Contributions of the National Council for Women in Promoting the Political Empowerment of Egyptian Women

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Abstract: The study aimed at identifying the actual role that the National Council for Women plays through the services, programs and strategies it provides to facilitate women political empowerment. This study was a descriptive study, which used comprehensive social survey methodology for 54 female members of the National Council for Women in Cairo. The study revealed the following results: the most important role for the National Council for Women is to identify the needs and problems associated with politically empowering women via studying, investigating and preparing the annual plan. The council included plans to empower women politically via multiple services, as well as the important indicators, improving percentage of female election representation. As for the obstacles, these include unclear vision for women political empowerment, low number of women volunteers and participants in the political field, and the prevailing beliefs that hinder women's political participation.

Keywords: Egyptian Women- Political Empowerment- National Council for Women.

Introduction:

On their way to achieve comprehensive development, countries seek to find a kind of balance between economic and social development through interest in increasing services, designing programs, elevating investment in human resources including both sexes (men and women). Involving women in the political process is an essential part if we want to speed up the developing process and raising the standard of human life. (Roslyn, 2000, p.144).

Women were not satisfied with their shallow contribution in all fields, specifically, in the political sphere and political life. Nevertheless, women face many obstacles in their societies making their role only honorary. Despite to all obstacles, women's contributions increased and began to develop and shine year after year, and we can see roles that are more effective for women in different countries, (Baybars, 2015, p. 251).

Investing in women's' capabilities and empowering them are among the most secure ways to overcome their problems. The past two decades has witnessed a forced increase in societal awareness for empowering women (Abdul-Jawad, 2009, p. 1756), and the study of Ibn Jalili (2008) revealed an urgent need for the inclusion of women in the comprehensive development process by setting up plans, taking into consideration different conditions and interests of women. The integration process seeks to make women part of the basic developing efforts, development strategies to consider participant women, and beneficiaries of developing

plans, as well as, improving women's living conditions. The process provides them with opportunities to participate in economic, social, and political development. The study of Al-Mashhadani (2012) concluded that the process of empowering women achieves a level of equality between women and men in political, social, and economic work, and requires identified mechanisms to proceed this equality. Such mechanisms include activating and amending laws related to penalties to reserve women's dignity.

Egyptian women's political rights are evidently rendered by many internal and external pressures, which arise from time to time as well as denial of their political rights by society. Under the guise of freedom, democracy, and the empowerment of women, especially in the political aspect, the Egyptian woman is making a remarkable effort in the framework of her endeavor to obtain her political rights for equality with men and for obtaining citizenship rights. The door is open to empower women, as Egyptian women were intensely waging wars to obtain equality with men and in political life before the January 25th revolution in 2011. (Abdulaziz, 2016, p. 52).

Empowering women and women's role in political development was reported in Elbour (2009, p.22) where equal opportunities for women and men and their full participation in power structures, political leadership, political representation, decision-making, and political accountability are essential in the process.

This is confirmed by Moghadam's (2014) study, which focuses on the impact of notions of atonalism on Women's rights in Egypt." This study talks about the conflict between islamic and secular ideology about politically empowering women and explains the efforts made to combat the challenges facing Egyptian women in their daily lives.

Political participation of Egyptian women has emerged after January 2011's revolution, which was proved in Wahba's study (2014) where 5 out of 150 women from 5 different Egyptian governorates have participated in the elections before 2011, and this prevalence increased after the revolution. After January 25th revolution, the percentage of women registered in the 2012 parliamentary elections reached more than 48% of those who have the right to vote compared to only 37% in 2005. Nine hundred-eighty four women ran in the same elections as opposed to only 61 in the two mentioned years, respectively.

Nevertheless, women's representation in Parliament in 2012 did not exceed 2%, then in the 2014 Constitution, 10% of parliament was for women (Association for the Advancement and Development of Women, 2014, pp: 7-12). Opinion polls indicated that both January 2011 and June 2013 revolutions enhanced the opportunities for Egyptian women to participate in political life and that awareness of gender issues has evolved, despite the persistence of cultural restrictions and the weak role of civil society organizations in this context. It is worth noting that the 2014 Constitution reserved 25% of the local government seats forwomen (Shash & Forden, 2016, p. 79).

This is confirmed by the study of Fawzi & Bahi et.el (2017) as well as the study of Khodair & Hassib (2015), which referred to the roles of women to analyze and explain the position of women in decision-making positions in state institutions and civil society organizations with their limited role in the 2014 Constitution. The 2014 constitution faced a serious issue between the quality of texts and the problems of activation and the impact of economic and social empowerment on women's political participation. Moreover, talking about international experiences and the cultural component of the political participation of Egyptian women in terms of influences and problems of local policies and its impact on political empowerment of women, the limited role of 2014 Constitution had the main influence on the political empowerment of women.

Believing that the stability and progress of the state can only be achieved through the participation of women in the public sphere as a leading actor, the National Council for Women, as the national mechanism concerned with the advancement of Egyptian women, both have led a broad participatory process to develop the sustainable development strategy "Egypt Vision 2030" (The National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030, 2017, p. 75).

The National Council for Women is considered one of the governmental institutions concerned with empowering Egyptian women, which was established by Republican Decree No. 90 of year 2000. It is one of the independent bodies of the Egyptian state, directly affiliated with the president of the republic It is the supreme national mechanism for the advancement of women in Egypt and is entrusted with developing and following up plans for the advancement of women; proposing policies in the field of developing women; enabling them to play their primary role in society; and integrating their efforts into comprehensive development programs.

The role of the National Council for Women began to appear actively since the Egyptian President declared the 2017, the year for Egyptian women, yet the matter was not limited to one year, rather successive years for women. Thus, the government worked on several legislations that do justice to women such as criminalizing their deprivation of inheritance and increasing the punishment of female circumcision.

Political participation and decision-making powers are measured by the percentage of women and men's participation in parliament. The economic participation and decision-making power can be measured by two indicators: first, proportion of women and men participating in positions such as legislative and senior management; secondly, professional, and technical positions in the private sector and control of economic resources.

Taking all together, the issue of women has become a global issue, and involvement in political life has come to the surface as an indicator of the progress of democratic life in societies. The political empowerment of women is linked to their legal legitimacy, such as participation in political decision-making processes, elections, and voting. The main problem of the study is to know the political role for both women in Egypt and Tunisia after the Arab Spring revolutions, which is formulated in a main research question of 'What is the actual role of the National Council for Women in empowering women politically?'

The importance of this study: women are considered an important element of human development that should be considered now as the participation of women in the development of society. Such participation faces many obstacles that require concertized efforts to be resolved. Social work is one of the professions that contribute to supporting the role of women and empowering them politically to participate in all the activities that serve societies. This research has a scientific importance to the political empowerment of women, and thus it is possible to identify the areas of seriousness and excellence in this field.

Objectives of the study:

1. Standing on the actual role that the National Council for Women plays through the services it provides to women for facilitating their political empowerment.

2. Determine the services provided by the National Council for Women to facilitate the process of political empowerment for them.

3. Defining the programs and strategies used by the National Council for Women that help empowering women politically.

4. Monitoring indicators of political empowerment of women from the viewpoint of female members of the National Council for Women.

5. Identifying the obstacles that women face in the process of political empowerment and the role of the Council in addressing and dealing with these obstacles.

Study Questions:

1. What are the actual services provided by the National Council for Women play for women to facilitate their political empowerment?

2. Which services do the National Council for Women provide to facilitate the process of political empowerment of women?

3. What programs and strategies do the National Council for Women use that help empower women politically?

4. What are the indicators of empowering women politically from the members of the National Council for Women's viewpoint?

5. What are the most important obstacles that women face in the process of political empowerment and the role of the Council in confronting and dealing with them?

The theoretical part of the study:

- Concept of women's political empowerment:

Linguistically: it is the source of the action (enabled) and the physical locus of the thing, and we can generally say that linguistically empowering means making it capable of something. (Arabic Language Dictionary, 1990).

- Idiomatically: it is to raise awareness, capabilities, understanding and readiness for women and men to make a difference in society. (Abu Bakr & Sukkari, 2006, p. 102).

Women's political empowerment can be defined by increasing their capacity for choice, representation, and political participation (Sundstr.m.et al., 2015, p. 4). Political influence may take direct forms through obtaining seats for decision-makers, or indirectly through voting and choosing those who do so (Al-Sayed, 2010, p. 153). Increased political empowerment of women is achieved through their legislative and executive positions, and choosing whoever represents them through official political channels, as well as their participation in civil society (Alexander, et al. 2016, p. 433).

Indicators of the political participation of women:

International law has recognized that it is the duty of states toward their citizens to ensure that women exercise full human rights equally with men without discrimination, regardless of their form and source.

These global, regional, and local legislative foundations include political rights most importantly; right in equality and non-discrimination, the right to participate in public and political life, the right to conduct public affairs. (Qazadri, 2015, 129)

Methodology: -

This study is a descriptive study that seeks to define the role of the National Council for Women in empowering women politically. The researcher relied on the methodology of a comprehensive social survey of female members of the National Council for Women in Cairo Governorate. The data were collected through the application of the questionnaire tool specially designed for this study, which clarified the role that the National Council for Women plays as well as the most important programs and strategies it uses to empower women politically and the most important difficulties they face in empowering women politically.

This tool was presented to a group of arbitrators to configure the extent to which this tool is applicable. After adopting the tool, the researcher began collecting the data from female members of the National Council for Women in Cairo Governorate, Egypt. The data was analyzed using the (SPSS) program by giving weights for each of the study variables, and the weights range between: Yes = (3), To some extent (2), No = (1).The classified data in tables were either simple or complex, as required by the quality of data, with table numbering in a serial.

Then the data were analyzing after tabulating them, by analyzing the content of the tables, and linking them with each other, in a way that confirms the facts revealed by the study. The researcher resorted to a set of statistical treatments to analyze the data by using the statistical program (23 SPSS) to find the different correlational coefficients, including the following: percentage, arithmetic mean, weighted frequencies, order, total weights, and the alpha-Cronbach correlation coefficient.

- Fields of study:

-**Spatial field:** The National Council for Women includes 27 branches across the republic where the National Council for Women was chosen as a spatial area in Cairo- Egypt. It includes female members of the National Council for Women as the main branch. Women visit the National Council for Women to obtain full support to empower them whether politically, socially, or economically. It also provides distinguished and upscale services represented in training and counseling services directed to women to prepare them and empower them in terms of cultural, professional and production aspects and to activate their role in community development.

The National Council for Women was chosen for the following reasons:(1) it is the main center in Egypt responsible for creating a suitable environment for activating the fields of Egyptian women's work and providing various services; (2) it assists and facilitates women's empowerment in its various aspects, as well as the officials knowledge of the researcher and their welcome to conduct field studies; (3) the center's activity in the field of empowering women and training courses are held regularly; and (4) it receives delegations from different countries of the world.

- **The human sample**: all members of the main branch of the National Council for Women were involved in the study area during 2020, who were 54 members.

Time domain: Survey was conducted between the periods of 1/11/2020 to 1/1/2020.

- **Study limitations**: The researchers faced several obstacles in conducting their studies:

A- information regarding the political field was not available to the public. The researcher was able to overcome this difficulty by looking at such information in scientific publications, periodicals, and secondary online database.

B- to the extent of the researcher's knowledge, no available previous work in the same frame in social work was detected. Yet, the researcher was able to overcome this by merging previous study results at Arab and local levels.

C- the researchers were not able to reach the studied sample easily because of time inconvenience for the committee of the National Council for Women, so an online questionnaire was created to overcome the problem and follow precautionary measures for COVID-19 -19.

- Study Tools: a questionnaire form linked to the subject of the study contained the following: the internal regulations of the National Council for Women outlined in the work policy and its system, the theoretical framework of the previous studies and studies, as well as reference to eexperts and specialists in this field.

A**- The Scale Dimensions**:

First: the role of National Council for Women to provide women's political empowerment.

Second: determining the level of political empowerment in its various dimensions among Egyptian women.

Third: programs and strategies that help empower women politically.

Fourth: the obstacles that women facing in the process of political empowerment and the role of the Council in addressing and dealing with them.

Fifth: the proposals that contribute to activating the role of women and empowering them politically in the development of society from the perspective of social service; the form contained questions in the rating scale form from 1-3 where 1 meant no, 2 meant to some extent, and 3 meant yes.

- **Content Validity:** The researcher used two types of validity, "apparent validity" and "statistical validity. External validity was approved after the apparent honesty was validated, using arbitrators mean ratios from 10 interview forms of the National population Council including professors, assistant professors and experts in the Community Organization Department of the Faculty of Social Service, Helwan University. The questionnaire was revised, and all the suggestions and recommendations were taken into consideration.

-**Reliability of the tool**:

The researcher performed a calculation of the stability of the form by re-apply, in the test retest on twenty female members of the National Council for Women, with a time interval of fifteen days; and by calculating the general stability of the form, the researcher gave quantitative scores for all the questions of the form. The researcher excluded the basic data, and statistical reliability and validity were calculated in the interview form, for the members of the National Council for Women, as shown in the following table:

Table (**1**) shows the validity and reliability coefficient of the interview form.

Dimensions	Coefficient (alpha Cronbach)	Validity factor Reliability factor	*Significance (2-tailed)*
first dimension	0.698	0.83	0.01
Second dimension	0.714	0.84	0.01
third dimension	0.678	0.82	0.01
fourth dimension	0.774	0.88	0.01
fifth dimension	0.851	0.91	0.01
Dimension as a whole	0.734	0.85	0.01

** Significant at (0.01)   * Significant at (0.05)

It is clear from the previous table that the functional tool is of significant level of 0.01 for each dimension.

Study Results:

Table (2) shows the characteristics of female members of the National Council for Women, N=54

Dimension	Frequencies	Percentage %
- Gender:		
a- male.	0	0
B- female.	54	54
Total:	**54**	**100%**
- Age:		
a- less 30 years.	4	7.4
B- 30-40 years.	15	27.8
C- 40-50 years.	22	40.7
D.older than 50 years.	13	24.1
Total:	**54**	**100%**
- Degree:		
a- Bachelor.	28	51.8
b- master.	16	29.6
c- PhD.	10	18.6
Total:	**54**	**100%**
- Experts.		
a- less 2 years.	5	9.3
B- 2-5 years.	12	22.2
D- more 5 years.	37	68.5
Total:	**54**	**100%**

The results of the above table show that:

The studied sample was all females of the members of the National Council for Women and as most of them are between 40-50 years constituting 40.7%, and then females from 30-40 years with (27.8%,). The ranking is less than 30 years old, at a rate of (7.4%).

As it appears from the table, members with bachelor's degree contribute to 51.8%, and a master's degree of 29.6%, the doctoral degree came at 18.6%.

The table also showed that most of the members have more than 5 years of experience working in the council, with a percentage of 68.5% and 22.2% for those who worked less than two years.

Table (3) shows the roles assigned to the National Council for Women in empowering women, N=54

Roles	Answers			T-w	M	R
	Yes	Some Times	No			
Determining the needs and problems related to the political empowerment of women by studying and researching.	40	12	2	146	2.7	1
Estimate the available resources and capabilities (human and material) to be used in empowering women.	16	13	25	99	1.8	20
Preparing the annual plan for the council and including plans for empowering women politically.	35	18	1	142	2.6	2
Defining the electoral opportunities available for women to occupy office.	32	16	6	134	2.5	3 D
Organizing and managing the tasks of the committees concerned with empowering women and providing them with support.	13	25	6	95	1.7	21
Review legislation related to the empowerment of women in the political field.	27	13	14	121	2.2	12
Supporting women MPs in practicing their parliamentary work.	22	26	6	124	2.3	8
Establishing education programs that consecrate the concept of citizenship and non-discrimination.	20	28	6	122	2.2	12 D
Forming specialized committees in the political empowerment of women's services.	26	18	10	124	2.3	8 D
Holding training courses for women on how effectively to participate in the political process that suits their needs?	31	17	6	133	2.5	3
Encouraging women who wish to participate in the electoral process.	25	15	14	119	2.2	12 D
Coordination between women in the governorate and their peers in the republic in favor of the political process.	19	17	18	109	2	16

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Roles	Answers			T-w	M	R
	Yes	Some Times	No			
It provides an opportunity for communication between women and officials in the region.	17	17	20	105	1.9	19
Establishing a wide network of relations between women and all community institutions concerned with political work.	21	22	11	118	2.1	15
Carrying out media programs to raise awareness of the council's goals and activities in the political empowerment of women.	14	26	14	108	2	16 D
Intensive training of female judges to support them.	22	27	5	125	2.3	8 D
Encouraging and enhancing opportunities for women to assume leadership positions.	26	25	3	131	2.4	5 D
Identifying and training women leaders.	29	18	7	130	2.4	5 D
Holding seminars and conferences to support businesswomen to run for parliaments.	23	24	7	124	2.3	8 D
Providing data and information on women's political empowerment.	18	20	16	110	2	16 D
Continuous evaluation of political empowerment projects to support women.	30	15	9	129	2.4	5

The results of the above table show that:

Top roles of the National Council for Women are to:

1. in the first place, determining the needs and problems associated with empowering women politically by studying and researching a total of weights (146) and an average of (2.7).

2. in the second-place, preparation of the annual plan for the Council with a total of weights (142) and an arithmetic average of (2.6).

3. in the third place and the third place repeated, holding training courses for women on how effectively to participate in the political process that suits their needs with a total of weights (134) and a mathematical average of (2.5): defining the electoral opportunities available for women to

occupy office with a total of weights (134) and a mathematical average of (2.5).

Table (4) shows the most important and actual services provided by the National Council for Women in the field of political empowerment. N=54

Services	Answers			T-w	M	R
	Yes	Some Times	No			
Introduce females to the goals and importance of political action.	31	17	6	133	2.5	2
Facilitate obtaining data and information in the political process.	22	26	6	124	2.3	6
Providing an opportunity to share opinions in selecting positions appropriate to their abilities.	32	16	6	134	2.5	2 D
Providing technical support for serious practical practice through training on political participation.	26	25	3	131	2.4	4 D
Issuance of national ID cards for every woman.	35	18	1	142	2.6	1
Providing the necessary political expertise to help women empowerment	25	15	14	119	2.2	8
Helping women complete the administrative procedures for candidacy.	29	18	7	130	2.4	4
Discussing the obstacles of implementing the political actions they face with the concerned authorities and trying to overcome them.	18	20	16	110	2	9
Providing database on the developing projects in the region that can be used to empower women.	22	27	5	125	2.3	6 D
Helping to find the necessary funding to complete their political work.	18	20	16	110	2	9 D

The results of the above table show that:

The actual services provided by the National Council for Women from the viewpoint of the Council members:

1. in the first place, the issuance of the national number cards for women with a total of weights (142) and an arithmetic average (2.6).

2. in the second place and the second place repeated, they were introduced to the objectives and importance of political work, and the opportunity to participate in the opinion in choosing positions appropriate to their abilities, with a total of weights (133) and an arithmetic average (2.5).

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3. in the fourth place and fourth position repeated, helping women complete the administrative procedures for candidacy, and providing technical support for serious practical practice, through training on political participation, with a total of weights (130) and an arithmetic average (2.4).

Table (5) shows the programs and strategies that help empower women politically, N=54

Programs and strategies	Answers			T-w	M	R
	Yes	Some Times	No			
Programs to increase women's participation in elections.	26	18	10	124	2.3	2
Programs that help women have balanced representation in parliament.	31	17	6	133	2.5	1
Programs that help prevent distinction and promote judicial bodies.	25	15	14	119	2.2	4
Programs that help in assuming leadership positions for women in the executive authority.	19	17	18	109	2	6 D
Programs that help provide outstanding performance for women in legislation and oversight.	17	17	20	105	1.9	8
Programs that help complete the institutional framework for empowering women.	21	22	11	118	2.1	5
Professional awareness programs for women to participate in political life.	14	26	14	108	2	6
Programs to build the capacity of women in political life.	22	27	5	125	2.3	2 D

The above table show the most important programs and strategies that helped empowering women politically from the viewpoint of the council members:

1.in the first place, came the programs that facilitated balanced representation of women, with a total of (133) weights and an arithmetic average (2.4).

2. in the second place and the second-place repeated, programs to increase women's participation in elections, and programs to build the capacities of women in political life, with a total of (124) weights and an arithmetic average (2.3).

3. in the fourth place, programs that helped in non-discrimination and advancement in judicial bodies, with a total of weights (119) and an arithmetic average (2.2).

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Table (6) shows indicators of empowering women politically from the viewpoint of the members of the National Council for Women. N=54

Indicators	Answers			T-w	M	R
	Yes	Some Times	No			
Percentage of female representation out of the total number of participants in the elections.	32	16	6	134	2.5	1
Percentage of women's representation in Parliament.	13	25	6	95	1.7	6
Percentage of female representation in local councils.	27	13	14	121	2.2	4
The proportion of females in the judicial bodies.	22	26	6	124	2.3	2
The proportion of females in public offices.	20	28	6	122	2.2	4 D
The proportion of females in senior management positions.	26	18	10	124	2.3	2D

The above table shows that the most important indicators of empowering women politically from the viewpoint of the members of the Council:

1. in the first place was the female representation out of the total number of participants in the elections, the percentage of females in the judicial bodies, as well as the percentage of females in senior management positions, with a total of weights (134) and an arithmetic average (2.5).

2. in the second place and the second place repeated, the proportion of females in the judicial bodies, and the proportion of females in senior management positions, with a total of weights (122) and an arithmetic average (2.2).

3. in the fourth place and the fourth-place repeated, percentage of female representation in local councils, the proportion of females in public offices, with a total of weights (134) and an arithmetic average (2.5).

Table (7) shows the most important obstacles that women face in political empowerment, N=54

Obstacles	Answers			T-w	M	R
	Yes	Some Times	No			
(A) Obstacles related to the Council:						
The lack of clarity of the regulations governing the relationship between women and the council.	26	18	10	124	2.3	2
Ambiguity of the strategy followed in the political development of women.	31	17	6	133	2.5	1
Lack of specialized cadres in managing political development projects.	25	15	14	119	2.2	4
Insufficient methods of communication between the Council and community institutions.	19	17	18	109	2	6
Lack of coordination between the submitted political projects, which affects their effectiveness.	17	17	20	105	1.9	7
Weakness of the resources and material capabilities available within the council.	21	22	11	118	2.1	5
Overlap and conflict of jurisdiction between those in charge of work.	26	18	10	124	2.3	2D
(B) Obstacles related to women:						
Typicality of the presented political projects and their lack of real connection with the Egyptian reality.	40	12	2	146	2.7	1
Women focus on the material return more than the social and political return.	16	13	25	99	1.8	6
The existence of regulations and laws that limit the participation of women in autonomous places.	35	18	1	142	2.6	3
Lack of experience and skills among women.	32	16	6	134	2.5	4
Not being fully devoted for managing its own political project.	13	25	6	95	1.7	7
Low turnout of women to wage electoral battles.	27	13	14	121	2.2	5
Weak financial funding available.	40	12	2	146	2.7	1D
(C) Societal Obstacles:						
Lack of resources and capabilities available for effective projects.	26	25	3	131	2.4	2D
Low number of female volunteers and participants in the political field.	35	18	1	142	2.6	1

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Some groups of society do not accept the implemented political projects and feel their importance.	25	15	14	119	2.2	5
The prevailing beliefs that hinder women's political participation.	29	18	7	130	2.4	2
Weak societal awareness of the role of women in political life.	18	20	16	110	2	6
Weak policies rendering women from leadership positions.	22	27	5	125	2.3	4

The above table shows that the most important obstacles facing women in political empowerment from the viewpoint of the council members are:

Obstacles related to the National Council itself and were identified in:

1. in the first-place, unclear strategies followed in the political development of women came first, with a total of weights (133) and an arithmetic average of (2.5),

2. in the second place and the second place repeated, the lack of clarity of the regulations governing the relationship between women and the council and overlapping of these regulations; the specializations among those in charge with a total of (124) weights and an arithmetic average (2.3).

3. in the fourth place, was the lack of cadres specialized in managing political development projects with a total of weights (119) and an arithmetic average (2.2).

Obstacles related to women themselves were identified in:

1. in the first place and the first place repeated, typicality of the presented political projects and their lack of real connection with the Egyptian reality; weak financial funding available, with a total of weights (146) and an arithmetic average (2.7).

2. in the third place the existence of regulations and laws that limit the participation of women in autonomous places, with a total of weights (142) and an arithmetic average (2.6).

3. in the fourth-place, lack of experience and skills among women, with a total of weights (134) and an arithmetic average (2.5).

Obstacles related to the surrounding community and were identified in:

1. in the first place, the small number of female volunteers and participants in the political field, with a total weight (142) and an arithmetic average (2.6).

2. in the second place and the second place repeated, the prevailing beliefs that hinder women's political participation, and lack of resources and capabilities available for effective projects with a total weight (131) and an arithmetic average (2.4).

3. in the fourth-place, weak policies rendering women from leadership positions, with a total weight (125) and an arithmetic average (2.3).

Table (8) shows the relational relationship of the programs belonging to the state programs established by the National Council, their indicators, and their participation.

Variable	Percentage of female representation out of the total number of participants in the elections.	Percentage of women's representation in Parliament.	Percentage of female representation in local councils.	The proportion of females in the judicial bodies	The proportion of females in public offices.
Programs and services.	*351	**390-	**365	**398-	**229-

＊＊ Significant at (0.01)   ＊ Significant at (0.05)

The above table shows:

1-There is a correlation relationship of statistical significance between the programs and services provided by the National Council for Women and the political empowerment of women in terms of the percentage of female representation out of the total number of participants in the elections at a significant level (0.05).

2-There is a correlation relationship of statistical significance between the programs and services provided by the National Council for Women and the political empowerment of women in terms of the percentage of women's representation in parliament at a significant level (0.05).

3-There is a correlation relationship of statistical significance between the programs and services provided by the National Council for Women and the political empowerment of women in terms of the percentage of women's representation in local councils at a significant level (0.01).

4-There is a correlation relationship of statistical significance between the programs and services provided by the National Council for Women and the political empowerment of women in terms of the percentage of females in the judicial bodies at a significant level (0.01).

5-There is no statistically significant correlation between the programs and services provided by the National Council for Women and the political empowerment of women in terms of the percentage of females in public positions at a significant level (0.01)

Discussion:

Engaging women in politics is somewhat considered as intellectual luxury and that political work may hinder woman's social and/or guiding function. While her main political responsibility confined to vote for men, those who adopt such opinion are ruminating on legacies that excluded women from the platform of life and civilizational potential. By reviewing political empowerment according to the result of this study, this study shows the top roles of the National Council for Women are determining the needs and problems associated with empowering women politically by studying and researching. This is consistent with the study of Khattab, (2014), which indicated the need to pay attention to identifying the special needs of women to empower them politically.

The political empowerment of women may take several approaches and mechanisms including, increasing the participation of women in decision-making positions, and implementing the (quota) system, but the question arises: Is it female representation or the feminist agenda? The feminist agenda in this context aims at achieving societal security and peace to push the comprehensive development process towards equality and dignity for the absolute human being. The National Council for Women should not focus solely on participating in elections as one of its roles in empowering women; otherwise it must take all levels into consideration, beyond the experience of elections, which is considered an interim period. The National Council for Women Secretariat needs to focus on new areas related to building special capabilities of women in decision-making positions that lead to long-term political empowerment. Such plans include preparing front lines for women leaders who can change public opinion. Training is intensively and continuously required on political mobility that serves to change trends in society while thinking of creating a second class for youth. This trend was noticed by the views of members of the National Council for Women, implicitly and, such as investing in the council's youth committee.

The actual services provided by the National Council for Women from the viewpoint of the Council members: the issuance of the national number cards for women and the most important programs and strategies that helped empowering women politically, from the viewpoint of the council members. Here, came the programs that facilitated balanced representation of women.

This is consistent with the study of Fawzi, Mona & Bahi, Ezzat Ahmed, et. al, (2017). She emphasized the need to provide services to women in different regions, given that these women are in dire need of

these services. When the researcher reviewed of empowerment of women in Egypt on national council, it was noticed that training for women focused on short term goals to qualify women for elections other than long-term goals, which may include creating a new generation of leaders of both sexes in various decision-making positions. Although programs were implemented for the 2020 elections, all concentrated in the three months following the elections (May-August), which renews the question about the degree of clarity of the training process and to which extent long-term goals are considered. As for the by-elections for the year 2020 for special political reasons, the council succeeded in preparing women candidates with the help of national expertise, and it succeeded in implementing training programs despite the short time preceding elections.

Within the framework of the study results, we find that the National Council for Women has prepared a set of programs and strategies that can contribute to empowering women politically, despite the obstacles they faced generally, whether at the level of the Republic, by extending bridges of cooperation with public, private sectors and/or civil society institutions; or at the level of regional and global institutions, with the aim of opening channels of communication and networking with those leading institutions on issues related to women's affairs and empowerment. The National Council for Women had a prominent role in that era in actively contributing to many activities and events and adopting a set of outlines which were included in the decision to establish the Council.

Concerning the result of this study, the most important indicators of empowering women politically from the viewpoint of the members of the Council are the female representation out of the total number of participants in the elections, the percentage of females in the judicial bodies, as well as the percentage of females in senior management positions. This is consistent with the study of Khodair, Amany A. & Hassib, Bassant (2015). It is also evident from the results of this study that there is no clear mechanism with regards to research methodology or the results of expert studies, especially with regards to the process of implementing the outputs of such studies. However, there is a benefit from personal and cumulative experiences, regarding the research background of experts to implement research recommendations, surveys, and studies. The secretariat of the Council also sought to develop an integrated training plan for the staff of the General Secretariat, civil society institutions and official institutions aimed at creating a network of national trainers. As the Secretariat reported that work is currently

underway to evaluate the national plan for the advancement of Egyptian women and special programs will be used after finalizing the draft of the training study, requiring the aid of international expertise. Whereas the results of the study have shown that there are a few obstacles facing the National Council for Women, and from the viewpoint of the female members of the Council, the political participation of women in society requires dealing with them as an integral part, and only from the procedural aspects necessary for theoretical research and application. Regarding the specificity of the feminist role in politics, it is closely linked to a popular belief that organizes society and its material and intangible components. Knowing the obstacles can help overcoming them to politically empower women in the future.

Despite the obstacles, the National Council for Women was able to achieve many positive and patriotic gains, especially in the recent period, i.e., by the end of 2020, for a new social and political movement toward a fruitful future for the Egyptian women, such as enrollment of women in the various relevant ministries, and women's enrollment in the judiciary and other jobs that fall within the framework of Egyptian women's political empowering.

Recommendation: Within the framework of the women's political empowerment program, it is crucial to:

1. Provide awareness-raising and training programs for groups that formulate awareness of women's rights from a national perspective.

2. Conduct critical studies and readings in school curricula on different levels and submit proposals to fit them within human rights perspectives, women, and children, as well as carrying out social studies with norms, customs, and traditions, providing opinion makers in society with them and proposing annual plans for them.

3. Propagates gender equality and objectively redistributing the roles by focusing on the awareness aspect.

4. Increasing awareness of legislations and laws because the lack of awareness hinders the individual from exercising his rights.

5- There is no doubt that introducing legislation and laws and putting them into action plays an important role, not only in making women's participation in politics and decision-making a reality, though it could:

-Propose a training program for students of a few scientific specializations in Egyptian universities as a graduation project, whereby every student is required to actively raise awareness of the rights in the laws for citizens, both men and women, in schools, universities, governmental departments, etc.

-Activating the articles, laws, and agreements that the state has ratified, related to women, and transferring them to keep in track with actual political decisions.

6. Providing psychological support, social and media assistance to female candidates and train them on managing and preparing electoral campaigns and endeavoring a training manual that would be accessible to any woman intending to enter the political life and raise her capabilities and skills in communication, meeting the public, and holding festivals and debates.

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