

The Political Impact of King Abdullah II's Second Discussion Paper on the Development of Jordan's Democratic System: An Analytical Study of Political Parties (2013-2024)

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the political impact of His Majesty King Abdullah II's Second Discussion Paper on the development of the democratic system in Jordan, with a focus on the state of political parties during the period from 2013 to 2024. The Second Discussion Paper served as the primary concept (independent variable), and its influence on the evolution of political parties (dependent variable) within Jordan's democratic system was critically examined. The study was divided into two sections: the first addressed key concepts and the trajectory of democratic development in Jordan, while the second analyzed the impact of the Second Discussion Paper on political parties and their role in Jordanian political life. A political analysis approach was employed to understand and interpret the influence of the Second Discussion Paper on political parties in Jordan, framed within the context of democratic theory. The analysis focused on the direct effects of the Discussion Paper on Jordan's political system, specifically examining the evolving role of political parties. The study found that the Second Discussion Paper significantly strengthened the role of political parties in Jordan by fostering national dialogue and supporting political pluralism. The Paper contributed to increased political participation by parties, enhanced their influence within the democratic process, and encouraged the development and reshaping of party roles within Jordan's political system. The study concluded that there is a strong correlation between the Second Discussion Paper and the development of Jordan's democratic system. The Paper contributed to empowering political parties, increasing their impact on political life, and reflecting the political leadership's commitment to ongoing democratic reforms.

Keywords: *Second Discussion Paper, Democratic System, Political Parties, Political Participation, Jordan.*

Introduction

His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein's second discussion paper is an extension of his continuous efforts to strengthen and develop the democratic system in Jordan, as it focused on strengthening the role of political parties and balancing the various political parties in the country. This paper was launched in light of changing regional and international circumstances that have greatly affected political life in Jordan, as it sought to address the challenges facing the democratic system by presenting visions and ideas aimed at achieving more political participation. Enable parties to play a pivotal role in the political process.

As internal and external challenges mount, it was imperative to rethink how to empower political parties to be able to respond to rapid changes in the political environment. The second discussion paper laid a new foundation for understanding the relationship between the state and society and strengthening the role of parties as an integral part of the Jordanian political system. In doing so, it sought to achieve a kind of political balance that would enable Jordan to maintain its political and social stability in light of regional and international changes.

This paper is an important focus for understanding the transformations that have taken place in the democratic system in Jordan and the role of political parties in this context. Accordingly, this study seeks to analyze the impact of the second discussion paper on the Jordanian democratic system, by studying the situation of political parties, determining their success in achieving the desired objectives of this paper, and evaluating their role in enhancing political participation and maintaining political stability in Jordan.

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The Importance of Studying

The scientific importance of this study stems from shedding light on the role played by the second discussion paper in the development of the democratic system in Jordan, especially regarding strengthening the role of political parties. This study fills a gap in research on the impact of royal discussion papers on political life in Jordan, providing an in-depth analysis of how political parties respond to proposed reforms and their role in achieving national goals.

The practical importance lies in trying to understand the transformations that have taken place in the Jordanian democratic system since the issuance of the second discussion paper, and how this paper has contributed to enhancing political participation by supporting and empowering parties. Through this understanding, the results of the study can be used to develop future policies and plans to enhance the role of political parties in the Jordanian political system and achieve more balance and stability in political life.

Study Problem

This study seeks to answer the central question: *What is the impact of His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein's second discussion paper on the democratic system in Jordan, with a focus on the role of political parties?* This main question has several sub-questions, including:

How did the second discussion paper contribute to strengthening the role of political parties in Jordan?

What is the impact of the discussion paper on the political balance between the various political forces in the country?

What challenges did political parties face in implementing the visions and ideas presented in the discussion paper?

Justification of the Time Period

The study extends from 2013, the year in which the second discussion paper was launched, until 2023, when this period witnessed important developments in Jordanian political life. This period was chosen because it represents a crucial stage in the path of democratic transition in Jordan, as it began to implement the ideas and visions presented in the discussion paper in practice.

Hypothesis of the Study

The main premise of this study stems from the fact that the second discussion paper of His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein has effectively contributed to strengthening the role of political parties in the Jordanian democratic system, which reflected positively on political stability and balance between political forces. The study assumes that this paper played a pivotal role in directing political parties towards achieving broader and more effective participation in the political process.

Define Concepts

Concepts play an essential role in guiding research and ensuring its accuracy and objectivity. Therefore, the researchers addressed the basic concepts related to the subject of study:

Discussion Paper: It is an official document issued by His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein, which aims to provide visions and ideas to promote political, social, and economic reform in Jordan.

Democratic System: refers to a political system that relies on political pluralism, and allows effective political participation by all components of society through fair elections and the effective role of political parties.

Political Parties: They are political institutions that seek to achieve their programs and objectives by participating in the political process and representing the interests of certain groups of society in government.

Study Variables

The Independent Variable: The Second Discussion Paper of His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein.

Dependent Variable: The Role of Political Parties in Strengthening the Jordanian Democratic System.

Study Methodology

Due to the importance of the research method in political science, this study relied on the descriptive analytical approach to understand the impact of the second discussion paper on the democratic system in Jordan. This approach allows for an analysis of the role the paper has played in changing the trajectory of political parties and how they respond to new challenges. In addition, the case study approach focusing on Jordanian political parties was used as a case study to understand in depth the impact of the discussion paper.

Previous Studies

In light of the review of previous studies related to the research topic, several research and scientific papers were reviewed on the impact of royal discussion papers on political life in Jordan, in addition to other studies on the role of political parties in promoting democracy. These studies provided an important theoretical background for the current study and helped identify the research gaps that this study seeks to fill by analyzing the impact of the second discussion paper in particular on Jordanian political parties.

In reference to previous studies, the researchers surveyed a number of studies related to the subject of the study. Abdul Ghani Tayseer Mohammed Al-Khalayleh's study (2020) aimed to demonstrate the ability of Jordanian political parties to form a parliamentary government under legislation and the constitution, and relied on the descriptive, analytical, and historical approach to analyze the development of partisan work and its challenges in Jordan. The study concluded that the weak participation of partisans and political programs hinder the formation of strong parliamentary governments, and recommended the need to activate the role of youth in the partisan and political process and be guided Discussion papers of His Majesty King Abdullah II to promote political action.

Ahmad al-Sharif and Aya Owais (2019) aimed at analyzing the discourse used in King Abdullah II's discussion papers, focusing on how it is used to advance his vision of reform and democracy in Jordan. The study relied on critical discourse analysis and text analysis, and explained that the king uses keyword repetition to enhance his vision on political reform, reflecting the importance of discussion papers in the development of the Jordanian political system.

In another study, a study published by Constitution Net (2021) aimed to analyze royal efforts to modernize Jordan's political system, including updating party and election laws, and explain the real motives behind these reforms. The study used a descriptive and analytical approach to review previous reform attempts, concluding that the proposed reforms may not lead to radical changes, but rather reflect tactical attempts to contain popular and regional pressures.

In the same context, a study published by the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy (2023) aimed to examine the evolution of political reform in Jordan with a focus on changes in laws related to political parties and elections. The study relied on the historical approach and critical analysis to trace the development of political reforms, and concluded that political reform faced significant challenges and did not meet popular expectations despite efforts to improve the political system.

After reviewing previous studies related to the research topic, this study focuses on assessing the impact of His Majesty King Abdullah II's discussion papers on the democratic system in Jordan, with a focus on studying the case of political parties. This study aims to analyze how these papers are applied on the ground, and the extent of their impact on enhancing the role of parties in the Jordanian political system. This study differs from previous ones in its focus on the direct relationship between discussion papers and the actual practice of political parties, including challenges. These parties face in working within the democratic framework that the papers seek to achieve. The study is also concerned with determining the effectiveness of these papers in achieving political reforms, which makes it necessary to analyze the changes that have occurred in the political behavior of Jordanian parties in light of these papers.

The first topic: discussion papers and political parties "a study in concepts"

The first requirement: the concept of discussion papers

First: Definition of Discussion Papers:

Introduction

The term "discussion papers" is used to refer to a series of documents issued by His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein since 2012, which are part of his overall vision for political and social reform in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The origin of this initiative goes back to the urgent need to promote national dialogue among the various segments of Jordanian society on key issues related to reform and political development. As in ancient Greek medicine, where the crisis marked a decisive turning point in the patient's life, the discussion papers seek to be a decisive turning point in the path of political reform in Jordan, to guide the country towards a more democratic and transparent future (Roberts, 1988, p. 10).

The Concept and Objectives of Discussion Papers

Discussion papers are a relatively new term in the political arena, but they are based on ancient practices based on opening spaces for dialogue and public debate on pivotal issues. Historically, the concept of debate has been used in societies as a tool for reaching political or social consensus. However, the discussion papers we see in contemporary contexts, such as those presented by His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein, take on a more structured and institutional dimension (King Abdullah II, 2013, p. 16).

Discussion papers are usually concerned with identifying existing problems and providing a strategic vision on ways to address them. Its main objective is to engage citizens and decision-makers in an open dialogue that contributes to shaping the political future of the state. Therefore, discussion papers are not just documents or statements, but represent an intellectual and reference framework for promoting political or social reform, as they contribute to directing the debate towards the fundamental issues that affect society. (Habermas, J, 1963, p643.)

Some researchers also believe that discussion papers represent a crucial stage in the process of democratic transition, as they work to enhance political awareness among citizens and develop state institutions in a way that reflects the aspirations of peoples. The interaction between the leadership and citizens through these papers is an indication of the regime's desire to achieve transparency and popular participation in the decision-making process (Al-Rawashdeh, 2020).

The Concept of Political Parties

Political parties are one of the most prominent pillars of democratic systems, as the idea of parties emerged from the dawn of the first democracies, and they represented groups with common political goals seeking to gain power or influence public policies (North, R. (N.D., p168.). Political parties are defined as formal or informal organizations that bring together individuals who adopt a unified political vision and program, and whose main objective is to gain power or influence state decisions, whether at the level of legislation or implementation (Amari, 1993, p. 13).

In this sense, political parties play a pivotal role in promoting democracy by representing various segments of society. It is the means through which citizens express their political orientations and opinions, and contributes to providing clear political programs to solve national problems. Parties are also seen as a tool for controlling the executive branch through their role in elected parliaments, and this role is reinforced in parliamentary systems that rely on party alliances to form governments (Lust-Okar, 2006, p123).

However, political parties face many challenges, whether internal such as weak organizational structure and funding, or external, such as government interventions or weak public trust. Despite these challenges, parties remain one of the main tools to ensure wider representation of society in political life (Al Bayati, 2015, p. 10).

The Second Requirement: The History of Political Parties in Jordan

Party life in Jordan was not born of the moment; it has deep roots that predate the establishment of the Emirate of Transjordan in 1921. This partisan life began under the Faisaliyah government in 1919, after the end of World War I and the unveiling of the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration. At the time, some Jordanians organized into the Syrian Independence Party, a party founded to defend the independence of Greater Syria and against foreign domination. Upon the establishment of Transjordan, a branch of the party was established. In Jordan, some of its members participated in the first Jordanian government headed by Rashid Tali in 1921 (Al-Khazaali, 2016).

First: The Evolution of Political Parties in Jordan

Several political parties were founded in Jordan after the proclamation of the emirate, and the Jordanian People's Party was among the first in 1927. This party called for an elected parliament and a government accountable to it, and was also one of the advocates of the first national conference in 1928 against the Jordanian-British treaty. The conferees announced a national charter that included demands for full independence for Jordan and rejection of the treaty that diminished the country's sovereignty (Abu Mustafa, 2015).

This was followed by a series of political parties that reflected the shifts of Jordan's political and social landscape. The Executive Committee of the National Congress led by Hussein Tarawneh, founded in 1929, was one of the most resistant to the British Mandate and the Zionist movement, and lasted for more than five years, making it among the most sustainable parties of the period. Other parties were founded such as the Jordanian Solidarity Party in 1933, the Jordanian Brotherhood Party in 1937, and the Social Nationalist Party in 1938 (Al Bayati & Al Jubouri, 2015).

During the forties and fifties of the last century, party life continued to grow and develop. The Muslim Brotherhood movement was founded in 1943 and officially recognized in 1946, followed by the establishment of the Jordanian Arab Party and the Jordanian People's Party in the same year. Next came the establishment of the Jordanian Communist Party in 1951, Hizb ut-Tahrir in 1952, the Arab Nationalist Movement in the same year, as well as the National Socialist Party, which formed a national government headed by Suleiman al-Nabulsi in 1956 (hajaj, 2016).

This period witnessed a decline in party activity due to local and regional political conditions. In 1957, a state of emergency was declared and party life ceased until 1989, when signs of a revival of democratic and parliamentary life began to appear in Jordan.

In 1992, the Parties Law was passed, which revived the party movement in Jordan after decades of hiatus. Many parties were founded based on different ideas and ideologies, some of which have continued until now. This was followed by the promulgation of new party laws in 2007 and 2012 when the parties file was under the authority of the Ministry of Interior. In 2015, the Parties Law No. 39 was issued, which transferred the parties file to the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs (Clutterbuck, 1993

With the accession of His Majesty King Abdullah II to the throne, the issue of political reform has become one of the country's priorities. The second discussion paper came to enhance the role of political parties in the democratic life in Jordan, which contributed to the formation of a new vision for the role of parties in the political process and their role in achieving political and social stability. This vision represented a shift towards enhancing political participation and party pluralism within an institutional framework that ensures the representation of various segments of Jordanian society (ConstitutionNet, 2021).

Over the decades, party life in Jordan has undergone major transformations, from the founding of parties in the early twentieth century to their freezing and revival in recent decades. The role of parties Today, considering His Majesty King Abdullah II's second discussion paper, reflects a new vision towards strengthening their role in the Jordanian democratic system, reflecting the political leadership's commitment to democratic reform.

Since its founding, Jordan has witnessed a multiparty system, but it has faced significant challenges in terms of popular and political acceptance. Between 1950 and 1989, political parties in Jordan suffered from legal and administrative constraints, which made it difficult for them to play an effective role in political life. However, after the events of the "April Gift" of 1989, which represented a major turning point in Jordanian political life, the ban on political parties was lifted, opening the door for them to actively participate in parliamentary elections (Abu-Odeh, 1999, p. 29).

In 1992, the Political Parties Law was passed, which defined the legal and regulatory frameworks for the work of parties in Jordan, which contributed to strengthening their political role. Despite this, parties continued to face significant challenges, including weak party infrastructure, low levels of popular trust, and overlapping executive powers with their work (Ryan, 2018, p. 45).

In 2012, His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein launched a series of discussion papers aimed at stimulating national dialogue on political reform and enhancing popular participation in the decision-making process. These papers came within the framework of the continuous efforts to restructure the Jordanian political system and promote democracy, as the second discussion paper constituted an important stage in this process, as it focused in particular on the role of political parties in the democratic system. The paper stressed the need to develop political parties as the cornerstone of any effective democratic system, and the importance of forming parliamentary governments based on the will of the people and working to achieve a balance between the different political forces (King Abdullah II, 2013).

The second discussion paper stresses the need to develop the political environment in Jordan, so that political parties can grow and develop. She called for the modernization of electoral laws in line with the goals of political reform, noting that political parties should not be just tools to gain power or political representation, but should be platforms that express the aspirations and needs of citizens. This reflects the royal vision aimed at creating a pluralistic political system that achieves justice and the effective participation of citizens in the political process (Habermas, 1963, p. 643).

Hence, the role of political parties is an essential element for the promotion of democracy, as these parties play a pivotal role in representing the various segments of society and expressing their interests. In the Jordanian context, parties are tools for achieving political and social stability, through their active participation in elections and the formation of governments, as well as contributing to the formulation of public policies. The second discussion paper points to the need to activate the role of political parties by enhancing their ability to effectively represent citizens, and building bridges of communication between them and the grassroots. To ensure true democratic representation (Lust-Okar, 2006, p. 123).

One of the main themes addressed in the paper is the balance of powers, as it stressed the need for the independence of political parties to ensure their ability to operate freely away from government interference. This point is key to promoting pluralistic democracy in Jordan, and ensures that parties are able to develop public policies that reflect the interests of citizens in a sustainable and effective manner (King Abdullah II, 2013).

Despite the ambitious goals set out in the second discussion paper, there are several challenges that hinder the realization of this vision. The most prominent of these challenges is the overlap between the executive and legislative authorities, which reduces the effectiveness of the role of parties in formulating policies and decision-making. In addition, parties suffer from a lack of financial resources that hinder them from implementing their political programs efficiently, as they rely heavily on government funding, which may affect their independence and limit their ability to represent the people (Schwedler, 2021, p. 305).

Political parties also face challenges related to popular awareness. Weak confidence among citizens in the ability of parties to bring about the required change has led to a low turnout in elections, which reflects negatively on the strength of parties and their role in political life (Al-Taher, 2023, p. 42). Despite these challenges, the second discussion paper remains an important roadmap towards strengthening the democratic system in Jordan through the development of political parties and enabling them to participate effectively in the political process.

Second: Second Discussion Paper: Focusing on the Development of Political Parties

Among the discussion papers issued, the second discussion paper focused specifically on developing the role of political parties in Jordan. This paper seeks to create a political environment that allows parties to grow and develop, by presenting clear and integrated political programs, and enhancing their role in the electoral process as a step towards forming parliamentary governments that represent the popular will. This initiative reflects the King's vision of building a political system capable of adapting to local and regional changes, and based on solid democratic foundations (Habermas, 1963, p. 643).

The second discussion paper aims to achieve several objectives, including strengthening the role of parties in the Jordanian political system and increasing their effectiveness in the political process. This is done by enhancing transparency and responsibility within parties, and encouraging the active participation of citizens in party life. These steps are necessary to ensure that parties do not only function as electoral tools, but as platforms that continuously express the concerns and hopes of the people (Al-Taher, 2023, p. 24).

The second discussion paper contributed to the reshaping of the party landscape in Jordan. This paper led to the emergence of new parties and the restructuring of existing parties to conform to the new vision put forward by the leadership. The political arena has witnessed notable developments, including an increase in the number of registered parties and an improvement in the quality of the political platforms they offer (Kamhawi, 2019, p. 56).

Moreover, the paper contributed to strengthening the role of parties in parliament and in political life in general, as parties became more able to represent different segments of society and participate actively in political decision-making. This has been positively reflected in increasing political participation and enhancing transparency and accountability in the political system (Ryan, 2020, p. 35).

However, there is still some criticism about the effectiveness of parties in achieving the desired political change. Despite improvements in party structure, the actual influence of some parties has remained limited. This suggests that further structural and organizational reforms are needed to strengthen the role of parties in Jordanian political life (Abu-Hamdi, 2021, p. 98).

Despite efforts to develop political parties, the second discussion paper faced many challenges in implementation. One of the most prominent of these challenges is the overlap between executive and legislative powers, which has reduced the role of parties in making important political decisions. This overlap has hindered parties from operating effectively and achieving their goals (Schwedler, 2021, p. 73).

In addition, the limited funding of political parties is a major impediment to achieving their goals. Despite royal directives that parties should be supported, financial support from the government is still insufficient to cover the parties' expenses and implement their political programs. This has prompted some parties to seek alternative sources of funding, affecting their independence and ability to objectively represent the interests of citizens (Lust, 2019, p. 60).

Political awareness among citizens still needs to be developed, as there is a low voter turnout and a lack of confidence in the ability of parties to bring about change. This has reduced the popular support base for political parties, negatively affecting their ability to influence political life (Al-Taher, 2023, p. 42).

Third: Second Discussion Paper: A Roadmap for the Future

Some researchers argue that the discussion papers, especially the second paper, are not just theoretical guidelines, but rather a roadmap that commits political parties and various sectors in Jordan to move towards real reforms. Hence the importance of these papers in determining the criteria that must be followed to achieve a more transparent and fair political system. These reforms can lead to positive results that contribute to enhancing political and social stability in the Kingdom (Al-Dhawiyah, 2016, p. 12).

The success of this vision depends heavily on the ability of political parties and state institutions to implement the proposed reforms effectively and efficiently. These papers reflect the royal concern for continuous interaction with internal and external challenges, making them a vital tool in Jordan's political development process (North, N.D., p. 168). The second discussion paper is part of a comprehensive strategy aimed at strengthening democracy and developing Jordan's political system by empowering political parties. Despite the challenges faced in the implementation of this paper, it has contributed to tangible developments in the political arena, with further reforms needed to strengthen the role of parties. Continuing to implement the royal directives and adhering to the roadmap set out in the discussion papers will contribute to achieving the goals of political reform and ensure the stability of the Kingdom in the Kingdom. Future.

The second discussion paper dealt in particular with the issue of political parties, stressing that the existence of strong and effective political parties is the basis of any successful democratic system. According to His Majesty the King, strengthening political parties requires a supportive legislative and regulatory environment, as well as promoting a culture of political dialogue between different forces and currents (King Abdullah II, 2013, p. 9).

The discussion papers set clear criteria for how to develop political parties by encouraging them to present integrated political programs and enhancing their participation in elections with the aim of forming parliamentary governments that represent the popular will. This shift in the role of parties reflects the King's commitment to modernizing Jordan's political system and making it more responsive to citizens' aspirations (Roberts, J., 2014, p. 18).

The discussion papers, especially the second, provide a practical framework for strengthening democracy in Jordan by strengthening the role of political parties. However, the practical implementation of this vision faces significant challenges related to weak party infrastructure and lack of interaction with voters. Therefore, there is a need to develop comprehensive strategies to support parties and enhance their ability to achieve the goals set out in the discussion papers (Issawi, 2015, p. 22).

In this context, the researchers argue that the discussion papers represent a clear roadmap for political reform in Jordan, but success in achieving this vision depends heavily on its actual implementation. Political parties need to develop their organizational capacities and enhance their interaction with the grassroots to achieve effective participation in the democratic system. Accordingly, it is proposed that financial and technical support be provided to political parties so that they can adopt and implement the proposed reforms effectively. Achieving these goals will enhance the ability of The Jordanian political system to achieve stability and sustainable democracy considering local and regional challenges.

The second topic: the role of political parties in the Jordanian political system: a political and democratic analysis of the second discussion paper

The first requirement: the democratic analysis of the second discussion paper of His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein

The second discussion paper, launched by His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein in 2013, marked a new phase in the process of political reform in Jordan, focusing mainly on strengthening the role of political parties in the democratic system. This move came as part of His Majesty's vision to enhance political stability and multi-partyism, based on the importance of constitutional and political reforms to achieve a balance between the various political forces in the country (King Abdullah II, 2013).

The aim of the second discussion paper was to improve the political environment in which parties operate and develop their ability to participate actively in decision-making. The paper stressed the need to update electoral laws in line with democratic reforms, emphasizing the importance of forming parliamentary governments based on the will of the people through broad representation of political parties (Issawi, 2015).

Jordanian political parties witnessed a remarkable development after the issuance of the second discussion paper, as it provided them with the opportunity to actively participate in the political scene. This paper pushed for rebuilding the party structure and strengthening the political independence of parties by enabling them to play a greater role in the electoral process. In this context, the 2024 parliamentary elections witnessed a remarkable development in the representation of parties, as the paper contributed to pushing parties towards improving their political programs and increasing their ability to attract voters and participate effectively in parliament. (Kamhawi, 2019).

The focus on parties in the second discussion paper enabled them to develop their organizational structure and present more realistic and implementable political programs. This shift allowed Jordanian parties to play a key role in the elections, winning a sizable percentage of parliamentary seats, increasing their influence in shaping public policies and influencing government decisions. This development is a natural consequence of the reform efforts led by the second discussion paper (Yom, 2017).

Despite the success achieved by political parties in obtaining a large number of parliamentary seats during the 2024 elections, significant challenges still face them. Most notably, the overlap between executive and legislative powers reduces the independence of parties and limits their ability to fully influence policymaking. In addition, poor funding for parties is a major impediment to the effective and independent implementation of their programs (Schwedler, 2021).

Low public trust in parties also remains a real problem, as citizens suffer from a gap between party aspirations and actual political performance. This low trust leads to low voter turnout, weakening the ability of parties to effectively play their role in promoting democracy (Al-Ta'her, 2023).

The second discussion paper is considered an important turning point in the path of political reform in Jordan, as it contributed to developing the role of political parties and enhancing their representation in the political system. Despite the challenges facing parties in the post-election phase, their success in obtaining a large number of parliamentary seats reflects the improvement in their political performance and ability to influence decision-making. The future requires continued commitment to implementing the reforms proposed in the second discussion paper to ensure the continuity of democratic change and increase the effectiveness of the Parties in the Jordanian political system.

The researchers believe that the second discussion paper of His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein represents a crucial step towards strengthening the role of political parties in the Jordanian political system, and achieving more democracy and stability. Despite the challenges facing the implementation of this vision, the paper provides a clear roadmap to achieve the desired political reform, by strengthening the role of parties in political life and increasing their participation in decision-making.

The second discussion paper remains a pivotal document in Jordan's political reform process, laying the foundations for building a political system capable of adapting to internal and external challenges. With continued commitment to implementing the proposed reforms, Jordan can achieve its goals of building a democratic system that reflects the aspirations of citizens and enhances the Kingdom's future stability.

First: The Second Discussion Paper: The Intellectual Basis of Democratic Transition

His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein's second discussion paper is an important strategic document to promote democratic transition in Jordan. It highlights the need to develop political parties and enable them to play a pivotal role in the political system, stressing that "democratic reform is not limited to amending laws and regulations, but requires continuous development of the approach that governs the relationship between citizens, the government, and parliamentarians" (Discussion Paper 2, 2013, p. 16). In doing so, the paper set out a practical roadmap to create the political environment that enables parties to actively participate in the formation of parliamentary governments that reflect the will of the people.

In response to the call of the second discussion paper, the Jordanian political arena has witnessed a remarkable movement since 2023, which resulted in the emergence of many new parties and the development of existing ones. These parties produced clearer and more ambitious political programs to participate in the 2024 parliamentary elections, where the number of participating parties reached thirty-six out of thirty-eight licensed parties (Maaytah, 2024). These parties participated in twenty-five lists within the public district, reflecting their commitment to realizing the royal vision of political reform.

It is worth noting that the amended electoral law allocated 35% of the seats in the House of Representatives to national party lists, allowing parties more space to compete. This change reflects a clear vision towards promoting political pluralism and encouraging parties to assume their responsibilities in forming parliamentary governments (Bani Amer, 2024). Party alliances have also witnessed remarkable growth, forming five alliances that included sixteen parties, which enhances party cooperation to achieve common goals (Maaytah, 2024).

Despite the great optimism about the growth of the role of parties in the upcoming parliamentary elections, there are significant challenges facing them. According to the RASED poll, 63% of parties suffer from a lack of financial capacity, which constitutes a major obstacle to organizing electoral campaigns effectively and ensuring that they reach voters. This problem may limit the ability of some parties to achieve strong results in elections (RASED, 2024).

Poor societal acceptance of parties also remains a major challenge. Nine percent of parties cited this problem as one of the main barriers they face. This challenge is due to the gap between parties and voters, which is linked to declining public confidence in the ability of parties to achieve the desired political reforms (Discussion Paper 2, 2013).

Despite these challenges, the electoral arena witnessed an increase in the number of candidates, with 1,651 people applying to run in local and public constituencies, with 76.5% of males and 23.5% of females. The competition for seats in the current elections has also become more intense, with an average of 9.5 candidates per seat, a decrease from the competitiveness rate in the 2020 elections, which was thirteen candidates per seat. This shift reflects the growing interest in national constituencies and party work rather than focusing on individual competition (Bani Amer, 2024).

The shift towards a system of parliamentary governments that relies more on political parties is one of the most important objectives sought to achieve in the second discussion paper. Part of this vision was achieved in the 2024 parliamentary elections, as parties now represent a large proportion of candidacies at the national level. For the first time in the history of Jordanian elections, the general constituency has become reserved for parties only, enhancing the role of parties in attracting voters and influencing national policies (Maaytah, 2024).

Data on party candidacies have shown that there has been a marked shift towards teamwork between parties. A number of lists included strong candidates, including former MPs and those with significant political influence, which enhances competition for seats and reflects the shift towards partisan cooperation to exceed the 7% threshold (Bani Amer, 2024).

Despite the challenges facing parties, the 2024 parliamentary elections show that political parties in Jordan have come a long way towards achieving this vision by increasing their participation and presence in parliament. As parties remain committed to developing their platforms and voters respond to calls for political change, Jordan could make greater progress toward a party-based democracy soon.

Second: Analysis of the Role of the Second Discussion Paper in Preparing Parties for Elections

His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein's second discussion paper represents a change in basic assumptions in Jordan's political system, laying out a roadmap to enable political parties to play a pivotal role in the democratic system. The paper focused on the importance of developing political parties, not only in terms of number, but in terms of quality and ability to represent the interests of citizens and present implementable political programs. This was a strategic shift as the paper made political parties an integral part of the decision-making process, Beyond its traditional role as a tool for electoral mobilization (Discussion Paper 2, 2013, p. 22).

Through the second discussion paper, the main goal became the transition to a genuine parliamentary system, where governments are formed based on the partisan majority in parliament. This shift, which was unusual in the Jordanian political context in previous decades, requires empowering parties through radical reforms. Therefore, the paper focused on supporting the construction of national political programs that reflect the concerns and aspirations of citizens, allowing parties to form strong government coalitions capable of facing economic and political challenges. In doing so, the paper contributed to the establishment of principles Institutional party work, which made the democratic transition in Jordan a long-term project and not just a limited reform process (Discussion Paper 2, 2013, p. 16).

Since the publication of the second discussion paper, political life in Jordan has witnessed numerous constitutional and legislative amendments that enhance the role of parties in the political system. Most notably, forty-one of the 138 seats in parliament will be allocated to political parties for 2024, with plans to gradually increase this percentage to 65% (Discussion Paper 2, 2013, p. 18). This privatization reflects a fundamental change in the role of parties, as they are no longer seen only as tools for mobilizing voters, but as actors contributing to shaping policies. Public and government guidance.

These amendments came as a result of a strategic orientation towards enabling parties to have more influence in the parliamentary system, which requires continuity in political reforms that guarantee the independence of parties and enable them to compete genuinely. Compared to previous elections, where tribal and family blocs dominated the political scene, the 2024 elections represent a change in basic assumptions, as political parties compete for clear platforms based on citizens' demands, not just their social or financial influence (Bani Amer, 2024).

The shift towards this system reflects a clear vision of the second discussion paper in promoting political pluralism and creating a system based on competence and party capacity. However, the success of these parties in achieving this goal depends on their ability to form strong and effective coalitions, capable of crossing the electoral threshold and achieving the required representation in parliament.

Second Requirement: Future Challenges and Expected Role of Parties

Despite this clear progress in empowering political parties, significant challenges remain facing these parties in Jordan. For example, 63% of parties are reported to be financially under-resourced, making it difficult for them to organize effective election campaigns and be able to reach all segments of the electorate (Discussion Paper 2, 2013, p. 20). This reality may constitute an obstacle to the ability of parties to take full advantage of political and legislative reforms that seek to enable it.

Besides financial challenges, there are also challenges related to the culture of partisanship in Jordanian society. A large proportion of citizens still see political parties as ineffective tools for achieving political change. This vision affects the rate of popular participation in elections and the ability of parties to build a broad support base that enables them to succeed. Compared to more developed democracies, where

political parties have a long history of institutional work and active popular participation, Jordanian parties still have A lot to do in this context (Schwedler, 2021).

On the other hand, the second discussion paper laid the foundations for improving this situation, focusing on the need for parties to develop national programs that reflect the needs and aspirations of citizens. By fostering internal political dialogue, parties can improve their ability to build trust with voters and provide real solutions to the challenges Jordan faces. Thus, it can be said that the second discussion paper not only laid out the theoretical framework for democratic transition, but also the practical foundations from which this transition can be achieved.

As the 2024 parliamentary elections approach, these elections are expected to be a real test of the parties' ability to benefit from the reforms that have been passed. According to polls, a large percentage of parties have already decided on their candidate names and electoral plans, reflecting a serious willingness to contest (RASED, 2024). It is expected that these elections will result in a parliament with a larger proportion of deputies belonging to political parties, contributing to the formation of a parliamentary government that reflects the will of the voters more compared to Previous elections (Discussion Paper 2, 2013, p. 18).

This change enhances the chances of achieving political reforms on the ground, as the next parliament will be more representative of Jordan's political and party diversity. These elections are also expected to lead to the formation of strong party coalitions capable of influencing government policies and directing them towards achieving national goals. In this context, the second discussion paper is the basis for this transformation, focusing on empowering parties and achieving a greater balance of powers in the political system. Jordanian.

The End

The study was launched from the impact of the second discussion paper of His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein on the development of political parties in Jordan and motivating them to play a pivotal role in the 2024 parliamentary elections. The study tried to analyze the role of this discussion paper (an independent variable) in empowering Jordanian political parties (a dependent variable) by reviewing the mechanisms and legislative amendments that led to structural changes in political life.

After trying to answer the questions and evaluate the hypotheses from which the study started, the following results were reached:

Despite the multiple challenges facing political parties in Jordan, political reforms, initiated by the second discussion paper, were one of the most prominent factors in enabling parties to play a greater role in parliamentary elections. The study showed that these reforms strengthened political pluralism and contributed to changing the shape of the parliamentary system.

The study validated the main hypothesis that the second discussion paper clearly contributed to directing parties towards collective action and strategic planning, which led to improving their representation in the 2024 parliamentary elections. This effect was demonstrated by the increasing number of party alliances and the increase in the proportion of seats allocated to parties in parliament.

The second discussion paper sought to push parties to adopt implementable national political platforms, leading to a qualitative shift in party policies towards better citizen representation. This trend resulted in an improvement in the performance of parties during the parliamentary elections, despite challenges related to funding and building community trust.

The 2024 elections represent a real turning point in the history of Jordanian political life, as it witnessed the entry of political parties into parliament at a higher rate than in the past, which reflects a development in the political system towards enabling parties to play an active role in the formation of parliamentary governments.

Despite these developments, significant challenges remain related to financial resources and the weakness of the popular base, but the second discussion paper paved the way for further progress in party and institutional work, which enhances the chances of achieving democratic reforms.

In conclusion, His Majesty King Abdullah II's second discussion paper contributed to pushing the Jordanian political system towards greater pluralism and balance of powers, while giving parties more space to influence political decision-making.

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