in the city?

The main hypothesis of this study is that “Tribal Houses” negatively effect on enforcement of the law and political engagement, while positively affecting the accountability of the government officials to provide the minimum level of public services needed.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The study is guided by Informal Institutional Theory, which highlights the influence of unwritten rules, social norms, and traditional structures such as tribal houses on political behavior. Helmke and Levitsky (2006), in their study entitled “Informal Institutions and Democracy Lessons from Latin America,” discuss the effect of institutions on democratic development in Latin American countries, and a main focus on the role and effect of informal institutions on democracy in Latin America. They define informal institutions as socially shared rules created, communicated, and enforced outside officially sanctioned channels. These rules are typically unwritten and are produced by social groups. They also argued that actors need to believe that there is a real consequence for disobeying these unwritten standards, whether it is a loss of job, physical punishment, or just social shame (Helmke and Levitsky 2006). Helmke and Levitsky differentiate four distinct types of informal institutions: substitutive, cooperative, accommodating, and complementary (Siavelis, 2006). The four categories are differentiated by two factors: the strength or weakness of formal institutions and whether the outcomes of adhering to informal norms are similar to or different from those of formal rules (Siavelis, 2006). Based on the above definition, this study analyzes the role of the tribal houses in the Chamchamal District and clarifies how strong these informal institutions are in the city.

A part from that there are several studies which focus on the role of informal intuitions in rural areas of different countries namely Tsai (2007) in her study “Solidary Groups, Informal Accountability, and Local Public Goods Provision in Rural China” focused on the rural area which religious informal institution such as Temple affects the elected officials to keep their promises while the formal institutions are corrupt and not effective. Tsia focused on the Temple because it is out of the state institutions, unlike many other countries where religious institutions are among

governmental state organizations. According to the result of her research, informal institutions influence lower-level officials’ accountability in front of local populations, even in the face of ineffective formal state institutions (Tsai, 2007).

Tribal House is an informal institution and plays a vital role in shaping the political behavior of society, and also impacts political leaders and the governance of the city. A tribe is a social organization formed through kinship ties. In Kurdish interpersonal networks, blood bonds are the most intimate connections (Xue et al., 2024). Currently, there are more studies on religion than on tribes. Scholars use multi-country samples to investigate the impact of informal institutions on political behaviors and governance. In addition, some researchers examine the effects of particular informal institutions such as Taoist and Buddhist-dominated religions (Shao et al., 2023).

Amendolagine and Von Jacobi (2023) debated the relationship between informal and formal institutions and examined how the two work hand in hand. According to the authors, not enough research has been done on the complex interaction between the two. Therefore, the primary concerns that Amendolagina and Jacobi aim to address are how the link between informal and formal institutions develops and broadens. Unlike other researchers who distinguish between culture and informal institutions, this study seeks to blur the boundaries between them. Yet their analysis also reveals the interdependency of the two institutions. The research examines the impact of cultural differences across five Brazilian regions on the role of informal and formal institutions as a leading party (Amendolagine and von Jacobi, 2023).

Hnas Joachim Laut (2000) in the study entitled “Informal Institutions and Democracy,” offers a complex and typologically rich framework for the study of informal institutions and how they affect democratic systems, especially in the context of the third wave democracy. He identifies five major categories of informal institutions: clientelism, corruption, violence, civil disobedience, and customary law, which also assesses their different purposes and suitability of democratic standards (Lauth, 2000). Laut like Helmke and Levitsky discusses a conceptual framework for assessing how interactions between the formal and informal institutions can either promote or hinder democratic growth by categorizing them as complementary, substitute, and conflicting types (Lauth, 2000). He highlighted that not all informal institutions are inherently anti-democratic; in some situations, they may even reinforce democratic principles such as customary law and civil disobedience (Lauth, 2000). Despite the study’s significant theoretical contribution, it is still primarily abstract and lacks case-based analysis or a thorough empirical foundation to support the suggested typologies.

Ishise (2025), in *Religion as Informal Institution: A Case of True Pure Land Buddhism and Lost Women in Early Modern Japan*, provides a comprehensive statistical analysis of how early modern Japan’s religious beliefs influenced the practice of murdering newborns depending on their gender. The study adds to the body of research by showing how the true pure land Buddhist sect worked as an informal

institution that opposed killing babies based on gender in early Japan, especially where there were not many strong laws against it (Ishise, 2025). It illustrates that areas with more True Pure land presence had fewer male-to-female ratio aberrations in 1846 and 1906. This emphasizes religions' role in replacing ineffective governmental systems in determining demographic outcomes (Ishise, 2025). Furthermore, while the research proposes using True Pure Land norms instead of formal legislation, it generalizes True Pure Land's effect without taking into consideration any variations in local practices or interpretations (Ishise, 2025). A more in-depth discussion of intra-sect diversity and enforcement methods would have supported the institutional argument.

The paper by Nepal et al. (2025), entitled "Does executive gender diversity culture inhibit corporate greenwashing behavior? The effect of informal institutions," makes a significant addition to the literature by focusing on the importance of informal institutions, particularly the Executive Culture of Gender Diversity (CEGDC), in limiting corporate greenwashing (Nepal et al., 2025). The study makes a strong case that environmental ethics can be strengthened in companies through informal rules such as leadership values and cultural views formed by female managers (Nepal et al., 2025). In their research, the authors aimed to fill in the gap that is mostly overlooked, because the focuses mostly go to the formal institutions, while the informal institutions might be effective in green thinking and new ideas. A more in-depth theoretical addition on how these kinds of informal institutions work in larger culture and organizational settings, especially outside of China, where institutional dynamics may be very different, would have made the study stronger (Nepal et al., 2025).

Given the abundance of existing research on informal institutions, the question that has to be addressed is: What is the research gap, and what does this study add? To answer that, it can be said that the impact of institutions (formal and informal) has been discussed by scholars who applied it to countries around the world. One way to respond to it is to say that academics have examined the effects of both informal and formal institutions in many nations worldwide. However, the influence of informal institutions in the Kurdish region, particularly the functions of tribal houses, has not been the subject of prior studies. Therefore, this study makes a valuable contribution to the existing body of literature by examining a particular informal institution, namely "tribal houses," and directing it is attention towards a specific District within the region that has previously been overlooked by researchers. Finally, it is important to note that this project addresses a core theme of political behavior in the Middle East, focusing specifically on the role of informal institutions (tribal houses) in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It would be appropriate to summarize the methods of data collection through which the research is going to be conducted. A structured survey questionnaire is the primary

instrument for data collection in this study, which employs a rigorous quantitative research design. The survey was designed to capture a broad range of views and experiences related to the role of tribal houses in local governance and decision-making processes. The instrument includes closed-ended questions designed to collect quantitative data. The quantitative technique was chosen because it produces quantitative data, allowing statistical analysis to test research hypotheses.

A random sampling method was employed to ensure that the selection of participants was representative of the broader population within the Chamchamal District. This approach minimizes selection bias and enhances the generalizability of the findings. The sample includes individuals from various backgrounds, allowing for a diverse range of perspectives on the influence of tribal traditions, local leadership, and informal decision-making structures. The survey was distributed in a manner that facilitates accessibility and encourages participation, taking into account the local context and cultural norms. As the researcher resides in Chamchamal and shares the same language and cultural background as the participants, this will aid in fostering trust and ensuring that responses are both reliable and reflective of genuine experiences.

For the data collection method, the survey instrument was administered solely online, facilitating extensive accessibility and effective response management. The questionnaire was methodically designed into four separate sections, with the first section meant to collect demographic information. The second section examined the presence and impact of social norms, particularly regarding the operation and effect of tribal house in Chamchamal District, which includes seven items (T1Q1-T1Q7) that investigated respondents' perceptions of how social norms, such as tribal house influence, shape the political attitudes and actions of individuals and the government of the city. Four items (T2Q1-T2Q4) in the third section examine how tribal house influences general aspects of political engagement, election participation, and the selection of candidates for official city government posts. The third section examined the impact of Tribal House on judicial power, containing four items (T3Q1-T3Q4) that investigated the perceived involvement of informal mechanisms—such as personal relationships or customary authority—in formal court decisions. The fourth section examined the influence of tribal house on accountability practices, employing four items (T4Q1-T4Q4) to evaluate whether the tribal house promotes or obstructs institutional transparency and responsiveness. A five-point Likert scale, with one representing "strongly disagree" and five representing "strongly agree," was used to score each item. This structured approach provides for a thorough and systematic investigation of how informal institutions interact with formal political and judiciary systems in Iraq's Kurdistan Region.

#### *A. Instrument Validation and Reliability Testing*

The instrument was validated and tested for reliability, which is demonstrated in Table I, containing the content

TABLE I  
THE RELIABILITY TASTE FOR THE ROLE OF "TRIBAL HOUSES" IN CHAMCHAMAL DISTRICT

No	The reliable	Cronbach's alpha	Number of Items
1	The Influence of Informal Institutions and social norms, such as Tribal Houses	0.868	7
2	The impacts of Tribal Houses on governance and political engagement	0.862	7
3	The impact of Tribal Houses on the rule of law (Court Decisions)	0.849	4
4	The impact of Tribal Houses on the accountability of officials	0.540	4

validation results along with Cronbach's alpha values for all variables.

Table I presents the reliability test for the measurement scales assessing the role of tribal houses in Chamchamal District using Cronbach's Alpha. The scale measuring the influence of informal institutions and social norms, such as tribal houses, achieved a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.868, indicating strong internal consistency and reliability across the seven items used. Likewise, the measure that looked at how tribal houses affected the political participation and governance received a score of 0.862, indicating great reliability, suggesting that the seven items successfully conveyed the intended concept. The four questions on the scale that assessed how tribal houses affected court decisions and the rule of law had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.849, indicating high internal consistency. Nevertheless, the scale evaluating how tribal houses affect officials' accountability had a lower Cronbach's Alpha of 0.540, suggesting lower reliability. Overall, the findings indicate a high reliability in the majority of the aspects.

### B. Research Ethics Statement

Before data collection, ethical approval was acquired to ensure that all scientific and academic criteria were met. Participants were informed about the aims of the study and were asked to participate voluntarily without any pressure or obligation. They were also told that their answers would remain confidential. No identifying information was gathered to maintain anonymity, and all data were completely anonymized and coded before analysis. The participants' confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout the research procedure.

### C. Formal and Informal Institutions

Formal and informal institutions both play a central role in the development of the country (Rodríguez-Pose, 2013). While most studies have concentrated on formal institutions, informal ones are crucial for providing public services in countries with weak formal systems. Formal institutions are often equivalent or transferable from one country to another. However, informal institutions are context and geography-specific, and different institutional settings create different results (Rodríguez-Pose, 2013). It has been noted that it proved difficult to define institutions precisely. There is no

agreement on a common definition yet. It might be difficult to distinguish between formal and informal institutions since the lines between them are already blurry. According to Friedrich Hayek, useful unwritten rules eventually become formal laws as a result of cultural progress. Veronica Anghel (2023) illustrates that informal constraints reinforce and strengthen formal ones (Veronica Anghel, 2024). However, efforts have been made to draw different theoretically grounded boundaries between formal and informal institutions. For Peter A. Hall, institutions are the formal rules, compliance procedures, and standard operating practices that shape the interactions between people in different political and economic units (Hall, 1986).

This study distinguishes between formal and informal institutions, mostly based on the location of information. Formal institutions as legally created and codified rule systems that are enforced by state authorities and serve as guidelines for behaviors based on socially accepted values (Amendolagine and von Jacobi, 2023). Formal institutions, such as charters, laws, constitutions, rules, and bylaws, as well as elements such as property rights, the rule of law, and systems for controlling contracts and competition, are examples of universal rules (North, 1990). In other words, they are the political restrictions on government and individual activity imposed by legal institutions (Williamson, 2009).

Conversely, informal institutions that Rodríguez-Pose and Storper name as "Communities" include a range of components of group life that are essential for building trust, including relationships, interpersonal ties, norms, traditions, and social customs (Rodríguez-Pose and Storper, 2006). This study considers informal institutions as networks of unplanned but potentially codifiable norms that represent and are socially enforced expectations on interpersonal interactions (Amendolagine and von Jacobi, 2023). In other words, they are rules of behavior that are instinctively established and largely accepted by society. They include belief systems, social norms, and cognitive abilities (North, 1990). To summarize, while informal institutions are generally accepted norms, such as social or cultural standards, formal institutions are often linked to the official channels of government bureaucracy.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. The Background of the Participants

Table II offers a detailed background of the age distribution among 158 participants in Chamchamal District. The participants were divided into five age groups. The data reveal that the largest age group comprises 97 participants, which is equal to 61.4%. The age of this group is between 35 and 45 years old. This is followed by the 25–35 years of age group, which consists of 35 participants and accounts for 22.2% of the total. In addition, 18 respondents aged 45–55, making up 11.4% of participants. The youngest group, aged 18–25, includes 6 participants, accounting for 3.8% of the total. The smallest group is those above 55, with only 2 responses, making up only 1.3%. This age

TABLE II  
AGE

Valid age	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
18–25	6	3.8	3.8	3.8
25–35	35	22.2	22.2	25.9
35–45	97	61.4	61.4	87.3
45–55	18	11.4	11.4	98.7
Above 55	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

distribution indicates that the sample is heavily concentrated in the age group of 35–45 years. While there is significant representation in the age group of 25–35 years, the 35–45, 25–35, and 35–45 age groups are all important for this study because participants in these ranges have likely experienced both traditional practices and modern changes in the city, offering a balanced understanding of the role of tribal houses and their effects.

Table III presents the gender distribution, which indicates that among 158 respondents, 134 (84.8%) are male while 24 (15.2%) are female. This sizable male majority highlights the possibility of a gender imbalance in the representation of community experiences and viewpoints, suggesting that a male perspective may primarily shape the discussions on informal institutions in Chamchamal District.

Table IV presents the educational background of the 158 participants of the study. The data reveal that from 158 respondents, 79 of them hold a diploma or a bachelor's degree, which makes up 50%. While 48 individuals hold a master's degree, which counts 30%. The 22 doctoral degree holders represent 13.9% of participants. A smaller portion of 8 individuals, which is around 5%, completed high school. Only 1 individual, 0.6% has no certificates at all. This high degree of education indicates that the participants are well-informed, which may contribute to more reflective and critical discussion regarding the role of the tribal house in Chamchamal.

Table V shows a correlation analysis that looks at how tribal house, political participation, court decisions, and accountability are connected in Chamchamal district. All of the correlations are significant at less than a 0.01% level, which means that the factors are strongly linked. The *P*-value for the relationship between tribal house and politics is 0.000, which is <0.05. This indicates both variables have a strong relationship with each other.

Table VI presents the findings of the “Tests between-Subjects Effects” that were carried out in Chamchamal District to demonstrate how the tribal house affected political engagement, court decision, and government accountability. The result demonstrates that the tribal house has a major impact on the three important dependent variables, as indicated by the following:

- 1- Tribal House has a highly significant impact on political participation, as confirmed by its *F* value of 4.804 and *P* = 0.000
- 2- With an *F* value of 3.168 and a *P* = 0.000, the impact of tribal house on court decisions is also statistically significant
- 3- Tribal house has a considerable impact on officials'

TABLE III  
GENDER

Valid gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Female	24	15.2	15.2	15.2
Male	134	84.8	84.8	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

TABLE IV  
DEGREE

Valid degree	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
High School	8	5.1	5.1	5.1
Bachelor or diploma	79	50.0	50.0	55.1
Master	48	30.4	30.4	85.4
Doctorate	22	13.9	13.9	99.4
None	1	0.6	0.6	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

TABLE V  
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ALL INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Correlation methods	Tribal house	Political engagement	Court decision	Accountability
<b>Tribal houses</b>				
Pearson correlation	1	0.497**	0.405**	0.476**
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000
<i>n</i>	158	158	158	158
<b>Political Engagement</b>				
Pearson Correlation	0.497**	1	0.801**	0.699**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000
<i>n</i>	158	158	158	158
<b>Court Decision</b>				
Pearson correlation	0.405**	0.801**	1	0.639**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000
<i>n</i>	158	158	158	158
<b>Accountability</b>				
Pearson correlation	0.476**	0.699**	0.639**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
<i>n</i>	158	158	158	158

accountability, as confirmed by an *F* value of 4.039 and a *P* = 0.000.

According to the error term value explained in the table, the residual variance not covered by the model was quite moderate for all dependent variables. Political involvement has a mean square error of 0.545, and Judicial Decisions have a mean square error of 0.787 and officials' accountability has a mean square error of 0.411.

A comprehensive detail on the tribal house's explanatory power over dependent variables is provided by the *R*-squared value. The corrected *R*-value for political activity was 37.7%, meaning that the tribal houses explained around 47.6% of the variation. With an adjusted *R*-squared value of 25.7%, the tribal house was able to explain almost 37.5% of the variation in the court decision. Using an adjusted *R*-squared value of 32.6%, the tribal house accounted for about 43.3% of the variation in official accountability. The above-mentioned *R*-squared value indicates that tribal house has a moderate but considerable influence on court decisions, whereas political engagement has an extensive relationship with tribal house. However, compared to political engagement, tribal house has

a somewhat slighter effect on accountability.

Table VII indicates that a substantial adverse impact of tribal house on involvement. The unstandardized coefficient (B) is  $-1.075$ , signifying that for each one-unit rise in the tribal house variable, political engagement diminishes by  $-1.075$ . The moderate negative relationship between these variables is indicated by the standardized coefficient (Beta) of  $-0.354$ . This relationship is statistically significant with a T-value of  $-3.693$  and a  $P = 0.000$  indicating that the impact is not due to a random chance. The negative correlation is further supported by the coefficient's 95% confidence interval, which ranges from  $-1.652$  to  $-0.497$ . Even after controlling for other variables, the correlation value continues to show a negative relationship between tribal house and political Engagement, with a Zero-order correlation of  $-0.354$  and partial and partial correlations holding steady at the same value.

Table VIII demonstrates a similar opposing correlation between tribal house and the Judiciary. The unstandardized coefficient (B) is  $-1.040$ , which means that the role of court goes down by 0.865 scores for every one unit rise in the role of tribal house variable. The standardized coefficient (B) is  $-0.308$ , indicating a moderate negative correlation. The statistical significance of the relationship is demonstrated by the T-value of  $-3.156$  and the  $P = 0.002$ . The finding

is strong as seen by the coefficient's 95% confidence interval, which ranges between  $-1.695$  and  $-0.386$ . A zero-order correlation of  $-0.308$  and identical partial and part correlations show a constant negative relationship, according to correlation measurements. These findings suggest that even after adjusting for other variables, tribal house still harms the court.

As shown in Table IX, the regression analysis indicates that tribal house has a significant negative impact on government accountability. The unstandardized coefficient (B) is  $-0.865$ , which means that increasing the role of tribal house by one unit results in a 0.865 fall in the role of government accountability. The standardized coefficient (B) is  $-0.334$ , which indicates a moderate inverse correlation among variables. The relationship between the two variables is statistically significant with a T-value of  $-3.451$  and a  $P = 0.001$ , indicating that the effect is not accidental. The reliability of the result is demonstrated by the 95% confidence interval of the coefficient, which ranges from  $-1.363$  to  $-0.367$ . Zero order, partial, and part correlations all have correlation coefficients of  $-0.334$ , which supports the idea that tribal house and accountability are negatively correlated.

V. DISCUSSION

The data for this study were collected using a random sampling method, and a total of 157 completed forms were returned. Based on the returned forms, we can infer that participants' ages and certificates are reliable because the older participants are better able to comprehend the impact of informal institutions, specifically the tribal house in Chamchamal District, and the higher the certificates, the more likely it is that our participants understood the questions. Out of the 157 participants, 96 respondents, or roughly 61.1% are between the ages of 35 and 45 years, while 35 respondents or 22.3% are between the ages of 25 and 35 years. This suggests that the majority of the study participants likely understood the questions and how to respond to them. Because males are more likely to run the tribal houses in the Kurdistan Region, males had an interest in responding to the survey questions. From all the participants, 133, or 84.7% were men, and just 24 respondents, or 15.3% were women who completed the form. It can be presumed that women did not respond to the form as men did because the men may have had a better understanding of the strength and capability of the tribal houses in the City.

Consequently, according to the result, the impact of Tribal House on the three dependent variables is obvious, as

TABLE VI  
TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS

Source	Dependent variable	Type III Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significant
Corrected model	Political engagement	65.451 <sup>a</sup>	25	2.618	4.804	0.000
	Court decision	62.286 <sup>b</sup>	25	2.491	3.168	0.000
	Accountability	41.503 <sup>c</sup>	25	1.660	4.039	0.000
Intercept	Political engagement	849.046	1	849.046	1558.053	0.000
	Court decision	916.034	1	916.034	1164.691	0.000
	Accountability	628.349	1	628.349	1528.770	0.000
Tribal houses	Political engagement	65.451	25	2.618	4.804	0.000
	Court decision	62.286	25	2.491	3.168	0.000
	Accountability	41.503	25	1.660	4.039	0.000
Error	Political engagement	71.932	132	0.545		
	Court decision	103.818	132	0.787		
	Accountability	54.254	132	0.411		
Total	Political engagement	1730.531	158			
	Court decision	1882.438	158			
	Accountability	1336.438	158			
Corrected total	Political engagement	137.384	157			
	Court decision	166.105	157			
	Accountability	95.757	157			

<sup>a</sup>R Squared=0.476 (Adjusted R Squared=0.377)

<sup>b</sup>R Squared=0.375 (Adjusted R Squared=0.257)

<sup>c</sup>R Squared=0.433 (Adjusted R Squared=0.326)

TABLE VII  
EFFECT OF TRIBAL HOUSE ON POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significant	95.0% Confidence interval for B		Correlations		
	B	Standard error	Beta			Lower bound	Upper bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part
1 (Constant)	6.035	0.870		6.940	0.000	4.309	7.761			
Tribal House	-1.075	0.291	-0.354	-3.693	0.000	-1.652	-0.497	-0.354	-0.354	-0.354

<sup>a</sup>Dependent Variable: Political engagement

TABLE VIII  
EFFECT OF TRIBAL HOUSE ON COURT DECISION<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significant	95.0% confidence interval for B		Correlations		
	B	Standard error	Beta			Lower bound	Upper bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part
1 (Constant)	5.818	0.985		5.906	0.000	3.863	7.774			
Tribal Houses	-1.040	0.330	-0.308	-3.156	0.002	-1.695	-0.386	-0.308	-0.308	-0.308

<sup>a</sup>Dependent Variable: Court decision

TABLE IX  
EFFECT OF TRIBAL HOUSES ON ACCOUNTABILITY<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significant	95.0% Confidence interval for B		Correlations		
	B	Standard error	Beta			Lower bound	Upper bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part
1 (Constant)	5.808	0.749		7.754	0.000	4.321	7.295			
Tribal houses	-0.865	0.251	-0.334	-3.451	0.001	-1.363	-00.367	-00.334	-00.334	-00.334

<sup>a</sup>Dependent Variable: Accountability

expected, and significant with different ranges. However, the impact was negative across all independent and all dependent variables, contrary to the study's hypothesis, which predicted a negative impact of tribal houses on government accountability and court decisions, but a positive impact on political engagement.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The results indicate that tribal house has a major impact on political engagement, judicial decisions, and accountability of the government within Chamchamal District, in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The finding underscores the significance of tribal house in shaping political behavior in the district.

The current study acknowledges that informal institutions primarily seek to explain the influence of unwritten norms and rules on formal structures and, more specifically, on individual behavior in line with much of the existing literature, despite some earlier studies disputing the idea that informal institutions inevitably undermine formal institutions.

### A. Practical Implications

The findings of this study have significant ramifications for enhancing decision-making and public participation in Chamchamal District and the Kurdistan region in large. Tribal Houses' detrimental effects on people's decisions and interactions with official institutions show that traditional structures still impact behavior, frequently restricting or directing people's participation in elections, civic campaigns, and other formal procedures. By reinforcing obedience to traditional authority, tribal houses hinder independent decision-making and diminish reliance on governmental institutions. Strategies to increase people's participation should be planned with consideration for the local social context where tribal authority and community norms severely limit behavior and political choices. Using a strong governmental structure to hold officials accountable and courts to resolve legal matters can promote individual autonomy, reduce reliance on

tribal houses, and strengthen institutionalized governance in the Chamchamal District

### B. Limitations and Future Research

Future studies should look beyond the current study's emphasis on tribal house in Chamchamal, which is only a small area of the region. To obtain an additional and complete understanding of the function of informal institutions, future research should have a larger geographical coverage that includes the whole Kurdistan region. It is also encouraged to investigate the effect of semi-informal institutions such as Mosques and community-based religious leaders who can play an important role in shaping people's political behavior in Kurdistan. Finally, highlighting the military function of the tribal house offers valuable insights that can enhance scholarly understanding within this field of study.

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