

The Impact of Political Awareness on Women's Political Participation in Syria



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Since 2011, Syria has witnessed a popular revolution in which women have played an active role in the popular revolutionary movement, in all its areas. They participated in and organized protests and demonstrations, and played an active role in humanitarian relief for those in need and affected by violence. The roles played by women cannot be hidden, as Syrian women demonstrated that they were capable, despite their suffering, of bearing the burdens of war and its exceptional circumstances. They faced bereavement, fear, pain, and deprivation of their most basic rights. They also did not give up their right to have a role in the negotiation committee and the Syrian Constitutional Committee that prepares for the process of writing the Syrian constitution. Nevertheless, women's participation in real political activity is very weak, raising serious questions about the reasons for this weakness in political participation.

Therefore, this research came to shed some light on the impact of political awareness on the political participation of Syrian women by studying the situation of women in Syria, and then identifying the impact of their political awareness, and addressing women's interest in political participation. Hence, this study tried to find the answer to the following question: **To what extent does political awareness affect women's political participation in Syria?** This question led to the following questions:

- What is the source of political awareness among women in Syria?
- What is the impact of societal customs and traditions on political awareness and participation?
- What are the most prominent manifestations of women's political participation in Syria?

This research is primarily aimed at identifying the source of political awareness and the most prominent manifestations of political participation among women in Syria.

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

In this study, the researcher relied on the descriptive analytical approach, in order to describe the study and its concepts and present political awareness, in addition to analyzing women's opinions on the issue of the study and measuring the extent of their participation, in order to identify the results of the study hypotheses, and achieve their objectives and answer their questions.

The questionnaire tool was used for the study by the researcher as it overcomes some of the difficulties that represented an obstacle. The questionnaire was divided into

three axes: the first axis covers the demographic data of the research sample: age and educational attainment. The sample was selected to consist only of females. The second axis includes phrases that measure the political awareness of women in question, the factors that help to raise and develop it, and the impact of the economic factor on it, while the last axis includes phrases and questions focused on political participation, and focuses on the tools and means through which women work in political participation.

THE RESEARCH SAMPLE

The questionnaire was presented to 100 Syrian women, the researcher chose the random sample from different regions of Syria. Only 65 women responded to the questionnaire, and 63 of the responses were valid for analysis. SPSS software was used in the analysis of these data.

This study started at the end of March, 2020 and was completed in the second month of 2021 while the field study and the collection of evidence was in December and January of 2020.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

The study reached a number of results through which the researcher was able to answer the research questions, which focused on political awareness and its impact on political participation.

1. There is a scarcity of political participation among Syrian women due to poor political awareness.
2. There is a clear lack of coordination in the work of organizations on integrated political development programs and a scarcity in opportunities for Syrian women to attend training activities and workshops.
3. There is a clear influence of customs and traditions on women's political participation, and it is noted that there is stereotyping of women's roles in society, and this causes a weakness in women's involvement in political experiments.
4. There is a clear correlation between political awareness and the process of political participation.

5. Some specialized training and workshops provided by civil society organizations help raise awareness, and give women the opportunity to attend and gain some experience.
6. Because of the lack of political awareness, there is no strong motivation for women to engage in political activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on the findings of the research, the researcher recommended the following:

1. To work to activate the role of civil society organizations more broadly in the political sphere.
2. To work on awareness courses aimed at women, focusing on the importance of political awareness.
3. To work on specialized political training in the political affairs of Syrian women, and workshops to project theoretical views on the ground in a practical and interactive way.
4. To urge the authorities to integrate women into leadership and political positions.
5. To work on advocacy campaigns on important issues related to Syrian women.
6. To conduct further studies including ones that examine customs and traditions and stereotyping the role of Syrian women in social life and the influence of these factors on politics.
7. To conduct studies on the importance of Syrian women's participation in the election process and local councils.
8. To conduct studies on how women use social media and media to express their political participation.

