

## POLITICAL PARTICIPATION CONCEPT INDICATORS AND FORMS

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### Abstract

The study aimed to identify the concept of political participation, its indicators, stages, forms, motivations and obstacles. Given the importance of political participation in promoting democratic life, the study recommended raising the degrees of political awareness among citizens in order to build a political culture that leads to more political participation, activate the role of various socialization institutions, improve the general economic level, and the standard of living of individuals and their income, as the less per capita income, the lower the level of demand for political participation, and changing the citizens' view of the elections, the more the citizen believes in the usefulness and importance of the elections, the more likely they exercise their right to vote, but if they lose confidence in the elections, the greater they reluctance to participate in them.

**Keywords:** Political Participation, Political Awareness, Political Culture, Democracy

### INTRODUCTION

Political participation expresses the space of freedom and democratic practice provided by the political system in any country, as it is a reflection of the extent of political awareness in society, and one of the most important pillars of the political system, according to the great role played by political participation to establish institutional construction at all political, economic and social levels.

Political participation is all citizens' activities aimed at influencing government decisions and the selection of senior government employees, whether those activities are subjective or motor, individual or collective, legal or illegal, long-term or immediate, effective or ineffective. Political participation is linked in the form of actions and events of individuals; as positive participation types may be election, personal contact, and lobby. Or negative participation and its types are demonstrations, protests, sit-ins, and acts of violence (Huntington 1976, 503).

Political participation is considered a necessary tool for the purpose of distinguishing between democratic regimes and authoritarian regimes; as it relates to the structure of the political system, the extent to which it responds to political participation, and the provision of institutions, mechanisms, and laws that through which the process of political participation takes place.

Political participation is also the process by which the individual freely and consciously contributes to the formulation of the social lifestyle in the economic, social and political aspects, by providing him with sufficient opportunity to participate in the development of the general goals of the community movement, and to imagine the best means to achieve those goals, or determine his role in accomplishing the daily tasks that are gathered at the national level in the form of general goals, he is convinced of them, participates in their formulation, and defends them in the face of all obstacles that impede the means of achieving them (Abu Dhaif 2002, 155).

Political participation has long been limited to the class of the rich and nobles; as they had the largest role in political life, while the general class was immune from political participation, and its role was limited to protest actions and uprisings that did not demand radical change, but only demanded certain interests (Al-Qaraan 2000, 65).

At the beginnings of the Renaissance and until the seventeenth century, political participation spread until it peaked in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries during the Industrial Revolution, due to the economic and industrial transformation that contributed to the creation of social forces such as workers, traders, professionals and crafts. These social forces demanded that they have part of the political power by granting them the right to face government decisions that can harm their interests, in addition to the contributions of philosophers, intellectuals and writers in raising awareness of political participation, and calling for its expansion, in addition to the nature of the conflict between political leaders in that period, which had a prominent role in reaching its peak of political participation by creating a spirit of competition to reach power, and the subsequent attempt of all of these forces to gain popular support in their favour (Al-Menoufi 1987, 339).

Given the importance of political participation in democratic life and the development of societies, this study comes to provide a theoretical framework regarding political participation in terms of its concepts, indicators, stages, forms, motivations and obstacles.

## **IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

The importance of the study lies from the importance of political participation, which represents the focus of the individual's attention through which he can express his opinions and ideas, and translate them on the ground. Political participation also provides the opportunity for individuals to vote or sympathize with a certain political direction, and mobilize their forces around a particular political issue. This increases the political participation of the masses, which is a tool for measuring the legitimacy of any political system (Mahoub 2001, 96). It leads to the search for an alternative to legitimacy that is embodied in the use of support, or that the political system uses the factor of force with the aim of intimidation and enticement.

## **STUDY OBJECTIVES**

The study aims to achieve the following goals:

1. Statement of the concept of political participation and its indicators.
2. Identify the stages and forms of political participation.
3. Clarify the motivations and constraints of political participation.

## **Statement of Purpose**

The research problem of this study revolves around providing a theoretical framework on political participation as it is the first established promoter of democracy that ensures the participation of all individuals in governance and the formulation of public policies.

Based on the study problem, the following questions will be answered:

1. What is the concept of political participation and what are its indicators?
2. What are the stages of political participation and what are their forms?
3. What are the motives for political participation and what are its obstacles?

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study is based on the descriptive and analytical approach to survey all literature that dealt with the theoretical framework of political participation, where the concept of political participation, its stages, forms, motivations and obstacles will be discussed. This is as follows:

### **Concept of Political Participation**

The concept of political participation is generally related to parliamentary democratic political systems, and the high level of political participation in those systems is due to the interaction of five factors, namely (An Ankara and others 2008, 45):

1. Modernization, as a process based on the rational use of resources, the renewal of growth processes in the agricultural and industrial sector, rural-to-city migration, high education, and the development of mass communication.
2. Change in the structure of social classes
3. The influence of thinkers and modern means of mass communication on the opinions of citizens and constantly urge them to participate politically.
4. The emergence of difference between different political groups and leaders.
5. Increasing the role of the central government in the economic, social and cultural fields, which leads to finding those who support the general policies of the state and those who call for their amendment; because they affect the life of the citizen, and result in an increase in the volume of political participation.

Although political participation is considered an act or behaviour, it includes trends that are considered the main driver of that behaviour, considering that the process of political participation is an acquired process that a person learns during his life, and during his interaction with many reference groups starting from the family, and gradually from comrades' groups, religious institutions, parties, civil society institutions, and other socialization institutions (Mawhoob 2001, 53).

Political participation in its common sense is defined as those voluntary activities carried out by members of society with the aim of selecting their rulers and representatives, and contributing to policy and decision-making directly or indirectly (Mki2005, 65). These activities are divided into two parts, namely:

1. Traditional activities are represented in voting, which is one of the most widespread patterns of political participation, whether in democratic systems that take elections as a way to compare candidates and choose the incumbent of the optimal political position, by voting within a free framework, in order to influence political affairs and governance affairs, or in "authoritarian" non-democratic systems in which elections do not express anything but a tool to win support from individuals to reach a degree of legitimacy, and some individuals in those authoritarian regimes may resort to a means to express their protest against the existing system represented by their abstention from voting (Al-Menoufy 1985, 341-342).
2. Unconventional activities that may be legal such as complaints, or illegal, such as demonstrations, violence and assault on public property, in addition to civil wars and revolutions resorted to by citizens in the absence of legal means of expression to communicate their demands to governments, taking means to express their rejection of and protest against government policies (Mki2005, 69).

It is worth mentioning that the completion of the political participation process requires individuals who have the political interest and awareness that is the result of early upbringing through the primary groups represented in the family and the school that follow the democratic approach in raising its members, so that they become more inclined to participate than those individuals who arise in primary groups that follow an authoritarian approach. The process of completing political participation is also linked to a direct relationship with the quantity and quality of political stimuli to which individuals are exposed. Namely the individual's class affiliation, place of residence and educational status, as it is noted that individuals living in cities, educated individuals and individuals belonging to the middle class are more vulnerable to political stimulus than individuals belonging to the working class, individuals living in villages and uneducated individuals.

Political participation in all its forms means that the individual has a share of political affairs (Al-Srouf 2010 and 21) that qualifies him to play his role in political life, and to express his opinions, positions and orientations, whether through traditional or non-traditional activities, as mentioned in the study earlier.

To clarify the concept of political participation, the study will present some of the definitions reached by political and sociologists, which are:

- Definition of "Sedney Verba" where he defined political participation as "those legal activities by citizens in private sectors, which are aimed at influencing ruling individuals or their actions (Tahboub 2003, 8). Here we note that Verba has focused on legal activities, and excluded illegal activities that an individual can use to express political participation, which are riots, violence, revolutions, civil wars and property burglaries.
- Philip Pro defined it as "the sum of collective activities carried out by convicts, capable of giving them an impact on the functioning of the political system, and this criterion

is coupled in democratic systems in which it is considered a fundamental value with the concept of citizenship (Mohoub 2001, 98).

- The concept of political participation also refers to the citizen's right to perform his role in the political decision-making process and his right to public control over power and its organs, whether executive or legislative (Tahboub 2003, 9).
- Samuel Huntington defined political participation as "the activities of individuals aimed at influencing government decision-making, and on the choice of the entity of government employees, whether individual or collective activities, organized or spontaneous, seasonal or continuous, peaceful or violent, effective or ineffective, legitimate or illegal (Huntington 1976, 24). Thus, Huntington believes that the breadth and wide scope of political participation is the feature of the modern state, based on the fact that the political participation of groups, which stems from the right of citizenship, which is defined as the right of the individual to express his opinions and positions and his approval of the system of government under which he lives are the most important aspects of political modernization.
- Reese McGee considered political participation to be a source of political change, underscoring how important it is, defining it as "a process by which an individual or group freely, consciously, and orderly contributes to shaping the political lifestyle in society, directly contributing to the process of political development (Juhari 1984, 48).

Political participation is the accomplishment of daily tasks that gather on the national level in the form of its goals, and a participant in its formulation, and defending it in the face of all obstacles that stand in its way (Abu Deif 2002, 155), and the study finds that this definition is considered one of the most comprehensive definitions of political participation, As it deals with the most important topic in the process of political participation, which is represented in persuading the individual of the goal and form that he participates in political life, and in this sense, political participation expresses political practice, in harmony with his feeling of thought, work, change and participation in society from society (Al-Surour 2010, 46) Here, in turn, the individual is keen to influence political life, play a positive role by exercising his right to run for nomination and vote, discuss various political issues with others, and join organizations, institutions and political parties.

The study provides a procedural definition of political participation, which is the involvement of the average individual according to his will and choice in the political and social life of his society, and the existence of the opportunity for him to participate in setting the general goals of that society.

It is clear from the previous definitions that political participation is a dynamic process in which the individual participates in the political life of his society voluntarily and consciously, in order to influence the general political track in order to achieve the public interest that is consistent with his class affiliation, opinions, ideas and trends gained through the processes of social and political formation to which he underwent. This participation takes place through a range of legal activities such as voting, nomination, complaints, participation in political

seminars and discussions, affiliation with civil society institutions, joining political parties, or illegal activities such as demonstrations, violence, attacks on public property, revolutions, and civil wars.

## INDICATORS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Indicators of political participation are as follows:

### 1. **Vote In Elections**

This is done by choosing it in the direct voting approach that it represents, Judging the effectiveness and success of this participation is linked to the nature of the political system and the sincerity of its democratic orientations. It is also linked to the integrity of the electoral process, the community's ability to hold accountable those they chose as representatives on their behalf and follow them up, and not relying on blind trust that turns the representative into an entity separate from the community that he chose as his representative. (Ali, 2008, 42).

### 2. **Participation Through The Popular Referendum**

This type of participation is resorted to in democratic systems, in order to gain popular support for a specific law or procedure before applying it on the ground (Abrash 1999, 252).

### 3. **Participation By Popular Objection**

This type of participation gives citizens the right to object to any government policy, decision, or law issued by Parliament, and it is mentioned that this form of participation is not appropriate for Arab societies in general. This is based on several reasons, the most important of which is: weak and lack of political awareness (Al-Azmi 2008, 19).

### 4. **Participation By Demanding A Re-Election**

This type of participation is in the event that doubts are raised about some deputies or officials, and this is done within direct legal and judicial procedures (Mahoub 2001, 66).

### 5. **Participation By Resorting To Means Of Pressure**

This participation is through strikes, demonstrations, civil disobedience, and resorting to violence against state institutions or symbols, and this is in the event that all channels of legitimate participation are closed, and this type of participation is considered one of the most dangerous types of political participation, as it represents a popular rejection of an existing political system It is sought to change it through the popular movement, which requires the presence of political parties and effective and strong civil society organizations that meet at the same goal in order to fight a battle at a certain stage when the political system has reached a decisive slope in the life of society (Abrash 1999, 102).

### 6. **Participation Through Lobbying And Interests Groups**

This type of participation is resorted to in the absence of meaningful and effective official

channels, as a group of individuals resort to forming a group that puts pressure on decision-makers to achieve their interests, either by making a decision that is compatible with their interests, or by retracting a decision that contradicts their interests. This type of participation expresses a segment that is limited in number and has wide influence politically and economically and is committed to achieving its interests only (Tahboub 2003, 22).

### **Participation through political parties and civil society institutions**

This type of participation takes place in democratic regimes that believe in pluralism, which is considered the main driver of the election process through which public opinion is mobilized and citizens are motivated to participate in politics (Abrash 1999, 254).

Political participation takes place through political parties and civil society institutions by crystallizing public opinion to put pressure on the authority and its decisions through federations, trade unions, and associations in all their feminist, cultural, and religious forms. Despite the importance of this type of participation, it is not practiced in the Arab world; this is due to the weakness of civil society organizations, which are unable to create a mass base around their programs and positions (Ali 2008, 19).

### **Stages of political participation**

Political participation differs in its levels from one society to another, within society itself, and from one period of time to another. It has been observed through the definition of political participation that it ranges between legal and illegal activities, between interest in political issues and interaction with them, and between active individuals who tend to discuss and dialogue, and they have a desire to participate, and between individuals who refuse to participate according to the emergence or absence of the motive (Tahboub 13, 2003), and political participation depends on several conditions such as the availability of conditions that allow or restrict participation, and the extent of citizens' willingness to contribute to collective action (Al-Menoufy 1987, 155).

The researchers believe that the process of political participation is subject to five levels that vary according to society and the stage it lives. These levels are:

- **Level one:** represents political action activists. Carl Deutch set six conditions that at least three of them must be met by the individual who belongs to this category, namely (Mawhib 2001,115):
  - Membership of a political organization.
  - Donate to a political organization or to a candidate in a general election.
  - Regular attendance at political meetings.
  - Participation in electoral campaigns.
  - Sending messages on political issues to the authority, whether executive or legislative authority or the press.

- Talking about politics with people outside the narrow family circle that surrounds the individual. This category constitutes the highest peak in the pyramid of political participation, and its members hold political positions, and they also have the right to make decisions through which they influence society. This influence may go beyond the impact on society to the impact on society's relationship with other societies (Tahboub 2003, 18).
- **Level Two:** represents the category that cannot make a political decision, but rather influence it (Mohoub 2001, 121), because they have the sources of power that influence the political system, and this category represents the leaders of political parties, lobbyists, and those seeking political positions (Al-Sorour 2010, 40).
- **Level Three:** represents the active group in political organizations that seek to achieve and defend public interests through their participation in formal and informal conferences and meetings (Mohoub 2001, 122).
- **Level Four:** represented in the category that has the right to vote in elections or referendums, and the vote of this category does not come from its awareness of the importance of political participation, but from different points of view according to each individual (Tahboub 2003, 19).
- **Level Five:** It is the politically speaking category, which forms the broad base of indifferents and those who depart from political participation, and they do not even exist as spectators, or some of them may tend to use a violent and sharp image of participation (Alaswad1999, 175).

Some researchers point out that the indifference of this broad base of individuals to political participation and reluctance to it is due to a range of reasons, summarized in (Tahboub 2003, 19):

1. Historical circumstances that their society is going through, which is related to external invasions, external governance, and the ideas it carries that carried negative effects on individuals, as they instilled in them the spirit of division, and reduced the features of collective and cooperative work.
2. Political alienation: It means that the individual feels worthless in the society to which he belongs, and that power does not feel it, which leads to his feeling that the political events that are taking place are unrelated to him, and therefore the individual loses the enthusiasm of active political participation.
3. Political doubt, which is the result of political alienation, is the lack of trust between the individual and those working in the field of politics, and there is political doubt in countries that pursue a system of formal democracy in which elections results are predetermined (Mowed 2001, 124).

## STAGES OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Political participation has become one of the important topics at the academic and societal levels, and it has received great attention from thinkers in the field of social, political and historical sciences, as well as from civil and governmental institutions and governments, because political participation carries within it the values and emotions of the individual and his sense of loyalty and belonging to the community in which he lives and as part of it, and it is the way through which the individual can express his views and ideas, and exercise his role in the political process and political change.

Since political participation is only a way through which the individual expresses the values and feelings that he holds towards the political system in the society to which he belongs, which is governed by a set of motives and incentives, it either pushes the individual to participate and takes the nature of support and loyalty or the nature of opposition and violence, or it may hinder. The individual refrains from participating, and pushes him to indifference, alienation and political isolation.

These incentives and factors include social data, where political participation is affected by the level of education, income, and gender of the members of society, and the political stimuli that are formed by individuals through following the media or following political movements. Here it must be noted the importance of political parties and civil society institutions that it represents an umbrella under which the means that provide the individual with a space to express his opinions and ideas contribute to refining his personality and developing his skills, so that he becomes a more aware individual and capable of political participation, in addition to that these institutions and parties work to provide the mechanisms represented in holding conferences, seminars and meetings that encourage individuals to Political participation, creating and developing political motivation for them (Al-Surour 2010, 52).

Political participation goes through four stages, namely (Al-Azmi 2008, 41):

1. Political interest: It expresses the individual's interest in public issues, at different periods of time, in addition to the individual's follow-up of political events, and participation in political discussions with others.
2. Political knowledge: It means that the individual has knowledge of personalities who play a political role in society, such as knowledge of members of parliament, ministers, and political elites.
3. Political voting: It means participating in election campaigns, whether by providing material support through election campaigns, assisting candidates, or by participating in voting
4. Political demands: It means contacting official bodies, submitting complaints, and participating in voluntary parties and associations and civil society organizations.

## FORMS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Forms of political participation range from holding a political or administrative position, seeking a political or administrative position, active membership in a political organization, regular membership in a political organization, active membership in a par apolitical organization, regular membership in a parapolitical organization, participation in public political meetings, participation in informal political debates, interest in public policies, voting in elections, and finally those who are not interested in politics (Alsrour,2010:96).

There are other divisions of forms of political participation and indicators as follows (Abrach 1999):

### 1. Official participation (institutions)

It expresses the participation of politically responsible individuals who perform their established functions, as well as individuals involved in political work.

### 2. Organized Participation

It is represented by participation through agencies and institutions that monitor and accumulate individual demands, and then turn them into political choices within the framework of specific programs, and an example of organized participation is joining political parties.

### 3. Independent participation

It is the independent participation of the individual through which he has the absolute freedom to choose the type and degree of his participation.

### 4. Circumstance participation

It is represented in the practice of the individual to participate once or several times, and then inactivity.

### 5. Permanent continuous participation

This form of political participation is the most prominent in democratic societies that consider the effectiveness and institutionalization of civil society through political parties, trade unions, interest groups, and organizations to be the basis of their political structure.

Other divisions of forms of political participation include putting them in two forms, as follows:

- **The first form:** consists of organized and familiar activities, such as: registration on electoral lists, voting, searching for political media, belonging to an organization that deals with collective issues, political discussions, joining a specific political party, attending political meetings and meetings, and organizing participation in an electoral campaign (Al-Azmi 2008, 39).
- **The second form:** expresses the activities that are held temporarily, through which it expresses the attitudes of individuals towards a particular issue or event, represented by protest actions, such as sit-ins and demonstrations. Those protest actions, sit-ins and

demonstrations may be legally, legally and peacefully. These demonstrations can be divided into (Ashour 2003, 11):

1. **The driving demonstrations:** The role of these demonstrations is to highlight a particular issue that political institutions are trying to hide from the political arena.
2. **Routine demonstrations:** The role of these demonstrations is to provide organizations with the opportunity to express their ability to mobilize on current momentary issues, such as trade union demonstrations to collect workers' rights.
3. **Demonstrations associated with comprehensive political crises:** The role of these demonstrations is limited to demanding the preservation or overthrow of public authorities. There may be illegal, illegal, violent, and violent demonstrations, protest and sit-ins, and this type of participation is resorted to by individuals as an expression of their indignation and non-acceptance of the status quo, and in protest against the failure to implement and fulfill their desires for which they engaged in the process of political participation, and try through this participation to pressure the government and political regime.

After this introduction of forms of political participation, it is clear that some researchers in its fields have excluded violence from its forms; based on the fact that is not based on legal capacity. But the researcher believes that violence should be included as a form of political participation; based on the fact that political participation is only an activity that individuals resort to influence government policies on a particular issue. Thus, violence and participation participate in the approach, whereby individuals practice violence to influence government policies and decisions, and since the participation of individuals requires that government policies meet their demands, the response of governments and decision-makers to the demands of those who provoke violence reinforces the conviction that violence is only a form of political participation.

## MOTIVES FOR POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The motives of political participation may be psychological, as the individual seeks through his political participation to prove that he is a person who enjoys freedom and will, and can take a political position and express it, and here political participation gives the individual his self-confidence, and makes him feel important as an individual of value in society (Tahboub 2003, 13).

Political participation may be a tool for expressing political awareness and citizenship, as the individual links his rights granted to him by society, with his duties towards that society (Ali 2008, 46).

Political participation may be a tool for expressing the cultural, political and social demands of the masses, and this participation appears through the gathering of a social group or segment behind its representatives who seek to achieve specific demands that serve their interests, and strengthen their positions towards a particular issue, such as calling for a strike, or carrying out a sit-in or a vigil (Mawhoub, 2001, 105).

Political participation may be religious or ethnically motivated. This type of participation

appears in countries with multiple nationalities, religions, or sects, where individuals in those countries seek to show their religious or national thought, thus forming a political body of their own, through which they defend their interests and rights (Ali 2008).

Political participation may be a fear of power, and this type of participation appears in the developing world, where participation is only in obedience to the wishes and orders of power (Mohoub 2001, 105).

Also political participation may be a request for a particular political position or job position (Mawhoub 2001, 105).

political participation may be a defensive policy against an expected danger, and this participation is related to the emergence of a threat to the state and the citizen, such as the spread of extremist forces, fear of their coming to power, or the spread of racist ideas, which pushes the individual out of his state of indifference to the state of participation (Ali 2008, 46). Finally, political participation may be a manifestation of family and tribal solidarity. Here the individual does not have any political tendencies, but he exercises his right to elections only for the benefit of a person close to him, or for the benefit of a member of his tribe (Ali 2008, 47). The degree of clarity in political goals is an important motivation for the participation of political individuals, especially when these goals are related to the needs of a large number of individuals who make up the political system. Through the aforementioned motivations, the study was able to extract a set of incentives that increase the desire of the individual to participate in the political process. These incentives are summarized in:

- The individual's sense of national duty, loyalty and belonging to his homeland.
- The general political climate that gives an individual the opportunity to express their opinion in a democratic framework.
- Social and economic characteristics have an important and fundamental role in promoting political participation among individuals.
- Civil society organizations, unions, parties and associations influence the individuals who belong to them, and promote their political participation.

## **OBSTACLES OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

Political participation is a means by which the individual expresses his freedom, opinions and ideas, and it is one of his rights granted to him by the Constitution in democratic countries, but some individuals do not always exercise this right, and do not give any attention to political life, which is known as counter-political behavior (Assus 2003, 12). (Dal, 2005) suggests that the obstacles to the interest of individuals:

- If the individual finds that the compensation he receives as a result of the participation process is less than the compensation he receives as a result of his participation in another activity.
- If the individual believes that the new goals of his participation are not different from

the previous goals, so his participation will not change anything on the ground.

- If the individual has doubt about the ability to change the existing situations, this doubt leads him to refrain from participating; due to his feeling of difficulty in changing.
- If an individual has a sense of limited information and political culture, this will prompt him to refrain from participating.
- If the individual has the feeling that he will get his goals without being linked to politics

Other researchers also suggest that individuals' reluctance to participate politically is due to a set of reasons (Ashour 2003, 16):

- The individual's feeling of non-social integration, and this feeling is generated in minorities, and individuals who feel that the state rejects them.
- The individual's lack of confidence in the candidate, and the lack of an efficient candidate from the individual's point of view.
- The feeling of the individual that there is no point in his voice affecting government decisions, and that the consequences of his participation do not benefit him, and that there is always a gap between what is said from politicians, and what is applied on the ground
- An individual expects negative results from the process of his participation, such as fear of threatening his personal safety, fear that his relationship with others will be affected, or fear of losing his job.
- Absence of political stimuli factors acquired by the individual from institutions of political upbringing, including the family, parties, and the media.
- Weak loyalty and belonging to individuals; due to the lack of society to provide for their basic needs, which contributes to weakening their social integration
- Refraining from political participation may be due to historical reasons, such as foreign invasions, foreign rule, and the ideas it carries in which it carries, which reduces collective action and cooperation, and instills a spirit of division. It is not mentioned that the high level of participation is not necessarily an expression of a state of political stability, as some researchers believe that political participation may reach high levels in countries that contain a high degree of conflict between political forces, as these forces compete with each other to win the support of citizens, or participation in them may be an expression of the emotions raised by citizens as a result of the racial contradictions experienced by society (Al-Surour 2010, 53).

By addressing the crisis of political participation in the Arab world, (Moawad, 1989) points out that the most important thing that hinders the Arab citizen from political participation, and prevents the expansion of its base of political participation is the following (Mowad 1989, 68):

1. The existence of severe socio-economic inequality among citizens, the lack of a minimum level of economic sufficiency, high unemployment and poverty rates, and a

lack of social justice, which led to popular dissatisfaction with the political system, and thus a lack of interest in political life.

2. The spread of illiteracy, and the lack of experience that negatively affects the degree of political awareness of the Arab citizen.
3. Poor participation in the fields of social and political life
4. The tyranny of personal benefit, and the prominence of the personal worker over the political process.
5. Weakness of intermediate political institutions and organizations, represented by political parties, interest groups, lobbyists, and civil society organizations.
6. The stagnation of political culture, as the political and social formation processes prevailing in the Arab world, and the associated ideas, beliefs and behavior contributed to the low levels of political participation

## RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing the concept of political participation, its stages, forms, motivations and obstacles, the study recommends the following:

1. Raising political awareness among citizens in order to build a political culture that leads to more political participation, and activating the role of various social and political formation institutions.
2. Improving the general economic level, the standard of living and income of individuals, as the lower the per capita income, the lower the level of political participation.
3. Changing citizens' perception of elections, the more a citizen believes in the feasibility and importance of elections, the more likely he is to exercise his right to vote, but if he loses confidence in the elections, the more he is reluctant to participate in them.
4. Developing the parliamentary institution, and raising its level by responding to the demands of citizens, and paying attention to their public affairs, not rushing to enact legislation and laws, taking into account that the laws issued meet the public affairs and the public interest, giving priority to the public interest over what is less, activating political control over governments with regard to public policy, the existence of a legal code of parliamentary behavior, holding the erring parliamentarian accountable, raising the level of integrity and transparency in parliamentary work, and increasing the degrees of communication with the bases elections, and identifying their concerns and needs.
5. Reviewing the election law in terms of determining a percentage of seats for political parties of not less than (50%) of the total seats in parliament, and that people are allowed to run independently or individually.
6. Using various media to change the stereotype of women, highlight women as active citizens, visionaries and thinking capable of achieving achievements at all political,

economic and social levels, and developing a clear plan to support competent female candidates who are able to obtain high voting rates in their constituencies, and avoid nominating more than one woman in the same constituency.

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