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Political Parties, Tribalism, and Democratic Practice in Jordan

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Abstract
Despite the shift towards democracy and political reform throughout the Middle East, this movement failed to make any political gains for several factors. In Jordan, the weaknesses of the political parties and their tribalized activities are viewed as primary reasons why the democratic reforms in Jordan failed to come to fruition. This study aims to address this issue, specifically the role of political parties in democracy practice in Jordan, the weaknesses of the political parties, the effect of tribalism on the political process, and the factors that hinder the democratization process in Jordan. A total of 380 Jordanian partisans took part in a survey questionnaire that was distributed in Jordan. The participants' responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics and the results revealed that political participation in Jordan is marred by tribal and authoritarian tendencies. Tribalism has a great influence on the parties' activities and elections. These results lend important insights into the factors that hinder democratization process in Jordan in the light of the Arab Spring and current democratic revolutions demanding political reforms in the Middle East.

Keywords: Democracy; Jordan; partisans; tribalism; weaknesses of political parties; political participation; political reform.

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الأحزاب السياسية والعشائرية وممارسة الديمقراطية في الأردن

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ملخّص
على الرغم من التحركات والنداءات الكبيرة من أجل الديمقراطية والإصلاح السياسي في جميع انحاء الشرق الاوسط، إلا أننا نجد أن هذه المساعي فشلت في تحقيق اي مكسب سياسي، وذلك لعوامل عديدة. في الأردن مثلا، يُنظر الى ضعف الاحزاب السياسية وأنشطتها العشائرية على انها الاسباب الرئيسية لفشل الاصلاحات الديمقراطية في الاردن وعليه، تهدف هذه الدراسة الى تسليط الضوء على هذا الموضوع، وخصوصاً دور الاحزاب السياسية في ممارسة الديمقراطية في الاردن، ونقاط ضعف الاحزاب السياسية، وتأثير العشائرية على العملية السياسية، والعوامل التي تعيق عملية التحول الديمقراطي في نظام الاردن. شارك في هذه الدراسة ثلاثة مائة وثمانون حزبي أردني بالاتكاء على استمارة وُزعت في الأردن تم تحليل البيانات باستخدام إحصاءات كمية وكشفت النتائج على ان المشاركة السياسية في الاردن تشوبها ميول عشائرية وسلطوية. العشائرية لها تأثير كبير على نشاط الاحزاب وانتخاباتها. كما تقدم نتائج هذه الدراسة رؤى مهمة حول العوامل التي تعيق عملية التحول الديمقراطي في الاردن، وخصوصاً في ضوء الربيع العربي والثورات التي تطالب بإصلاحات سياسية في الشرق الأوسط.

الكلمات الدالة : الديمقراطية، الأردن، الحزبيون، العشائرية، ضعف الاحزاب السياسية، المشاركة السياسية، الإصلاح السياسي.

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INTRODUCTION

The political parties are known to be a significant conduit of communication between the masses and government elites (Alazzam, 2008; Lust-Okar, 2001). They are important in determining the likelihood different policies are to be legislated and implemented. According to Hofmeister and Grabow (2011), "parties are the most important connecting link between state and society. They carry out a political leadership role that a modern democracy cannot do without". Rowaan and de Zwart (2015) also emphasize that political parties serve some educational purposes: "mass-parties started to teach the masses about politics, educating them to become knowledgeable, active citizens". These arguments share a common and an unequivocal opinion that places emphasis on the important role of political parties in promoting democratic doctrines among the masses.

The political parties in Jordan emerged in the 1950s. They were very effective and a large number of youths were keen to participate in these parties. During that time, these political parties were able to connect to the masses and establish solid, ideological foundations. They also made real political gains in the government (Lloyd, 2019; Lust-Okar, 2001). Nevertheless, these political parties were banned as their success resulted in forming a parliamentary majority in 1956, and therefore setting up the only party-based coalition in the Jordanian history. Their clashes with the royal authority also resulted in their dissolution and prohibition of all the party activity in the country (Ryan, 2011). The government declared a state of warfare and the democratic process in Jordan was brought to standstill (Sexton, 2012).

Since the political participation is construed necessary for the development of democratic process (Torki Bani Salameh, 2017), the political parties in Jordan were brought back to life in 1989 after repeated demands for political liberalization. Although the movement was successful and new diverse groups, including the political parties, NGOs, and the opposition press entered the political process, many academics and policy makers have emphasized that these contemporary political parties were different from those in the 1950s (Lust-Okar, 2001; Wiktorowicz, 1999; Yom, 2014). The political parties after their re-emergence were fragile and they no longer had strong ideological base and mass support. They were also unable to make any noticeable political gains or provide effective political leadership. The Jordanian citizens also have gone through experience characterized by frustration and fear to the extent that the word party was forbidden (Kabatilo, 2014). According to Kabatilo (2014), the majority of the Jordanian students do not want to participate in a political party and they are not willing to join a political party in the future. The fear of being chased by a secret service agency drives a substantial number of students away from joining any political party.

There are some scholarly reports which denote that the political participation in Jordan is tribalized (Alazzam, 2008; Faucher, 2015; Hinnebusch, 2017). Despite the increasing efforts that the Jordanian government is putting into liberalizing the political process in Jordan, the democratic practice in Jordan remains hindered by weaknesses of the political parties whose activities remain marred by tribal and authoritarian tendencies (Antoun, 2000; Lloyd, 2019) . However, Rowland (2009) has opposing views. Jordan's tribal sentiment is not to be blamed for the decline of the political system, since neither the tribal system nor the tribal sentiment in Jordan are accountable for the poor levels of efficiency in the government and unequal parliamentary representation. Instead, it is the electoral system which is at fault.

According to Rowland (2009), the electoral system forces candidates to recruit family members for support and to use financial rewards for voting. Rowland suggested that in order to introduce greater democracy in Jordan, tribalism should be seen as a tool for the democratic transition. It can be used as a vehicle for the social change necessary to implement greater democracy in Jordan. For Rowland, the democratic ideals are present in tribal elections -the tribes run internal elections and the tribal candidates do not hesitate to contest with each other, even with individuals from their own kinship group. Additionally, historically, tribes were the primary actors in the demand for greater political liberalization in Jordan. Therefore, it is not tribalism that hinder the democracy practice in Jordan, but rather the system itself along with historical events that have caused elections to be localized and tribal (see also Al-Momani, 2007).

The political parties nowadays are receiving a great deal of attention in view of their potential effects. Considering that they determine the success and failure of political reforms and the stability of society, the present study aims to examine the Jordanian partisans' view of the democratic practices in Jordan. More specifically, this paper investigates the role of the

political parties in the democratic process in Jordan, the weaknesses of these political parties in Jordan, the effect of tribalism on the political process in Jordan, and finally the factors that hinder the democratization process in Jordan. The methods of data collection and analysis are stated in the methodology below.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

This section presents the methodology of the study. An elaboration of the characteristics of the participants, the test materials, and the approaches that were taken to collect and analyze data are given in these subsequent sections.

Participants

Using a purposive sampling technique, a total of 380 Jordanian political partisans in Jordan took part in the survey of the study. According to Creswell (2009), purposive sampling is used in contexts in which the researcher is interested in particular characteristics of the population. In this study, only those Jordanian citizens who were partisans and are thought to have a significant role in the government and an appreciable influence on the political affairs in the society were recruited. They included intellectuals, professionals, members of political parties, academics, professional council members, journalists, and human right organization members. Table 1 below summarizes the demographic information of the participants.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants

Demographic information		Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	96.3
	Female	3.7
Religion	Islam	98.7
	Christian	1.3
Age	30-35	0.5
	36-40	9.1
	41-45	44.5
	46-50	37.6
	51-60	5.3
	Above 60	0.5
Education	PhD	1.6
	Master	23.2
	Bachelor	46.7
	Diploma	28.5
Position in Party	Secretary	.5
	Manager	23.2
	Board of Directors	23.7
	Ordinary Member	52.5
Position in Government	Minister	1.2
	Deputy Minister	1.1
	Ex-Prime Minister	0.3
	Current Parliament Member	4.0
	Ex-Parliament Member	6.4
	Ordinary Member	87.1

The results in Table 1 above show that the majority of the respondents in the survey were male participants (96.3%), whereas only few were female participants (3.7%). The male participants were more amenable to participate in the study

and therefore they outnumbered their female counterparts. The results also suggest that the respondents were almost entirely Muslim participants (98.7%), whereas only a little number was Christian (1.3%). The Muslim were the majority of the participants as Islam is the dominant religion in Jordan and this division is representative of the population in Jordan.

The data of the study also had five divisions of age: (30 to 35), (36-40), (41-45), (46-50), (51-60) and (60 above). The results suggest that the majority of the participants were in the range between 41 and 45 years old (44.5%). This is followed by those whose ages between 46 and 50 years (37.6%); 36-40 years of age (9.1%); 51-60 (5.3%); 30-35 (5%); and finally, those above 60 years of age (5%). The participants' education level had four divisions in the data: PhD, Master, Bachelor, and Diploma. Participants at the bachelor level were the majority of the respondents (46.7%), then Diploma (28.5%), Master (23.2%), and finally PhD (1.6%).

The participants who were ordinary members in the party were the majority of the participants (52.5%), followed by those who were board of directors (23.7%), managers (23.2%), and secretariats (0.5%). The participants' position in the government ranged between being a minister and an ordinary member in the parliament. The ordinary members were the majority of the participants of the study (87.1%), followed by the ex-parliament members (6.4%), current parliament members (4%), ministers (1.2%), deputy ministers (1.1%) and finally ex-Prime Ministers (0.3%). These demographic details are thought to provide some useful background information about the qualitative characteristics of the participants who accepted to take part in this study.

Instruments

This study used a survey questionnaire on democracy that was principally adopted from Kabatilo (2014), but the present study made some necessary changes to meet the research objectives. The questionnaire comprises four subscales that address four main themes related to democracy practice in Jordan. These include (i) the role of the Jordanian political parties in the democracy practice in Jordan, (ii) the weaknesses of the Jordanian political parties, (iii) the effect of tribalism on the political process in Jordan, and (iv) the factors that hinder the democratization process in Jordan. The study distributed the questionnaire to 30 participants to test the reliability of the instrument. This took the participants about 25 minutes to complete the task. After completing the task, the participants' responses were analysed using IBM SPSS (Version 26). The results of the reliability analysis are given in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Reliability results of the questionnaire

	Reference	Theme	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
T2	**T1**	Role of the Jordanian political parties in the democracy practice in Jordan	5	.798
		Weaknesses of the Jordanian political parties	5	.714
	T3	Effect of tribalism on the political process in Jordan	5	.712
	T4	Factors hindering the democratization process in Jordan	6	.709

According to the results in Table 2, the overall score of the measures of internal reliability analysis (Cronbach's α) was 0.798 for the scale in T1, .714 for the scale in T2, .712 for the scale in T3, and .709 for the scale in T4. These reliability scores were greater than the cut-off point 0.70, and therefore the questionnaire has met the assumptions of reliability (Field, 2018).

It is worth noting that the questionnaire was presented to a panel of experts to ensure that the items can measure the objectives under investigation. The questionnaire was also translated into Arabic language to make certain that the questionnaire was free of difficulties related to item comprehensibility to the target participants. An expert in translation translated the questionnaire from English into Arabic. The translated version was then read by some Jordanian volunteers to make sure that was clear and comprehensible. The feedback received from the participants led to some necessary

amendments related to instructions and item clarity.

After making the amendments on the Arabic version, the questionnaire was back-translated into English by a translation expert to make certain that Arabized version was equivalent to the English version. Subsequent to this, the researcher compared the two English versions to examine for any discrepancies between the two versions and it was ensured that the final translated version was equivalent to the original version of the instrument.

Data Collection Procedure

Conducting research on political issues in a semi democratic developing Arab country is a challenging task. Obtaining official permissions to distribute a national questionnaire is also difficult to acquire. So, considering this impediment, the researcher employed himself to visit places and offices that have participants willing to take questionnaire. As part of the instruction, the survey started with information that explained the purpose of the study and how the questionnaire can be filled out. It was made clear that there were no correct or wrong answers, or trick questions. They were also informed that their responses will be treated anonymously and used for research purposes only. The participants were informed that they would have no compensation money for their participation and that their participation is voluntary, and they can also withdraw any time. This study was approved by the UPM Research Ethics Committee to avoid any harm related to vicious conduct, confidentiality, and voluntariness (ref: UPM/TNCPI/RMC/1.4.18.2/ JKEUPM).

RESULTS

Prior to data analysis, the study explored the data to make certain that they are free from any unwanted outliers. The raw data was computed and the participants whose mean scores were above 3 *SD* were removed from any subsequent analyses. This procedure has resulted in the removal of 5 participants from the data.

The Role of Political Parties in the Democratic Process in Jordan

The political parties have important roles on various political, societal, and governmental levels. They are also considered an inseparable adjunct to democracy. Whenever a representative democracy existed, the political parties were the primary pipeline to that democracy. The present study examined the role of political parties in the democratic process in Jordan. The participants' responses to the corresponding survey were analyzed using IBM SPSS (Version 26). The study has adopted the measurement offered by Hanson et al. (2005) to report the mean score of the subjects' responses for each item on the 5-Point Likert scale, According to these researchers, the mean scores that range between 1.00 and 2.33 are construed low, those between 2.34 and 3.67 are construed moderate, and those scores that range between 3.68 and 5.00 are construed high. The participants' means and standard deviations are presented in Table 3 below. They are presented in a descending manner from the highest to the lowest mean score.

Table 3. The role of political parties in the democratic process in Jordan

Questionnaire Items	Mean Score	SD	Level
– To elect officials who will try to carry out the political party's goal.	2.47	.994	Moderate
– As a political platform for people to mobilize their political ideas towards government systematically.	2.45	1.141	Moderate
– Provide a way for voters to easily identify a candidate's political ideas.	2.27	1.174	Moderate
– Serve as a link between citizen and the government.	2.19	1.096	Moderate
– As an important institution for people to participate in political process legally.	2.12	1.058	Moderate

According to the results given in Table 3, the participants seem to suggest that electing the officials who would try to carry out the goal of the political party is one of the main roles of the political party (*M*= 2.47, *SD*= .994). Subsequent to this, the participants suggest that political parties in Jordan serve as a political platform from which the masses can mobilize their political ideas to the government (*M*= 2.45, *SD*= 1.141). They also, in less representative role, provide a way for voters to identify the candidate's political ideas (*M*= 2.27, *SD*= 1.174) and serve as a link between the citizen and the government (*M*= 2.19, *SD*= 1.096). Perceived as the least representative role of political parties in Jordan, the participants consider the political parties an important institution for the participation in the political and democratic process legally (*M*= 2.12, *SD*= 1.058). These results suggest that the Jordanian participants seem less satisfied with the political parties and their role in the democratic process in Jordan. The participant's responses were neutral and did not show strong approval towards the statements that propose the political parties sufficiently dedicate themselves to their political responsibilities in Jordan.

Weaknesses of Political Parties in Jordan

The study also asked the participants about their view of the weaknesses of the political parties in Jordan. The responses of the participants were analyzed and presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Weaknesses of political parties in Jordan

Questionnaire Items	Mean Score	SD	Level
– Effect of tribalism in the elections.	3.59	1.305	Moderate
– People do not trust political parties.	2.76	1.191	Moderate
– Lack of effective party's programs and activities	2.55	1.139	Moderate
– Low participation of political parties in the social activities.	2.50	1.064	Moderate
– Unclear political aim and ideology	2.42	1.066	Moderate

According to Table 4 above, the results reveal that the tribalism in elections is the weakest part of the political parties in Jordan (*M*= 3.59, *SD*= 1.305). This is followed by the lack of people's trust in the political parties (*M*= 2.76, *SD*= 1.191), the lack of effective party's programs and activities (*M*= 2.55, *SD*= 1.139), the low participation of political parties in the social activities (*M*= 2.50, *SD*= 1.064), and finally the unclear political aim and ideology (*M*= 2.42, *SD*= 1.066). These results indicate that the political parties in Jordan experience some weaknesses mainly represented by tribalism. Tribalizing the political process is construed the weakest side of the political parties in Jordan.

Effect of Tribalism on the Political Process in Jordan

This study further examined the effect of tribalism on the political process in Jordan. The participants' responses were analyzed and the results are provided in Table 5.

Table 5. Effect of tribalism on the political process in Jordan

Questionnaire Items	Mean Score	SD	Level
– Limit the awareness about the duty of the representative in the parliamentary responsibilities.	3.97	.879	High
– Increase the chance of non-partisan in the parliament.	3.94	.967	High
– Hinder the function of political parties.	2.66	1.212	Moderate
– Give a service to his/her tribe's members.	2.59	1.122	Moderate
– Have a good role to increase the proportion of voters.	2.43	1.248	Moderate

According to the results in Table 5, the participants' responses ranged between high and moderate levels. At higher rates, the participants perceived tribalism as a factor that limits the duty and responsibilities of the representative in the parliament

(*M*= 3.97, *SD*= .879). It also increases the chance of having non-partisans in the parliament (*M*= 3.94, *SD*= .967). However, at moderate levels, the Jordanian participants consider tribalism a factor that may hinder the functions of the political parties (*M*= 2.66, *SD*= 1.212), using their position for tribal purposes (*M*= 2.59, *SD*= 1.122), and having a good role in increasing the proportion of voters (*M*= 2.43, *SD*= 1.248). These results suggest that tribalism is the bottleneck of the democracy practice in Jordan. The opportunity of having non-partisans in the governments to the effect of tribalism is always present and this may in turn obstruct the governments' efforts to promote democracy practice in Jordan.

Factors Hindering the Democratization Process in Jordan

The present study has probed into the factors that may hinder the democratization process in Jordan. The participants' views were analyzed and presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Factors hindering the democratization process in Jordan

Questionnaire Items	Mean Score	SD	Level
– The constitution gives the King the whole right to appoint the Prime Minister.	3.97	.879	High
– Tribal influence in elections.	3.94	.967	High
– Meaningless existence for political parties that they do not have the full right to exercise their job.	2.66	1.212	Moderate
– People's fear of political parties.	2.59	1.122	Moderate
– The performance of opposition parties evaluated by the government.	2.43	1.248	Moderate
– Lack of political awareness about the ideal of democratic practice among people.	2.32	1.086	Moderate

According to the results presented in Table 6, the Jordanian participants consider giving the King the whole constitutional right to appoint the Prime Minister is one of the most significant factors that hinder the democratization process in Jordan (*M*= 3.97, *SD*= .879). Subsequent to this comes the tribal influence on the elections (*M*= 3.94, *SD*= .967), the inability of political parties to exercise their full rights (*M*= 2.66, *SD*= 1.212), people's fear of political parties (*M*= 2.59, *SD*= 1.122), and finally the lack of political awareness of the ideal democratic practice among people (*M*= 2.32, *SD*= 1.086). These results suggest that the democracy practice in Jordan is largely influenced by tribal tendencies. Giving the King the full right to appoint the prime minister is also perceived as a factor that hinders the democracy practice in Jordan.

DISCUSSIONS

The Jordanian people are keen to reform and improve the democratic process in Jordan as democracy is crucial for the consolidation of its political and social stability (Yitzhak, 2018). Over the last ten years, the talks about improving democracy have been related to maintaining modern laws on the political parties and Jordan's electoral system in order to address the demands of the Jordanian people. This includes free and equal elections that bring in a real representation of the different classes of society and respect for human rights and the rule of law. However, this movement towards democracy in Jordan and the government's intent to make political reforms fell short of the expectations due several reasons, specifically the political parties and their tribalized activities (Lloyd, 2019).

This study has conducted a survey among Jordanian partisans to probe into the factors that are currently impeding the democratization process in Jordan. This survey focused on the role of political parties in the democratic process in Jordan, specifically the weaknesses of the political parties in Jordan, the effect of tribalism on the political process in Jordan, and finally the factors that hinder the democratization process in Jordan.

According to the results, the Jordanian partisans recorded moderate levels of their stance of the role of political parties in developing the democratic process in Jordan. The large majority of the participants tended to disagree with the view that the political parties in Jordan have the concern to connect the masses to their government leaders. The traditional party

theory posits that the main purpose of the political parties is to enhance the linkage between government actions and the populace (Harmel & Janda, 1994). However, according to Lloyd (2019), the Jordanian government attempts to weaken the parties' ability to perform this, specifically on one main purpose -weakening the parties will result in more tribal reliance, and therefore limiting the strength of the parties. Although the government has the desire to cede some power to political parties, this power is restricted and not absolute.

In discussing the weaknesses of the political parties in Jordan, the participants suggest that the tribalism in elections is one of the most important weaknesses of political parties. The participants largely agree on the proposition that tribalism increases the chance of having non-partisans in the parliament. This finding is in tandem with previous reports suggesting that the political participation in Jordan is marred by tribal and authoritarian tendencies (Lloyd, 2019; Wiktorowicz, 1999). Tribalism in Jordan has a great influence on the parties' activities and especially the elections. The Jordanian people depend heavily on the tribe in elections. This is because all the members of the tribe vote for the person nominated by the tribe. According to Zouhaier (2012), the majority of elected MPs are either individuals with tribal affiliation or businessmen. Given most Jordanians' strong allegiances is to tribe and locality, the inevitable and intended result is to favor traditional and loyalist candidates (Blaydes & Lo, 2012).

According to Ryan (2011), tribalism is one of the key reasons behind the deterioration of the parties. In discussing tribalism and its influence on the elections and parties' activities in Jordan, Shryock (2000) suggested that the Jordanian tribalism plays additional roles to its main roles: it forcefully imposes itself on the political scene, strengthens its presence to marginalize the political parties, and finally it imposes itself clearly on the stage of preparation, presentation and initial screening of candidates. Shryock (1997) argued that even the partisans with history in party activity and background would seek support from their tribes and return to their electoral bases to seek support and run in its name.

Historically speaking, there are two points of time that affected the parties and led to their deterioration. The first one was due to the interruption of party work for more than 30 years, and the other was the One-Vote Law from 1993 to 2014. According to Lucas (2003), during the period when the party work was interrupted, the martial law was imposed and the parties were banned. Some people now are still afraid to join the parties holding the concern that they will get arrested or they will not be able to get a job (Kabatilo, 2014). According to Rowland (2009), the one-vote law in the elections can strengthen the role of tribalism and contribute to the demolition of the party system in Jordan. The one-vote law allows the voter to elect only one candidate, and through this process a person elects the candidate according to kinship. This makes the partisans have very little chance of success, unless the partisan gets support from their tribe. However, if the candidate does not have any tribe, then they will not have an appreciable chance of success in their elections. In this respect, the parties do not have any role in the electoral process; they are only superficial in their role in the elections.

Contemporary academics suggest other two main reasons for the weaknesses of political parties in Jordan. The first one is related to the increased and continued strength of the monarchy which enjoys supreme judicial powers irrespective of the existence of a democratically-elected parliament (Lloyd, 2019; Lust-Okar, 2001). The opponents of this system argue that this parliament is an absurdity -it is established to entertain and ameliorate both Western powers and internal democratic movements:

 "The country's parliamentary system... gives the kingdom the veneer of a semi-democratic state. Upon closer examination though, the Parliament can be seen as a mere pressure release valve for the regime and source of political distraction for the general population. It is designed to fail as a legislative body" (Fox, 2012).

The second explanation why Jordan's political parties are relatively weak is linked to the increased strength of tribal control and authority (Lloyd, 2019). The government promotes ethnic allegiance to eliminate party participation. This is particularly apparent in the legislation of the one-individual vote known as a single non-transferable vote (SNTV). This rule, introduced in 1993, is also meant to curb the popularity of Islamic Parties in 1989:

"With the SNTV electoral method, King Hussein expected many electors to be forced to use their own voters for a family or tribal member, regardless of their opinions, rather than a nominee from a political party." (Fox 2012).

The explanation for this devotion is not necessarily an altruistic sense of relationship with the members of the tribe.

However, having a tribal member in office provides economic advantages for the people of his kinship, both in the form of direct financial assistance and/ or through future jobs given by a family member in office.

The influence of the tribalism on politics is further amplified by "the disproportionate allocation of electoral seats to East Bank, tribal communities, rather than using demographic proportionality as the basis for seat allocation" (Fox 2012). This regulation not only leads to more seats going to tribal candidates, but also to a widespread persecution of Palestinian Jordanians, a disenfranchised demographic that is more inclined to vote for rival political parties, partially due to parties that almost unanimously advocate renewed war against Israel.

The results of the present study also suggest that the political parties in Jordan are not largely trusted. This finding is in line with previous results reported by Lloyd (2019). The lack of faith in the political parties is due to fearful past. Shortly after the Israeli takeover of the West Bank in 1967, the international nations started arming the Jordanian political groups to oppose the Israeli military without the Jordanian government's permission. The Government of Jordan criticized this intervention and detained and discredited the political party affiliates involved. According to a government official in Lloyd's study, the resulting dispute between the parties and the State led the Jordanians to regard the parties as fundamentally oppositional, and thus the participation in political parties was inherently dangerous. This perception persists to this day. Owing to the continuing interest of government in party inefficiency, the distrust in political party involvement is currently taken as a justification for the Jordanians to vote for tribal affiliates in elections.

According to Lloyd (2019), the "fake" party issue in Jordan is prevalent and about 50% of the parties are existent due to the personal advantages it produces, not for the benefit of citizens. Jordan's economic situation is exacerbated by 19 %of unemployment and slow GDP rise, and therefore not capable of compensating for the growing workforce and influx of refugees (World Bank). As a result, the Jordanians are largely reliant on tribal associates in this stagnant economy, depending mostly on economic advantages received from a tribal member in office. One of Jordan's main duties is thus to teach the Jordanian citizens about the role of political parties in a democratic system. However, Lloyd (2019) proposed that royal attempts to promote involvement by political parties will not work unless the government becomes more conscious of the position of the parties.

With regard to the factors that hinder the democratization process in Jordan, the present study found that giving the King the full constitutional right to appoint the Prime Minister is the most significant factor that hinders the democratization process besides other factors that were previously discussed. Democratization entails a transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one which occurs when specific conditions are met (Linz & Stepan, 1996; Opuamie-Ngoa, 2010). These views are in line with the general view that the Prime Minister should be elected by people (Rajeev, 2015); however, the condition in Jordan is different. According to the constitution, the Prime Minister is personally appointed by the King in accordance with article (35). The Prime Minister can be appointed by the King even if the chosen one is not a parliament member or even a partisan. The King chooses a new Prime Minister based on his personal assessment of the competence of the person in administering the affairs of the country and possessing the confidence of Parliament.

From a theoretical perspective, this political protocol is far from the main principle of democracy that people should rule themselves (The New York Times, 2009; Jordanian constitution, 1952). Nevertheless, the King has a different view of the factors that affect the democratization process in Jordan. The King proposed that Jordan has a great movement towards democracy but the only thing that hinders the democratization process is the weakness of the political parties. The King's view is consistent with a statement that summarizes the condition of the political parties in the Arab world and the underlying causes of their failure in making any political gains:

"Parties lack clear ideologies; fail to articulate distinctive and coherent policy proposals; have weak structures that remain dormant outside election campaign periods; have narrow and/or shifting support bases that are defined by personal, regional or ethnic ties; and struggle to conduct cohesive action in Parliament." (Shea 2018).

Muasher (2013) also adds that

"Parties have relied on the personalities of their founders rather than on clear programs, making them unsustainable in the long run and raising skepticism among citizens that the real aim of such parties is the personal glorification of individuals

rather than the people's well-being."

The findings of the present study do not seem to be consistent with the tenets of the democracy theory. The tribalism in Jordan and its great influence on the elections violates the essential components of democracy, specifically the ethnic, racial and minority freedom. Tribalism violates the right to participate in a free and fair political life in competitive elections. According to the theory of democracy, there should be legal equality under one law and the government is committed to this law (Petersen, 2008). Therefore, the tribalism in Jordan opposes the tenets of the theory of democracy and Jordan must strive to resolve this issue to prevent any obstacles for its endeavors towards democratization.

One cannot deny that Jordan has made great efforts towards democracy during the reign of the late king Hussein and king Abdullah II, staring with the national reconciliation and the national charter in the era of king Hussein, and then passing through the Royal Discussion Papers and amendments to the constitution that aimed to support the political parties and electoral law during the era of King Abdullah II (Faleh & Ahmad, 2019). In response to the increasing demands for political reform, King Abdullah II has previously underscored his desire to limit his constitutional authority and he therefore established the National Dialogue Committee in 2011 that involved various parts of Jordan's political spectrum (Torki Bani Salameh, 2017). This committee recommended constitutional amendments and a modern electoral law that leads to the formation of a parliamentary government. If these amendments were really adopted, they can pave the way for the establishment of a state and a society of citizenship and equality. In turn, this can also enhance the legitimacy of the political regime and therefore ensure its sustainability and continuity.

CONCLUSION

This study has investigated the factors that limit the democracy practice in Jordan, specifically the weaknesses of the political parties, the tribalized political activity in Jordan, and appointment of the Prime Minister by the King of Jordan. Using quantitative analyses, the results revealed that tribalism was the main weakness of the political parties in Jordan (M= 3.59, SD= 1.305). Tribalism was viewed as a common activity in Jordan that does not follow the electoral rules and laws enacted by the government. The results also showed that the tribalized political activity in Jordan has led to having individuals with little political background, and hence individuals being less aware of their duties and responsibilities that would thus make them exploit the political positions for personal interests.

This study has also provided insights into the factors that influence the democratization process in Jordan. The results showed that the majority of the participants object giving the King the whole constitutional right to appoint the prime minister. This was viewed as the highest obstacle to the democratization process (M= 3.97, SD= .879), followed by the presence of tribal tendencies in the elections (M= 3.94, SD= .967). These results provide a useful reference to vital reforms that should be carried out in the Jordanian system, particularly the great influence of appointing the prime minister by the King on the democracy practice. These reforms are considered essential for the democratization process in Jordan and hence considerations for remedial solutions.

Future research may need to use interviews and focus-group discussions that may triangulate the data of the present study. The qualitative interviews may provide stronger insights about the current democratic practices under investigation. In the same vein, having interviews with some political elites in the government may provide remedial views on how the current democratic practices should be improved in Jordan amid the current Arab Spring that has been calling for democratic reforms in the region for about a decade now. Future studies should discuss and propose solutions for appointing the Prime Minister in Jordan. This research has shown how the Jordanian political system does not implement all the democratic processes in appointing the Prime Minister by the King, and therefore, it is advised for future studies to focus on the factors that lead to appointing the Prime Minister by the King without referring to the parliament.

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