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The Shaping of the Second-Class Citizen: A Social Response to Gender Based Violence in Jordan

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Master's Degree in Sociology

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To my mother, may her fights not be in vain.

Acknowledgements

I am immensely grateful to my supervisor, Prof. João Sebastião, for his unwavering support and invaluable guidance throughout the duration of my project. His insightful feedback, constructive criticism, and willingness to assist at every stage of the research have been truly instrumental in its success. Under his mentorship, I have not only gained valuable knowledge and skills but have also grown into a more proficient researcher.

In addition to Prof. João Sebastião, I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to my mother, who has been my unwavering inspiration and pillar of strength throughout this challenging process. Her boundless love, financial support, and unwavering belief in my abilities have been a driving force that kept me focused and motivated during this journey. Without her encouragement and sacrifices, achieving this milestone would not have been possible.

Resumo

Este estudo explora a intrincada relação entre a falta de direitos de cidadania e a violência baseada em gênero vivenciada pelas mulheres na Jordânia. Ao investigar as percepções e experiências das mulheres jordanianas, a pesquisa lança luz sobre como o status de cidadania impacta a segurança, o bem-estar e a igualdade de gênero na sociedade. Apesar das recentes emendas à Constituição para incluir as mulheres jordanianas, elementos discriminatórios na Constituição e nas Leis de Estado Pessoal persistem, privando as mulheres de seus direitos fundamentais de cidadania. O estudo revela que a conexão entre os direitos de cidadania e a violência baseada em gênero é fortemente influenciada pelas percepções sociais sobre a honra das mulheres. Essas percepções desempenham um papel fundamental na moldagem da extensão e natureza da violência baseada em gênero vivenciada pelas mulheres em relação ao seu status de cidadania.

Palavras-chave: Cidadão de Segunda Classe, Resposta Social, Violência Baseada em Gênero, Jordânia, Direitos de Cidadania, Direitos das Mulheres, Percepções Sociais, Igualdade de Gênero, Constituição, Leis de Estado Pessoal.

Abstract

This study explores the intricate relationship between the lack of citizenship rights and gender-based violence experienced by women in Jordan. By delving into the perceptions and experiences of Jordanian women, the research sheds light on how citizenship status impacts their safety, well-being, and gender equality within society. Despite recent amendments to the Constitutional Law to include Jordanian women, discriminatory elements in the Constitution and Personal Status Laws persist, depriving women of their fundamental citizenship rights. The study reveals that the connection between citizenship rights and gender-based violence is strongly influenced by societal perceptions of women's honor. These perceptions play a pivotal role in shaping the extent and nature of gender-based violence experienced by women in relation to their citizenship status.

Keywords: Second-Class Citizen, Social Response, Gender-Based Violence, Jordan, Citizenship Rights, Women's Rights, Societal Perceptions, Gender Equality, Constitutional Law, Personal Status Laws.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

In the natural debate of gender based violence, the modern society perseveres on the prevention of aggressions laid on women, assuming that the right to live has been established as a given. To this day, the perception that violence against women's existence is to be expected in Eastern regions of the world still exists as they are deemed uncivilized, or assumed to take part in traditions unknown to the West. These assumptions lead to the prevalent Western ignorance towards Eastern women's issues, and the portrayal of the Eastern woman as permanently and insolvably oppressed. As a consequence, Eastern women are continuously marginalized and neglected.

Although this image is not necessarily true, Eastern women have only been attempting to break free from the patriarchal shackles and accepting aid quite recently, and the process has been painfully slow. In the legal systems of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and within Muslim-majority countries, it is a recurring theme that women are primarily identified in society as individuals associated with reproduction and sexuality, often subject to restrictions imposed by men, families, and the government (Zuhur, 2005). When it comes to the MENA region, progress has been rejected by a great number of men and women as there is the misconception that feminism would lead to detachment from cultural and religious values, and Westernization, or in other words, corruption of local values. As a result, archaic traditions are practiced, including cold-blooded femicides, and unfortunately, handled with leniency. A recent light has been shed in the Middle East on what is commonly called "honor killings", which by definition are murders driven by the necessity to protect a family, tribe or an individual's honor and reputation; a practice which violates the several conditions of citizenship. Consequently, the Middle Eastern woman has been commonly labeled as a second-class citizen.

The existence of a second-tier, or second-class citizenship status in Jordan is deeply rooted in various forms of gender-based violence (GBV) that affect both women and men. However, women disproportionately bear the burden of GBV, regardless of its specific form. While GBV has diverse definitions, including domestic violence and a wide range of

physical, sexual, verbal, financial, and psychological aggressions, this research adopts a comprehensive understanding of GBV that also includes legal and societal forms of violence. This inclusion is crucial for understanding the lack of progress in addressing this pervasive issue, particularly in relation to women's issues in Jordan.

GBV, including domestic violence, is not exclusive to Jordan but a prevalent global issue. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated domestic violence cases worldwide. Honor killings, a specific form of violence known as "cleansing the eternal shame," have been practiced for decades in regions such as the Middle East, South East Asia, Eastern Europe, and Northern Africa. However, Jordan stands out due to its inadequate protection for domestic violence victims, resulting in many victims facing fatal incidents within their own homes. What sets these regions apart from the focus of this study, particularly in the Middle East and Jordan, is the absence of laws condemning such practices and the underlying sympathy of the population towards the perpetrators.

Rautureau (2020) highlights that the actual number of honor killings in Jordan ranges from 15 to 20, yet these figures are often inaccurately reported or not officially documented. In some cases, these crimes are misclassified as suicides or disappearances, intentionally obscuring their true nature as murders.

Several contributing factors have been identified in the high prevalence of GBV in Jordan. Traditional patriarchal societal norms and values that justify or excuse violence against women, even to the point of murder, play a prominent role. Additionally, the lack of legal protections and support services for GBV victims, combined with insufficient awareness and education about GBV, further exacerbate the issue. Jordanian women face numerous obstacles when reporting such crimes, whether they are victims of sexual assault or domestic violence or have experienced the repercussions as relatives of honor killing victims.

Jordanian society bears significant influence from religious parties, and the "Constitution grants direct authority to religious power" (Al-Rabadi & Al-Rabadi, 2018, p. 123). This factor is noteworthy as it shapes a system in which politics, laws, and societal norms revolve around conservatism and the traditional family structure. Furthermore, decisions are often made based on public opinion. It is worth highlighting that any endeavor seen as embracing modernity or "westernization" is swiftly met with accusations of blasphemy or a perceived threat to national identity (Al-Rabadi & Al-Rabadi, 2018, p. 124).

To comprehensively grasp the dynamics of Jordanian society, it is imperative to examine the prevailing attitudes towards gender-based violence (GBV) among both Jordanian women and men. GBV has seen a troubling increase in recent years, and understanding these attitudes is pivotal in this context. This investigation also seeks to explore a crucial question: Is there a correlation between violence against women and their citizenship status in Jordan? By studying this relationship, we aim to shed light on the complex societal factors at play and their implications for policy and social progress.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Due to the sensitivity of any topic related to women in Jordanian society, crimes are either concealed, or exposed minimally and often stipulated by society as a conspiracy. Moreover, according to Faqir (2001), the locally available data in Jordan on criminal activities is considered unreliable. This unreliability stems from the fact that the documentation of criminal activities in the country is primarily carried out by untrained men who lack gender sensitivity. Additionally, finding alternative sources of data proves to be challenging in this context. Thus, local research on gender based violence and femicide is limited and highly focused on legal justice, and while it is preferable to rely on local sources rather than Western reports, it is nearly impossible to do so. Supporting the researcher's reliance on public opinion, Yazmin Ali (2008) conducted a study on honor killings that heavily relied on testimonies from key advocates and social observations. However, the focus of this study is on the social factors that influence legal justice or its absence. The purpose of this review is to integrate both aspects and analyze the reciprocal impact between gender-based violence and the citizenship status of Jordanian women.

1. Enforcing Gender Roles

Following the traditionally patrilineal family structure placed on the Jordanian community, gender roles are clearly stated from early education to marriage laws. It is of no surprise that these roles are disproportionately enforced on young girls and women, exemplified through the curriculum established by the Ministry of Education. This institutionalized reinforcement of gender roles begins early in a student's life and significantly shapes their perceptions and aspirations. Within this educational framework, certain subjects and skills, such as culinary arts and sewing, are presented as part of the curriculum. Undoubtedly, these skills can be valuable in promoting practical abilities and self-sufficiency for both genders. However, a crucial aspect to emphasize is that these classes are overwhelmingly offered in girls' schools, setting the stage for the differentiation of gender roles from the outset of a child's educational journey.

Moreover, the curriculum tends to pigeonhole women into specific roles, primarily as housewives and mothers or within occupations traditionally associated with femininity, such as teaching and nursing (Essaid et al., 2019). While there is undeniable value in these professions, the issue arises when these options are presented as the primary or even exclusive choices for girls. This not only perpetuates deeply ingrained gender stereotypes but also acts as a formidable constraint on girls' educational and career aspirations. By limiting the spectrum of career possibilities for girls, the education system unintentionally communicates that their potential is confined to roles predetermined by societal expectations. Consequently, this restricted outlook can hinder their personal growth, hinder their self-esteem, and restrict their pursuit of diverse career paths. It effectively narrows the horizon of opportunities that should be available to them, undermining the principles of gender equality and perpetuating gender-based inequalities.

Additionally, media representation in Jordan is a powerful tool that shapes societal norms and expectations, and one of its notable impacts is the reinforcement of traditional gender roles. This influence is most evident in the world of advertising, where women are frequently featured in roles associated with domesticity, such as promoting cleaning products and food brands. These portrayals serve to not only limit women's roles to the domestic sphere but also perpetuate the deeply rooted belief that their primary responsibilities revolve around housekeeping and caregiving. Young girls growing up in this environment may internalize these messages and feel constrained in pursuing careers or interests outside the boundaries of traditional gender roles.

Beyond advertising, the news media also plays a pivotal role in shaping public perceptions and priorities. In Jordan, the stark underrepresentation of women's issues in news content, comprising only 5% of news coverage in 2019 (Essaid et al., 2019), highlights a troubling trend. This underrepresentation marginalizes the experiences, concerns, and achievements of women, effectively rendering them invisible in the public discourse.

Moreover, The influence of local and regional religious figures within Jordan's media landscape is a pivotal dimension that significantly contributes to the enforcement of traditional gender roles. These influential religious figures, often occupying prominent positions, wield substantial authority and reach vast audiences through various media channels, including television, radio, and online platforms. Their interpretations of religious

teachings hold immense weight, making them influential arbiters of social and moral values. Crucially, these religious figures play a central role in interpreting religious texts, sometimes molding them to align with their own socio-political interests (Essaid et al., 2019). This interpretation can lead to the promotion of patriarchal views on women within the context of religious discourse. Traditional gender roles, which relegate women primarily to domestic and caregiving roles while limiting their participation in public life, are often emphasized.

Consequently, within conservative communities, the interpretations and teachings of these religious figures are often accepted as authoritative and beyond reproach. Their views become deeply ingrained in societal beliefs and practices, further solidifying traditional gender norms.

2. Citizenship

Gender roles are further strengthened by legislation that, for example, imposes the financial responsibility of the household on husbands and fathers. This division of duties in the legal framework also has implications for the citizenship status of Jordanian women. In discussing citizenship, Tilly (1995) explains that citizenship can vary in its depth, ranging from minimal involvement with limited rights and obligations to extensive participation encompassing a significant portion of all transactions, rights, and obligations carried out by state agents and individuals within their jurisdiction. With that notion, Abla Amawi (2000) argues that Jordanian women are provided with rights as citizens, however, since their relationship with the state is “articulated by a mediator” and the mediator is a male family member, Jordanian women do not enjoy ‘thick’ citizenship.

Amawi’s claims are supported by the Jordanian Nationality Law n°6, according to articles 3 and 9, an individual is eligible for a Jordanian nationality if their father holds the citizenship regardless of place of birth. According to article 8 under the same law, foreign women are eligible for the Jordanian citizenship if married to a Jordanian man (The Jordanian Nationality Law, 1954). However, the law does not apply the same standard to Jordanian mothers or women married to men of foreign nationalities. These restrictions on women’s citizenship are postcolonial approaches to British colonial legislations that follow paternal and patrilineal ideologies, as well as Sharia (Essaid et al., 2019).

Additionally, following the Hashemite Kingdom's patrilineal structure, Jordanian men possess a family booklet that constitutes every member of the man's family. Civil Status Law implies that the family registry book is under the name of the head of the household, and the law states that this 'leader' is the husband. This booklet is given to every man that constructs a family to include his wife and kids under his name. Whereas a woman can either exist in her father's booklet or husband's as an extension of their name except if widowed or divorced, however, her offsprings can never be under her name. According to Amawi (2000), the main issue with the booklet is the establishment of a male 'head of the household' that further becomes the family's mediator for any legal processes.

This situation presents an apparent contradiction with the Constitutional Law of 2011, Article 6, which declares that all Jordanians are equal before the law without regard to religion, language, or race. However, it's essential to note that the Constitution was originally drafted in Arabic, a language with gendered characteristics. The term 'Jordanians' (urduneyoun) used in the Constitution's language could potentially encompass both Jordanian men and women or be interpreted as the plural of 'Jordanian men.' This linguistic ambiguity has created opportunities for gender-discriminatory laws to persist. Notably, Article 6 of the Constitution, while emphasizing equality without specifying sex or gender, has left room for subsequent laws to exploit this loophole. Consequently, despite women enjoying political rights and legal equality in areas like healthcare and education, they still face legal disparities, particularly in matters related to inheritance, divorce, and child custody, which fall under the jurisdiction of Sharia (Islamic law) courts (Lucas, 2010)

In 2022, Article n°6 was amended to include Jordanian women alongside men, in order to rid the constitution of ambiguity and establish Jordanian women and men as equals before the law. However, this modification spiked controversy since it contradicts several other laws, many based on Sharia, which do not provide equality, for instance, the nationality law. Several officials, particularly from the parliament, were opposed to this modification and it has caused a famous physically violent brawl between parliament members. The protest went beyond the official parliament decision when conservatives began opposing this shift in fear of "Westernization" and destruction of the traditional family structure. Hayat al-Musami, a former lawmaker and member of the Islamic Action Front (IAF), stated for Al-Jazeera that adding 'women' to the equality law would be dangerous for society and family, and believes

that the legal and social differences between men and women are crucial for the stability of the Arab community.

From another standpoint, conservatives additionally argue that Sharia Law promotes equity, providing men and women their respective rights and duties. Former MP and spokeswoman for the IAF, Dima Tahboub has confirmed to Al-Jazeera the fact that adding ‘women’ to the constitution would result in the absolute equality of sexes, which, according to her, would oppose the “positive discrimination” that Islamic laws provide for women. Sauda Salem, an experienced lawyer, supported Tahboub’s claims that the discrimination of women is in most cases, positive. Salem mentioned to Al-Jazeera that women have the right to receive alimony regardless of their ex-husband’s financial status. (Davis, H., 2022)

While attempting to maintain and sustain the Jordanian ‘identity’ in fear of westernization, which is simply maintaining a traditional family structure, conservatives also use the Palestinian cause to refrain women from gaining complete citizenship. According to a prominent Journalist and editor of Al Arab Al Yawm, Nabil Ghishan, the discrimination is unrelated to oppression, yet political. Ghishan claims that providing women with the right to pass citizenship would allow Palestinians to attain Jordanian citizenship and lead to the complete availability of the occupied land, which would lead Jordan to seem accepting of Palestinian displacement to another land. Sauda Salem maintains the same point of view as Ghishan, and adds to Al-Jazeera the obvious result of adding ‘women’ to the Constitutional Law n°6, women becoming equal to men signifies the deletion of articles 3 and 9 of Jordanian Nationality Law n°6, which consequently leads to women obtaining the right to pass down citizenship. (Davis, H., 2022)

This was immediately debunked by Salma Nims, the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) secretary-general, who questioned conservatives’ concern about the Palestinian cause since Palestinian women married to Jordanian men are entitled to obtain Jordanian citizenship (Davis, H., 2022). Additionally, Jordanian women are unable to pass citizenship to foreign spouses or children regardless of their nationality, not particularly Palestinian men. (Jordanian Nationality Law, 1954)

Conservative views dictate that Sharia law provides equity; however, the law, its extremist application by some, and lack of application by others are said to disproportionately harm women, though it is extremely difficult to obtain official local reports to sustain these

claims. Therefore, resorting to public opinion, the testimonies of previous authors, and ongoing grassroots efforts are the foundational pillars supporting this study, highlighting the imperative need to explore this complex issue further.

3. Honor Crimes

The uproar against unequal laws and their consequences in the Hashemite Kingdom is not in any way new, in Rana Husseini's *Murder in the Name of Honor*, for instance, reports of honor crimes, lenient sentences and movements against them date back to 1994. Honor crimes are defined by criminal activity driven by the necessity to protect one's honor, and yet, murder in the name of honor is not considered a crime.

For further clarity on the social view of honor killings, Arab societies carry two different, yet linked, definitions of honor: *Sharaf* and '*Ard*. *Sharaf* referring to the scale of honorability of a social unit, family, tribe or community. This scale is dependent on the members' conduct and reputation, generally regarding good social mannerisms such as honesty and generosity; *Sharaf* can vary and once decreased in social points, can be redeemed. Whereas '*Ard* strictly refers to a woman's honor, generally referring to chastity, and it cannot be retrieved once lost unlike *Sharaf*. With that notion, a woman's '*Ard* can tarnish a family or tribe's *Sharaf*, and in many Jordanian communities, this can only be cleansed with an honor 'sacrifice' (Ali, Y., 2008).

According to statistics given to the public, 2020 ultimately saw a total of 17 honor killings, though many more were heard of during the March-June COVID related quarantine of 2020 (Balaha, H., 2021). To these men, it is indeed more honorable to be known as a murderer than as a family with impure or disobedient women (The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, 2020)

Moreover, following Sharia, with the presumption that the Quran enforces the death penalty on homicides, murder can be punishable by death according to the Jordanian Penal Code. Nevertheless, killing in the name of honor can be subject to a reduced sentence, if any at all.

According to Article 340 section 1 of the Jordanian Penal Code, an individual is entitled to a reduced sentence if he finds his wife, ascendants or descendants fornicating

(*zina*) and kills or causes permanent disability to them and/or the individual fornicating with them (The Jordanian Penal Code, 1960). For *zina* to be punishable in Sharia, four witnesses are required, however, the concept of virginity in Jordan is still highly reliant on the hymen. Thus, 'virginity loss' can easily be evidenced or even fabricated postmortem, and in order to protect the murderer, it is possible to gather false witnesses that are admissible in court. Although Section 2 of the same article includes women to benefit from the same reduction (The Jordanian Penal Code, 1960), it is unrealistic to support the claim of a man's adultery in court, and more difficult to find supporting witnesses whether false or reliable. Therefore, the murder of a woman who carries the mere allegation of committing adultery is excused in court and receives a reduced sentence of imprisonment, if any at all.

Although Article 240 was repealed in 2018, Article 98 of the penal code allows individuals to benefit from a reduced sentence if murder was committed in a 'fit of fury'. Therefore, the punishment remains the same yet the reasoning before court changes from witnessing adultery to anger (Imran, Y., 2020). While crimes of passion are existent in many legislations worldwide, passion and honor hold completely distinct ideologies and courses of action. According to , the idea of "passion" in relationships is about the deep connection between a man and a woman, which is different from a situation where several men are involved with a woman and they work together to protect their reputation. When it comes to the passion model, if one person in this relationship behaves inappropriately sexually, it hurts the other person's feelings, not their public image. Additionally, it does not consider men who are not romantically or sexually involved with the woman, such as fathers, brothers, or sons. Instead, it highlights intense feelings of jealousy within the relationship (Abu-Odeh, 2010).

Moreover, Jordanian courts can sentence a murder driven by anger as misdemeanors as reported in *Murder in the Name of Honor*, where Rana Hussein narrates her encounter with a man who faced a six-month misdemeanor sentence after killing his sister for tarnishing her family's honor by being raped by her brother-in-law. The case is the embodiment of Articles 340 and 97 of the Penal Code working hand-in-hand, along with how easily premeditated murder can be fabricated as an honor killing, as seen in the following excerpt of Hussein's book (2009):

"His sister, Yasmin, had been raped by her brother-in-law. Knowing full well the consequences of such a crime, she had turned herself in to the police, rather than risk the

wrath of her family. Sarhan headed to the police station the following day and tried to bail out his sister. His request was refused; the police thought he might kill her because she had lost her virginity.

Sarhan went to a friend's house and stayed there for a couple of days. When he returned home, he found his sister in the living room. Without uttering a word he shot her four times with an unlicensed gun and turned himself in. (...) Sarhan told the investigator in his initial testimony that he decided to kill his sister after learning that she was no longer a virgin. He said he asked his family to bail her out and that he waited for them to bring her home, which they did. The minute she walked in, he shot her to death. The investigator informed him that if he insisted on this version then he might face life imprisonment and advised him to change his story to say he was taken by surprise by his sister's rape and the loss of her virginity, in order to get the lightest sentence possible. His lawyer gave him the same advice when the case was about to be heard in court."

This excerpt evidences several underlying issues that contribute to a murder taking place and a killer to receive lesser sentences, if any. In many cases, sentences are reduced if the victim's family does not file a complaint or drops charges, and given the fact that in most cases the family is complicit and does not want their family member imprisoned, for instance the case in the excerpt above where the family bailed Yasmin out at the request of her brother, families nearly always drop charges if there was a complaint filed in the first place (Human Rights Watch, 2004).

Acknowledging the fact that they will suffer little to no consequences, men have neglected the media exposure and practiced their homicidal tendencies under the nose of the public. The reality is that several homicides that are labeled as honor killings are unrelated to virginity or adultery. The reasoning behind the murder can range. According to Lubna Nimry, "refusing to enter into an arranged marriage, being the victim of a sexual assault, seeking a divorce—even from an abusive husband—or (allegedly) committing adultery" are possible factors that destroy a family's honor (Nimry, 2009). Deeper into reality, Jordan has an extremely high rate of gender based violence, leading to a good number of murders resulting from extreme injury caused by domestic assault to be labeled as an honor killing for the purpose of reduced sentencing.

4. Domestic Violence and Aid Accessibility

Though no country is exempt from numbers of domestic violence, the concern lies with regions, cultures and laws that ‘normalize’ physical aggressions towards family members. One major factor identified as contributing to high rates of GBV in Jordan is the previously mentioned traditional patriarchal societal norms and values, which often excuse or justify violence against women, including murder. Moreover, along with the fact that emotional abuse towards women is considered to be a natural social factor, physical abuse has been culturally accepted as a form of discipline by the Jordanian and Arabic society in general (Haddad, L., 2011). With that notion, due to incapability of identifying violence and success of aid being entirely reliant on the support official’s gender-sensitivity, victims are hesitant to report violence of any form.

Until 2018, the Hashemite Kingdom implemented an administrative detention center called Dar Amnah which directly translates from Arabic to ‘safe home’, where women reporting domestic abuse and murder threats were imprisoned for protection from their abusers. This administrative detention, or ‘protective custody’, entailed women leaving their children, education and careers in exchange for asylum while their abusers walked free. According to the Domestic Violence Protection Law, the national institution for Family and Juvenile Protective Services are responsible for protecting victims and preventing homicides of women and minors. However, the practice of administrative imprisonment is now conducted by this institution (Husseini, R., 2021), and according to an investigation by the Human Rights Watch in 2003, 97 women at Juwaida were held as administrative detainees and among the 153 inmates at the Amman Women’s Prison, 40 were placed there for protective custody reasons, while both prisons accommodate female offenders and individuals who may be at risk of victimization (Human Rights Watch, 2008), which contributes to the grand list of reasons victims do not report. Moreover, this method has obviously not been successful in decreasing the instances in honor crimes (Hartman, 2010).

In 2019, data from the Ministry of Social Development revealed that around 4,527 adult women and 2,438 minors sought assistance from the Family Protection Department's social service offices, leading to a total of approximately 6,965 reported cases (The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, 2020). However, it's important to note that the decrease in reported cases during 2020 didn't indicate a reduction in instances of abuse.

Instead, it marked a troubling shift towards more fatal outcomes. The official statistics for 2020 disclosed a total of 17 honor killings, but additional cases came to light during the March-June quarantine period. Reports suggested that national and feminist communities were hearing of over two honor killings per month throughout the year (Balaha, H., 2021).

In 2021, there was a return to face-to-face service provision at all sites, including in-person activities that are considered crucial entry points for women and girls seeking assistance. Furthermore, remote service provision continued to be available as a feasible option for those unable to visit the centers. The easing of government measures and movement restrictions aimed at containing the COVID-19 pandemic led to a rapid increase in reported GBV incidents following the reopening of service delivery centers (JORDAN GBV IMS Task Force, 2021). Faced with domestic violence and imminent threats to their lives, several victims and young women sought refuge abroad, turned to authorities for assistance, and sought support from public opinion and international organizations (Balaha, H., 2021).

5. Islamic Perspective

In order to maintain a neutral stance on the sects and interpretations of Islam, this study primarily focuses on the analysis of Quranic verses and their interpretations. The phrase 'misinterpretation of Islam' is frequently invoked to safeguard the reputation of the religion from behaviors that are carried out in its name and can lead to marginalization. However, when addressing the status of women in Islam, it becomes evident that these behaviors are not solely a result of misinterpretation but are rooted in influential teachings, including Hadith and the words of scholars. FThe prevalence of patrilineality in Arab societies can be traced back to the Quranic verse found in Surah Al-Ahzab (The Confederates), specifically in verse 33:5, which states, "Call them by [the names of] their fathers; it is more just in the sight of Allah." This verse is often cited as the basis for the practice of identifying individuals primarily through their paternal lineage. The Quran is considered the divine revelation and the ultimate source of guidance for Muslims, and as such, its teachings hold immense authority and influence. In this context, the practice of tracing one's lineage through their fathers has been interpreted as a means of maintaining clarity and justice in matters of identity and inheritance. It is seen as a way to establish clear lines of descent and to ensure that familial ties, particularly those related to inheritance, are well-defined and respected. This practice

aligns with the broader Islamic principles of fairness and justice in matters of family and inheritance, as outlined in various Quranic verses.

It's crucial to acknowledge that Arab societies are not exclusively Islamic, and there is a rich tapestry of diverse religious and cultural traditions within these regions. However, Islam holds the status of the majority religion in many Arab countries, and its teachings have played a significant role in shaping the social fabric, customs, and traditions over centuries. The Quran, as the primary religious text of Islam, has been a cornerstone in influencing cultural norms, legal systems, and societal structures. The concept of patrilineality, derived from the Quranic verse mentioned, has become deeply ingrained in the cultural practices of many Arab societies. It has influenced naming conventions, family structures, and even societal expectations regarding gender roles. This practice is a testament to the enduring impact of religious texts on the social and cultural dynamics of a region.

The Quran, as the central religious text of Islam, contains verses that consistently emphasize the equality of men and women in the eyes of God. One notable verse that underscores this equality is found in Surah Al-Ahzab (The Confederates), specifically in verse 33:35. In this verse, it is made explicit that both Muslim men and Muslim women share in the virtues and rewards of their faith. It states, "Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allah often and the women who do so - for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward." This verse encapsulates the core principle of equality in Islam, affirming that both genders are equally valued and rewarded for their faith, virtues, and righteous deeds. It underscores that men and women, as believers, are on an equal footing in their relationship with God. This concept of spiritual equality forms a fundamental aspect of Islamic theology and serves as a source of empowerment for Muslim women.

However, it's important to acknowledge that while the Quran consistently upholds the spiritual and moral equality of men and women, it also provides guidance on specific gender roles within a societal context. This guidance includes a division of responsibilities that has been interpreted in various ways. For instance, some interpretations emphasize that men bear

the financial responsibility of providing for their families, while women are expected to contribute to the family through their roles as caretakers and homemakers. This interpretation has sometimes led to the perception of a power dynamic where men hold authority in financial matters, while women are expected to be obedient and fulfill their roles within the family. It is crucial to note that interpretations of these roles can vary widely within the Islamic tradition, and contemporary scholars and Muslims engage in ongoing discussions about the applicability of these roles in today's societies.

Furthermore, the Quranic verse found in Surah An-Nisa (The Women), verse 4:34, is a source of considerable debate and discussion within Islamic scholarship and society. This verse is often cited in discussions about the role of men and women in marriage and has been interpreted in various ways over the centuries. It states, "As to those women on whose part you see ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful)." The Quranic verse found in Surah An-Nisa (The Women), verse 4:34, is a source of considerable debate and discussion within Islamic scholarship and society. This verse is often cited in discussions about the role of men and women in marriage and has been interpreted in various ways over the centuries. It states, "As to those women on whose part you see ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful)."

Some scholars and individuals interpret this verse as allowing for a form of physical discipline in cases of marital discord. However, it's crucial to emphasize that proponents of this view generally advocate for an approach that is non-harmful and intended to serve as a last resort when other measures (such as admonishment and separation) have failed. The intention, in this interpretation, is not to cause harm but to convey a message of dissatisfaction with a spouse's behavior. On the other hand, many contemporary scholars and Muslims reject any interpretation that sanctions physical harm or violence within marriage. They argue that the term "wadhribuhunna" should be understood metaphorically, symbolizing a separation or estrangement rather than physical punishment.

The Quran provides clear guidance on issues such as adultery (zina) and murder. It prescribes a penalty of 100 lashes for both men and women found guilty of adultery, emphasizing gender-neutral punishment. Importantly, the Quran does not endorse homicide as a punishment for any offense. The concept of stoning to death for adultery is primarily based

on Hadiths, not Quranic teachings. Furthermore, the Quran explicitly views taking an individual's life as a grave sin and allows for its punishment only within a legal framework and as an act of justice, not as a form of honor-related or extrajudicial killing (Penal Reform International, 2015). In light of these Quranic principles, honor killings, which involve taking a life to restore family or community honor, directly contradict the Quran's sanctity of life and prohibition of unlawful killing.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

1. Research Design:

With the notion of the Jordanian woman mentioned, this study aims to investigate and examine the true experience and perspective of the Jordanian women on citizenship, violence, prevention and honor. Consequently understanding their citizenship status and whether they are opposed to it. As this study was conducted online, it adopts a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

2. Quantitative Data Collection:

The study began with a survey designed with Qualtrics to collect quantitative data on the prevalence of GBV in Jordan. The sample consisted of a convenience sample of women and men aged 18 to 35 willing to participate in this study. The survey instrument included questions on demographic information, as well as questions on different forms of GBV such as physical, sexual, psychological, financial abuse and technological restrictions. Moreover, the survey also included questions to gather data on the awareness of legal and/or humanitarian aid, opinions on whether aid is effective, and their socio-political involvement against GBV.

The survey consisted of a strict set of multiple choice questions, which included whether the participant has or knows someone who has experienced GBV, what method of violence is more prominent in their environment, whether they identify as victims of societal violence, whether religion affects the increasing rate of cases, along with a series of other questions that tackle legal, social, religious and humanitarian aspects of the situation in Jordan, eventually concluding with whether they are satisfied with the Jordanian woman's citizenship status.

3. Qualitative Data Collection:

In addition to the quantitative survey, the study also included in-depth interviews with a sample of women who have experienced and/or witnessed GBV closely. Among these

women, an interview with Rana Husseini, a Jordanian journalist, author and human rights activist, was conducted and transcribed to discuss her her experience performing research on victims of honor killings and their families in the 1990's, and attain an experienced perspective of how the Jordanian society views women and GBV.

A request for interviews was shared on Jordanian women's Facebook groups to gather input from additional participants. From the five interviews conducted, only two were considered appropriate for inclusion in this study. While both participants preferred to remain anonymous, they openly and willingly responded to all questions, sharing their experiences with violence without hesitation.

The interviews were conducted through secure internet video chat, audio calls or chat platforms, guided and developed based on a literature review of existing research on GBV in Jordan, and explored the participants' experiences and/or opinions on GBV, including the causes, consequences, barriers and facilitators to accessing services and support, and their perceptions of societal attitudes towards GBV. Participants' personal experiences, along with gathering the information of previous reported cases in the media, allowed this study to develop a concrete idea of the resources Jordanian women are capable of acquiring to exist in the Hashemite Kingdom.

To support the analysis and discussion of the data collected, the study also included excerpts from the Jordanian Constitution (Jordanian Constitution, 2011), the Holy Quran, and Customary Tribal Laws (Al-Serhan, M., Furr, A., 2008). These three pieces of literature are responsible for the influence on the Jordanian society, representing government, religion and tradition. Analyzing the three major components of what Jordanian beliefs, values and norms are, and determining the distinction between them, aided this study to support the data collected from the public and identify whether there is a gap in the common interpretation of each piece of literature.

4. Data Analysis:

As the target audience is either bilingual (English and Arabic) or solely Arabic-speaking, the survey takes two versions, English and Arabic, with the same exact questions. Similar to the quantitative data collection, the in-depth interviews were held in either Arabic or English

depending on the participant's preference. The Arabic samples were transcribed and translated to English.

Both the English and Arabic versions of the survey were custom-designed to address questions that appeared unanswered during the interviews. These questions aimed to either substantiate or challenge the statements made by interviewees. The quantitative data analysis process initiated by addressing missing values, which were present in 200 survey responses for each language version. Additionally, the analysis tool, Qualtrics, had segregated the data and generated its own analysis.

The analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data worked together harmoniously to form a discussion that involved comparing public viewpoints, firsthand accounts, and the insights from the literature review. This combined analysis served as a valuable tool for understanding the citizenship status of Jordanian women.

5. Ethical Considerations:

Due to the sensitivity of the topic and the fear of exposition in the Jordanian society, all participants were informed about the nature and purpose of the study, and were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Additionally, participants' right to withdraw from the study at any time was respected, and informed consent was obtained from all participants before the study began. The data collection was also designed and implemented in a way that is culturally sensitive and respectful of local customs and beliefs. This includes women and girls, who are often disproportionately affected by gender-based violence.

Jordan is quite conservative and censorship was an issue. According to Freedom House "open discussion of topics such as politics, the monarchy, religious affairs, and security issues is inhibited by the threat of punishment under various laws governing expression."(Freedom House, 2022) Therefore, one of the main points of consideration was conducting interviews and surveys acknowledging the speech restrictions the participants may face. Moreover, it was important to ensure that participants are protected from any harm that may result from participating in the study. The questions were asked with precaution of not crossing the boundary where the participant may in consequence be under threat of legal punishment.

6. Challenges and Limitations:

Generally, this study was complex to execute. The resources were limited and the taboos were limitless, and a study on such a confined society focusing on gender-based violence (GBV) is prone to face a series of challenges and limitations. The Jordanian society values reputation and the concept of “عيب” (Ayb)¹ which loosely translates to disgrace; these invaluable concepts prevent women from admitting to the public, and at times to themselves, of whatever occurrence that may cause people to speak ill of them.

Recruiting participants was also a challenge since GBV is a sensitive and often stigmatized topic, and some women and/or men were unwilling to disclose their experiences or participate in the study, they may not have wanted to revisit traumatic experiences and declined to participate. Additionally, a vast number of the population diminishes gender related issues, therefore, some have ridiculed it or participated to falsely impact the results. Moreover, a good number of men and women were skeptical of the confidentiality and identity anonymity agreement, which might have lead to a great fear of being exposed in a reputation-based society.

As it is common to normalize violence in the Jordanian society, some of the participants may not have identified certain aspects of GBV. Moreover, while responding to the survey, some participants misinterpreted questions, or assumed that a certain aspect of GBV is non-existent in their environment. Additionally, there was the possibility of facing defensiveness and denial throughout interviews as some incidents may have occurred to interviewees as deserving of violence or simply traditional of the culture or/and religion.

Another challenge is the fact that the study is online-based. According to Ross Coomber’s “Using the Internet for Survey Research” (1997), though the internet is an incredible tool for today’s research, the internet is not a limitless platform for resources, and sample bias will always be an issue as long as different socio-economic backgrounds exist and hard to reach societies still do not have access to basic internet. According to Jordan Times (2022), 24.1% of the Jordanian population lives under the poverty threshold, therefore, about a quarter of the Jordanian population has limited accessibility to electricity and consequently electronics that should be used as facilitators for online-interviews and surveys. Moreover, studies have deduced that the majority of GBV cases, which most of the time go

¹ عيب contains several meanings such as shame, flaw, demerit and/or stigma

unreported, reside in rural areas; for instance 75% of domestic violence cases are reported to occur in rural areas (Al-Hawari, H., El-Banna, A., 2017). Along with the fact that several women who suffer violence are of other socio-economic backgrounds and yet are prohibited from internet access. All these factors contribute to the fact that the participants of this study were not representative of the entire population of women affected by GBV in Jordan. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalizable to the wider population, they simply demonstrate a general perspective of the online active percentage of the Jordanian population.

Although the internet is a powerful tool for research, it becomes a challenge regarding the accuracy of the results, or even the data collected. As mentioned previously, socio-economic backgrounds are crucial to whether someone willing to participate has internet accessibility, along with not being taken seriously. Jordan has a wide variety of digital misogyny towards female journalists or activists, and towards gender related issues (Jordan Times, 2022). Thus, advertising a survey and/or a call for interviews attracted participants who instead preferred to reproduce the violence digitally.

7. Conclusion:

Examining the experiences and perceptions of the Jordanian population aimed to investigate the connection between gender based violence (GBV) and citizenship. The main goal was to procure evidence of whether women are in fact not enjoying the privilege of a full citizenship, relating it to citizenship rights such as protection or lack thereof, and other legal factors based on societal ideologies.

Although the focus group of this study is Jordanian women, or women in Jordan affected by the same laws, social traditions, and aggression (ie. Syrian, Palestinian and Iraqi women residing in Jordan and abiding to the Jordanian legal system), the testimony of men under the same is also valuable since both genders suffer from GBV in Jordan. Combining the data from both men and women allowed this study to compare and contrast whether the genders have different perceptions of the prevalence of GBV and citizenship rights.

Finally, the findings of this study contributed to the existing knowledge on GBV in Jordan, however, from a closer approach to the public. As honor crimes have become more common in the recent years, men and women have become more aware of the injustice women face and the social pressure that is thrown on men's shoulders to commit such crimes.

Several approaches such as communicating with victims of GBV or incarcerated perpetrators have been considered, however, amplifying the focus on specific crimes disregards the greater issue, which in consequence leads the population to believe that GBV is uncommon and only practiced in the form of murder. The goal in this study is to dive deep into the beliefs, norms and values of the Jordanian society that lead to femicide in order to determine whether the cycle of violence creates a second-class citizen, and if it is the main blockage preventing women from full citizenship.

CHAPTER 4

Findings and Analysis

This chapter presents the findings of this study through a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys and interviews, to investigate the intricate relationship between second-class citizenship and gender-based violence. Drawing on existing literature, this research aimed to unravel the complex dynamics that contribute to the perpetuation of violence against women in Jordan, a society where discriminatory practices and legal frameworks theoretically relegate them to a status of secondary citizenship.

By analyzing the data collected from a diverse range of participants through surveys and conducting in-depth interviews, this chapter illuminates the extent to which second-class citizenship exacerbates gender-based violence, exploring its manifestations across various domains, including physical, sexual, emotional, financial, technological, legal, and social violence. The findings presented herein deepen our understanding of the multifaceted ways in which structural inequalities, societal norms and lack of awareness interact to perpetuate violence, and how violence affects these same norms and inequalities.

The sample for this study, gathered through the conjoined surveys, consisted of a total of (517) participants, with the majority of them being under the age of 35. Among them, (376) identified as female, while (141) identified as male. This gender-diverse and predominantly young sample provided insights into the experiences and perceptions of a demographic that is particularly vulnerable to such forms of violence. Considering that Jordan has one of the youngest populations (OECD, 2021), the inclusion of a substantial number of young participants enhances the relevance and applicability of the findings, offering valuable insights into the challenges faced by the younger generation in addressing gender-based violence and citizenship. The analysis of responses from female and male participants revealed notable differences in their viewpoints. Females exhibited more consistent views, while males displayed slight variations, particularly concerning their perceptions of different forms of violence.

In assessing whether a gender is disproportionately affected by violence in Jordan, the voting patterns shed light on the participants' perspectives. Among female participants, a

significant majority voted for the "Female" option, indicating their recognition of gender-specific challenges and disparities. Conversely, among male participants, a substantial proportion voted for the "Female" option, suggesting an acknowledgement of gender oppression within the country. Notably, the "Equally affected" option received relatively higher support from males compared to females. As seen in the following table:

Table 4.1

	Female	Male	Equally affected
Female vote	346	6	24
Male vote	86	9	46

Question 4: From your point of view, which sex is disproportionately affected by violence in Jordan?

1. Physical Violence

In the evaluation of participants' perceptions regarding violence, it is noteworthy to examine their recognition of physical violence as a form of aggression. The data collected from female participants (368) and male participants (134) indicated that the majority acknowledged physical violence as a legitimate form of violence. This consensus among both genders underscores a shared understanding of physical violence as a distinct and tangible manifestation of aggressive behavior. However, it is important to note that a small proportion of participants, albeit a minority, expressed disbelief in the existence of physical violence. This minority's denial of physical violence can be seen as an indicator of a limited but significant normalization of violence within the community or society under study. In addition to the mentioned Quranic verse which allows men to lightly hit their wives, such normalization may stem from cultural or societal factors, that downplay or overlook instances of physical violence, leading some individuals to question its validity or severity.

During the interview with author and journalist Rana Hussein regarding the normalization of domestic violence and child abuse, Hussein asserted that abuse is not normalized in Jordanian society, as evidenced by the existence of the Juvenile and Family Protection Department. However, the results of a conducted survey indicate that a small number of participants (24; 7 females and 17 males) expressed some level of agreement when questioned about the acceptability of hitting one's spouse when angry. Subsequently,

participants were asked about the normalcy of hitting one's child when angry, where a larger number (68; 32 females and 36 males) displayed agreement. It is crucial to emphasize that these figures, although constituting a minority in the study, bear significant importance. Despite the majority of participants expressing opposition to abuse, the alarming data reveals that 261 respondents disclosed personal experiences as victims of physical violence, while an even greater number of 430 respondents reported firsthand knowledge of female victims. Contrary to Hussein's claim, this data highlights that the substantial number of individuals opposing abuse within the community does not negate its widespread occurrence and the lack of appropriate consequences.

Furthermore, it is essential to delve into the experiences of interviewee n°2, who disclosed being a victim of recurrent domestic violence and having undergone the procedures facilitated by the Juvenile and Family Protection Department. Her account sheds light on the nuanced nature of these procedures, revealing that they can vary depending on the specific dynamics of the relationship between the victim and the abuser. Interviewee n°2's narrative underscores that the response to domestic violence cases may exhibit subtle distinctions contingent on the nature of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. These distinctions may be influenced by factors such as the level of familial or spousal connection, the duration of the abuse, or the severity of the violence endured.

“When I revealed that it was my husband, the staff swiftly initiated the process of apprehending him, flagging him as a potential flight risk. Once my husband was brought in, both of us were strongly urged by the department to reconcile our differences. Being a stay-at-home wife without the support of male family members, I reluctantly agreed to reconcile under the close monitoring of the Juvenile and Family Protection Department. Consequently, my husband never resorted to physical violence against me again. However, I have a cousin who endured repeated beatings inflicted by her father and brother. When she sought help from the Juvenile and Family Protection Department, she was dishearteningly informed that it was considered a “family affair” in which they could not intervene.” (Interviewee n°2)

Hussein's book highlights numerous instances where women faced the daunting reality of the Juvenile and Family Protection Department downplaying the significance of “family affairs.” (Hussein, 2009). Furthermore, Hussein asserts in the interview that those mentioned in her book who managed to endure their predicament through administrative

confinement found assistance primarily from non-governmental organizations rather than the local department specifically tasked with aiding victims (Husseini, 2022).

In addition to what was previously mentioned, there have been cases where victims of physical violence have tragically lost their lives due to negligence at the Juvenile and Family Protection Department. One particular case that garnered significant attention was the shocking incident involving Ahlam. In early July of 2020, Ahlam was fatally attacked by her father in the capital city of Amman, right on the road leading to their property.

Ahlam had been subjected to severe beatings by her father within their home, prompting the concern of neighbors who heard her cries for help. Despite managing to escape with a bleeding neck and seeking refuge on the street, begging for assistance from those nearby, her father caught up with her. He struck her from behind with a brick, resulting in her untimely death. Disturbingly, he proceeded to drag a chair, sit beside her lifeless body, and calmly enjoy a cigarette and a cup of tea until the arrival of the police. He displayed no remorse for his actions, since he believed he would not be held accountable in court (The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, 2020)

2. Legal Violence:

In addition to the absence of protection against physical violence from governmental entities, women have reported encountering various legal complexities. As previously mentioned, women have only recently been included in the constitutional equality law. Moreover, a significant portion of the population remains unaware of the rights women lack and the legal intricacies they face. For instance, when survey participants were questioned about the legal equality between women and men, a noteworthy number of respondents (78) admitted to a lack of knowledge on the subject, with the majority (52) being women who were unaware of their own rights. Notably, a substantial portion of participants (52), primarily males (36), asserted that women enjoy legal equality under Jordanian law. While the majority of participants (387) acknowledged a legal disparity between genders, it is evident that a significant number of Jordanian citizens exhibit indifference or ignorance toward this differentiation.

Moreover, a considerable number of citizens align with Dima Tahboub's viewpoint, perceiving the legal differentiation as a positive and fair measure. This perspective finds

support in the survey responses regarding participants' opinions on the fairness of the law. Notably, a significant number of respondents (106) expressed uncertainty, indicating the diverse levels of comprehension and awareness surrounding the issue. Furthermore, a minority (68) of participants assert that the law is indeed fair, yet not equal.

These findings indicate that some of the participants remain unaffected by the legal situation, potentially leading to the widespread uncertainty and a lack of understanding. However, the available data does not definitively prove whether any of these individuals actually support the existing disparities.

In order to measure the participants' level of acceptance to Jordanian women's citizenship status, a set of subsequent questions were asked regarding women's citizenship status and whether participants believed that Jordanian women should be considered full citizens, or in other words, if they should enjoy full citizenship. Interestingly, a notable portion of female participants (115) indicated a lack of clarity or uncertainty regarding their own citizenship status, while the majority of males (68) believed women to enjoy full citizenship although these numbers contradict the previous calculation that the majority of participants recognize the legal gender disparity.

These figures provide evidence supporting the notion that males, being unaffected directly by the disparities, tend to exhibit a greater lack of awareness or ignorance on the subject. However, in regard to the question of whether Jordanian women should have full citizenship, it is notable that an interesting number of female participants (29 and 31, respectively) voted "No" or "Not sure," whereas a comparatively smaller number of male participants (11 and 9, respectively) expressed similar doubts or opposing views. This difference in perspectives can be attributed to various factors, including the influence of traditional gender roles and societal norms to which Jordanian women may feel attached.

To demonstrate the reciprocal influence between societal norms and the legal system, the third interviewee provides insight into her divorce experience and the ongoing legal challenges she has encountered nearly a decade after its finalization. The participant recounts that she initiated *Khuluu'* (a form of divorce initiated by the wife) since her spouse refused to grant her the divorce. However, this measure depletes women from their divorce rights such as alimony.

Divorce procedures under Sharia law encompass various methods and requirements. However, as per the participant's account, this knowledge is often withheld from women. In certain cases where divorce is granted, women encounter additional complications. One such condition for obtaining Khuluu' is that women must return the initial dowry received from their husbands and forfeit the Mu'akhar, which was intended to provide security for women after divorce or the husband's death (Bani, L. M., Pate, H. A., 2015). Interestingly, Sauda Salem, who asserted that women receive alimony regardless of their husbands' income, represented the participant in court. However, the participant had to renounce her entitlement to alimony and her rightful dowry. This serves as an example of how the implementation of Sharia law in Jordan diminishes women's rights and reinforces male privilege.

In the case of this particular participant, relinquishing the dowry and alimony initially seemed like a form of liberation. However, it came with complications as her husband also refused to provide child support. Furthermore, under the Personal Status Law, fathers are granted complete legal authority over their children, regardless of whether the parents are divorced or not. This gives fathers the sole right to make decisions concerning various aspects of their children's lives, including education, medical treatment, and crucially, obtaining legal documents such as passports and identity cards. Conversely, mothers are only granted the right to physical custody. In summary, in cases of divorce, women are restricted to keeping their children at home, while all decisions regarding the children's well-being are externally determined by their fathers, leaving mothers devoid of any rights over their own children.

The participant expresses her pain legally and socially:

“Although I was the one who was working and educating and raising and doing everything for my kids, he was the one that was desired for legal documents, school enrollments, and in the future, he has to be the one legalizing my daughters’ marriages.” (Interviewee n°3, 2023)

Furthermore, the participant acknowledged her desire to remarry in order to share the responsibility of raising her children and provide financial stability. However, ironically, pursuing this path would result in her daughters being taken away from her, as the remarriage of a divorced woman automatically deprives her of custody rights.

In addition to the points mentioned earlier, when asked about the possibility of divorce, interviewee n°2 responded with a resounding denial. She explained that her financial

dependence on her husband was a crucial factor that deterred her from considering divorce, as it could potentially leave her without financial support. Additionally, she expressed a sense of shame, citing societal expectations as a significant concern. She indicated that she would never disclose the abuse she endured to those around her, as she feared the stigma and labels associated with being a divorcee.

3. Social Violence:

Based on two out of three interviews, Jordanian society can be characterized as watchful, resistant to change, and conservative. However, Husseini holds a stronger belief in the progress she perceives to be occurring. An illustration of this progress can be seen in the attitudes of Jordanian youth, who have started to stigmatize physical violence in social contexts, even though some of them have personally experienced its negative impact. While progress is indeed evident, it is undeniably slow in its manifestation.

While social violence predominantly targets and undermines the reputation of women, it also impacts both genders consistently. Women's social status is often defined by notions of virginity, motherhood, domestic skills, and submissiveness, while men's social status is built upon traits that are opposite to traditional female attributes. Both genders face immense pressure to conform to rigid and childlike definitions of femininity or to reject them entirely. For instance, some men may disregard personal hygiene due to its association with femininity. However, these views are not exclusive to conservative perspectives in Jordan; they intertwine with specific religious and tribal codes, resulting in women being stigmatized and considered a source of shame within society.

The survey respondents reveal a concerning pattern regarding the perception of honor. When asked about honor in general, it becomes evident that a significant portion of participants hold biased views. For example, nearly half of the respondents (234 individuals) associate honor directly with gender, and over half (271 individuals) believe that a woman's honor is tied to her virginity. This highlights a clear double standard when it comes to linking honor and gender.

Furthermore, when examining the direct link between honor and virginity, Rana Husseini argues that there are various other attributes or actions that can lead to a woman being dishonored. These include rumors, being a victim of incest or rape, or engaging in

relationships with non-relatives. However, upon closer examination, it becomes clear that these reasons ultimately revolve around the concept of virginity.

In cases of being a victim of incest or rape, society tends to perceive the woman as having lost her value since her virginity has been taken. Similarly, when a woman goes out with a man who is not a relative, it is often met with suspicion of engaging in sexual activity. Thus, while there may be additional factors at play, they ultimately trace back to the societal emphasis on a woman's virginity as a determinant of her honor.

The bias becomes further apparent when participants were asked about the attributes that contribute to an honorable individual, such as honesty, generosity, justice, and modest clothing. In terms of physical aspects like virginity and modest clothing, a larger number of participants (271) believed these traits to be essential for an honorable woman, while men received fewer votes (100). This suggests that participants do not consider these attributes as necessary for an honorable man. However, participants generally viewed the necessity of honor for both genders as almost equal.

To provide further evidence of the prevailing societal perspective on women and their honor in Jordan, the third interviewee shared her personal experience of facing societal challenges and encountering misconduct by government officials simply because she is a divorced woman:

"I was told several times to go kiss his feet (ex-husband) to get anything done. I was treated as if I am easy, and that I would accept anything from desperation. It gave the opportunity for sexual harassment especially in work interviews and professional situations where men see you as a used object that can be taken advantage of. But again, society allows them... Because we (mothers) do everything we can for our kids, even in the worst circumstances. So just like many women, I submitted to many things but I also fought for many things and men don't like that so they automatically draw a target on your back... Although I was the one who was working and educating and raising and doing everything for my kids, he was the one who got credit... I felt like I had no right to happy life. If you are unhappily married, you will be even more unhappy after the divorce. If you love your kids, they are treated as your punishment. The law and society also supports everyone's decision but yours as a woman. This behavior made me feel pressured, ashamed and dirty for getting a

divorce, which I know for a fact they do on purpose. They want you to feel like your freedom is your new nightmare.” (Interviewee n°3, 2023)

4. Honor Killings:

Collectively, the social ideologies surrounding honor, the absence of adequate legal protection, instances of legal misconduct, and the alarming rates of physical violence, contribute to the significant and pressing nature of the issue of honor killings in the country. Honor killings are commonly defined as “the killing of women for suspected deviation from sexual norms imposed by society” (Faqr, F., 2001). However, as Husseinini pointed out in the interview, it is important to note that honor killings can be motivated by various other reasons that are unrelated to virginity. Additionally, she states:

“The patriarchal system still exists in our part of the world, whereby women are expected to perform certain roles and act in certain ways. So, once this woman violates this expectation, it is considered disrespectful. Her life is in danger and some would consider a disgrace to the family.” (Husseinini, 2022)

In her book, Husseinini reports the story of two women murdered by their brother and since it was labeled as honor crimes, Husseinini heard several versions of the story, including the truth that they were killed due to inheritance quarrels:

“Nadia was married to a man without the knowledge of her brother, and when he learned about it, he killed them. But everyone knew that Mohammad often quarrelled with his two sisters over their share of the inheritance. He wanted them to give their share up to him.

The following day I went to the chief prosecutor’s office; he was a man I knew and got on with quite well. When I asked him about the murder of the two sisters, he confidently said, ‘It is a crime of honour. The suspect killed his two sisters because he found a strange man in the house.’

He made no mention of the inheritance issue or the alleged ‘secret marriage’. I was surprised that while the inheritance story was the talk of the community, the chief prosecutor had no knowledge of it.” (Husseinini, 2009; pages 67-68)

Moreover, similar to numerous cases involving similar charges, the perpetrator in question received a reduced sentence. This issue highlights the mislabeling of a significant number of femicides as honor killings for various reasons, with one of the most common

being the perpetrators benefiting from Article 98 of the Penal Code, which allows for a reduced sentence.

During the interview, Husseini mentioned that femicide is a worldwide phenomenon, and not particular of Jordan, as seen in the following:

“I think there is violence against women all over the world. Femicide is a worldwide phenomenon, it is not particularly related to Jordan or our part of the world. I think it has to do a lot with the masculine issues and their need to control women’s bodies and lives. Some kill because their wife left them, or because of infidelity, and it all revolves around controlling somebody, which is a worldwide issue. Not only in our region but also in South East Asia, South America and even some European villages. This is why it is important to address GBV from a global perspective in order not to demonize any region or country or class. We have to stay focused on alerting women and informing them about the help they can get.” (Husseini, 2022)

However true, her statement has also been used by others to discredit victims and those who fear becoming victims. Additionally, according to Krysten Brooke Hartman, some researchers also argued that honor killings are not unique since they occur globally, and violence against women is unfortunately a common occurrence. However, this perspective can be challenged since, in most cases of domestic violence, the perpetrator does not claim to be motivated by the "preservation of honor" or any discernible motive (Hartman, 2010).

While the issues mentioned are not unique to Jordan alone, the Hashemite Kingdom, like many other Middle Eastern and North African countries, tends to overlook these issues under the assumption that shame will act as a deterrent, preventing Jordanian women from being left unprotected as they would not risk causing such shame in the first place. However, the factors discussed contradict the notion that the perceived conservativeness imposed on Jordanian women actually safeguards them. Furthermore, these findings underscore the central point of this study: the unfortunate reality that Jordanian women are undervalued by society and face a lack of proper legal protection.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the potential relationship between the lack of citizenship rights and gender-based violence experienced by women in Jordan. By exploring the perceptions and experiences of Jordanian women, this research aimed to shed light on the implications of citizenship status on their safety, well-being, and gender equality within the society.

Throughout this dissertation, we have delved into the complex interplay between citizenship rights and gender-based violence, with a specific focus on the unique socio-cultural context of Jordan. The significance of this research lies in its potential to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on women's rights and gender violence.

Despite the efforts of some public figures to deny or justify the existence of gender disparities, the undeniable truth has come to light, revealing the linguistic loopholes in the law. While the Constitutional Law was amended to include Jordanian women, it is evident that the remaining articles of the Constitution and the Personal Status Laws still heavily discriminate against women. Moreover, the argument used to prohibit women from passing down citizenship in support of the Palestinians' right of return lacks a solid foundation, as Jordanian women married to any other nationality, Arab or foreign, also cannot pass down their citizenship. These claims are nothing more than facades created by conservatives to divert attention from the stark reality that women are being deprived of their fundamental citizenship rights.

After delving into the existing literature and thoroughly analyzing the collected data, this study has arrived at a compelling conclusion. It reveals that the connection between the lack of citizenship rights and gender-based violence can be attributed to the perception of women and their honor within the society. The manner in which women's honor is perceived plays a pivotal role in shaping the extent and nature of gender-based violence experienced by women in relation to their citizenship rights.

Despite facing challenges in reaching a specific group of individuals with limited internet access or those hesitant to respond, this study successfully gathered responses from 517 participants who demonstrated varying degrees of awareness regarding gender disparities within the Jordanian legal and social system. Furthermore, to enrich the research, in-depth interviews were conducted with three women from diverse backgrounds. These interviews proved instrumental in shaping the study's understanding that gender-based discrimination affects women across all socio-economic strata, challenging the common notion that violence is primarily associated with class disparity.

The findings of this study shed light on the prevalence and perceptions of physical violence among Jordanian participants. The research reveals a significant number of respondents who have personally experienced or known someone facing physical violence, including intimate partner violence and parental abuse, underscoring the gravity of the issue within Jordanian society. Amidst these concerning statistics, there is a glimmer of hope, as the study also highlights a prevailing resistance against physical violence among the Jordanian youth. The fact that a considerable proportion of young individuals reject violent behaviors indicates the potential for positive change and the cultivation of a more equitable and compassionate society.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge that despite this resistance, there remains a substantial number of victims who continue to endure the traumas of physical violence. The presence of resistance should not overshadow or diminish the reality and prevalence of these victims and their experiences.

To follow, the study highlights the complex challenges faced by women in Jordan regarding legal protections and citizenship status. Despite recent inclusion in the constitutional equality law, women continue to encounter legal complexities and disparities. A significant portion of the population lacks awareness of the rights women lack and the legal intricacies they face. Additionally, diverse perspectives on the fairness of existing laws further emphasize the need for increased public awareness and education on gender equality issues.

The findings also demonstrate the reciprocal influence between societal norms and the legal system, as exemplified through the interviewee's divorce experience. The implementation of Sharia law in Jordan has led to the depletion of women's rights and reinforced male privilege, particularly in matters of divorce and child custody. The

participant's painful account showcases the legal challenges faced by women and the limitations imposed on their agency and choices.

The implementation of Sharia Law in Jordan presents a significant challenge, as it necessitates a utopian society for perfect adherence. While some may perceive the conditions of husband-wife roles, including in divorce, as fair, it overlooks potential issues such as the husband's lack of impartiality, the current economic situation, and the possibility of undiagnosed mental illnesses that may subject Jordanian women to hardships.

The study uncovers the societal pressures faced by both genders, wherein women's social status is largely determined by traditional attributes such as virginity, motherhood, domestic skills, and submissiveness. Conversely, men confront expectations to embody traits that oppose traditional female attributes, sometimes leading to the rejection of certain behaviors associated with femininity. This reinforcement of rigid gender roles places significant burdens on individuals and perpetuates gender stereotypes.

A concerning pattern emerges surrounding the notion of honor, with a considerable number of participants directly linking it to gender and a woman's virginity. This bias contributes to a double standard and results in the stigmatization of women within society. Moreover, an interesting aspect surfaces in the study: men's honor is often perceived as contingent upon the social status of their female relatives. The reputation and honor of male family members are influenced by the actions and adherence of their female kin to societal norms, creating an intricate interplay between honor and the status of women.

The study's findings and legal aspects paint a distressing picture of the experiences of women in Jordan, revealing a reality where their rights are marginalized and their voices often disregarded. The societal and legal emphasis on adhering to a narrow and rigid lifestyle for women, including excelling in household duties, maintaining purity, marrying within the culture, and submitting to their husbands to avoid violence, severely restricts their autonomy and personal choices.

These societal expectations not only perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes but also hinder women's full participation in various aspects of life, such as social, economic, and political spheres. The pressure to conform to traditional gender roles can take a toll on women's emotional well-being, leaving them trapped in situations that compromise their happiness and agency. As a result, many women may fear seeking help or support and become

hesitant to file complaints or pursue divorce, even in cases of abuse or marital unhappiness. The heavy reliance on conforming to these specific norms creates an environment that discourages women from asserting their rights and seeking redress for injustices they may face.

Furthermore, the socio-political emphasis on upholding a pristine reputation to preserve the image of the traditional Jordanian family significantly impacts the feasibility of implementing certain policies that could potentially protect women from violence.

Conclusively, it is apparent that the absence of citizenship rights and the prevalence of gender-based violence in Jordan are interconnected. The societal valuation of women appears to primarily serve the social, economic, and political interests of the country, albeit within the confines of religious restrictions. This valuation is heavily influenced by perceptions of women's honor and adherence to traditional gender roles, resulting in the marginalization of women's rights and experiences. Consequently, women in Jordan are left vulnerable to various forms of gender-based violence, including legally.

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ANNEX A

Survey Numbers

1. In your opinion, violence can be:

	Physical	Sexual	Emotional	Financial	Tech	Legal	Social
Female Yes	368	371	372	362	355	346	358
Female no	8	5	4	14	21	30	18
Male Yes	134	137	134	110	108	99	108
Male no	7	4	9	31	33	42	33

2. Have you personally experienced any form of violence?

	Physical	Sexual	Emotional	Financial	Tech	Legal	Social
Female Yes	184	204	304	118	177	117	258
Female no	192	172	72	258	199	259	118
Male Yes	77	38	60	63	38	34	73
Male no	64	103	81	78	102	107	68

3. Do you personally know someone who has experienced some form of violence?

	Physical	Sexual	Emotional	Financial	Tech	Legal	Social
Female/ Female	330	284	346	280	301	240	329

	Physical	Sexual	Emotional	Financial	Tech	Legal	Social
Female/ Female	330	284	346	280	301	240	329
Female/ Male	137	82	140	87	57	76	99
Female neither	39	84	19	80	66	124	43
Male/ Female	100	90	98	60	86	57	89
Male/ Male	84	46	83	67	46	43	67
Male neither	27	43	25	54	45	67	41

4. From your point of view, which sex is disproportionately affected by violence in Jordan?

	Female	Male	Equally affected
Female vote	346	6	24
Male vote	86	9	46

5. How often do you hear of crimes related to honor in Jordan? (killings, beatings, educational prohibition, etc)

	Rarely	Often	Never
Female	37	335	4
Male	37	99	5

6. Have you ever feared and/or been threatened of becoming a victim of an honor crime?

	Yes	No
Female	152	224
Male	19	122

7. In your opinion, is honor directly related to sex/gender?

	Yes	No
Female	169	207
Male	65	76

8. What makes each sex an honorable individual? (Multiple Choices)

	Virginity	Generosity	Modesty (clothing)	Honesty	Justice
Female/ female	189	262	231	327	294
Female/male	60	303	106	290	280
Female/NA	156	31	114	27	41
Male/female	82	91	101	117	110
Male/male	40	115	73	120	117
Male/NA	48	17	31	12	15

9. In your opinion, are victims of sexual assault dishonorable? (rape, groping, etc)

	Yes	No
Female	24	352
Male	12	129

10. In your opinion, which of the following factors contribute to honor crimes in Jordan?

	Lack of education and awareness	Legal system	Outdated traditions	Poverty	Other
Female	317	284	343	182	29
Male	113	92	103	62	19

11. "The household bread-winner is entitled to all decisions regarding their home and family.”:

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Female	25	63	92	196
Male	18	58	24	41

12. "Lightly" hitting your spouse when angry is normal.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Female	4	3	12	357
Male	8	9	17	107

13. "Lightly" hitting your child when angry is normal.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Female	5	27	53	291
Male	8	28	26	79

14. What is the common response of the victims of abuse/violence that you know?

	Finding another source of financial security (work, relative, etc)	Take radical action (divorce/ moving out)	They know it is abuse but are silent	They normalize it or do not know it is violence	N/A
Female	40	51	283	186	10
Male	17	19	90	44	21

15. In your opinion, should aggressions be reported? (police and/or specialized org)

	Yes, Always	Yes, but only in life threatening situations	No, never
Female	325	48	3
Male	95	41	5

16. In your opinion, should aggressions be reported to and "solved" by family/tribe members?

	Yes, and kept private	Yes, and reported to the police/ specialized organization	No, only reported to the police/ specialized organization	No, and kept private
Female	36	123	208	9
Male	29	64	36	12

17. Do you think it is common for victims of abuse/violence to report?

	Def not	Prob not	Prob yes	Def yes
Female	153	159	26	38
Male	38	55	22	26

18. If applicable, why is it not common for victims of abuse/violence to report? (Multiple choices)

	Fear of financial instability (divorce or abandonment)	Fear of revenge from the perpetrator or their family/tribe	Not being able to access the judicial or administrative system (distance, lack of legal status, etc.)	The fear of legal or social consequences.	The lack of trust in the judicial or administrative system.	Victims consider the abuse/violence as a part of their daily life and do not see the need for outside intervention.	N/A
Female	268	326	208	282	300	196	4
Male	67	111	62	83	92	51	7

19. Are you familiar with the procedure to report abuse/violence?

	Yes	Not entirely	No
Female	60	227	89
Male	34	69	38

20. Are the police/family protective services successful in protecting victims of violence in Jordan?

	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
Female	8	44	175	149
Male	9	35	69	28

21. According to your knowledge, are men and women treated equally in the Jordanian law?

	Yes	I don't know	No
Female	16	52	308
Male	36	26	79

22. If not equal, is the Jordanian law fair towards both men and women?

	Yes	I don't know	No
Female	31	72	273
Male	37	34	70

23. Jordanian women are not allowed by law to pass down citizenship to their children if their spouse does not carry the Jordanian nationality. Does this policy create challenges in your life in Jordan?

	Yes	No	N/a
Female	181	51	144
Male	47	39	55

24. To be defined as a citizen, an individual has to enjoy the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of a nation, as well as protection and assistance. Do you think the Jordanian woman can be defined as a full citizen?

	Yes	Not sure	No
Female	79	115	182
Male	68	32	41

25. According to the definition presented in the previous question, in your opinion, should women be considered full citizens?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Female	316	29	31
Male	121	11	9

ANNEX B

Interviews

1. Interviewee n°1 (Rana Hussein, 2022):

Interviewer: What drove you to begin writing about honor crimes and begin this movement?

Hussein: When I became a journalist for the Jordan times, it was a time when the issue was sort of a taboo and no one wanted to talk about it. Then I came across a sad story of a 16 year old killed by her brother because one of her other brothers raped her and she became pregnant. So the family believed that she brought them disgrace so they decided to kill her. But she survived and he went to prison. She has a secret abortion and was married off to a man 34 years older, who divorced her six months later and she was killed on the day of the divorce. Basically, they blamed her for rape. To me this was outrageous.

Interviewer: What kind of threats during your work with this? What kind of threats have you faced for speaking up?

Hussein: In the beginning, people, especially men, rejected it. To them, it was not a topic that should be discussed, it was taboo. No one wanted to talk about it. I had some people, especially men living abroad, telling me they did not like what I was doing and they were asking me to stop reporting. But, this did not deter me.

Interviewer: Why do you think they did not like it?

Hussein: Once, a man who was married to an American woman said that if he gets divorced, I am to blame, because he claims that she was afraid of him. And, of course, some thought this is a family matter that should not be discussed in the media.

Interviewer: Do you think that men and women are equally victims of society?

Hussein: To an extent. Because, most men would not want to kill their female relatives, someone they grow up to love, care and cherish. But I think social pressure and family

pressure puts some men in a position whereby they have no choice but to kill. They are told that if you do not kill, people will look down on us and we will be outcast from society. If we do not kill the daughter who brought shame, then no one will marry your other female relatives. So there is a high level of pressure.

Interviewer: You think that they're equally victims of society ?

Husseini: To some extent. No one really wants to kill a relative but some of them are put in this situation.

Interviewer: Do the perpetrators consider their actions wrong?

Husseini: Yeah. Some do, but they tell you, if I'm put in the same situation again, I will kill my female relative.

Interviewer: Yeah, because generally, like living with shame is worse than killing?

Husseini: To them, probably. I mean, for me, everything is horrible. To transform a human being into a killer is a disaster, and not standing with women is also disastrous.

Interviewer: Have you been able to humanize honor killers?

Husseini: It's not my aim in life,

Interviewer: So you still see them as criminals?

Husseini: Yes, of course. Anyone who ends a life is a criminal, regardless of the cause. However, there are two types of honor killers. some men do not actually want to kill, they are forced to. Others, believe that they can do what they want but their sisters cannot.

Interviewer: Yeah, in your opinion, what is the value of a woman?

Husseini: The value of the woman is her brain is very worth. Self-worth is hers, what she stands for, what what she achieves in life, just like a man, you shouldn't have a certain value of divide the value. The value is the same for men and women, she should be treated as a human being and not a sex object or a source of shame and disgrace to her family.

Interviewer: Do you think Society hold the same values?

Husseini: There are some. There is a good amount of people who believe this. But in any society there are those two sides, even in the west there are women haters. There are all kinds of people. It depends on what ideas you were brought up on.

Interviewer: You think women are still being protected or protected according society?

Husseini: It depends of a lot of things, the family, where they live, what they stand for. There are families who believe that women should be protected, and some families that believe their daughters can do what they want.

Interviewer: Do you think the Injustice we face is connected to our value as women?

Husseini: Yeah, mostly value. It is so connected to how some view the system. The patriarchal system still exists in our part of the world, whereby women are expected to perform certain roles and act in certain ways. So, once this woman violates this expectation, it is considered disrespectful. Her life is in danger and some would consider a disgrace to the family.

Interviewer: what is honor in your opinion?

Husseini: Yeah, the last chapter in my book I actually question the meaning of Honor because for me honor is you know, honor is being honest. Not cheating people. Not deceiving others. Not talking about the reputation of others. Respecting everyone around you, um. Being truthful. Being honest supporting people around you helping people. Ah not stealing. Not cheating. Ah not talking about people's behaviors reputation. This is the honor. This is for me. The honor is to respect others and ah, to abide by all the values that. Ah. We are lacking these day in our life. You know, most people are no longer. most people are, you know,

Interviewer: And how do you think you're like your definition of honor?

Husseini: I don't know everyone. Everyone defines honor in their own way, but that's how I Define it.

Interviewer: Do you think society's concept of honor is directly related to virginity?

Husseini: Sometimes virginity, but sometimes not. There are many reasons why women are killed related to honor. For instance, if she leaves her home to an unknown destination, if she marries a man against family wishes, if she is a victim of incest or rape, rumors, suspicions of being involved in an extramarital affair, or going out with a man who is not an immediate family member.

Interviewer: Okay, do you think the capability of killing is connected to the normalized domestic violence or child abuse?

Husseini: No. This is a general question that applies to all societies. I think there is violence against women all over the world. Femicide is a worldwide phenomenon, it is not particularly related to Jordan or our part of the world. I think it has to do a lot with the masculine issues and their need to control women's bodies and lives. Some kill because their wife left them, or because of infidelity, and it all revolves around controlling somebody, which is a worldwide issue. Not only in our region but also in South East Asia, South America and even some European villages. This is why it is important to address GBV from a global perspective in order not to demonize any region or country or class. We have to stay focused on alerting women and informing them about the help they can get.

Interviewer: Yeah, I just wanted to have like a certain idea since like domestic violence and child. Abuse in Jordan is something super normalized in society.

Husseini: I do not think so. There are many women's groups, Family Protective Services, and the police addressing this issue. So you cannot say this is a normalization, I think there is a large part of society that is resisting this kind of abuse. Laws are changing, there are shelters for abused women, NGOs helping survivors.

Interviewer: Do you think that some deaths resulting from child abuse are framed as honor affairs for leniency in court?

Husseini: I do not know, it depends on each case. There is a recent improvement in the investigation system, so they are no longer accepting that justification.

Interviewer: I want to follow up with like the cases that you wrote about in your book. Has anyone safely left administrative incarceration?

Husseini: Yeah, there are some who were helped by NGOs, but only in the hands of NGO's.

Interviewer: You think every man in Jordan is capable of killing?

Husseini: Of course not.

Interviewer: But do you think that every man is excused by their own Society? By their own Community?

Husseini: No.

Interviewer: Do you think women are great to endorse of the violence?

Husseini: No, I don't.

Interviewer: Why?

Husseini: These are all generalized questions. There are some women that endorse this violence. Some pressure their sons or brothers to kill or to be violent. In a lot of times, if they do not support these family decisions, her life is also in danger.

Interviewer: Do you think that men are letting go of what we now call, toxic masculinity?

Husseini: Of course.

Interviewer: What is your idea of change?

Husseini: The idea of change is one which we have actually achieved here in Jordan because a total shift in the acceptance of these murders happened. In the past when I began lecturing and reporting, there were more people supportive of the killings. Nowadays there is more awareness, and more people against the violence against women. But of course, there still are people who think women should be punished.

Interviewer: So you think it is progressing?

Husseini: I think so.

2. Interviewee n°2 (Anonymous, 2022):

Interviewer: Have you experienced any form of violence?

Interviewee: Yes. I suffered from physical violence by my current husband, and it got to a point where I feared for my life. Since I do not have kids and I do not speak to my family, I feared he would do something to me and no one would get me justice.

Interviewer: What did you do?

Interviewee: I ended up going to the Juvenile and Family Protection Department to file a complaint, although I was scared this step would make things worse. I heard too many stories of women who did that and her husband killed her.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about the procedure if you do not mind?

Interviewee: Yeah, I first went to the hospital for a body examination to prove to the Department (Juvenile and Family Protection) that I had been a victim of violence. Then, I went to Family Protection and they took me into a room to explain my situation. I told them that I had been suffering from violence for years and that I feared for my life. I explained that I was afraid of the consequences and what people would say about me, that is why I did not come in years prior.

Interviewer: What was the line of action?

Interviewee: When I revealed that it was my husband, the staff swiftly initiated the process of apprehending him, flagging him as a potential flight risk. Once my husband was brought in, both of us were strongly urged by the department to reconcile our differences. Being a stay-at-home wife without the support of male family members, I reluctantly agreed to reconcile under the close monitoring of the Juvenile and Family Protection Department. Consequently, my husband never resorted to physical violence against me again. However, I have a cousin who endured repeated beatings inflicted by her father and brother. When she sought help from the Juvenile and Family Protection Department, she was dishearteningly informed that it was considered a "family affair" in which they could not intervene

Interviewer: Did you consider filing for divorce?

Interviewee: Never! I depend on him financially, I never got an education and I could not let society know what was going on or be called a divorcee around my acquaintances. I am just glad that he became afraid of the police apprehending him or his passport since he travels a lot.

Interviewer: What happened to your cousin, if you do not mind me asking?

Interviewee: I do not mind. She accepted the first marriage proposal from a man who lives abroad and cut off her father. She does not love the man, but at least he does not lay a hand on her.

3. Interviewee n°3 (Anonymous, 2023):

Interviewer: How long had you been married and why did you get divorced?

Interviewee: 18 years of a straining marriage because he was selfish and irresponsible. I did not want to divorce, I wanted to get separated in different countries with my kids to maintain an appropriate image of our family in front of society. However, he began financially pressuring me to come back with my kids against my will. Therefore, I took the decision to get divorced. I asked him to divorce me as our religion mandates, however he did not want to, even when my family intervened for him to divorce me. I took the decision to divorce him in what is called Khuluu, which depletes me of any right to alimony.

Interviewer: Why did you not want to get a divorce at first?

Interviewee: We were raised in a society that teaches us to be patient and wait for our husbands to do better and become more responsible, so I did but it is hopeless. Also, I was trying to avoid the humiliation and the pressure I was about to be put through.

Interviewer: How was the divorce process?

Interviewee: He was in another country, so the trial was inconsistent and took four months for the divorce to be final. But during the process, he refused to pay child support which I did not expect since I believed that his anger was towards me and not our kids, so I was confident that he was going to sustain his kids financially without a law suit. When I filed a suit for child support, He proposed to pay around 70 Jordanian dinars for each child per month, which could not sustain two teenage girls or even pay for their education. I refused, therefore the suit kept being delayed until the judge could give us a reasonable number. Meanwhile, I was working, taking help from my family and taking out loans to be able to sustain my kids and pay for their education since they could not study in public school because of the language barrier. Two years later the judge sentenced 150 JOD for each child which was also not enough to sustain two teenage girls, however it is considered in society and courts one of the highest amounts of child support. He kept trying not to pay several times, however there was a process of forcing him legally.

Interviewer: Tell me more about the schooling issues.

Interviewee: My daughters were raised abroad, they did not have any knowledge in Arabic and it was too late to teach them such a difficult language and its grammar since they were already in high school. So their sole option would be schools with international systems which were, of course, way more expensive. The issue is that fathers also have the right to claim what schools their kids go to, and at the time he legally claimed he did not want our kids in private schools, he wanted them to go to public school in order not to pay for education although he had the financial capacity since they had been in elite private institutions since infancy. So I took the matter into my own hands.

Interviewer: Besides their education, where there any other complications?

Interviewee: Of course! I was not able to get several documents done for my daughters (such as passports and IDs) since government officials kept demanding their father's presence, which is still unclear to me whether it is illegal. I did not file for custody since my kids were teens and by law they stay with their mothers until the age of 15 which then they choose, I

preferred spending my money on my kids than filing more and more lawsuits. I was told several times to go kiss his feet (ex-husband) to get anything done. I was treated as if I am easy, and that I would accept anything from desperation. It gave the opportunity for sexual harassment especially in work interviews and professional situations where men see you as a used object that can be taken advantage of. But again, society allows them.

Interviewer: Although most of this is either illegal or malpractice, how do you think they got away with all of it?

Interviewee: Because we (mothers) do everything we can for our kids, even in the worst circumstances. So just like many women, I submitted to many things but I also fought for many things and men don't like that so they automatically draw a target on your back.

Interviewer: How has the law and society treated you afterwards?

Interviewee: Although I was the one who was working and educating and raising and doing everything for my kids, he was the one who got credit and he was the one that was desired for legal documents, school enrollments, and in the future, he has to be the one legalizing my daughters' marriages.

Interviewer: Do you feel like you have been violated?

Interviewee: Of course. I felt like I had no right to happy life. If you are unhappily married, you will be even more unhappy after the divorce. If you love your kids, they are treated as your punishment. The law and society also supports everyone's decision but yours as a woman. This behavior made me feel pressured, ashamed and dirty for getting a divorce, which I know for a fact they do on purpose. They want you to feel like your freedom is your new nightmare, and they make sure of it.

Interviewer: What was your lawyer's attitude towards this?

Interviewee: Sauda, my lawyer at the time, said I don't have the right to ask for alimony or rent legally, and years later another lawyer told me I actually could and we filed for it years after the divorce was settled. I was enraged of course and I then began asking myself and lawyers if we could have done better to obtain our right, but that was the extent of it. Legally and socially he has more entitlement than I or my daughters will ever have.

Interviewer: Were you able to find a scapegoat to this cycle?

Interviewee: I thought of getting remarried to maintain the image of a traditional family in front of society, and of course, financial stability. But what is worse, women are incapable of getting remarried while their kids are still minors because they will be legally taken away from her. So I could not remarry and my ex husband kept tabs to see if I would remarry in order to take our kids away from me and prevent them from seeing me. I had to deal with it until my daughters turned 18 and we left the country.