

Jordanian Women Participation in the Parliamentary Elections of 2016: Field Study in Albalqa Governorate

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Abstract

According to the constitution and election laws Jordanian women enjoy equal rights with men regarding voting and running for parliamentary elections. However, despite the fact that half the voters in all previous parliamentary elections that took place in the country since 1989 elections' records show that women had failed to win a seat before 2003 election. Therefore, the government in 2003 introduced a six guaranteed seats quota for women and increased the number seats to 15 in 2013 election and 2016. However, despite all reform measures only one woman had won a seat in the elections of 2007 and 2010; three in 2013 and five in the 2016 election out of 130 seats. Results show that women's election behavior and voting priorities are influenced by males, families' relationships and religious beliefs; that their voting behavior is influenced by age, level of education and place of residence. Results also show that the working and more educated women are more willing to vote, to run for parliament, participates in elections' campaign than younger women.

Keywords: Women Participation, Parliamentary Elections, Quota, Jordan, 2016.

Introduction

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a small country located in the heart of the Arab World and its system of government is parliamentary monarchy. The legislative authority consists of two houses: the lower house consists of (130) members elected directly by the people, while the upper house consists of 65 members appointed by the King. Among the (130) lower house members there are fifteen secured seats (quota) for women; fifteen seats for the semi-desert (Badia) region, nine seats for Christians, three seats for Chechens and Circassian. The parliamentary life in Jordan started in 1946 with independence from British Mandate and the establishment of the 1952 constitution. In theory the Parliament of Jordan enjoys constitutional power to oversight the government's deeds and actions including approving the budget and dismissing the government. (Article (54) of the constitution). The constitution of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan guarantees equal rights for all Jordanians men and women. "Jordanians shall be equal before the law. There shall be no discrimination between them as regards their rights and duties on grounds of race, language or religion" (article 6). The constitution guarantees freedom of opinion, Press, meetings, the establishment of civil societies and political parties. (Articles: 15, 16, 17). It stipulates that appointment to any government office "shall be made on the bases of merit and qualifications" (article: 23). However, despite the fact that women's equality with men was laid down in the constitution of 1952, many subsequent laws, rules and regulations still discriminate against them, like the nationality law, the personal status law, the social security and health insurance laws (*Atligan:2002*). This is in addition to official regulations that prevent women organizations from hosting election debates, organize meetings or workshops on their premises on the ground that such activities are not within the objectives of these organizations (Al-Jraibi: 2002).

1. Women Political Participation and the Quota system

Since the establishment of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, women participation in politics went through different stages and was affected by religious, cultural, and economic factors and the tribal nature of Jordanian society.

Indeed before 1974 Jordanian women did not have the right to vote or run for parliamentary seats but in 1955 the election law was amended to allow women to vote but denied them the right to run for elections until 1974 when the election law which issued in that year (law No. 8) gave women the right to vote and to be elected to parliament for the first time in the history of the Kingdom but they only exercised their rights during parliamentary elections of 1984.

However, Jordanian women's interest in politics and public life goes back to the middle of 1950s when few women organizations were established and started to voice their demands for equality, freedom, and equal opportunities in education and employment. The first Jordanian women organization to appear was the "Arab Women's Union" in 1954, which raised the slogan "Equal Rights and Duties, One Arab Nation" which clearly shows its political character. (al-Jraibi: 2002). Women's organizations like other NGOs directed their attention towards participation in some social, voluntary and charitable organizations until 1974 when they were granted the right to elect and run for parliamentary offices. However, women in Jordan and the Arab world still facing numerous political, cultural, religious and economic obstacles that hinders their endeavor to participate in politics. And despite the fact that some Arab countries have attempted to bridge the gender gap in the political arena by means of constitutional amendments, establishing new laws, the majority of Arab countries still lag behind with the lowest percentages of women in parliaments in comparison to their counterparts globally (table,1). It is worth noting that the lower percentage of women representations in parliaments is not confined to Jordan and the Middle East rather it is a global phenomenon. Their representations in the world still very low compared to men. The World statistics show that the percentage of women in parliament is about 23% in the World while it is only 17.5 % in the Arab World.

Table 1: Women in International and regional parliaments 2016

	Lower House	Upper House	Both Houses
Nordic countries	41.6%	---	---
Americas	27.8%	27.7%	27.8%
Europe – including Nordic countries	25.9%	25.1%	25.7%
Europe – excluding Nordic countries	24.4%	25.1%	24.6%
Sub-Saharan Africa	23.5%	22.0%	23.3%
Asia	19.5%	16.0%	19.2%
Arab States	19.1%	12.6%	17.5%
Pacific	14.2%	33.7%	16.4%
World average	23.1%	22.5%	23.0 %

Source: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

A wide-range of sociological literature on the challenges facing their low level of political participation has highlighted several factors such as Islamic Sharia law, tribalism, cultural norms and patriarchy (Benstead: 2016); (Abou-Zeid: 2002; Nahar:2013). A number of theories have been proposed to explain why women political participation in Jordan and other Arab countries is weaker than other countries. Several cultural, religious, patriarchal gender norms and economic factors were presented to explain such variation on shaping women's access to political power (Nahar. 2013, ((Ross, 2008); (Bush and Gao, 2013); (Sabbagh. 2007); (Kang 2009); Sharabi.1988).

Women in Jordan today enjoy a wide range of economic, social and political rights. Jordan is keen on empowering women not only in politics but rather in all other socio-economic sphere. The government has drafted several laws designed to empower women and enable them to occupy influential positions in health, education, economic and the government. Indeed, women have held numerous cabinet positions (total 30 ministers) since 1984, in addition to many others as members of the Senate and the lower house. Women voters and candidates participated in all parliamentary election that took place in Jordan since 1989 and formed about half of the voters. Moreover, the government took several political and legislative measures to change the dominant public image that women do not fit for politics. These measures included the establishment of the quota system which started in 1993 by allocating six guaranteed seats for women in the Lower House to be raised to 15 seats in the 2016 election. (Jordanian Parliament's records, 2016).

Some argued that the 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" (Nahar 2013; Dababneh.2012). Others considered it as a special measure that is necessary to enhance the chances of racial, religious minorities and women's representations in parliament and other political bodies (Majed: 2005). However, the quota system is highly controversial among academics and politicians. Some consider it as a form of positive discrimination and a violation of the principle of fairness, while others view it as compensation for structural barriers that prevent fair competition between the different social groups (Dahlerup, Ed: 1998).

So, supporters of the quota system praise it as a form of affirmative action without it women and other social minorities would not have chance to get seats in parliament (Majed: 2005). By contrast, some oppose the quota system on the ground that parliament's seats are meant to be occupied by qualified candidates to represent the nation regardless of gender, class and other ethnic groups. In their views Parliaments are organizations that compose elected representatives of the people and political parties (Majed: 2005). Others argue that the quota system contradicts some constitutional articles and basic democratic values which clearly stipulate that voters should be able to choose their representatives freely (Al-azzam: 2008). Others object to the quota system as a result of the negative aspects involved in it (Al-azzam: 2008). The introduction of quota systems represents a qualitative jump into a policy of specific goals and means, and indeed because of its relative efficiency, it is used to increase women's representation in parliament (Dahlerup, Ed: 2006).

The quota system proves to be effective in encouraging more women to won seats in parliament. Election's results show that women candidates have failed to win a single seat in any of the 1989, 1993, 1997 and 2003 election on the bases of free competition with men. However, number of parliamentary seats which were won by women through the quota and outside the quota system increased from six seats in 2003 elections 20 seats in the 2016 elections and the number of women appointed to the Upper House increased from one woman in 1989, to nine in 2016 Senate, see (table 2).

Table 2: Women representation in Jordan's Parliament 1989-2016

Year	Lower house			Upper house			
	Total MPs	Females PMs	%	Total	Females	%	% Both Houses
2016	130	20	15.4%	65	10	15.4	15.3
2013	150	18	12.0	75	09	12	12
2010	120	13	10.8	60	09	15	12.2
2007	110	07	6.3	55	07	12.7	8.4
2003	110	06	5.4	55	03	5.4	5.4
1997	80	00	00	40	03	7.5	2.5
1993	80	01	1.2	40	02	5	2.5
1989	80	00	00	40	01	2.5	0.8

Source: Data was assembled by the researcher (Records of Parliament 1989-2016)

This peculiar situation raises many questions regarding women image and status in Jordan and the Arab World and the extent of their effectiveness in politics and parliamentary elections. This indicates a greater need for more studies to investigate and analyzes the different reasons and obstacles hindering women's progress in politics and parliamentary elections, and the factors that influence their status, voting preferences and behavior which the present study tries to find some answers to them.

2. Objectives

- To analyze the dynamics of Jordanian women participation in the parliamentary elections of 2016.
- To examine the extent and effectiveness of their participation and achievement.
- To Analyze their motives for participating in politics and parliament elections
- To understand their voting preferences and priorities
- To understand the major factors affecting their choices of candidates and their voting and participation behavior

3. Questions

The study tries to find answers to the following questions:

- What are the role of Jordanian women in politics and the parliamentary election of 2016?
- What is the extent of their effectiveness in the 2016 parliamentary participation and achievement?
- What are their motives for participation in politics and parliamentary elections?
- What are their voting preferences and priorities?
- What are the major factors that affect their choices of candidates and influence their voting and participation behavior?

4. Literature review

Jordan today is witnessing progressive debate regarding the role of women in society in general and in politics in particular. Some demand full freedom and participation in all aspect of life while others insist in keeping them within their traditional roles as housewives and mothers (*Alsoudi: 2003*). Arab public opinion appreciates the notion that women are not qualified for politics and even those who call for women empowerment and political participation are looking for women as voters, more than competitive candidates (*Ayesh: 1993*). This view reflects the traditional Arabs' view of women as housewives and mothers and not political actors and members of governments or parliaments. It is no secret that some Arab countries still, until today, without elected parliaments, written constitutions,(Saudi Arabia) political parties,(all GCC countries). Others allow women to elect but not to run for parliament, while few only allow women to elect and run for parliamentary seats such as Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, Lebanon, Algeria, and Tunisia. The reality today is that most of the Arab countries are governed by a variety of undemocratic regimes without any near prospects for liberal democracy (*Alsoudi, 2010; Hammad: 1998; Freyiat: 1999*).

There are different views, among scholars, regarding the causes of women's lack of success in parliamentary elections. Some scholars argued that religion, culture and traditions are responsible for the lower percentage of women candidates in running for seats in parliament (*Ayesh: 1993*). Regarding the causes of women's lack of success in the parliamentary elections, one study showed that 37% of respondents said that citizens were not convinced to be represented by women, 14% said because of religious reasons, 11%, because of lack of women support, and the rest gave other reasons such as the absence of understanding of politics, tribalism, lack of experience, and other socio-economic factors (*Alsoudi: 2010*). Another study revealed that among the obstacles facing women's participation in the politics are unemployment, low income and lower level of educational (*Al-Hadidy, 1996*), while another argued that women's lack of confidence in themselves is one of the main reasons for their low-representation in parliaments, governments and political parties (*Shvedova: 2002*). Another study summarized the views of Jordanians regarding the causes of women failure in the parliamentary elections as follows: 70% of the respondents said that the main obstacle against women was the negative attitudes within society towards women, 35% believed that women lack of confidence in women candidates, and the various educational, media and other institutions that have negative views regarding women political participation. The rest gave other reasons such as men's monopoly of the political field and women's ignorance of their rights and of political matters in general (*Haddad, 2002*).

The Jordanian Committee for Women Affairs' Report for Beijing's Conference referred for several reasons for the failure of Jordanian women candidates in the 1989 elections such as: public opinion does not accept women to represent people in parliament; lack of financial resources; lack practical experience in politics and election campaigning; lack of women voters' support for women candidates, lack of women voters awareness of their importance role in government and parliament; males influence over women voting choices in the election and finally the long absence of democracy in Jordan (*National committee on women's affairs: 1995*).The 'Jordanian Living Conditions Survey of 1996' (*Hanssen-Bauer eds. 1998*), found that about one-third of respondents were against women serving in Municipal Councils, (34%), against their participation in the parliament or the government and that (46%) of men were against women holding such positions. What was more interesting to know is the number of young men who opposed women political participation in politics: 57% of men from 20-24 years of age did not want to see female parliamentarians and ministers, while 40% of them would not even tolerate having women participate in voluntary societies and organizations (*Atligan: 2002*). Another study found that 78% of the respondents believed that men are more capable than women in the field of politics, and 77% believed that men are more able to make decisions. It is therefore, not surprisingly that 75% said they would vote for a man and not for a woman in case where candidates of both genders were equally qualified (*Shteiwi, and Daghistani: 1993*).

One study examined the effects of women employment and voting preferences on their political participation and found positive correlation between these variables and the size of their political participation and their voting preferences (Albanawey (1998). Another study examined women attitudes towards politics and running for parliamentary seats and found that 58% of women were interested in politics and 90% of them believed that women should run for parliament (Alnegashabandi, 2001).

Among the suggested solutions for this problem were the followings: raising public awareness regarding the important role of women in politics, strengthen women societies, encourage women teamwork and the amendment of laws and legislation (Haddad: 2002). There are differences between males and females regarding their willingness to participate in politics as according to(Almashagbeh: 1993) 59% of males and 41% of females expressed their desire to participate in politics and parliamentary election, and like to have effective role in political life. Other scholars argued that the Arab family dominated by patriarchal structure which implies a hierarchy of authority that is controlled and dominated by males. Within this structure Arab women, grow to learn their roles and responsibilities as caretakers of their husbands and families (Nahar 2013; Joseph, 1996, Darwazah, 2002; Christy: 1987). As for the economic factors they argued that participation in democratic politics requires time, money and skills. Unfortunately the gendered structure and the lack of employment of women in Jordan and the Arab World deprive women of the necessary economic resources required for such participation. Others argued that the State institutions may theoretically enable women to participate in the parliamentary elections but it does not reflect a deeper commitment in society at large to gender equality (Nahar 2013; Brand,1998).Therefore, only few women had reached high level of government's offices and parliament (Abou-Zeid: 2002). This view seems true since women in Jordan and the rest of the Arab World have never made it to the head of the state or prime minister in any Arab country, contrary to their counterparts in some Islamic and third World countries where women succeeded to be president or prime minister in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Indonesia. The status of women is not much better on the World arena as their representation in all Worlds Parliaments is about 13%. The following reasons were given for this phenomenon (IPU: 2016).

5. Relevance of this study

As appeared in the above literature review women participation politics in general and parliament in particular still very low in Jordan, the Arab World and globally. This is in addition that many Arab countries don't have democratic institutions, such as written constitutions, election laws; parliaments, political parties, and some of those who have don't allow women to participate or limited their participation to voting only. The few countries that give women full right to run and vote for parliaments suffer from males' domination over women. Previous election results show that the majority of Jordanian women are interested in politics and indeed about 50 % of voters in the parliamentary elections were women. However, despite this high percentage of women participation they still under represented in parliament, the Senate, political parties' leadership and high government offices. There is a consensus among scholars about the reasons for women's lack of political participation and their failure in the parliamentary elections. Such as: lack of economic resources, patriarchal family structure, traditional and religious values, lack of political experience and finally that the majorly of men and women are not convinced to be represented by women. What makes this study unique is that it tries to examine the extant of women participation in the parliamentary election in Albalqa governorate with its diverse population and to explore their voting preferences and to find out the main factors that influence their election behavior and priorities in choosing their parliamentary candidate.

6. Methodology

6.1 The Study

Quantitative research method was used in this study to collect data from a representative sample of women selected from different back grounds, careers, ages and education. A closed questionnaire was used to collect data from the sample under the supervision of the researcher. The questionnaire was structured in a manner to allow collecting data about the extent of women political participation in Albalqa governorate in the 2016 parliamentary elections including; their voting priorities and preferences and the factors that influence their political participation. A representative sample of 220 women was selected from Balqa governorate area including the city of Salt and the surrounding areas of Mahis, fuheis and the Baqa refugee' camp. According to the latest election law of 2016, eleven parliamentary seats were allocated to the governorate including seven seats for Muslims, three for Christians one for Circassian and one for women quota.

6.2 The sample

To achieve the study's goals a purposeful sample of 220 women were chosen from different educational levels, 29% from high degrees, 36% secondary certificate, 21% read and write and 14% illiterate. There were distributed in different age groups between 18-23, (15%); 24-30, (24%); 31-40,(27%); 41-50 (23%) and over 51 (11%); the age average was 38 years. 55% were government employees and 27% in the private sector and the rest 18% unemployed. It included women from different areas of Balqa governorate, 42% from Salt city, 28% from Mahies and Fuheis area and 30 % was taken from Baqa's refugee camp (Table 3).

Table (3): Variables distribution and sample characteristics N=220

Variables	No	%	Variables	Areas	No	%	
Education	High degree	64	29	Residence	Salt City	93	42
	Secondary certificate	79	36		Mahis and fuheis area	61	28
	Read and write	46	21		Baqa's camp	66	30
	illiterate	31	14	Employment	In government	120	55
Age group	18-23	33	15		In private sector	62	28
	24-30	52	24		unemployed	40	18
	31-40	60	27				
	41-50	50	23				
	Over 51	25	11				

6.3 The Instrument

The data was collected by a questionnaire designed especially for the study. It consisted from three sections. The first section contained questions regarding some demographic variables such as: age, residence, employment, education and income. The second section included questions regarding their stated reasons for voting, causes for not participation, reasons for electing a particular candidate, conditions that help women to succeed in the elections, and their opinion in the election law one man one vote the transparency of the election. The third section, included statements regarding their attitudes towards participation in the parliamentary elections.

6.4 Statistical Measures

The questionnaire was tested on a pilot sample consisted of 50 women and reviewed by 5 professors and as a result of the review and the pilot study some of the questions were modified or adjusted. A consistency test then was performed and a correlation of 0.81 among answers was reached and considered satisfactory for purpose of this study. The collected data was analyzed by the SPSS program and the T-test, ANOVA and f-test were used to compute the relevance and significance of the correlations between the variables.

7. Data analysis and Discussions

7.1. Women status in the constitution and election law

Jordan's constitution guarantees equal rights for all Jordanians. "Jordanians shall be equal before the law. There shall be no discrimination between them as regards their rights and duties on grounds of race, language or religion" ... and shall ensure a state of equal opportunities to all Jordanians (article 6). The constitution guarantees Freedom of opinion, meetings, and to establish societies and political parties and entitled to address the government on any personal matters affecting them and that elementary education shall be compulsory for Jordanians free of charge (*Articles: 15, 16, 17, 20*). It stipulates that "every Jordanian shall be entitled to public offices"; and that appointment to any government office "shall be made on the bases of merit and qualifications" (*article: 22, 23*).

As for women status in the election law women were given equal rights for voting and running for parliamentary election since 1974. Election's records show women's votes, in all parliamentary elections that took place since 1989 and formed about 50% of all votes. However, records show that no single woman won in the elections that took place between 1989 to 2003 on the bases of free competition with men. However, one woman won in 1993 elections on the bases of quota for Circassian' seats (racial minority) and six more won in 2003 as a result of the quota system that guarantee six seats for women (*Parliament records 2003*), (*Nahar 2013*)

7.2. Women's participation in parliamentary elections

Regarding women's political participation, voting preferences and their achievement in the parliamentary elections in 2016, the study revealed that women participated in all election that took place from 1989, to 2016, and formed about half the voters in all those elections. As for the number of women candidates who run in those elections and those who won seats in the previous elections are shown in (table 4)

Table 4: Number and percentage of males and females candidates 1989-2016

Year	Total seats	Total candidates	Males candidates		Females candidates	
			number	%	number	%
2016	130	1293	1035	80	258	20
2013	150	1484	1287	86.7	197	13.3
2010	120	763	629	82.5	134	17.5
2007	110	885	686	77.5	199	22.5
2003	110	765	711	93.0	54	7.0
1997	80	524	507	96.7	17	3.3
1993	80	534	531	99.5	3	0.5
1989	80	647	625	96.5	22	3.5

7.3. Reasons for women's participation in the elections of 2016.

As for the reasons behind women's voting and election behavior and the factors that influence their decision to electing their candidate, the study revealed that the majority of women 84% said that they voted in support a male family candidate, 78% obeying husbands or relatives' demand, 75% to support a religious candidate, 18% national duty, 13% use my right, 9% believe in democracy, 7% to influence the elections' results, 4% to elect the best candidate. These results show that the voting behavior of the majority of Jordanian women is influenced by men, family relationship and religion. It is interesting to see that less than 20% of the respondents went to the election for reasons other than family and religious consideration such as national duty, my right, believe in democracy, to influence the elections' results and to elect the best candidate which, to some extent, indicates a lack of independence and lack of awareness among Jordanian women regarding the importance of the parliamentary elections (Table 5).

Table 5: Reasons for women's participation in the parliament's election 2016

Reasons for participation	frequency	percentage	rank
Supporting relative candidate	185	84	1
Obeying Husband's or relatives' orders or wishes	172	78	2
Supporting religious candidate	165	75	3
National duty	40	18	4
Personal right	29	13	5
Believing in democracy	20	9	6
To influence the election's results	16	7	7
To elect the best candidate	9	4	8

7.4. Factors that influence women's preferences for candidates

The study tried to find out what are the factors that influence women behavior in choosing their parliamentary candidate. They were provided with five choices these are: Family preferences & relationship, Religiosity, Job & experience, the extent of services to citizens, Social class and wealth, Personality and qualification and Political affiliation. Results show that the majority 92% of women are influenced by family affiliations, 86% by the candidate religiosity 23%, by the extent of the candidate's services to the people, 19% by the kind of job and experience of candidate 16%, by his social class and wealth 11%, by his personality and qualification 7% by his political affiliation (Table 6). This means that women's first choice is for the relative candidate regardless of his qualification, the second choice is candidate's religiosity, and with less interest they will look for the kind of job, extant of services and lastly his personality, qualification and political affiliation. Here again the family commitment comes first in women's mind when they vote for a candidate. Religiosity comes in the second place, while his job, status and experience and political affiliation come last.

The result of these preferences is reflected in the formation of parliament's members where most of MPs are individuals representing themselves, their family and constituencies and more importantly they behave accordingly. It is also clear from the above results that women's voting preferences are greatly influenced by what one can call family duty, husband demand and religious believes which is a resemble a traditional society's behavior.

Table 6: Factors that influence women's preferences in electing Parliamentary candidates 2016

Factors	frequency	percentage	rank
Family & relationship	203	92	1
Religious beliefs	190	86	2
Services to citizens	51	23	3
Job & experience	42	19	4
Social class and wealth	36	16	5
Personality and qualification	25	11	6
Political affiliation	16	7	7

7.5 women's preferences for parliament's candidates according to political affiliation

The study tried to examine women's preferences regarding the different political back ground and affiliation of candidates. It tried to find out what are women preferences regarding candidates' different political affiliation? To achieve this goal they were provided with a list of the main political parties streams in Jordan. As for their preferences of the candidates' political affiliations their responses were as follows: 85% for independent candidates or those with no political parties' affiliation, 71% for the candidate who are affiliated to the religious parties, 20% for candidates affiliated to the national parties 10% for pan-Arab candidates, and 5% for leftist parties' candidates (table 7). This means that the majority of women prefer independent candidate and that is usually mean a relative, but if there is no relative then the second choice will be for the religious candidate and with less degree for national, pan-Arab and leftist parties. It seems that women choices are between independent-practically family candidates- and the Islamists candidates.

Table 7: Women preference for parliament's candidates according to their Political affiliation 2016

Political affiliation	frequency	percentage	rank
Independent candidates	178	85	1
Religious candidates	157	71	2
National political parties	44	20	3
Pan-Arab political parties	22	10	4
Leftist parties	12	5	5

8. Factors that influence women voting and participation behavior

Regarding the effects of four independent variables on women voting and participation in the election process the one way ANOVA test was used to analyze the relationship between the five variables, age, education, employment and residence on the following respondents' actions: a. voting in the election, b. run for parliament seat, c. participation in the election campaign, d. participation in the election meetings.

8.1. Age Effects on women's voting and participation behavior

As for the effects of some factors on the sample subjects the participants were introduced with four statements related to their willingness to vote, to run for parliament, to participate in the elections' campaigns, and to attend elections' meetings. Results indicate that there are positive correlations between respondents' ages and their voting behavior ($p=0.020$). The middle age groups (31-40 and 41-50) years (Means=2.864-3.167) are more willing to vote than the youngest do (18-22 and 23-30), (Means=2.221-2.133). This result indicates that the youngest generation is less motivated to vote in the elections than the middle age and the elderly. It is well known in Arab societies that the elderly has stronger commitments to family than the youngest generation. Indeed most candidates depend on their families' support for running, campaigning and winning the election. As for the effect of age on respondents' decision to run for a seat in parliament, results show that there is positive effect of respondents' age on their decision to run for a seat in parliament, ($p=0.003$).

The older respondents (41-50 and over 50) seem more willing to run for parliament (Means=4.631-3.971) than those under thirty years of age (Means=3.241-3.174). This is perhaps due to the fact that parliament's candidates must be over thirty years of age. Regarding the effect of age on respondents' participation in the election campaigns results show correlation between respondents' age and their decision to participate in these campaigns, as ($p=0.024$). The elderly group (41-50 and over 51) are more willing to participate in the election campaign (Means=3.856-3.939) than the youngest does, (Means=3.172; 3.251; 3.532). This result is understandable as in Arab societies the elderly enjoy greater respect and influence upon others and they are more acceptable to visit homes and neighbors during the campaign than the youngest does.

As for the effect of age on respondents' participation in the election meetings results show correlation between respondents' age and their participation in these meetings, ($p=0.031$). The middle age and elderly groups (41-50 and over 50) are more willing to participate in the election meetings (Means=3.856-4.231) than the youngest generation (Means= 3.121; 3.242; 3.461). This result is also logical as such meetings are held in candidates' homes and involve discussions which the middle age and elderly are more interested and qualified to participate in such debates than the young see (table 8).

Table 8: One way ANOVA analysis for the means of deviation for the effects of women's age on their participating in the elections

Participation activities	18-22		23-30		31-40		41-50		Over 51		f-value	f-sig
	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.		
Voting	2.221	1.658	2.133	1.720	2.864	1.282	3.167	1.321	2.757	1.268	7.729	0.020
Running for parliament	3.251	1.723	3.164	1.530	4.636	1.275	4.641	1.261	3.965	1.189	8.311	0.003
Election campaign	3.172	1.561	3.251	1.632	3.532	1.213	3.856	1.152	3.939	1.243	7.123	0.024
Election meetings	3.121	1.735	3.242	1.853	3.461	1.441	3.825	1.148	4.231	1.287	6.569	0.030

8.2. Education effects on women's attitudes toward participation in the elections' activities

The study tried to explore the effect of the level of education on the respondents' attitudes towards participation in the elections. To achieve these goal respondents were provided with seven statements related to their willingness to: vote, running for elections, participation in the elections' campaign and meetings, joining the government, the Senate and the political parties. Results show correlation between the respondents' level of education and their voting behavior ($p=0.000$). It found that the less educated women are more willing to vote (means=3.848) than the educated does (means=3.137), while the more educated respondents are more willing to run for parliament, to attend election meetings, to join the government and the senate (means=3.916, 3.853, 3.611, and 3.722) than the less educated does (means=1.143, 1.181, 1.134, and 1.201), see (table 8).

However, results show that there is no effect for the level of education on women' desire to join the election's campaign or the political parties, ($p=0.254$ & $p=0.314$ respectively). This result reflects a general trend among Jordanians, namely that politics in general and joining political parties in particular is a man job. This trend is supported by traditions, social customs and religion all of which restrict women involvement in mixed work with men. This result is perhaps applicable to all Arab and Islamic societies see (table 9).

Table 9: F-test results and one way ANOVA analysis for the differences of means of the effect of education on women's desire for participation

Participation in	Higher degree		Secondary certificate		Read and write		illiterate		f-vale	f-sig
	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.		
Voting	3.146	1.534	3.021	1.643	3.718	1.276	3.845	1.130	9.562	0.001
Run for parliament	3.921	1.637	3.426	1.341	1.188	1.610	1.146	1.957	7.558	0.000
Election campaign	3.152	1.249	3.445	1.539	3.130	1.620	3.123	1.465	0.785	0.243
Election meetings	3.851	1.153	3.610	1.519	2.127	1.851	2.183	1.643	7.478	0.000
Government jobs	3.614	1.264	3.512	1.122	1.151	1.3167	1.133	1.214	9.611	0.000
Senate membership	3.719	1.803	1.639	1.238	1.087	1.323	1.202	1.433	8.772	0.000
join political parties	2.169	1.158	2.205	1.179	1.024	1.145	0.770	1.651	0.871	0.300

8.3 Employment effects on women's attitudes toward participation in the elections' activities

The study tried to examine the relationship between employment and respondents attitude toward voting and participation in the election. Results show that there are correlation between employment and respondents' attitudes toward voting, running for parliament, joining the election campaign, and meetings ($p=0.001$) while there is no such correlation between employment and respondents' attitude towards joining the political parties ($p=0.151$). The unemployed are more willing to vote and participate in the election (mean=3.716) than the employed does (mean=2.542). This is because some of the unemployed try to exchange their votes for a future help from their candidate. This is an acceptable behavior in Jordan and perhaps in some other Arab countries as some candidates promises their voter to help them if they elect them, such as finding jobs or economic assistance. As for the effect of employment on respondents' decision to run for a seat in parliament, results show that there is significant correlation between respondents' employment and their decision to run for parliament, ($p=0.001$). The employed respondents are more willing to run for election (mean =3.574) than the unemployed does (mean =2.312). This is because running for election needs a lot of money and only employed or rich people can afford to pay for such high costs.

As for the effect of employment on respondents' attitude towards joining elections' campaign and attending elections meetings, results show that there is correlation between employment and respondents attitude towards participating in the election campaigns ($p=0.002$) and attending election meetings ($p=0.003$). The unemployed are more willing to participate in the election campaign and attending elections' meeting (means=3.488' 3.619) than the employed does, (means=2.474 and 2.135 respectively). Candidates usually employ many unemployed people to help them in their elections' campaign especially to distribute leaflets, pictures, talk to people from house to house etc., while the employed has no time for such activities nor they are allowed by law to be hired for such job. The unemployed also attend election meetings because they have a chance to meet the candidates face to face and have the chance to discuss with them their economic situation and perhaps to strike bargains with them.

As for respondents' willingness to join the government and the Senate, results show positive correlation between employment and respondents attitudes towards joining these institutions. The employed are more willing to join these institutions (means=3.742 and 3.884) than the unemployed (means=2.410 and 2.224); ($p=0.002$) respectively, while there is no effect for employment on their attitudes towards joining the political parties as both seems not interested in joining these parties ($p=0.151$). There are several reasons for such negative attitude towards the political parties especially among women such as: social customs, some religious believes and social roles which restrict unnecessary interaction between women and strange men (see table 10).

Table 10: F-test results and one way ANOVA analysis for the differences of means of the effect of employment on women attitude toward participation

Participation	employed		unemployed		f-value	f-sig
	mean	Std.	mean	Std.		
Voting	2.542	1.051	3.716	1.368	7.361	0.002
Run for parliament	3.567	1.140	2.324	1.380	8.151	0.003
Joining election campaign	2.466	1.301	3.475	1.322	6.782	0.002
Joining election meetings	2.141	1.116	3.623	1.230	9.873	0.001
holding government jobs	3.751	1.020	2.415	1.322	8.680	0.001
Accepting Senate membership	3.877	1.115	2.219	1.550	7.639	0.000
Joining political parties	2,759	1.478	2.818	1.759	0.958	0.151

8.4 The effects of Place of Residence on women attitudes toward voting and participation in the elections:

The study tried to examine the effects of the place of residence on the respondents' attitude towards voting and participation in the parliament elections. It provided them with six statements related to participation activities see table (10). Results show that there is correlation between the place of residence and respondents' desire and willingness to vote and participate in the elections ($p=0.004$). Women from outside Salt city are more willing to vote and participate in the election (mean=3.677) than their urban women do (mean=2.239), ($p=0.004$). It is well known that candidates' success in the rural areas is depends on their relatives' votes, and that winning the election is a sign of family power and influence vis-à-vis other families. Therefore, men exercise their traditional roles over women namely ordering their wives and other female's relatives to go and vote for the family's candidate.

This is an acceptable behavior in Jordan and perhaps in some other Arab countries as some candidates introduce themselves as family candidates and urge their relatives to vote for them and even, in some cases, they prevent other candidates from campaigning in their areas. As for the effect of place of residence on respondents' decision to run for a seat in parliament, results show that there is correlation between respondents' place of residence and their attitudes towards running for a seat in parliament, ($p=0.012$). Respondents from Salt city are more willing to run for election (mean=3.650) than women from outside Salt City do (mean =2.149). This is because urban women are richer, have more freedom and education and more involved in public work than rural women.

As for the effect of place of residence on respondents' attitude towards joining elections' campaign and attending elections meetings, results show that there is correlation between place of residence and respondents attitude to participate in the election campaign (f-value=7.576; $p=0.004$; and attending election meetings ($p=0.013$). Respondents from Salt City are more willing to participate in the election campaigns and attending elections' meetings (means=3.858 and 3.741) than the residents from rural areas do (means=2.190 and 2.361 respectively). These differences are due to the different social roles and statuses enjoyed by women living in the rural and urban areas where urban women enjoy more freedom than women living in the rural areas.

As for respondents' willingness to join the government and the Senate, results show positive correlation between employment and respondents attitudes towards joining these institutions. Urban women are more willing to join these institutions (means=3.639 and 3.525) than the rural women (means=2.250 and 2.041 respectively ($p=0.002$), while there is no effect for employment on their attitudes towards joining the political parties as both seems not interested in joining these parties($p=0.220$), see (table 11).

Table 11: F-test results and one way ANOVA analysis for the differences of means of the effect of place of residence on women attitudes toward participation

Participation	From Salt city		Outside Salt city		f-value	f-sig
	Mean	Std.	mean	Std.		
Voting	2.239	1.233	3.683	1.150	8.139	0.004
Running for election	3.650	1.035	2.149	1.185	6.720	0.013
Join election campaign	3.858	1.151	2.190	1.423	7.576	0.004
Attending election meetings	3.741	1.154	2.361	1.191	6.720	0.007
Accepting government's jobs	3.639	1.136	2.250	1.142	7.581	0.001
Join the Senate	3.525	1.213	2.041	1.633	8.634	0.002
Join political parties	2.741	1.142	2.489	1.260	0.851	0.220
General trend	3.492	1.263	3.293	1.546	11.033	0.001

9. Reasons behind women's non-participation in the elections:

The study tried to find the reasons behind women refrain from participating in the 2003 elections, arranged according to their importance. To achieve this goal respondents introduced with seven choices to choose from them see table (11). Results show that the majority of the non-voters say that they didn't have any relative candidate, 84%, no one asked them to vote 62%, no good candidate to vote for 46%, that they have no time to vote 33%, that they are not interested in the elections 25%, that they don't trust the government 18%, that they don't trust the election's results 12%, and finally 8% say the election has no benefits for them (Table 12). These results indicate that the majority of women say they don't vote because they don't have relatives; they don't find a suitable candidate; nobody asked them to vote for him, or they don't have time and not interested. This is a reflection of reality in Jordan's elections. The majorities of candidates are usually independent and relative candidates which, women are obliged, by their males relatives, to vote for them, regardless of their qualifications. Moreover, candidates, usually go from home to home to urge people to vote for them and promising voters to help them in every way if they win. The other interesting finding here is that a significant percentage of the respondents shed doubts on the government's manipulation of the election's results, although they seem as the least important reasons, as 18% say they don't trust the government, and 12% don't trust the results of the elections.

Table 12: Reasons for non- participation (no=60)

Reasons for non-participation	frequency	percentage	Rank
No relatives candidates	56	93	1
No one asked me to vote	42	70	2
No good candidates	32	53	3
No time to vote	25	41	4
Not interested in the election	16	27	5
don't trust the government	12	20	6
Don't trust the results	8	13	7
No benefits for them	5	8	8

Conclusions and Recommendations

Women in Jordan enjoy equal political rights, including voting and running for parliament. They participated in all previous parliamentary elections that took places since 1989 and formed about half the voters in those elections. However, no woman has won a seat in Parliament in the first three parliamentary elections. Therefore, the government introduced of the quota system to encouraged more women to vote and run for parliament's seats. Indeed the number of women candidates increased after the introduction of the quota system from 22 in 1989 election to 258 in 2016 elections and the number of women who won seats outside the quota was increased from one in 2007 election to five in 2016 elections.

The study revealed that the majority of women (80%) said they have voted to support a male family candidate, obeying husbands or relatives' demand, or to support a religious candidate, while less than 20% said they voted for other reasons such as national duty, using their rights, and to influence elections' results etc. Similar result were revealed regarding their voting behavior as the majority (92-86 %) Of women were influenced by family affiliations and candidate religiosity, while less than 20 % were influenced by the candidate's qualification or his political affiliation. Women's voting preferences are greatly influenced by what one can call family duty, husband demand and religious believes which resembles a traditional society's behavior. More importantly, these preferences are reflected in the formation of parliament's members where most MPs are individuals representing themselves, their family and behave accordingly. Regarding women's preferences for candidates' political affiliation the study revealed that the majority of women (85%) voted for independent candidates or those with no political parties' affiliation and similar percentage voted for candidate affiliated to religious parties, while about (20%) voted for candidates affiliated to national parties, pan-Arab, leftist parties and other parties.

Regarding the factors that influence women participation in the elections, results indicate that the middle age groups (31-40 and 41-50) years are more willing to vote more than the youngest ones and that the older respondents (41-50 and over 50) are more willing to run for parliament than those under thirty years of age. This is perhaps due to the fact that parliament's candidates must be over thirty years of age. Regarding the effect of age on respondents' participation in the election's campaigns results show that the elderly group (41-50 and over 51) are more willing to participate in the election campaign and attend election meetings than the youngest ones. Regarding the effect of the level of education on the respondents' attitudes towards participation in the elections results show the less educated women are more willing to vote than the educated ones, while the more educated respondents are more willing to run for parliament, to attend election meetings, to join the government and the senate than the less educated ones. Results also indicted that there is no effect for the level of education on women' desire to join the election's campaign or political parties. This result reflects a general trend among Jordanians, namely that politics in general and joining political parties in particular is a man job.

The study revealed that there are positive effects of employment on respondent's attitude toward voting, participation, running for parliament, joining the election campaign, and meetings, while there are no such effects for employment on respondents' attitude towards joining political parties; and that the unemployed are more willing to vote and participate in the election than the employed does. This is understandable as the unemployed try to exchange their votes for a future help from their candidate which an acceptable behavior in Jordan and perhaps in some other Arab countries. Indeed some candidates promise their voter to help them finding a job and some of them promise pay money for voters. As for the effect of employment running for parliament, results show that employed is more willing to run for parliament than the unemployed and this is because running for election needs a lot of money and only employed or rich people can afford to pay for such high costs.

Regarding the effect of age, Level of education, place of residence and employment on women's attitudes toward voting and election behavior, results show that the urban, educated, employed and older women are more willing to run for parliament, government jobs and the Senate positions, than rural women, while the rural, less educated and the elderly are more willing to vote to join the election campaign and meetings than the educated and the young does. Moreover, respondents from urban areas are more willing to run for election to accept government jobs and Senate positions than women from rural areas do, and this is understandable as urban women are richer, have more freedom and education than rural women, while there is no effect for employment on women's attitudes towards joining political parties as both seems not interested in joining these parties.

Finally, regarding the reasons behind women refrain from participating in the 2016 elections, results show that the majority of the non-voters (84-64 %) say that they didn't participate in the elections because they did not have any relative candidate, no one asked them to vote while half of them gave other reasons such as there don't find good candidate; don't have time to vote; not interested in the elections or election has no benefits for them. The other interesting finding here is that a significant percentage of the respondents shed doubts on the government's manipulation of the election's results, although they seem as the least important reasons, as 18% say they don't trust the government, and 12% don't trust the results of the elections.

Recommendations

- According to the above results the study suggests the followings:
- There is a need to increase the percentage of women quota in parliament from 12% at present to 25% in the future elections.
- There is a need for extensive public awareness programs to educate women about the importance of their participation in politics and parliamentary elections.
- The government should employ more women in cabinet, Senate and other government leading position and introduce program at schools and through the media aiming at changing public opinion about women's roles and make women more acceptable as political actors.
- Women should be educated about the importance of their role in parliament and encouraged to vote for the best candidates regardless of his/her sex or relation.
- Young women and men should be educated and encouraged to vote for women.
- Adding women to existing power structures to help creating some role models that could contribute to more participation of women in public life and decision-making processes.

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