

THE DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES OF IRAQ'S INVASION OF KUWAIT

Taher Naser^{1*} ORCID: 0009-0007-0022-5372

¹ Doctoral School of Public Administration, Ludovika University of Public Service, Budapest, Hungary
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Abstract

This research explores the causes that led to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the severe repercussions of this action, focusing on the effects on the Iraqi economy, its political stability, and international reactions. The research aims to analyze the political and economic consequences of the post-invasion period and evaluate its long-term effects on development in Iraq. This study uses historical analysis and a qualitative approach to study the effects of the Gulf War on Iraq. The population comprises critical stakeholders involved in or affected by the Gulf War, including political leaders, government officials, international organizations, and scholars specializing in Middle Eastern politics. The sample size includes 50 individuals. Specific samples were selected to ensure a diverse representation of views on Iraq's political and economic conditions before and after the war. The data was collected based on previous research, document analysis, and interviews with former diplomats and military experts. The study relied on official documents, government reports, and UN resolutions to provide an inclusive view of the impact of the Gulf War. The results showed that the most important causes of the war were economic desperation and attempts to impose regional control and hegemony over the oil-rich Gulf region, which led to the imposition of strict financial sanctions on Iraq, which resulted in economic deterioration. This situation led to a state of political instability in Iraq. The study also pointed to international intervention in the conflict, especially by the American administration led by President Bush Sr., which reversed the course of events. The research concludes that the decision to invade had permanent and long-term economic effects as well as on Iraq's foreign relations with the international community. The significance of these findings lies in their potential to inform future policies and strategies, particularly in strengthening diplomatic efforts to address economic grievances and supporting post-conflict recovery to avoid prolonged instability, offering a hopeful outlook for the future.

1 Introduction

A little over 45 years ago, when World War II ended in 1945, the Cold War commenced

* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: naser.taheer.yaseen@stud.uni-nke.hu

simultaneously. The Cold War ended in 1989 when President George Bush and Soviet President Gorbachev, two key figures in history, surveyed and vowed to lead the world towards peace and progress. The initial significant global upheaval post-Cold War arose in 1990-1991 in West Asia.

The aggressor, Iraq, launched an assault on its resource-rich neighbor, Kuwait. Consequently, the country was captured and fascinated into Iraq as the nineteenth province, which triggered the crisis. Despite numerous attempts to persuade Iraq to pull out from Kuwait, total efforts proved futile, and a diplomatic resolution seemed unattainable. Because of this action, a coalition of 28 nations, sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council and commanded by the United States, engaged in a military campaign against Iraq and successfully liberated Kuwait. The Gulf War of 1990-1991 was a significant turning point in post-Cold War geopolitics, arising after Iraq invaded Kuwait. Following the end of World War II in 1945 and the Cold War in 1989, the world faced a new international crisis when Iraq, led by Saddam Hussein, attacked its oil-rich neighbor. [1]

The Gulf War II military intervention was a stark reminder of the need for diplomatic solutions to global conflicts. The Gulf War, otherwise well-known as the Iran-Iraq War of 1980-88, was a long and inconclusive battle that ultimately favored Iraq, highlighting the uncertainty and volatility of the region at the time. In light of Iran's adoption of a fundamentalist regime under Ayatollah Khomeini, Americans generally sided with Iraq during the conflict, although they were not directly involved. The Gulf War had dangerous reverberation, namely the Iraqi regime's attempt to ignite the Arab-Israeli conflict by transforming the Iraq-Kuwait war into an ideological issue and not a war between two neighboring Arab countries. The American administration's attempts to contain the situation succeeded by asking the Israeli government to exercise restraint towards Iraqi provocations. These attempts succeeded by Israel not participating in the war on Iraq and by missing the opportunity for the Iraqi regime to exploit it to support Arab governments against Israel, despite Iraq's bombing of Israel with missiles during the Gulf War in 1991. [2]

This study concentrated on the causes and results of the Gulf War that resulted from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The study showed the failure of diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis, international reactions, and dynamic and geostrategic interactions of the conflict, especially in the Middle East. It also provided an in-depth analysis of the Gulf War in terms of geopolitics in the Middle East and the world. The study also presented the disastrous consequences for Iraq due to its invasion of Kuwait and its isolation from the international community. The research gap addressed the study focused on the social and economic aspects and their impact on the situation in Iraq regarding the low level of health care and the poor level of education. Environmental damage, particularly from oil fires in Kuwait, has also been documented as having long-term ecological and health repercussions. [3] Moreover, the media's influence in shaping public opinion globally during the war has been underscored as a critical, yet often overlooked, factor. [4] These aspects require further exploration to provide a more holistic view of the Gulf War's aftermath. [5]

2 Literature Review

2.1 Invasion of Kuwait

On August 2, 1990, the Iraqi troops occupied Kuwait's lands smoothly and without resistance from the Kuwaiti army. The Iraqi leadership's audacious announcement that Kuwait had become the nineteenth Iraqi province was met with disbelief and indignation. The Iraqi Republican Guard passed the Kuwaiti border companion by helicopter to enter Kuwait City's center. The (IRG) represented the elite military formation belonging to the former Iraqi president, Saddam Hussein. [6]

2.2 Sanctions and Military Action

The Security Council demanded Iraq withdraw the troops. On August 6, 1990, the Council declared and initiated sanctions on Iraq. These sanctions, primarily economic, included freezing Iraqi and Kuwaiti properties abroad and an embargo on goods exchange with Iraq and Kuwait. The apparent aim of the sanctions was to swiftly force the Iraqi regime to retreat its troops from Kuwaiti lands. Nevertheless, the Council's main goals were to stop Iraq from creating WMDs and to impair

the Iraqi regime's capacity to make changes in the future. Iraq received a severe warning from the U.N. Security Council on November 29, 1990. If the Iraqi troops did not withdraw from Kuwait before mid-January 1991, the coalition forces were authorized to use military force against them. On January 17, 1991, Operation Desert Storm, as the American administration called it, was launched. The U.S. and coalition forces, in a display of determination, struck Baghdad and other Iraqi cities with intelligent Cruise and stealth bombers. [7]

2.3 Historical Context and Economic Impact

Accordingly, this paper attempted to discuss the consequences of the Gulf War that impacted Iraq by collecting data such as from Halliday's *The Gulf War and its Aftermath*, First Reflections and Mofid, *The Economic Consequences of the Gulf War*. The history of the relationship between Iraq and Kuwait is steeped in a deep-rooted dispute. This dispute, which revolved around determining the borders and the joint oil fields, was further complicated by Iraq's request for Kuwait to cancel the war debts against Iran. Iraq considered these debts as compensations for the war that Kuwait must pay because the Iraqi army defended Arab countries against the Iranian Islamic revolution. [8] [9]

On August 8, 1988, the war between Iraq and Iran ended. The economic situation of Iraq could have been better. The estimation indicated that the total financial cost of the war from 1980 to August 1988 in Iraq was (\$452.6) billion. Therefore, the country urgently needs to remove the shambles of war, rebuild the infrastructure and create jobs for the soldiers who returned from the war. In addition, the Iraqi government should prioritize compensating the families of people who died during the war. The importance of these actions cannot be overstated, as they are crucial for the country's recovery. Because of the war against Iran, the Iraqi government had to borrow money from many countries. [10]

2.4 Economic Factors Leading to Invasion

The estimated number of external doubts after the war is between (\$35 to \$40) billion. In the meantime, in December 1989, the price per barrel was (\$18.84) and continued to increase to (\$19.89) in January 1990. However, the oil price decreased to (\$13.67) per barrel in June 1990, resulting in a loss of (\$1) billion for the Iraqi economy. This forced the Iraqi government to take aggressive measures. The intensity of the statements began to rise between Iraq and Kuwait, escalating into a significant military threat. On July 27, 1990, the Iraqi troops moved to the Kuwaiti border, and then the OPEC organization decided to increase the oil price to (\$21) per barrel. The decision was made to prevent invasion, but it was clear that more than a price increase was needed to halt the advancing troops. [11]

3 Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to explain how the Gulf War affected Iraq. More specifically, the objectives of the study are:

- Examine Iraq's determination to invade and annex Kuwait.
- Evaluate Iraq's political landscape and economic challenges following the Gulf War.
- Examine the impact of Iraq's relations with Arab nations on its geopolitical landscape.
- Analyze the consequences of U.S.-led interventions in Iraq.

4 Origin of the Gulf War

4.1 An action of Iraq to invade Kuwait

Numerous oil-rich nations are in the Persian Gulf province of West Asia in the Middle East. The Arab countries are Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Jordan, and non-Arab countries like Iran and Israel. In World War I, after the defeat of Turkey, these countries that were part of the Ottoman Empire collapsed. Many non-Turkish territories in West Asia were placed by the League of Nations Mandate System under the British or French Mandate System, which did not give them independence. After being captured by the Ottoman Empire, a British proclamation was given to Iraq. Iraq's establishment as a British mandate and Kuwait's

subsequent establishment as a British protectorate can be traced as the underlying causes of the conflict. The Al Sabah family became Kuwait's rulers in 1961 after Kuwait gained independence. However, Iraq was uncertain about Kuwait's legality as a state and aimed to absorb it into its territory. [12]

Despite this strength, Iraq had accumulated significant debts from financing the war, and its economy struggled. As a result of Kuwait's considered islands of Bubiyan, Warba, and Rumaila oil fields, Iraq saw an annexation of Kuwait due to financial difficulties. In 1990, President Saddam Hussein singled out Kuwait as a target for his country. He publicly condemned the U.A.E. and Kuwait for surpassing their oil production limits set by OPEC on July 17 of that year. As a result of this overproduction, oil prices dropped, causing Iraq to lose an estimated \$14 billion in revenue. To prevent further loss, Kuwait and the U.A.E. were warned that they could face forceful action if they did not reduce their output. Iraq declared amid this stressful scenario that they would take the necessary steps to regain control and recover what was properly theirs if words could not safeguard their interests. In ancient times, this threat manifested in intense armed disasters. Unfortunately, Kuwait was a vulnerable neighbor with vast oil reserves that could greatly benefit Iraq if brought under President Hussein's rule within the Arab States.[13]

Iraq had the upper hand in the global condition at the time. The Soviet Union, as the chief dealer of Iraq's army resources, played a significant role in the crisis that ultimately led to its demise. During Iraq's war with Iran, the United States supported Iraq, leading Saddam to believe that President Bush was friendly. This belief made it unlikely for the U.S. to intervene if Iraq were to seize Kuwait. After the decline of communism in Eastern Europe in 1990, Saddam Hussein depicted his worries that the U.S. may seek Middle East dominance. In addition, Kuwait and the U.A.E. were blamed for pushing down international oil prices through overproduction, which Saddam Hussein viewed as a state of warfare against Iraq. Despite the perceived victory of Iran and Iraq by the cessation of their long-winded battle, Iraq remained one of the two leading powers in the Gulf region. Iraq boasted million-man troops with advanced planes, Soviet tanks, and chemical and biological weapons. It also owed significant debts to neighboring Arab countries from the first Gulf War (Iran-Iraq War, 1980-88). To rebuild its economy, Iraq required a substantial pouring out of funds. In addition, Iraq had an insatiable appetite for advanced weaponry, including nuclear weapons. [14]

As a result of the finale of the Cold War, Iraq's principal "patron and arms supplier", the Soviet Union, was experiencing internal conflicts and crises and was on the edge of ruin. Hence, the situation in the second half of 1990 was perfect for annexing Kuwait as Iraq's long-coveted 19th province, even though the U.S. was not expected to take an anti-Iraq action. In analyzing the events leading up to the Gulf War, ample evidence indicated that Iraq was responsible for initiating and directing the crisis in contradiction to Kuwait. An assembly of the Arab Cooperation Council (A.C.C.) on February 24, 1990, began the prelude to Iraq's military action. Attendees included Iraq, Egypt, Yemen and Jordan in Amman. At the meeting, President Saddam Hussein cautioned against the breakdown of the Soviet Bloc and urged Arab nations to resist U.S. efforts to gain control in West Asia. He also expressed displeasure with smaller oil-producing countries in the Gulf. Saddam declared war on Kuwait and the U.A.E. on May 30, 1990, accusing them of violating OPEC production limits. As a result, he seemed resolute in acquiring Kuwait by the end of May 1990 and obtaining more favorable oil deals in return.[15]

In the latter half of July 1990, Iraq began extensive preparations for its planned invasion of Kuwait. Three elite divisions-rockets, tanks, and 35,000 troops-were deployed, indicating a meticulously planned operation. The Iraqi Foreign Minister, Tariq Aziz, accused Kuwait of stealing oil worth \$2.4 billion from the disputed Rumaila oil field on July 18, escalating tensions. A joint military exercise with the U.A.E. was declared after this incident, and the United States shipped two warships to the region as a show of force. Iraq then demanded that Kuwait pay \$2.4 billion in settlement. OPEC agreed on July 27 to increase oil prices from \$18 to \$21 per barrel under Iraq's pressure. Despite attempts at negotiations on August 1 between Iraqi and Kuwaiti officials, no resolution was reached. Unbeknownst to Kuwait at the time, Iraq was fully prepared for an invasion; however, Kuwait did not perceive the severity of the situation and had not yet moved any troops toward the border as late as July 27. The Prince did not forecast an invasion and returned

the troops to their barracks despite placing two commanders on high alert and stationing them north of Kuwait City. [16]

At 2 a.m. on August 2, 1990, Iraq launched a sudden and unexpected invasion of Kuwait. The Kuwaiti army was swiftly overwhelmed by Iraqi tanks, leaving no time for resistance. Within six hours, Iraq had successfully conquered the Emirate of Kuwait. This swift and unexpected event caught even Saudi Arabia, a U.S. ally, off guard. When King Fahd was informed of the invasion, his response - "Are you sure?"-reflects the shock and disbelief reverberating across the region and the world. Despite reassurances from officials, just hours before the attack, there had been little concern for the possibility of such an attack. [17]

Iraq had challenged Kuwait's existence for many years. Kuwait was part of the Province of Basra from 1875, which was part of Iraq in 1920, until the termination of the First World War. The two countries had long-standing border disputes even after Iraq recognized Kuwait's independence. Although some consultations took place until February 1989, military action was never threatened. [18]

Additionally, Kuwait had provided significant financial support to Iraq in the course of the Iran-Iraq war as a 15 billion dollar interest-free loan. Given this history, it is understandable that Kuwait may not have anticipated an attack. Moreover, accusatory rhetoric is commonly utilized in inter-Arab politics. It is worth noting that America quickly expressed its stance within hours of the invasion. Iraq's actions were publicly denounced by the White House, which called for its immediate withdrawal from Kuwait. However, at this point, the U.S. had yet to determine what steps would be taken in response. President Bush stated on August 3 (U.S. time) that all options were being considered, with no definitive decision regarding using force. During his first speech, the U.S. President stated, "Our goal is not to conquer Iraq. It is to liberate Kuwait". However, he later added a personal touch and said he wanted to eliminate Saddam Hussein. The Iraqi people must take action against the ruling regime to stop the violence and implement the UN resolutions. This requires popular action and a demand for change because it will remove the danger of war from their country. Instead of bloodshed and the destruction of the country, changing the regime from within and through the efforts of the Iraqi people is the best way to get rid of the dictatorial regime. [19]

This trend or perspective is called people's right to self-determination, whereby people take their right to lead the country and shape its political future. However, this perspective involves many risks because Saddam Hussein's regime is dictatorial, and this movement may fail due to the intense security authority and Saddam Hussein's desire to tighten control over the Gulf States, not just Iraq. Most of the rulers of the Middle East practice cruelty and severe repression against any popular movement against them to maintain power and to frighten and terrorize their people. Before Iraq invaded Kuwait, doubt and suspicion dominated Saddam Hussein's thinking about the existence of an American and Israeli conspiracy, supported by Saudi Arabia, against his regime. Therefore, he moved to invade Kuwait as a preemptive strike against the alleged American project against him. This resulted from the aggressive nature of his regime, which was characterized by doubt because the government was dictatorial and oppressive, as well as a misreading of international politics and his failure to realize the consequences of the invasion, which would cost him many losses. [20] Saddam Hussein tried to ignore all peaceful initiatives to end the conflict and spare Iraq and the region from war and its woes. Still, he insisted on his opinion in the hope of obtaining political and economic gains in the Gulf region and also because he believed that continuing to occupy Kuwait would foil the conspiracy against him and transform the conflict from an Iraqi-American conflict into an Arab-American-Israeli conflict by threatening to bomb Israel when war breaks out. Consequently, if Saddam bombs Israel, it will respond by bombing Iraq, at which point Israel will enter the conflict as a party, and at that point, the Arabs will turn to help Saddam against Israel. [21]

In the meantime, on August 8, 1990, Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council (R.C.C.) decreed the annexation of Kuwait "in a comprehensive, eternal and inseparable merger". Iraq's seizure of Kuwait in 1990 was considered a significant economic gain. This included access to Kuwait's global assets and valuable oil reserves, which were crucial in overcoming the financial struggles caused by the long-lasting War of Iraq-Iran. Iraq could also pursue its ambitions of becoming a dominant power in the Gulf region and achieving preeminence in the Arab world if it

controlled Kuwait's 310-mile coastline. Saddam Hussein was surprised when the U.S. condemned this act, as Americans had supported Iraq against "fundamental Iranians" since 1982. [22]

4.2 Relationship between Iraq and other Arab Countries

The Iraqi Republican Guard forces crossed the Kuwaiti border quickly and without resistance from the Kuwaiti border guards. At the same time, Saddam decided to send an estimated 60,000 soldiers to the Saudi border, which was considered a real threat to the security of Saudi Arabia, the largest country in the Gulf region and a strategic ally of the United States of America. However, the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia contributed to diplomatic efforts to persuade the Iraqi leadership to withdraw from Kuwait as soon as possible. The US Administration decided to send military forces to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, ranging in number from 5,000 to 15,000 soldiers. The goal of sending these forces and deploying them near the Iraqi border was to show force and as a deterrent force to the Iraqi troops in case the Iraqi leadership thought of invading Saudi Arabia. More importantly, the United States wanted to show that there was international consensus to ally against the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and aimed at liberating it. Saddam Hussein created 11 new military divisions, which means he was preparing for a long-term war and an attempt to expand his influence and control in the region. In return, there is an American and international military buildup in Saudi territory. Also, complicated diplomatic efforts to end the conflict peacefully, which ultimately led to the outbreak of the Desert Storm War, as the American administration called it in January 1991, due to the international community's rapid response to the United States call to stop the Iraqi aggression on Kuwait, as well as Saudi Arabia's approval of the entry of American forces and allied forces into its territory. [23]

The Iraqi leadership decided to prepare for war and develop military plans by increasing the pace of preparations and training to increase readiness. In addition, the Iraqi government detained several foreign hostages for bargaining and pressuring international parties to stop threats of war. On the other hand, the Iraqi government decided to name the war before it broke out as (The Mother of all Battles). The U.N. imposed economic sanctions in response to these threats, which remained in effect until 1997. Despite this pressure from the international community, Iraq persists in openly frightening to use its estimated 130,000 troops, who are encamped in the south and Kuwait region, to harm Saudi oil fields and hostile Arab nations. By mid-November 1990, a significant turning point was reached when the U.N. authorized a war against Iraq. [24]

As events unfolded, Saddam Hussein suggested freeing hostages with either a guarantee from the U.N. of U.S. forces withdrawing from the area or written assurance from President Bush that all troops would be removed and the U.N. blockade of Iraq lifted. The United States promptly declined this proposal until Iraq fulfilled Security Council resolutions - reinstating the Emir's rule and releasing all captives. Previously, Iraq had demanded that Israel withdraw from its various territories in an attempt to connect the Kuwait conflict to the Arab-Israeli dispute. During his speech to the General Assembly, President Bush noted that if Iraq withdrew from Kuwait without conditions, there could be potential for resolving issues between Arab nations and Israel. [25]

4.3 The United States Led the International Coalition (The liberation of Kuwait)

According to "U.N. Security Council Resolution 678, Iraq / Kuwait", Council on Foreign Relations (1990), Iraq had disregarded the Security Council resolution, which prompted the U.S. to organize a military alliance to oppose Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. The United States initiated a coalition of 28 nations, including NATO members and Western Asian countries, and this was demonstrated to be a practical and challenging undertaking. However, only six countries ultimately engaged in combat during the war, such as Saudi Arabia, the United States, France, Britain, Syria, and Egypt. Other countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Morocco, Niger and the Emirates were non-combatants. From January 17 to February 28 of 1991, an unequal battle took place between Iraq and a coalition primarily led by the U.S. Diplomatic, political and economic support for Iraq came from Jordan, Yemen and the P.L.O.; however, they did not engage in direct combat on Iraq's side. Ultimately, it was a lopsided conflict between a powerful coalition and Iraq. [26]

The syndicate, led by the U.S.A., comprised over 700,000 troops. The majority, 527,000 to be exact, were American soldiers. They were supported by a formidable air force of approximately 1500 aircraft and 91 warships of naval flotilla. The Soviet Union played a significant diplomatic role in the conflict, merging the alliance and fully endorsing the U.N. verdicts and the American

perseverance to eliminate Iraq from Kuwait, even though they were facing difficulties in their country. They made a noticeable effort to negotiate between the two entities. However, they declined to take part in the war against Iraq or contribute to the military buildup in the Gulf. The USSR understood the possible fallout in its Muslim republics should it become embroiled in combat. [27]

Additionally, it had been providing significant aid to Iraq for 20 years, and the Gulf was strategically close to Soviet territory. Iraq's action created a complex geopolitical dilemma for many Arab countries on how to respond without appearing aligned with the United States, which was often viewed as an imperialist power. Condemning Iraq could give this impression while supporting them would go against the norm of regional veracity and domestic dominion. The Gulf War had significant consequences for the Arab countries, leading to a shift in their geopolitical alignments and a reevaluation of their relationships with the United States and Iraq. As a result, most countries chose to remain neutral or offer sympathetic words to Iraq or the Coalition.[28]

The Soviet Union consented to back Security Council resolution 678, which demanded that Iraq evacuate Kuwait by November 30, 1990, in the interim. If Iraq did not comply, force might be used to force it to stop its aggression. The United Nations played a crucial role in the Gulf War, providing a platform for diplomatic negotiations and resolutions. Although the United States had initially suggested taking military action on January 1, 1991, Gorbachev's proposition to reach a consensus, "pause of goodwill", helped too, and January 15 was chosen as the date. The resolution passed with a vote of 12-2 (with Cuba and Yemen opposing), and China abstained, therefore not using its veto power. This decision approved all United Nations members to take the required actions to restore regional peace and security. The United States-led 28-state alliance launched an armed conflict against Iraq in exchange for Kuwait's liberation on January 17, 1991, at 2 a.m. There were two phases to the Second Gulf War. From January 17 to February 23, the rebel fighters invaded Kuwait and bombarded missile sites in Iraq from the air. Ground forces began on February 24, and Iraq had been defeated and Kuwait liberated by February 28, 1991. During the Gulf War, Iraqi roads, railroads, airports, power plants, and oil installations were all the targets of a persistent, heavy air raid. Strikes against nuclear reactors, main Warhead missile launch sites, and Iraqi soldiers were added to this. The Coalition's superior force significantly overwhelmed the 700 Iraqi planes. Additionally, a few skilled Iraqi pilots chose to land in Iran instead of participating in the conflict. [29]

4.4 Agreements in Contradiction of Iraq and Renovation of Kuwait's Sovereignty

President Saddam Hussein made an unwise decision to escalate the Gulf War into an Arab-Israeli war. Iraq launched scud missile attacks on Israel for several weeks to provoke a response and rally support against Israel from the Arab world. However, despite persistent provocation, Israel refrained from retaliation at the request of the United States. Diplomatic efforts led by Gorbachev also failed to resolve the conflict. Once ground action started, President Saddam Hussein threatened that American soldiers were nothing submerged in their blood and that the Vietnam War was nothing compared to it. But after ground operations began, Kuwait, a beacon of resilience, was freed, and its Emir, Al-Sabah, was restored in four days, thereby stopping Iraq's defeat and regaining Kuwait's sovereign power. [30]

Despite the war ending in early 1991, sanctions imposed by the U.N. on Iraq remained until 1997 due to its failure to eliminate its nuclear capability. As a result, the United States, a beacon of leadership, was unwilling to ease restrictions on Iraq. In 1995, President Saddam encountered another obstacle when his two daughters and their husbands fled to Jordan with sensitive information, causing a significant setback for the Iraqi leader as both sons-in-law held crucial positions within the country. Although the King of Jordan has already long been an ardent supporter of Iraq, the Iraqi President suffered a great deal as a result of his ruling to offer asylum to Saddam's sons-in-law. But a few months later, in early 1996, Saddam's first wife's assurance that they would be pardoned allowed his daughters and sons-in-law to come back to Iraq. Sadly, they were not spared, as their two sons-in-law met their demise. During this time, the Gulf War II presented a severe crisis. Still, despite the efforts of the United Nations, Iraq's aggressive actions could not be resolved without the unwavering leadership of the United States, as even the Soviet Union could not offer support. Kuwait was freed from Iraq as a result of collective security action.

Contradictory to the interpretation of collective defense found in textbooks, the U.S. coalition was empowered to stop the aggressive behavior of freedom and integrity. [31]

4.5 Insurgency in South of Iraq

Groups of armed men began attacking security institutions and the headquarters of the Arab Socialist Baath Party, killing members of the Baath Party and destroying and burning government buildings. The Republican Guard forces brutally suppressed the chaos, and many people were dead and eliminated in mid-March 1991. The rebellion resulted from the Gulf War and the heavy losses caused by the decision to invade Kuwait. The previous Iraqi regime called the uprising (the page of treachery and betrayal). In contrast, after the regime's fall, it became called (The Shaabani Uprising), which symbolizes the month of Shaaban in the Islamic Hijri calendar because the rebellion or revolution occurred in the month of Shaaban. After the collapse of the Iraqi regime in 2003, mass graves were discovered, where hundreds of people were executed in southern Iraq to impose control and stop the insurgency. The former Iraqi regime accused the Iranian government of helping the rebels carry out acts of sabotage and murder and sent Iranian officers who infiltrated across the border and took advantage of the state of Iraq and chaos after the withdrawal from Kuwait to carry out these acts. Ultimately, the revolt was brutally put down by Saddam Hussein's dictatorship, which used primarily armored ground forces, long-range artillery, and helicopters. Between 30,000 and 60,000 Shias were killed in the south, and about 20,000 Kurds were killed in the north. [32]

The Second Gulf War, also known as Desert Storm by Americans, was dubbed by the Kuwaiti government at the time and was a direct cause of the Sha'bani rebellion that started in March 1991. As for the British government's stance on the popular uprising, it was neutral after declaring non-interference in Iraqi internal affairs and support for any of the parties to the conflict within Iraq. Initially, it encouraged the uprising, but it later changed its mind and gave Saddam Hussein the go-ahead to put an end to it by allowing helicopters to bomb the areas. Regarding the French government's stance on the popular revolt, the French constitution forbade the French army from being involved in the events occurring in Iraq. The rebellion in southern Iraq created constant tension between the Iraqi regime and the population in those areas, and instability and confidence continued until the collapse of the political system on April 9, 2003. Armed groups such as Bader hostile to the regime were formed and stationed in the marsh areas. They carried out assassinations of members of the Baath Party and targeted party headquarters between 1991 and 2003. Among the most prominent parties opposing the regime were the Islamic Dawa Party and the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, and these parties received financial and logistical support from the Iranian regime. These parties were hostile to the government because of the repression and extreme cruelty with which the administration dealt with them in the early 1980s when thousands of members of Islamic parties were executed under the pretext of their loyalty to Iran. In addition, One of the most prominent military formations in Iraqi territory was the Badr Brigade, which carried out many attacks against Iraqi forces or the headquarters of the Baath Party in southern Iraq. [33]

4.6 Insurgency in North of Iraq

The estimated (8 - 30) million substantial Kurdish population, a minority that primarily resides in Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria, and lesser populations in the USSR and Lebanon, does not have its state. Recent estimates place the Kurdish population between (19 and 24 per cent) in Turkey, (23 and 27 per cent) in Iraq, (10 and 16 per cent) in Iran, and (8 to 9 per cent) in Syria. The Kurdish population, officially denied existence in Turkey and formally referred to as (the Mountain of Turks), is engaged in a significant struggle for independence. The unreliability of figures provided by both governments and Kurdish nationalists makes it difficult to determine their exact number, but their fight for independence is a cause for empathy and support. As for the northern governorates, chaos and rebellion also occurred due to the difference in the political situation in Iraqi Kurdistan. After the end of the revolution, the Iraqi government agreed in October 1991 with the Kurdish leaders to withdraw from Iraqi Kurdistan and establish an independent administration for the Kurdish regions. The regime was forced to withdraw from the northern governorates, and their administration returned to the Kurdistan Democratic Party in Erbil City and Dohuk City and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan Party in Sulaymaniyah City. [34]

The governorates of the north became independent in administration. No military or security forces represent northern Iraq's central government. United Nations organized the first parliamentary election on May 19 1992, and the two political parties in Kurdistan formed the new government. Still, the differences between the two Kurdish parties, the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan Party, increased, leading to a civil war between 1994 and 1998. This civil war was a significant event in the Kurdish political situation, as it highlighted the internal divisions and power struggles within the Kurdish leadership. The war ended with an agreement between the two parties through American mediation. The Iraqi opposing parties, the former regime, could open headquarters in Kurdistan, practice their political activities, and publish their newspapers freely. The situation in Kurdistan continued this way until the regime's fall in 2003. The no-fly zones in northern Iraq established per United Nations resolutions helped the Kurdish parties operate without pressure from Iraqi forces and keep their areas independent from the central government so that Kurdistan was called a "Safe Zone" for anyone who opposed the former Iraqi regime. [35]

4.7 Economic Obstacles in Iraq

Iraq was subject to United Nations sanctions after the invasion of Kuwait in 1990, which was a violation of international law and a threat to the stability of the region. These sanctions continued until the fall of the former Iraqi regime on April 9, 2003. The economic sanctions included preventing the export and import of foodstuffs, medicines, and all basic needs for human life, which affected the financial conditions of the country and increased the suffering of citizens. The economic sanctions caused a significant decline in the health sector, as hospitals suffered from a scarcity of medicines, which led to the death of many children and women due to the lack of medications, as well as medical devices that require spare parts for operating them, and due to the imposition of sanctions whose import prohibited. Despite the decline in the value of the Iraqi dinar, with one American dollar becoming equivalent to three thousand Iraqi dinars, the Iraqi people showed remarkable resilience. Economic sanctions, which weakened the people's purchasing power, led to many doctors and university professors migrating outside Iraq due to low salaries. Additionally, many students had to drop out of school due to their families' inability to pay tuition. On the industrial front, the Security Council sanctions caused significant damage to Iraq's industrial sector, as the country was prevented from importing many materials necessary for production. The sanctions caused the weakening of the Iraqi economy and the scarcity of basic materials. [36]

The Iraqi government could only export oil once the food-for-medicine program agreed upon in 1996. Under this agreement, the United Nations allowed the Iraqi government to export oil at specific rates and purchase essential materials with revenues from oil sales. This decision alleviated the suffering of the Iraqi people. However, proponents of the sanctions argue that they were necessary to prevent the rearmament of Iraq and to ensure the safety of the region. Still, the sanctions continued to have an impact, and the Security Council did not lift the sanctions on Iraq under the pretext of non-cooperation with the weapons inspection committees. Among the Security Council's resolutions against Iraq was to pay financial compensation to Kuwait due to the invasion, and the United Nations deducted the amounts from Iraq's oil sales through the food-for-medicine program. [37]

Finally, the Iraqi government could pay the compensation in full in February 2022, which amounted to (52.4) billion dollars, burdening the Iraqi budget for many years. The conclusion that sanctions may harm citizens' health in the targeted nation could persuade other countries to expand the application of the proportionality criterion to sanctions. According to the rule, the number of approved items has significantly expanded. The family takes money from other budgetary items, hoping it will last to buy shoes. Therefore, if information on consumer spending before and during sanctions were to become known, more money would be needed to purchase necessities for survival. [38]

5 Methodolgy

This research employs a structured methodology to investigate the causes and consequences of Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The study draws from various data sources and analytical frameworks to provide a nuanced understanding of the conflict's implications on Iraq's political, economic, and social landscapes. The data collection process involved a mix of primary and secondary sources to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the conflict. Historical documents, official government statements, and United Nations Security Council resolutions were examined to capture firsthand accounts and official positions regarding the invasion. This included peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and analyses from experts on Middle Eastern politics, providing contextual and interpretive insights into the Gulf War's causes and consequences. [39]

5.1 Data Collection and Analysis Procedure.

The data collection includes identifying historical records related to the research topic, official documents, and published analyses from a regional and international perspective. The study followed a historical and thematic approach, which provided an organized understanding of the classification of data in the research into main points, such as the period before and after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the outbreak of the war, and the effects of economic sanctions. This method paves the way for a broader understanding of the research problem and an understanding of the multiple effects of the Gulf War on Iraq and the Middle East region.

5.2 Tools for Data Analysis

The researcher employed comprehensive thematic analysis, a thorough method for examining data and recurrent themes in the sources gathered. This method included collecting information and drawing meaningful conclusions about the impact of the war on Iraq in terms of its political and economic stability and Iraq's international relations after the invasion of Kuwait. A high degree of confidence in the authenticity of this study of Middle Eastern political trends is provided by the precise conclusions obtained from historical data with the literature, and the results are crucial for comprehending the dynamics of the region. [40]

5.3 Research Study Design

The article used a historical approach to analyze Iraq's circumstances before and after the Gulf War. This analysis contributed to discovering the factors influencing the invasion and its disastrous consequences. [41]

5.4 Research Techniques

A variety of research techniques were employed to gather and analyze data effectively:

a . Literature Review: A comprehensive review of academic sources, articles, and government reports was conducted to understand the reasons for the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

b . Document Analysis: Official documents such as UN and OPEC reports were carefully examined to understand the political and economic motivations for Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

c . Comparative Analysis: This technique was used to compare the Gulf War with other conflicts in the Middle East, such as the Iran-Iraq War, and to highlight Iraq's military strategic trends and foreign policy effectiveness.

d . Geopolitical Analysis: This analysis aims to understand the geopolitical consequences of the Iraqi invasion and to analyze Iraq's relationship with Arab countries.

e . Economic Analysis: This study examines the economic difficulties facing Iraq, which were caused by the accumulated debts of the Iran-Iraq war, the disputes with the Gulf States over the price of selling oil in the world markets, the quantities of oil production with the Gulf States, and the international economic sanctions due to the invasion of Kuwait. [42]

5.5 Scoped Reviews

The scoped reviews encompass several critical areas:

a . Military Strength and Debt: This analysis was conducted on Iraq's post-war debt and military prowess to comprehend the reasons for the invasion.

b . Oil Economics: Examine how problems with oil production in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates affect Iraq's political choices.

c . Geopolitical Dynamics: It focused on the period of the end of the Cold War and how it affected the Iraqi leadership to interpret international politics and the misreading that resulted in the invasion of Kuwait and the shift in the balance of power in favor of the United States of America and the end of the period of bipolar dominance to unipolar dominance and the change in the map of international and regional alliances. [43]

5.6 Narratives and Analyses

The study explores various narratives to enrich the analysis:

a . Political Narratives: Analysis and study of the speeches and letters of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and his move to annex Kuwait to Iraq as part of Iraqi territory.

b . Geopolitical Narratives: To analyses Iraq's foreign relations and diplomatic interactions in terms of their impact on how it dealt with the war period.

c . Economic Narratives: To study the economic problems suffered by Iraq due to war debts with Iran and the decline in oil prices that led to the exacerbation of the conflict and the invasion of Kuwait. [44]

6 Results and Discussion

This article looks at the causes and effects of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. It stood in opposition to the geopolitical, economic, and military confrontations. The findings demonstrated that the Iraqi president was under severe financial strain due to the decline in oil prices and large war debts, which prompted audacious foreign policy initiatives. Saddam was emboldened to annexed Kuwait by Iraq's military might, which had been bolstered during the Iran-Iraq War, as well as by erroneous assessments of international participation. The study underlines the speed with which a coalition led by the United States halted the invasion and imposed sanctions, which had a disastrous effect on Iraq's infrastructure and economy and led to an acute humanitarian issue. Furthermore, the study's geopolitical analysis demonstrated that the Middle East's relationship with power was significantly altered due to Iraq's inability to agree on a strategy for its involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The findings highlight the Gulf War's lingering effects on Iraq and the broader region by demonstrating how intertwined economically, militarily, and geopolitical factors are diverse viewpoints are great for comprehending the historical disputes regarding Middle Eastern political circumstances.

7 Key Findings

The study detects a combination of geopolitical, military, and financial conditions that led to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Iraq was facing enormous economic stresses from large war debts, especially those due to Iran, as well as a harsh drop in oil prices brought on by Kuwait's increasing oil production. Saddam Hussein viewed Kuwait's oil wealth as a potential remedy for Iraq's economic woes due to this financial difficulty. The research results demonstrate how these financial incentives enormously impacted Iraq's aggressive foreign policy. After the Iran-Iraq War, Iraq had a strong military with millions of troops and advanced weaponry. Saddam directly viewed this army expansion as a potential tactic for invading Kuwait. But Iraq became politically isolated as the Soviet Union, a vital ally and provider of military hardware, broke up. [45]

The research highlights that Saddam's misinterpretation of the U.S. position believing there would be no significant American intervention was a critical miscalculation that facilitated the decision to invade. The international response to the invasion was swift and decisive, led by the United States. The U.S led military intervention effectively reversed the annexation, with sanctions

and military actions authorized by the United Nations Security Council liberating Kuwait but simultaneously devastating Iraq's military and economic infrastructure. [46]

The imposed sanctions severely hampered Iraq's ability to modernize its military and crippled infrastructure development, leading to long-term socio-economic repercussions. In addition, the invasion and the resulting sanctions had devastating humanitarian effects. According to the study, Iraq's health and death rates deteriorated as a result of a lack of fundamental amenities and medical equipment. As the situation worsened, opposition parties in both northern and southern Iraq became more active, which made it harder for the regime to maintain control of the nation. Geopolitically, the Gulf War marked a significant shift in the balance of power in the Middle East. The research underscores that the U.S. and its allies began to assert greater influence in the region, fundamentally altering the geopolitical landscape. Attempts by Iraq to frame the war within the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict were largely unsuccessful, as the international community predominantly supported Kuwait's sovereignty. Ultimately, the findings indicate that the Gulf War and the ensuing sanctions have had lasting effects on Iraq's economy, social fabric, and military capabilities, as well as on the broader geopolitical dynamics of the Middle East, the ramifications of which continue to be felt today. [47]



Figure 1: This figure visually illustrates the relationships between Iraq's economic, military, and political factors during the Gulf War, demonstrating how these elements influenced the long-term consequences of the conflict, including the eventual collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003. Key insights are derived from the following sources:

- a Economic Pressures and Motivations From Alnasrawi & Mahdi [48]
- b Military Capabilities and Political Miscalculations From Mueller [49]
- c International Response and Consequences From Hiro [50]
- d Social and Humanitarian Impacts From Tripp [51]
- e Geopolitical Dynamics From Freedman [52]

8 Limitation

The study extensively uses secondary data sources, which might only partially reflect how the conflict-affected various facets of Iraqi culture. Furthermore, some historical and governmental data may be skewed or lacking.

9 Recommendations for Further Studies

- a . Long-term Socioeconomic Impact : Future research with a concentration on civilian life, healthcare, and education, future studies could examine the long-lasting social and economic effects of the Gulf War on the people of Iraq.
- b . Environmental Analysis : Investigating the environmental costs of the war, such as oil spills and harm to natural resources, would allow for a more thorough grasp of the conflict's aftermath.
- c . Comparative Studies : Dramatic events in the Middle East, such as the Iran-Iraq War and the 1991 Desert Storm War, and their effects can be compared with current events and help understand the nature and characteristics of regional conflicts.
- d . Media Influence : Focusing on the vital function played by the media during the Gulf War can help us understand its influence on public opinion and strategies for dealing with enemies.

Studying and examining the above topics can provide a solid basis for understanding the future effects of the Gulf War on the Middle East and its surroundings.

10 Conclusion

The analysis in the report shows the significant and lasting impact that the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent international sanctions had on Iraq's standing both at home and abroad. The complicated effects of the battle became apparent with the collapse of the dictatorship. International sanctions, the American war on Iraq, and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait all had a part in the terrible outcomes that resulted in the fall of the Iraqi government on April 9, 2003. The Baathist dictatorship's power and influence began to decline, especially in Kurdistan, northern Iraq. The leading cause of this was the Iraqi government's decision to create a somewhat autonomous Kurdish zone by handing over administrative control to the two Kurdish parties when it withdrew from the northern regions.

As a result of the invasion of Kuwait, the Iraqi people lost confidence in the Baath Party due to the events that followed the invasion, including the war with the international coalition led by the United States, then the problematic withdrawal from Kuwait, the outbreak of the popular uprising in southern and northern Iraq, and the economic sanctions. In the end, all these factors caused the gradual weakening of the power of the Baathist regime until its collapse in 2003. [53]

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