

The Impact of Popular Demands on the Jordanian State's Response to Political Reforms (1999_2021)

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Abstract

Objectives: The study aims to shed light on the trajectory of political reform in Jordan, understand popular aspirations and perspectives, and clarify the steps and reformist orientations declared by the state to assess the extent of the Jordanian state's response to popular demands regarding the political reform process.

Methods: The study examined political reform using three approaches: David Easton's systems analysis, which assessed inputs (popular demands for reform), outputs (official reform decisions), and feedback to gauge the Jordanian state's commitment; the decision-making approach, which focused on how decision-makers selected the best option from various alternatives after analyzing information; and the institutional approach, which reviewed texts and documents issued by various official bodies.

Results: The study concluded that numerous reform initiatives were introduced, including the formation of the "Royal Committee for Updating the Political System" on June 10, 2021. Constitutional amendments led to the creation of a Constitutional Court and an independent electoral body. However, these reforms did not meet public expectations, as there were still demands for parliamentary governments, the existence of a teachers' union, and the cancellation of special courts like the State Security Court, seen as encroachments on authority.

Conclusions: There has been progress in some aspects of the reform process, while others have not satisfied all segments of the population. Thus, the studied phenomenon had a partial impact when comparing popular reform efforts with actual official results.

Keywords: Jordan, political reform, democracy, movement, parties, modernization, stability.

أثر المطالب الشعبية على استجابة الدولة الأردنية للإصلاحات السياسية (1999_2021)

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ملخص

الأهداف: تهدف الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على مسيرة الإصلاح السياسي في الأردن، والتعرف إلى التطلعات والرؤى الشعبية، وتبيان الخطوات والتوجهات الإصلاحية التي أعلنتها الدولة، للتوصل إلى مدى استجابة الدولة الأردنية للمطالب الشعبية تجاه عملية الإصلاح السياسي.

المنهجية: قامت الدراسة بتحليل مسيرة الإصلاح السياسي من خلال عدة مناهج؛ أولاً منهج تحليل النظم "ديفيد إيستون" حيث النظر إلى المدخلات والمتمثلة في المطالب الشعبية المتعلقة بالإصلاح السياسي، والمخرجات التي تتمثل بالقرارات والتوجهات الإصلاحية الرسمية، ومن ثم التغذية الراجعة للتوصل إلى مدى توفر عناصر الجدية والالتزام في المخرجات التي تقاس بمدى استجابة الدولة الأردنية لتلك الإصلاحات السياسية، ثانياً منهج اتخاذ القرار من حيث تركيز متخذ القرار بعد جمع المعلومات وتحليلها على اختيار الخيار الأمثل من عدة بدائل متاحة والعمل على تنفيذه، ثالثاً المنهج المؤسسي بالنظر على النصوص والوثائق الصادرة عن الجهات الرسمية المختلفة.

النتائج: توصلت الدراسة لعدة نتائج أهمها أنه تم طرح العديد من المبادرات والخطط الإصلاحية آخرها تشكيل "اللجنة الملكية لتحديث المنظومة السياسية" 10_حزيران 2021، وتم القيام بتعديلات دستورية وإنشاء محكمة دستورية وهيئة مستقلة للانتخاب كاستجابة لبعض المطالب الشعبية. ولكن على الرغم من ذلك، لم تحقق التوجهات الإصلاحية ما كان مأمول منها؛ وذلك تبعاً لبعض الآراء وردود الفعل الشعبية مثل المطالبة بتشكيل الحكومات البرلمانية وأخرى بالتمسك بوجود نقابة للمعلمين والغاء إنشاء المحاكم الخاصة كمحكمة أمن الدولة التي يعتبر وجودها تفوقاً صريحاً بين السلطات.

الخلاصة: تحقق تطور في بعض جوانب العملية الإصلاحية، وأخرى لم تحقق رضا كافة الأطياف الشعبية، وبذلك كان للظاهرة المدروسة تأثير جزئي عند مقارنة المساعي الإصلاحية الشعبية بالنتائج الفعلية الرسمية.

الكلمات الدالة: الأردن، الإصلاح السياسي، الديمقراطية، الحراك، الأحزاب، التحديث، الاستقرار.

1. Introduction:

Political reform is an important step to bring about change and progress in the political process, and represents the main gateway to achieving the rest of the reforms. It has become an essential and integral part of countries' policies and directions. When talking about Jordan, it, like other countries, when it realized the magnitude of the challenges and difficulties that would be caused by the absence of a reform will, rushed to take steps. Reform, translated through royal initiatives since His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein assumed power in 1999, reform plans, and constitutional amendments that would respond to popular demands and raise the value of the state in political reform.

From this standpoint, this research paper comes to shed light on the political reform process in Jordan, by focusing on three topics. The first section focuses on the nature of political reforms in Jordan, which began with royal initiatives and the launch of several reform programs. In continuation of the political reform process, King Abdullah presented God II presented seven discussion papers in the year 2012-2017 in which he called for enriching the national dialogue and developing the democratic system. Recently, on June 10, 2021, the Royal Commission was formed to modernize the political system with a royal will and under the guidance of His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein, in an effort to reach the integrated democratic model. The second section reviews the popular demands for political reforms in Jordan, including the demands and participation of popular movements and the extent to which that process was affected by popular demands. The third section addresses some of the obstacles that limit the implementation of the political reform process, and finally the results come to clarify the extent of the Jordanian state's response to popular demands for political reforms.

2. General framework of the study:

2.1. Problem of the study:

The problem of this study comes from examining the extent of the discrepancy between popular demands for political reform and the Jordanian state's orientations towards political reform and what was achieved of those demands on the ground.

2.2. hypothesis of the Study:

The hypothesis of the study stems from a central idea that "there is a slight convergence between the popular aspirations and orientations towards the political reform process and the response of the Jordanian state to the reform process, which was met with dissatisfaction by the popular spectrum".

2.3. questions of the Study:

In order to determine the extent of correspondence between popular aspirations and the state's actual response to the political reform process, it was possible to formulate the following questions:

- What is the vision and directions of the Jordanian state towards the political reform process?
- What are the popular perceptions and visions that would develop the political reform process in Jordan?
- What are the most important obstacles to the political reform process in Jordan?
- What are the most important actual results of political reform in Jordan according to the comparison between the popular demand and the Jordanian state's response?

2.4. Objectives of the study:

- Studying the latest findings of the political reform process in Jordan.
- Identifying popular aspirations and visions regarding the political reform process in Jordan.
- Turning around some obstacles that limit the process of political reform in Jordan.
- Analysis of the most important actual results of political reform in Jordan, and the extent of the Jordanian state's response to popular demands related to political reforms.

2.5. significance of the study:

The importance of this study lies in two axes:

Scientific: The study is considered a scientific reference for the researcher and those interested in the field of political reform. Because of the information it provides about the political reform process in Jordan, and the extent to which the

reform process is consistent with popular demands, and thus it is considered an important knowledge contribution to understanding the methods and mechanisms that govern the political reform process in Jordan.

Process: The study presents some trends that would contribute to addressing gaps that were overlooked in the process of political reform, and thus it is considered as a reform approach that leads to the path of the desired political reform that meets the needs and aspirations of the members of society in order to contribute to the absorption of internal pressures that may pose a threat to stability.

2.6. limits of the study:

Spatial boundaries: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Time limits: The study begins in 1999, when King Abdullah II assumed his constitutional powers, until 2021 as the end of the study period.

2.7. Terms of the study:

Political reform:

Reform: It is defined as changing traditional values and patterns of behavior, spreading communication and education, expanding the scope of loyalty so that it goes beyond family, village, and tribalism to reach the nation, rationalizing power structures, strengthening functionally specialized organizations, replacing measures of favoritism with measures of competence, and supporting a more equitable distribution of material and symbolic resources. (Huntington, 1999)

Reform, according to the Oxford dictionary, "is a change or alteration for the better in the case of things that have contradictions, especially in corrupt or unfair political institutions and practices, the removal of some arbitrariness or error." Reform is a process of continuous societal development related to improving the performance of social systems and institutions, in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. This is what we call political, legal, administrative or economic reform. Political reform is a process of updating and changing the functions and roles of power relations in society, in a way that guarantees the freedom of the citizen and his civil and political rights. (Zaher, 2013)

"Political reform" is also defined as "a process of radical modification and development in the form of governance or social relations within the state within the framework of the existing political system and with the available means and based on the concept of gradualism. In other words, it is the development of the efficiency and effectiveness of the political system in its surrounding environment internally, regionally and internationally." (Amin et al., 2010)

The Political Encyclopedia defines it as a non-radical modification or development in the form of governance or social relations without prejudice to its foundation, and it is an improvement in the existing political and social system without prejudice to the foundations of this system. (Kilani, 1994)

3. Theoretical framework and Literature review:

3.1. Theoretical framework:

The term "political reform" has become one of the most common terms in the Arab world, especially after the outbreak of the Arab Spring revolutions. According to its advocates, this term aims to reformulate the contractual relationship between peoples and their political systems, correct the deficiencies in various social, economic, educational and intellectual systems, as well as combat financial and administrative corruption in all its forms and manifestations.

The concept of political reform is completely and radically different from the meaning of revolution. The former aims at gradual and partial change of the political system and social structures, while revolution aims at the total change of all systems and structures, especially the political system. (Al-Harathi, 2016)

The Political Encyclopedia defined reform as a radical modification in the form of government or social relations without affecting their basis. Contrary to the concept of revolution, it is nothing but an improvement in the existing political and social system, without affecting the foundations of this system, as reform is similar to wooden supports erected to try to prevent the collapse of buildings. crumbling, and is used to prevent revolution or delay its occurrence. (Al-Kayyali, 1974)

The British Encyclopedia linked the term reform to the religious reform movement that began in the sixteenth century, to purify the Christian Church morally and ideologically, on the basis of the rules of the Old Testament, which quickly

extended to the political, economic, and social aspects. (Al-Jumaili, 2011)

As for Arab society, the idea of political reform and the call for it were not the result of the current situation in our Arab reality. This call began several centuries ago in which thinkers and intellectuals called for reforming the conditions of the subjects and reforming the affairs of governance. (Al-Dulaimi, 2005)

With regard to the political level, its beginnings go back to the era between the two world wars, or what is known as the (Arab liberal era), although it did not last long and its gains were modest, on the other hand, it can be viewed from the aspect of establishing a new and modern political field in which the constitution and pluralism are represented. Partisanship, the representative parliamentary system, and freedom of the press and publishing. (Belqiz, 2004) When a number of Arab countries that gained independence at that time adopted an approach similar to the Western European model, such as: Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, and Lebanon, and practiced a type of liberal democracy, and associations, parties, and organizations were founded. Liberalism called for social reform by spreading modern education, improving the status of women, opposing traditional systems, calling for democracy and constitutional life, political participation and parliamentary life. (Al-Zaidi, 2000)

At the popular social level, we can point to a large accumulation of struggle in political and professional work in order to achieve democratic reform in the Arab world and the struggles that the peoples of the Arab nation waged against tyranny for the sake of freedom and democracy throughout the long decades of the twentieth century, some of which were to defend social rights in the face of An authority that makes unilateral decisions, and does not take the interests of the people and unions into account, such as facing decisions related to education or the increase in the prices of bread and basic materials, and some of these uprisings were purely political. The impact of these uprisings, although they ended in a major setback followed by a massive arrest campaign, was profound in the growing awareness of the failure of the ruling elites to solve the dilemmas of political participation and the social rights of the citizen.

With the beginning of the twenty-first century, the emerging civil society movement in the Arab world began to accelerate and intensify its activity, and meetings of civil society organizations began to multiply, especially in countries such as Syria, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Egypt. Some emerging civil society organizations have also begun to use new methods in their activities, such as mobilizing citizens in large-scale protests such as those witnessed in Arab cities during the American war on Iraq in 2003.

Likewise, we cannot ignore the role played by these Arab civil society organizations in the field of political, economic, social and cultural reform or demanding and advocating for it through several means, such as presenting the demands of citizens in the face of state authorities, or their contributions in the field of economic development by seeking to develop local and national communities. (Al-Jumaili, 2011)

The truth is that political reform in the Arab countries can only take place with a set of steps, according to what was stated in the reform document issued by the Library of Alexandria in 2004, including: constitutional and legislative reform that is consistent with democratic requirements, reform of political institutions and structures, abolition of exceptional laws, emergency laws, and exceptional courts. Freedom to form political parties within the framework of the constitution and law, freedom of the press and media from government influence and control, freedom to form civil society institutions, and freedom of public opinion. (Political Reform Issues, 2004)

From the above, "political reform" is changing the perceptions and practices of the political and social system and the institutions associated with them for the better, as well as combating the manifestations of corruption, weakness and defects in them, through various effective peaceful means, such as giving advice, presenting suggestions and advice, revealing manifestations of imbalance, and positive participation in the ministry and parliament. Establishing free parties, activating and strengthening civil society institutions, and exerting more motivation and pressure to push for political reforms.

3.2. Previous studies:

Study by Saleh Al-Majali and Walid Al-Awaimer (2021) entitled: The Impact of Parliamentary Elections Laws on the Political Reform Process in Jordan (1989_2020)

The study aimed to reveal the impact of changing the parliamentary election laws on the process of political reform in

Jordan. The period from (2003_2020) in the arrival of a partisan majority to the House of Representatives to form a parliamentary government.

Study by Mohammed Bani Salama (2017): Political Reform in Jordan: Reality and Aspirations

The study aimed to provide a comprehensive review of the political reform process in Jordan during the reign of King Hussein and King Abdullah II from 1989, and identifies the obstacles that prevent political reform. The main findings include that political reform in Jordan is an old and popular demand, and that the reform process in the country has made some achievements. However, these achievements were not sufficient to advance real and ongoing reforms.

Study by Mohammed Bani Salama and Azzam Al-Ananzeh (2015) :constitutional reforms in Jordan a critical analysis

The study concluded that the Jordanian movement preceded the Arab Spring revolutions in the Arab region, and that the roots of the Jordanian movement go back to previous decades, and that despite the many reforms in Jordan on the political and constitutional level, the reforms are still modest, and the study concluded that there is a need for more. Among the reforms, to avoid defects that represent a basic motive for Jordanians to continue and resume their movement in the future. More constitutional reforms will lead to more political and democratic reform to reach a constitutional monarchy and actual parliamentary governments.

The study of Mohammed Al-Sharaah (2007) entitled Elements and Mechanisms of Political Reform in Jordan 2001_2006

The study aimed to correct the concept of political reform and to identify its local and international motives, obstacles and results in Jordan. It is part of the political development process, and I concluded that political reform in Jordan came as a result of regional and international transformations, which contributed to influencing the political and economic reality.

3.2. What distinguishes this study from previous studies:

Many Arab and foreign studies have been conducted regarding the political reform process in Jordan from several aspects, but neglecting to study the actual results of that phenomenon based on popular demands and comparing them with the trends of the Jordanian state and what has actually been achieved on the ground. Therefore, this study was distinct from the others that came before, within the limits of the researcher's knowledge, to shed light on the gap between popular demands and the response of the Jordanian state, and the actual impact of political reform within the borders of the Jordanian state, since King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein assumed power until the year 2021, the period of the end of the study.

4. Study Approaches:

- **Systems analysis approach:** To study the environment from the inputs, which are represented by the popular reform demands that the political system seeks to provide, and the outputs, which are represented by the decisions and reform directions of the Jordanian state, and then the feedback is determined by the availability of elements of seriousness and commitment in the outputs, and it is measured by the extent of the Jordanian state's response to political reforms.
- **Decision making approach:** To know the mechanism of decision-making in the country by focusing the decision-maker after collecting and analyzing information represented by popular demands, and then choosing the best option from several available alternatives and working to implement it, in order to get to know the standards and rules upon which the reform decision was made in Jordan.
- **Institutional approach:** Studying the phenomenon by focusing on texts and documents issued by the Jordanian state and various official institutions and using them in the study to arrive at data related to the political reform process in Jordan.

5. Study topics: Assumptions and perceptions from an analytical perspective:

5.1. The first topic: the process of political reform (1999-2021): initiatives, legislation, and institutions.

Jordan has made great strides on the path of comprehensive reform since King Abdullah II assumed his constitutional powers in 1999, represented by moving towards a comprehensive national dialogue, establishing democratic parties, partnership with parliament and a reformist government, enhancing security and stability, in addition to striving for youth

empowerment and broader participation of women. (Report of the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs, 2004)

First: Initiatives:

The "Jordan First" initiative was launched in November 2002, in order to strengthen the foundations of the modern democratic state. It is an action plan aimed at consolidating belonging among citizens, where everyone works under the national umbrella, and every part of them is an effective element in the modernization and reform process of the modern Jordanian state. The initiative came to emphasize the primacy of the national interest over other interests. (Document on the formation of a national body to study the slogan "Jordan First", 2002)

His Majesty King Abdullah II's vision came to form a royal committee to formulate the "National Agenda" as a comprehensive framework for the development process in November 2005 that included a set of political, social and economic priorities with the aim of "improving the quality of life of Jordanians by creating income-generating opportunities, improving the quality of life and ensuring social well-being". (Tuwaiqat, 2009)

In July 2006, His Majesty King Abdullah II launched the "We are all Jordan" initiative with the aim of establishing a comprehensive national perspective, based on a common vision among the components of Jordanian society through broad and effective participation. Party life and human rights, focusing on economic reforms and fighting poverty, as well as focusing on regional challenges and the Palestinian cause. (We are all Jordan document, 2006)

In light of the developments of the Arab Spring, the Jordanian popular movement began since the beginning of 2011, calling for a number of reforms. Therefore, His Majesty the King directed the need to carry out constitutional reforms in Jordan. On March 14, 2011, the government was entrusted with the formation of a National Dialogue Committee, as well as the formation of a royal committee to review Constitution on 4/26/2011, to conduct a comprehensive review of the constitutional texts contained in the 1952 constitution to advance political life in a constitutional context. (Nasraween, 2013)

It has defined the tasks of the National Dialogue Committee; By conducting an intense national dialogue on the various legislations related to the political work system and reviewing them to reach the goals that the government seeks to achieve, which are creating an advanced partisan and democratic life, forming parliamentary governments based on parties, and presenting two consensual bills for general elections and parties that meet these goals. (The Official Gazette Issue No. 5165, 2012)

The reaction of the opposition forces and the movement to this step was negative. Because the prime minister-designate was at the head of a previous government between 2005-2007, and the parliamentary and municipal elections that were held during his reign at that time witnessed flagrant irregularities and clear fraud, which led to the dissolution of parliament two years before the end of its constitutional term, and the holding of early parliamentary elections. (Jordanian parliamentary elections in November 2007)

Some national figures also refused to participate in the committee's meetings, while five parties objected to the formation of the committee, and saw the need to reconsider it to ensure the representation of all political parties, national personalities, and opinion leaders. (Statement issued by the Islamic Action Front Party, 2011)

On December 8, 2012, a Royal Decree was issued to form the Royal Committee to Strengthen the Integrity System, which is concerned with reviewing legislation, studying the reality of the work of all oversight bodies, and proposing recommendations that would strengthen and correct the balanced institutional workflow, in a manner that ensures the establishment of a climate of justice and accountability according to performance in order to achieve For the public interest, which is the first priority, and this committee consists of 11 members and is chaired by the Prime Minister. (Message of His Majesty the King to Eagles, 2012)

His Majesty the King established the path towards democracy through the seven discussion papers in 2012-2017. Through which it seeks to stimulate a national dialogue about the reform process and the democratic transformation process that Jordan is going through. (Prime Minister Jordan, 2012_2017)

And on June 10, 2021, a royal will was issued to form a "Royal Committee for the Modernization of the Political System" with the state entering the second centenary, with the aim of bringing about a quantum leap in the political and

parliamentary life that ensures the continuation of the development process to guarantee the right of Jordanian men and women to practice a parliamentary and partisan life that advances their democracy and life, leading to a parliament. Based on programmatic blocs and parties. (Document of the Royal Commission to Modernize the Political System, 2021)

The task of the committee will be to draft a new draft law for elections and political parties, to consider constitutional amendments de jure related to laws and parliamentary work mechanisms, to present recommendations related to the development of legislation regulating local administration, and to create a legislative and political environment that guarantees the role of youth and women in public life. (Nofal, 2022)

Second: Legislations and Constitutional Amendments:

The constitutional amendments on October 1, 2011, are the first amendments to the constitution during the reign of King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein, which included several provisions dealing with the issue of powers and their validity and the application of the principle of separation of powers in the belief that these texts address the sources of complaints that have increased about the imbalance in the provisions of the constitution in this regard. On the other hand, however, it neglected many of the basic aspects that should have been reformed in order to restore balance to the constitution in a way that requires the principle of the people as the source of powers. (Al-Hammouri, 2011)

The 2011 constitution stipulated that it is not permissible for a minister, deputy, or appointed person to hold the nationality of another country, and that the government that is formed should obtain the confidence of the majority of the members of the House of Representatives instead of the texts that used to make this government gain confidence unless the majority of the members vote. The board is not to be trusted. The new provisions established a constitutional court according to a specific regulation in order to adjudicate appeals related to the constitutionality of laws and regulations. It also established an independent body to supervise and manage the electoral process. In addition to that, the amendments added a second paragraph to Article (74) in order that the government in which the House of Representatives is dissolved must resign within a week from the date of dissolution, and its president may not be assigned to form the next government, and added two paragraphs to Article (98) in order to establish A Judicial Council that handles all affairs related to regular judges, and that the Judicial Council alone has the right to appoint regular judges. Article (101) affirmed that no civilian person may be tried in a criminal case in which not all judges are civilians, with the exception of treason, espionage, terrorism, drug crimes and counterfeiting currency. (Articles 42_101 of the Jordanian Constitution of 2011)

The new constitutional amendments to Article 127 came in 2014, which granted the King exclusive powers to appoint the Army Commander, the Director of the General Intelligence Department, and the Director of Public Security and accept their resignation and dismissal without a recommendation from any other party, and in 2016 a new constitutional amendment was introduced according to which the sole authority is to appoint a commander. The gendarmerie is in the hands of the king. (Obeidat, 2017:56) to increase the fears of the Jordanian opposition about the trend towards absolute monarchy, and to put us before a king with the powers of a president of the republic, while violating the principle of the people's authority in accountability. The king is constitutionally exempt from all dependency and responsibility, and this means the collapse of the parliamentary system. (Al-Hammouri, 2014)

It included the constitutional amendments proposed by the Royal Commission to Modernize the Political System on October 3, 2021; (22) Constitutional texts related to the protection and independence of political parties, the protection of the role of the new parliament, the development of parliamentary work mechanisms, the failure to combine the ministry with the membership of the National Assembly, and the empowerment of women, youth and persons with disabilities. Among the articles proposed to be amended; Article 67_Paragraph 2_ The Independent Election Commission, adding the power to consider applications for the establishment of political parties and follow up on their affairs in accordance with the provisions of the law. (Nofal, 2022)

The Judicial Independence Law of 2014 came to consolidate this principle stipulated in the Jordanian constitution, and the most prominent of what was stated in this law: (European Commission, 25_3_2015)

– The judiciary is independent, and judges are independent. There is no authority over them in their rulings other than the law.

– It is prohibited for any license or authority to prejudice the independence of the judiciary and to interfere in its affairs.

Election Law No. (34) of 2001 (temporary) was issued on the basis of which the elections were held on June 17, 2003 for the Fourteenth Parliament. By this law, the number of parliamentary seats was increased from 80 to 110, including 6 "women's quota" seats. (Mashaqbeh, 2012)

The law was amended in 2012, specifying the number of parliamentary seats (150), allocating (108) seats for the local electoral district, (15) seats for the women's quota, and (27) parliamentary seats for the general electoral district on the system of closed proportional lists, and the Kingdom was divided into 45 A local constituency, and one general constituency at the level of the Kingdom, and the voter was given two votes, one vote for the local constituency, and another vote for the general constituency at the level of the Kingdom. (Election Law No. 28, 2012)

However, neither of the two formulas, "the draft election law for the year 2012, and the proposal of the National Dialogue Committee" was adopted. After the resignation of the government and the advent of the next government, there was a clear change in the two formulas, through which a return to the one-vote law was made, and the same previous approach was devoted to electing Members of Parliament, which led to the reluctance of a large segment of citizens to participate in the 2013 elections.

One of the most prominent features of the 2016 election law is that it adopted the open-type list system at the governorate level, as the law stipulated that candidacy for parliamentary elections should take place on lists only to replace individual candidacy, and the number of seats reached 130. (Article 8_Jordanian Election Law_2016)

As a result of the recommendations and outputs of the Royal Committee for the Modernization of the Political System on October 3, 2021, it included the adoption of a mixed electoral system that includes the closed proportional national party list in addition to the open proportional local lists, as this step aims to ensure a democratic approach based on partisan pluralism and future access to partisan parliaments. multi-party and parliamentary governments that emerge from it over the next three electoral cycles. A mixed electoral system project emerged from the committee that adopts two levels of representation: the national through the national constituency, and the local through the local constituencies. The project gives resident voters two votes: the first for the closed party national list and the second for the open local list on a preferential basis. And raising the number of members of the House of Representatives from 130 to 138 seats, of which 41 seats (at least 30%) are allocated to national party lists, and 97 to local constituencies, in a gradual step to raise the representation of political parties to 65% after 3 electoral cycles. With the reduction of the number of local districts from 23 to 18 (3 in Amman, 2 in Irbid, and 1 in the rest of the governorates and the three Bedouin districts). Of the 97 local seats, 18 seats are reserved for women, which achieves a representation rate at the local level equivalent to 18.5%, Christians are also allocated 7 seats, and Circassians and Chechens 2. The age for candidacy has been reduced from 30 to 25 years.

The most important recommendations for the development of local administration came as follows: (Nofal, 2022)

- Maintaining the levels of elected councils (the local council, the municipal council, and the provincial council) in addition to taking gradual measures to create regional councils after 3 electoral cycles at the latest.

- Replacing the direct election of the mayor with the election of members of the municipal council, so that the members elect a president for themselves.

- Reducing the candidacy age from 25 to 22 years.

Decentralization Law No. 49 of 2015 was issued, which aims to increase community participation in drawing up development plans and decision-making in the Jordanian governorates, in order to distribute development gains in a fair manner among the various governorates and regions of the Kingdom. (Decentralization Law, 2015)

Parties Law No. 16 of 2012 Parliament did not abide by the formula proposed by the National Dialogue Committee with regard to political parties, and made a number of amendments to it that did not satisfy the majority of parties and perpetuated the same old mistakes, and the law kept the Ministry of Interior as a reference for supervising parties, contrary to the committee's recommendation Which proposed the establishment of an independent supreme body to supervise, and this would perpetuate government interference in the work of the parties, and enhance the mood in granting licenses and

hindering the activities that organize them. It also kept the condition that the number of founders of any party should not be less than 500 people, contrary to the recommendation that suggested reducing the number to 250 people, and also stipulated that the founders be from seven governorates, after the previous law required five governorates, and that the percentage of women among them not be less than 10%, and the percentage of founders from each governorate is about 5%, and these conditions are considered among the obstacles to the emergence of parties and maintaining their continuity. (Political Parties Law No. 16 of 2012)

The law also maintained the condition that the age of the founding members should not be less than 21 years, despite calls to reduce it to 18 years, which is the age of general membership. The law allowed the party the right to receive donations from natural Jordanians only, with a maximum limit of fifty thousand dinars, and prevented receiving any upcoming external or internal funding. From legal persons, such as companies and public and private institutions. (Al-Suhouri, 2012)

In conclusion, the Political Parties Law of 2012 was not satisfactory to the various political and partisan spectrums, which made the government reconsider many of its provisions, and sent a new and relatively advanced draft law to the House of Representatives in mid-2014 and it was approved in mid-2015. The new law included reducing the number of founding members to 150 members, reduced the minimum age for constituent membership to 18 years, and transferred the task of supervising parties to the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs instead of the Ministry of Interior. The draft law also canceled some conditions related to the founding members, related to their representation of seven governorates, that the percentage of women be 10%, and that the percentage of members from each governorate not be less than 5%. The law also allowed parties to receive funding, donations, and grants from legal persons, with a maximum ceiling of 50,000 dinars. (Draft Political Parties Law of 2014)

The recommendations and outputs of the Royal Committee for the Modernization of the Political System on October 3, 2021 included a draft law on political parties, as the draft emphasized the need for the current programmatic political party system and new parties to raise the number of party founders to no less than 1,000 affiliates. 6 governorates, and the participation of youth and women in rates of not less than 20% for each category, and stipulated holding a general conference for the current parties, and holding a first founding conference for the new party within a period not exceeding one year from the date of submitting the registration application. (Nofal, 2022)

The Anti-Corruption Commission Law No. (62) of 2006 was issued, according to which it specified the objectives and tasks of the commission and between the acts that are considered corruption, and the amended Law No. (10) of 2012 was amended, and the new amendments included many legal articles related to providing protection for witnesses and whistleblowers in corruption cases, in addition To grant the authority the authority to suspend the work of any contract, agreement or concession obtained as a result of an act of corruption, and to authorize the authority to have international cooperation to provide and request mutual legal assistance. The project. (Article 5 of the Anti-Corruption Commission Law No. 62 of 2006 and its amendments).

The Financial Disclosure Law is considered one of the national integrity laws, and it provides a mechanism to determine the current or potential conflict or conflict between the public responsibilities of the holder of the position, and his private interests or activities. It also aims to prevent illegal enrichment as a result of exploitation of the position or capacity by senior state officials, and this includes all movable and immovable money, any benefit or right to benefit, and any increase over the money of the person concerned, his wife or minor children that is not commensurate with their resources, and the inability to Proof of its legitimate source.

Within the framework of the development and modernization pursued by the government on the legislation in force, **the Illegal Gain Law** No. (21) of 2014 was issued, and the law included an expansion of the circle of those charged with disclosure of financial disclosure, and an amendment to some of the rules contained in the Financial Disclosure Law No. (54) of 2006 of In terms of the terms and penalties for violating the provisions of the aforementioned law, while preserving the name of the Financial Disclosure Department, its powers, specializations, and organizational structure. Also, financial disclosure declarations are confidential documents that may not be viewed, and it is prohibited to publish them or disclose

their content. (Political Parties Law No. 16 of 2014)

Third: Political Institutions:

The establishment of the Jordanian Anti-Corruption Commission as an independent body came in implementation of the royal message sent by King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein to the government on June 26, 2005, believing in the importance of creating an independent reference concerned with combating corruption and increasing transparency and accountability. (European neighborhood policy _Jordan, 23 April 2009)

The Financial Disclosure Department of the Ministry of Justice was also established according to the provisions of the Financial Disclosure Act No. (54) of 2006, which is one of the departments concerned with combating corruption. A room has been allocated with the necessary security precautions containing special fire-resistant iron clips for keeping disclosure declarations. In which. (Ministry of Justice website)

The first sub-committee on human rights and democracy was established in 2005, and the National Center for Human Rights in 2006. (National indicative program 2007_2010)

The most prominent of the provisions of the constitution, after its amendment in 2011, was the establishment of a constitutional court, to serve as an independent, stand-alone judicial body, consisting of nine members appointed by the king. (Constitutional Court Act 2012)

This court constituted a partial solution to the dilemma of temporary laws issued by the government (the executive authority) when Parliament is absent. These laws have always been a matter of widespread controversy in Jordan and the subject of widespread criticism by opposition forces and many civil society institutions. With the establishment of the Constitutional Court, there has been authority to decide. In the constitutionality of laws, which have the power to rule on their survival or suspension of their implementation, which ultimately constitutes protection for legislation from the encroachment of the executive authority.

On 9/4/2012, the Independent Election Commission was established, and its terms of reference are summarized in supervising and managing the parliamentary electoral process in all its stages. It has the right to supervise any other elections decided by the Council of Ministers in accordance with the provisions of the legislation in force. A security plan to ensure the conduct of the electoral process. The Commission has a board of commissioners consisting of a chairperson and four members who are appointed by a royal will for a non-renewable six-year period. (Mashaqbeh, 2012)

The article was amended again in 2014 to expand the competencies of the Independent Electoral Commission in managing parliamentary and municipal elections, and the amendment aims to end the dominance of the executive authority by conducting elections in all its stages. (Al-khasawneh, 2012:91-100)

5.2. Forms of popular demands for political reforms in Jordan:

That the protest movements in all their forms were popular or included some partisan or trade union organization or any social or political forces from the various groups of civil society in the country; It came in order to bring about a positive change in the system of government, and to carry out general reforms that include public rights and freedoms, as well as political, economic and social rights. (Bani Salamah, 2013)

In 2007, the protests were condemning the high prices, and they continued, but in an unorganized manner, in the years 2009-2010, when all the protest movements focused on the peaceful approach and non-use of violence in their reform demands. (Directorate of Public Security, 2012)

The Jordanian political movement began in Dhiban on 7/12/2010, before the start of the Arab Spring and before the Arab popular revolutions. During two years, it passed through various stages: demonstrations, marches, sit-ins, and strikes that affected most professions, including engineers, doctors, nurses, and teachers, and protests by day laborers in the Ministry of Agriculture and the port of Aqaba. And the Jordanian opposition forces rode the wave, with the participation of the Muslim Brotherhood, members of trade unions and leftist parties, and many popular movements were formed. (Nihad, 2014)

At the beginning of 2011, when the Arab revolutions began, specifically on January 14, 2011 on Friday, marches took place in Jordan on a day called the "Jordanian Day of Anger", calling on the government at the time to leave, and the participants in the demonstrations denounced the high prices. (Anger demonstrations in Jordan, Asharq Al-Awsat

newspaper, 12/23/2016)

Among the most prominent demands were the amendment of the constitution, the adoption of an electoral law based on proportional representation, freedom of opinion, and limiting the executive authority's influence over the rest of the authorities, as well as protesting against the state's general policies and the security grip, in addition to reducing prices and fighting corruption. The National Committee for the Revival of the Teachers Syndicate also organized a sit-in in front of the National Assembly on the fourth of December 2011 AD, in which they demanded that the government approve the establishment of a teachers' union. (Al-Dustour newspaper, January 2, 2011)

The movement began to gradually raise the ceiling of demands, and interacted with attempts to contain it with constitutional amendments, which he considered formal and did not meet ambition, just as he was not convinced of a change in the government at the time, as he raised his voice calling for the people to restore their powers and for the government to be elected. (Allawama, 2013)

One of the most important results achieved by the popular movement on the Jordanian scene in 2011 was the establishment of the Teachers Syndicate, but in September 2019 the Syndicate practiced a form of professional strike, calling on teachers to stop providing their services in the field of education until their demands for improved salaries and bonuses are considered. On July 25, 2020, it was decided to stop the union's activities and close all its branches in the Kingdom. It was also decided to stop the members of the union's council and the branch bodies and their management. (Human Rights Watch, 30/July/2020)

It was noted that the protest demands centered around three main issues: political reform, combating corruption, and improving the economic conditions of citizens. And that the ceiling of demands continued to rise, as they demanded a constitutional monarchy, amending the constitution, establishing a parliamentary government, and establishing a constitutional court, and a group of demands with an international dimension appeared, such as canceling the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty. (Al-Qadi, 2015)

On June 4, 2018, the government submitted its resignation in the wake of the popular protests against the income tax bill and the price-raising policy. Demonstrations and gatherings were renewed against the bill, which provides for increasing tax deductions from the citizen's income. (Badri, 2018)

In general, we can say that it became clear from the outset that "reforming the regime" was the general demand that all movements unanimously agreed upon and adhered to. As for the calls to overthrow the regime, they did not meet agreement or unanimity, and the majority of political, partisan, professional, and popular forces disavowed them, and it remained associated with them. In the opinion of some people only. (Al-Falahat, 2013)

5.3. Obstacles to political reform in Jordan (1999-2021).

First: Political Factors:

The concentration of powers in the hands of the executive authority, the lack of transparency surrounding executive decisions, the restriction of freedom of access to information, the weakness of monitoring systems, and the wide tolerance of corrupt activities are among the obstacles to reform. (Democracy in Crisis Report, 2018, Jordan)

One of the most important political factors affected by the political reform process is; The absence of activities of civil society institutions and their poor performance in the reform process, and the inability of the political forces to present a specific vision for reform that represents the limit of consensus, including parties outside the framework of the opposition parties, and the lack of confidence between the opposition parties and the center, in addition to the inability of the political forces to expand participation in activities. The demand for reform, and its inability to present a comprehensive and reassuring Jordanian national discourse to the segments of Jordanian society, such as the people of the desert and Jordanian villages. (Al Shunnaq, 2014)

And that many parties, since their inception, have been dominated by the personality of the "founder who has financial influence", making the parties of an individual nature that lacks institutionalization in work, thus not unifying the efforts and work of those parties, in addition to legal restrictions, undemocratic practices, and weak financial resources. (Al Hosami, 2010)

As for the parliament, there are a number of institutional obstacles that limit its ability to play an important and prominent role in the process of political development and political reform, and weaken its ability to carry out its various functions, especially oversight and legislative, which is evidence of effective political development, and among these The obstacles are the lack of qualified and trained human cadres capable of legislation and oversight, the parliament lacks technical and advisory support, and the lack of information needed by the representative to discuss the various laws and public policies, which negatively affects the efficiency of the representative in carrying out his work. (Al Hosami, p. 97_111)

Also, the Jordanian parliament was unable to play its real role as a result of reasons related to election laws, factors related to tribalism, the dominance of the executive authority, and the weakness of partisan work, which contributed to the decline in the ability of the parliament to play its oversight and legislative role, and this was reflected in the confidence of the Jordanian citizen in this parliament and its role.

As for the blocs inside Parliament, they are the result of a phase, formed in the absence of parties, so they are fragile in their structures far from institutional, they are not united by intellectual ties, but rather by links of incoherent interests, and there is no clear commitment to their decisions on the part of the members, as they are formed and disintegrated overnight, which led to a weakening of its role. (Azzam, 2006)

And that the political elite has taken control of most of the leadership positions in this council, such as the president, his deputies, and his assistants, who are mostly military or security figures, former ministers, or businessmen, most of whom are from the regime, and who usually manipulate to ensure support for government policies. It is an extension of the executive authority, as the authority passes its programs through it. (Al Hosami, 2010: 112)

The political system in any country is also considered to be under the influence of the surrounding external environment and cannot be isolated from regional and international external influences. The Syrian crisis and what is happening in Syria is one of the most challenging challenges facing all Arab countries. Its events and developments were a shock to the Arab movement, as expectations indicated Positive change at the level of regimes with the start of the Arab Spring, and this had an impact on the situation at the regional level. The use of force to suppress the Syrian revolutions was a catalyst for its use in other countries. A public opinion emerged calling for stopping the protests for fear of contagion and in order to avoid a clash between the protesters and the security services, so as not to exacerbate the situation on the local scene, and go in the direction of what neighboring countries went to. (Mohammed, 2014)

Second: Economic Factors:

Economic factors play a major role in change and reform, as the state that is characterized by a high economic level is characterized by political stability, but when the economic conditions deteriorate, this leads to the absence of reform, justice and freedom.

One of the most important economic challenges facing Jordan is the high indebtedness and wrong economic policies. Since the late eighties of the last century, the Jordanian economy has been going through exceptional circumstances resulting from the economic policies that plunged the country into indebtedness, which were taken by successive governments based on the directives of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, to implement the so-called economic correction policy, the most prominent of which was the increase in indirect taxes, which led to a rise in the cost of most Basic commodities, along with the decline in government spending on services, the lifting of all forms of support for local production and national exports, and other policies that had severe economic and social impacts on the poor and middle-income. (Bulletin of the Ministry of Finance for the month of January 2010)

In addition to the lack of resources and weak capabilities, and the spread of poverty, as a high percentage of people are below the poverty line of 15.7%, according to the Prime Minister's announcement in April 2019 (European Commission, 29.11.2019), and the unemployment rate has increased to reach in 2021 (19.3%). of the total labor force, based on statistics from the World Bank. (Report issued by the World Bank, 2021)

In light of the economic crisis afflicting the country, the disappearance or manifestation of the middle class, and other economic imbalances, political reform has declined as a priority among large segments of society, as they focused on providing basic needs such as food, medicine, and housing, based on the argument of bread first, freedom, democracy, and

human rights. And political reform secondly, but in reality, sacrificing freedom for bread may lead to the loss of both. (Tobin, 2012:91)

6. Results and Discussion:

6.1. Findings and Dissections:

Perhaps the most important findings of the study are as follows:

1. The movement related to the political aspect agreed, for the most part, to take the slogan “reforming the system” as a general goal. The reaction of the political system was somewhat positive, and it took several measures in terms of the political reform process, which included the formation of a “national dialogue committee” and “the formation of a committee to review The Constitution” in 2011 in light of the demands for political and constitutional reforms by the popular movement, and some constitutional amendments were made, and a number of legislations regulating the political reform process, development on the electoral law and parties, drafting the decentralization law 2015, and making changes at the level of institutions, and recently in 2021 The "Royal Committee for the Modernization of the Political System" was formed in an effort to reach an integrated democratic model.

2. It can be said that the political system responded to the protest demands related to political reform, but it was a relative response, and some of it was temporary. It did not achieve popular aspirations; For example, the method of choosing governments to "form parliamentary governments", which is considered one of the basic demands of the protesters, and another method of dismantling the teachers' union after its establishment, which is one of the most prominent demands that were put forward on the Jordanian scene.

3. The constitutional amendments and legislation have not fully achieved the requirements of political reform, nor have they made complete progress on the level of political life in Jordan; Like the power to appoint the army commander and the director of general intelligence, it is not satisfied because of the conviction that these amendments will constitute an abolition of the basis of the parliamentary system on which the constitution is based, and the transformation of the Jordanian system from a constitutional monarchy to a presidential monarchy, in which most of the powers are concentrated in the hands of the king.

4. Governments in Jordan are good at talking about reform, but on the practical level and application on the ground is something else different. Approval and availability of the law is an important guarantee for the reform process, but this requires compatibility of the law with practical reality by respecting it in practice and application. For example, the decentralization law of 2015 reflected the vision of the political system, but did not limit the central government's exclusiveness in political and developmental decisions, nor did it contribute to the creation of local developmental authorities.

5. The manifestations of the separation of powers in the constitutional amendments are clear through the link between the departure of the government and parliament, the establishment of the Constitutional Court, the establishment of the Independent Election Commission, the granting of the judiciary the authority to consider appeals submitted to the validity of the representation of members of the House of Representatives, and the trial of former ministers before the civil courts, but it remains Some manifestations and practices distort the principle of separation of powers. Such as maintaining the establishment of special courts, such as the State Security Court, whose existence is considered an encroachment by the judicial authority, as it is formed by the Prime Minister, who appoints its military judges, in addition to appointing members of the Senate by the King, as well as appointing members of the Constitutional Court and court judges. regularity and legitimacy.

6. It cannot be said that the decline of the movement reflects the masses' satisfaction with the reforms achieved, as the demands for comprehensive reform are still valid, and the government is still facing sharp criticism, especially through social networking sites and modern media, in light of the decline in the movement and the absence of its activities. As the bloody events in the Arab arena were a direct reason for the decline in the intensity of the protests in the Jordanian arena, and a general feeling was generated that the Arab revolutions had failed to achieve their goals, and therefore the Jordanian social movement was satisfied with what it presented, hoping that the political system would respond to the reform demands

that the movement called for.

6.2. Recommendations:

1. Responding to all the demands that the people agree upon to achieve a comprehensive response, such as creating parliamentary governments on the ground, since this has been a basic popular demand since 2012 for governments to be popular and more legitimate.

2. Recommending the teachers' union to return to work and carry out its work without pressure. This is one of the most prominent demands put forward on the Jordanian scene, which grants greater freedom.

3. When making constitutional and legislative amendments, one must adhere to the fixed and established constitutional texts and adhere to the parliamentary system on which the constitution is based. Such as the power to appoint the Commander of the Army and the Director of General Intelligence, as these amendments will constitute an abolition of the basis of the parliamentary system, and the transformation of the Jordanian system from a constitutional monarchy into a presidential monarchy, in which most powers are concentrated in the hands of the King.

4. The law is compatible with practical reality by respecting it in practice and application. For example, the Decentralization Law of 2015 reflects the vision of the political system, but the central government's exclusivity in political and development decisions must be limited, and local development authorities must be created.

5. Adherence to the principle of separation of powers; And canceling the establishment of the State Security Court, whose existence is considered an invasion by the judicial authority, because it is formed by the Prime Minister, who appoints its military judges, in addition to appointing members of the Constitutional Court, and judges of the regular and Sharia courts by the King.

6.

7. Conclusion:

Strengthening Jordan's reform and democratic process has continued since His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein assumed power in 1999 until this moment to move forward in achieving political reforms and reaching a democratic state, as Jordan continues to develop its experience in the process of political reform by expanding the scope of its work and moving on the path. Having a common reform policy with all segments of society enables it to exercise an effective role, and this was evident in the introduction of some legislation, the launching of initiatives, and the signing of agreements that would strengthen its reform position. However, despite this, the opportunities and efforts made have met with a decline in reality and have not achieved the desired goal and goal decreed by it. Before the Jordanian state and satisfaction on the part of some popular factions, in light of the difficult circumstances and conditions that the Kingdom has gone through and is going through as a result of local, regional and international variables whose effects are reflected in the Jordanian environment.

Considering the entire reform system, including initiatives, legislation, demands, and obstacles that limit the achievement of the desired reforms; The study found that there was some agreement between the inputs, which are popular demands for political reform, and the outputs, which are the response of the Jordanian political system to popular reform contents, and some demands were ignored without an actual response.

Thus, the study was able to answer the questions of the study, reaching the extent of correspondence between popular aspirations and the state's actual response to the political reform process, and it was able to test the hypothesis that there is a slight convergence between popular aspirations and the state's response, and it achieved the goals it sought in terms of identifying the process of political reform. In Jordan, highlighting popular aspirations for reform, circumventing some of the obstacles that limit the reform process, and finally reaching the most important actual results of the reform process.

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