Women's Participation in the Parliamentary Elections in Jordan 2003: A Socio-Political Study in Greater Amman Area

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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that half the voters in the last four parliamentary elections in Jordan were women, and that there were no legislation or legal obstacles on their way to win the parliament's election, yet their achievement in this domain remained very poor. Elections' records show that no single woman won in those elections on the basis of free competition with men. However, one woman made it to the parliament in 1993 and six others succeeded in 2003 as a result of the quota system for women and racial minorities. Results show that women's behavior and voting priorities are influenced by their husbands' opinion and families' relationships and that their voting and participation behavior are influenced by their age, level of education and place of residence. Results show that the older and more educated women are more willing to vote, to run for parliament, and to participate in the elections' campaign and meetings than the younger women.

Keywords: Women's Political Participation, Parliamentary Elections, Jordan, 2003.

INTRODUCTION

Jordan is a small country located in the heart of the Middle East and the Arab World and its system of government is parliamentary monarchy. The legislative authority consists of two houses: the lower house which consists of 110 members including six secured seats for women, and the upper house which consists of 55 appointed members. The parliamentary life started in 1929 with the establishment of the Basic Law which was followed by two other constitutions in 1947 and 1952. The Parliament of Jordan enjoys constitutional power to oversight the government's deeds and actions including approving the budget and dismissing the government.

The beginnings of Jordanian women’s interest in public affairs can be traced back to the 1950s when women’s organizations rose for the first time and voiced their demands for freedom, equality and equal opportunities. During this period Jordan witnessed the emergence of many political parties, professional associations, social organizations and organized opposition. Under these circumstances, a Jordanian Women’s Union was established in 1954 under the name of “Arab Women’s Union” and raised the slogan “Equal Rights and Duties, One Arab Nation” which clearly shows its political character (Al-Jraibi, 2002).

However, this union was suspended together with all political parties in 1957 as a result of instability which swept Jordan and the area. Consequently, women's participation was confined to memberships in some social and voluntary organizations as well as charitable work until 1974 when women were given the right to elect and to run for the elections and were permitted to establish Women’s Unions again.

Unfortunately, women had no chance to run for parliamentary elections before 1989 due to the suspension of the parliament, and the occupation of the West Bank by Israel. In 1989, Jordan resumed the democratization process and the new parliament passed numerous laws for election, press and publication, privatization, education, and the government allowed the establishment of many women organizations.

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 to 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 which are 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 basis of merit and qualifications"; that "work is the right of every citizen" (article: 22, 23).

It is worth noting here that although women's equality with men is laid down in the constitution, many subsequent laws, rules and regulations still discriminate against them, like the nationality law (a woman cannot give her foreign husband citizenship), the personal status law, the social security and health insurance laws (they do not cover her husband and children) (Atligan, 2002).

Moreover, there are some legal obstacles that impede 70 women's societies from becoming involved in a substantial effort conducive to the development of women's political participation, because such an activity is viewed as outside their aims. Therefore, these societies are not allowed to organize election symposiums or election propaganda on behalf of female candidates (Al-Jraibi, 2002).

Women and Parliament

Women have shown increasingly more interest in running for public office in Jordan and indeed participated and formed about half the voters in all parliamentary elections that took in 1989, 1993, 1997 and 2003 (Ministry of Interior, 2004). However, despite the fact that twelve women ran for the parliament in 1989, three in 1993, 17 in 1997 and 54 in the 2003, election's results show that no single woman won those elections on the basis of free competition with men. However, one woman won in 1993 on the basis of the quota for Circassian seats, (racial minority) and six more women won in 2003 on the basis of the quota system for women (Election Law, 2001 and Ministry of Interior, 1997, and 2003).

The position of women in the Upper House of Parliament was not much better than their position in the Parliament. Since the restoration of Parliamentary life in 1989, one woman was appointed in the Upper House in 1989, two in 1993, three in the 1997 and seven in the 2003 House (Jordan's Upper House Records, 2003). This means that despite the fact that Jordanian women have equal opportunities to run for the parliament and constituted about half the voters in the four last elections, only few ran for elections and only few won the elections thanks to the quota system.

It is worth noting here that the political status of women in the Arab World is not better than their status in Jordan and it is worth noting that the status of women in politics in the world is still very low compared to men but it is the lowest in the Arab World. The World statistics show that the percentage of women in the parliament is about 13% in the World, 20% in Europe, 13% in the third World while it is only 7% in the Arab World. In 2004, only 24 women preside over one of the 179 parliaments, 9.9% are presidents or speakers of parliament 3% as head of states in the World, and only 3% of all ministerial jobs in the World (IPU, 2004).

This peculiar situation raises many questions regarding the extent of women's participation and the reasons and obstacles behind their failure in these elections, and the factors that influence their election and voting preferences and behavior which the present study tries to find them some answers.

1. The Study Questions

Against the above background the study tries to find answers to the following questions:
1. What is the status of women in the constitution and election law?
2. What is the extent of women's participation in parliament?
3. What are the motives and reasons for women's participation in the parliamentary elections?
4. What are the factors that influence their voting and participation behavior?
5. What are their voting preferences and priorities?
6. Why some women don't participate in the elections?

2. Objectives

The objectives of this paper are:
a) To examine the extent of women's participation in the parliamentary elections.
b) To analyze their achievement in the parliamentary elections.
c) To Analyze their motives and reasons for participating in the elections.
d) To analyze their voting preferences, priorities and factors affecting their choices of candidates.
e) To examine the factors that influence their voting
and participation behavior.

f) To find out the reasons behind their lack of participation in the elections.

3. Literature Review

The Arab World today is witnessing wide debate regarding the role of women in society in general and in politics in particular. Some demand full freedom and participation in all aspects of life while others insist on keeping them within their traditional roles as housewives and mothers (Alsoudi, 2003). The Arab public opinion is with the notion that politics is not suitable for women and it seems that even those who call for women empowerment, freedom and full political participation are looking for women as voters, more than competitive candidates (Ayesh, 1993: 6-8).

This view reflects the traditional view of women as housewives and mothers away from political participation which is a new subject in the Arab World. It is no secret that many Arab States still, until this very moment, without parliaments, written constitutions, political parties, or parliamentary elections. Others allow women to elect but not to run for parliament, while few only allow women to elect and run for states such as Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, Syria, Lebanon and Tunisia. The reality today is that most of the Arab countries are governed by a variety of undemocratic regimes (Frejat, 1999: 233 and Hammad, 1998).

There is no agreement, among scholars, regarding the absence of women from the political scene. Some scholars see that traditions are responsible for the powerlessness and backwardness of women in the Arab World in general and in politics in particular (Ayesh, 1993). Others believe that illiteracy and unemployment are behind the lack of women's political participation. One study found a positive correlation between women employment and the size of their participation in the parliamentary elections, and between employment and their voting preferences (Albanawey, 1998: 135).

Results of another study showed that 59% of women were interested in politics and 91% of the respondents believed that women should run for parliament (Alnegashabandi, 2001).

As for the causes of women failure in the election, one study found that 39% of the respondents said that the people were not convinced to be represented by women, 13% said because of religious reasons, 12%, 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 (Abdallah, 1993).

Another study revealed that among the obstacles which restrict women’s participation in the politics are unemployment, low income and level of educational (Al-Hadidy, 1996), while another argued that the lack of confidence in themselves is one of the main reasons for women’s under-representation in formal political institutions, including parliaments, governments and political parties (Shvedova, 2002).

The Jordanian Committee for Women Affairs' Report for Beijing's Conference summarized the reasons for the failure of women candidates in the 1989 elections as follows: the lack of society acceptance to women work in politics; lack of economic resources for election campaign; lack of women experience in politics and election campaigning; lack of women voters awareness to the importance of women's role in the parliament; men influence over women voting choices in the election and finally the long absence of democracy in Jordan (National Committee on Women's Affairs, 1995).

Regarding Jordanian attitudes towards women's participation in public and civil life, the 'Jordanian Living Conditions Survey of 1996' (Hanssen-Bauer eds., 1998), found that about one-third of the respondents were against women serving in Municipal Councils, (34%) against their participation in the parliament or the government and that (46% and 47%%) of men were against women holding such positions, nearly twofold compared to women (24% and 25%). Furthermore, 20% of men did not want women to vote, while still 9% of women shared this view. What was more interesting to know is the number of young men who opposed women's participation in the public and political field: 57% of men 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).

A Statistical study conducted in 1993 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 the case where candidates of both genders were equally qualified (Shteiwi and Daghistani, 1993).

Another study summarized the views of Jordanians
regarding the causes of women's failure in politics as follows: 70% of the respondents said that the negative attitudes within society towards women was the main obstacle on the way to women's participation in politics, 35% believed that change starts with the woman herself, followed by society in general through its various educational, media and other institutions, rather than by decision makers who are in authority. 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, 2002:37).

As for a solution for this problem, the study argued that it needs active work on a number of dimensions. The most important of which are increasing knowledge, awareness, education and women teamwork and suggested the amendment of laws and legislation that limit women's personal freedom and their role in the political and public domains. (Haddad, 2002:49). However, this is not to say that Jordanians don't like politics, 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 an effective role in political life.

Other studies argued that the woman's status in the Arab World is not very much better than her status in Jordan (Bookman, 1988), and that the governmental and parliamentary work are seen in the Arab World as men's work (Hess and Torney, 1967). Moreover, most of the social organizations in Jordan and the Arab World don't recognize equal opportunities for both men and women and this leads for inequality between the two sexes in all political, social and employment affairs (Alsoudi, 2003).

Other scholars argued that the Arab family epitomizes the patriarchal structure which implies a hierarchy of authority that is controlled and dominated by males. The patriarchy, they argue, contradicts democracy and the participation of women, as it does not permit them to make decisions that fit their needs and interests. Within this frame, the Arab women grow to learn their roles and responsibilities as caretakers of their husbands and families (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 in Jordan and the Arab World may theoretically enable women to participate in the parliamentary elections but it does not reflect a deeper commitment in the society at large to gender equality (Brand, 1998: 10). Thus, women’s participation in public offices has been limited at all levels: parliamentary level, local councils and or in the executive authority. A study in Egypt reflects this fact and argues that despite the fact that women in Egypt were granted citizenship and full political rights in the 1956 Constitution, the social and economic environment in the country has worked against women exercising their political rights (A bu-Zayd, 2002).

This view holds 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 the Islamic and third World countries where women succeeded to be presidents or prime ministers in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Other studies showed similar results in some third World countries. In India for example, the lower house has 545 members and the upper house has 250 members but women constituted only 5.2% of the membership of lower house and 9.8 per cent of the membership of the upper house in 1991 (Swarup et al., 1994). The status of women is not much better on the World arenas the status of women in politics is still very low in the entire World as their representation in all third World Parliaments is about 13%. The following reasons were given for this phenomenon: (IPU, 2004).

- The prevalence of the masculine model of political life and of elected governmental bodies; limited financial support for women candidates; limited access to political networks;
- Poverty, unemployment and lack of adequate financial resources;
- Illiteracy and limited access to education and choice of professions;
- The lack of media attention on women's contributions and potential, which also results in the lack of a constituency for women;
- Women's low self-esteem and self-confidence, supported by certain cultural patterns which do not facilitate women's access to political careers.

### 3.1. Relevance of this Study to the Previous Studies

As appeared in the above literature review, women's participation in politics in general and in the parliament in particular is still very low in Jordan and in the Arab World.
In addition, many Arab countries don't have democratic institutions, such as written constitutions, election laws, parliaments, political parties, and or those who don't allow women to participate or limit their participation to voting only. The few countries that give women full right to run and vote for parliaments suffer from male dominance over women.

Most of the previous studies focused on some aspects of women's political participation and tried to find the reason for their failure in politics. Some argued that the majority of Jordanian women are interested in politics and parliamentary elections, but they are under represented in politics, political parties' leadership and high government offices. Many scholars agreed in their analysis about the reasons behind women's lack of political participation and their failure in the parliamentary elections. Among the main reasons they mentioned were the following: lack of economic resources, patriarchal family structure, political institutions, traditional and religious values, lack of political experience and finally that the society is not convinced to be represented by women.

What makes this study unique is that it tries to examine the extent of women's participation in the parliamentary election in Jordan during the 1990s and to explore their voting preferences, the main factors that influence their election behavior and priorities in choosing their parliamentary candidate from women's point of view.

4. Methodology

4.1. The Study

The main aim of this study is to examine the extent of women's political participation, voting priorities and preferences and the factors that influence their participation. The study intended to cover all women in the Greater Amman Area including West Amman or the rich areas and East Amman, the poor areas and some areas around.

4.2. The Sample

To achieve the study's goals, a purposeful sample of 440 women was chosen from different educational levels, 29% from high degrees, 36% secondary certificate, 21% read and write and 14% illiterate. They 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 36 years. 55% were government employees and 27% worked in the private sector and the rest 18% were unemployed. Also, the study sample included women from different areas of Amman, 42% from East Amman, 28% from West Amman and 30 % was taken from the villages around Amman (table 1).

4.3. Instrument

The data were 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 lack of 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" as well as the transparency of the election. The third section included statements regarding their attitudes towards participation in the parliamentary elections.

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**Table (1)**

Variables distribution and sample characteristics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Years</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High degree</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>West Amman</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary certificate</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>East Amman</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read and write</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Villages around Amman</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>In government</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In private sector</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-23</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>unemployed</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-30</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 51</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2
Reasons for women's participation in the parliament's election 2003.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for participation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To support family's candidate</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response to husband's or relatives' demand</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To support a religious candidate</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National duty</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use my right</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in democracy</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To influence the election's results</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To elect the best candidate</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3
Factors that influence women's preferences in electing Parliamentary candidates 2003.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family preferences &amp; relationship</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of services to citizens</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind of job &amp; experience</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social class and wealth</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality and qualification</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political affiliation</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4
Women preference for parliament's candidates according to their Political affiliation 2003.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political affiliation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent candidates</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious candidates</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National political parties</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pan-Arab political parties</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leftist parties</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4. Statistical Measures
The questionnaire was tested on a pilot sample which consisted of 50 women and was reviewed by 5 professors and as a result, 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 the purpose of this study. The collected data were analyzed by the SPSS program and the T-test, ANOVA and f-test were used to compute the relevance and significance of the correlations among the variables.

5. Findings and Results Discussions
5.1. 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 to 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 basis of merit and..."
qualifications”; that "work is the right of every citizen" (Articles: 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, formed about 50% of all votes. However, records show that no single woman won those elections on the basis of free competition with men, and only one woman won in 1993 elections on the basis of quota for Circassians' seats (racial minority) and six more won in 2003 as a result of the quota system that guarantees six seats for women (The Election Law, 2001).

5.2. Extent of Women's Participation in the Elections

The study was set out to examine the extent of women's political participation, voting preferences and their achievement in the parliamentary elections in 1990s. The study revealed that women participated in all the elections that took place in 1989, 1993, 1997 and 2003, and formed about half the voters in all those elections. As for the number of woman candidates who run in those elections, records show that it was 13 in 1989 and 3 in 1993, 17 in 1997 and 43 in 2003. However, despite the fact that women formed about half the voters in those elections no single woman won in any of those elections on the basis of free competition with men. There was one woman who won according to a racial minority quota reserved for Circassians in 1993 and six others in the 2003 on the basis of the women's quota.

Regarding women's view of the "one man one vote's law", results show that 33% of respondents say they don't consider it good or bad, 28% say it is a bad law, 22% say it is a good law, and 17% say they don't know. These results partly dismiss some Islamists and opposition's arguments which claim that the majority of Jordanians believe that it is a bad law. Of course, it should be noted here that women are more careful in expressing their views regarding political issues than men and therefore, these results should not be generalized to all Jordanians, rather it reflects the respondents' views.

5.3. Reasons for Women's Participation in the Elections of 2003

The study tries to explain the reasons behind women's voting and election behavior and the factors that influence their decision to elect their candidate. To achieve this goal, the respondents were provided with eight choices. The study reveals that the majority of women, 84% say that they go to the elections to vote and to support a family candidate, 78% obey 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 go to the election for reasons other than family and religious considerations 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 2).

5.4. Factors that Influence Women's Preferences for Candidates 2003

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 and relationship, religion, job and 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's religion, 23% by the extent of the candidate's services to the people, 19% by the kind of job and experience of the candidate, 16% by his social class and wealth, 11% by his personality and qualification, 7% by his political affiliation (Table 3). This means that women's first choice is for the relative candidate regardless of his qualification, the second choice is candidate's religion, and with less interest they will look for the kind of job, extent of services and lastly his personality, qualifications 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.
Table 5
One way ANOVA analysis for the means of deviation for the effects of women's age on their participating in the elections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation activities</th>
<th>18-22 Mean</th>
<th>18-22 Std.</th>
<th>23-30 Mean</th>
<th>23-30 Std.</th>
<th>31-40 Mean</th>
<th>31-40 Std.</th>
<th>41-50 Mean</th>
<th>41-50 Std.</th>
<th>over 51 Mean</th>
<th>over 51 Std.</th>
<th>f-value</th>
<th>f-sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>2.211</td>
<td>1.678</td>
<td>2.143</td>
<td>1.710</td>
<td>2.873</td>
<td>1.292</td>
<td>3.178</td>
<td>1.315</td>
<td>2.753</td>
<td>1.279</td>
<td>7.732</td>
<td>0.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in election campaign</td>
<td>3.182</td>
<td>1.571</td>
<td>3.241</td>
<td>1.622</td>
<td>3.542</td>
<td>1.223</td>
<td>3.875</td>
<td>1.175</td>
<td>3.943</td>
<td>1.234</td>
<td>7.128</td>
<td>0.025</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6
F-test results and one way ANOVA analysis for the differences of means of the effect of education on women's desire for participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desire to participation</th>
<th>Higher degree Mean</th>
<th>Higher degree Std.</th>
<th>Secondary certificate Mean</th>
<th>Secondary certificate Std.</th>
<th>Read and write Mean</th>
<th>Read and write Std.</th>
<th>illiterate Mean</th>
<th>illiterate Std.</th>
<th>f-value</th>
<th>f-sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willing to vote</td>
<td>3.137</td>
<td>1.537</td>
<td>3.019</td>
<td>1.642</td>
<td>3.716</td>
<td>1.278</td>
<td>3.848</td>
<td>1.127</td>
<td>9.573</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to run for parliament</td>
<td>3.916</td>
<td>1.635</td>
<td>3.429</td>
<td>1.331</td>
<td>1.194</td>
<td>1.612</td>
<td>1.143</td>
<td>1.954</td>
<td>7.567</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to join election campaign</td>
<td>3.154</td>
<td>1.246</td>
<td>3.447</td>
<td>1.541</td>
<td>3.129</td>
<td>1.619</td>
<td>3.121</td>
<td>1.466</td>
<td>0.825</td>
<td>0.254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to join election meetings</td>
<td>3.853</td>
<td>1.152</td>
<td>3.607</td>
<td>1.521</td>
<td>2.125</td>
<td>1.854</td>
<td>2.181</td>
<td>1.642</td>
<td>7.544</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to join government</td>
<td>3.611</td>
<td>1.266</td>
<td>3.513</td>
<td>1.123</td>
<td>1.153</td>
<td>1.317</td>
<td>1.134</td>
<td>1.213</td>
<td>9.548</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to join the senate</td>
<td>3.722</td>
<td>1.801</td>
<td>1.641</td>
<td>1.241</td>
<td>1.090</td>
<td>1.324</td>
<td>1.201</td>
<td>1.435</td>
<td>8.867</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to join political parties</td>
<td>2.172</td>
<td>1.161</td>
<td>2.203</td>
<td>1.184</td>
<td>1.025</td>
<td>1.148</td>
<td>0.769</td>
<td>1.652</td>
<td>0.973</td>
<td>0.314</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7
F-test results and one way ANOVA analysis for the differences of means of the effect of employment on women attitude toward participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment effects on women attitude toward participation</th>
<th>employed Mean</th>
<th>employed Std.</th>
<th>unemployed Mean</th>
<th>unemployed Std.</th>
<th>f-value</th>
<th>f-sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willing to vote</td>
<td>2.538</td>
<td>1.038</td>
<td>3.724</td>
<td>1.376</td>
<td>7.369</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to run for parliament</td>
<td>3.574</td>
<td>1.135</td>
<td>2.319</td>
<td>1.383</td>
<td>8.134</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to join election campaign</td>
<td>2.476</td>
<td>1.016</td>
<td>3.490</td>
<td>1.315</td>
<td>6.782</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to join election meetings</td>
<td>2.132</td>
<td>1.113</td>
<td>3.621</td>
<td>1.217</td>
<td>9.879</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to join government</td>
<td>3.741</td>
<td>1.015</td>
<td>2.408</td>
<td>1.321</td>
<td>8.671</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to join the senate</td>
<td>3.882</td>
<td>1.102</td>
<td>2.234</td>
<td>1.534</td>
<td>7.632</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to join political parties</td>
<td>2.762</td>
<td>1.479</td>
<td>2.815</td>
<td>1.762</td>
<td>0.958</td>
<td>0.170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 beliefs which resemble a traditional society's behavior. However, it must be noted here that this voting behavior seems very odd since the majority of respondents are from Amman.
the capital of Jordan and represent an urban society. It is safe then to conclude that urbanization didn't change the traditional voting behavior among Jordanian female voters.

5.5 Women's Preferences for Parliament's Candidates According to Political Affiliation

The study tried to examine women's preferences regarding the different political background and affiliation of candidates. It tried to find out what 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: 83% for independent candidates or those with no political parties' affiliation, 72% for the candidates who are affiliated to the religious parties (opposition party), 52% for candidates affiliated to the national parties (loyal parties), 43% for pan-Arab candidates, and 3% for leftist parties' candidates (opposition parties) (table 4).

This means that the majority of women prefer independent candidates which means a relative, but if there is no relative then the second choice will be for the religious candidate and with a less degree for national, pan-Arab and leftist parties.

It seems that women choices are between independent- practically family candidates- and the Islamists candidates. Therefore, if the government performs general elections today according to political parties' lists, the Islamist will win the elections in Jordan and this perhaps holds true in all the Arab World. These results confirm the fears and arguments of some Arab scholars who believe that quick democratization in the Arab World would probably lead to Islamist's governments.

6. Factors that Influence Women Voting and Participation Behavior

The study tried to explore 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.

6.1. Age Effects on Women's Voting and Participation Behavior

The study tried to find out the effects of age on respondents voting and participation in the parliamentary elections of 2003. It introduced the participants 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’ age and their voting behavior (f-value=7.732; p= 0.021; (α=0. 05). The middle age groups (31-40 and 41-50) years (Means=2.873-3.178) are more willing to vote than the youngest do (18-22 and 23-30), (Means=2.211-2.143). 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 the 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 a positive effect of respondents' age on their decision to run for a seat in parliament, (f-value=8.304; p=0.003; (α=0.05). 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 a correlation between respondents' age and their decision to participate in these campaigns, as f-value=7.128; p=0.025; (α=0.05). The elderly group (41-50 and over 51) are more willing to participate in the election campaign (Means=3.875-3.943) than the youngest one, (Means=3.182-3.241). 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 ones.

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, (f-value=6.571; p=0.031; (α=0.05). The middle age and elderly groups (41-50 and over 50) are more willing to participate in the election meetings (Means=3.815-4.251) than the youngest generation (Means= 3.114-3.232). 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 5).

6.2. 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 this goal, respondents were provided with seven statements related to their willingness to: vote, run for elections, participate in the elections' campaign and meetings, join the government, the Senate and the political parties. Results show correlation between the respondents' level of education and their voting behavior ($f$-value=9.573; $\alpha$=0.000; ($\alpha=0.05$). It has been found that the less educated women are more willing to vote (mean=3.848) than the educated ones (mean=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 (mean=3.916, 3.853, 3.611, and 3.722) than the less educated ones (mean=1.143, 1.181, 1.134, and 1.201), see (table 6).

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, ($f$-value=0.825, $p=0.254$; and $f$-value= 0.973; $p=0.314$, respectively). This result reflects a general trend among Jordanians, namely that politics in general and joining political parties in particular is a male-dominant job. This trend is supported by traditions, social customs and religion, all of which restrict women's involvement in a mixed work with men. This result is perhaps applicable to all Arab and Islamic societies.

6.3 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 is a correlation between employment and respondents' attitudes toward voting, running for parliament, joining the election campaign, and meetings ($p=0.000$, while there is no such correlation between employment and respondents' attitude towards joining the political parties $p=0.170$. The unemployed are more willing to vote and participate in the election (mean=3.724) than the employed (mean=2.538) ($f$-value=7.369, $p=0.000$; ($\alpha=0.05$). 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 promise their voters 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 a significant correlation between respondents' employment and their decision to run for parliament, $f$-value= 8.134; $p=0.000$; ($\alpha=0.05$). The employed respondents are more willing to run for election (mean=3.574) than the unemployed (mean=2.319). 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 a negative correlation between employment and respondents' attitude towards participating in the election campaigns ($f$-value=6.782; $p=0.001$; and attending election meetings ($f$-value=9.879, $p=0.000$; ($\alpha=0.05$). The unemployed are more willing to participate in the election campaign and attend elections’ meetings (mean=3.490 and 3.621) than the employed, (mean=2.476 and 2.132, 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 allowed by law to be hired for such a 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 a positive correlation between employment and respondents' attitudes towards joining these institutions. The employed are more willing to join these institutions (mean=3.741and 3.882) than the unemployed (mean=2.408 and 2.234); ($f$-value=8.671 and 7.632; $p=0.000$, respectively ($\alpha=0.05$), while there is no effect for employment on their attitudes towards joining the political parties as both seems not interested in joining these parties $p = 0.170$. There are several reasons behind
such a negative attitude towards the political parties especially among women such as: social customs, some religious beliefs and social roles which restrict unnecessary interaction between women and strange men (see table 7).

6.4 The Effects of the 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 (8). Results show that there is correlation between the place of residence and respondents’ desire and willingness to vote and participate in the elections (p=0.000). Women from outside Amman are more willing to vote and participate in the election (mean=3.682) than women from Amman (mean=2.241) f-value=8.143; p=0.000; (α=0.05). It is well known that candidates’ success in the rural areas 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 relatives to go and vote for the their 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,(f-value= 6.367; p=0.014; (α=0.05). Respondents from Amman are more willing to run for election (mean=3.645) than women from outside Amman (mean=2.153). This is because urban women are richer, have more freedom, 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=7.582; p=0.003; and attend election meetings (f-value=6.719, p=0.006; (α=0.05). Respondents from
Amman are more willing to participate in the election campaigns and attend elections’ meetings (means=3.860 and 3.734) than the residents from outside Amman (means=2.192 and 2.364, 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=3.741 and 3.523) than the rural women (means=2.249 and 2.034); (f-value=7.579 and 8.632; respectively p=0.000), while there is no effect for employment on their attitudes towards joining the political parties as both seem not to be interested in joining these parties (f-value=0.845; p=0.214 (α=0.05), see (table 8).

7. Reasons behind Women's Non-participation in the Elections

The study tried to find the reasons behind women's refrain from participating in the 2003 elections, arranged according to their importance. To achieve this goal, respondents were introduced with seven choices to choose from them see table (9).

Results show that the majority of the non-voters say that they didn't have any relative candidates, 84%, no one asked them to vote, 62% no good candidates to vote for, 46%, they have no time to vote, 33% that they are not interested in the elections, 25% that they don't trust the government, 18% they don't trust the election's results, 12% and finally 8% say the election has no benefits for them (Table 9).

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; no body 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 majority of candidates are usually independent and relative candidates which, women are obliged, by their male 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 promise 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.

Summary and Conclusions

The study set out to examine the extent of women's political participation in the parliamentary elections that took place in Jordan in 2003, and to find out the main factors and reasons that influence their participation behavior and voting preferences and priorities. It tried to find answers to several questions regarding the impact of some demographic variables such as age, level of education, employment and place of residence on women's attitudes toward their participation in the parliamentary elections. A purposeful sample of 440 women were selected for this purpose from Amman and outside, from different backgrounds, ages, education level, and employment.

The study revealed the following results:

1. Women in Jordan enjoy equal political rights, including voting and running for parliament. They participated in the last four parliamentary elections that took place since 1989 and formed about half the voters in those elections.

2. Despite the fact that many women had run for parliament, no one won on the basis of free competition with men. However, one woman won in 1993 election, and six others won in the 2003 elections according to the minority and women's quota.

3. As for their motives and reasons for participation and voting results show that the majority of women go to vote to support a family or relative candidate 84%, or as a response to husband's demand 78%, and for less important reasons such as national, religious duty, believe in democracy or to elect the best candidate.

4. As for the factors that affect women's preferences in electing parliament's candidate, results show that women's first choice is for the relative candidate (92%) regardless of his qualifications, and if there is no relative then they would look for other qualifications such as his religion 86%, kind of job, extent of his services and lastly his personality, qualifications and political affiliation.

5. The study reveals that the first choice for women regarding the candidate political affiliation is the
independent candidate 84%, followed by the religious 71%, the traditional, the pan-Arab and finally the leftist candidate.

6. As for the effect of age, level of education, place of residence and employment on women's attitudes toward voting and election behavior, results show that there is correlation between these variables and women's attitudes. It shows that educated, employed, older women are more willing to run for parliament, government and the Senate, 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.

Suggestions

According to the above results the study suggests the following:

a) Women need more education and awareness regarding their preferences in electing parliament's candidate.

b) The number of quota seats for women in the parliament should be increased to twelve women at least one woman for each governorate.

c) Women should be educated about the importance of their role in parliament and should be encouraged to vote for the best candidates regardless of his/her sex or relation.

d) Women and men should be educated and encouraged to vote for women.

e) Adding women to the existing power structures might help to create some role models that could contribute to more participation of women in public life and decision-making processes.

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