Attitudes of Jordanian University Students toward the Political Recruitment of Women

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Abstract —————————————————————————————————————

This study aimed to determine the attitudes of Jordanian university students toward the political recruitment of women. A cross-sectional design was followed, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire provided to 1,188 students from ten selected universities in northern, central, and southern Jordan. The results were then analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (version 23.0 SPSS) through descriptive statistical analysis using mean and standard deviation, Pearson correlation, and t-test. The findings indicated a low (2.47 ± 0.40) level of acceptance for the political recruitment of women. However, medium (2.67 ± 0.44) and low levels of acceptance were obtained for assigning political roles to women through employment and election. A significant correlation was obtained for the political recruitment of women in general through elections and women's appointments ($p < 0.005$). Finally, a significant difference level was obtained for obstacles to the political recruitment of women and the extent to which young people are receptive to the political recruitment of women ($p < 0.005$); however, a non-significant relationship was obtained with respect to academic specialization. Therefore, the study concludes that the necessary initiatives should be taken to promote women's participation in Jordan's political recruitment.

Key words —————————————————————————————————————

Jordan, obstacles, political recruitment, university students, women

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Introduction

The term "politics" is connected to democratic systems that are used to enhance the effectiveness of society, build strong images, and suppress intolerance within the population through leadership skills (Syzdykov et al., 2016). The way people interact with each other, make decisions, negotiate ideas, and reduce disputes depends on politics. Politics involves individuals who take authority and act as leaders to create suitable settlements for society. As people are divided into many groups, the decision to share resources and power becomes complex (Ahmad & Bano, 2019).

Traditional systems of political recruitment rely on standards of patronage or inheritance, and these systems are characterized by limited opportunities. Many studies have differentiated political parties with individuals of appropriate interest who have the ability to control these political channels or change the rules of political implementation and recruitment policies (Fagbadebo, Odeyemi, & Agunyai, 2014). When considering women's participation in the development of society, there is a wide gap between women's and men's rights. This gender bias arises when people remain unaware that women should also participate in major responsibilities outside of the home (Mussarat, 2021).

Assigning political roles to women in any society takes on a special character by eliminating all forms of discrimination against them to achieve equality and equal opportunities between women and men (Ichino & Nathan, 2017). Folke, Rickne, and Smith (2016) asserted that a number of countries are now accepting quotas on gender, and that a large number of women are accepted in parliament. Previous studies have estimated that in the past ten years, about 11% to 12% of women have been recruited as parliamentary members (Sharma, 2020) aimed to identify the dimensions of political empowerment of Indian women and evaluate the factors responsible for the gap that holds them back in achieving their potential. The study results showed that some of the main factors, such as information or awareness, family support or family environment, the legal and political environment, and personal ambitions or internal motivation were needed for the political empowerment of women. Similarly, Ahmad and Bano (2019) evaluated the intended outcome of the local government system, which was revived by General Pervez Musharraf's regime in Pakistan in 2001, regarding women's political empowerment. The study found that existing informal institutional forces, such as socio-cultural and religious practices, did not allow women to participate fully and attain the desired political status. The representation of local women has not enabled them to

meaningfully participate in policymaking at the local level. The representation of local women has not been able to meaningfully participate in policymaking at the local level. The study's findings suggest revising the design of the local government with a focus on the eligibility criteria for the candidates. In addition, to ensure the political empowerment of women, policymakers should focus on alternatives such as political awareness, women's education, and monitoring by the media and civil society.

In most democratic regions, the political recruitment of women and their access to important decision-making processes is one of the most important indicators of democracy. According to Segerberg (2018), women enjoy recruiting more female members to their teams: the only barrier they face in the process is women's lack of interest and other job opportunities that are open to them. Jordan is one of the countries that have ratified international treaties and conventions to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. However, Jordanian women still face some obstacles in the process of political empowerment, especially in terms of their access to leadership positions (Atiyat, 2017). Kumar (2017) outlined the total representation of women in the parliaments of Western Asia and the Middle East. According to the results, in 2016, only 30 out of 195 seats were held by Jordanian women.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to identify the extent to which society is receptive to the political recruitment of women, and to identify obstacles that prevent their political recruitment. This study further aims to identify the attitudes of university students, who are a large and important segment of Jordanian society, regarding women being assigned political roles through elections. It also analyzes the most important obstacles faced by women when appointed as political members, and determines the differences in these attitudes according to variables such as gender and educational specialties. The importance of this study stems from two aspects, one scientific and the other practical. This study analyzes the attitudes of university youth who, through their votes and voices, constitute the fate of the political system in the future through the selection of political elites via elections. This further highlights the importance of woman's role in politics, which is one of the main structures that contributes to the development of society. Because, in the present era, women's contributions are not restricted only to household responsibilities, they serve as active participants in building a strong society. The development and progress of societies are associated with full gender equality, elimination of all forms of discrimination, and giving women active roles as key leaders of change. An important aspect of this study is also to present a set of scientific re-

sults on the issues of assigning political roles to women and their role in the process of reform and democratic transformation in society so that the positive aspects are strengthened and the negative aspects addressed. It also presents new insights into the field of women and politics by providing empirical evidence on the dimensions of political empowerment in Jordan. The findings of this study can be initiated and replicated across countries.

Theoretical Framework

The political elite theory determines how the process of political recruitment is carried out through the ideas presented by Pareto, Michels, and Mosca. From a sociological perspective, Pareto sees that any society is divided into two parts: rulers as the elite and the governed as the general public. The elite are a distinct minority, and their superiority imposes its sovereignty in society because of their innate psychological leadership tendency. Pareto called these tendencies as, "residues," from Pareto's point of view, the process of recruitment to the elite is according to the nature of the residues. In particular, the residues of meditative thinking enable the elite to govern through persuasion and desire, whereas in the residues of survival and order, the elite govern through power and domination, so they operate using methods of repression, bullying, and intimidation (Delican, 2000).

Mosca and Michels relied on the concept of the organization by analyzing the concept of the elite and its power. Mosca (1939) believed that the elite are a relatively organized minority that governs the unorganized majority because of its organizational capacity, as the small size of the elite and the simplicity of its means of communication give it high organizational capacity; the ruling elite depends on the support and satisfaction of the masses. According Bottomore (2006) elites are a minority that governs the majority in any society, as the power of the elite lies in its high capacity for cohesion and organization, whereas democracy is an "illusion," and the manifestations of democracy hide the rule of an elite or a minority whose power is unique as it dominates the fate of political and social life (Arif, 1998; Ekundayo, 2017).

The process of political recruitment among women is inspired by two developmental processes: the first is the true merit basis, where women are new to the political profession (Folke et al., 2016). The second is to assign political roles to some women to participate in political power. Where political systems differ is in the means of their political recruitment to the elite. Traditional and autocratic political systems depend on the criteria of paralysis, cronyism, and inheritance, where politics is passed to the next generation, while democratic and pluralistic systems

are based on standards of efficiency and capacity (Jandari, 2012). The social pattern imposes different forms of exploitation on both men and women, but the exploitation of women is a common factor in all feminist theories, despite the different theoretical frameworks on which they are based and the results they reach (Abdelazim, 2014; Ichino & Nathan, 2017).

Many countries have issued national strategies and plans to achieve gender equality, but the gap between these strategies and implementation on the ground remains wide, as women's political participation and representation are still limited in decision-making positions in all executive and legislative organizations, as well as those in civil society. This leads to a clear imbalance in the principle of equality between men and women, which is an obstacle in the process of democratic transition (Adly, 2017). The Constitution of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (Article 6) devoted the process of regulating rights and freedoms through Chapter II, which provided for political participation and freedom of assembly, freedom of association, and political parties, as enshrined in the principle of equality, where the constitution stipulated that "Jordanians shall be equal before the law with no discrimination between them in rights and duties, even if they differ in race, language, or religion" (Jordan's Constitution 1952, and its amendments).

The government's policy on reducing the number of women in public services is a matter of concern. In addition to Article 16, Jordanian women were granted the right to participate in politics when the amendment to the Jordanian Women's Union was introduced in 1974, with the goal of empowering Jordanian women and overcoming the challenges they face in contributing toward the development of Jordan and in developing leadership skills (Salameh & Shdouh, 2018). Today, Jordanian women and men enjoy equal rights politically, socially, and economically. Jordan continues to work on the development of women not only in politics but also in socioeconomic areas. The government of Jordan is developing many agendas related to the empowerment of Jordanian women and to enabling them to act as influential parties in the education, health, and economic sectors (Atiyat, 2017).

Empirical Review

Osei-Hwedie and Agomor's (2018) study on gender in political parties during the general elections in Ghana in 2016 pointed to a set of results, the most important of which is that the political parties in Ghana did not play a role in promoting the participation of women and their representation in leadership positions, and the gap between genders did not decrease in the two dominant parties

(the Democratic National Congress and the New National Party); this has weakened the position of the political parties in promoting democracy and gender equality. Furthermore, the findings of this study have debated whether a low literacy rate and a high level of education are required to encourage women in Ghana to participate in political and economic activities.

Further, Allen & Cutts's (2018) analysis of political ambition in Britain showed that its political institutions are not representative of the population as a whole, which indicates that political ambition in the process of political recruitment is not distributed equally among all candidates. The Zapata-Barrero study (2017) on how political parties deal with the diversity gap, and what strategies are used, assumes that political parties cannot be neutral on the existence of diversity, especially in the processes of participation and representation. Pyeatt and Yanus (2017) focused on increasing women's political participation by investigating the role of women-friendly areas, where the researchers mention that women have historically participated in political activities such as speaking in public meetings and contributing to candidates at lower rates than men.

Segerberg (2018) conducted a study in Myanmar where elected women constituted 10.5% of parliamentary members. The study was conducted to identify women's representatives' influence as political members in a newly democratic society with a strong youth wing. Kumar (2017) observed the challenges and obstacles women face in achieving their political, social, and economic life. Globally, the representation of women has not been promising and compelling. Atiyat (2017) added that women in Jordan have placed themselves in parliamentary elections and voting for women leaders. However, the rejection ratio of women in parliament is high. This study revealed that since 1989, women's election records have shown their failure to obtain high numbers of votes and have not played a dominant role in any political party. This study further implicates the lack of suitable awareness programs related to the importance of women's participation in parliament, where young individuals should be encouraged to vote for female candidates. Abdo-Katsipis (2017) outlined the political participation and awareness of Tunisian women in the Arab Spring. The findings indicated the existence of stark differences between men and women in their levels of political awareness, which causes an obstacle to female political participation. The study recommended reducing this gap by establishing educational funds for women and increasing access to political information outside the capital.

Dababneh (2012) provides some important recommendations to increase women's participation in Jordanian elections. Accordingly, the Jordanian government

needs to provide action plans to emphasize the political rights of women. Additionally, educational institutions need to develop a school curriculum that may improve students' understanding of participation, leadership, and citizenship through women's participation. Finally, there is a dire need to increase the role of civil society organizations in supporting Jordanian women's participation in political engagement. Alatiyat and Barari (2010) provide an unclear vision of Islamist parties in relation to the ideological standing of women in political areas. It further emphasized that the concept of women's participation is not widely supported by these Islamist parties, and thus they are unable to meet the needs of women's participation in different areas such as politics. Another study conducted by Mlambo and Kapingura (2019) identified the factors that impact women's participation in politics in the SADC (Southern African Development Community) region. They argue that the full and equal participation of both men and women in political decision-making provides a balance that more accurately shows the composition of society while enhancing the legitimacy of political procedures by making them more democratic and responsive to the perspectives and concerns of all parts of society. An empirical study by Fanny and Oluwasanumi (2014) examined the relationship between the political participation of women and educational levels in the southwest region of Cameroon. The results of the study showed that women in this region are fairly well exposed to formal education. The study also showed that the higher the level of women's formal education, the greater their tendency is to participate in politics by voting in elections and occupying political posts, either through appointments or elections at all levels of government.

Although women's participation has been the focus of interest in various studies, there is still a wide gap in studies outlining the existing conditions regarding the youth's perspective on women's participation in politics. Therefore, this study is significant in analyzing trends in the political recruitment process of women in Jordan. In addition, it further addresses the obstacles that prevent the recruitment of women to politics and shows how the difference in the trends of the sample study about the recruitment process of women politically depends on certain personal variables such as gender, specialization, and place of residence.

Methods

Study Design and Setting

This study had a cross-sectional design. Ten universities were randomly selected

to collect data through a questionnaire: three universities in the north, four in the center, and three in the south of Jordan.

Study Sample, Sampling Technique and Data Collection

The study population included students from Jordanian public universities. A multi-stage sample was employed, as random sampling was used in the first stage when universities in each region were selected. In the second phase, ten colleges were selected using random sample procedures. The third stage was applied to select students enrolled in elective university courses to ensure a diverse sample of students. As a result of the number of members of the study community being more than (100,000) individuals, the researchers established a confidence interval of 95%, with an error of ± 3, resulting in an appropriate sample size of 1,307 individuals. In the fourth stage, questionnaires were distributed to students enrolled in these courses. A total of 119 unanalyzed questionnaires were excluded owing to incomplete answers, reducing the number of questionnaires suitable for analysis to 1,188 (Israel, 1992).

The selection of participants was based on inclusion and exclusion criteria and included students enrolled in the above-mentioned educational institutions, along with those belonging to humanities and scientific colleges. In addition, students who were currently in their final year of academic education were recruited. Participants other than those with the characteristics discussed below were excluded.

Study Instrument

Data in this study were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of three parts. The first part consisted of information regarding demographic variables such as gender, specialization, and student accommodation. The second part (19 items) measured the extent to which university students accept the political recruitment of women, and the third part (33 items) measured obstacles to the political recruitment of women. The respondents' answers were collected using a five-point Likert scale where 1 = *strongly agree*, 2 = *agree*, 3 = *strongly disagree*, 4 = *disagree*, 5 = *neutral*.

Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

To verify the validity of the questionnaire, it was distributed to a group of faculty members, who were asked to express their opinions on the importance of

each item, the integrity of the language formulation, and the appropriate items for the sample of the study. Their suggestions and observations were considered in deleting, modifying, or making suitable changes to the questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated based on the equation of Cronbach's alpha; the first part of the resolution was 0.84, while the second part was 0.92, which is deemed acceptable in social science studies, as all the values were above 0.7.

Data Analysis

Data in this study were analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (version 23.0), using descriptive statistical analysis, Pearson's correlation with respect to gender and students' academic specialization, and the t-test to identify the difference in the level of political recruitment of women and the obstacles preventing this. The findings are presented as means and standard deviations. A p-value of = 0.005 is considered significant.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained before commencing the data collection process. Participants were informed they had the right to withdraw their participation at any time during the data collection.

Results

Table 1 provides information on the level of acceptance among university students with regard to the assignment of political roles to women. The findings show that the level of acceptance of Jordanian university students for the political recruitment of women is low (2.47 ± 0.40). It further shows the difference in the level of acceptance of Jordanian university students in the process of assigning political roles to women through election and employment, where the level of acceptance among students was low (2.28 ± 0.430) and medium (2.67 ± 0.44), respectively.

According to Tables 2a, 2b, and 2c, the most important obstacles that lead to non-assignment of political roles to women are cultural and social obstacles, followed by personal, political, and legal obstacles. Acceptance was high with M = 3.772 (cultural and social obstacles), medium with M = 3.461 (personal obstacles), and low with M = 2.2499 (political and legal obstacles).

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of University Students' Acceptance of Assigning Political Roles to Women

Political recruitment	Means	S.D.	Degree of acceptance
I accept that a woman is a judge.	2.0135	1.20158	Low
I accept that a woman is an international judge.	2.0522	1.42748	Low
I accept that a woman is a prime minister.	2.6002	1.34242	Medium
I accept that a woman can be an ambassador for my country abroad.	2.6481	1.18290	Medium
I accept that a woman is a governor in my country.	2.6961	1.35995	Medium
I accept that a woman is a minister.	2.6978	1.20883	Medium
I accept that the woman is the director of a service department.	2.8443	1.33269	Medium
I accept that a woman is the president of a university.	2.8695	1.39223	Medium
I accept that a woman is a member of the Senate.	3.0295	1.36386	Medium
I feel good when the head of the department or the dean of the college is female.	3.2811	1.37681	Medium
Assigning roles through employment.	2.6732	.44669	Medium
I contribute and invite others to support women for their election and access to parliament.	1.6162	1.02248	Low
If the political party nominated a woman in the elections, I do not mind electing her as an MP.	1.7668	.91805	Low
I elect my fellow student in a student union if she is highly qualified.	2.2138	1.15069	Low
I do not mind joining a political party if the secretary is a woman.	2.3081	1.12685	Low
I support women to be elected president of professional unions.	2.3199	1.16696	Low
I accept that women represent me in the House of Representatives.	2.4091	1.03485	Low
I do not mind joining any civil society organizations if the boss is a woman.	2.4815	1.23437	Low
Successful parties are the ones that get women to senior political positions.	2.5337	1.18031	Medium
Civil society institutions are gaining strength through their ability to connect women to political positions.	2.9108	1.27001	Medium
Assigning roles through election.	2.2844	.43055	Low
Political recruitment.	2.4788	.40144	Low

Table 2a

Means of Items that Measure Personal Obstacles

Personal obstacles	Means	S. D.	Degree
Women's poor ability to make rational decisions	3.0421	1.01625	Medium
Women's lack of objectivity in rational decision-making	3.1145	1.06899	Medium
Emotions govern women, which prevents them from holding senior leadership positions	3.1364	1.10292	Medium
Women's poor resilience to challenges	3.1852	1.06853	Medium
Women's low resistance to stress	3.2012	1.09256	Medium
Women's poor awareness of their roles and importance in society	3.5168	1.36655	High
Women's inability to hold senior leadership and political positions	3.5918	1.26883	High
Women's poor performance in their positions leads to a decline in their access to leadership and political positions	3.7584	1.39311	High
Poor motivation and desire of women to assume a higher position	3.7626	1.37772	High
Women's trained competencies are not available for senior leadership and political positions	3.8771	1.43552	High
A woman's physical ability (due to pregnancy and childbirth, for example) make women unqualified for senior leadership and political positions	3.8948	1.39859	High
Total	3.4619	.49243	Medium

Table 2b

Means of Items Measuring Cultural and Social Obstacles

Cultural and social obstacles	Means	S.D.	Degree of acceptance
A man is the ultimate authority at home, so he does not accept that a woman is responsible for him at work.	3.3392	.93075	Medium
The society looks at women as inferior, so it is not permissible to move freely from one place to another.	3.3872	1.01708	Medium
Parents and husbands oppose women's leadership and political positions.	3.5438	.96559	High
Women do not support each other for male control.	3.8022	1.03377	High
Officials consider that success in senior leadership positions requires physiological conditions that are not available to women.	3.8114	1.27240	High
The Jordanian family is more interested in males developing their leadership skills than females.	3.8662	1.08047	High
There is a bias against women in the practical practices applied by men when nominating individuals for senior positions.	3.8906	1.21344	High
The home is the kingdom of women and it is not permissible to leave it except for the utmost necessity.	3.9285	1.12598	High
Our customs and traditions require women's attention to the home and its requirements.	3.9562	1.11576	High
The behavior of social associations has made popular responses in most cases, a collective rather than an individual matter, including the selection of male candidates.	3.9621	1.14172	High
The clan does not stand in solidarity with women to reach leadership and political positions.	4.0084	1.08366	High
Total	3.7723	.47422	High

Table 2c

Means of Items Measuring Political and Legal Obstacles

Political and legal obstacles	Means	S.D.	Degree of acceptance
Jordan's constitution limits women's equality with men, leading to women's low access to leadership and political positions.	1.9091	1.14279	Low
Jordan's current election law limits women's access to leadership and political positions.	2.0522	1.28328	Low
There are laws limiting women's access to leadership and political positions.	2.0699	1.28014	Low
The electoral law on decentralization limits women's access to leadership positions.	2.1355	1.21323	Low
The weak role of the media in highlighting women's issues and their success stories.	2.1633	1.22812	Low
Weak demands for women's rights including leadership and political positions.	2.2315	1.19651	Low
Women's ignorance of their rights and duties, which leads to their exploitation.	2.2500	1.23101	Low
Women's ignorance of laws and legislation, especially those concerning women.	2.2837	1.22849	Low
Poor political participation of women leads to a decline in access to leadership and political positions.	2.4798	.94878	Low
Lack of interest of political parties and civil society institutions on women's right to be recruited for senior leadership and political positions.	2.5042	1.03151	Medium
Weak support for women by political parties has led to a decline in their access to leadership and political positions.	2.6700	1.11762	Medium
Political and legal obstacles.	2.2499	.35233	Low

Table 3

Pearson's Correlation Between the Obstacles of Women's Political Recruitment and the Level of Acceptance of University Students.

Obstacles	Correlation	The extent to which young people are receptive to political recruitment of women	The extent to which young people are receptive to political recruitment of women by election	The extent to which young people are receptive to political recruitment of women by appointment
Political and legal obstacles	Pearson correlation	-.138(**)	-.158(**)	-.096(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.001
Cultural and social obstacles	Pearson correlation	-.221(**)	-.227(**)	-.178(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
Personal obstacles	Pearson correlation	-.345(**)	-.286(**)	-.344(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000

Note. N = 1,188. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4a

T-test for the Difference in the Level of Political Recruitment of Women and the Obstacles Preventing This, According to Sex

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	T	DF	Sig.
The obstacles to political recruitment of women	Male	574	3.2033	4.723	1186	0.000
	Female	614	3.1222			
The extent to which young people are receptive to political recruitment of women	Male	574	2.3920	7.366	1186	0.000
	Female	614	2.5600			

Table 4b

T-test for the Difference in the Level of Political Recruitment of Women and the Obstacles Preventing This, According to Academic Specialization.

Variables	Specialization	N	Mean	T	DF	Sig.
The obstacles to political recruitment of women	Humanities colleges	651	3.1607	0.089	1186	0.929
	Scientific colleges	537	3.1622			
The extent to which young people are receptive to political recruitment of women	Humanities colleges	651	2.4795	0.061	1186	0.951
	Scientific colleges	537	2.4780			

Table 3 provides findings regarding the correlation between the obstacles faced by women in political recruitment, followed by the level of acceptance among them. The findings indicated a significant relationship between political and legal obstacles, cultural and social obstacles, and personal obstacles with the extent to which students are receptive to the political recruitment of women in general, and political recruitment through elections and appointments ($p < 0.01$).

Table (4a) shows the difference in the level of political recruitment of women and the obstacles preventing this, while identifying differences in terms of gender. The findings indicated a significant difference between the obstacles faced during the political recruitment of women and the extent to which people were receptive toward the political recruitment of women ($p < 0.005$). Table 4b indicates the difference in the level of political recruitment of women and the obstacles preventing this based on academic specialization. However, a non-significant difference was found between the obstacles to the political recruitment of women and the extent to which young people are receptive to the political recruitment of women among college students in the humanities and science ($p < 0.005$).

Discussion

This study aimed to determine the issue of political recruitment and the assignment of political roles to women, as well as the attitudes of Jordanian university students by gender and their academic specialization. The study found that the low level of the students' acceptance of the political recruitment of women may be due to the negative role of socialization agents such as schools, universities, media, civil society, and political parties that have promoted negative values, beliefs, and attitudes among young people; in turn, this has affected stereotypes of women, who are therefore accepted only by their traditional image, which is related to their only place, namely, the home.

With regard to young people's acceptance of assigning political roles to women through appointments rather than elections, this may be due to social and cultural reasons as well as the society's lack of confidence in women, and therefore, its bias against women in the political recruitment process in general, and by nominating and electing them in particular. This biased thinking also came as a reaction to the fact that women have reached many positions to be equal with mean at all levels. In fact, women have been assigned many senior positions in all the highest authorities in the country, including the executive and legislative authorities, such that Jordanian women have become ministers, deputies, senators, engineers, and doctors. Some of the positions that may be obtained by elections have remained weak and continue to suffer from the injustices of the society, customs, and traditions, where the primacy of the traditional stereotypes and view of women's inferiority limit their leadership role in society. In the field of assigning political roles to women in the government of Hani Al-Mulki, there were two female representatives among 28 ministers and 17 new members ("Jordan's new prime minister", 2016). During the interview with the new cabinet member, Omar Al-Razaz encouraged women to participate as parliamentary members; about 28 government ministers were ongoing members of parliament, and 17 female representatives were also encouraged (Ma'ayeh, 2018).

According to The Jordan Times (2015) among all Arab countries, Jordan ranked 11th, with a union of female representatives. According to a statement by the Sisterhood is Global Institution (SIGI), the number of women in the Senate was ten out of 65 (The Jordan Times, 2015. As for the assignment of roles to women in the judiciary, in 2016, there were 130 seats in the legislature, of which 20 (15.4%) seats were won by women (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2016). Furthermore, according to SIGI in 2014, from a total of 973, about 176 were female judges, which is an improved ratio from

the year 2012 (Husseini, 2015). In 2018, Ihsan Zuhdi Barakat was appointed as the first female judge and the first woman from Jordan to be promoted to a very senior level in the judiciary. Prime Minister Hani-ul-Mulki passed a statement to ensure equal rights for men and women in position vacancies ("Barakat becomes first female cassation", 2018).

In the field of assigning roles by election, although the Jordanian legislator recognized women as candidates and voters in 1974, they failed to reach parliament by election: although 12 women were nominated, none of them won and, in 1993, only one of three women won by way of a seat to Circassians and Chechens. Moreover, cultural and social obstacles have had a negative impact on the political recruitment of women. These obstacles arise due to a lack of clan support for women in the elections, stereotypes of women and their association with the work of the home, interest in male without females by agents of socialization, political elites' views of women as inferior human beings, and a lack of support among women.

Mehtap, Jayyousi, Gammoh, and Al Haj (2016) believed that the emergence of widespread social and cultural obstacles was due to socialization that focuses on the role of women toward their families and does not recognize the multiplicity of their roles in relation to family and community. Nor does it take account of the weak role of political parties, clans, associations, and organizations in the process of the political recruitment of women and the assignment of political roles only to men. Some studies have confirmed these results, which show that a patriarchal system prevails in Arab societies, and the rule of the tribal system in political life has negatively affected the overall perception of women and their ability to carry out political activities, as the tribal society is still a male society, unprepared to accept female candidates (Salameh & El-Edwan, 2016).

This study revealed that personal obstacles have a negative impact on the political recruitment of women and the assignment of political roles to them to a medium degree. The researchers divided these obstacles according to a medium degree of influence, such as the weakness of women's resistance to psychological pressures, women's ability to face and challenge obstacles, control emotions, and ability to make rational decisions. The obstacles that prevent a high degree of influence include pregnant women not qualifying for any political position, the absence of trained and qualified female cadres, lack of motivation to reach leadership positions, poor performance of women in their positions, and poor perception of women in political positions.

Mehtap et al. (2016) further added that to avoid these obstacles, women must be aware of and encouraged to excel in their work and performance alongside men.

Furthermore, that study monitored some of the obstacles affecting women, such as their reluctance to stand for election due to poor financial capacity and the lack of awareness programs for their rights, both those provided by civil community institutions and those provided by official institutions.

Political and legal obstacles had a slightly negative impact due to the lack of recruitment of women by political parties and the low participation of women in political life. Despite the existence of laws or interpretations in the Jordanian constitution that limit women's access to political positions, women's ignorance of legislation concerning women and their lack of demand for their rights these obstacles were relatively small. The Jordanian constitution has enshrined the principle of equality before the law, and every Jordanian male or female has the right to hold senior positions (Atiyat, 2017).

According to Saja Majali, a permanent representative of Jordan, Jordan reserved some articles in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), according to which Jordan is devoted to reducing gender discrimination to achieve the goal of sustaining development and empowering women. In the last parliamentary elections held in 2017, 20 women were elected as parliamentary members, with the goal of creating a peaceful environment for women to enjoy full power (United Nations Human Rights, n.d.). In a study by Mohammed (2013), women in Somalia faced many problems related to economic and financial obstacles as parliamentary members in contrast to men. As women play an active role in the development of Somalia, they need to fulfill all the obligations of female political participants. The government is continuously working on empowering women through awareness programs and creating an environment that recognizes social and political needs.

Jurists are divided into two groups based on the quota system. The first opposes this system because it violates the principle of equality adopted by the constitution, while the second accepts this system to reduce the gender gap in the process of nomination and voting. Researchers believe that the quota system is ideal in societies that do not accept the role of women, as there are fixed quotas for women in the process of political recruitment, regardless of the acceptance of youth or others (Mehtap et al., 2016).

Conclusion

This study investigated the issue of political recruitment, the assignment of political roles to women, and the attitudes of Jordanian university students toward this issue according to gender and academic specialization. The analysis found that

the obstacles that prevent the assignment of political roles to women are cultural and social, followed by personal, and finally political and legal obstacles. The findings further showed an inverse relationship between the obstacles of politically recruiting women and young people's level of acceptance, meaning that the less acceptance there is by young people for the political recruitment of women, the more cultural, social, personal, political, and legal obstacles women face.

Study Implications

It is necessary to urge successive governments to implement election laws that create new opportunities for women to compete in parliamentary elections. In addition to raising the status of women and promoting them, it is necessary to harness the official and informal media, civil society, and educational institutions' awareness of the role of women, and to resist cultural and community conventions. This initiative will help change the stereotypical mindset of the public regarding women's role as parliamentary leaders. This could be done by introducing women to international and community forums and encouraging them to communicate with students in schools and universities to show their abilities and competencies in various aspects of life. In addition, by conducting various development programs for women supported by international civil society and governmental institutions, their social and economic status and family conditions could be improved. This improvement will eventually lead to political empowerment and build strong leadership abilities.

Study Limitation

The current study considered only public university students regarding women's participation in politics. Moreover, the study only adopted a quantitative approach.

Recommendation for Future Research

Future researchers could usefully conduct comparative analyses between Jordan and other Arab countries such as Qatar, Oman, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Palestine. Future studies could also adopt a mixed-method approach, as this could add considerable depth to the quality and understanding of the research findings.

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