

## **The Reality of Political Culture in Jordan after Twenty Years of Political Openness**

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to explore the reality of the political culture in Jordan after twenty years of political openness by identifying the most important features of contemporary Jordanian political culture. In addition, the study aims to examine the main factors that shape this political culture. To build the argument on a solid ground, the study raises some significant questions about the reality of the Jordanian political culture such as: has political culture changed significantly since 1989 (after the political openness)?, what are the main factors that contributed in shaping the political culture in Jordan?, and what is the main type of political culture that clearly prevails in the society?. The study is carried out by using the descriptive analytical approach, as a method for examining the findings of the survey through distribution of 400 questionnaires to five groups of political elite in Jordan. The study concludes that there cannot be a real democratic system in Jordan without the establishment and consolidation of democratic values in the political culture of Jordanian citizens. Another conclusion of the study is that traditional political culture is still prevailing in Jordanian society, which is social, tribal, and family ties prominence despite the passage of twenty years on the political liberalization.

**Keyword:** *Political culture, Democratization, Cultural obstacles, Political openness, Democratic values*

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### **1. Introduction**

Democracy is a political system based on political culture of pluralism and respect for human rights in addition to the devolution of power. Without doubt, these features are very inconsistent with the rule of the individual, which is reflected in the absence of a state of law and institutions, a lack of respect for the opinion, and lack of democratic human rights such as freedom of association, parties and freedom of movement. Therefore, democracy is not a set of regulations and laws, but it is rearing needs practice and behaviour that must be with the person since childhood in the home, school, street, party and other civil institutions. The political culture is considered an indicator of the progress of political and democratic life and a reflection of political maturity, and participation in the political process. The first step in building democratic governance in Jordan requires changes in the nature of the prevailing political culture in society, in addition to removal of the values and behavioural patterns that interfering with building democracy. In order to be able to achieve these changes requires determining what the prevailing cultural stereotypes, and what is the reason for its existence. Therefore, the following sections shed light on the prevailing culture in Jordanian society and its values and behaviour patterns that affect political life.

**Culture of Doubt towards the Jordanian Governments:** There is a culture of doubt and lack of confidence prevailing in society that the government has no serious intention to combat corruption or to achieve democracy, since the government has not adopted any substantive laws nor created institutions to tackle these issues. The study results revealed that financial and administrative corruption ranked as the most important reason that the study sample considered an obstacle to political reform in Jordan. 35.4% of respondents stated that this reason constituted a major obstacle to political reform and participation. In this study, respondents were asked to identify the most important of the various internal issues, which constituted the biggest obstacle to creating a stable environment for democratization and political participation. Therefore, the question provided respondents with five main reasons, in addition to an open-ended choice to mention other reasons:

- Administrative and financial corruption in Jordan.
- The economic status of Jordanian citizens.
- Lack of government seriousness to achieve democracy
- Tribalism.

- The current electoral system.
- Other reasons (please specify).

Table 1 shows that the largest obstacle, according to 36% of respondents, was the spread of administrative and financial corruption.

**Table 1: Respondents' views about the most important obstacle to political reform**

<b>Main obstacles</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
administrative and financial corruption	64	36
Lack of government seriousness to achieve democracy	54	30.3
Economic status of Jordanian citizens	26	14.6
Tribalism	13	7.3
Current electoral system (SNTV)	11	6
Other reasons	11	6
Total	178	100

The second most important internal obstacle, according to the 30.3% of respondents, was a lack of government seriousness to achieve democracy and to open the way for professional associations, political parties, and the media to participate freely in the political sphere. Jordanian society is a society based on family and tribal ties, which control the various spheres of life and are considered as a major force in both Jordanian politics and society. Sometimes tribalism and social ties are held to be a major obstacle to democratization and the rule of law. Nepotism, favouritism, and intermediation (*wasta*) are the most common forms of administrative corruption in Jordan where the members of large families and tribes with influence can hold office and gain more benefits than others gain. There is a close relationship between administrative and financial corruption and favouritism, nepotism and (intermediation) *wasta*. This has created a climate of distrust because of the adoption of personal and family ties rather than standards of competence, experience, and the proper evaluation of ability and suitability in recruitment for public office. All of this has led citizens to doubt the effectiveness of the law, and eroded trust and confidence in the Jordanian governments, which disregards such important issues, and consequently this has led Jordanians to have less trust in the ability of political parties and parliament to resolve national problems. Disappointment and frustration prevail among ordinary Jordanians and cast a shadow on the process of political participation, particularly participation in parliamentary elections. Elections have become a matter of voting based on criteria of familial and social ties rather than concerning the substantive issues relating to democracy and political reform.

**Culture of fear Politically:** The culture of fear is one of the biggest obstacles to political reform and change in the Arab world. Moreover, this culture is one of the dilemmas facing political opposition forces and makes them unable of paying people to support them to claim their rights and interests in the face of political power. Consequently, this culture leads to fear of power, lack of political participation, lack a strong liberal political culture and value for individuals, and lack of a strong opposition, which contradicts all principles of democracy. Understanding the status of political participation in Jordan requires an understanding of the political culture that prevails in the society where political participation takes place. This involves, in particular, the elements of basic human rights and freedoms whether if these are guaranteed and protected by the constitution, and legislations concerning political parties, and media and expression. The questionnaire asked the respondents a series of questions about equality and the levels of political freedoms guaranteed by the constitution, the Political Parties' Law, and the Press and Publications Law. Furthermore, these freedoms are closely related to political participation, and the expansion of these freedoms is considered synonymous with democracy. Respondents were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed that the following freedoms are guaranteed in Jordan: freedom of opinion; freedom to participate in political demonstrations; freedom to join political parties; equality of citizens' rights regardless of their religion, ethnic origin, and tribal affiliation; freedom to criticize and disagree with the government in public without being subject to security consequences; and freedom to participate in peaceful oppositional political activities without being subject to security consequences. The results revealed that the freedom to join political parties was considered the most guaranteed freedom by 57.4% of the respondents, compared to 30.8% who disagreed that this freedom was guaranteed, and 11.8% were neutral, as shown in table 2. It is

worth mentioning that 51.6% of political party members agreed or strongly agreed that freedom of membership in political parties is guaranteed. The second guaranteed freedom is freedom of speech with 37.6%, compared to 54% of the respondents who believed that the freedom of speech was not guaranteed in Jordan.

**Table 2: Indicators of political freedoms in Jordan**

Political Freedom	SD		D		N		A		SA		Total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Freedom of opinion	45	19	83	35	20	8.4	82	34.6	7	3	237
Participate in political demonstrations	54	22.9	80	33.9	24	10.2	75	31.8	3	1.3	236
Joining political parties	30	12.7	43	18.1	28	11.8	109	46.0	27	11.4	237
Equality of citizens rights	65	27.5	65	27.5	24	10.2	62	26.3	20	8.5	236
Criticizing the government	65	27.4	88	37.1	24	10.1	53	22.4	7	3	237
Participation in peaceful political activities	45	19.1	84	35.6	25	10.6	71	30.1	11	4.7	236

SD= strongly disagree D= Disagree N=Neutral SA= strongly agree A= Agree

The percentage of journalists who believed that freedom of speech was not guaranteed is 46.3%, compared to 43.7% who agreed or strongly agreed that the freedom of speech was guaranteed in Jordan, whereas 10% were neutral. With regard to freedom to criticize and disagree with the government in public without being subject to security consequences, 64.5% of the respondents believed that this freedom was not guaranteed, where 25.4% thought it was. Approximately 55% of the respondents believed that the freedom to participate in political demonstrations and peaceful political activities was not guaranteed, whereas about 33% agreed that these freedoms were guaranteed. Regarding the equality of Jordanian citizens, a total of 55% of respondents reported that they disagreed or strongly disagreed that there was equality of rights for all Jordanian citizens regardless of religion, ethnic origin, and family or tribal affiliations.

Accordingly, the ranking of political freedoms in Jordan being considered guaranteed according to the data as follows:

- Freedom to join political parties (57.4% of respondents)
- Freedom of opinion (37.6%)
- Participation in peaceful political activities (34.8%)
- Equality of citizens' rights regardless of religion, and ethnic origin (34.8%).
- Freedom to participate in political demonstrations (33.1%)
- The freedom to criticize or disagree with the government (25.4%).

Based on the data presented in table 2, only approximately one-third of respondents believed that political freedoms are guaranteed in Jordan, with the exception of the freedom to join political parties.

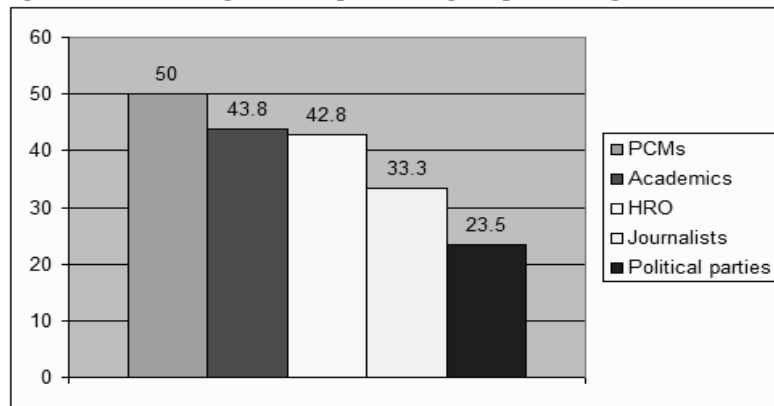
## 2. Freedom of Expression

Freedom of expression and ensuring the protection of the expression of opinions from abuse, are the root of all other freedoms at all times, to all peoples and in all societies. Most constitutions in the world regulate freedom to express opinions and provide some protection of this freedom. The Jordanian constitution states that, "The State shall guarantee freedom of opinion. Every Jordanian shall be free to express his opinion by speech, in writing, or by means of photographic representation and other forms of expression".<sup>1</sup> Moreover, this freedom is guaranteed in article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions

<sup>1</sup> The Jordanian Constitution, Article 15.

without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”<sup>2</sup>, and this is also guaranteed in article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.<sup>3</sup> In Jordan there is a fierce debate concerning whether or not freedom of speech, especially without fear of punishment, really exists and, if it exists, what are the limits of this freedom. 37.6% of questionnaire respondents agreed that freedom of opinion is guaranteed. This result indicates that freedom of speech exists and is guaranteed to a certain extent. The government generally respects the rights of its citizens, at least in some aspects. However, in practice the government places some restrictions on freedom of speech. Generally, individuals in Jordan are able to express their opinions and criticize the government privately without reprisals. However, citizens are tending to criticize the government in public less. The government imposes certain restrictions, which impede political criticism, particularly on opposition political activists, and members of political parties, and other groups (such as journalists, and members of human rights organizations) who criticize the governments’ policies and practices. Furthermore, the restrictions on the level of freedom to criticize and disagree with the government in public without being subject to security consequences are varying from group to another according to their practice of criticizing and opposing the governments’ policies, in addition to the effect of this criticism on the public. Therefore, if those who criticize the government, such as the members of political parties and journalists have wide popular support, they tend to face more limits and restrictions than others do, as figure 1.1 shows do.

**Figure 1: Percentages of respondent groups who agreed that freedom of speech is guaranteed**



\* Professional Council Members (PCMs) \* Human Right Organization (HRO)

The results also revealed that the members of political parties who believed that the government does not guarantee freedom of speech in Jordan had been subjected to security consequences more than other groups, where 42.2% of them declared that they had been subjected to security consequences as a result of criticizing the government in public. In addition, 26% of journalists were subjected to security consequences due to their criticism of the government’s policies, as had some members of human right organizations. In addition, some respondents who had not been subject to security consequences explained that they had never exercised this freedom; in other words, they believed that they could not criticize the government in public without anticipating punishment. The Jordanian governments have shown intolerance of public criticism, as evidenced by the series of amendments to Press and Publications Laws in 1993, 1997, 1998, and 1999. All of these amendments gave the authorities sweeping powers to reduce the degree of press freedom. The temporary 1997 law which were ratified by royal decree without parliamentary debate, give the government broad powers to fine, suspend, or permanently close newspapers found to be in violation of the new law’s provision, and also impose on publications arbitrary and discriminatory financial obligations. According to the current law, it is prohibited to publish any information, news, cartoons, or commentaries about Jordan’s armed forces and security services, offends the King and the royal family, harm national unity, general ethics, religion, security apparatus, and insults the head of Arab and friendly states. This is in addition to the last controversial amendment that allowed the jailing of journalists who break the press law.

<sup>2</sup><http://www.unhchr.ch/udhr/lang/eng.htm>. September 2010

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a\\_ccpr.htm](http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ccpr.htm). September 2010

**Jordanian Citizens and Political Parties:** The findings in table 3 show that the majority of the respondents (63.5%) are not members of political parties. It is worth noting that, with the exception of political party members, only 14.5% of the respondents were members of political parties, while 85.5% of the other respondents did not belong to political parties.

**Table 3: Respondents' answers to the question: "Do you belong to a political party?"**

Choices	Political party members		Academics		PCM		Journalists		HRO		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
YES	60	93.8	7	19.4	5	23.8	1	13.5	2	5.7	84	36.5
NO	4	6.3	2	80.6	1	76.2	6	86.5	33	94.3	146	63.5
Total	64	100	3	100	2	100	7	100	35	100	230	100
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Furthermore, the results revealed that the members of the professional councils (23.8%) were more likely than other groups to belong to political parties. 19.4% of academics belonged to political parties, and 13.5% of journalists were party members, while members of human right associations had the lower membership in political parties (5.7%). Those who said that they were not party members were then asked that if they intend to join any political parties in the future, which of the current political parties would represent their political aspirations so that might join it. If they did not intend to join political party, they were asked to mention the main reason for this. Table 4 below shows that 80.5% of respondents said that they do not intend to join political parties. Only 19.5% answered they would join political parties in the future.

**Table 4: Respondents answer to the question, "Do you intend to join a political party in the future?"**

Choices	Academics		PCM		Journalists		HRO		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
YES	5	17.5	9	52.9	9	13	5	17.1	29	19.5
NO	24	82.8	8	47.1	60	87	29	82.9	124	80.5
Total	29	100	17	100	69	100	35	100	153	100

On the other hand, the respondents who did not intend to join political parties were asked to mention the main reasons behind their decision. The majority of respondents (70%, n=42) declared that they had no confidence in the current political parties and their programmes as they did not offer clear proposals to address the country's main problems. In the prevailing political culture, the executive authorities in Jordan have adopted clear and negative attitudes for several decades towards political parties, and have tended to consider them as responsible for threats to the security and stability of the country's political life. Even after the issuance of the political Parties' Law in 1992, which decreed the legitimacy, and plurality of political parties, these negative attitudes continued. In addition, the government has shown caution, and sometimes hostility toward social movements and non-governmental organizations led by the opposition forces that play a political role, and which seek to mobilize their members and public opinion to take political positions that do not agree with the policies of government. Therefore, the persistent culture of fear is clear evidence that the Jordanian political parties are still experiencing crisis reflected in the reluctance of Jordanian citizens to engage in partisan activities. This is a fundamental reason for the lack of growth of political parties in terms of the number of members.

### 3. Culture of Political Participation

Political participation means the contribution of citizens and their active role in the political system to influence the official decision-making process. At the forefront of political participation patterns are electoral activity, partisan action, and union work, which are all linked to the principles of political pluralism, freedom of opinion, freedom of peaceful assembly, and the right to form associations and political parties. Democracy is the best mechanism for effecting change for the better, through the peaceful rotation of power. This devolution of power is usually conducted through the empowerment of the people to exercise their right to

elect their representatives in full freedom and fairness based on the candidates' programmes. The electoral process provides the opportunity for the owners of these programmes to exercise their role in the executive branch and therefore apply their programme, thus providing a chance for people to judge their success or failure. Accordingly, success in the application of these programmes demonstrates confidence, or, to the contrary, failure is reflected in the ballot box by withdrawing confidence. All of this guarantees the rights of individuals and groups to participate in public affairs, with devolution of power, and the possibility of change. The parliamentary elections in Jordan raised many problematic and challenging issues concerning the electoral system, elections management, the results of the elections, and the degree of citizen participation. Therefore, respondents were asked about their participation in the 2010 parliamentary elections, the main reason behind their vote, voting for women in Jordanian parliamentary elections, the voters' behaviour, and their evaluations of the electoral system. Respondents in this study were asked if they had voted in the last elections (2010 elections) to explore their participation in parliamentary elections. Respondents were given two choices:

1. Yes or two. No.

As shown in table 5 a majority of the respondents (77.4%) had voted in the last parliamentary elections compared with a ratio of 22.6% who did not participate. It can be also noted from the table that the ratios of those who participated in the last elections among professional councils' members (85.7%) and political party members (84.4%) were higher than those in other groups of the sample.

**Table 5: Respondents' participation in the 2010 parliamentary elections**

Choices	Political parties		Academics		PCM		Journalists		HRO		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
YES	54	84.4	25	69.4	18	85.7	59	75.6	26	72.2	182	77.4
NO	10	15.6	11	30.6	3	14.3	19	24.4	10	27.8	53	22.6
Total	64	100	36	100	21	100	78	100	36	100	235	100

In general, the participation rate of respondents was around three-quarters, ranging from a low of 69.4% academics to a high of 85.7% of PCM. On the other hand, the ratios of those who did not participate in the last elections ranged from 14.3% of PCMs to 30% of academics. The questionnaire asked respondents who said they had voted to identify the main reason behind this decision. The respondents were given five choices:

- National duty and constitutional right,
- Tribalism and social ties,
- To enhance democracy in Jordan,
- Others (please specify)

However, it is clear from table 1.6 below that tribalism and social ties represented the main priority for many of the sample. Over half of the respondents (52.2%) declared that this was the most important reason behind their decision to vote in the last elections.

**Table 6: Respondents' reasons for participating in the 2010 parliamentary elections**

Main reason	Frequency	Percentage
Tribalism and social ties	95	52.2%
National duty and constitutional right	33	18.1%
To put the right person in the right position	27	14.8%
To enhance democracy in Jordan	22	12.1%
Other reasons	5	2.7%
Total	182	100%

Only 12.1% of respondents supported the issue of enhancing democracy in Jordan, and putting the right person in the right position was third with 14.8% of responses. National duty and constitutional rights was cited by 18.1%, and 2.7% of the respondents declared that their participation was a partisan decision. The Jordanian citizen tends to refrain from political participation. Therefore, the electoral process for elections to the House of Representatives 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> has witnessed reluctance among voters to participate. Table 7 shows statistical comparisons and the proportions of the participants in the electoral process for the years 1989, 1993, 1997, 2007 and 2010.

**Table 7: Participation of Jordanian citizens in the electoral process from 1989-2010**

	1989 elections	1993 elections	1997 elections	2007 elections	2010 elections
Population estimates by the General Statistics	3,370,867	4,152,000	4,580,234	5,723,677	6,300,000
Number of registered voters	1,104,45	1,402,78	1,838,199	2,105,882	2,500,0000
The number of voters	541,426	822,294	824,664	1,052,941	1,257,987
The ratio of the number of voters to the number of the election cards	51.58%	68.47%	55.72%	50.00%	49.8%

<http://www.electionsjo.com/ESubject/DefaultSub.asp?seid=82>. December 2010

#### 4. Gender Culture (Masculine Culture)

Although Jordan has witnessed democratic transformation over the last decade; this requires the effective participation of women who constitute almost half of Jordanian society. Despite the growing role of women in social and economic life, however, their role in the political sphere is still weak. Like other Arab societies, Jordanian society from its inception and social composition is still a patriarchal society, where women are treated in such a way that hinders their access to the decision-making centres in the community. Therefore, the head of the family, the tribal leader (Sheikh), and sometimes the Secretary-General of the political party have the final say in deciding whether or not to participate, in guiding public opinion, and defining the direction of the electoral votes, in addition to the identification of the candidates and ensuring their access to the council of deputies. Women have a limited presence in political positions due to the tribal nature of Jordanian elections. Consider the paradox in the last municipal elections in Jordan. A woman candidate<sup>4</sup> who ran for a seat in the municipal council in Mafraq was appointed a council member even though she did not obtain a single vote. She did not vote for herself and neither did her husband and five children. Although the number of people registered for voting in her district was 144 men and 207 women, and voter turnout was 95 per cent, she got no vote at all. She justified the result by saying "I did not vote for myself because of my commitment to my tribe and the residents of my town to vote for another candidate, who unfortunately did not win... I would not break my commitment to the tribe. We are a tribal community and the priority is for electing a man".<sup>5</sup>

**Women's Political Participation:** Women have been deprived of political participation for many decades since the founding of the Emirate of Trans-Jordan in 1921. However, the right to political participation in the pre-independence period, which was restricted to males, has not really changed since independence, even during the 1960s and 1970s. Although women had no political and legal right to vote and to be elected for

<sup>4</sup> Fardous Mohammad Al Khaldi, a candidate who ran for a seat in the Sabha and Dafianeh municipal council in Mafraq.

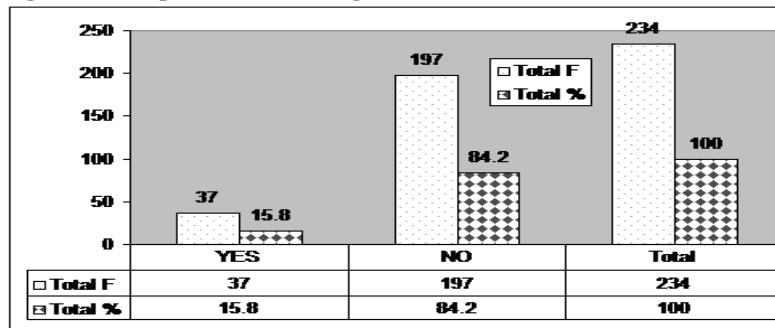
<sup>5</sup> *The Jordan Times*, New Female Council Member Wins Seat with Zero Votes, February 2010.

parliamentary elections until 1974, their struggle to be granted the right to vote and run in municipal and parliamentary elections started in the early 1950s. This struggle was led by the Women's Awakening Association, founded in 1952, which has been resolved as a result of its activities.<sup>6</sup>

The Jordanian constitution never distinguished between women and men in term of rights and duties, and in addition, the 1974 election law granted women the right to vote. However, the theoretical equality in the constitution and election law did not reflect the reality of women's situation in the political sphere. Women remained subject to the effects of social values, traditions, and the prevailing culture. Over the last decade, Jordan has witnessed important economic, social, and political transformations. At the political level, a new climate of political openness and pluralism encouraged women- as they accounted 49% of the Jordanian community according to the department of statistics in 2004- to strengthen their political role and participate in political life.

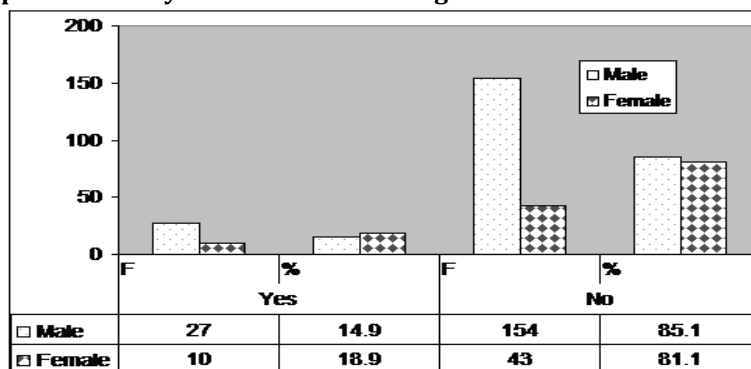
**Women in Jordanian parliaments:** The number of women candidates for Jordanian parliamentary elections has increased steadily since women won the right to run for parliamentary elections in 1980s. However, it will also be noticed that the increase in the number of women candidates has not been accompanied by an increase in the number of women MPs. To explore the problematic relationship between the number of women candidates and women MPs, the respondents were asked two questions to provide an overview about the reality of women participation in parliamentary elections. Based on data presented in figure 1.2 the results revealed that an overwhelming majority of the 234 respondents (84.2%) had not voted for women, compared with only 15.8% who had.

**Figure 2: Respondents' voting for women candidates in the 2010 parliamentary elections**



More importantly, the results revealed also that the ratio of women who voted for women candidates was very low (18.9%) compared with 43 women respondent (81.1%) who did not vote, as figure 1.4 shows.

**Figure 1.3. Respondents' answer to question "Have you voted for women candidates in the last parliamentary elections?" According to Gender**



As a consequence of concern at the low rates of voting for women candidates in Jordanian parliamentary elections, as shown in the figure above, another question were asked aimed at discovering an explanation for

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.electionsjo.com/Esubject/DefaultSub.asp?seid=240>. December 2010



women's low representation in parliament, asking respondents for their main reason for not voting for women candidates. Respondents were given five main choices:

- Lack of women experience in political affairs.
- Social obstacles (culture and traditions)
- Religious dimension (for example urging women to be more conservative and calling for the separation of the sexes in the workplace).
- Women do not have enough experience in public affairs
- Tribal dimension (women could not get support from their tribes)
- Other reasons (please specify)

A majority of respondents (43.8%) concluded that the absence of women candidates with political experience was the main reason for their decision. social obstacles was the second most common reason (17.3%), and 6.1% cited, 5.1%, the tribal dimension and 4.1% the religious dimension. Moreover, 46 respondents (23.5%) cited five other reasons for not voting for women candidates. 22 (11.2%) stated that there were no women candidates in their electoral districts, and 10 (5.1%) indicated that they were committed to their tribal candidates. Some respondents (3.5%, n=7), said that they opposed the quota system and therefore they did not vote for women candidates, and another four respondents (2%) declared that there were no partisan women's candidates in their districts. The current electoral law cited by (1.7%, n=3) of respondents as a reason not to vote for women candidates. It is also important to note that 42% of political party members who did not vote for women believed that women do not have enough political experience to be elected to parliament. In addition, 54% of academics, 50% of PCMs, and 44.6% of journalists gave the same reason for not voting for women. More importantly, table 8 shows that 50% of women respondents who did not vote for women candidates justified their decision in terms of lack of women's experience in political affairs.

**Table 8: Respondents' reasons for not voting for women candidates, by sex**

Statement		Men	Women
lack of women experience in political affairs	F	64	21
	%	41.6%	50.0%
Social obstacles (community's culture and traditions)	F	30	3
	%	19.5%	7.1%
Tribal dimension (women could not get support from her tribe)	F	9	3
	%	5.8%	7.1%
Religious dimension (religion urging women to be more conservative)	F	6	2
	%	3.9%	4.8%
Others	F	37	11
	%	24.0%	26.2%
Total	F	154	42
		100.0%	100.0%

## 5. Conclusion

Despite the launching of political openness in Jordan, which was crowned by the 1989 parliamentary elections, and despite the fact that the democratic process has received and still receives considerable interest from successive governments at the level of writing and slogans, the same level of success has not been achieved in terms of practical application. Addressing the issue of democracy in Jordan requires a search for the real reasons that hinder the fundamental building of a democratic society rather than simply focusing on external manifestations of this problem. There is a series of subjective and objective factors that have led to drawing the development of the political culture of Jordanian society. One of the most prominent of these factors is the political and intellectual despotism that led to the fall of the society since many centuries in the quagmire of civilization underdevelopment. Those factors led to a revival of negative values such as lack of interest, introversion, intolerance, refusal of dialogue, encouragement of the narrow loyalties, hypocrisy, preference for self-interest rather than the public interest, and the promotion of male dominance.

- The most important conclusion to be drawn from the research findings in this study in relation to political culture in Jordan, it seems that there can be no real democratic system in Jordan without the establishment and consolidation of democratic values in the political culture of Jordanian citizens. As Ayubi stated, "Democracy is simply not a form of government; it is also a cultural and intellectual tradition" (Ayubi, 1995). This culture is the key element in the formulation of political relationships between the government and the population, because democracy is not just laws, political institutions and electoral processes, but first of all, it is a set of values and principles, which provide the cultural framework for a democratic system.
- Despite the remarkable progress witnessed by Jordan at the end of the 1980s, the culture of fear in Jordanian society still poses a fundamental challenge to democratic reform. The fear of the security agencies and the consequences of criticizing governments in public and disagreeing with them based on perceptions and impressions generated among citizens. In addition to the culture of fear to make complaints about violations of their rights, or lack of the government's response to cope with complain.
- The present study also concludes that the subject political culture still prevails in Jordan. Democratic values do not represent a major component in the structure of the political culture of the majority of Jordanians, which has led to the prevalence of an apathetic political culture. On the other hand, negative values and abstention from participation are common among the majority, in addition to the sense of their inability to influence national events and developments. Moreover, as Sharbi argued, Arab societies are characterized by patriarchal values (Sharabi, 1988). Patriarchal culture still dominates the culture of Jordanian society. The social relations of kinship and the tribe are still dominant and constitute the main motives for Jordanians to participate in parliamentary elections. Furthermore, there is a culture of doubt and lack of confidence prevailing in society that the government has no serious intention to combat corruption or to achieve democracy, since the government has not adopted any substantive laws nor created institutions to tackle these issues.
- Finally, regarding women's participation in Jordanian parliaments, although the quota system has brought women into Jordan's parliament, the presence of women there really only represents a facade of democracy and is purely cosmetic, as the majority of citizens do not believe in the importance of the political role of women.

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