

The Impact Of Election Laws On The Participation Of The Jordanian Woman In The Elected Local Councils (2017 And 2022) A Comparative Analytical Study

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Abstract

This study aimed at identifying the impact of elections laws on the participation of the Jordanian woman in the elected local councils (municipalities and governorate councils (decentralization)) during the years (2017) and (2022). The study used three approaches, these are: The legal approach, the analytical descriptive approach, and the comparative approach. The study concluded with the following results: first, the Jordanian state has started adopting the elected local councils recently; particularly in 2015, where the government approved the advent of the councils of governorates (decentralization)- before that there were only one type of elections at the local level, which are performed in governorates, known as the municipal councils elections. Second, the election laws related to the elected local councils stated that there is a quota for the Jordanian woman, in addition to the seats that she acquire based on free competition. Third, there was a variation between the contexts of the municipal elections laws for the year 2015 and 2021 in the law of local administration, where they varied concerning the woman's rights to have seats in the municipal elections, especially after canceling the local councils of municipalities in the law of 2021, particularly the law of local administration. Indeed, this has been noticed while analyzing the numbers obtained by the Jordanian women in the municipal elections of 2017 and 2022. As for the women's seats in the councils of governorates (decentralization), the law of (2021) related to local administration helped and encouraged her, a case that was noticed while analyzing the numbers gained by women in the electronics of governorate councils (decentralization). The study recommended the following: first, the necessity of retracting the cancelation of local councils of municipalities. Second, continuing the adoption of the Jordanian quota in the law of local administration, either in municipalities or governorates councils (decentralization), especially after obtaining very few seats based on free competition in those councils. Third, urging the feminist federations and associations to hold more seminars and conferences to instill the idea of the importance of the participation of the Jordanian woman freely with man. Fourth, increasing the role of media in educating the community about the importance of the participation of the Jordanian woman in obtaining seats based on free competition, in addition to the seats obtained by quota, and promoting awareness concerning the importance of women's reaching to an seat in the governorates which is the head of the municipal council.

Keywords: elections laws, the participation of the Jordanian woman, elected local councils, municipalities, decentralization.

INTRODUCTION

Woman gained an important space in studies and writings, either at the international level, regional (Arabic) level or local level (Jordan). However, this interest, whether related to studies, policies, laws or their amendments,

was not equal or approximate to the reality of woman's position in the actual political participation. In the whole world, women have a lower representation percentage as compared to men with regard to political participation- this percentage may differ among countries. At the local level, Jordan

witnessed more interest in woman's affairs, where the Jordanian woman did more efforts in an attempt to obtain her rights in political participation and public life. The woman's participation was humble at the beginning, since laws weren't developed enough yet to her the required rights; therefore, women expressed their requirements through protest and appealing the concerned authorities (Al-Noaimat, 2021: 1).

Even though the Jordanian woman was given the right to participate for the first time in the Parliamentary elections in 1974, and the right to participate in the municipal elections in 1982, the phenomenon of her participation was questionable by researchers, since the Jordanian state in that period was extremely a masculine one. Indeed, women's participation was too humble, especially in the municipal councils until the year 2007, the year when law specified a certain quota to the Jordanian woman and that was the case until the last issued law during the era of local administration ministry in 2021. It is worth noting that the experiment of governorate councils (decentralization) attracted the attention of researchers about the issues related to the participation of the Jordanian woman even though it was a short period since the start of (decentralization) experiment that actually started by issuing a law in 2015 and holding the first decentralization elections in 2017, while the second elections were held in 2022 based on decentralization law in 2021, which implied giving an additional percentage in quota as compared to that in 2015. In this context, which witnessed the advent of decentralization in the Jordanian state and relating it closely and directly with the laws that are specific to the municipal work, researchers (e.g. 2020) started using the term of "elected local councils, municipalities, decentralization" in their studies. Similar terms became more popular amongst Jordanian people based on the province or governorates in which they live.

Considering those councils and the participation of the Jordanian woman as well as the laws that helped her in competing side by side with men in the elections of municipalities and governorate councils (decentralization), the community and the last issued law represented a barrier, especially

after the cancellation of the local councils of municipalities, where seats were also exclusive for the municipal Council.

Furthermore, the laws of municipalities improved the woman's quota which reached (25%) according to the last law. However, women had no chance to win the seat of the head of municipality, and during the last elections of 2022, no woman was nominated to that position, and thus their final result in the position of municipality's head was (0%). As for the elections of decentralization, women participated actively and obtained seats at the level of quota and free competition. Indeed, this urged the researcher to address this phenomenon and compare it based on the previous laws, particularly municipality's law of 2015 and decentralization law of 2015 with the local administration law of 2021 that included an article related to municipalities and governorate councils (decentralization).

In this study, we will address the elected local councils in general, then we will address the participation of the Jordanian woman, in terms of the numbers and percentages that she obtained in elections using the comparative approach based on the official statistics and information mentioned in the relevant studies that the researcher collected during his research about the study problem.

The study problem

The study problem lies in identifying the impact of the election laws relating to the elected local councils (municipalities, and governorate councils (decentralization)) and the participation of the Jordanian woman in these elections. Indeed, this domain, which is related to woman's participation, gained a considerable range in the studies at the international level. Accordingly, the researcher was, particularly, interested in the phenomenon of the Jordanian woman's participation in the elections of local councils (municipalities, decentralization).

Therefore, the study problem was prominent in the researcher's interest in this topic in the light of the new experiment in elections (decentralization), in addition to the amendments in the laws based on which the elections of these councils took place and affected the participation of the Jordanian woman, in terms of nomination and

representation. The researcher sought to compare between those election laws and estimate the participation of the Jordanian women in them based on the number that they obtained and qualified them to obtain seats in those elected local councils (municipalities, governorate councils (decentralization)).

The study importance

The study importance lies in identifying the participation of the Jordanian woman in the elected local councils (municipalities, governorate councils (decentralization)) in order to measure the level of woman's participation and representation based on the laws enshrined by the Jordanian legislator in the laws of 2015 related to municipalities and decentralization as well as the law of local administration issued in 2021 based on which the elections were held in March, 2022.

Since the elections were held based on laws that are somehow different in their content relating to the participation of the Jordanian woman in them, the study importance was complementary to the study problem in terms of identifying the level of the participation of the Jordanian woman in the elections that took place in 2017 based on the municipalities law No. (41) of 2015 and decentralization law No. 49 of 2015, and finally, her participation, based on the law of local administration No. 22 of 2021, in the elections that took place in 2022.

The study objectives

This study aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- 1- Identifying the election laws for the elected local councils and the conditions under which the Jordanian woman participated in them.
- 2- Identifying the participation of the Jordanian woman based on the content of election laws of 2015 and 2021 for the elected local councils (municipalities, governorate councils (decentralization)).
- 3- Identifying the impact of the laws of local councils elections (municipalities, governorate councils (decentralization)) on the participation of the Jordanian woman in a comparative way.

The study questions

This study aimed at answering the following questions:

- 1- What are the election laws for the elected local councils and the conditions under which the Jordanian woman participated in them?
- 2- How did the content of election laws of 2015 and 2021 for the elected local councils (municipalities, governorate councils (decentralization)) cite the participation of the Jordanian woman in them?
- 3- How did the laws of local councils elections (municipalities, governorate councils (decentralization)) affect the participation of the Jordanian woman in a comparative way?

The study barriers

The researcher faced difficulties in citing the study title and finding many studies that addressed the same topic, especially when the current study compares between two new periods about the participation of the Jordanian woman in the elections of the elected local councils (municipality, decentralization). The main resource upon which the researcher relied was the laws of elections issued in the official newspaper, the website of the independent election commission, some studies as shown in the previous studies, in addition to some articles and news in some web sites that addressed woman's participation and the difficulties that faced her nomination and representation in the elections (municipalities, governorates councils (decentralization)). The researcher relied on those resources in order to come up with results that benefit the Jordanian woman in practicing her rights in this constitutional right in the future, and to provide decision-makers in Jordan with recommendations about the study topic.

The previous studies

After the extended research for the studies that addressed the participation of the Jordanian woman in elections (municipalities, governorates councils (decentralization)) in Jordan, especially that there is a paucity in the studies which were conducted after 2017.

(Al-Khawaldeh, 2018) conducted a study entitled "the participation of the

Jordanian woman in decentralization elections in 2017". The study aimed at identifying the participation of the Jordanian woman in the decentralization elections in 2017 and the impact of quota in the law of decentralization on the participation of the Jordanian woman in decentralization elections. The study concluded that the law of decentralization gave the woman the right to elect and nominate herself to the membership of governorate councils and assigned more seats to the Jordanian woman (quota). The results revealed that there is a positive effect between women's quota in the decentralization law and the participation of women in decentralization elections. The study recommended the necessity of increasing the number of additional seats assigned for women in the governorate councils, setting educational and counseling programs about the importance of the participation of the Jordanian woman in the governorate councils, providing financial support to women in the campaigns of election as well as holding training programs and courses for the women members in the governorate councils.

(Khatir and Al-Majali, 2018) conducted a study entitled "the Jordanian municipal and decentralization elections of 2017, a statistical political study". The study aimed at analyzing the municipality and decentralization elections held in 2017 in Jordan by investigating the electoral efficiency of the new election law of municipal councils and governorate councils, in addition to demonstrating the political composition of the country and the changes that took place to it, as well as investigating the strengths and difficulties that faced elections during this electoral cycle.

(Al-Tarawneh, 2020) conducted a study entitled "the participation of the Jordanian woman in the elected local councils: (municipalities, governorates councils (decentralization)). The study aimed at identifying the participation of the Jordanian woman in the elected local councils in Jordan (municipalities, governorates councils (decentralization)), which were held in 2017 as well as the repeated elections in 2018 in the region of Al-Muwaqqar. The study used the

analytical descriptive approach as well as the legal approach. The results revealed that the elections law contributed to the encouragement of the participation of the Jordanian woman in the elected local councils due to the difficulties that women face in each electoral process in the community. The results of 2017-elections revealed that there is a high participation and representation of the Jordanian woman in the municipal and decentralization elections, and the percentage of woman's participation increased in the repetition municipality elections of 2018 that were held in the region of Al-Muwaqqar.

(Abu Homoud, 2021) conducted a study entitled " the political reform in Jordan: a review of the experiment of decentralization of 2017. The study aimed at highlighting the decentralization experiment held in Jordan in August, 2017 according to the law of decentralization No. 49 of 2015, considering it as a part of administrative, legal and political reforms held by the Jordanian political system since 2011- this experiment has the potential of establishing the state of citizenship, sovereignty of law and equal opportunities, expanding the space of participation in decision making, promoting the citizens' confidence with governments and their institutions and creating governorate councils that determine the services and developmental priorities in their regions. The study used the descriptive approach in addressing the experiment of decentralization in 2017, considering it as a type of political reform. The study also used the historical approach in displaying and analyzing the development of decentralization and its requirements since the beginning of the democratic transformation in 1989. The results revealed that applying decentralization in Jordan does not seem to be an easy task at the political level.

The study methodology

The study used the legal approach in order to identify the first issued legislation which, in turn, gave the Jordanian woman the right to participate in local councils. The study traced the laws that were issued successively until the law of local administration in 2021. The study also used

the analytical descriptive approach in order to describe the participation of women based on the elections that took place in 2017, 2018, and 2022 for the elected local councils (municipalities, governorates councils (decentralization)). Then, the study analyzed that participation, and finally the study used the comparative approach to compare between the size of the Jordanian woman participation in the elections that took place based on the laws and their impact on that.

The first topic: a general view about the election laws for the elected local councils and the conditions under which the Jordanian woman participated in them.

When considering the concept of elected local councils, we refer to the councils in which citizens elect the candidates that they hope to represent them well in their election region (Al-Tarawneh, 2020: 47). In this vein, Jordan has two types of elected local councils, these are: municipalities and governorate councils (decentralization), where both councils give the Jordanian woman the right to participate in their elections. In general, all Jordanian citizens, including women have the right to be active participant in the political process based on the Jordanian constitution, which is the highest law in the country, from which other laws are derived, and is the main pillar for decision making in the Jordanian state. Indeed, the Jordanian state passed through several important political stations and has always been interested in extending the base of political participation at all the levels of participation in decision making, either in the councils of legislative authority or the local councils represented by municipalities and governorate councils (decentralization).

The first requirement: an overview about the laws of municipalities elections and the participation of the Jordanian woman

The Jordanian woman obtained the right to participate in the elections of local councils after being given the right to participate in the elections of the Jordanian house of representatives in 1974. The Jordanian woman actually obtained the right to participate in the municipality elections in 1982 before the democratic

transformation that Jordan witnessed in 1989. Indeed, the late king Hussein Ibn Talal established early efforts to promote the participation of women, and democratic practice became more extended during the early 1990s (Al-Tarawneh, 2020: 53). Furthermore, the Jordanian National code of 1991 stated that "Jordanians, either as men or women are equal before law, with no distinction between them in rights and duties regardless race, language or religion". The code implied that they practice their constitutional rights and are committed to the higher state's interest and national labor ethics, in a manner that ensures directing the capabilities of the Jordanian community and launching its financial and spiritual abilities to achieve its objectives relating to unity, progress and future-building (website of the prime ministry of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan).

There are also a number of laws for municipalities that included quota seats for women, these are: law No. 14 of 2007, law No. 13 of 2011, law No. 41 of 2015, and law No. 14 of 2017, where the last law was compared to the law of 2015. The last law for municipalities was issued in 2021 within the law of local administration that also included the law of governorate councils (decentralization), which is law No. 22 of 2021- it was preceded by the local administration law that included explanatory items for decentralization in law No. 49 of 2015.

The reality of the participation of the Jordanian woman prior to the issuance of law No. 14 of 2007, was too low. Also, during (1995 – 2003), women had a low level of participation and representation, and thus they were assigned a certain position in each municipality election (Al-Tarawneh, 2020:53), especially that no quota percentage was determined in the law of municipalities that preceded the law of 2007, where women had already been given the right to participate in elections, especially municipality elections (Al-Tarawneh, 2020 :57). The law No. 14 of 2007, frankly, gave the woman the right to elect and nominate to the presidency and membership of municipality Councils, and gave her additional seats (woman quota), with a percentage of no less than (20%) of

the total seats in the municipal council, where only women compete to obtain those seats, in addition to women's rights to compete freely with men for the rest of seats. In the law No. 13 of 2011, the quota seats percentage increased to (25%) (Al-Khawaldeh, 2018: 247-248).

The municipality laws issued in 2007, 2011, and 2015 encouraged the woman to compete in the elections, where those laws promoted the existence of certain seats for women, and that was evident in the elections of 2007, where women obtained the quota seats, in addition to (23) seats based on free competition. In the elections of 2013, women obtained the quota seats, in addition to (51) seats based on free competition (Al-Khawaldeh, 2018: 236-245). However, it is noteworthy that the seats of quota in the elections of 2007 were (20%), and increased to be (25%) in the elections of 2013. Here, we can see that the Jordanian state paid attention to the phenomenon of woman representation in elections.

The second requirement: a general view about the laws of decentralization elections and the participation of the Jordanian woman

The governorate councils (decentralization) are considered as a new experiment in Jordan. By citing the law of decentralization, the government aimed at applying the principles of administrative decentralization at the level of governorates as well as adopting elections as an approach for the state's work and increase the popular participation in the process of developmental decision making (Khatir and Al-Majali, 2018: 6). The law No. 49 of 2015 and the following law No. 22 of 2021 concerning local administration gave the woman a great importance in terms of her participation and competition side by side with man for the seats of governorate councils (decentralization).

Decentralization is considered as one of the main entrances that confirm the role of local councils in achieving sustainable local development based on real partnership and cooperation with the centralized government, institutions of the civil society and private sector. It is also considered as a major component in political development,

in terms of its ability to modernize the political system and suit it with the social transformation in Jordan. Decentralization aims to promote the participation of citizens in the political system, and providing more opportunities to involve in it, where the benefits of decentralization are closely related to political development and supporting the local economy, especially in the light of the inability of successive governments to achieve development and manage the local affairs in a way that ensures the achievement of justice and equality in distributing resources. Based on the Jordanian state's efforts to promote the process of political reform as well as modernizing the ability of the political system and suiting it in a better way with the process of democratic transformation in Jordan, the Jordanian government held the elections of governorate councils in 2017 to promote the participation of citizens in the political system and provide more opportunities to involve in it (Abu Hammour, 2020 :113-114). Elections were also held for the second time in 2022– in both elections, the Jordanian woman had an active participation in terms of nomination, voting and presentation in those elections.

Comments on the previous requirements:

- 1- The participation of the Jordanian woman developed as a first step in the municipality elections, in terms of giving her the right to participate in those elections by nomination or voting since the issuance of the law of 1982 until now in the issued laws of municipality elections.
- 2- Due to the difficulties that the Jordanian women faced in elections, the municipality law No. 14 of 2007 assigned a certain quota for women- this assigned quota increased until the last issued law of municipality.
- 3- Based on the experiment in elections and the obstacles faced by the Jordanian woman, the Jordanian legislator assigned a certain quota for women since the start of governorate councils laws: law No. 49 of 2015 and law No. 22 of 2021.
- 4- Incorporating the texts relating to municipality elections and

decentralization elections in one law, which is the local administration law No. 22 of 2021.

The second topic: describing the participation of the Jordanian woman in the text of election laws of 2015 and 2021 for the elected local councils (municipalities, governorate councils (decentralization)).

The election laws in the elected local councils in the Jordanian state were compatible with the previous laws; indeed, they were complimentary to them, as they did not cancel a certain existing law (woman quota) related to seats either in municipality laws or governorate councils law (decentralization), in that law No. 41 of 2015 and law No. 49 of 2015 stated that there are quota seats for women. This quota was confirmed in the local administration law No. 22 of 2021. This research will address the way through which election laws stated the participation of the Jordanian woman in the elected local councils.

The first requirement: the Jordanian woman in municipalities law No. 41 of 2015 The municipality law No. 41 of 2015 in article (33), section (a) stated that women are assigned one seat for the membership of the local council out of the stated seats in article (3) of this law, where the seat is occupied by the candidate that obtains the highest votes of voters among other female candidates. In case no woman was nominated to the elections of the local council, the minister assigns the female member based on the female voters registered in voters lists of that local council. Article (b) of the first section stated that assigned women membership in the council with a percentage of no less than (25%) of the total number of seats, where the assigned seats are occupied by the female members who obtained the highest votes; in case the percentage was equal between more than one female candidate, the head of the council chooses one of them based on the draw; however, if the number that is equal to the targeted percentage wasn't enough to fill in the assigned seats, the minister assigns female members to reach the targeted percentage from the female voters registered within the lists of voters within the municipality area. The provisions of this article are applied to Amman municipalities council, except for

including the percentage of (25%) which is represented based on the number of the elected members of Greater Amman Municipality. The second section of the same article stated that if the municipality's area isn't divided into local councils, women will be assigned a percentage of no less than (25%) of the total number of the council's members, where the assigned seats are occupied by the female members who obtained the highest votes; in case the number doesn't equal the percentage, the minister assigns a number of women that is approximate to the targeted percentage based on the female voters registered in voters lists of that municipality (municipalities law, 2015).

The second requirement: the Jordanian woman in governorate councils (decentralization) law No. 49 of 2015

The government passed law No. 49 of 2015, that is related to governorate councils (decentralization). Article (6) of the law demonstrated the nature of the council's structure, and section (a) stated that the council is consisted of a number of members and has a legal personality with a financial and administrative independence. Section (c) of the law implied that (10%) of the seats that are assigned for elected council's members are filled by the female candidates who obtained the highest votes in the governorate of those who didn't win. Section (d) stated that the council of the government is assigned based on a decision by the minister with a percentage of no more than (15%) of the total number of elected council members in the council, provided that one third of this percentage is assigned to women (decentralization law, 2015).

The third requirement: The Jordanian woman in the law of local administration No. 22 of 2021

As for the position of a woman in the law of local administration relating to decentralization elections, article(3), in section (c), item (1) stated that women in the governorate council are assigned a percentage of (25%) from the total number of the elected council members, where the assigned seats are occupied by the female members who obtained the highest votes in their electoral cycle, and the fraction is approximated to the

nearest integer. The same article in item (2) stated that in case the number doesn't equal the targeted percentage as illustrated in item (1) of the same article, the minister assigns a number of women that is approximate to the targeted percentage based on the female voters registered in voters lists of that governorate Council (local administration law, 2021).

As for the status of woman in the local administration law in relation to municipality elections, article (13), section (d), item (1) stated that women in the membership of the municipality council are assigned a percentage of (25%) from the total number of the elected municipal council members, where the assigned seats are occupied by the female members who obtained the highest votes in their electoral cycle, but didn't win based on free elections- for this purpose, the fraction is approximated to the nearest integer. The same article in item (2) stated that in case the number of the female candidates wasn't satisfied or the number didn't match the targeted percentage as illustrated in item (1) of the same article, the minister assigns a number of women that is approximate to the targeted percentage based on the female voters registered in voters lists of that municipality area (local administration law, 2021).

Comments on the previous requirements:

- 1- Before the year 2021, the law of municipalities and the law of governorate councils (decentralization) were issued separately from each other, even though they have common activities between municipal work and governorate councils. (Al-Tarawneh, 2020) suggested that the objective of conducting municipality elections and governorate councils elections was clearly cited by decentralization law No. 49 of 2015, and stated that cooperation between these councils in each governorate contributes to establishing and implementing service and developmental projects based on a regular coordination between these two councils.
- 2- The year 2021 witnessed the issuance of the two laws under the title of local

administration law No. 22 of 2021. Indeed, this confirms the complimentary work nature between the municipal Council and decentralization Council, especially that they are the only elected councils in all the governorate of Jordan. They are based on decentralized work and extending the process of participation in decision making.

- 3- In the law of local administration of 2021, there has been a cancellation for what is known as local councils that used to be stated in the previous laws, where only municipal councils are being used instead. This case affected woman's existence, especially if she takes additional seats; i.e. quota in the local councils in addition to quota in the municipal councils.
- 4- The percentage of women seats relating to quota in local administration law was fixed at a percentage of (25%), as enshrined in the municipality law of 2015, whereas the percentage varied for women in quota seats in the law of local administration concerning decentralization, where it increased to be (25%) instead of (10%) in 2015.

The third topic: The impact of election laws for the local councils (municipalities, governorate councils (decentralization)) on the participation of the Jordanian woman, a comparison

The elections of councils (municipalities, governorate councils (decentralization)) for the years 2017 and 2022 took place in the light of the variation in the laws that were enshrined for those elections. Each law has a different effect from other in terms of the participation and representation of the Jordanian woman in these councils which have a lower level as compared to the Jordanian parliamentary elections (legislative authority)- each law- municipality law of 2015, decentralization law of 2015, and local administration law of 2021- frankly supported the participation and representation of the Jordanian woman in those councils. Indeed, the Jordanian woman obtained seats in those councils based on free competition, in addition to the quota seats; we will discuss this in detail in this topic of the study.

The first requirement: the impact of the election laws of (municipalities, governorate councils (decentralization)) on the participation of the Jordanian woman in 2017 and 2018

First, the participation of the Jordanian woman in municipality elections in 2017 and 2018

The municipality elections that were held in 2017 witnessed an increased participation of the Jordanian woman, since the majority of the community members believe in her ability to service the areas that they represent effectively, in addition to their ability to convey the voice of the community members more effectively in front of decision makers in their areas. These elections are new in terms of specialization, where both decentralization councils and municipality

councils have many tasks in common in all the governorates of the Jordanian state. It is also worth noting that the participation of woman in free competition for the seats of local council is higher than her participation in the municipality council, since the municipality law assigned local councils for some municipalities, while it didn't assigned similar councils to other municipalities; also, women rarely compete with men for the position of the head of municipality. It was reported that the number of women who participated as heads of municipalities were (5) women, those who participated for membership in municipality councils were (112) women, and those who participated for the seat of local councils were (10783) women (Al-Tarawneh, 2020 :54). woman's representation in the municipality elections in illustrated in table (1).

Table (1) The representation of the Jordanian woman in the municipality elections of 2017

Number	Seat title	Numbers of seats
1	Head of Municipality	-
2	A seat in municipality council	121
3	Municipality quota	326
4	Local councils	241
5	Local councils quota	243

Source: the results of Local councils elections of 2017, the Independent Election Commission.

The previous table revealed that there is a varying representation of the Jordanian woman in the municipality elections that took

place in 2017, where the number of seats that women obtained in free competition was low as compared to the seats obtained in local councils – this is expected, since the local councils were too many as compared to the main center related to the head of municipality's seat.

Table (2) The woman's seats in the elections of local councils in 2018

Number	The way of obtaining the seat	Number of seat
1	Acclamation	10
2	Women quota	4
3	Competition	3
4	Acclamation / women quota	1
Total		18

Source: (Al-Tarawneh, 2020 :56).

The previous table showed that women obtained (3) seats based on free competition, where they were obtained by: Hiyam Khalaf Hafid Al-Joraibi' with (183) votes for the local council of the village of Salim; Ghadeer Mofaddi Ali Al-Wadhan, with (456) votes for the local council of "Al-Thihiba Al-Gharbiya"; and Aishah Mohammad Sayil Al-Khreisha with (556) votes for the local council of Al-Muwaqqar (Al-Honaihiyah), whereas the woman obtained the seats of quota for the local councils of in the village of Salim, Al-Thihiba Al-Gharbiya, Al-Faisaliya, and Al-Muwaqqar (Al-Honaihiyah); which means that there was competition over elections between women in these areas concerning the female quota seats of local councils (Al-Tarawneh, 2020 :56).

Second, the participation of the Jordanian woman in the elections of governorate councils (decentralization) in 2017 and 2018

The Jordanian woman had a high percentage of participation and representation in the elections of governorate councils

(decentralization) 2017 and 2018, a case that was advocated by the law of governorate councils No. 49 of 2015, where this law encouraged the participation and representation of the Jordanian woman in this new and qualitative type of elections is the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. As for the repetition elections held in Al-Muwaqqar in 2018, the results were as follows: (6) men were nominated to the membership of the governorate councils for the (28th) electoral district, whereas only one man was nominated for the (29th) electoral district. As for the municipality elections, (6) men were nominated for the head of municipality council, and (59) men were nominated for the membership of the municipality council, whereas (18) were nominated for the membership of the municipality council, with a nomination percentage of (21.7%) of the total candidates in the municipality elections with a total of (83) candidates (Al-Tarawneh, 2020: 55-56) .

Table (3) The representation of the Jordanian woman in the decentralization elections in 2017 and 2018

Number	Elections year	Quota	Assignment	Competition	Acclamation	Acclamation quota
1	2017	32	17	4	-	-
2	2018	4	-	3	10	1

Source: (Al-Tarawneh, 2020 : 55-56).

The previous table revealed that there were two decentralization elections. The first elections were held in 2017, where women obtained (32) quota seats and (17) seats based on assignment; however, obtaining seats based on free competition was too few, with only (4) seats. As for the repetition elections that took place in Al-Muwaqqar in 2018, women obtained (4) quota seats, (10) seats based on acclamation, and one acclamation seat of quota. In the latter elections, we can see that the numbers obtained by women based on competition were humble. The number of female candidates varied among governorates in decentralization elections in 2017 ,where the highest number of candidates was in Al-Karak governorate with (20) female candidates; women also obtained a certain ratio of seats during the assignment process, which was distributed to all the

governorates in the kingdom (Al-Tarawneh, 2020 : 55).

The second requirement: the impact of local administration law on the participation of the Jordanian woman in 2022

The council of the Independent Election Commission decided to determine Tuesday 22, March, 2022 as the day of elections and sorting out votes for the elections of governorate councils, municipality councils and Amman municipality council. This deceleration is based on the provisions of article (35)/ section (a/1) and (a/2) of local administration law No. 22 of 2021 and article (6/c) of Amman municipality law No. 18 of 2021 (ministry of local administration, 2021).

First, the participation of the Jordanian woman in municipality elections In

relation to the municipality elections law, the law of local administration gave the Jordanian woman the right of nominating and electing. At the same time, the law came up with a new thing that was existent in the previous laws, which is the local councils that were canceled in this law, where the law gave the Jordanian women the right to compete on the seat of the municipality head and the seats of municipal councils as well as a quota seat in the municipal council. Table (4) below revealed

that women didn't compete for the seat of municipality head, and thus there percentage was (0%), in terms of nomination or representation as a head of municipality. Women obtained seats in municipality councils with about (248) seats and a percentage of (34.5%) of the total seats of municipal councils members with a total of (718) seats. Women also obtained (200) quota seats in municipal councils, in addition to (6) seats in Amman municipality Council.

Table (4) The representation of the Jordanian woman in municipality elections in 2022

Number	Seat title	Number of seats
1	Head of municipality	-
2	Seat in Municipal Council	248
3	Municipal Council quota	206

Source: (the Independent Election Commission, 2022).

The Jordanian National Committee for women affairs, in her report about the obstacles that faced the Jordanian women in the local elections, reported that there are a number of obstacles that affect the participation of the Jordanian woman in elections at the local level, including the cancelation of the local councils, where the Committee stated that they disagree with cancelling these councils- it was stated that women start their public work from this council and that their work is based on their efforts and initiatives at the local level, from that point, their leadership and political role develops in public domain. Additionally, the lack of candidacy to the position of municipality head is related to a number of causes, including the dependency on the tribal and family bases to select the one who has the most opportunities of winning. Nomination to the presidency of municipality mainly depends on the financial resources, the ability to reach decision makers and providing services and advantages, where the elector often selects the one who contributes to solving economic and social problems (the Jordanian National Committee, 2022). The women's lack of desire for the nomination to the position of the Head of municipal Council in Jordan brings the file of empowering woman politically and having a representation in public work into the

existence of local events (Al-Odwan, 2022), where the number of candidates to the presidency of municipal councils was (519) male candidates, and at the level of representation, there was only one seat obtained based on acclamation, which is the seat of the head of Al-Qatraneh municipality, Nawwaf Lafi Mohammad Al-Oqailat.

Second, the participation of the Jordanian woman in the elections of governorate councils (decentralization)

The election cycle of governorate councils (decentralization) is the second cycle, where the first elections were held in 2017 based on the law of governorate councils (decentralization) No. 49 of 2015. At the level of woman's participation and representation, the local administration law No. 22 of 2021 encouraged the participation of women and ensured her right of representation through the quota seats, where the Jordanian woman obtained the seats of quota in all the Jordanian governorates. Also, the law ensured her a certain assignment ratio as can be illustrated in table (5) below. However, the cause of not reaching that position is related to the continuous obstacles in the way of representing the Jordanian woman in all elections, which is obtaining few seats based on free competition, and in case women obtained seats, the number

would be too humble. Indeed, the issue is more concerned with the community itself, which represents a major obstacle in front of

women that prevents them from obtaining seats based on free competition.

Table (5) The representation of the Jordanian woman in governorate councils (decentralization) in 2022

Number	Seat acquiring	Number of seats
1	Quota	59
2	Assignment	82
3	Competition	7

Source: (the Independent Election Commission, 2022).

The results showed that the total number of candidates to governorate councils (decentralization) was (1016), among them are (151) female candidates with (15%) of the total number of candidates (Independent Elections Commission, 2022). The previous table revealed that the law of decentralization increased the percentage of women's assignment in the governorate councils to the limit of the percentage stated in law, in relation to quota seats, where the assignment number reached (82) seats for the Jordanian women. This, in turn, increased the level of the woman's representation in the elected local councils, particularly the governorate councils (decentralization). Even though the increase was in decentralization, we found that the law of local administration relating to the context of municipalities contributed to the cancellation of municipalities local councils. The results revealed that women have only obtained (7) seats based on free competition, with a percentage of (3%) of the total number of seats assigned to the elections of governorate councils with (230) seats- this percentage is too low in comparison with the seats obtained by men in the elections.

Conclusion:

Based on the study questions, study concluded with a number of results:

- 1- The Jordanian government started adopting the elected local councils recently, in 2015, when the government introduced what is known as governorate councils (decentralization). Before that, Jordan only held the elections of municipal councils at the level of governorates. Decentralization councils are

important new councils that are closely related to municipalities and their elections are held simultaneously, where the last elections were held in 2022. The participation of the Jordanian woman in these councils was too humble, especially before 2015, where only municipalities were existent, and women hardly participated to obtain seats in municipalities at the level of local councils in municipalities or municipal councils or the seats of the heads of municipal councils. In 2007, the Jordanian woman started to have a certain fixed quota. Also, after the decentralization, the Jordanian woman was assigned quota seats, in addition to the seats obtained based on free competition; this was applied to both municipalities and decentralization, where the latter acquired the characteristic of assignment in law.

- 2- When referring to the text of the laws that enshrined the election of local councils in Jordan either as municipalities or decentralization as well as the law that combined these two laws, known as the law of local administration No. 22 of 2021, we can see that the legislator provided the woman with articles that ensure her participation in the elections of those councils according to three levels. The first level is the free competition with men, the second level is related to ensuring her a certain ratio, known as quota, and the third level is the assignment in the governorate councils (decentralization), and the latter was

determined with a certain percentage, either in the law of 2015 with about (10%), and in the law of local administration of 2021 with a percentage of (25%).

- 3- When amending the laws relating to the elections of local councils (municipalities, decentralization), the legislator took into consideration the position of the Jordanian woman's participation and assigning her seats in the elected councils. That can be noticed in the following:

At the level of the impact of municipality laws on the participation of the Jordanian woman in the municipal elections. Before applying the quota in 2007, the results revealed that the Jordanian woman wasn't elected by community members; this can be noticed in the results of elections. However, after 2007, several laws were enshrined and until the year 2015, the women quota was increased to reach (25%), in addition to her free competition with men and assignments in municipal councils. Where we refer to the study, we can see that the participation of the Jordanian woman in the elections of 2017 and the repetition elections in 2018 was more active than the elections of 2022. This could be attributed to two reasons. First, the law issued in 2021 included a cancellation for the local councils of municipalities- women used to have high percentages of representation, which was evident in the numbers obtained in the local councils in 2017 and 2018 that reached to (241) seats. This result was approximate to that obtained by women in 2022, where women obtained (248) seats. Second, the law of 2015 included quota that women obtain at the level of local councils. However, in the elections of 2022, and due to the cancellation of those councils, the Jordanian woman didn't obtain quota seats in the municipal councils that the legislator didn't basically include in the law. As for the level of obtaining a seat of the municipal council's head, women nominated for this position in the elections of 2017, but didn't obtain any seats. However, no woman nominated herself for this seat, since both men and women in the community don't have a tendency towards electing a woman to occupy such a position. In this vein, people in the Jordanian community believe that man is more qualified to be in this position; this is

why both men and women, for social considerations, don't prefer to elect a woman to occupy this position.

At the level of the impact of governorate councils (decentralization) laws on the participation of the Jordanian woman in elections. The law of decentralization in 2015 and the law of local administration of 2021 contributed to increasing the participation of the Jordanian woman in elections by increasing the percentage of quota seats, where the percentage was (10%) in the law of 2015; However, this percentage increased to be (25%) in the law of (2021). The assignment percentage in the law of 2015 was (15%) and reached (25%) in 2021; quota seats in 2017 were (32) seats and (17) assignment seats, quota seats in 2018 were (4) seats, while women obtained (59) quota seats in addition to (82) seats by assignment. As for the seats that the Jordanian woman obtained in governorate councils (decentralization) through free competition, women obtained (4) seats in 2017, (3) seats in 2018, and (7) seats in 2022. These results reveal that the causes are more concerned with the nature of the Jordanian community that doesn't trust the existence of women in these positions, even though women proved great effectiveness in all the sectors of the Jordanian state. Also, this could be attributed to the lack of desire among females to vote to woman, a scenario that is frequently repeated at the level of municipal elections and even at the level of legislative councils.

Recommendations:

In the light of the results, the study recommended the following:

- 1- The necessity of ceasing the idea of cancelling local councils of municipalities, since the idea proved to be inefficient, since the Jordanian woman can't obtain as high number of seats as men, or compensating for that by increasing the percentage of women's quota in relation to the municipality laws in the law of local administration.
- 2- Continuing the adoption of quota for the Jordanian woman in the law of local administration either for municipalities or governorates councils (decentralization), especially after

obtaining few seats based on free competition in those councils.

- 3- Urging the feminist federations and associations to hold more seminars and conferences to instill the idea of the importance of the participation of the Jordanian woman in free competition with man.
- 4- Promoting the role of media in educating the community members about the importance of the participation of the Jordanian woman in obtaining seats based on free competition in addition to the seats obtained by quota and promoting awareness concerning the importance of women's reaching to an important seat in governorates, which is the seat of the municipal council's head.

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