The Political Empowerment of Saudi Women in Light of the Kingdom's Vision 2030

Maleeha Mohammed Zaaf Al-Qahtani[a], Tarek Tawfik Yousef Alkhateeb[b], Manal Abdalla Zahed Abdalla[c], Wedad Abdullah Sharabi[d], Alyaa Omer Kamel Farag[e], Sahar Hussein Al- Maliki[f], [a,c,d,e,f]College of Education, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Dilam 16213, Saudi Arabia, [b]College of Business Administration, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Alkharj 11942, Saudi Arabia, Email: [a]ml.alqahtani@psau.edu.sa, [b]tkhteb1@gmail.coms, [c]m.zahed@psau.edu.sa, [d]wa.sharabi@psau.edu.sa, [e]a.farag@psau.edu.sa, [f]sh.almalki@psau.edu.sa

The involvement of women in the political arena constitutes an accomplishment towards the Kingdom's democracy and societal development. This research intends to perceive the level of political empowerment of Saudi women in light of the Kingdom's Vision 2030. The research has accentuated the barriers and problems faced in the realisation of the political representation of women in the Kingdom and has projected the mechanisms for activating the political role of Saudi women. Also, it has framed a future strategy aimed at raising the level of political empowerment of Saudi women. A questionnaire was designed, consisting of 17 paragraphs, and distributed to collect the data. The sample size is 218 individuals from faculty members, university leaders and teachers. It was determined that there were statistically insignificant differences in the views of the sample individuals towards the level of political empowerment of Saudi women depending on gender, place of residence and experience. The research results show that the level of political empowerment of Saudi women in light of the Kingdom's vision 2030 received a response of satisfactory from the respondents. The barriers and problems facing political representation and mechanisms for its activation are also found significant. However, it is concluded that the legislation for women empowerment is not working proficiently. This is ascribed to prevailing views of society towards females in all fields and lack of financial support. All members of the research samples indicated it can be resolved, that mechanisms for activating women's political empowerment are the key factors to implementing their political empowerment.

Introduction

All international agreements, charters and covenants have recognised the worth of impartiality between men and women and stressed the need to provide equal rights and opportunities in all their forms. In September 1995, the Beijing Conference devoted significant space to the importance of women's access to power and decision-making positions. The conference stipulated practical measures for all parties concerned, that is, the United Nations and its various authorities, governments and civil society organisations. The past three decades have witnessed a growing interest in the issue of gender equality in all fields, intimated by relevant international authorities. Considering this issue as a basic path for achieving fair and comprehensive development, this international interest is echoed in national trends. Many countries have issued national strategies and plans to achieve gender equality. However, the gap has remained wide between the two genders despite what has been approved by these strategies and what has been implemented on the ground.

At the level of national legislation, the basic system of government in Saudi Arabia included several articles. These articles have represented a good opportunity to enhance the political participation of women and the provision of decision-making occupations. The system offered guarantee and protection to women in a number of its articles. Article No. 8 stated that "the regulations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have relied on mutual agreement, justice, and equivalence following Islamic Sharia". The article was referred to as equality between women and men in rights and duties. Article No. 26 also stipulated that "the government protects human rights according to Islamic laws". Moreover, Article No. 18 specified that "the government of Saudi Arabia shall abide by the treaties and contracts, it has been associated with public and global organisations". According to this article, the state should be obligated to implement the international agreements that it has ratified. Article No. 7 of the agreement included detailed provisions, in which the state demanded that all necessary actions be taken to overcome female gender discrimination in the general political life of the state, particularly to ensure women's equality with men in the political field. Article No. 5 of the agreement set that, "states are obligated to amend prevailing patterns of social and cultural behaviours of men and women and to implement equality standards in the public and private spheres separately" (United Nations, 1979).

The above-mentioned articles are extremely important for our society because the discrimination that exists between men and women has social and cultural roots, and requires more than enacting legislation or taking several measures and procedures. Rather, eliminating

discrimination needs a comprehensive and integrated view of legislation, and besides that, approving national strategies and public policies to eliminate gender inequality issues in all political, social and economic areas to ensure the ultimate goal of achieving gender equality is reached. Moreover, a woman participated in a pledge of allegiance to a person chosen as king, according to the provision of Article No. 6 (The National Society for Human Rights, 2008). According to Royal Decree No. 25, "the international agreement is part of the internal legal law. It is necessary to work according to it, whether from the executive or judicial authorities". It must be noted that it has brought a progressive and qualitative shift by addressing discrimination and achieving equality between women and men.

The United Nations' (2017) administrative board has been managing gender equivalence and women empowerment. It defines empowerment as "collective action in oppressed or oppressed groups to overcome barriers and differentials that reduce their status or deprive them of their rights". The contribution of women in political matters constitutes an advanced rank among the indicators of democratic life. The political empowerment of women is linked to their legal legitimacy. It is represented in political decision-making processes, elections and voting. Despite the progress made to enhance the political representation of women in the Kingdom, they still participate in a marginal way in political issues with limited opportunities to contribute on an equal footing with men. Therefore, the research problem can be described in the subsequent main question: To what extent does the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Vision 2030 contribute to enhancing women's political empowerment?

The objective of the current study is to identify the level of Saudi women's political empowerment, to highlight the barriers and problems facing Saudi women and to detect the significance of differences according to the response of the population to Saudi women's political empowerment. We propose to set the mechanisms to activate the political empowerment of Saudi women and to provide a future strategy to empower Saudi women politically in light of the Kingdom's Vision 2030. The current research is an attempt to reveal the importance of the political empowerment of Saudi women. It emphasizes to divert the attention towards the positions of international institutions, Arab constitutions, and Islamic laws regarding women's representation in political work. So, Civil society organisations and decision-makers in the state can benefit from this research. And, they can formulate several effective mechanisms and proposals that can contribute to empowering Saudi women politically.

Literature Review

Al-Ahmad (2016) defines women's political empowerment as a process of advancing the active contribution of females in decision-making circles. It can be achieved by expanding the range of opportunities, options and alternatives available to women. Active participation

requires the development of women and the development of their abilities and capabilities to possess the elements that enable them to bring changes within society. In 2017, women's political representation was still limited in decision-making positions in the executive authorities and civil societies. This was reflected in their inactive participation in policy and legislative decision-making. This represents an imbalance in achieving equal participation between women and men, which is essential to achieving democracy (Izzat, 2017).

Abu Raya's (2017) study highlighted women's participation as electors and candidates. This was dependent on the concepts of civil society and political empowerment. The study was counted in the descriptive-analytical method. Some official newspapers were analysed in the state of Saudi Arabia along with several reports issued by the Saudi government and international organisations. The most important result of the study indicates that civil society in the Kingdom has made efforts for Saudi women's political empowerment even if they were still at an earlier stage. It has been the requirement by their institutions to exert more effort that has helped in the political empowerment of women. In this context, the Kingdom has taken many measures to enable women to achieve leadership jobs in the state. The Saudi monarch issued a decree in which he granted 30 positions in the Shura Council to the women. It was ordered to allocate 20 percetn of the Shura Council seats for women in 2013. In addition to that, women have been elected to the municipal administration boards, and several women have been appointed to leadership jobs in the public and private sectors (Al-Ahmad, 2016).

The report issued by the ESCWA (2017) focuses on developing evidence-based recommendations. These recommendations would assist Arab countries to expand their efforts to fulfill their obligations of achieving the full participation of women at every level of decision-making in economic, political and general life. The report also examines the status of women's representation in the legislative, executive, judicial authorities and local councils. Despite, the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have witnessed some positive developments, such as giving women the polling right and right to participate, for the first time, in the 2015 Saudi elections. The report concludes from its results that many barriers have still hindered the political representation of women.

ESCWA (2017) addresses an analysis of Arab countries. It acknowledges their good practices to integrate issues related to men and women into public policy and decision-making. The study relies on a review of the social and economic trends that have occurred in the past ten years. It concludes that handling the economic and political representation of women was a prominent challenge for the state, which despite all efforts was still below the required level in the region. The 2030 Development Strategy was issued by the United Nations in September 2017, which focuses on achieving gender equality and empowering all women (United Nations, 2017). The report issued by the Egyptian Cabinet (2018) reflects the role of

ministries and different bodies in women's political empowerment. These departments have contributed to implementing the national strategy for the vision of Egyptian Women's Empowerment in 2030, which policies are comprised of women's political, economic and social empowerment, and protection from gender discrimination.

The report presented by the United Nations (2015), "Arab Women & Legislations", considers gender equivalence and women's empowerment. Its focus is on analysing the status of women and their legal rights in the legislation of 20 Arab countries. This was achieved by reviewing approximately 300 national laws, referring to the international treaties and agreements that countries have ratified and the measures they have taken to activate their national and international obligations. Saudi women have witnessed a qualitative shift. The whole world witnessed women obtaining their rights on social, economic and educational levels (Faraj and Sharabi, 2020). Considering the importance of Saudi women's empowerment in light of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 and their expected role in society, we focus on addressing women's political empowerment. We aim to achieve an appropriate vision for women's political empowerment in the community of Saudi Arabia.

Research Methodology

In this research, the method of descriptive analysis was applied, as it is suitable for this type of research and its goals. Its procedures are involved in designing a questionnaire as suggested by Al-Tayyib (2005). This included three dimensions: the reality of political empowerment of Saudi women, barriers to political empowerment of Saudi women, and mechanisms for empowering Saudi women politically. The population of the research is comprised of faculty members, university leaders, and teachers in the south of Riyadh: Al-Kharj, Al-Dalam, Al-Houta, Al-Sulayyil, Wadi Al-Dawasir, and Al-Aflaj. 218 sample members were selected by random sampling. Table (1) shows the distribution of the sample individuals according to the research variables of gender, place of residence and experience.

Table 1: Distribution of research sample individuals in accord with the study variables

Variables	Variable classes	Repeating	Percentage
Sex	Male	45	20.6
	Female	173	79.4
Residence	Alkharj	94	43.1
	Al-Dalam + Al-Sulayyil + Wadi Al-Dawasir + Hotat Bani Tamim	77	35.3
	Aflaj	47	21.6
Experience	Less than (10) years	91	41.7
	From (10-20) years	91	41.7
	From (20-30) years	36	16.5
Total		218	100.0

Based on the research goals, the researchers have designed a questionnaire. The questionnaire acted as the main tool for information and data collection. It was divided into three dimensions with 17 paragraphs including six (6) paragraphs for the first axis, five (5) paragraphs for the second axis and six (6) paragraphs for the third axis. It was applied to the sample of faculty members, university leaders and teachers, consisting of both male and female genders. To calculate the frequency of responses of the sampled individuals, a five-graded scale was used. The scale assigned each of its paragraphs with one of five grades (strongly-agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly-disagree), which were digitally represented as 5, 4, 3, 2 & 1, respectively.

In order to verify the validity of the research tool, it was presented to a group of experts and specialists in the area of sociology and education. They confirmed the integrity of the linguistic formulation of the paragraphs, and the degree of suitability for the study. Adjustments were made according to the observations and suggestions agreed to by the arbitrators. To confirm the consistency of the research tool, the method of test-test was used by implementing the scale to a survey sample. This sample was within and outside the research population and comprised of 30 individuals. After this the Pearson correlation was calculated between their estimates, and the Cronbach alpha equation was applied for the internal consistency method to determine the coefficient of stability. The results are tabulated in Table 2.

Table 2: Alpha stability coefficient, correlation coefficients (internal consistency) and repeatability of the study tool

Field	No. of paragraphs	Steady return	Internal consistency
The reality of empowering Saudi women politically.	6	0.93	0.91
Barriers and problems facing the realisation of political representation for Saudi women.	5	0.89	0.85
Mechanisms for activating the political empowerment of Saudi women.	6	0.91	0.88
The tool as a whole.	17	0.89	0.78

It is determined from Table 2 that the research tool has high stability coefficients to all its fields, suggesting the reliability for its use. The table also indicates internal coefficients of statistical significance for a level with significance at 1 percent between the tool domains. This confirms the validity of the tool to measure. To determine the criteria for judging the sample individuals' responses, the category lengths were determined by using Equation 1. The results are presented in Table 3.

Equation 1:
Relative weight = (Maximum value - minimum value) / number of levels = (5-1) / 3 = 1.33

Table 3: Relative weight, categories and verbal estimates

No.	Extent	Verbal estimates
1	From 1.00–1.80	Very few
2	From 1.81–2.60	A few
3	From 2.61–3.40	Moderate
4	From 3.41–4.20	Large
5	From 4.21–5.00	Too large

Results and Discussion

The questionnaires were collected and analysed in the SPSS program. Considering the research requirement, these were treated with the appropriate statistical methods. The t-test was performed to determine the significance of the difference following research variables of gender, place of residence and experience. The first hypothesis: "*What is the reality of political empowerment of Saudi women in light of Kingdom's vision 2030?*" is tested. To

verify this question, arithmetic averages, standard deviations and a rank for each of the items in this field are extracted, as seen in Table 4.

Table 4: Arithmetic average, standard deviation and rank of the response of research sample for political empowerment of Saudi women in light of the Kingdom's Vision 2030

Paragraph No.	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Rank	Degree
2	Appropriate legislation is available to ensure that women obtain their political rights.	3.77	0.95	1	High
1	Governmental institutions strive to activate the role of women in decision-making.	3.76	1.05	2	High
5	Women are given opportunities to express their opinion on all issues and at all levels.	3.56	1.07	3	Medium
6	Women get a fair share of participation in all state institutions.	3.50	1.11	4	Medium
3	There is a sufficient level of awareness of women's political rights.	3.48	1.09	5	Medium
4	Women have opportunities to assume leadership positions without discrimination with men.	3.44	1.15	6	Medium
The reality of empowering Saudi women politically.		3.59	0.93		Medium

Table 4 shows that the arithmetic averages range between 3.44 – 3.77. Paragraph 2 is ranked in first place with a mathematical average of 3.77. This may be attributed to the fact that women are involved in political policymaking. They are contributing to facilitating state and community affairs. They are participating in elections and forming associations of a political nature. These results differ from the study by Makhlouf and Boudrham (2018), which confirms that the constitutions of many countries may not include a fair distribution in the field of political representation of women. Paragraph (4) ranks last with an average of 3.44. This demonstrates a delay in enacting true empowerment legislation for women. This dimension needs attention to help women highlight their capabilities and qualifications in

various fields. This result also differs from what is indicated by another study by Safou (2017). This study confirms that the political status of women has been promoted. They are directly involved in decision-making positions. Moreover, they are centrally aligned with their international obligations and the development programs of the United Nations.

The second research question: "*What are the barriers and problems facing realising the political representation of Saudi women in the Kingdom?*" is also tested. Arithmetic averages, standard deviations, and an order and grade for the barriers and problems facing the realisation of Saudi women's political empowerment were extracted to answer this question. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Arithmetic average, standard deviation and rank for the response of research sample individuals to the barriers and problems facing the realisation of women's political representation

Paragraph No.	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Rank	Degree of direction
5	The small number of role models in the areas of political action.	3.87	1.09	1	High
1	Low level of community understanding for the worth of women's political contribution.	3.83	1.14	2	High
4	The unacceptability of the political role that women play in society.	3.77	1.06	3	High
3	Women's lack of enthusiasm and self-motivation towards political participation.	3.74	1.15	4	High
2	Women are not aware of the value of their contribution to political life.	3.61	1.14	5	Medium
Barriers and problems facing the realisation of political representation of Saudi women		3.76	0.92		High

It is determined in Table 5 that the range of arithmetic averages lies between 3.61 – 3.87. The result of the first-ranked Paragraph 5 may be attributed to the prevailing view in society

toward women that women are less efficient than men. Moreover, they are not provided with enough financial support. Consequently, they are still facing discrimination against contesting for candidacy in the elected councils. This result verifies the conclusions of a previous study by Ashour (2017), indicating that the position of women is still marred by many deficiencies, which may be affected by their production and involvement in political transformation. The lowest-ranked Paragraph 2 shows there is a low rate of female legal illiteracy. Furthermore, women are well informed from childhood of the importance of their political role. This result verifies the conclusions of a former study of Hassan (2010), emphasising that society is aware of the barriers that women's empowerment is facing. Besides which, they realise the necessity of women participation in the community development process.

Table 6: Mathematical averages and standard deviations for women's political empowerment according to variables of gender, residence and experience

Variable	Variable classes	Number	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
Sex	Male	45	3.68	0.95
	Female	172	3.57	0.93
Residence	Alkharj	93	3.55	0.93
	Al-Dalam + Al-Sulayyil + Wadi Al-Dawasir + Hotat Bani Tamim	77	3.67	0.96
	Aflaj	47	3.50	0.98
Experience	Less than (10) years	91	3.61	0.93
	From (10-20) years	90	3.61	0.93
	From (20-30) years	36	3.79	0.79

The third research question: "*Detection of the significance of the difference between the means of the sample population at a significance level of (α≤0.05), which estimates the women's political empowerment attributed to the variables i.e. gender, place of residence and experience*" is tested and analyses of the response are presented in Table 6. The table demonstrates an apparent variation in the standard deviations and arithmetic means of the average estimates of the sample individuals. These indicate women's political empowerment due to the difference in the categories of gender, place of residence and experience variables.

Table 7: Triangular investigation of the effect of gender, domicile and experience on the sample population averages toward women's political empowerment

Variables	Squares' Sum	Degree of freedom	Mean square	Values	Statistical significance
Sex	0.255	1	0.255	0.292	0.590
Residence	0.981	2	0.490	0.560	0.572
Years of experience	2.021	2	1.011	1.155	0.317
Mistake	184.695	211	0.875		
Overall	188.015	216			

It is obvious from Table 7 that there are statistically insignificant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) due to the effect of the variables of sex, place of residence and years of experience. The values for the variables are acquired as 0.292, 0.560 and 1.155, respectively, with statistically significant values of 0.590, 0.572 and 0.317.

Fourth, the question: "*Establishing mechanisms to activate the political empowerment of women in light of the Kingdom's Vision 2030*" is tested. Arithmetic means, standard deviations and ranks of responses for the establishment of a mechanism for Saudi women's political empowerment are extracted to answer this question, which is shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Mathematical averages, standard deviations and ranks of the respondents' responses to paragraphs for empowerment activation mechanisms

Paragraph No.	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Rank	Degree of direction
1	Activating decisions aimed at achieving gender justice in all areas of political work.	3.86	1.06	1	High
4	Increased number of programs eligible for women's participation in political life.	3.73	1.14	2	High
5	Media interest in highlighting the political role of women with a focus on successful role models.	3.70	1.12	3	High
6	Allocating an appropriate and fair opportunity for the participation of women in the legislative and	3.67	1.15	4	Medium

	ministerial councils.				
3	Supporting efforts and incentives to activate the role of women in the political field.	3.66	1.14	5	Medium
2	Reviewing and revising legislation that may distinguish between women and men in political life.	3.57	1.22	6	Medium
Mechanisms for activating the political empowerment of Saudi women.		3.69	1.05	High	

Table 8 shows there is a high approval among faculty members, university leaders and teachers for all the proposed mechanisms of the questionnaire, where all the paragraphs have received a high level of response from the members of the sample, except for three paragraphs that received a moderate level of response. From these results it may be concluded that all the respondents of the research sample have reflected these mechanisms as the main factors for implementing the political empowerment of Saudi women. Paragraph 2 receives the lowest rank. This reveals that the policies, programs and strategies adopted by the state are not effective in empowering women politically, and that these could not achieve gender equality. This result is consistent with the previous study by Al-Yahya (2015), recommending inactivating amendments and legislations to reduce the gap between the two genders in favour of women in the political field.

The Future Strategy to Empower Saudi Women Politically in Light of the Kingdom's Vision 2030

Based on the results, the research has determined the mechanisms of the political empowerment of Saudi women. Which are considered certain to lead to better opportunities for empowering Saudi women? Which contributes to the activation of women's political role in society? It is therefore now considered important to formulate a future strategy based on these mechanisms to empower Saudi women in political works. The future strategy will reflect the vision and operational goals of the Kingdom's Vision 2030. It will function to achieve gender equality, women empowerment and the goals of sustainable development. It will be consistent with national and international references, which are the basic system of governance and the goals of sustainable development up to the year 2030. These references were also implemented by the general assembly of the United Nations in 2015 and approved by the Kingdom. This strategy will respond to the needs of Saudi women without neglecting the disparities according to place of residence and age. It will confer the economic and social levels of females and will fulfill the requirements of a vulnerable group in society.

The structure of the future strategy is developed in consideration of its vision and strategic objectives. It is supplemented by evaluating the present situation of the political empowerment of Saudi women. Moreover, it is finalised by convening programs that achieve the operational goals to enhance the leadership role of Saudi women in Vision 2030. By 2030, Saudi women will become a major factor in achieving sustainable development in a homeland, a state that will guarantee them all their rights and will safeguard them by the basic system of government. This will provide them full protection. This will ensure them to be able to upgrade their capabilities and achievements themselves, without any discrimination in economic, social and political opportunities. It will make them able to perform their role in upholding the nation's affairs.

The strategy seeks to emphasise the Kingdom's commitment to women's rights and puts them into practice following what the national charters have prescribed, foremost of which is the basic system of governance, international agreements, covenants and declarations to which the Kingdom is committed. The strategy focuses on the needs of Saudi women, that is, care of the poor, employees, the elderly and those with special needs. As the first category of care, it aims to provide them with full protection and to make full use of the energies and material resources to achieve the principle of equal opportunities. For this purpose, the strategy focuses on achieving women's political empowerment and enhancing them for leadership roles. It emphasises the activation of women's contribution in all forms, including their representation in parliament at local and national levels. It motivates to eliminate partial behaviour against women while considering them for leading roles in jurisdictional and administrative institutions, and to prepare them to excel in these situations.

Saudi women have progressed in education, work, economic, social and political empowerment. They are developing an awareness of their rights in general. Many decisions and royal orders have been issued. These have extensively contributed to women's empowerment, and include some senior government jobs and access to leadership positions. In 2013, women's participation and membership were imposed in the Shura Council. In 2015, women were considered eligible to vote in councils, both as voters and candidates. Thus, Saudi women have entered the field of political action, working in policymaking and implementation. During 2003-2004, the percentage of women's participation in public jobs increased to about 36.5 percent of the total workers in the country. Whereas the contribution of women in the education sector was concentrated at 83 percent of the total Saudi female workers in the public sector in 2005. Moreover, Saudi women became a part of the diplomatic corps by entering the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Table 9 shows some present and targeted indicators.

Table 9: Impact measurement indicators for political empowerment and strengthening the leadership role of women

Impact measurement indicators	Year	Observed value (%)	Targeted in 2030 (%)
The female part of the total participants in the elections.	2017	44	50
The part of female representation in parliament.	2016	15	35
The part of female representation in local councils.	2017	25	35
The part of females in the judiciary authorities.	2015	0.5	25
The part of females in public offices.	2016	5	17
The part of females in senior management positions.	2016	19	27

In 2014, sixty women joined the judiciary authorities through the Board of Grievances and its affiliated courts. The educational qualifications of female candidates were matched to fill vacant female positions, who were then employed in judicial work. Their responsibilities included receiving reviews to record cases, handing out judgments, serving reviews, answering inquiries and other administrative work. The general objective of the intervention of programs is to achieve the overall strategic and operational goals of future strategy. This purposes to empower Saudi women politically and to enhance their leadership role. It stimulates women's participation in all forms of politics, including their participation in parliament at local and national levels. It aims to vanish the partial behaviour against women and to consider them for leading roles in jurisdictional and administrative institutions. The executive goals are to access the balanced representation, non-discrimination in appointment and promotion to judicial authorities, non-discrimination in leadership positions in judicial authorities, and access to leadership positions in the administrative branches.

Conclusions and Recommendations

After analysing the responses, it is determined that the arithmetic means of the overall tool of the paragraphs of the reality of empowering Saudi women politically in light of Kingdom's vision 2030 has scored a moderate degree. It may be ascribed to a delay in enacting the true empowerment legislation for women that may help them highlight their capabilities and qualifications in various fields. Conversely, the arithmetic means for the overall tool of the paragraphs of the barriers and problems facing the realisation of the political representation of women in the Kingdom's vision 2030 has achieved a high degree. This may be attributed

to the prevailing view in society toward women as being less efficient than men, the absence of financial support provided to women, and negative discrimination against the candidacy of some women in the elected councils. Besides this, it is found that differences are statistically insignificant in the degree of political empowerment of Saudi women depending on gender, place of residence and experience. Moreover, the arithmetic means of the overall tool of the paragraphs of the mechanisms for activating the political empowerment of Saudi women in light of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 has obtained a high degree. This may be accredited to all members of the research sample seeing that these mechanisms are one of the main factors for implementing the political empowerment of Saudi women.

After evaluating and concluding the current research, several measures for positive intervention within the framework of a national strategy are recommended: to issue legislation that supports women's political participation; to expand the representation base in the parliament, local councils and municipalities; to highlight successful role models of businesswomen and successful workers in various occupations; and to activate the role of civil organisations. This can, through educational sessions, seminars, forums and media for women to increase awareness of their rights and duties, play a vital role in enabling women to fulfill their roles effectively. Based on the research findings, a future strategy is proposed. It mainly relies on the mechanisms of political empowerment of Saudi women, considered certain to lead to better opportunities for empowering Saudi women, as well as to activate their political role in society. Additionally, we suggest to issue legislation that supports the political participation of women and to expand the base of representation in parliamentary authorities. We also recommend: strengthening the role of civil societies and organisations working in the field of women through educational sessions to enhance the realisation of their rights and duties; shedding light on successful role models of businesswomen in different professions; intensifying media and political awareness efforts that clarify the role of women in political life; and empowering them to play their role effectively.

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