

The Phenomenon of Parliamentary Violence in Jordan Causes and Consequences

Amin Ali Alazzam *

ABSTRACT

Background: Violence in the Jordanian parliament is now receiving a great attention as it creates a serious challenge to democracy, in addition to being a blatant violation to human rights. Aim of the Study: the study aims to acknowledge and understand the problem as the first step towards seeking solutions. In addition, it aims to explore the causes and consequences of this phenomenon.

Research Method: This is mainly a cross-section descriptive study, and the secondary data and insights were drawn extensively from the conflict theorists.

Results: The study has revealed that violence cases in the house of deputies increased in the last three councils (16th, 17th, and 18th). This increasing rate has been accompanied by amendments made to the electoral law of the 2010, 2013 and 2016 elections, taking into consideration the wide range of parties, led by the IAF that boycotted these elections, having led to a profound impact on the nature and structure of parliament and accordingly on the rate of violence.

Recommendations: Among many other recommendations, the study shows that there is a real need for creating an encouraging environment for political parties and enhancing their capacities to become active and play an important role in the upcoming parliamentary elections, through designing the most suitable electoral systems to achieve positive outcomes.

Keywords: parliamentary violence, democratic stability, electoral law, Jordan.

1. Introduction

Violence, as a global issue, has probably always been part of the human experience. It is not restricted to a particular country or society as it can be found almost everywhere, with different forms and for different reasons.. Violence in different forms has a profound negative impact on individuals and groups, and its implications may extend to affect the world and society as a whole, considering that its effect can either be visible or invisible.

According to a world report on violence and health, released by World Health Organization, violence kills over than 1.6 million people worldwide every year, and has direct and indirect economic and social effects at many levels of society. Economically, violence costs countries billions of US dollars each year as a result of loss of productivity, job instability and health care related costs. The cost of violence is socially represented by lack of social cohesion, financial divestment, fear, anxiety, depression and the increased burden on the justice systems. (<https://www.who.int/violence>, accessed at 06:43 pm, 2019).

Although violence as a phenomenon is a global issue, but it differs in the form or size from society to another, according to a society's culture, traditions and norms, religion and beliefs, political and economic environment, and the legal systems, that governs the individuals and political authorities. In Jordan, the statistics, issued by the Directorate of Criminal Information at the Public Security Directorate, reflect the growing incidents of violent behavior on women, children and family, and also reflect that violence has spread widely in streets, universities, schools, and workplaces and in the course of wider community life.

Some argue that the violence, witnessed in Parliament, is a real reflection to the level of violence in society and

*Al al-Bayt University, Bayt Al-Hekmah (House of Wisdom), Jordan. Received on 3/5/2019 and Accepted for Publication on 23/7/2019.

mirrors the behavior of individuals, groups and authorities in the society. However, the recent Parliamentary violence could be a warning sign that violence has become a serious problem and poses a serious challenge to democracy for different reasons: firstly, in democracy, the parliament must be a model institution at all levels and a place of work where it is assumed that all groups and individuals should be able to express their views and listen to those of others through an egalitarian, open mindedness and mutual process of reasoned argumentation. Secondly, it has been argued that parliamentary violence and democracy are generally antithetical because violence impedes, delays, or prevents the MPs from fulfilling the mandate they were elected to deliver.

Accordingly, to address the problem of parliamentary violence, one must first understand the nature of violence behavior before exploring ways to address it. Violence manifests at different levels – individual, social, and national. In the context of this article, the researcher shall restrict the focus to parliamentarians and try to understand what drives an MP to behave violently and to explore the main consequences of this phenomenon, not only in the parliament, but also in the society as a whole.

2. Back ground and Conceptual Framework

2.1 Research Purposes

The main purposes of this paper are:

- To determine the specific causes of the parliamentary violence in Jordan
- To explore the relationship between level of democracy and violence
- To investigate if the type of the electoral system play a role in parliamentary violence
- To determine whether the parliamentary violence is personal violence or legislative, political or ideological.

2.2 Research Questions

2.2.1 Principle questions

- The main question of this study is: What are the main causes and motives for violence during parliamentary sessions and the consequences that may have resulted from?

2.2.2 Sub Questions

- Does the electoral system play a role in parliamentary violence?
- What are the main effects of parliamentary violence on the legislative process?
- Does the parliamentary violence effects on the role of MPs whether towards constituents, parliament and their political party?

2.3 Basic Concepts and Definitions

Any comprehensive analysis of violence should begin by defining the term “violence” and its various forms and other related terms.

2.3.1 Phenomenon

The word phenomenon comes from Greek, and its plural form is phenomena which can be defined as a fact or an event or group of events -especially one that is not fully understood- that is different from the familiar norm. These events cause a positive or negative impact in the medium in which it occurs.

According to Cambridge dictionary phenomenon can be defined as something that exists and can be seen, felt, tasted, etc., especially something unusual or interesting (Cambridge dictionary).

The phenomenon might occur in nature or society, so it can be classified into the following:

- Natural phenomena: Those events that occur without human intervention, all scientists can do is using their science knowledge to explain or predict (Machamer, 2011). Examples of natural phenomena include gravity, tides, earthquakes, etc.
- Social phenomena: those events that occur or exist through a person or a group of people such as the phenomenon of social networks (Cacciattolo, 2015). David White declared that Social phenomenon "involves one person's observable behavior influencing another person. For example, racism is a social phenomenon because it is an

ideology that people have constructed that directly affects another group". Moreover he argued that social phenomenon works and influences our lives so significantly (White, 2018). Some argue that social and political phenomena are intertwined in many fields. However, it is true that political phenomenon takes place within a specific society in which individuals are politically influential, but no one can argue that all social phenomena are necessarily political. However, many authors argue that politics is considered as a social phenomenon although it differs from other areas of life, but also binds them together. Moreover, they argue that politics is an element of society that has a special place and plays a significant part (<http://www.infotaste.com>, accessed at 9:17 pm) .

Ahmad Khader argues that although some use Social problems, social phenomena and social issues as synonymous, but in fact there is a difference between them. Events begin with a phenomenon that occurs in society and then spread and become more noticeable, and it has positive and negative aspects. Then phenomenon turn into an issue if the negative aspects become more than their positives, but the negatives are not tangible, however, events become a problem if the negatives are tangible and clear (Khader, 2013). In other words, he argues that when the phenomenon has a negative dimension, it would be considered as a social problem. Moreover, he declared that the real source of social problems is a defect in all or some areas of society, or some of its parts (Khader, 2013).

2.3.2 Violence

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5. want to be harmed," and they define violence "as any aggressive
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A variety of definitions have been suggested for violence. Dehkhoda Dictionary describes violence as a mode of treatment through which a person imposes his will and desires on others using physical or nonphysical force (Hasanvand, 2012). In Webster and Oxford dictionaries also violence means the use of any physical force in order to cause harm, injury, or death. Most of the researchers in social psychology differentiate between aggression and violence. They define aggression as "any behavior that is intended to harm another individual who does not wish to be harmed" (Baron & Richardson, 1994), and they define violence as "aggressive acts that has as its goal extreme physical harm, such as injury or death" (De Wall, Anderson, & Bushman, 2011). However, some criticized these definitions because what looks like aggressive behavior from one point of view may not look that way from another, and behavior that accidentally causes harm or pain and self-defense are not aggression (Ames & Fiske, 2013).

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World Health Organization (WHO) defined violence in world report on violence and health (WRVH) as "The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm,

maldevelopment or deprivation.” (Stephen and Morris, 2007). It is clear that this definition is wider and more clearly than definitions adopted by social psychologists as violence includes acts do not necessarily result in injury or death, but nonetheless poses a significant burden on individuals, families, societies and health care systems worldwide (Krug et al., 2002).

As indicated above, it became clear that a comprehensive definition of violence should include four essential components: behavior that is (a) intentional, (b) unwanted, (c) nonessential, and (d) harmful. These elements explore that acts or events to be classified as violent should emphasize that an individual or group must intend to use force or power against another individual or group, also these elements draw attention not only to the use of physical force but also to the use of threatened or actual power. Lastly, elements emphasize that what is considered violence not only as resulting in physical injury but as being present where psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation occurs (Hamby, 2017).

2.3.2.1 Types of Violence

Although violence could be understood as a pattern of behavior intended to establish and maintain control over individuals or groups whether colleagues, family, household members, intimate partners, etc. However, generally it can be concluded that there is high prevalence of various forms of violence whether at the individual, community or institutional levels, but scholars and researchers divided violence into nine categories (see table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Types of Violence

<p>Physical Violence Physical violence occurs when someone uses a part of their body or an object to control a person’s actions e.g., slaps, burns, kicks, bites and any object that may be used to do harm</p>	<p>Sexual Violence Sexual violence occurs when a person is forced to unwillingly take part in sexual activity e.g., kissing, grabbing, fondling), Forced sexual intercourse , Forcing a person to perform sexual acts that may be degrading or painful , Beating sexual parts of the body etc.</p>	<p>Emotional Violence Emotional violence occurs when someone says or does something to make a person feel stupid or worthless e.g., Intimidating the person, destroying possessions, Not allowing the person to have contact with family and friends</p>
<p>Psychological Violence Psychological violence occurs when someone uses threats and causes fear in an individual to gain control. Victims are directly affected in their dignity. e.g., blackmail, threats, false accusations, isolation from friends and family</p>	<p>Spiritual or Religious Violence Occurs when someone uses an individual’s spiritual beliefs to manipulate, dominate or control that person e.g., Not allowing the person to follow her or his preferred spiritual or religious tradition</p>	<p>Cultural Violence Cultural violence occurs when an individual is harmed as a result of practices that are part of her or his culture, religion or tradition e.g., Abandonment of an older person at hospital by family, Female circumcision, Committing “honour” or other crimes against women in some parts of the world</p>
<p>Verbal Abuse Verbal abuse occurs when someone uses language, whether spoken or written, to cause harm to an individual e.g., Recalling a person’s past mistakes , Expressing negative expectations , Expressing distrust , Threatening violence against a person or her or his family members etc.</p>	<p>Financial Abuse Financial abuse occurs when someone controls an individual’s financial resources without the person’s consent or misuses those resources e.g., Forcing the person to work outside the home , Refusing to let the person work outside the home or attend school, Controlling the person’s choice of occupation , Illegally or improperly using a person’s money, assets or property etc.</p>	<p>Neglect Neglect occurs when someone has the responsibility to provide care or assistance for an individual but does not e.g., Failing to meet the needs of a person who is unable to meet those needs alone , Abandonment in a public setting , not remaining with a person who needs help etc</p>

Source: Developed by the researcher using the following site <https://www.gov.nl.ca/VPI/types/#1>

To cover all related basic concepts of this study, it would be essential to define other key concepts that relate to the main idea of this paper, such as workplace violence, political violence, and legislative violence.

2.3.2.1.1 Workplace Violence

Workplace violence- known also as work-related violence or violence at work- referred to acts against persons who fall victim to violence at the place of work or related to work. Wynne and others defined workplace violence as "Incidents where staff are abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances related to their work, involving an explicit or implicit challenge to their safety, well-being or health" (Wynne et al.,1997).

The International Labour Organization defines workplace violence as "any action, incident or behaviour that departs from reasonable conduct in which a person is assaulted, threatened, harmed, or injured in the course of, or as a direct result of, his or her work" (<https://www.ilo.org>, accessed at 10:52 am).

Level of violence at workplace provides a real indication to the level of violence and the seriousness of the problem at the level of the society as whole. Di Martino argued in his paper *Workplace violence in the health sector* that high incidence of violence at workplace reflects increasing level of violence in different aspects of social life which has to be dealt with at the level of the whole society (di Martino, 2002).

Researchers have identified many causes to workplace violence, however, they considered the social factor as the most important factor. It has concluded that there is a direct causal relationship between violence in various media, exposure to violence in television, movies, TV serials, newspapers, cartoons, video games, cell phones etc and violent behavior. In sum, researchers confirm that unfortunately some media show violence as being brave or superior to others giving rise to the working young population into being violent at workplace. In addition, weapons are increasingly available, and there is a growing fascination with weapons as tools of power. Warburton argued that the vast majority of studies have found "that exposure to violent media increases the likelihood of aggressive behavior in the short and long term, increases hostile perceptions and attitudes, and desensitizes individuals to violent content" (Warburton, 2014).

Criminologist Helfgott reached to same conclusion when he summarized his research by saying that "There have been over 1000 studies on the effects of TV and film violence over the past 40 years. Research on the influence of TV violence on aggression has consistently shown that TV violence increases aggression and social anxiety, cultivates a "mean view" of the world, and negatively impacts real-world behavior". (Helfgott, 2015, p. 50).

2.3.2.1.2 Political Violence

Political violence is alarmingly widespread in many parts of the world. And although the concept is an ambiguous concept and its definition involves some controversy, however, most political researchers when they define political violence they link their definitions with goals of violence. Therefore, many have defined political violence as acts or events that are committed in the context of a political conflict, or that can be related, either through its causes or through its motives, to political issue.

O'Neill defined political violence as "politically motivated violence outside of state control" (O'Neill, 2015). (ACLED)¹ defined political violence as the deliberately using of power and force by a group with a political purpose or motivation. This definition is used to recognize political violence through its constituent events, the intent of which is to produce a comprehensive overview of all forms of political conflict within and across states (Raleigh and Dowd, 2017).

The political researchers who seek to investigate what factors cause political violence provide three different categories:

- Institutional: these factors describe how institutions such as states, regimes, economic institutions², social

¹The ArmedConflictLocation&Event Data Project: is a non-governmental organization that collates and analyzes data on political violence and protest around the world.

²Such as capitalism.

institution³ have a significant impact in fostering political violence. These institutions might be a cause of political violence and sometimes are likely to be the target of political violence (Balcells, 2015). O'Neill argues that "Institutional is the best explanation for political violence due to the fact that it is the root source for violence" (O'Neill, 2015).

- Ideational: these factors focus on the rationale behind political violence and explain the relationship between political and religious dimensions and causing and increasing political violence (O'Neill, 2015).
- Individual (socio-psychological): these explanations focus on individuals who carry out violence in addition to the psychological or strategic factors lead them to engage in political violence (Mider, 2014).

Accordingly the legislative violence also known the parliamentary violence or Parliamentary brawl can be classified as both workplace and political violence. Workplace violence because it can be defined as acts against persons who fall victim to violence at the place of work or related to work as well as it can be classified as political violence as it has been defined in the previous paragraph as violent acts that are committed in the context of a political conflict, or that can be related, either through its causes or through its motives, to political issue. Therefore, parliamentary violence can be defined as any violent clashes between members of a legislature, might be physically or psychologically inside the legislative assemblies and triggered by divisive issues and tight votes.

3. Methodology

The study used the descriptive analytical approach being the best to obtain and identify information concerning the phenomenon of violence in the Council of deputies, and to describe what exists with respect to the phenomenon. Moreover, using this approach in this study aims to understand phenomenon by discovering and measuring causal relations between the main variables.

4. Jordanian Parliamentary System

The Jordanian political system is based on the separation of the three powers (Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary). The 1952 Jordanian constitution stipulates that every authority exercises its mandate without interference in other authorities' businesses. The relationship between these three authorities is a balanced, complementary, and participatory one. According to articles 25, 26 and 27 of the 1952 Jordanian constitution the legislative power is jointly vested in the King and the Parliament, the executive power is vested in the king who exercises its powers by his ministers and the judicial power is independent power and is vested in the courts of justice and all judgments shall be issued in the name of the King.

The Parliament of Jordan also known as the National Assembly is bicameral national assembly. Established by the 1952 Constitution, consists of two houses: an upper house (the Senate or House of Notables) appointed by the king and an elected lower house (the House of Representatives or chamber of deputies). The Constitution stipulates that the number of senators cannot be more than half the number of deputies. The original Jordanian Parliament, formed in 1947 a year after the kingdom's nominal independence from the United Kingdom, comprised a twenty-seat elected lower house and a ten-seat appointed upper house.

The numbers of seats has since been changed, most recently in 2016, decreased from 150 to 130 for the lower house, nine seats of the 130 seats are reserved for Christians, three are for Circassian and Chechen minorities, and fifteen for women. Senators⁴ are 65 members, all of whom are directly appointed by the King for four-year terms, with half retiring every two years.

4.1 Types of Electoral Systems used in Jordan

The electoral system is a set of rules and procedures which is responsible for determining how votes cast in an election and how votes transforming into legislative seats. There is a large and growing body of literature has explored the relationship between electoral systems and kinds of parliamentarians and accordingly their post-parliamentary results.

³Such as beliefs, culture and norms

⁴comprising notables such as former prime ministers and ministers, tribal leaders, retired senior military officers, former diplomats, and judges

Therefore, determining the type of electoral system is considered one of the most important institutional decisions for any democracy as it shapes the nature of political competition. This is because the design of the electoral system has a deep and strong effect on the future political life of the country and influences the nature of representatives (Alazzam, 2008).

Sartori argues that designing the electoral system is the most specific manipulative instrument of politics because it leads to achieve particular outcomes (Sartori, 1968). Reynolds and Reilly argue that, "the easiest political institution to be manipulated, for good or for bad, is the electoral system, because in translating the votes cast in a general election into seats in the legislature, the choice of electoral system can effectively determine who is elected and which party gains power" (Reynolds and Reilly, 1997). They also argue that "Electoral system consequences depend upon factors such as how a society is structured in terms of ideological, religious, ethnic, racial, regional, linguistic, or class divisions; whether the country is an established democracy, a transitional democracy, or a new democracy; whether there is an established party system, whether parties are embryonic and unformed, and how many 'serious' parties there are; and whether a particular party's supporters are geographically concentrated together, or dispersed over a wide area" (Reynolds and Reilly, 1997).

Many scholars suggested that electoral systems can have an impact on public policy outcomes and the behavior and incentives structures of political actors, they have also argued that different electoral systems are more likely to ease or exacerbate conflict (Menocal, 2011).

4.1.1 The Electoral Systems used in Jordan

Elections in Jordan are for the House of Representatives. However, in Jordanian political life and across elections from 1929 and 2016 the regime has employed different types of electoral systems.

1. The first Jordanian legislative elections were held in February 1929, bringing the first Legislative Council to power. The elections in the era from 1928-1947 were based on proportional representation electoral system and witnessed five legislative councils (Alazzam, 2008).

2. The Era Between 1947-1974 (nine parliamentary elections): In 1946 Jordan acquired its independence through the Anglo-Transjordanian Treaty in March of that year. Accordingly, a new constitution was formulated which provided for two legislative chambers. According to the Electoral Law was issued on April 5, 1947. The Jordanian Electoral System was based on the proportional representation, and provided for the election of Muslims and deputies from the minority communities of Christian, Bedouin tribes, Chechen, and Circassian. It has been argued that in the 1950s most candidates came from the ranks of political or party activists, and parties enjoyed a reasonable degree of freedom (al-Atiyat et al, 2005)

3. Freezing of Parliamentary Life from 1974 -1989: The Martial Law Period Parliamentary life in Jordan was frozen due to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank of Jordan, in addition to other Arab and international issues such as the resolution of the Arab Summit in Rabat (Alazzam, 2008).

4. The Era between 1989-2016: from 1989 till the last election in 2016 the regime has employed six types of electoral laws, some of which were temporary and some were permanent. Under these laws eight parliamentary elections were held, the latest were for the Eighteenth House of Representatives.

- The 1989 elections (BVS): the 1989 elections were significant because they were the first since the initiation of the liberalization process and, to date, the last conducted under the Block Vote electoral system (BVS), in which the voters have the right to select a number of candidates equal to the number of seats in a given district (Alazzam, 2008).

- The 1993 elections (SNTV): before the 1993 elections and after the dissolution of the parliament, the Jordanian regime adopted new temporary Law No. 15 of 1993, (SNTV) in which the voter was given only one vote. However, all subsequent elections have been conducted according to this system (1993, 1997, 2003, 2007 and 2010 elections) with some amendments related to the number of seats and quota system (Hussainy, 2014).

- 2013 elections (mixed electoral system): Prior to the 2013 elections a new electoral law was passed maintained the one-person-one-vote basis. According to the new law the number of seats increased to 150 seats and allowed each voter to cast two ballots; one for a candidate in his constituency and one closed proportional list at the national level.

Through which 108 are elected from 45 single and multi-member districts and 27- 18% out of the total number of seats- are elected through national proportional lists, an additional 15 seats are reserved for a women's quota.

- The 2016 parliamentary elections (open proportional list): According to the new law no. 6, 2015 the electoral districts reduced from 45 to 23 and the parliamentary seats remain 130. Each candidate must register through an open candidate list with a minimum of three members on each list, and no greater than ten dependent on the number of seats available in the respective district.

In conclusion, it could be argued that although the Jordanian governments have adopted many amendments to the electoral systems, however, it still maintaining the one-person-one-vote basis. Moreover, by analyzing the different electoral systems and amendments adopted from 1993 till the last elections held 2016 and analyzing the elections results, it becomes clear that at least 85%⁵ of parliamentary seats are determined by quotas as 96 seats are for Muslims, 9 for Christians, 3 for Circassians and Chechens, and 15 for women. Taking into account that a Circassian candidate, for instance, cannot compete for a Muslim seat as well as the Bedouin candidate is not allowed to run outside the Badia districts even if he lives elsewhere.

In addition, it is obvious that the way of dividing electoral districts has negative consequences. On one hand; the electoral districts limit the voting strength of a particular group and reinforce the loyalty of electors towards the candidate of a tribe, a family or a region. On the other hand, and as Hussainy argued in his article *The Social Impact of Jordan's Electoral System* the electoral systems "turned the election from a political competition to one that is more tribal or regional. This unnatural competition can take a violent form during election campaigns"(Hussainy, 2014).

5. Violence in Jordanian parliaments (types and motives)

5.1 Violence cases in the 11th parliament (1989 elections)

It has been noted by many observers and analysts that the parliamentary violence is taking an upward curve. While the 11th House of Deputies distinguished by the scarcity of brawls , however, the cases of violence increased in the following councils.

- The most prominent violence cases that took place in the 11th council started by the Islamist MP Abdul Moneim Abu Zant when he criticized the election law by saying "Stone, trees, dunes and deserts are elected"; accordingly a number of tribal MPs were angered by Abu Zant's criticism that led one of them to draw his pistol and pointed it at Abu Zant's face before putting it away (<http://www.al-sijill.com>, 6:00 am, 2019).

- In the same council, there were several brawls between MP Mohammed Faris al-Tarawneh and Islamist deputies (particularly MP Abd al-Hafiz Allawi) who were dominating the council. The violence cases which were directed to left-wing deputies specifically included verbal abuse and exchanging accusations (<http://www.al-sijill.com>, 6:00 am, 2019).

5.2 Violence cases in the 12th parliament (1993 elections)

- The twelfth parliament elected in 1993 started with a fight between Jamal Kharisheh from the central badia district and Toujan Al-Faisal who won a Circassian seat; this fight began with an argument that became heated and ended with throwing Kharisheh -who could not tolerate her talk about the Bedouins- an ashtray at MP Toujan. Immediately the presidency of the House of Representatives decided to replace glass ashtrays with light metal ones, affixed to the tables (<http://www.alhayat.com/article/1907559>, 9:00 pm, 2019).

- Another verbal violence between Toujan Al-Faisal and Abdul Karim Dughmi recorded in the council, the quarrel occurred during a meeting of the Legal Committee, when Al-Faisal insisted on the introduction of European television to record a part of the meeting, which was rejected by Dughmi (<http://www.al-sijill.com>, 9:00 pm, 2019).

- A verbal violence between MPs Samir Kawar and Fawaz al-Zu'bi, When Zu'bi described Kawar as "corrupt", in turn, Kawar replied: "You are a smuggler" (<http://www.al-sijill.com>, 9:15 pm, 2019).

⁵123 seats out of 150 seats in the parliament

5.3 Violence cases in the 13th parliament (1997 elections)

- One of the most famous quarrel in the 13th council was between MPs Mansour Murad and Ahmed Oweidi Al-Abbadi which ended with Al-Abbadi bit and ripped off part of Murad's ear. According to an article published by MEMRI⁶ which entitled *Tribal Tensions in the Jordanian Parliament*, the author argued that "the biting incident was the climax of a long conflict between the two tribes that has escalated over the past weeks. The events began with an attempted rape of a Cirassian girl, by three of the 'Abadi tribe, which resulted in confrontations between the two tribes" (<https://www.memri.org>, accessed at 9:52 pm, 2019).

- In the same council, another fierce quarrel broke out, between MPs Ahmed Oweidi Al-Abbadi and Khalil Attia, in which Attia gave a punch to Abadi (<http://www.al-sijill.com>, 10:09 pm, 2019).

- Another disagreement broke out between MPs Abdelraouf al-Rawabdeh and Abdul Razzaq Tabishat against Mahmoud Kharabsheh, which soon developed into a limited exchange of water cups.

- A physical violence from MP Mahmoud al-Kharabsheh against MP Hamada al-Phara'na. The cause of the fight came as a result of al-Phara'na support for normalization of ties with Israel particularly after his visiting to Israel accompanied by MP Mohammad Rafat. Consequently, MP al-Kharabsheh attacked his colleague by saying "Your place in the Knesset with Netanyahu, this council represents the Jordanian people in all its spectrum" then he threw an ashtray on him, put him down and slapped and kicked him several times (<http://www.alhayat.com/article/964707>, accessed at 11:53 pm, 2019)

5.4 Violence cases in the 14th parliament (2003 elections)

The 14th council of deputies has witnessed several verbal arguments between members of the council and some ministers

- The first verbal quarrel took place in one of the offices of the Council between MP Abdel Raouf Rawabdeh and Minister of the Interior Samir Habashneh because Rawabdeh did not make peace on Habashneh while entering the hall (<https://www.addustour.com>, accessed at 07:45 pm, 2019).

- Insults and accusations between MP Abdel Raouf Al-Rawabdeh and MPs from the IAF as a result of the issue of expulsion of the Hamas leadership from Jordan and its offices shut in 1999. Al-Rawabdeh was the prime minister at the period of expulsion (<http://assafirabi.com>, accessed at 07:15 pm, 2019).

- A verbal quarrel by Justice Minister Salah al-Bashir against MP Suleiman Abu Ghaith on the background of appointments in the judiciary, accordingly, the other members of the council expressed anger at the minister's speech, forcing Bashir to apologize (<https://www.addustour.com>, accessed at 07:45 pm, 2019).

- A verbal attack from some members of the house of representatives on the Minister of Awqaf Islamic Affairs and Holy Places because of the Hajj visas for some deputies (<http://www.al-sijill.com>, 8:36 pm, 2019).

5.5 Violence cases in the 16th parliament (2010 elections)

According to study conducted by Al-Quds Center for Political Studies which revealed that many parliamentary quarrels were recorded in the 16th house of representatives, MP Yahya Al-Saud was mostly a party.

- On January, 12, 2011, dispute broke out between MP Yahya Obeidat and Yahya Al-Soud, when Obeidat criticized the speech of the Al-Soud in the discussion of confidence after the Soudi attacked some of the opposition figures, one of them was the former prime minister Ahmed Obeidat, the MP Obeidat relative.

- On December, 14, 2011, a clash between MPs Mamdouh al-Abadi and Zaid Shakirat. MP Mohamad Al-Dhahrawi stand on the side of Al-Abadi and they exchanged beatings with water cups. The president of the council was forced to lift the meeting for half an hour to calm the situation.

- On February, 22, 2012, a verbal clash between MP Yahya al-Soud and Atef Al-Tarawneh (the vice president of the council) after he invited him to respect the rules of procedure of the Council, accordingly, the session has been adjourned.

- On April, 8, 2012, The thirty-third session held on Sunday evening 8/4/2012 turned into a field for directing

⁶The Middle East Media Research Institute

accusations and verbal clashes between deputies as a result of the article published in Al Ghad newspaper by MP Bassam Haddadin who criticized the Speaker of the council Abdul Karim Dughmi for using an "authoritarian tone" and involving the House in the country's power struggles. In return, Haddadin asked to speak in the session, but Dughmi did not permit him to do so, telling at him. The deputy then walked out of the session. Expressing dismay over Dughmi's attitude, several MPs joined Haddadin and left the chamber to sit with him in the gallery (<https://www.sarayanews.com>, accessed at 9:50 pm, 2019).

- On June, 17, 2012, MP Yihya Saud physically assaulted MP Jamil Al-Nimri and beat him with his shoe under the dome of the council during debates on the election law.

- On May, 14, 2013, a verbal clash between MP Yahya al-Soud and MP Rula Al-Hrub (Anchor of " Kalam fi Alsamim" TV show) after he taunting from her TV program, which led her to be anger. The two MPs appeared to be about to engage in a physical fight, but were prevented by their colleagues(<http://www.albaladnews.net>, accessed at 11:45pm, 2019)

- On July, 6, 2012, During a heated television debate, Jordanian MP Mohammed Shawabka threw his shoe at his activist opponent and former MP, Mansour Sayf al-Din Murad, before pulling his pistol out and pointing it at him (<https://www.jo24.net>, accessed at 11:50 pm, 2019).

By analyzing and reviewing the main causes behind the parliamentary violence in the 16th parliament it becomes clear that violence is motivated by personal and social reasons, rather than political or ideological motives.

Moreover, according to article published in ammon news, a total of 72 deputies 65% of the members of the Chamber of Deputies, have been completely silent in one of the council's sessions. Furthermore, the statistics confirm that some members of the council did not attend more than a quarter of its sessions, these absences led to inability of the council to complete discussions in many laws because of the lack of quorum(<https://www.ammonnews.net/article/136374>, accessed at 12:58 am, 2019).

5.6 Violence cases in the 17th parliament (2013 elections)

The pace of parliamentary violence in the Seventeenth House of Representatives appears to be unprecedented as it has increased markedly compared to previous parliamentary councils. More than 11 quarrels and confrontations were recorded between the deputies under the dome of parliament, the most prominent are:

- On March, 6, 2013, MP Shadi al-Edwan attempted to pull out a pistol in the council during a bitter dispute following a disagreement with his colleague MP Ziad Shawabka. Cameras documented images of the gun. The incident was settled in the Jordanian way, through tribal reconciliation between the two deputies(<https://www.jo24.net>. Accessed at 06:30 pm, 03/2019).

- A few days later a verbal attack by Al-Adwan on his colleague Talal Al-Sharif, in which he used obscene language. Parliament did not take any measures to denounce(<https://www.jo24.net>. Accessed at 06:30 pm, 03/2019).

- MP Nidal Hayari was injured and hospitalized after he was hit with an ashtray from another parliamentarian, Khaled Hayari.

- On September 8, 2013, MP Yahia Al-Saud, had interrupted Jordanian Prime Minister Abdulla Ensou every time he spoke, the MP claimed that the people are the ownership of the TV as it financed by their taxes, accordingly, Yahya al-Saud decided to unplug the Jordanian TV microphone from the parliament platform to prevent Prime Minister Abdullah al-Nsour from speaking and airing his speech. The interruptions led MP Qusay Al-Damissi to shout angrily at Al-Saud to shut up, Al-Saud and Al-Damissi then traded insults. MP Talal Al-Sharif stand on the side of Al-Saud's, even though the argument had absolutely nothing to do with him (<http://assafirarabi.com>, accessed at 07:38, 03/2019).

- For the same reasons, Through prime minister speech, MP Abu Rumman intervened and called on Al-Saud to allow the premier to talk and not to interrupt him, which led to an argument and a scuffle between the two MPs, and was followed by bottles of water being hurled.

- On September 10, 2013, as a result of previous clash MP Talal Al Sharif opened fire using a Kalashnikov

automatic weapon on his colleague MP Qusai Dmeisi inside the Jordanian House of Representatives, following an argument during the parliamentary session⁷. Democratic debate is temporarily suspended as he uses two bullets to end an ongoing dispute with another member of parliament.

- In December, 2, 2014, during a regular parliament session, while MP Yehia Al-Saud was starting his speech, he was cut numerous times by his female colleague Hind Al Fayeze. After loudly asking Al-Fayeze several times to stop talking and let him finish his speech, Al-Soud started hitting the table, and yelling: "SIT DOWN HIND!"⁸ when Al-Fayeze did not stop her argument, Al-Soud turned his hands upwards and shouting and criticizing the election law that allocates 15 seats in the House of Representatives to women. saying: "My Allah have revenge on who ever came up with the quota to the parliament."⁹ As a result a number of female MPs withdrew from the session after Al-Soud refused to apologize (<https://www.bbc.com/> accessed at 12:18 am, 2019).

5.7 Violence cases in the 18th parliament (2016 elections)

On January 13, 2019, a fight broke out in the Jordanian Parliament during a session discussing labor laws, when MP Khalil Attieh, physically attacked MP Muhammad Al-Baraysah. Attieh had been talking about the right of MPs to speak freely during session when Al-Baraysah interrupted him. Attieh told him to shut up and then started rushing across the room towards him. Other MPs intervened and restrained the two men .

- On April, 25, 2018, a heated dispute and exchanging accusations broke out between MPs and Jordan Teachers Association (JTA), however, the dispute escalated to a brawl and verbal insults during a meeting at the Lower House. The Lower House's Administrative Committee, said that the teachers came already "tensed and angry" to the meeting and they started insulting the MPs present. The association said the exact opposite, claiming that two deputies, "minutes, after the meeting", started using an abusive language against the teacher leaders "in defense of the government"¹⁰ (<http://www.jordantimes.com/news>, accessed at 8:30 pm, 2019) .

- On February, 6, 2019, the Lower House session turned into scenes of chaos. The brawl began after MP Mohammad Riyati accused judges and attorney generals of corruption by receiving cash payments from the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority totaling JD1 million between 2011 and 2016. MP Zaid Shawabkeh interrupted Al-Riyati to defend the officials of the charges and then tried to attack him, but was prevented by MP Saddah Habashneh, who stood on Al-Riyati side and threw bottles of water at Shawabkeh and tried hitting him with headband. Habashneh and Shawabkeh appeared to be about to engage in a physical fight, but were prevented by their colleagues (<https://www.khaberni.com>, accessed at 9:10pm, 2019).

- On March, 26, 2019, a verbal abuse by Khalid Al-Fanatseh against MP Mohammed al-Dhahrawi during the discussion of the gas agreement. Al-Fanatseh accused Al-Dhahrawi of being spy or agent for Mohammed Dahlan¹⁰ (<http://www.ahkelak.net>, accessed at 08:29 am, 2019).

- On March, 31, 2019, a verbal abuse under the dome of parliament during the discussion of the law which was returned from the house of senators and attempts to assault hands

6. Discussion and Conclusion

According to the data that the researcher could collect¹¹ regarding the violence cases in the house of representatives and as can be seen in table 6.1, violence cases increased in the last three councils of deputies (16th, 17th, and 18th councils), the most cases were in the 17th council with 14 cases, taking into account that there are nine cases in the 18th council, while the council in the first two years of age. Moreover, it is clear that physical violence cases more in the

⁷the overwhelming majority of MPs decided to dismiss Sharif and suspend Dmeisi's membership for one year .

⁸The incident has sparked massive interest and debate on social media, #SitDownHind has become a popular Twitter hashtag and a popular meme on social media

⁹The quote refers to the number of parliament seats reserved for female members

¹⁰Palestinian leader

¹¹There are no definite statistics to violence cases in the House of Representatives , as the house doesn't record and document violence cases, so the researcher could collect only 46 violence cases. Taking into account that violence cases might be more than what the researcher obtained.

same councils than others, and in the 17th were the highest with six cases, and the current council came second with four cases.

Table 6.1: the violence cases in the councils of deputies from 1989 until 2016

The council	Verbal violence	Physical violence	Using pistol	Total
11 th 1989	2	0	1	3
12 th 1993	3	1	0	4
13 th 1997	1	3	0	4
14 th 2003	4	0	0	4
16 th 2010	4	3	1	8
17 th 2013	6	6	2	14
18 th 2016	5	4	0	9
total	25	17	4	46

Source: Prepared by the researcher

The lowest violence cases were in the 11th and 12th councils with four cases. It is worth mentioning that 11th council was free of physical violence as well as the 14th council. Regarding using pistol under the dome of parliament, it is clear from table above that there were four cases, two in the 17th council and one in 11th and another in 16th council. It is worth noting that the 17th council was the most violent council, whether in terms of the number of violence cases or type of violence or number of gun violence incidents. More importantly, the most famous violence case against female MP was in the 17th council.

As a result, many have argued that there are many details that made forgetting the 17th House of Representatives a difficult task, not because of its distinguished oversight and legislative performance, but rather because of the behavior of its deputies under the dome, which reached the limit of fire in the Council. Furthermore, in a press conference organized by RASED¹² to evaluate the performance of the 17th House of Representatives, the general director of the program had presented the parliament's performance during the 40 months of the parliament's span. He explained that the poor performance of the 17th House of Representatives is reinforced by the following facts:

1. RASED recorded 6,191 absences during the 283 working days. These absences often caused the adjournment of sessions due to the lack of quorum. The loss of quorum occurred twenty times throughout the 40 months of the council' life. RASED described this council by "Council of empty seats"

2. In three and a half years, over four legislative sessions, 175 economic, political, social and legislative laws, and two constitutional amendments were approved during a period of 181 legislative working days. This clearly explain the poor legislative performance when the council approve of nearly 1 law per day. While some of these laws require more time to be discussed thoroughly¹³.

According to table 6.1 the 18th council came second regarding violence level. In evaluation report to the 18th council of deputies issued by RASED, the report revealed that in the first 100 days of the council's life, the council

¹²Al-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development/RASED Program

¹³For more details see <http://elections.rasedjo.org/en/articles/rased-news/press-conference-rased-announcing-results-monitoring-performance-17th-house>

approved only 8 laws. The report showed also that the rate of absence of deputies from the parliamentary sessions has increased, while it was 16 deputies in the first year, it has jumped to 21 deputies during the session in the second year, and the total absence of deputies was 1257 absence during the second year of council's age (<https://www.hala.jo>, accessed at 10:40 am, 2019).

According to the main categories provided previously in the literature review exploring the main factors cause political violence, figure 6.1 provides the most common motivations for violence in different councils. It can be concluded from the figure below that most of the violence cases in the house of deputies according to the cases obtained were based on personal, social and tribal motives with 30 cases out of 46 which constitutes 64% of total motives, while ideological motives came second with 8 cases constitutes 17%, regional motives came third with 6 cases constitutes 13%, Legislative causes to violence in the councils comprising only 6% with 3 cases.

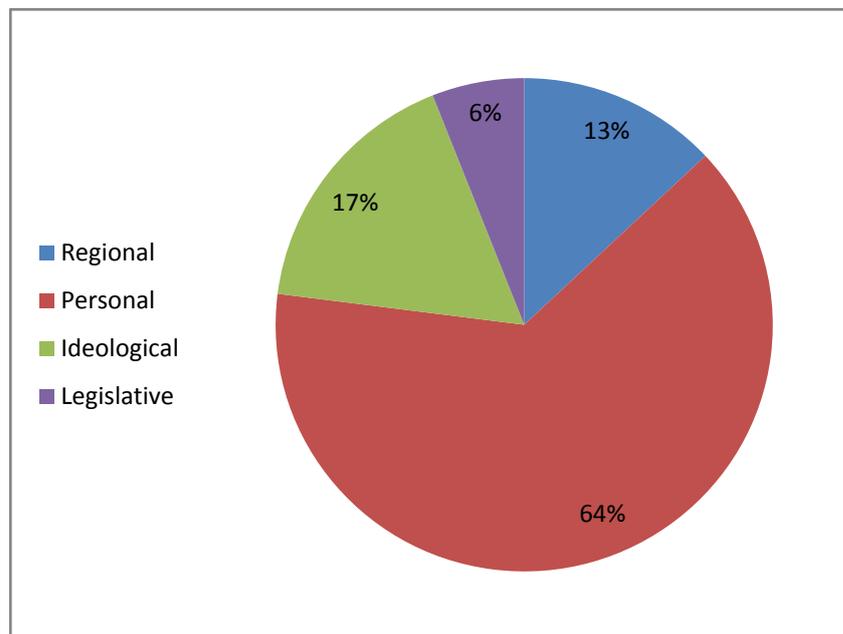


Figure 6.1: Motives of violence in the councils of representatives

For example, in the 17th parliament most of deputies who defend the prime minister in the face of his critics are from the same city (Al-Balqa, the prime minister city). Moreover, it is clear that deputies who defend the premier defend him personally and not defend the government or policies. Additionally, as it has been argued before, it is assumed in democratic debate that all groups and individuals should be able to express their views and listen to those of others through an egalitarian, open minded and mutual process of reasoned argumentation. Accordingly, preventing the prime minister from speaking, and the national TV from airing his speech is undemocratic behavior. Moreover, it is also clear that the standing of the MP Al-Damissi on the side of Al-Soud was not as political or ideological position as it was personally.

Regarding to the motives for violence according to the council, it is worth noting that in the 17th council all motives behind violence were social and regional with no ideological or legislative motives. While in the 11th council the four violence cases came as a result of ideological motives as table 6.2 shows.

Table 6.2: motives of violence with regard to the council

The council	Regional causes	Personal (socio-psychological)	Ideological causes	Legislative causes
11 th 1989	0	0	3	
12 th 1993		4		
13 th 1997		3	1	
14 th 2003		3	1	
16 th 2010		6	1	1
17 th 2013	6	8		
18 th 2016		6	1	2
total	6	30	7	3

Source: Prepared by the researcher

According to the results concluded above, and based on the literature review presented previously regarding the relationship between electoral system and political behavior. The researcher argues that electoral systems matter because it is clear that different electoral systems can ease or exacerbate violence in the house of representatives. It can be noted that violence cases taking upward curve particularly from 2010. It is clear from the data presented in tables 6.1 and 6.2 and figure 6.1 that number and types of violence cases differ from council to another, and accordingly affected by the electoral system adopted.

the 11th House of Representatives which were held in 1989 witnessed the lowest violence rate with three cases only. Moreover, all cases of violence were ideological based violence, taking into account that all violence cases were verbally abused without aggravating to physical violence. Conversely, the number and types of violence cases increased slightly in the next three councils with four cases in each council, however, the rate of violent cases increased markedly from 2010 with 8 cases, and reached the peak in 2013 with 14 cases as shown in the line chart 6.1.

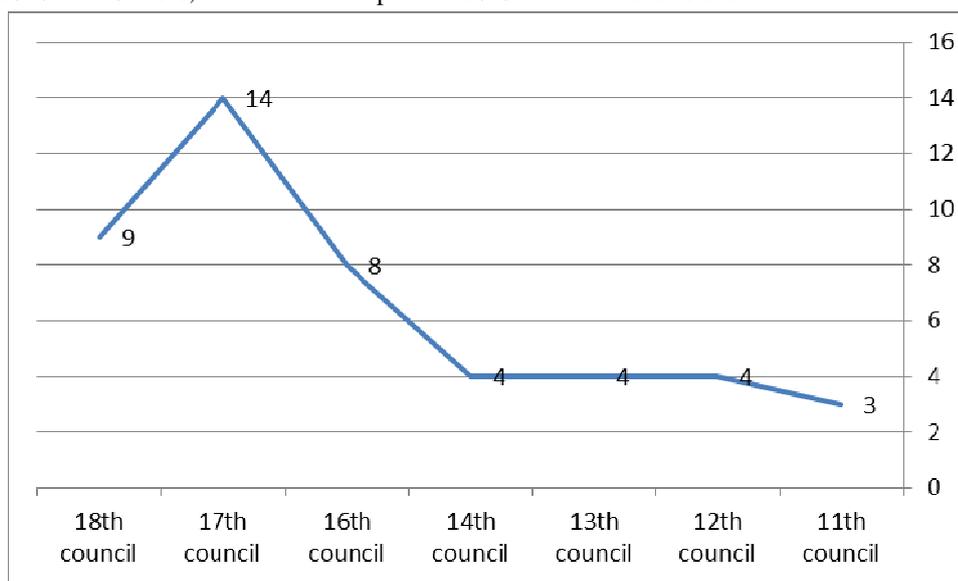


Chart 6.1: The Rate of Violence cases from 11th council until 18th council

It is worth mentioning that the 1989 elections for the 11th House of Representatives were held under a multi-vote system, in which electors could cast a number of votes equal to the number of seats allocated in their districts, which gave voters the chance to cast their ballots for both tribal and political candidates, accordingly Islamists won 42% of the 80 parliamentary seats and the opposition parties together won some 60% of parliamentary seats (Alazzam, 2008). The electoral system was then changed several times and many have argued that the government responded to the 1989 elections' results by changing the electoral law to a one-man one -vote formula in a multi-candidate district system that forced the voters to choose between the tribal affiliation and political candidates. Therefore, the main aims of these amendments were to enable the government to keep the parliamentary elections' results and the parliament councils under its control.

In 1993 elections for the 12th council which were held under SNTV, the Islamists losing nearly half their seats while independent candidates won 50 of the 80 parliamentary seat (Russell, 2003).

It is worth mentioning that opposition forces headed by the Islamic Action Front (IAF) boycotted the 1997 and 2003 partially, while in 2010 and 2013 elections were completely. They justified their boycotting decision by the government's insistence on manipulating election results, adding that all these previous elections were marred by extensive charges of rigging, and each produced a lackluster parliament that was disbanded long before its term was (<https://foreignpolicy.com>, accessed at 11:15 pm 3/2019). As a result of boycotting elections by opposition parties, the Independent candidates representing tribes, clans, ex-government, businessmen and retired military officers won the majority seats.) for example in 1997 elections independents won 75 seats out of 80. In 2003 independents won 77 seats out of 110, in 2010.

It is clear that amendments to electoral law led to the 2010 and 2013 elections being boycotted by a wide range of parties led by the IAF which has had a profound impact on the nature and structure of parliament and accordingly the rate of violence rate increased markedly in 16th and 17th councils as it has been explained before.

Witnesses from inside the parliament

- Saad Hayel Al-Srouf¹⁴ declared in a lecture at the Rotary clubs on June 10, 2013 that "the current electoral law will not achieve the desired parliamentary stability and is considered one of the most important reasons of university violence which has recently increased. He added that it became necessary to adopt a new electoral law that meets the aspirations of the people, achieves stability in parliamentary representation and ensures the participation of all in decision-making (<http://www.jfranews.com.jo>, accessed at 09:35 pm, 2019).

- Bassam Haddadin¹⁵ said in his comments on the parliamentary violence that the aim of the quarrels is to show. The quarrel itself is an exciting news that shows the deputies and attracts the media, in addition to the desire for fame for the sake of being famous (http://www.al-sijill.com/sijill_items/sitem1726.htm, accessed at 12:20 pm).

- Former deputy Deeb Abdullah¹⁶ attributed the outbreak of quarrels in the house of deputies to the weakness of argument among those who cause violence. When their arguments fall, they do attack others. He added that the House of Democracy is supposed to uphold the values of dialogue not chaos. He argued that there are some deputies who want to impose their own opinions, backed by their tongues and their muscles, which will empty democracy out of its content (<http://www.al-sijill.com>, accessed at 12:35 pm).

7. Recommendations

Councils of representatives have recently witnessed a growing number of violent conflicts among its members. These acts of violence manifest in different ways, ranging from vandalism to verbal abuse and physical assault. To prevent a spiral of parliamentary violence, the researcher provide a number of recommendations:

¹⁴ Al-Srouf is the former Speaker of the House of Representatives. He was a representative for Northern Badia, being chosen in the 2013 elections. Previously he served as Interior Minister and Deputy Prime Minister and was Speaker of the House for six sessions during the 12th, 13th and 15th Parliaments.

¹⁵ Bassam Haddadin, a former Jordanian leftist and served as a Member of Parliament for Christian seat in Zarqa for six parliamentary terms from 1989 until 2012

¹⁶ Deeb Abdullah was a deputy in the 12th council of deputies.

- The main suggested solution to this new phenomenon in the councils of deputies would lie in the creation of real political parties, which can direct and control the individualistic behavior of their respective member deputies. As the results of this study showed the absence of party work enhancing individual action and increasing the violence cases.

- The Lower House of Parliament should embark on adoption a new policies to control aggressive deputies who take the law into their own hands and have recently become unruly and uncontrollable as they hide behind their parliamentary immunity from prosecution. Furthermore, to reduce incidents of violence and aggression and to bring order to parliamentary sessions, the violence incidents must be resolved through legal procedures not in the Jordanian way, through tribal reconciliation between deputies.

- The design of electoral systems is one of the most important institutional decisions for any democracy. This is because the design of the electoral system has a deep and strong effect on the future political life of the country and influences the nature of representatives. Moreover, the electoral system must be chosen according to the political, economic social and cultural conditions in a way that strengthens democracy.

Accordingly, the researcher suggests returning to the BVS electoral system which has been adopted in 1989 elections being most suitable to the Jordanian society at the political, social and cultural levels.

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ظاهرة العنف البرلماني في الأردن الأسباب والتداعيات

أمين علي العزام*

ملخص

العنف في البرلمان الأردني يحظى الآن باهتمام كبير؛ لأنه يخلق تحديًا خطيرًا للديمقراطية، بالإضافة إلى كونه انتهاكًا صارخًا لحقوق الإنسان، لهذا هدفت الدراسة إلى التعرف على المشكلة وفهمها كخطوة أو لنح والبحث عن حلول، بالإضافة إلى ذلك، هدفت إلى استكشاف أسباب ونتائج وتداعيات هذه الظاهرة، لتحقيق أهداف الدراسة والإجابة على أسئلتها، فقد اتبع الباحث المنهج التحليلي بشكل رئيسي، وقد تم استخلاص البيانات الثانوية والأفكار بشكل واسع من منظري الصراع، كشفت الدراسة أنحالات العنف في مجلس النواب زادت في المجالس الثلاثة الأخيرة (السادس عشر والسابع عشر والثامن عشر). رافق هذا المعدل المتزايد لحالات العنف التعديلات التي أدخلت على القانون الانتخابي 2010 و 2013 و 2016. ومن الجدير بالملاحظة أن مجموعة واسعة من الأحزاب، بقيادة جبهة العمل الإسلامي قاطعت هذه الانتخابات، مما أدى إلى تأثير عميق على الطبيعة وتشكيل البرلمان ومما كان له الأثر الكبير على معدل العنف، ومن التوصيات التي أوصت بها الدراسة أنهن كحاجة حقيقية لتهيئة بيئة مشجعة للأحزاب السياسية وتعزيز قدراتها على أن تكون نشطة حتى تلعب دورًا مهمًا في الانتخابات البرلمانية القادمة، من خل التصميم أكثر النظم الانتخابية لتكون أكثر ملاءمة لتحقيق نتائج إيجابية.

الكلمات الدالة: العنف البرلماني، الاستقرار الديمقراطي، القانون الانتخابي، الأردن.

*معهد بيت الحكمة للعلوم السياسية، جامعة آل البيت. تاريخ استلام البحث 2019/5/3، وتاريخ قبوله 2019/7/23.