

The Factors Affecting the Women Political Participations in Jordanian Parliamentary Elections (2003-2013)

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper aim to provide a thorough historical, legal, or factors affecting women's participations in the Jordanian parliamentary elections

Design/methodology/approach: The study has analyzed three parts: the first part attempts to clarify Jordan's policy toward women and their political status before 2003. The second part examines the women political participation in Jordanian parliamentary elections after the quota system and laws. The third part analyzes the factors and developments have affected the form and scope of women political participation in the Jordanian parliamentary elections.

This paper will depend on the historical and Analytical Approaches.

Findings: Results indicated that adoption of a quota for female in Jordan is necessary and justified for a certain period of time during a transitional phase until society comes to believe in women's political abilities. The quota system can be seen as a first step in order to demonstrate the efficiency of Jordanian women in politics, so that in the future women could gain access to parliament through competition instead, which would depend on the ability of society to elect representatives without regard to race, ethnic identity, sectarianism, tribalism or gender.

Research limitations/implications: To enhance the political participation of women, this article is proposing to government and national stakeholders that more serious consideration be given to the potential of electoral system, as well as to affirmative measures and gender quota for women.

Originality/value: The study offers some new information and data about the status of Women and its political participation in the Jordanian parliamentary elections that is very limited or perhaps not offered in the libraries.

Keywords: Jordan, women, Jordanian parliamentary elections.

Introduction

Jordan has a long history in terms of its constitutional evaluation. When Jordan was established, it was a rural society and most of its population was living in rural areas. Also, the Jordanian society was governed by tribal ethics, and the tribal law was accepted as a legitimate law and had a similar validity to civic law. At that time, women were excluded from the political process. Equality between men and women was not considered to be a political issue nor was it perceived as a priority during most of that period. During the 1950s, some changes took place of which the most important was women's participation in public life and politics.

Unfortunately, political party's activities were banned in Jordan in 1957; the martial law was declared and implemented for more than three decades, following the political events in this country. Since 1989, Jordan has started once again to democratic life and seen important achievements regarding parliamentary elections, minority's rights especially women, religious, ethnics and political party's activities and the rising of their status in political scene. Also, nowadays, gender issues, role and participation in the political processes concerning the country and its official and civil institutes are considered to be important topics which contribute to social change and building a civil democratic society in Jordan.

Also, Women's status has faced radical changes in the area of strengthening women's capacity in education, work, and political participation. It has recently obtained a number of rights, represented in amendments to some laws, including a quota of seats for women as well as social minorities in parliament. In 2003, Jordan had introduced the quota system for the first time as an amendment to the Electoral law of 2001 (article 45, paragraph C). According to this amendment (No.42/2001), six out of 110 seats were allocated to women and 15th out of 150 seats in 2013 elections. This article is analyzing the impact of the quota system on women political participation in Jordanian parliamentary elections and identifies the main obstacles that prevent their real and effective participation in political life in general in Jordan.

-The Subject and Scope of this study

The Jordanian electoral system used the quotas for regions, religious, ethnic minorities, as well as for women. The quota system participation and influence of gender in 2007 & 2013, Jordanian parliamentary elections is the subject of this article. This study will deal with other aspects depending on their relevance to this subject.

- Research Objectives & Aims

The main aim of this paper is to explore and analyze the impact of the quota system on women political participation in Jordanian parliamentary elections and to determine the main obstacles that prevent their real and effective participation in political life in general and parliamentary elections in particular. Therefore, this article aims to identify the following:

Firstly: Establish the impact of the parliamentary and municipal elections in Jordan during the 2007 & 2013 elections on the political reform process and democratic transition. Have these been steps forwards or backwards?
Secondly: Study the impact of the quota system on the political reforms and parliamentary elections. Also, to analyze if these quota has been successful in reaping the aims of their adaptation within the conditions of the political process; or if they has paid for this adaptation by reduced popularity?

- Research Hypothesis

The basic assumption made in this research is that: "introducing a quota may encourage female to become politically more active and involved in parliamentary elections, politics & a positive step to the need for building modern, strong political participation designed to make democracy in Jordan".

- Significance Research

The significance of this research is to have more information about Jordan's democracy: reforms, Women's political activities in political life and participation in parliamentary elections.

- Research Content

In the light of the goals of this research and its hypothesis, this study covers three major topics:

The first section will explain the theoretical approach that has been suggested by the use of political analytical tools upon Jordanian women's quota and their political participation in the 2007&2013 parliamentary elections. This will be represented by their role in the parliament. Second section will focus upon Jordan's' position in respect of these instruments; Third one, will analysis the reasons behind this limited role of women in the formal parliamentary political process. Also, analysis, how a woman's legal status has been affected by these instruments and by the family, tribalism, and etc. Furthermore, this article identifies areas of legal concern relevant to the legal status of Jordanian women as well as provides specific recommendations for short and long terms interventions to increase women's political participation.

- Research methodology

Methodology is concerned with: what data the researcher collects, how often that data gets collected, why these data are collected where they are collected, and how did it is analyses(Collis, J. & Hussey, R.2003:55). Other writers defined methodology as referring to " the practices and techniques used to gather, process, manipulate, and interpret information that can then be used to test ideas and theories about social life" (Johnson, S. 2000:192). Also, as tools and instruments used by researchers to collect and investigate data, method can be classified in several ways based upon different criteria. For example there are two main sources of data, primary and secondary, based upon status of evidence classifies research as historical, descriptive, and experimental. Some scholars in its Basics, Methods and Procedures classified research into four categories: a- Experimental studies to evaluate interventions; b- Historical studies; c- Descriptive studies; and d- Developmental studies (Olayan,R.M.2001:41). In social sciences there are two main types of research orientations: the quantitative approach focuses on testing theories and correlations, and the qualitative approach focuses on generating data (Miller, R.L and Brewer, J.D.2003:192). Accordingly, there are different types of data collection methods that can be used in this field of study and each have its advantages and disadvantages, strengthens and weakness. Therefore, the researcher will choose methods in light of particular factors. This research will use the Analytical Method.

- Literature Review &Theoretical Approach

Some writers argued that in order to conduct a meaningful enquiry there is a need for" sound theoretical knowledge about the problem is from which the research task originated" (Bush, C.H & Harter, S.P 1980:17). Therefore, this article gives an overview of the literature and debates on quota system and women parliamentary elections, examining the key themes of this paper which are women political participation in Jordan and the role played by women and other factors in the 2007 parliamentary elections. The literature review starts by discussing the main terms and issues concerning the topic of the article: quota system, and women political participation.

Given the weakness and slow speed by which the number of women in political participation is growing, there are increased calls for more efficient methods reach a gender balance in political institutions and parliaments. Quotas present one such mechanism. The introduction of quota systems for gender represents a qualitative jump into a policy of exact goals and means (Dahlerup, Drude, Ed, 2006:21). Because of its relative efficiency, the hope for a dramatic increase in women's representation by using this system is strong.

The term 'quotas' are used here usually to cover, candidacy and results of elections to make sure that, they are conducted properly and according to law. Also, it is a formal mechanism that enhances minorities and women's participation and representations, are being increasingly implemented. Gender as well as Social minority's quotas ensure that these social branches constitute a specific number or percentage of the members of a body, a parliamentary assembly, a committee or the government .Another benefit of the quota system is that, it might reduce the gap between the numbers of minority's candidates and tribal represented in the political arena (Majed, Ziad: 2005). While there is consensus on the desirability of quota system and women political participation, there are some contradictions in this subject. In other words, analysis of quota discourses reveals interesting variations between different countries and different regions. Quota is highly controversial for some peoples and writers, whereas its proposal has passed with only little discussion in others. Yet the debate is often confused and faces some contradictions. It is also, is only comprehensible if hidden assumptions about gender and the position of female are scrutinized .Hence, some researcher consider quota to be a form of positive discrimination and a violation of the principle of fairness, while others view them as compensation for structural barriers that prevent fair competition (Dahlerup, Drude, Ed, 1998).

So, the supporters of this kind of system praise it as a form of affirmative action without which social minorities especially women would not have chance to get seats in Jordanian parliament (Majed.Ziad, 2005:13). It is criticized; however, because the mechanism used to determine the winners of the seats set aside for women in legislature but all cancels out the chances of minorities and female candidates from large elections districts. On the other side, and by contrast , some believe that the seats in the parliament is not a peace of cake to be divided between ethnic groups, women and tribes by means of quotas but an organization that composes elected representatives of the citizenry, who in run represent parties (Majed.Ziad 2005). Despite that, all these different opinions and methodologies that have discussed the quota system and the role of women in parliamentary elections and in political participation are considered a manifest benefit in knowledge.

These different opinions and methodologies have been exposed to numerous critiques that have made it difficult to rely upon one methodology or opinion to be implemented in this research. Also, these reviews of the important studies about quota system and women parliamentary elections in Jordan was looking for anything can be used to assess the democracy process through real indicators. Disappointingly, the reviewed literature offers early studies (after the year 2003) some before the issuance of the women's quotas' law. In view of that, It seems that it is too early to judge whether the process of quota system has fully consolidated and achieved the ambitious goals or not, as most of the dramatic and important events that have has a dramatic impact on the quota process occurred after 2003, such as the consequences of the economic consequences of the internal and regional events.

Therefore, this study is important for both academic and practical reasons and considerations. In terms of academic considerations, despite the multiplicity of writings on quota system, women political participation, parliamentary elections, and even the democratic reform in Jordan, there is a paucity of research and field studies on women political participation in this country. There is in need for more studies and identifying the reality of women political participation in Jordan and investigating the most important factors associated with participation concerning the economic situation, social structure, religion, and political culture. This study is also important because women participation in Jordanian parliamentary elections is not only a political phenomenon but also a social one where the political and electoral behaviour of both voters and candidates is affected by many political, social, economic, and cultural factors.

- Women's Political Status

As a part of the Arab world, Jordan has a long history in terms of its political development and evaluation. In its early foundation, women were excluding from the political process. Equally between male and female was not considered as a political issue nor was it perceived as a priority before the 1950s. During that time also, there was no political participation significant discovery between female's expectations and real practice.

In the 1950s, some changes took place towards women's activism and involvement in the political issue in Jordanian political situation. Women gained the right to vote, but not to stand for elections. However, that right was restricted to women with primary education or above, thereby still excluding a large number of women from the right to vote (Ministry of Interior, 2003:33). In the mid of 1970s, Jordanian women were finally accorded the full right to vote and to stand for election. Unfortunately, electoral activity was banned from the late 1950s to the late 1980s due to the many political events that have happened in Jordan as well as in the Middle East region.

Since 1989, Jordanian women's activism returned once again to the political scene in this country. Its candidates, in the 1989 parliamentary election was 12 women, but none received sufficient votes to gain any of the 80 seats. The 1993 parliamentary election was held under a new law and the Single Non- Transferable Vote electoral system, which replaced the Block Vote, used in the previous election. In this election only three candidates stood for election and one of them won (namely Twojan Faysal) and became the first female member of the Chamber of Deputies in Jordan's democratic history. In fact, her victory was not due solely to comparative reasons, as she obtained the seat set aside for social minorities (Circassian and Chechens minorities) in Amman's District No, 3. She got 1,885 votes only (UNIFEM: 2004). In the 1997 elections female candidates failed to win any seat in the parliament.

Indeed, these attempts by Jordanian women to participate in the elections of the House of Representatives that occurred during the years of 1989, 1993, and 1997 did not produce more than one representative from 80 in total during the 1993 elections. Recently, Jordanian government lunched and issued new laws concerning political reforms. Based on that, the Jordanian government produced a new election Law, raising the number of seats in the Parliament from 80 to 110 seats, with six set aside for women as part of the quota system. It introduced the quota system in 2003 fore women candidates as an amendment to the Electoral Law of 2001(Article45, paragraph C). According to this amendment (No.42/2001), six out of 110 seats were allocated to female. This means, the 2003 parliamentary elections, witnessed some changed with the introduction of a quota system which allocated these seats for female candidates. According to the quota system, women candidates are ranked according to their share as a percentage of the total votes cast in their respective constituencies. Those with the highest percentage share are declared the winners (Article45, paragraph). Based on that calculation, there were 54 women candidates, but none of them was elected within the quota system (www.jordanelections2003.com.jo). Moreover, in the 2007 elections, there were 212 women candidates; one of them only was elected outside the quota system, while the other six was within the quota system (Ministry of Interior, 2007).

On the 23rd of January 2013 elections, Jordanian government held its first Parliamentary elections in the context of the Arab spring. Like previous parliaments, the 17th elected Lower House, is royally appointed and consist of a majority of conservative and tribal candidates, providing the regime a solid support base in both the Upper House, and Senate. (Tucker, Joshua: January 25, 2013). Nearly 1,500 candidates, including 191 women, ran for the 150-seat parliaments Women have 17 deputies, two more than the women's quota of 15 provides. (Tucker, Joshua: January 25, 2013). Furthermore, the new law adopted the 'open quota system', giving women practice two chances to win seats. The first chance was in competition with the rest of the candidates for the seat in the district, whether on tribale seat in any of the districts or on social minority's seat in which these seats were allocated. The second chance would come when the votes cast for those women candidates who had not won seats were counted and the top six by number of votes cast were selected, regardless of district (Al-Attiyat,2005:39).

-The Quota system

An evaluation of the female's quota system in this article turns up some justifications and even contradictions. In other words, the system has come under criticism from various groups. Some support the allocation of a quota for women in the House of Representatives based on several considerations, and as a result of the benefits and advantages achieved by this system that gives women access to the House of Deputies. At the same time, others object to the quota system as a result of the negative aspects involved (Al-azzam, A, 2008: 258). Those who were in favour of quota and allocating seats to women in parliament gave various reasons (Nahar, Ghazi.Saleh:2009). First, on democratic justice, the arrival of women in parliament will devote the principle of real participation to all citizens in the political life. Second, it is assumed to be one method of addressing the issue of prejudice against women and their historical exclusion from formal political processes. Third, women from gender perspective it is assumed that introducing a quota may encourage women to become politically more active and involved. Fourth, it might also offer women an opportunity to learn from the experience of participating in public political affairs, from which they might otherwise be excluded. Finally, it is assumed that the quota is a temporary measure, an instrument of affirmative action only to be adopted until it is no longer necessary. While on the other hand and in the long term, others thought the quota system unfair to women.

In Jordanian society many opponents of the quota system argue that it contradicts constitutional articles and basic democratic values which clearly stipulate that voters should be able to choose their representatives freely (Al-azzam,Amin:2008:259). In the 2007 parliamentary elections, in Madaba, Deputy Fallak Al- Jamaani became the first woman to win a Lower House seat through direct competition, while the other six women won seats through the quota that the government introduced in previous elections (Shteivi, M, 2008:11). Falak garnered 3,301 votes to win the sole seat in Madaba's Second District, which 15 male candidates were vying for. Her strongest rival got 1,820 votes (Husseini, R.: 2009). She has demonstrated that it is possible for a woman to be elected without the quota system (Shahhen, O.: 2008). Thus by looking at the number of seats that Jordanian women have acquired in the legislative power in comparison to the number of seats of men, we can say that there is a gender gap between both men and women with regard to their representation in this power.

Indeed, the numbers of analyses have increased as well as the opinions regarding the reasons that have led to the weakening political participation of Jordanian women in the legislative power. Some of them associate the problem with the regulations concerning elections which are based upon one voice or vote and believe that it has negatively affected the opportunities confronting the participation of women (Shaykhani, M. :2009). Others associated the problem with the role of women itself not being effective on the decision making or even in social, religious, or other reasons; i.e. these writers have differed point of view from the previous ones especially in the reasons behind the weakening role of Jordanian women in political life in Jordan during the years of 1989, 1993, 1997 and 2003 (Al-Attiyat, I. 2005:53).

Despite the various opinions regarding the participation of Jordanian women in political life and the critiques that have been given towards the quota system as well as the women's weak role in the parliamentary elections, we can consider that the qualitative development in the political representation of Jordanian women in the legislative institute. Additionally, with the existence of limitations of political representations for Jordanian women in comparison to men, from a general perspective, with regard to the seats in the parliament has witnessed an increasing, but insufficient if not accompanied by legislation that empowers women (Zu'bi, A.: 2008). So some women believe that, the women should get better situation and eliminating the stereotypical image of women in the society.

Emily Naffa, for example said that: "last year's achievements were good, but not as expected"(Naffa, E.: 2008). She added" We were disappointed by the outcome of the elections because we were expecting more women to win outside the quota". She insisted that "the struggle to fight for better laws and more rights for women would never stop" (Naffa, E.: 2008). The people hold this opinion believe that the method of designation does not contradict the precept of equal citizenship, but rather state that from the obligations of equality is the lifting of social oppression that has afflicted the Jordanian woman during the levels of forming and developing the Jordanian society. Those hold this opinion defend their opinion by bringing forth as evidence the position of the Jordanian political system towards Christians in this country (Al-azzam, A. 2008:259).

Although the opinion that has been defended against, regarding the quota system for Jordanian women, has a positive side of increasing the participation of Jordanian women in political life, it is difficult to defend this process in the light of elections and democracy from one perspective. Furthermore, it is difficult to defend the designation of seats and the resort to nomination may not guarantee the full rights of women, if women are not selected according to the specifications set by the government. Meaning, that nomination may give women the possession of seats but at the same time, does not guarantee the absolute representation of women in the Legislative power in Jordan (Al-Rawabdeh: 2009). Also, as we high light upon the accompanied numbers we examined previously regarding the participation of women, we can deduce that the weakness of their participation and political representation was very evident at the higher levels of leadership. For example, there wasn't a single woman that acquired the position of president of the parliament, the senate, or even the ministry council ever since the establishment of Jordan. This weakness can be attributed to the nature of the Jordanian society in which dominates the phenomenon of inferiority towards women in comparison to men or maybe due to the small number of Jordanian candidates in the institutes of the government, in addition to the weakness of the female candidates in their role of representation.

On the other hand most of these women were win seats in the parliament did not have previous political experience, or even party experience, or practically any past experience in the political life. Thus, the collective political behavior of these women was not in accordance with the party or institute's methodology during their participation in the Jordanian parliament; instead their behavior was innate, which furthermore led to a decrease in their influence in the political life of Jordan(Nahar.Ghazi .Saleh:2009). It can be argued that adoption of a quota for female is necessary and justified for a certain period during a transitional phase until society comes to believe in women's political abilities. The quota system can be seen as a first step in order to demonstrate the efficiency of women in political life, so that in the future women could gain access to parliament through competition instead, which would depend on the ability of society to elect representatives without regard to race, ethnic identity, sectarianism, tribalism or gender.

- Obstacles

It is in the Jordanian constitution, male and female are equal in terms of rights and duties. In addition, the election law grants the rights of women to participate and to vote in the parliamentary elections. In spite of that, there are factors or components that are lacked by Jordanian women to guarantee a greater participation, as well as a greater interaction in Jordanian politics. Most researchers have attributed the restricted access of women to political life, and therefore to parliament, to social and religious constraints. In addition to that one could reveal that the main obstacle limiting the ability of women to improve their position and become involved actively in political life is the lack of confidence in the ability of women, whether in political or public life generally (Nahar, Ghazi, Saleh. 2003).

Moreover, the obstacles Jordanian women face with respect to political participation and parliamentary elections are numerous and often interconnected. Many of these challenges stem from the patriarchal nature of Jordanian society, which has permeated into formal and informal organizations, besides being the major force within family structures (Sabbagh, A.: 2007). These components however can be represented in social patterns, culture, and economic development, the political system of the country and its laws, and personal or private matters that are associated with the personality of Jordanian women. And in which there is no doubt, is that there is a relationship of interaction, influence, and interrelationships between these factors resulting in a cumulative effect upon the participation of women in Jordanian politics in general and in the parliament in particular (Naffa, E.:2008). Therefore, women weakness in the Jordanian parliamentary elections and the obstacle faces have been discussed by observers , researchers and institutions in Jordan , have produced a group of studies on the issue.

Some of them found that Jordanian society continues to lack confidence in gender's political and even decision-making abilities (Al-Attayat, I., 2005:53). Others believe that, Jordanian men do not encourage the presence of women in decision – making positions (Pederson, Jon & Others: 1998). Furthermore, a number of researchers have discussed the impact and influences of tribalism, personal behaviour and the weakness of elections campaign on the representation of female in parliament and in political life in Jordan (Majed. Z.: 2005). The political conditions of women outlined so far reveal a number of factors that play an important role in limiting or obstructing effective female participation in parliamentary elections, and may overlap with the results reached in the studies mentioned above. However, the factors we now examine are relevant to the current situation, which is influenced by women's political experience, and under the quota system.

- Social & Cultural

The Jordanian society is part of the Arab society; in which tribal, traditions, and authoritative customs predominate. The tribes, which exhibit a traditional type of culture, play an important role in Jordanian democracy process and politics. It is a paternal, male society and social interaction is distinctive in that it has an ascending relationship (Nahar.Ghazi.Saleh:2003). This type of society also, have succeeded in creating a framework, that effective public participation requires and enforces upon women the taking up of a traditional role inherited that is confined to the maintenance of the home and the assurance of the needs of the family inside the house (Al-Rawabdeh: 2009). Family leagues have been established and registered with the authorities, which means that they have become institutionalized. The traditional and conservative culture prevailing in Jordanian society depends on values, customs, and traditions which identify a stereotypical image of women through socialization and cultural beliefs determining what is appropriate and in appropriate in the roles of men and women. In addition, gender culture and patriarchal dominance is supported by social and religious institutions which reinforce the traditional role of women. This results in many decisive manifestations of political participation in favour of men and the marginalization of women. Therefore, no female candidate has ever been elected to represent a Jordanian tribe in the internal votes which they conduct to decide their candidates. Moreover, participation as candidates or voters in the tribe's internal elections is confined to men only (Al-Sa'eh.Aman. 2009 :). Naturally, societies that believe in social customs and traditions bequeath these customs and traditions to future generations during the process of social development. It is not easy to change such customs and traditions that have been inherited in a society especially those that are related to the position of women in the structure of the society.

Therefore, the hierarchical structure of the Jordanian society manifested the position of men and encompassed them with an aura of glory. On the other hand, it forced women to accept the current situation, in addition to actually participating in defending the occupation of men of advanced positions in the official governmental and civil institutes of the country. Women actually have reached a degree of supporting their fathers, friends, husbands, and even sons in reaching positions of leadership throughout their social lives.

Women themselves do not elect women because their electoral decisions are still not independent, instead being subject to masculine authority and to the customs and traditions that promote the status of men and reduce or marginalize the public presence of female. Nariman Al-Rousan, a candidate for the 15th parliament stated that the main reason that women refrain from supporting female candidates is the subordination of women to men, in addition to women's lack of self confidence that leads to lack of confidence in women candidates (Al-Rousan ,N. :2009). Thus men have been raised and nurtured upon traditions and customs that have given them the right to build the society and the leadership of the various advanced institutes in the society. Naturally, a society in which social development has been built upon this example of behavior causes the arousal of problems and obstacles in front of Jordanian women and decreases their self confidence, as well as their ability to compete in occupying positions in parliament and in the other official and civil institutes of the Jordanian society.

- Election Law

From a political perspective, the general political environment that has lead the political life in Jordan during the past decades was disadvantageous upon the participation of Jordanian women in politics. For example, the country did not allow women to participate in political affairs until 1974. In the previous decades, the country lived until 1989 under the laws of a state of emergency and the cultural laws, and prohibited the action of political parties.

Likewise, the government did not attempt to change the traditional situation of women in the Jordanian society. If the government wanted to open the door of opportunity for women to participate in political life, in a way that is equal to men, it could have done so by legislating laws that guarantee the support of women and in later steps to occupy more positions that are influential in the institutes of the country(Nahar.Ghazi.Saleh:2009). However, the laws and the direction of political life in Jordan are in the hands of men; in accordance to traditions and customs that have been inherited, and in accordance to the hierarchical paternal system that has been mentioned previously. All of this has come to the benefit of men for the price of the participation of women in the political life of the country. It is appropriate to say that the Jordanian government has legislated laws that are in favor of Jordanian women. However, the contents of these laws and regulations are not enough to guarantee the rights of women in political participation. To acknowledge the truth does not necessarily mean the implementation of the truth. The implementation of the truth requires on behalf of the government and both men and women to understand and accept that the practice of this right is an obligation (Al-Khawaldeh.Ensaf:2006).

Also, the new election law itself is considered to be one of the most important indicators of the existence of a degree of participation in power, but it does not always indicate the existence of democracy in a political regime. The new election law has itself a number of weak points, particularly when it comes to female's issues and their participation. First, it is based on the SNTV system, which reinforces tribalism, which in turn supports men over women candidates, regardless of their qualifications and competence. Second, the districting system is unfair, as the number of seats in a particular district does not match population density, while the SNTV system limits the candidate to his or her narrow electoral district, which reduces his or her political popularity. Third, the mechanism to determine winners of seats aside for female is unfair: since the top six candidates in terms of percentage of actual votes to the total number of voters in their district are declared winners, this provision has limited the chances of female candidates in large electoral districts gaining seats in parliament (IDEM 2007).

- The Religious

In addition to what has been mentioned, the participation of Jordanian women in political life faces social obstacles related to religion or economics. It is known, that the Islamic religion, which is the official religion of the country and most of the citizens of the Jordanian society, does not contain any passages or articles of evidence that do not allow or restrict the participation of women in political life (Dana Charkasi: 1999). Despite that there remain social activities belonging to certain individuals or to movements that claim to be religious in nature, (which are not well established in the fundamentals of the religion), have attempted, and continue, to restrict the activity of Jordanian women in political life. These social religious movements do not base themselves in their social behavior towards women in essentiality, understanding, and religious passages that are authentic and unimpaired. They interpret certain understandings in a way that supports their perceptions and ideologies and may use as evidence for their social behavior ideologies that envision the religion from a partial perspective (Nahar, Ghazi.Saleh:2002).

Islam does not prohibit nor restrict the participation of women in the political life of the society. It instead encourages women in doing such and every other understanding of the status of women and their participation are incorrect; such that the religion is innocent of them (Izzat, H. R.: 1995). The Arab woman has participated in general life and trade before and after Islam. As an example, Khadija bint Khuwailid participated in trade, and Aisha, the wife of the noble Messenger, lead the army in 'The Battle of the Camel' in 36 H. The grandmother of the king, al-Azeez bi-Laah, the Fatimian, worked in the management of the state from 411 H (1220 CE) to 415 H(1024 CE). Likewise, the mother of the caliph Al-Mustansir bil-Laah from 427 H to 465 H, and the daughter of al-Haafidh li-deenillaah the Fatamian(Jamal ad-Deen Ali Al-Azadee ibn Dhaafir; 1225), and others. Regardless to say, the emergence of Jordanian women and their participation in political affairs, generally, is different from religion to religion, and the status of women in rural and urban areas, in addition to their social status if they were married or divorced, as well as their economic status.

- The Economic

The economic situation has positive and negative effects upon the participation of women in Parliamentary elections as well as in political life in Jordan. The monetary cost for elective campaigns and the participation fee for entering into the House of Representatives affect the participation of Jordanian women in political life, especially, the situation of those women belong to the lower and middle classes of the Jordanian society.

In most cases, men pre-dominate the income of the family and control the monetary expenditures, and there are boundaries for women which they cannot transgress. For the transgression of these boundaries can lead to various problems of different types and different outcomes (Nahar Ghazi .Saleh:2001). The ascendancy of men over women can be attributed to different reasons; the most important of which being that men take part in the general labor force with a monetary return (i.e. a salary or wage), whereas women indulge in their daily home activities without a monetary return. It is correct that women sometimes participate in the general labor force and receive a monetary return. However, these jobs are initiated in the Jordanian society only after the consent of men; such as the father, brother, or husband. In addition these jobs also emerge as a means of mimicking men (Kondgen .O, & others: 1996:6).

Regardless to say, the factors that have been mentioned previously and have been pointed out throughout this research are of the factors that compose the situation of power of men, while at the same time, constitute a weakening factor confronting the participation of women in political life in Jordan. There are factors which have and can lead, to inequality in the political participation between the in-sense of genders in the Jordanian society. Furthermore, these factors have glorified the roles and control of men the higher positions in the official institutes of the government as well as the civil institutes. At the same time, these factors can be considered as obstacles or impediments that have hindered the activity and movement of Jordanian women in politics. As these factors are related to the effectiveness of the political participation of women and their exiting from the disadvantageous situation in which Jordanian women live in or even upon their persistence in such a state, we can consider this topic as one of the most important topics that must be focused upon and researched. There must also be propositions of appropriate solutions to rid the society of its disadvantageous effects upon the participation of women or at least to limit its effect upon the activity of Jordanian women in the various fields of official politics and civil involvement.

-Conclusion Remarks

The women's situation in Jordanian parliament, although the quota system has brought women into Jordan's parliament, the presence of women there really only represents a facade of democracy and is purely cosmetic, as the majority of citizens do not believe in the importance of the political role of women. The introduction of effective quotas system represents a shift in approach, from equal opportunity to equality of results. However, since the quota system in our study specifies the number of women and men to be presented to voters in parliament, one might prefer to see electoral gender quotas as an example of real equal opportunity. men ,women have an equal chance to present themselves to voters, and in open list proportional representation systems, as well as in majority ones, voters have the choice of voting for a male or female candidates.

The activation of the role of Jordanian women in political life in the country is in need of the creation of positive directions towards the absolute political example for women from the government, the men, and from women themselves. The suggestions related to the assignment of a certain number or proportion of seats for women (a women quota in the Jordanian parliament) is considered to be important. The legislative laws that have been issued in the Jordanian constitution in favor of the Jordanian women are also important. However, all of these different points are not considered sufficient to raise the level of women participation in politics in the Jordanian society. Furthermore, the educated mother strives in changing bad customs in any society as well as in replacing them with better customs that are more developmental and social during the stages of nurturing and social-family orientation; up to the higher circles of acknowledge the society that complete the structure of the society.

Thus, it is upon both men and women, as well as the government to research the factors that increase the power of women and use various tools to inform the social structure of the importance of these society factors and to attempt to reveal the correct way of using them with the intention to improve the status of women and their participation in political affairs. Likewise, it is upon the government to open or provide opportunities that are equivalent to those given to men so that they may be able to reach the higher positions in the official governmental and organizations, as well as provide social support for the examples that are appropriate for them. This requires the government to refrain from selecting the weaker social examples that achieve the surface goals or even the personal goals of the powerful individuals in the governmental institutions. The proposed suggestions are in further need of insight into the importance of making women aware of their importance and need of their practical participation in the improvement of their social, economic, and political status. They also require the changing of the view of men that depicts women as inferior in the Jordanian society.

It is rectified that these suggestions may require a long of time to reach their goals which this research has portrayed with regard to the participation of Jordanian women. However, the changes of social inheritance, as well as the inheritance of customs and traditions of societies, are in need of time to accept change from the citizens of the society. At the same time, the matter is in need of adopting various mechanism and different strategies to make social change a reality; instead of exclusively focusing upon advancing a certain number of women to positions of legislation or the official governmental or civil institutes. If one takes the actual exclusion of female as the starting point, that is, if he recognizes that many barriers exist that prevent women from entering the realm of politics, than quotas are seen not as discriminating against men. But instead it is a compensation for all the obstacles that women confront. When all these impediments are removed, it is possible that quotas will not be necessary anymore. In this respect, quotas are a temporary measure.

It can be argued that adoption of a quota for female is necessary and justified for a certain period during a transitional phase until society comes to believe in women's political abilities. The quota system can be seen as a first step in order to demonstrate the efficiency of women in politics, so that in the future women could gain access to parliament through competition instead, which would depend on the ability of society to elect representatives without regard to race, ethnic identity, sectarianism, tribalism or gender.

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