

10-1-2009

A Sociological Analysis of Crimes of Honor: Examining the Effects of Higher Education on the Concepts of Honor and Notions of Gender Equality in Jordan

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SIT Study Abroad
Independent Study Project

Fall 2009

***A Sociological Analysis of Crimes of Honor:
Examining the Effects of Higher Education on the
Concepts of Honor and Notions of Gender Equality in
Jordan***

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Abstract

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ISP CODES:

Social Sciences, General: 501

Cultural Anthropology: 504

Education, General: 201

The study analyzes the ever present traditional notions of patriarchy in Jordan, and the contexts by which they are surviving in the milieu of democratization. By way of 12 interviews with academics, legal professionals, judges, and tribal sheikhs, it specifically looks to legislation, concepts of honor, and gender notions as exemplified by the traditional exercise of honor killings in Jordan. The conclusion of this research critically assesses that, despite a wealth of political rhetoric promising the ideals of egalitarianism, Jordan still harbors a patriarchal society that does not apply benefits of equality (especially sexual equality) to all of its citizens (especially women in traditional areas of the country).

Furthermore, the study conducts a survey which examines the influence of higher education (in the College of Law at the University of Jordan) on the cultural mindset which perpetuates these crimes in traditional societies. The survey analyzed 39 students from a fourth year level class at the university and 35 students who had not yet completed an introductory level class in the college of law. The researcher examined nineteen pertinent questions which inspect notions of gender equality and sentiments surrounding family honor and mitigation legislation with reference to honor killings. After conducting two tailed, independent t tests and crosstabulational analyses on all nineteen questions, it seemed only one question retained a significant difference between the answers of the introductory and advanced courses which would support a hypothesis stating education is changing students' mindsets. Thus, despite literature and public discourse from academics, political leaders, and human rights activists which advocates the use of education to steer social change, the results of a survey at the University of Jordan do not reveal any significant difference in introductory level and advanced level students' traditional notions of gender equality and family honor.

**A Sociological Analysis of Crimes of Honor: Examining the Effects of Education on the
Concepts of Honor and Notions of Gender Equality in Jordan**

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Statement: "Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Jordan:

Modernization and Social Change SIT Study Abroad, Spring 2009"

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research would not have been possible without the immense help and support from so many people who donated their time and efforts. Among these, I find it most important to thank my advisors: Dr. Novera Ansari, Dr. Ahmed Hayajneh, Professor Asma Malkawi and Dr. Ra'ed Al Tabini. These three people were the biggest advocates of this research and each spent several long hours in aiding me with the construction of this project. Were it not for their consideration and special support, it can honestly be said that this research would not have been done to the quality and expectation that we had all hoped.

Further thanks must go out to the law students and interviewees who were so imperative this research, all of whom worked around their busy schedules to take the time to educate me.

My gratitude also goes out to my friends in family, both in the United States and in Jordan. Without their willingness to constantly support and motivate me in my work, this project would not have been given the passion and fervor that it deserved. Thank you.

Finally, a significant acknowledgement is indebted to those women around the world who live in societies which do not allow them the liberty to live as free citizens. It is my sincerest hope that this research, and research like it, might come to close the chasm separating women's social status from men's. It is my hope that these murders, which obliterate that same honor they propose to restore, might someday cease. Keep fighting.

Introduction

Gendered violence and Crimes of Honor in the Jordanian Context

The employment of physical and verbal aggression, in order to maintain masculine privilege and preserve the status quo of gender relations, has historically been an effective apparatus of men used to subjugate and oppress their female counterparts. As Fadia Faqir articulates, “The use of violence to maintain privilege is not a neoteric phenomenon, rather it is historically entrenched, and has turned gradually into ‘the systemic and global destruction of women, with the institutionalization of patriarchy over the centuries’” (Faqir, 2001). In part due to their physical superiority, men in traditional societies have been capable of structurally retaining a certain hierarchical ascription of social standing, which has attributed them an augmented status throughout their customary communities. As such, traditionalistic societies in Jordan have developed certain patterns of interrelated statuses and stratified roles which incorporate one’s communal rights and obligations based on numerous criterions, most centrally sex and the family.

As a main form of ensuring their statuses, early men employed the use of physical hostility and social confinement toward women, in order to gain parental certainty over their progeny and unopposed economic advantage in their communities. Consequently, violence in these communities has been historically institutionalized and entrenched within legal systems and social norms (several of which have transcended time into the modern era).

Today, violence against women is a crucial issue facing the every national agenda in the world. Within the Jordanian context specifically, violence against women is a well-established and, often, a socially accepted phenomenon (a recent United Nations report summated that ninety percent of Jordanian women accept physical abuse by their husbands within certain parameters (UNICEF, 2007)). Furthermore, although Jordan retains one of the uppermost quantities of domestic violence cases per capita, a 1999 study estimated that only seven and a half percent of cases are actually documented, leaving a ninety two and a half percent non-reporting rate among Jordanian women (Human Forum for Women's Rights, 1999).

Although these statistics have vaguely improved in the past decade due to a strong campaign headed by the monarchy and international activist groups, many believe there has not been a significant shift in the sociological framework which adheres to, and promulgates such abusive behavior. In Jordan, the foundation for this stagnant position toward social change rests in the institutionalization and sociological entrenchment of customary viewpoints referring to gender notions, which have led to the engrained patriarchal identity with which Jordan identifies.

As with other traditionalistic societies, Jordan uses customary methods of legislation, social normalization, and religious justification to validate the codified practice of gendered abuse; thus resulting in its uninterrupted existence. One such prevailing application of gendered violence used to buttress traditional notions of masculine preeminence in Jordan, is the recurring recital of crimes of honor, which represent about ten percent of total crimes (interview with Dr. Abeer Dababneh) and twenty five percent of homicides in Jordan each year (Husseini, 2009).

Defining Crimes of Honor

Crimes of honor typically occur in traditional and patriarchal societies and transpire when a woman infringes upon the reputation of her paternal family (or rarely, her husband) by violating a female sexual code of ethics, with its legitimacy resting in tribal custom (interview with Musa Shteivi, 2009, Ruggi, 1998, Interview with Rana Hussein, 2009, Faqir, 2001). Within the traditional Jordanian context, family honor signifies an important identifier of each individual to the society. Hence, once the honor of a family has been compromised, it becomes incumbent upon the paternal family to restore it. Patriarchal law and societal normalization of these traditional societies has dictated that the only accepted technique for restoring such honor is by way of physical abuse, frequently involving the bloodshed and murder of the ‘culpable’ female (and only the female) involved.

Honor Crimes and Modernization: A Staunch Dichotomy

In Jordanian society, there is a current battle being fought in regard the dichotomy between the national “equal” status of women and the perpetuation of honor killings. It is a battleground that represents the larger socio-political struggle to combine a modernizing nation with a traditional state of mind. The efforts to eradicate violence against women from the *modus operandi* of gender relations in the private sphere symbolize a larger struggle for egalitarianism in the macro society. This campaign further signifies the democratization of Jordanian politics, and the transition into a more civil society by way of social equality and liberal criticism in the public sector. It is an imperative battle for modernization and social change, which makes this research exceptionally pertinent to the themes of this program, and even more significant to the Jordanian social agenda.

Research objectives

It is well documented that crimes of honor in Jordan are deeply rooted in the socio-cultural norms, legislation, and the socioeconomic conditions of their traditional society. However, until very recently, there was little written on the *specific norms, concepts* of honor, *socioeconomic/demographic divides*, or *discursive effects* of legislation in the Jordanian socio-political sphere.

The scope of this particular research initially began with the main objective of assessing the socio-cultural underpinnings of Jordanian society which have facilitated the perpetuation of these crimes in a culture that has recently fostered and accepted modernizing trends. This main objective, however, is broad and fails to concisely label the more particular aims in the study. Thus, the main objective was separated into four concise and specific objectives, upon which a focused and structured thesis will be far easier to assemble. The specific objectives are constructed as such:

1. To discover the derivations and perceptions of the concept known as “honor” in Jordan. The expression “honor” is usually used as a blanket term which generally describes a largely undefined concept within Jordanian culture. The aim of this section is to discover the roots of the notion, and its applications to Jordanian women.
2. To analyze the notions of gender equality in the public sector of Jordanian society and gauge their role in the perpetuation of such transgressions.
3. To closely examine and analyze the discourse of certain articles in the Jordanian Penal Code, which harbor traditionalistic and imbalanced liberties for men and women, while simultaneously mitigating offenders of honor killings.
4. To examine a sample of seventy four students at the University of Jordan, thirty nine of which are well versed and advanced in the respects of legislation and social issues, and

thirty five of which are taking only introductory level classes in the College of Law. The results of the survey will aim to determine the extent to which the propensity of certain information and education can yield a changing sentiment in Jordanian society concerning the cultural fanaticism surrounding the protection of the family's honor.

With respect to initial three specific objectives, this research aims to conduct interviews and analyze literary texts, in order to extrapolate the social, economic and legal underpinnings of the crime. Although research was done in the field to attain such data, the results of these three objectives will be answered in the review of literature. The reason for such placement of the information is that the researcher, in keeping with ethical boundaries, does not consider the results of this part of the study to be called solely his "own findings," especially considering there is an influx of parallel information which is about to be published on the topic.

With respect to the last specific objective, it has recurrently been stated and insinuated throughout the thematic seminar, written literature and statistical data that the modernizing education in Jordan is the fundamental key to unlocking the open mindedness and rationale that will supposedly bring about a sharp decrease in the perpetuation of crimes of honor. However, there are opposing opinions, which state that the Jordanian educational system does not provide the nature of curricula which will produce such a variance in the Jordanian mindset. This survey is formatted to measure notions of Jordanian cultural values, and how they have been altered with the onset of an advanced education concerning social issues and legislation. The hypothesis of this study suggests that education, although imperative to democratization and gender equality, will not, alone, yield a significant result with regard to the modification of these particular social values.

Preliminary Statements Concerning this Research

The initial statement that must be reiterated constantly throughout this study is that this research is not particularly aimed at disgracing or discrediting any traditional values, norms, customs, or the people who adhere to them. In fact, it should be recorded that tribal customs yield *numerous* positive implications including advanced altruism, protection, and social sustainment that are not often found in Western culture. The researcher has drawn this conclusion by listening to the candor of two tribal sheikhs, one of which he lived with for five days in the Southern Badia of Jordan.

In addition, this researcher has gone to extensive lengths to avoid inscribing the Jordanian state of affairs by way of his own biases, and only provide information which has academic foundation through case study or statistical analysis. It is *not* the role of this researcher to provide any information that is unfounded or biased in nature. That said, it is incumbent to give a clear, critical analysis of the legislative, social, and cultural situation in Jordan. By this, it is to be understood that this researcher finds it necessary to critique Jordanian society in certain aspects of its being, and not adhere to the common method of veiling defective characteristics. It is in this way that progress is to be made, and it is only for the sheer potential which the researcher observes in Jordan as a modernizing state, that he is willing to give such a critical and vital review of the socio-cultural atmosphere.

This is not to say that Jordan alone is responsible for the unique transgression of crimes of honor. On the contrary, it is imperative to note that crimes of honor have been reported in all parts of the world including: Bangladesh, Ecuador, Egypt, The United Kingdom, India, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Pakistan, Morocco, Sweden, Turkey, Uganda, and even the United States (Goldstein, 2001).

Albeit a world-wide phenomenon, each culture is particular in its own regard, and it should be noted that this particular research is only significant as applied to Jordanian society. In applying methods of cultural relativity and sensitivity, it is imperative to note that each culture in each geographic location is unique, and one cannot be permitted to make generalizations about all cultures by evidence of one particular study.

As a final point, it becomes necessary to clarify that these crimes of honor do not necessarily represent the mindset of an entire national population. Rather, they represent certain existing notions of gender roles and the normalization of patriarchal governance which are particular to only *certain* people and institutions in Jordan. Throughout this research, it has to be made clear that many Jordanians are currently fighting to halt inequities of all kinds. As a result, this study is currently paralleling a larger initiative, launched by the King Hussein Foundation, which aims to change the social basis of understanding behind crimes of honor.

A Review of Existing Literature

1) The Jordanian Concept of Honor

Existing literature mentioning concepts of family honor in Jordanian society are well documented and easily attainable. However, after reviewing much of the prescribed documentation on the subject, it became apparent that further research was necessary in the context of specific derivations, conceptions, and applications of honor in Jordanian society. In essence, the aim of this subsection became to thoroughly describe the derivation of the concept, how it is perceived today, and how it is applied within the context of modernization.

Concepts and Perceptions of Family Honor in Jordan

Gideon Kressel argues in an article entitled, *Shame and Gender*, “Ideas and practices pertaining to social esteem and hierarchy are distinctive features of culture, which are supposed to reflect certain requirements of social organization” (Kressel 1992). In essence, Kressel argues that practices insinuating honoring and shaming techniques are seemingly applications of the sociological theory of *structural functionalism*, in that a society utilizes cultural devices (such as stereotypes or gender notions) in order to maintain the status quo of certain phenomenal relations (such as power retentions) (Rundblad 2009). Structural functionalism further dictates that societies are not willingly accepting of change, and if alterations are to permeate significant social institutions, the processes of transformation are very tenuous. As such, the development of social change in Jordan, especially in reference to notions tied to family honor; still implores aspects of the traditional.

Jordan, although in the processes of modernization, still solicits a patriarchal power base, both in its governance and in the private social sphere, leaving the concept of honor deeply rooted in kinship relations and familial bonds (Ruggi, 1998). As such, it is no surprise that family status, “constitutes the fundamental building block of society and is largely dependent upon its honor, much of which is determined by the respectability of its daughters” (Ruggi, 1998).

In Jordanian society, it becomes necessary to recognize that familial connections never deteriorate, even after the betrothal of a daughter into another family. This typically results in the interminable membership and guidance of the paternal family in the life of the Jordanian woman (interview with Rana Husseini). While this acceptance often yields exceptional benefits for women (such as protection and guidance), it also essentially places restrictions on her, especially in relation to her sexuality (interview with Dr. Musa Shteivi, 2009).

A popular Jordanian conception in relation to female honor is the notion of the *ird*. *Ird* is the Arabic title given to the traditional concept of honor retained by a woman through her compliance and acquiescence of a very rigid and socially constructed code of ethics referring to her sexuality (interview with Musa Shteivi 2009, Ruggi, 1998, Kressel, 1992). The notion of women's traditional representation is simply surmised as "expecting them to abstain from any kind of *sexual practice* before they get married" (Abu Odeh, 2000). This includes showing any interest in men, including kissing, flirting, or expressing their lust in any way. In this sense, it becomes a woman's chastity and virginity that link her to purity, which in turn, sustains the honor of the family. As Fadia Faqir articulates, "In Arab societies, women should remain *mastura* (literally meaning hidden, or low profile), a term which implies physical and psychological confinement in the public and private spheres" (Faqir, 2001). Respected femininity, in this way, is socially and culturally constructed to apply to those who maintain passivity, selflessness, and submissiveness, especially in their relationships with men (Faqir, 2001). On this point, Abu Odeh makes the assertion, "The hymen, in this context, becomes the sociophysical sign that both assures and guarantees virginity, as well as gives the woman a stamp of respectability and virtue" (Abu Odeh, 2000).

The *ird* concept, though, requires further inquiry, as it is conceived as the fundamental basis of family honor in traditional Jordanian sects. It is widely accepted among customary Jordanians that the *ird* is a secular concept and is physically embodied in an unmarried woman's hymen, as the hymen signifies a woman's sexual purity and ethical deference. However, it is necessary to note that the "hymenization" (Kevorkian 2002) of the *ird* is only acknowledged until the woman is betrothed, after which her nobility depends on chastity, progeny, and adulation of traditional custom (interview with Sheikh Abu Nweir).

Once a mother, it is incumbent upon the woman to educate her daughters in the maintenance of the *ird*, by insisting on abstinence from all things sexual in nature until marriage (interview with Sheikh Abu Nweir). Protection and conservation of the *ird* is a traditional woman's most important responsibility as it is the basis on which she is respected by her family and the basis on which her family is respected by society at large (interview with Musa Shteivi, 2009). Because the *ird* is so reflective of the honor of the family, great lengths are taken to preserve it, and once it is compromised greater lengths are taken to restore it.

The *ird* can be compromised in a plethora of ways, most of which concern sexually illicit conduct on the part of the woman (interview with Sheikh Abu Nweir). However, "sexually illicit conduct" is a loose and subjective term which leaves many open avenues for interpretation.

Sociological studies and inquiries into particular case studies have yielded the belief that, more important than the evidential substantiation of the compromise of the *ird*, is the influence of rumor and suspicion. In other words, societal implications made against a woman can compromise the *ird*, despite any fault on the part of the woman to protect it. In effect, rumors circulating about a woman's sexuality are often the only evidence men need to substantiate and legitimize their conduct in "cleansing their honor". This sentiment reasons that many women who are killed for the preservation of honor are murdered strictly in the name of suspicion. As such, numerous autopsies performed on victims yield the result that the victim was a virgin at the time of death, and her sexuality was not at all in conflict with traditional codes of acceptable behavior (Husseini, 2009).

Furthermore, women can potentially lose their *ird* due solely to the actions of others (interviews with Musa Shteivi and Yusuf Mansur, 2009). The most heinous and brutal example is the cases in which the woman in a customary environment is raped. In such cases, many

women are persecuted with the notion that they, in some way, facilitated the rape by acting or speaking with a perceived symbolic meaning of sexual advancement. In these acts, it is evident that “blaming the (female) victim” is common among traditional sects of Jordanian society, and women are so often viewed as “damaged” or “scratched” once their virginity has been compromised (Sheikh Abu Nweir).

Furthermore, unlike male honor (*sharaf*) which can be lost and regained, *Ird*, once lost, is typically lost forever (Kressel, 1992, interview with Musa Shteivi, 2009). Social codes are strict about the punishments necessary to restore family honor, and there is a resounding sentiment throughout traditional Jordanian society which implies that the only true form of restoration of honor relies on the bloodshed of the ‘offending’ female. The penalty for the woman is usually carried out by a close male relative, and, if the punishment is death, usually a brother or cousin for the sake light sentencing on the part of the judiciary. Families or tribes usually convene in one form or another and decide the proper punishment for the offense, although some acts are sometimes carried out irrationally, without consultation of the tribe. Typically, these punishments are conceived free of state or institutional intervention, and seemingly serve to reiterate the power of familial and tribal influence in Jordan, without due process or judicial review.

Effects of Modernization

Recently, the King Hussein Foundation alongside the research of sociologist Musa Shteivi has comprised a theory that the ramifications of modernization will lead to the displacement of the concept of the *ird*. In an interview with Dr. Shteivi, as well as in his presentation at a conference Amman, he asserted that certain effects of modernization, such as:

urbanization, technological advancement in communicatory devices, education and social inclusion of women will leave the concept of the *ird* a mostly historical phenomenon in modernized environments.

With reference to urbanization, Shteivi believes that the constant observance and scrutiny of men toward women's actions become futile in urbanized environments, as women's anonymity and ambiguity are easier to maintain in a more populated, larger geographic atmosphere. As such, urbanization is said to have the effect of men being less apt to criticize certain female behavior and women being able to adopt a more liberal stance in their social interactions. Over time, this theory states that there will yield a liberalization of women, by allowing them to revolutionize traditional social codes without fear of male wrong-headedness.

Furthermore, with reference to modernizing education and social inclusion, Dr. Shteivi believes that, if women overcome their traditionally constructed roles in school and the workplace, they will gain the basic social freedoms and empowerment to be recognized as social, political, and economic authorities. This shift will, in turn, signify their advancement toward gender equality with their male counterparts in the private sphere, as well as the public sphere (interview with Dr. Musa Shteivi).

Finally, Shteivi believes that the use of cellular phones and the internet will aid in bringing a wealth of knowledge, as well as access to the outside world, to women traditionally confined to the household. In effect, a technological revolution will serve to augment the propensities with which other effects of modernization can initiate change, mainly by providing unlimited sources to information and social interaction.

However, these claims are criticized by some, who believe that the traditional derivations of these concepts will not allow modernization to overtake them. After all, they have survived centuries of social change and have adapted to several contradicting environments. As such, this paper is obliged to closely examine the theoretical derivations of the concepts of honor in order to analyze their historical power in traditional societies, and potentially understand their ability to survive eons.

Derivation of Jordanian Honor:

The Fabrication of Religious Derivations: Islam, Adultery, and Honor

Most Western critics of Arab societies retain strong tendencies to fault Islamic law for the societal ills and norms surrounding honor killings; however, the application of such Western literature is based on unfounded and misinterpreted texts. While it may be the opinion of the researcher that fundamental Islam may retain certain texts calling for gender differentiation, it is a baseless, tenuous and unsubstantiated argument to claim that Islamic law is the direct foundation of murder in the name of honor. The first and most convincing evidence rests in the fact that crimes of honor are not specific to Muslim societies, but occur in South America, Europe, North America, Asia, Australia and Africa (Goldstein, 2001). Furthermore, a critical analysis of the Islamic textual discourse will yield a strong sentiment dictating that Islamic law does not condone murder, especially in the name of honor or without judicial review. Rather, the *Share'a* tends to favor the side of the defense in such matters, and control the spread of slander in Islamic communities.

The two sources of Islamic law (*Share'a*) are considered to be found within the *Qur'an* (the revelations of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon Him)) and the *Haddith* (a compilation

of the sayings, actions, decisions, and judgments of the Prophet). The *Qur'an*, Verse 2, Sura 24 states of unmarried adulterers:

The adulterer and the adulteress, scourge ye each one of them (with) a hundred stripes. And let not pity for the twain withhold you from obedience to Allah, if ye believe in Allah and the last day. And let a party of believers witness their punishment. (Qur'an 2:24)

These verses explain that scourging was necessary for *unmarried* adulterers. It is important to note that, in contrast with the savage portrayal many westerners associate with these public chastisements, the common trend in such a scourging was for the male executor to hold the *Qur'an* beneath his right arm, in order to minimize the strength with which he could strike the offender (interview with Dr. Yusuf Mansur). Furthermore, the law dictates that punishment is indispensable for both parties, male and female, which clearly contradicts the concept of family honor that reprimands only the woman. As a final point, Islamic law in no way states that adultery has any effect on the honor of the woman or her family, and does not propagate the idea that physical punishment retains “restorative” capabilities for a family’s honor.

Although the *Qur'an* and the *Sunna* both do adhere to the notion of killing an adulterous, married woman, one must delve deeper into the *Qur'anic* text in order to flesh out the entire sentiment of the *Share'a*, (Khalili, 2002). Interestingly, Islamic law required the use of an institutionalized judiciary to delegate on cases all of adultery, starkly contradicting the methods of “acting as judge and jury” utilized by offenders of honor crimes (Khalili, 2002). Furthermore, the *Qur'an* was very careful as to not allow false accusations based on mere suspicion, or any other artificial motive to substantiate a case. For example, In Verse 15, Sura 4 of the *Qur'an*, it is made clear that absolutely no incident of adultery could be admitted without coercion or witness by four believers (Khalili, 2002).

As for those of your women who are guilty of lewdness, call to witness four of you against them. And if they testify (to the truth of the allegation), then confine them to the houses until death take them or until Allah appoint them a way (through new legislation) (Qur'an 15:4)

By creating the “four witness” clause, the Prophet “aimed to abort and minimize slander throughout Muslim communities” (Khalili, 2002). The likelihood of a woman being caught during intercourse, by four rational male witnesses was highly unlikely, and thus proved to curtail men from turning suspicious inquiries into matters of life and death. The Quran goes on to protect against slander by delivering punishment to those who attempt to accuse their wives of undue promiscuity without the truthful assurance of four witnesses:

And those who accuse their wives but have not four witnesses, scourge them eighty stripes and never afterward accept their testimony, for they are indeed evildoers (Qur'an 4:24).

The *Qur'an* does allow men the chance to condemn their wives alone; however, only on the condition that the wife also admits, before God and a tribal judiciary, that she is guilty. The woman has the opportunity to defend herself, and her testimony alone is enough to quell an accusation by her male counterpart.

As for those who accuse their wives but have no witnesses except themselves; let the testimony of one of them be four testimonies (swearing) by Allah that he is of those who speak the truth, And yet a fifth, invoking the curse of Allah on him if he is of those who lie. And it shall avert the punishment from her if she bear witness before Allah four times that the thing that he saith is indeed false, And a fifth time that the wrath of Allah be upon her if he speaketh the truth (Quran Verses 6-9, Sura 24).

In summation, it is evident that nowhere in the *Qur'an* or the *Haddith* is the “implicit or explicit authorization or even acknowledgement of honor killings” (Khalili 2002). Neither text ever mentions the concept of honor when speaking about penalties for adultery, nor do they condone the practice of acting without judicial review of the accusation. Essentially, although Islamic texts may harbor some gender inequalities in the socio-political rights of women, it is

unsupported and ludicrous to assess Islam as the source of murder in the name of honor. Hence, it may be prudent to look to other academic explanations in order to explain this phenomenon.

A Biological Theory of Social Normalization

Although religious sources have no bearing, it remains necessary to discover the derivation of the true link between a woman's autonomous chastity with the pride and honor of an *entire* family or tribe. Within the traditional Jordanian context, there is a complete consensus that any infraction upon the *ird* of a woman destroys the honor of the *men* in her family (interview with Dr. Musa Shteivi 2009), but exceedingly few sources elucidate as to why. Throughout this research, it became clear that many scholars including sociologists, evolutionary theorists, and experts in deviance confirmed a biological theory of social normalization posed by Matthew Goldstein, which determines the source of women being the possessors of the family honor. Within the framework of his theory, Goldstein observes certain Darwinian notions, such as parental certainty, sexual selection, and reciprocal fidelity. He posits that, with regard to early *Homo sapiens*, there was a need for males to insure the *parental certainty* of their offspring. In other words, males craved assurance that the progeny, in whose livelihood they were expected to invest, were of their lineage, and not that of another male. Goldstein states, "Many cultures have acknowledged the importance of parental certainty through social norms protective of male exclusivity in sexual relations and patriarchal laws against adultery and the like" (Goldstein, 2002). In essence, the simplest way to insure that males produced offspring of their own individual lineage was the suppression and control over the sexuality of their female mates. As Rana Husseini confirms, "Men who controlled 'their' women were seen as strong leaders of high status, and therefore became honorable in the eyes of the tribe" (Husseini, 2009). Men solidified this notion of control by writing it into social and religious laws, which are still used in the

traditional sects of Jordanian society today. Thus, when a women of a particular family deviates from the normalized code of ethics written in traditional law, it is perceived as a lack of strength and control on the part of the males in her family. As weakness and lack of control of female sexuality are attributes which negate male supremacy and status, it becomes a direct infraction of the nobility of every male in the woman's family when she deviates from the inflexible societal standards (Goldstein 2002).

Goldstein failed to assess one critical feature concerning crimes of honor within his research. So often, although the men in the family commit the action, it is the *women* of the paternal family that initially stipulate the need for restoration of family honor. The assessments of this research have yielded that this sentiment on the part of women, which essentially only perpetuates violence perpetrated against their own sex, is the result of their traditionally ascribed societal roles. Because early man found it necessary to control the sexuality of his mate (according to Goldstein's theory), women have traditionally been assigned roles pertinent to the household. Such an assignment still permits men to maintain societal control, while simultaneously assuring the lineage of their children (Goldstein, 2002). Within the context of their roles, women's greatest responsibility became to cultivate the posterity of their husbands (interview with Sheikh Abu Nweir), by feeding, educating, and raising the children of the society. Of the most important motherly roles, however, were the instruction of gender roles and social norms, especially in reference to the propriety of their daughters (interview with Sheikh Abu Nweir). In the words of Sheikh Abu Nweir, "Men take leadership roles because a woman's place is in the home. Women are called upon to raise the children and if she has a daughter, to discipline her. If any mistake happens from the children of the family, especially with the daughter, it reflects on the parents and mostly the mother (sic)" (interview with Sheikh Abu

Nweir). In this sense, respectability of custom and conservation of social mores (especially the *ird*) is reflective of the parenting of the *mother*, and not the men in the family, to her children. Similar to traditional laws, these traditional social roles have been promulgated to present-day customary societies in Jordan. As such, when a daughter threatens the honor of the family, it may be seen as more of a disgrace on the mother than on the males of the family, as it was her role to teach and discipline her daughter about the graces of “purity.” Hence, it can be concluded that the motherly demand for the maintenance and restoration of family reputation in reference to crimes of honor, stems from the traditional roles and reflective values of the actions of her children.

In sum, it is likely that the derivation of the Jordanian concept of honor is the result of a power struggle concerning male genealogy and later patriarchal law. In traditional societies, men subjugated women to the roles of maintenance of the household and childrearing in an effort to sustain an ascribed societal status, first as fathers and later, as socioeconomic providers. As a result, men constructed the role of the mother to be to reproduce the very societal mores which were responsible for the suppression of women, by framing them as “honorable.” Hussein concludes, “As patriarchal notions of morality and culture became more deeply entrenched, these idealizations of sexual behavior gradually came to be reinforced by dress codes and notions of right and wrong” (Hussein, 2009). The ability of the mother to educate her daughters with respect to these idealizations became a major indicator of female status among the community. Hence, because a man’s status was partially dependent on the control of women and the number of his offspring, and woman’s status revolved around the propriety of her children, it can be concluded that the entire traditional family structure became reliant on the respectability (traditionally defined as virginity and chastity) of their daughters.

Such an evolutionary progression has infiltrated present day society, especially in Jordan where patriarchy is the foremost method of social organization and governance. As such, notions of gender equality in Jordanian society have not progressed with the democratization and social change of other socio-political sectors of the country. Hence, it is essential that this research examine the current state of gender affairs among the greater factions of Jordanian society, in order to gauge the pace of modernization and gender equality in the Jordanian context.

2) *Notions of Gender Equality in the Jordanian Context*

As previously stated, Jordanian society is one which is deeply rooted in patriarchal tradition, which has perceptibly struck a gendered chasm among men and women in Jordan. Yakin Erturk describes, “Within a patriarchal context, both sexes are ascribed with ideologically different positions, resulting in unequal access to power in favor of men” (Erturk, 2004). Such a male dominated dynamic is an impingement on the certain freedoms and values which rectify a free state; and, although Jordan is democratizing, it is clear that traditionalistic patriarchal attitudes and male dominated value systems have transcended the poster board political rhetoric referring to “equality” in the kingdom. As Stefanie Nanes asserts, “The explanations for this exceptionalism (sic) [from the modernizing trends among other third world states] vary from the structural to the cultural. Either the “tradition” of Oriental despotism represses Arab people, who are only too happy to applaud their oppressors, or the structure of Islam and its “puritan enthusiasm” prevent a Reformation like that which occurred in Europe” (Nanes, 2003). Further criticism of Jordanian democratization came from Edward Said, a prominent Arab Author and academic who went so far as to state, “*There is no Arab democracy*, Arab women are uniformly an oppressed majority and in science and technology every Arab state lags behind the rest of the

world” (Said 2000, emphasis added). Such fervent opinion challenging the true progress of democracy in Jordan is quite common and parallels the sociological framework behind the honor crime dynamic. Hence, it is necessary that this research peer into both the public and private sectors of Jordanian society in order to properly gauge notions of gender equality in this culture.

Due to the time restrictions and scope of this paper, it is necessary to limit the assessment of public sector gender dynamics to those most associated with democratization, and women’s rights. Hence, this section will maintain a focus on institutional support, political participation, educational achievement and occupational attainment of women, in order to determine Jordanian gender equality.

Education

Gender equality in education has, in the past decade, become a Jordanian maxim distinguishing their democratic enhancement from the rest of the Arab world. To substantiate the claim that the educational system has become equal, many public discourses esteem statistics such as: “the undergraduate total for the 2008/2009 school year at the University of Jordan, consisted of 24, 021 women and 13,950 men” (University of Jordan office of Public affairs, 2009). Such figures are frequently presented in international reports, public speeches, and scholarly articles advocating Jordanian social change. However, although these statistics may seemingly represent progress in democratization with respect to gender, little seems to be changing, even in the mindsets of the students themselves. There seems to be gender differentiated undertones exelling the so called “democratic changes” of educational reform so commonly declared to be occurring in Jordan. As Salam al Mahadin argues, “Traditional indices of gender in education...mask the importance of context and the political and social

practices that are sometimes obscured by figures, facts, and unquestioned notions pertaining to semiotics of what is generally referred to as freedom” (Mahadin 2004). One article that spoke to such “masking of facts and figures” is Mahadin’s assessment of the Jordanian educational system in 2004.

The Jordanian education system is an organization with deeply entrenched notions of gender differentiation, which are reproduced in the mindsets of the Jordanian students. From primary school through college, many students in Jordan are subject to being educated by a traditional perspective (from texts and professors) which inculcates passivity, conservativeness, and even reduced status to men (interview with Rula Quawas, Mahadin 2004). Such sentiments concerning the education structure’s gender biases are supported by numerous studies which abound: sexism and disciplinary bias (Enos, 1996), gender inequity (Christian-Smith and Kellor, 1998), gender roles (Enos, 1996), and stereotypes in curricula and inequality for opportunity (Shamai, 1994; Mills and Mills, 1996), as well as negative assessments of international reports on the subjects (Mahadin, 2004). These studies surmise that, in their classes, women are not taught to criticize governmental actions or maintain fervor to demand their equality. Rather, students are seemingly taught to adhere to the beliefs and actions of their traditional superiors, blindly accepting their teachings as truths (interview with Dr. Rula Quawas).

Hence, the education system in Jordan is seemingly serving as a partial *reinforcement* of traditional values, rather than an attempt to teach students think critically of them. Such reinforcement of customary practices promulgates the greater amount of women in this society to not fully utilize their educations in the workforce, or gain economic independence from their male counterparts. Furthermore, this educational process results in a space of coerced human association, which forbids many women from working independent of relational forces in any

sphere of their lives. As such, education in Jordan does not seemingly fulfill its role in empowering women, and often even negates the egalitarian standards of modern societies, by looking to maintain a structural functionalist power chasm between men and women. However, there are still those who argue that education is necessary to fight the traditional injustices against women, and that it is education which will alleviate the close-mindedness and traditionalism of the masses. Therefore, since there is seemingly no ironclad theoretical conclusion to be drawn from the role of education in democratization, it becomes essential to take a critical look at other macro societal factors at play, such as assessing the utilization of education in the workforce, gauging institutional support, and measuring the political participation of women in Jordan.

Occupational Attainment for Women in Jordan

Jordanian society incites women to attain certain occupations which allow them the ability to remain true to their long-established roles within the household. Most importantly among lower and middle class women in Jordan, is maintaining the role of housewife and mother. These roles are unique only to the female sex, and as previously stated, often reflect on the honor of women in traditional sects of Jordanian society. Very rarely is it that the mother and father adopt the western trend of sharing equal childrearing responsibilities and household duties (interview with Dr. Rula Quawas), due to the entrenched belief that the role of the woman is in the home, protected from societal harms (Goldstein 2001). As Psychologist N. Chodorow notes, “Women, even in confined conditions participate in one form or another in the realm of the male, the reverse, however, has been conserved socially less appropriate, since the more rigidly defined attributes of manhood have imposed a break from the sphere of women after early childhood” (Chodorow, 1978). Men, then, find the roles of women enfeebling, and for men

to undertake such roles would ostensibly threaten their authority in the private sphere. This acquiescence of gender roles plays a significant function in the field of occupational attainment, as many, if not most, women are forced to retain jobs which allow them the ability to come home and uphold their “motherly duties.”

Stereotypical jobs for women in Jordanian society range from housewives, teachers, nurses, dental assistants, secretaries, receptionists, and employees of the government (Interview with Rula Quawas). This explains why women dominate the gender ratio for certain fields at the university (for example, 1,903 of the 2,230 undergraduates in the educational studies department at UJ are women (University of Jordan, Dept. of Media and Public Relations)). These jobs remain the most beneficial for most women, as they end the workday around two or three P.M., and typically grant pensions after fifteen to twenty years of service. Most are low paying, and they do not grant women much power in the workplace; however, they do allow for a woman to maintain her traditional household responsibilities and bring extra financial support to the family. This extra money, however, is typically controlled by the husband, not the wife, and is rarely used toward any apparatuses which might empower her (Interview with Rula Quawas).

The significance of women’s occupational attainment to crimes of honor is crucial to understand. These crimes typically transpire in areas of low income, where women do not attain high paying jobs (Mansur, 2009). Most women who are victims of these crimes do not even retain occupations outside of the home, thus forcing dependence on their male relatives for financial security. This dependence works to stricken the woman of any monetary freedom or autonomous power, which directly results in her subjection in almost every other area of her life and reiterates her submissiveness to her husband and his standards (Fargues, 2005). The male perceives the situation as one in which he maintains control, and at the slightest deviation from

his convictions, he retains the societal and individual authorization to scrutinize in the way he sees fit, with no refutation from his female counterpart. Many times, this results in domestic violence, and in extreme cases involving family honor, the death of young women.

As such, it is necessary for women to work to achieve positions of economic and social influence, in order to be able to detest the normalization of male authority, both in the workplace and at home. There are currently many such movements in Jordan working toward the emancipation of women from male dominated authority, but several of these are futile. Perhaps the most pertinent example of democratic futility in Jordan with reference to gender, is the political representation of women in the Lower House of the Parliament.

Women in Jordanian Politics

In 2007, Minister Al-Ali initiated a new election law which fostered six seats in the Lower House of the Jordanian Parliament to be reserved for the election of women. The rationale behind this law was that it would promote the social change needed for Jordanians to willingly elect female officials on their own accord (brookings.edu). While the law has retained some important qualities, such as the example of the inclusion of women in powerful positions, it has also been rather fruitless in its attempt to change many of the traditional notions set forth in Jordan. Due to its ability to restrict the nominees with the most votes, many see the election law as an enforcement of governmental power, and not a window into democratic forum.

Furthermore, many scholars have noted that the quota system, in some ways, does not work to facilitate social change in Jordan at all, in that it does not revolutionize the mindsets of the people or their voting styles, but only forces the results desired (Interview with Dr. Rula Quawas). In addition, it has been said that the quota system has yet to even begin advocating a

modernizing effect. In fact, it has been clear that the women elected, very often hold more traditionalistic notions than the men in the government, mostly in attempt to gain favor and legitimacy by their male colleagues (Husseini, 2009). Most are afraid to advocate women's liberation in fear that it may delegitimize their position. Many even claim, forthright, that they are "not there to be the voice of women" (interview with Dr. Rula Quawas).

One point that needs to be criticized is the fact that such alterations (such as election quotas) in Jordan are being drawn from top-down governance, rather than from the ground, up. The royal family, and consequently, their appointed Senate, seems to remain determined to attain egalitarianism for women, by attempting to enact legislation which guarantees them affirmative freedoms. However, an ideological chasm occurs upon the involvement of the Lower House of the parliament, which is elected by the people.

Elections in Jordan work on a one man, one vote system. Consequently, in any election, each voter casts one vote for one candidate in a multi-candidate race for multiple offices. Posts are filled by the candidates with the most votes. In a three seat constituency, the three candidates receiving the largest numbers of votes would win office seats (Lecture by Dr. Muhammad Al Momani, 09/08/09). The problem with these votes is that men and women vote according to tribal, rather than political, affiliations. The influence of tribalism in the election process results in a conservative and traditional Lower House, which is not as inclined to disrupt the status quo of gender relations; even with the quota system in place.

Furthermore, there seems to be an understanding within governmental relations which dictates that, while the monarch attends to international relations, he leaves much of the domestic order in the hands of his parliament. Hence, although the monarch seemingly advocates social

change in Jordan, it is difficult for him to assert too much power over the Lower House, as they may begin to assess their own role on the international stage and reduce his power. Thus, it is left to Senate and the House to debate over any bills to be passed. Since the Lower House must approve a bill before it can become an amendment, the Upper House (Senate) and the monarch are presumptively unable to initiate the legal change necessary to guarantee gendered egalitarianism (Nanes, 2003).

In sum, due to improper representation in the government and the traditional mindset of the Lower House as an outcome of the voting system, it is unlikely that the government or the monarch will successfully initiate any change from the top. Lack of institutional support will continue to be a problem engrained in gender relations in Jordan if a grass roots movement is not initiated to overcome traditionalistic thinking (interview with Ghazi Al Zubadi). However, the codification and legitimacy lent to a masculine gender identity by the legal system, religion and traditional custom has made a movement from the bottom nearly impossible. As for now, it would seem that the Lower House of the Jordanian Parliament is intensely safeguarding all legislation which bears traditionalistic and tribal custom, especially when referencing crimes of honor.

The summation of the inability to initiate progress for gender relations in Jordan is posited in interesting theory by a researcher named Salam Al Mahadin, who looks into the roles of national identity, governmentality, and tribalism to assert the way in which institutionalized pressure groups are retained by the Jordanian government, in their ability to initiate social change.

Roles of Honor and Gender in National Identity: A Theory by Salam Al Mahadin

Many scholars have incorporated a semi-Marxist theory of international relations and national identity to assess the impediment of civil society with regard to gender relations in Jordan. These theorists utilize a formulaic approach which illustrates two groups: the colonizer and the colonized, which fight their “battle of ideals” through the liberalization and conservation of local women. To succinctly describe this conjecture, Mahadin dictates:

The colonizer drew upon his Enlightenment universal ideals of female liberation as a means for subverting and dehumanizing the local male while the latter, the proverbial colonized and oppressed ‘local’ male strove to control the female veiled body as means for holding on to tradition in the face the modernizing effects of the colonizers (Mahadin 2004).

However, Salam Al Mahadin notes that the Jordanian situation, with its British colonizers, does not necessarily apply to this theory. King Abdullah I had a rather superlative relationship with his British residents, which eventually turned into a seemingly symbiotic association (Mahadin 2004). However, Mahadin goes on to look to Arab/Israeli conflict and the Civil War of 1970 between Palestinians and Jordanians to analyze a theory of postcolonial governance which results in the stratification of gender relations. According to Mahadin, the Jordanian Civil War:

Led to a reformulation of power relations in Jordan to give rise to definitive practices to secure the survival of the establishment...Since 1970, a number of domestic policies have been undertaken to govern and neutralize the tactical influence of unequal demographic groupings and divisions of labor...

Mahadin goes on to argue that postcolonial nations like Jordan in the 1970s, typically go through three stages of governmentality: 1) A state of Justice which is a territory of a feudal type, 2) An administrative state where most of the power lies in the state and the judiciary, 3) a state where economic knowledge and power become instrumental in policy making (Foucault, 2000) (Mahadin, 2004). Jordan is seemingly entrenched in the second phase of governance with its “proxy in minicultures of bureaucracy, tribalism, *wasta* and state centered control over jobs”

(Mahadin 2004). According to Mahadin, it has been essential for the state to remain locked in its second phase with its concomitant hold on discourses of national identity and state patronage, in order to maintain “international individuality and regard.”

Notions of gender equality and the inability to initiate change have played into Mahadin’s theory in two ways. First, Mahadin describes women in the context of dual status identities. Their first identity is that which is bestowed upon women by the Constitution (which insinuates that citizens should not be viewed or generalized by their gender) which seemingly offers democratic liberties to all women. The Constitution is outwardly a representation of the modernization and social change taking place in Jordan, and, in essence, serves as a promise of egalitarianism in the kingdom to all its inhabitants. The second identity, however, stems from the Jordanian Personal Status Law whose rhetoric rings superior among many of Jordan’s traditional citizens. The JPSL contradicts constitutional rhetoric by classifying women with diminutive statuses and implying that only the *walii* (father) and the husband are the heads and the financial providers of the family. This legislation works to both reduce and subjugate women to a status of economic dependence and subjected standing. Hence, the standing of women in Jordan is dichotomized in such a way that essentially allows the phase of governance to assume the context of gender relations.

Second, Mahadin claims that Jordanian women have essentially existed in a status quo of gender relations for the past three decades, and, due the entrenchment of the second phase of governmentality, there is unlikely to be any institutionalized pressure groups which will advance the cause much further than it has already gone. Mahadin focuses mainly on nongovernmental organizations as examples:

If NGOs are allowed to mature into pressure groups, this would have the tactical spin-off of transforming parliamentary elections from one based on tribal affiliations into one more politically oriented towards performance, legitimacy of representation, and demographic considerations. It is not only essential for the state to maintain tribal affiliations to secure its discourse of legitimacy and sovereignty, but tribalism in turn, creates minicultures of waste, corruption, false generosity, and association of prestige with government posts (Mahadin 2004).

In essence, Mahadin believes that a hegemonic government and tribal system prefer to keep their power, rather than lend it to democratic advancement. Women, especially suffer from this, as they are constrained in their traditional subjected position with the proverbial “glass ceiling” halting their social mobility. The cause seems powerless from a grassroots standpoint, as the neutralization of all pressure groups has seemingly been a success on the part of the government, which enacts and supports gender biased articles in an effort to maintain the status quo. A deeper look into the legislation will prove, that especially in the case of honor crimes, the legislation plays an influential role in their perpetuation and social codification.

3) Honor Crimes Legislation

Throughout history, the legalization and nationalization of certain societal standards and cultural beliefs, have lent to the legitimization and institutionalization of traditional ideologies by the masses. As Catherine Warrick states, “It must be acknowledged that most, if not all, legal systems seek to appropriate to the societies they regulate, by reflecting social norms and shared beliefs within their laws” (Warrick, 2005). Warrick’s sentiments ring especially true when directed toward the milieu of Jordanian legislation and gender values. The Jordanian Penal Code, for example, is latent with gender specific rhetoric negating the egalitarian standards of a civil society. However, although there are *numerous* articles and laws which retain sexist clauses in the Jordanian Penal Code, it is beyond the scope of this paper to analyze all of them. Rather, this research is obliged to review only those laws in the Jordanian Penal Code which have

fostered and even perpetuated the sentiment of the culpability of the victim and judicial apathy in of perpetrators with respect to crimes of honor.

Article 340

The most well known law concerning honor crimes legislation in Jordan is Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal Code, which is historically rooted in the Ottoman and Napoleonic Penal Codes. Since 1999, there has been a progressive movement to remove this particular article, which grants significant mitigation and exculpatory excuse for those who murder their female relatives due to suspicion or proof of adultery (Interview with Dr. Abeer Dababneh). The legislation dictates:

- 1) *He benefits from exculpatory excuse, which catches his wife or one of his female unlawfully committing adultery with another and he kills, wounds or injures one or both of them.*
- 2) *He benefits from mitigation that catches his wife or one of his female ascendants or descendents or sisters with another in an unlawful bed, and he kills, wounds or injures one or both of them (Jordanian Penal Code, Article 340, 1960).*

To properly assess these laws, it is first necessary to provide a clear understanding of them. The difference in wording in clauses one and two of Article 340, albeit subtle, is significant. Thus, a critical analysis of the discourse utilized in this legislation may uncover some societal influences.

The first clause states that a man who catches his wife or “*unlawful*” (a female member of his family which is distant enough that he could marry her), in the act of adulterous intercourse and

kills, wounds or injures either or both of the parties involved, is completely excused of penalty (Interview with Judge Hussam Lasassmeh). The rationale behind this edict is to supposedly account for the “natural reaction” of any man upon finding evidence of his wife’s infidelity (Warrick, 2005). One need not look far to understand that this notion, written into law, supports and even sustains the perception of physical dominance and violence over women who do not adhere to the traditional code of ethics that their male relatives have set forth.

The second clause states that a man who catches any woman in his family in an “*unlawful bed*” and kills, injures or wounds either or both of the parties involved, benefits from mitigation or reduction of penalty (typically assigned by the judge at sentencing). The second clause, albeit rarely utilized by the courts, retains the phrase “*unlawful bed*”, which remains a very ambiguous and indistinct term to Jordanian legal professionals (interview with Judge Hussam Lasassmeh). The term has been applied to many proceedings, including those as serious as adultery or as harmless as flirtation. This sentiment comes to invoke a certain collective conscience concerning the roles of women in Jordanian society. In practice, this law can be interpreted to dictate that women are punishable by death if they are to contradict the social norms set by their patriarchal counterparts. It reiterates their subjugated standing and the constant surveillance by their male relatives over their freedoms, and is an infraction of democratic liberties which does not stand to promote the slightest egalitarian sentiment.

Most important to note in the original article, was the masculine rhetoric which has traditionally been used to address the perpetrator benefitting from mitigation or exculpatory excuse. Because the law read “*he benefits...*”, only men gained access to the alleviation of sentencing set forth by this legislation, until a “temporary” law was put in place in 2001 (interview with judge Hussam Lasassmeh).

Furthermore, this legislation insinuates that the perpetrator or wrongdoer in the situation is not necessarily the one guilty of homicide. Rather, it is seemingly the one committing adultery. Because adultery is seemingly more taboo for women than for men in Jordan, it would reason that this law is certainly targeted specifically toward the female population. On this point, Warrick asserts, “This is in keeping with the widespread practice, in state structures and in societies, of regarding women as vehicles by which authentic culture is maintained” (Warrick 2005). Because values such as the *ird*, which regulate a person’s sexuality, have been culturally assigned to women and not men; women are seemingly more culpable in a case concerning sexually illicit behavior in Jordan. Hence, one is to surmise that when gender issues are related to the nature of a crime itself (such as domestic violence, rape, or crimes of honor) the Jordanian Penal Code tends to deviate from the general orientation of pursuing justice and course the legislation toward maintaining “socially promoted standards” (Warrick, 2005).

It is worth noting that the law was temporarily amended in 2001 to allow women the same exculpatory excuse if they were to discover their husbands in the act of adultery and murdered them (there is no “*unlawful bed*” clause for women). The fact that these laws are “temporary” meant that, while parliament was excused in the summer of 2001, the laws would remain in effect, and when parliament resumed in 2003, it would vote on the laws to be amended or *rejected*. *However, in 2003, when the laws were once again assessed, the amendments to Article 340 were vehemently rejected by the lower house as being “a step toward the protection prostitution”, “a destruction of family values” and “dangerous and bad for society” by certain members of parliament (Husseini, 2009). The temporary laws still stand, but only as temporary. These temporary laws, however, are not working toward the egalitarian sentiment which is so fervently needed in Jordan and truly only condone more violence within the family (interview*

with Rana Hussein, 2009). Furthermore, it is exceptionally uncommon that a wife ever takes such action with her husband. In fact, this researcher has yet to hear of such a case to happen within Jordanian borders.

Interestingly, Article 340 is very rarely utilized and, in practice, it is clear that judicial officials infrequently submit to it. However, the legislation's very presence is a threat to women in Jordan. The law stands to dictate that women essentially have no sexual freedom and that a woman is constantly to be observed by her male counterparts for sexually illicit behavior (via the *unlawful bed* clause). This belief is certainly an infringement of democratic freedoms and personal liberties that should be upheld in any civil society. Furthermore, this legislation allows men (and now women) the right to take judicial review out of their spouse's due process of law and order. In essence, the male plays the role of judge and jury, seemingly acting with blatant disregard to state and institutional establishments, and executing justice with no observance or reverence for the national or religious policy.

Article 98

A more pertinent article to the mitigation of honor crimes offenders is Article 98 of the Jordanian Penal Code, which offers mitigation to anyone who commits crimes in a heat of passion. The legislation is phrased:

The commiter of a crime who undertakes it in a furious passion produced by a bad (unrightful) (sic) or dangerous act on the part of his victim, benefits from a mitigating excuse.

According to journalist, activist, and author Rana Hussein, this is the legislation that is most in need of amendment, as it is the justification of most defense attorneys who represent offenders of transgressions for honor (interview with Rana Hussein, 2009). Hussein states, "It was

Article 98 which has allowed the amending of charges of *premeditated homicide* to be reduced to a *misdemeanor*” (emphasis added, Husseini 2009).

Article 98 is very general and applies to so many criminal offenses that it would be exceptionally difficult to convince parliament to amend (Husseini, 2009). With respect to crimes of honor in Jordan, the defense is widely acknowledged as perfectly legitimate, even when the murder occurs days after the adulterous offense. Additionally, until recently, the article often mitigated the offender for over half their sentence (interview with Judge). However, it should be noted that there is currently an ongoing attempt to castigate offenders with less leniency, at least with accordance to Article 98, in Jordan.

The discourse of this article is reminiscent to that of Article 340 (pre 2001), in that it is phrased (“*his victim...*”) to only seemingly apply to male perpetrators (interview with Judge Hussam Lasassmeh). Furthermore, this law defines the victim of a homicide as the doer of “*an unrightful or dangerous act.*” Warrick comments on the phraseology of this discourse, “The murder victim is redefined by this law as the guilty party herself: the committer of a ‘dangerous or bad act’” (Warrick 2005). Again, this article is an example of the trend in Jordanian legislation that aims to impress culpability upon female victim. Another such example comes from Rana Husseini who describes a court case in which sexual activity was ruled by a judge, “a risk to our conservative society,” thus deeming her actions worthy of the penalty of execution. Furthermore, the court ruled, “The victim’s actions violate the traditional and religious beliefs and marriage duties which stipulate that the wife should respect, obey and serve her husband, and thus constituted dangerous actions against her husband” (Husseini, 1999). Such a position on the part of the courts is not unique to this case; rather is norm in the honor crime judicial process in Jordan.

Burden of the Judicial System

“In the Jordanian legal system, as in others, judicial practice is shaped both by text and context; the interpretation of statutes is inevitably affected by the dominant social mores and the shared values of a culture” (Warrick 2005). Jordan is a country which abides within a tradition of civil law. As such, precedent is not necessarily a controlling factor in judicial decisions. Rather, judges are permitted, to some degree, to be independent in their verdicts and sentencing.

Warrick concurs, “Judges’ decisions are not made in a vacuum containing only the facts of the event and the texts of the law” (Warrick 2005). Warrick goes on to state that decisions are susceptible to numerous external factors, such as societal pressures, cultural principles, and even the judge’s own opinions. Honor crimes trials are certainly susceptible to such partiality, and typically err in favor of the male perpetrator. In an interview between this researcher and a former judge, he exposed, “Although I don’t think one crime should be followed by another, I believe the fault in one of these cases is with the woman. So most [judges] would not give a long sentence to a man who committed one of these crimes” (interview with Judge Hussam Lasassmeh). Such a statement represents a judge’s autonomy, inability to be impartial, and susceptibility to pressure by greater social mores in the Jordanian criminal justice system.

Furthermore, the Judge began to tell me about the roles of the prosecution in assuring light sentencing for honor crimes victims. The judge stated, “Prosecutors even sometimes build their cases around mitigating articles. Every man can put themselves in the criminal’s shoes, and they know they would act the same” (interview with Judge). Researcher Nadera Shaloub-Kevorkian reiterates the sentiment of the Judge, “Often prosecutors neglected to gather or utilize available evidence that buttressed their indictment. They seldom sought or presented testimony of individuals who could have advocated for the deceased. Moreover, they often led the courts to

believe that Article 98 was applicable” (Shaloub-Kevorkian, 2002). Although these sentiments cannot be generalized to encompass every prosecuting attorney and judge, it seems that the patriarchal notion of defending the perpetrators in these cases has been somewhat institutionalized into the court system, at least to the degree that Jordanians, themselves, have begun to notice. However, the mitigation of offenders does not rest at the gracious alleviation provided by Article 98 or mercy of the courts. Honor crimes perpetrators have one other judicial loophole through which most young men slip through to achieve the lightest possible sentences.

“Extenuating Circumstances”: A Final Loophole

Articles 99 and 100 offer “extenuating circumstances,” among which are the most important allaying clauses of sentencing for honor crimes reprobates. The most convenient of these is a clause which permits the family of the victim to relieve the perpetrator of all charges. The rationale behind the ability of the family to drop charges in the Jordanian criminal justice system, is that half of the sentence of any perpetrator in Jordan should be to appease the victim or their family, and the other half, to appease the public for the offense against their collective legislation. Because the family of the victim is always the family of the perpetrator in reference to crimes of honor, the perpetrator is almost always benefitted from this clause. As such, he is alleviated from about half his sentence. As with Article 98, there is a movement among some judges in Jordan to disallow such circumstances in an effort to sentence according to the crime, and not the social acceptance of it. However, this movement, like most others in Jordan, is slow and faces much opposition.

The result after the application of Article 98, 99, and 100, is often a sentence of not more than six months, which frequently translates into time served. Time served in prison, it should

be noted, is no horrific experience for perpetrators of honor killings (it is most common that the perpetrator is treated as a hero, a defender of honor and tradition (Husseini, 2009)).

In sum, such legislation gives burglary a heavier sentence than premeditated murder. Further, it allows reinforcement of the traditional values and customs to dictate over institutional and state structures, as well as drowning fairness and impartiality out of the court process. This legislation is a threat to the democratization and modernization of an otherwise revolutionizing state.

Lately, theoretical conclusions have extrapolated that legislation, alone, may have the ability to modify the propensity of these crimes. Certain information that is in need of critical assessment is the recent result of a study by Yusuf Mansur, an economist who completed a work on the demographics of crimes of honor in Jordan. In a unique way, Dr. Mansur looked specifically at the age, education level, occupational attainment, income level, marital status, region of residence, and relationships of the perpetrators and victims. The results of his study were the first demographic representation in reference to these crimes, and his application of criminology to economic theory yields a compelling argument for shifting the penalties furnished by the legislation.

4) *Supply and Demand of the Honor Crime Dynamic*

In his study, Dr. Mansur worked to apply economic theory to a criminological context, by submitting the honor crimes phenomena to the work of rational choice theorists. Rational choice theory is a sociological conjecture which assumes that the criminal perpetrating a crime is a rational character, who, prior to committing the transgression, weighs the costs and benefits in an effort to make a rational decision on whether or not to commit (Becker 1968). Rational choice

theory can be strengthened by acknowledging that situational analysis can yield *individual variability* between the individual executors of crime, thus resulting in differential analysis and choices between different people (Bouffard 2002).

In sum, it would seem that the perpetrators of crimes are partially motivated by three criteria: the likelihood of getting caught, the benefits to be taken away, and the severity of punishment, should they be apprehended (interview with Dr. Yusuf Mansur). In this context, Dr. Mansur illustrates, with the use of a basic supply and demand curve, that the government could potentially lighten the perpetuation of these crimes by initiating more rigorous punishment for violators of the law and training police and prosecuting attorneys to more successfully apprehend and indict criminals (interview with Dr. Yusuf Mansur). An increase in penalty would ostensibly increase the net cost for both society and the individual criminal to commit the crime, while also lessening the net benefit. Hence, it should stand to reason that higher costs and lower benefits should deter criminality in its entirety, but especially with respect to crimes of honor, should the legislation change.

5) *Demographics of Honor killings: A Review of the Data*

Dr Mansur worked to also attain significant demographic data with regard to honor killings in Jordan. By examining this data, it is clear that crimes of honor are not solely the product of sociological or economic phenomena, but more likely the consequence of socioeconomic disparities resulting in a lack of opportunities for the victims and perpetrators. By reviewing the statistics, clarifications may be made to analyze certain institutions to promote change in the socio-culture mindset which propels these phenomena.

With respect to the age of the victims, 81% were under the age of thirty, while 41% of the total population was specifically between the ages 19-24. This data supports the assumption that the college-aged women are the most vulnerable sub sect of society associated with crimes of honor. This faction is more susceptible to frequent communication with males outside the family and is at an age where their brothers, cousins, and other male relatives are constantly assessing their behavior. Women are seemingly less likely to be the victims of honor crimes as they aged, as 10% were between the ages of 31-36, 4% were between the ages 37-41, and only 5% were above the age of 42.

Victims' level of education contains one of the most interesting trends in Dr. Mansur's study. He found that about 98% of victims' were not college educated, and only 8% of the victims had completed high school. Furthermore, the study yielded a significant rate of illiteracy among victims, standing for 19% of the studied population. This data stands to purport that the role of education in such offenses is quite significant, and that it may affect or challenge both the traditional notions and rationales utilized in these transgressions.

Another key finding by Dr. Mansur was that only 18% of victims retained an occupation outside of the home. In turn, 82% of the female victims were economically dependent on others for financial securities, and as previously stated, monetary dependence has been cited many times as a drain of individual autonomy (Fargues, 2005). Hence, Dr. Mansur's research propagates that these crimes are partially socioeconomic in nature, and not solely the result of socio-cultural trends and traditional notions. As such, it is necessary to remark that researchers be obliged to embrace the multifaceted nature of these crimes and to not try to limit the derivation of this phenomenon to one specific respect or field.

After discovering the occupational information relevant to victims of honor killings, Dr. Mansur also worked to uncover an economic correlation between income and crimes of honor. He found that these crimes typically happen in low socioeconomic areas, and that about one third of the victims and their families live on less than one hundred fifty Jordanian Dinars per month. Furthermore, about 25% of the victims live on between one hundred fifty one and two hundred fifty Jordanian Dinars, while about 42% live between two hundred fifty and four hundred fifty Dinars per month. In all cases, it would seem that victims subsist in low socioeconomic settings wherein they are less likely to cultivate opportunistic situations (such as occupational/educational attainment, social power, etc.).

Finally, Dr. Mansur looked at regional differences in reference to the propensity of these crimes, finding that 54% of the crimes occurred in the Middle region of Jordan, 32% in the Northern region, and 14% in the South. Interestingly, the crimes seemingly take place in both, densely populated, and very rural parts of Jordan, and are not necessarily controlled by any geographical or ecological characteristics. Furthermore, it is significant to note that the middle region, which is responsible for most of the incidents of the crime, is also the region which contains most of the poverty stricken population (Interview with Dr. Yusuf Mansur, 2009). Thus, it can be reaffirmed that economics and sociology combine to produce this phenomenon, and it is not the sole occurrence of one or the other which propagates these infractions.

When studying the demographics of perpetrators, Dr. Mansur used the same criteria as he did with victims, and concluded some appealing information. Over 64% of the perpetrators were under the age of thirty. And a significant number (34%) were between nineteen and twenty four. Furthermore, he found that 76% of the offenders were the brothers of the victims. The conclusion might be drawn from these statistics that, due to judicial sympathy and light

sentencing, you men are typically chosen to perform this act, in order to keep older, well respected men free of penalty. Dr. Mansur also reasoned that fathers in the family were usually also the economic providers, thus a poor family, not able to lose their main source of income, chose a different male to commit the act (personal interview with Yusuf Mansur).

Similar to the victims, the perpetrator's levels of education are quite low. Again 98% of the perpetrator's did not have a college education while only 8% total, had completed high school. Furthermore, 23% of the total populations of perpetrators are illiterate, which potentially reinforces the original proposal that there may exist a correlation between higher education and the strength of traditional normalization in Jordan, as clearly, very few individuals with higher education perform these acts.

Finally, Dr. Mansur found significant results when he discovered only 16% of the perpetrators are unemployed. This is a stark contrast compared to the 54% of victims who did not retain an occupation. The result may conclude that, within the relationships of victims to their perpetrators, there exists an *economic dependence*. The concept of economic dependence is very important within this relationship, as it would clearly detract from the existence of the victims' autonomic or social power (Fargues, 2005), essentially placing the victim at the control of her male provider to have power over her behavior and punish her as he sees fit.

Education

It would appear from this study that the impact of education on perpetrator's propensity to commit crimes of honor is partially a socioeconomic phenomenon. This study, as well as the conclusion of much literature on the topic, seems to further hypothesize that at the root cause of socioeconomic inequity, is the factor of unequal opportunity, most significantly, educational

attainment. Hence, it is perceived that educational attainment can work to bring about a change in the tribal mindset of family honor and gender notions on Jordanian society. It is this conclusion which brings about the necessity for more research to analyze students in Jordan.

Methodology

Choosing this Research: Shifting from the Origin

The methodology for this research experienced some significant shifts throughout its early stages of planning. Primarily, the goal was to assess the existing literature on the topic in order to extrapolate the sociological, demographic, legislative and cultural underpinnings of this phenomenon. I then aimed to delve deeper into the topic by way of interviewing a number of experts in the fields of sociology, law, research analysis, tribal custom, policing, women's rights, economics, and social change. However, upon attending a conference in early October, it became apparent that the King Hussein Foundation was simultaneously conducting a study of augmented resource and magnitude consisting of researchers from many different respects, all connecting their field of expertise with honor killings. Furthermore, it was revealed that a very prominent activist named Rana Hussein had just released a long awaited book which dealt specifically with these phenomena.

However, rather than shy away from the topic, it seemed that more research could only enhance the power and ability of the King Hussein Foundation's initiative. Although the researchers with the King Hussein Foundation were presenting their findings, the only written work that had been produced to date were copies of the power points used at the conference available through the *mathlouma* website. Hence, writing an article combining their findings with previous literature and external sources would essentially be an asset to the initiative.

In addition, throughout the initial phases of this research, it had been noted that Jordanian citizens and even researchers are somewhat reserved when it comes to criticizing their leadership. This researcher found strength in his ability to be more critical of Jordanian democratization and leadership, while still displaying essential sensitivity to cultural mores. Hence, in October, I began working to attain interviews with the experts, in order to delve deeper into their fields of inquiry, and extrapolate results from the qualitative research through another, perhaps more critical, perspective.

Interviews

The primary objective of this research became to interview people who occupy different fields of academia, journalism, law enforcement, tribalism and legislation, in order to compile a more complete work of honor crimes sociology. Luckily, I compiled three interviews before the independent study period began, which made the first two weeks of the actual ISP period profoundly less chaotic. My first interview was with the man who would ultimately become my first advisor, Dr. Ahmed Hayajneh. I chose Dr. Hayajneh due to his fervent knowledge of the law and criminology, as well as his passion for drawing conclusions to problems and his zeal for helping young people. Dr. Hayajneh was an immense advantage to have as an advisor, as he is well versed in this topic, and was so helpful in facilitating quality research.

Alongside Dr. Hayajneh, Dr. Novera Ansari (my other advisor) greatly aided this research. Dr. Ansari is the research director at the King Hussein Foundation, and she played an intricate role in the aforementioned conference on honor killings. Dr. Ansari was well versed in both, honor crimes and statistical analysis, which made her one of the biggest assets for this

research. It can honestly be said that were it not for her help and support, the statistical data would not have been nearly as well analyzed.

After these two interviews with the people who would become the advisors for this project, I laid out some general criteria for those participants I needed to interview. Because I narrowed my specific objectives down to sociology/culture, economics, gender notions and legislation, I used these as the main criteria for choosing interviewees, and began contacting people accordingly.

Due to the education provided in the field study seminar, I went to great lengths to assure the participants I interviewed in this study that they were expected to be truthful and honest in their responses. I began every interview by clearly defining my research, the goals, and the general content of the discussion. I verbally assured every participant that they were not obligated to answer any questions, and they held the right of anonymity if they wished. I also had them each sign a written consent form to assure their approval. I tried to record interviews if the participant would allow; however, many preferred to not be recorded, and I happily adhered to their requests. I found that humility and gratitude were two characteristics that greatly aided honesty and conviction on the part of the interviewees. Building rapport and gaining trust were two of the most difficult tasks with every interview, but I found that personality, rather than knowledge, seemingly tended to produce a reliable affinity, which often also led to the disclosure of more information.

Arranging interviews was generally an unproblematic undertaking for most of the academics in this research. Government officials were quite difficult to contact, even those I had tried to get in touch with months before the ISP began. Maintaining a schedule was not always

easy, and cancellations were common, but participants were almost always available for rescheduled appointments. All in all, I compiled twelve interviews, each with a unique perspective on the topic. The best advice to be given to new researchers is finding a plethora of viewpoints from interviewees. This allows the researcher the ability to see the topic from many different perspectives, and thus directly promulgates his/her ability to respond to comments, questions, and critiques about the topic.

One unique characteristic about this research was that so many of the interviews were with those researchers who are on the verge of publishing their own work on the topic. Because this researcher was borrowing work that was not quite published, but for the most part written, he felt it more logical and forthcoming to include his interviews in his literature review, rather than in his findings. I feel that constructing the essay as such contributed to the fluidity of this paper, as well as the ethical boundaries concerning what I could claim as my own “findings.”

Finding a new Angle: Surveying the Effects of Higher Education

Originally, work was done to create a survey which would be used to map the sentiment of Jordanians in urban areas to the traditional notions of gender inequality, family honor, legislative mitigation and the socioeconomic criminology that are so often tied to the incident. However, it seemed unrealistic to produce a survey that would be able to encompass such a large and diverse group within the time frame of one month. The research had no target sample, nor a way to compile and assess the amount of surveys which could reflect the entirety of the Jordanian population. Therefore, it was time to think smaller.

Throughout the thematic seminar, review of literature and interviewing process, higher education became a recurrent criterion for future change to take place with respect to crimes of

honor. Specifically, it was insinuated that Jordanians should become educated in democratization and civil society in its fullest context, as well as understand the egalitarian rights set to each individual by the Jordanian Constitution. It was implied, from the civil rights standpoint, that students of both sexes needed to learn about pertinent legislation and discriminatory clauses present in the Jordanian Penal Code which, in some ways, defend the rights of men to control their female relatives.

The Survey

As such, the researcher and the team of people working alongside him compiled a survey which would be handed out to two classes of students at the University of Jordan, who were studying specifically in the College of Law. One of the classes consisted of thirty nine students (primarily fourth year) who have taken a class entitled Jordanian Penal Law, and all the prerequisites necessary. It was revealed that these students would have a solid understanding of democratization, social issues and legislation pertinent to such crimes. The second class consisted of thirty five introductory level students who had not yet completed their introduction to international politics course (a preparatory course in the College of Law). The goal of collecting data from these target samples became to compare the responses of these two groups, in order to gauge if education was altering their views on traditional custom and family honor with respect to the aforementioned characteristics.

We selected students in the College of Law at the University of Jordan based on two main criteria. The first was availability. Because Dr. Hayajneh was willing to allow the use of his class for the survey, it was easier to collect more data based on one specific studied population, rather than parading around the university trying to talk people into taking a survey.

This reduced much bias and allowed for control of the population, all of whom were taking many of the same basic classes and were being educated in the same way. Furthermore, students at the College of Law had a basic understanding of English, and, although the survey was verbally translated to them in Arabic, I believe their language skills helped the students convey their opinions in the last two questions.

The second criterion was that the education of fourth year students at the College of Law promotes the study of current social issues and Jordanian legislation; both of which are critical to having a basis to formulate an educated opinion on honor crimes. As previously mentioned, the fourth year students studied here should retain at least a minute understanding of the Penal Code, Jordanian legislation, and the egalitarianism promised by the Constitution. This made the fourth year class an ideal group to compare to the first year students who had very little previous education in these areas.

The survey utilized in the study went through numerous revisions before being handed to the students. The original survey consisted of twenty seven questions, twenty five of which were to be answered by level of agreement on a one to five scale (1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- indifferent, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree) while the final two questions concerned sentiments about mitigation laws and were answered nominally (yes, no, maybe). For the sake of the findings, the researcher found that many of the questions (those focusing on socioeconomic status) did not have direct bearing on the concept of family honor, legislation, or traditional gender roles, and thus only decided to analyze nineteen of the most suitable questions.

The researcher in this study also provided important clarifications for the participants. Namely, it was made clear that this research was being done by a foreigner, in order to analyze

notions of gender equality and family honor, as well as socioeconomic criminology and legislation in Jordanian society. The survey provided a statement asking participants to be completely truthful, and assured them complete anonymity for their responses. Furthermore, Dr. Hayajneh provided a verbal translation for those who's English was insufficient for the survey. Finally, in keeping with ethical considerations, thanks were given to the participants for their time and honesty.

The Statistics

The goal of this study was to compare the difference between the means of two independent groups (first year students and fourth year students) within the same continuous variable (age). As such, the primary procedure needed to be conducted was a two tailed independent T test. I chose to do a *two tailed*, rather than a *one tailed*; test because I wanted to note significant differences between means in either direction, be it that one group was more or less conservative than another, or vice versa.

Furthermore, to analyze data between different variables, I conducted three sets of crosstabulational analysis. This procedure allowed me to view the differences in answers between genders, ages, and income levels by breaking down categories within each variable set and displaying how many participants responded in a certain way. Unfortunately, after reviewing the data, many of these tables were outside the scope of this project, and, for the sake of being concise with these findings, I chose to exclude them.

Finally, I calculated the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, variance, and the frequency for each variable. By using this information, I was also able to create bar graphs and histograms for the sake of comparative analysis. However, although days were put into research

analysis from this survey, very few of the findings were significant to this hypothesis. As such, very few of the findings are included in the “findings” section of this paper, and therefore are not found in the appendices. Although not referenced in the appendices, all data and subsequent charts from the survey analysis are available by contact of the researcher.

Implementing the Field Study Seminar

One of the greatest assets to student’s research during the ISP is the field study seminar which is taught throughout the semester. The seminar gave instructions and demonstrations on how to conduct interviews in Jordanian society, how to analyze numerical data and discourses, finding narrow topics and constructing research based on participant observation, interviews and content analysis. The professors instructed students about being culturally sensitive, foundationally ethical, and understanding of social mores. Having had no other research methods course previous to this, I felt completely prepared upon entering the field to begin my qualitative research, due mainly to the preparation lent by this course. A suggestion to future students is to be especially attentive in the field study seminar, as the material provided is so often applicable to your ISP study.

Obstacles & Limitations to this Research

The first obstacle to this research, and one way in which it could be improved, is that this researcher was, despite numerous efforts, unable to get an interview member of the Jordanian Parliament to get his/her viewpoint on the legislation. Due to the general unavailability of government officials, compiled by an Eid holiday and the call of an early election by King Abdullah, I was told time and time again that officials were too busy to grant me the time to speak with them. Although I did retain the opinion of a tribal sheikh, and receive literature based

on the traditional mindset, it seems a necessary opinion to have in this essay. I insist that anyone who continues this research attempts to speak with one of these people, to better analyze the immobility of legislative democratization in this respect.

Another obstacle faced in this research which was also caused by the intermediate Eid holiday, as well as an inconveniently placed exam week at the University, was the very limited timeframe with which the researcher could work with this data. Although I was able to compare most significant data, I believe it is important to examine all of the variables originally tested. Most interestingly, I think it is important for future researchers to analyze certain answers given with respect to the geography of a person's home town, as it might yield the result that rural areas hold more traditional notions than urban areas.

Furthermore, the researcher could obviously not test for all controls, and he is not audacious enough to assume that his target sample should represent all of Jordanian society, or even the education system in general. A larger study would be necessary to solidify the results of this study; however, this study would seemingly warrant cause for such research to take place. Additionally, the researcher has a very novice understanding of statistical analysis, and strongly encourages other researchers to critically assess the data.

Findings

Two-Tailed Independent T Test Results

To reiterate the original hypothesis of this study, there has been a significant amount of human rights discourse which has instituted higher education as very powerful apparatus of shifting traditional notions of family honor and gender equality in the Jordanian mindset. *The hypothesis of this study asserts that education, although imperative to democratization and*

gender equality, will not, alone, yield a significant result with regard to the modification of these particular social values.

To compare the means of the two classes and test for the significance of their differences, a two tailed independent T test was conducted on all nineteen of the pertinent questions selected from this survey. The results of these tests concluded that only three of nineteen questions had significant differences between the means of the two testing groups.

Interestingly, two of the three means held that the older, more advanced class actually retains a higher level of agreement with traditional notions of family honor than do the

introductory students.

Group Statistics

age of the students		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
obligation to preserve	15-19	35	4.23	.942	.159
	20-24	39	4.69	.655	.105
honor as identifier	15-19	35	4.23	1.003	.169
	20-24	39	4.62	.633	.101
education and gender	15-19	35	2.57	1.520	.257
	20-24	38	1.87	1.234	.200

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
obligation to preserve	Equal variances assumed	8.139	.006	-	72	.016	-.464	.187	-.837	-.091
	Equal variances not assumed			2.479	59.833	.018	-.464	.191	-.845	-.082
honor as identifier	Equal variances assumed	5.545	.021	-	72	.049	-.387	.193	-.771	-.002
	Equal variances not assumed			2.006	56.246	.055	-.387	.197	-.782	.009
education and gender	Equal variances assumed	4.396	.040	2.177	71	.033	.703	.323	.059	1.347
	Equal variances not assumed			2.158	65.592	.035	.703	.326	.053	1.353

All questions were answered based on level of agreement by way of a one to five scale (1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- indifferent, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree).

The first significant difference between means occur in question nine of the survey, which concerns gender differences in educational attainment. The question reads, *“To what degree do you believe that women have more difficulty than men in achieving higher educational attainment (especially in university admissions) in Jordan?”* In response, the introductory level class answered with a higher mean level of agreement (= 2.57), than the advanced class answered with a lower mean level of agreement (= 1.87). After conducting an independent t test (with the default p value set at .05) to compare the significant difference between the two means, the researcher found that the test concluded a significance level (= .033).

Because the significance level is under the p value, set at .05, the difference between means is said to be significant. With respect to these numbers, it can be concluded that the

introductory class' mean level of agreement (= 2.57), significantly differs from the mean level of agreement in the advanced class (= 1.87). Hence, for this question, the advanced class holds a significantly higher level of disagreement than does the introductory class concerning the difficulty of women in gaining educational attainment.

The second significant difference between the answers in the two groups occur in question twenty of the survey which concerns the obligation of the individual to safeguard their family's honor. The question reads, "*To what extent might you feel an obligation to take it upon yourself to protect your family's honor?*" The introductory class answered with a mean level of agreement (= 4.22) on the five point scale, while the advanced class answered with a mean level of agreement (= 4.69). After conducting an independent T test, it resulted with a significant value (= .016). Again, with respect to the data and the results of the analysis, there is a significant difference between the mean level of agreement of the introductory class (= 4.22) and the mean level of agreement of the advanced class (= 4.69). As such, it can be concluded that the advanced class hold a significantly higher level of agreement, than does the introductory class, which would seemingly contradict the belief that education will deconstruct traditional notions of family honor, and support the original hypothesis.

The third and final significant difference in means the two classes occur in question twenty one which concerns the concept of family honor as an identifier of the individual to culture. The question reads, "*To what extent do you feel the honor and respect of your family is an important identifier of yourself to the society?*" Here, the introductory class answered with a lower mean level of agreement (= 4.23), while the advanced class retained a higher mean level of agreement (= 4.62). After conducting an independent T test for this variable, the results concluded a significance value (= .049). While this statistic is under the p value of .05, and is

technically significant, it should be noted that it is a significance value .001 from being insignificant data. However, it can still be concluded that the mean level of agreement of the introductory class (= 4.23), significantly differs from the mean level of agreement of the advanced class (= 4.62). Thus, it can be understood that the advanced class holds a significantly higher level of agreement concerning the belief that family honor is an important identifier of the self to society. This, once again contradicts the belief that higher education deconstructs traditional notions of family honor, and supports the hypothesis of this research.

Significant Crosstabulations

Questions twenty six and twenty seven of the survey concern the sentiment of students in the University as applied to the mitigation offered to perpetrators of honor killings in Articles 340 and 98 of the Jordanian Penal Code. Because these questions were answered on a nominal, rather than numeric scale (yes, no, maybe), a two tailed independent t test proved inapplicable. However, my research concluded another way to analyze data of a nominal nature was to conduct a crosstabulational analysis, which compares categories within certain variables and breaks down the frequencies of answers accordingly.

Crosstabulation Tables and Results

age of the students * moment of rage Crosstabulation

Count		moment of rage			Total
		maybe	no	yes	
age of the students	15-19	3	5	27	35
	20-24	5	18	16	39
Total		8	23	43	74

Question 26: “Do you believe it is right to mitigate a person guilty of murder, because they committed the act in a “moment of rage?”

Interestingly, the introductory class resounding claimed that they supported the implementation of Article 98, when utilized in cases of murder. The easiest way to analyze these statistics is to look at the median answers provided by the students. As seen in the table, a median of twenty seven out of the thirty five (77.14%) introductory level students claimed they believed it was right to mitigate murderers in the name of the “moment of rage” defense. Only five of the thirty five students in the introductory level class (14.28 %) claimed that did not think it was right to mitigate under article 98 in a case of homicide. Three students remained undecided.

The advanced class held very different views on the implementation of the article. The median answer given was “no” as eighteen of the thirty nine (46.15%) students claimed it was not right to mitigate under circumstances of murder. There was s considerable amount who still adhered to the belief that the article can be justly implemented (16 of 39 or 41%), but this is still significantly different from the mindset of the introductory class. Similar to the introductory class, there were five students who could not decide on a just answer.

Hence, although no statistical analysis test was found by this researcher to determine a numeric calculation of significance, it is clear that the introductory course is much more likely to maintain a mindset which adheres to the traditional belief of implementing the law in the case of homicide. The advanced course, however, is more diverse in its conviction, and most adhere to the belief that it is not a just implementation of Article 98 when employed in the case of murder.

age of the students * adultery mitigation Crosstabulation

Count

		adultery mitigation			Total
		maybe	no	yes	
age of the students	15-19	2	5	28	35
	20-24	0	11	28	39
Total		2	16	56	74

Question 27: Do you think a person should be mitigated for murder if they find their female spouse or female member of their family to be in an adulterous relationship?

Unlike Article 98, the two classes seemed more in consensus regarding Article 340. The introductory course had a median reply of “yes” (28 of 35, or 80%) to the question of mitigation for murder if the defendant finds his/her spouse in the act of adultery. Among the introductory course, only five of the thirty five students (14.28%) stated that they did not find the law to be just. It should be noted that one of the two students who stated “maybe” wrote in it only should apply if the female is the one committing adultery, not the male.

The advanced class remains similar with their beliefs about Article 340. Although there were a higher percentage of “no” answers (11 of 28, or 28.2%), there was still a large majority (28 of 39, or 71.8%) who adhered to the median “yes” answer. Interestingly, no one in the upper class answered “maybe” and some even added noted at the bottom of the page in reference to their passion on the subject.

It should be noted in this data that a Crosstabulation was performed to discover gender inequities within the answers. Although the results of the survey were much skewed according to these analyses, it is not within the scope of this paper to examine all of them. However, among the most interesting was the fact that, out of all seventy four participants, not one male claimed it was unjust to kill his spouse should he catch her in the act of committing adultery. I feel that using this data and running crosstabulational analyses is worth further study. However, as previously stated, it is not within the scope or limitation of this paper to cover this aspect of the survey.

*See appendices for graphs comparing all data, as well as gender crosstab for mitigation on Article 340

Analysis of the Data

With respect to the hypotheses of human rights activist literature, public discourses, and academic articles on the subject of crimes of honor, which state that education is an avenue which will break the normalization of traditional concepts of family honor and gender notions, this study must serve as an objection. The primary evidence supporting the null hypothesis is that out of a total of nineteen questions which were tested for significant differences between the means of the two classes, only four arguably retained significant disparities. Of these four, two (concerning *obligation to preserve family honor* and *honor as an identifier of the self to society*) retained significant differences which still rejected the null hypothesis, as the advanced class held more traditionalistic views than the introductory course.

In addition, one of the questions which supported the hypothesis also concerned the difficulty of women to attain higher educations in Jordan. While the advanced class having a higher belief in the ease of women to attain college educations in Jordan does mark a significant

advance toward gender equality, the rest of the results from this study (which state that education does not have a significantly altering effect on the “honor crimes mindset”) would seemingly nullify the ability of women to gain access to the education system in Jordan to have a significant effect on the changing traditional mindset.

To conclude, the only question which is considered to have a significant difference is question twenty six concerning mitigation under Article 98. This question, however, which supports the hypothesis, is only *assumed* to be significant, but lacks any solid procedure to test significance, due to its nominal categorization. It is the suggestion of this researcher that research be done to more extensively examine the nuances of statistical analysis to discover if these means truly exist at a significant variance.

In essence, it seems clear that only one of the nineteen questions (5.2%) having a seemingly significant difference between means which supports the hypothesis of this literature, is not sufficient to make this claim. Quintessentially, it would seem that the educational system in Jordan may have a traditionalizing effect on students, rather than a modernizing one. As such, it is incumbent on the results of this research to reject the null hypothesis, and maintain that higher educational attainment is not, alone, yielding a significant change in the mindsets of these students with regard to notions of gender equality and concepts of family honor.

Conclusions

Seemingly, the conclusion that can be drawn from this research is that the Jordanian educational system, as represented by the University Of Jordan’s College of Law, is not having a significantly changing effect on those traditional concepts which contribute to the perpetuation and propagation of honor crimes in Jordanian society. Hence, the hypothesis stated in the

research objectives portion of this essay has been supported by the statistical analysis provided by this assessment.

As Mahadin had emphasized in the literature review section, the institution Jordanian education seemingly teaches with materials (such as text books and discourses) and instructors who still adhere to traditional roles of women in this society. It would be farfetched and unfounded to claim that the education system is providing a backwards sentiment of notions of gender and family honor; however, it is significant to note that two of the four significant differences between means in the data insinuated that the older class maintains a more traditional mindset than the younger.

However, it does occur to this researcher that education should seemingly have the desired effect of creating critically assessing mindsets and an overall augmentation of tolerance. However, in interviews with Dr. Rula Quawas, Dr. Abeer Dababneh, and later, Dr. Musa Shteivi, it became clear that the Jordanian educational system so often advocates a “spoon-feeding” sentimentality with reference to its philosophy of instruction. Students, rather than being taught to think critically, are simply taught to regurgitate information in order to pass exams. According to Dr. Rula Quawas, “They don’t teach them to think critically, Alex! They are not taught to analyze and create their own opinions, but to blindly be in agreement with whatever their professors teach. They are not taught to challenge...” (Interview with Dr. Rula Quawas).

Furthermore, Dr. Shteivi stated that, while the education system must go through its own reforms, this shift must also take place in a wider context of social change, which includes the aforementioned technological revolution, urbanization, and political and social involvement of

women in other spheres. In essence, education alone is not the key to change, but a social revolution based on modernization and social change in all aspects of Jordanian society may help to produce collective change.

In keeping with the structural functionalist perspective then, social change is a slow process which is only conducive and possible according to the ability of change to transcend all social institutions. Because Jordanian society has been a patriarchal society for so much of its history, a male dominated perspective has overcome about every social institution in the state. As such, gender equality is a social alteration which is not conducive to the traditional male controlled establishments. This is especially true for the Jordanian education system, which has seemingly retained traditionalism in its curricula, and is not providing its students with the ability to think critically of the establishment of their state or its traditional concepts.

Recommendations for Further Study

As previously mentioned, the greatest recommendation for further study to this research is a complete review of all the variables tested by the survey, rather than the specific variables chosen by the researcher to test notions of gender equality and concepts of honor. The survey also looks at notions of socioeconomic criminology, which may contain some important information to the phenomenon, especially with reference to Dr. Mansur's study.

Further inquiry into gender inequality as represented in the Jordanian Penal Code is also a necessary area to research. While I limited the scope of this research to honor crimes, there are numerous other pieces of Jordanian legislation which harbor traditionalistic views and gendered discrimination. By providing literature on such rhetoric, one would greatly enhance the movement toward egalitarianism in Jordan.

Finally, I believe to pick up where this researcher left off is imperative to completing this study. While I was able to make educated guesses at why education is not making a difference, I believe an interesting premise may be to study gender inequalities in different levels of schools by analyzing discourse in textbooks, classroom environments, and teaching styles. This would be most important research, and legitimately lead to both equality in education and women's rights in Jordan.

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Appendices

Appendix A: INTERVIEWS

Anonymous Student, University of Jordan. Personal Interview. 17, November 2009. Amman Jordan.

Ansari, Noveera. Personal Interview. 27 November 2009. Amman Jordan.

Dababneh, Abeer. Personal Interview. 21 November 2009. Amman Jordan.

Harb, Rajai. Personal Interview. 8 November 2009. Amman Jordan.

Hayajneh, Ahmed. Personal Interview. 19 October 2009. Amman Jordan.

Husseini, Rana. Personal Interview. 3 December 2009. Amman Jordan.

Lasasmeh, Hussam. Personal Interview. 17 November 2009. Amman Jordan.

Mansur, Yusuf. Personal Interview. 16 November 2009. Amman Jordan.

Quawas, Rula. Personal Interview. 10 November 2009. Amman Jordan.

Sheikh Nweir, Abu. Personal interview. 27 October 2009. Amman Jordan.

Shteivi, Musa. Personal Interview. 15, November 2009. Amman Jordan.

Al Zubadi, Ghazi. Personal Interview. 12 November 2009. Amman Jordan.

Appendix B: STATISTICS

*Crosstabulation analysis concerning sentiments of mitigation for
murders who catch their spouses in the act of adultery*

gender * adultery mitigation Crosstabulation

Count

		adultery mitigation			Total
		maybe	no	yes	
gender	female	2	16	23	41
	male	0	0	33	33
Total		2	16	56	74

Mean Median, Mode Standard Deviation, and variance for all introductory level students analyzed...

Statistics

		institutional protection	fair position in court	education and gender	occupation al attainment	representati on in government	authoritativ e positions
N	Valid	35	35	35	35	35	35
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mean	3.5143	3.8286	2.5714	3.7429	3.2857	3.3714
	Median	4.0000	4.0000	3.0000	4.0000	3.0000	3.0000
	Mode	3.00 ^a	5.00	1.00	3.00 ^a	3.00	3.00 ^a
	Std. Deviation	1.26889	1.12422	1.52017	1.09391	1.34101	1.21476
	Variance	1.610	1.264	2.311	1.197	1.798	1.476

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Statistics

		Men's status vs. women's	male head of household	financial responsibility	protection	purity and honor
N	Valid	35	35	35	35	35
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
	Mean	3.2571	3.9429	4.5429	4.6857	4.4286
	Median	3.0000	4.0000	5.0000	5.0000	5.0000
	Mode	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
	Std. Deviation	1.50182	1.23533	.78000	.79600	1.03713
	Variance	2.255	1.526	.608	.634	1.076

		obligation to preserve	honor as identifier	jeopardy by promiscuity	jeopardy lack control	education= anonymity	moment of rage	adultery mitigation
N	Valid	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mean	4.2286	4.2286	4.2571	3.4000	4.5429		
	Median	5.0000	5.0000	5.0000	3.0000	5.0000		
	Mode	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00		
	Std. Deviation	.94202	1.00252	1.24482	1.11672	.81684		
	Variance	.887	1.005	1.550	1.247	.667		

Mean Median, Mode Standard Deviation, and variance for all advanced level students analyzed...

Statistics

		institutional protection	fair position in court	occupational attainment	education and gender	representation in government	authoritative positions
N	Valid	23	23	23	23	23	23
	Missing	17	17	17	17	17	17
	Mean	3.04	4.22	3.17	2.04	2.70	3.22
	Median	3.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	3.00
	Mode	3	4	4	1	2	3
	Std. Deviation	1.296	.795	1.230	1.261	1.396	1.242
	Variance	1.680	.632	1.514	1.589	1.949	1.542

Statistics

		obligation to preserve	purity and honor	protection	financial responsibility	male head of household	Men's status vs. women's
N	Valid	23	23	23	23	23	23
	Missing	17	17	17	17	17	17
Mean		4.57	4.09	4.48	4.35	3.65	3.35
Median		5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	3.00
Mode		5	5	5	5	5	3 ^a
Std. Deviation		.788	1.203	.947	.775	1.369	1.265
Variance		.621	1.447	.897	.601	1.874	1.601

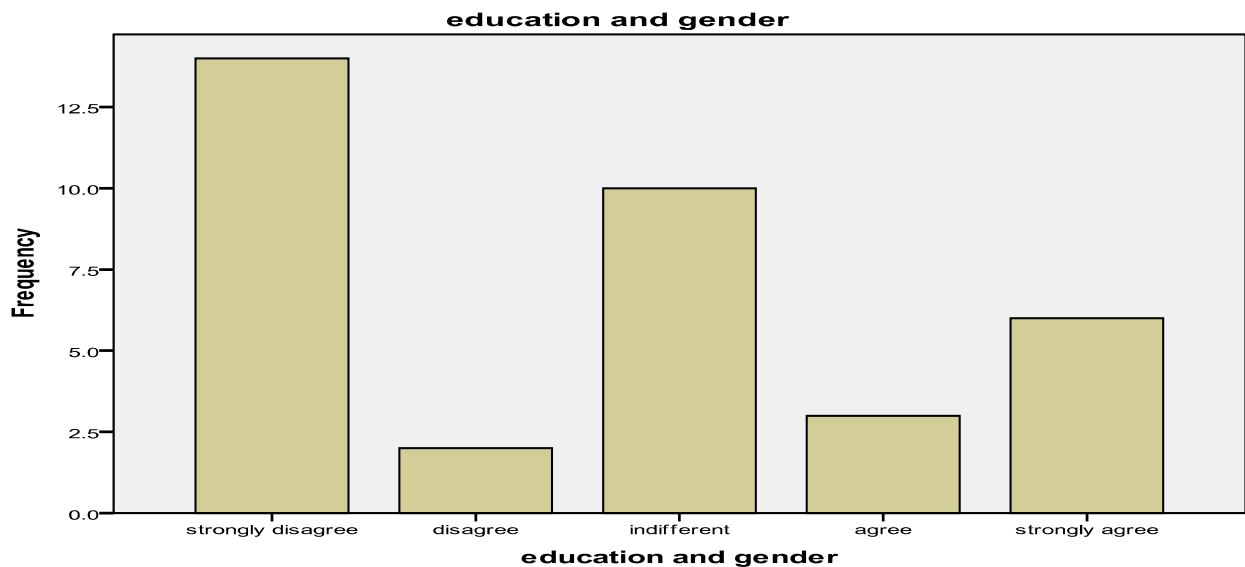
a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

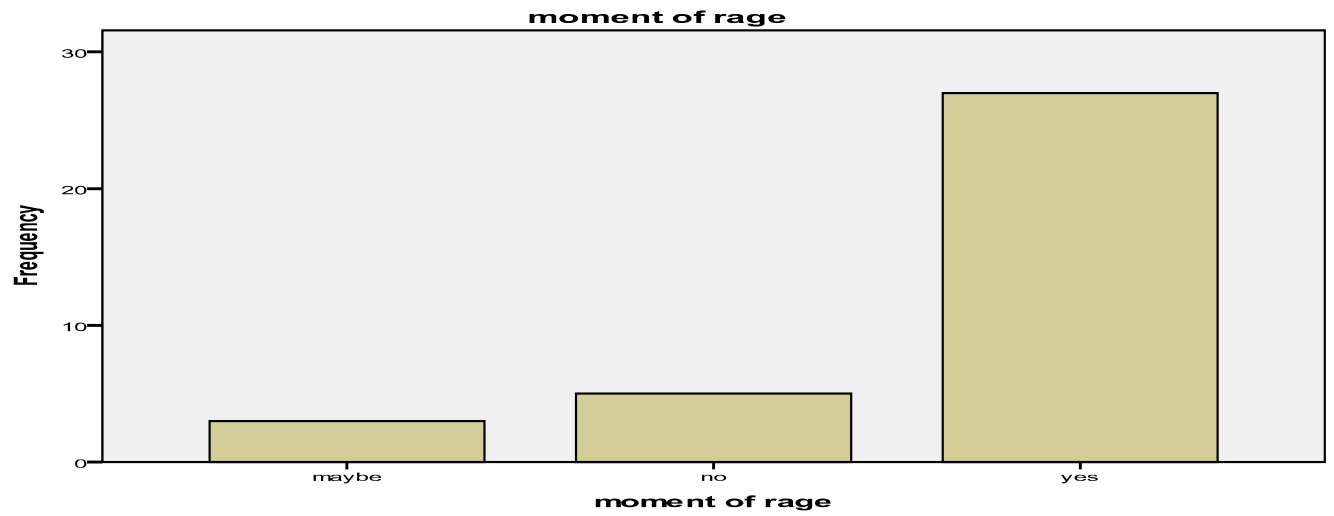
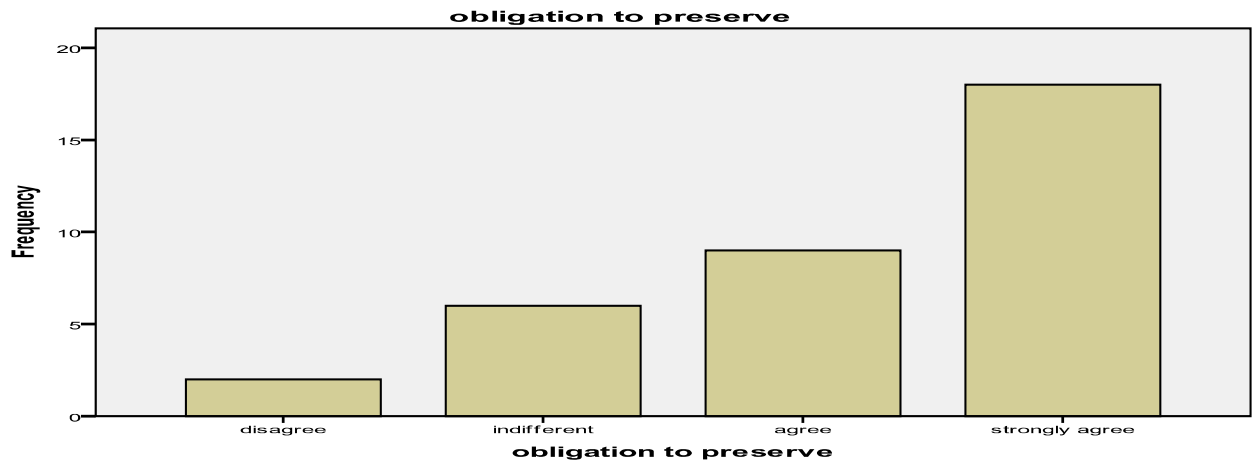
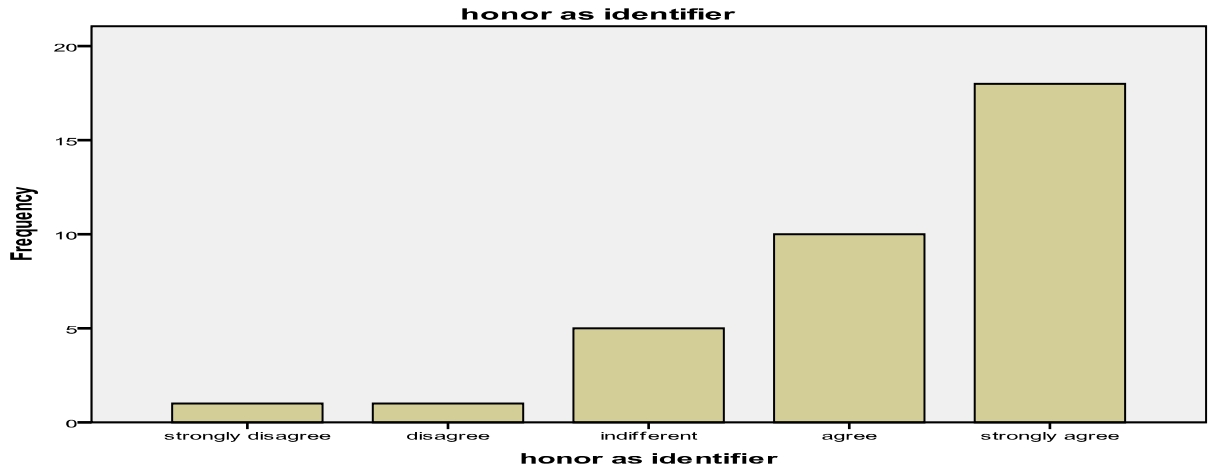
Statistics

		honor as identifier	jeopardy by promiscuity	jeopardy lack control	education=anonymity	moment of rage	adultery mitigation
N	Valid	23	23	23	22	40	40
	Missing	17	17	17	18	0	0
Mean		4.48	3.96	3.48	4.45		
Median		5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00		
Mode		5	5	5	5		
Std. Deviation		.665	1.107	1.473	.963		
Variance		.443	1.225	2.170	.926		

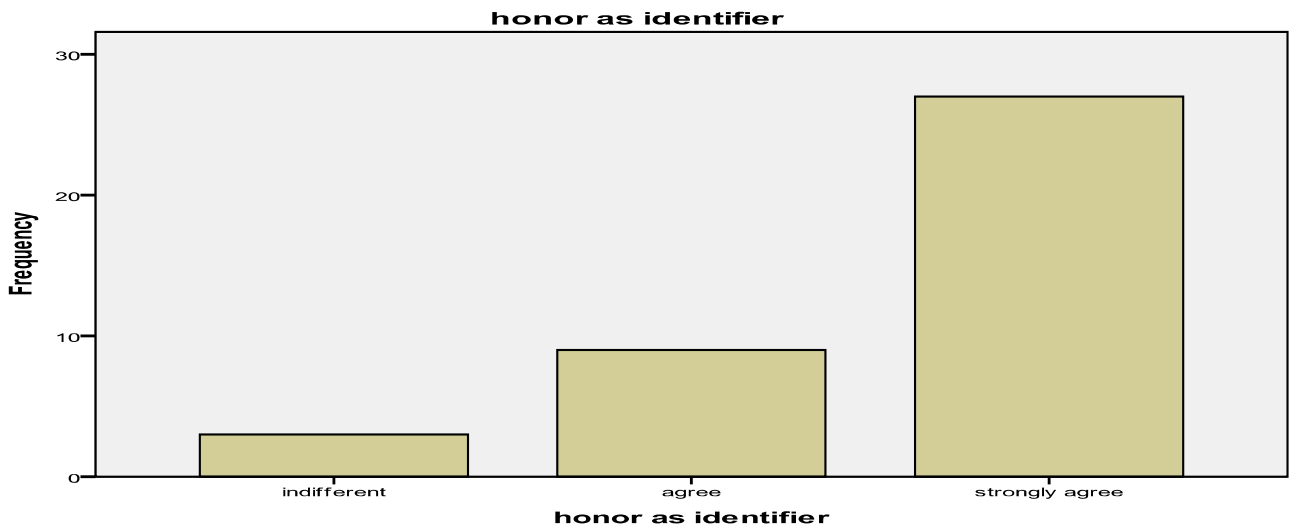
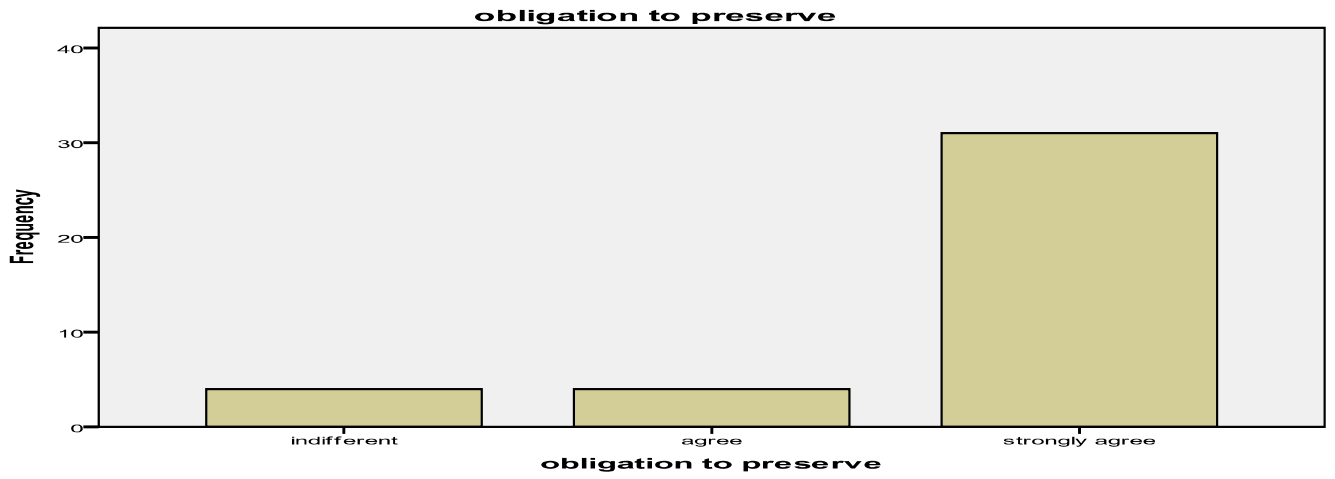
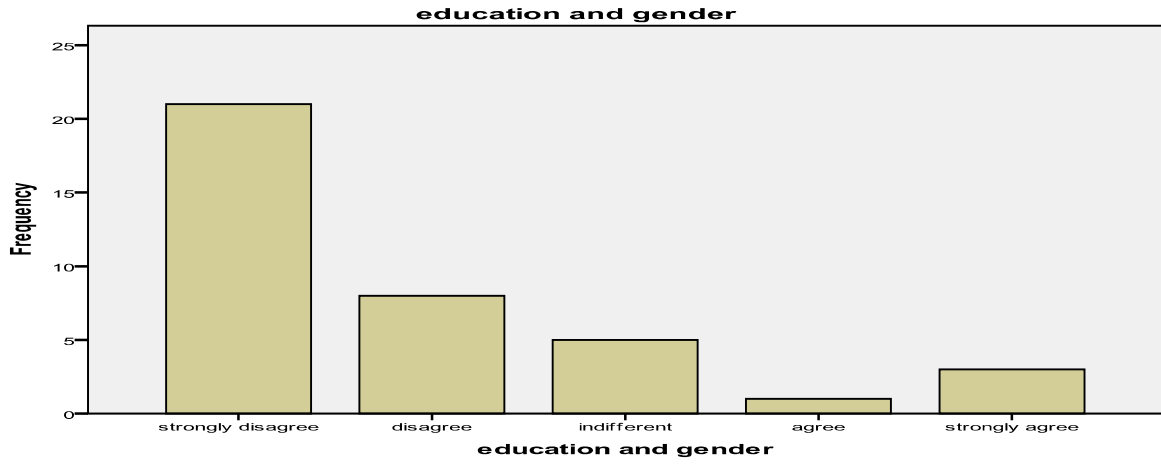
Graphs comparing *significant* differences between means (as concluded by the T Test)...

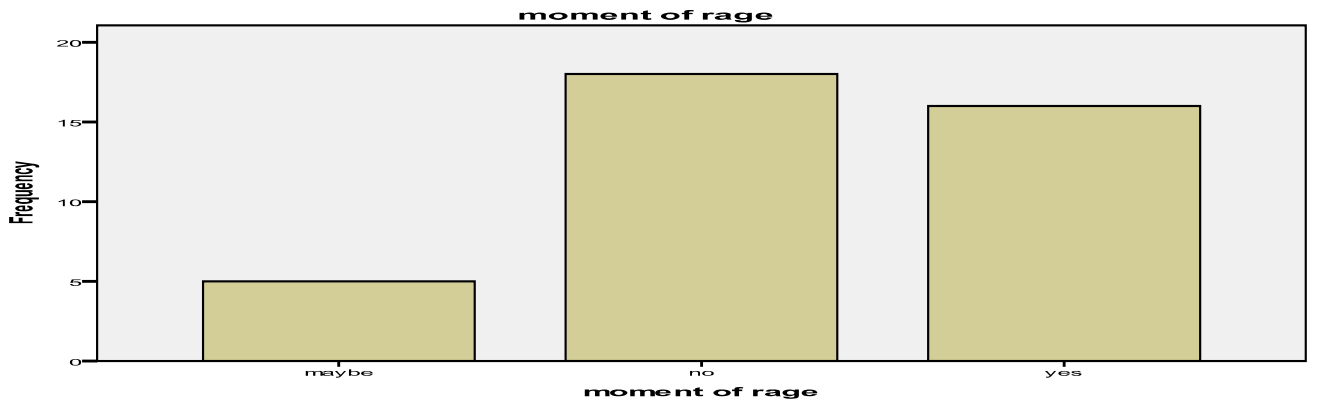
Introductory Class





Advanced Class





Appendix C: THE SURVEY

HONOR CRIMES SURVEY

This survey is part of an independent study conducted by a student at the School of International Learning, in order to better understand criminal activity in Jordan. Your answers will remain strictly confidential and you will remain anonymous in any literature produced from this study. We appreciate your honesty and thank you for your time.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

- Personal information
 - Age
 - Gender: M F
 - Hometown:
 - Education level (circle one)
 - 1) Grade school education
 - 2) High school graduate
 - 3) Bachelor's degree
 - 4) Master's degree
 - 5) Doctorate
 - Income level (monthly)
 - Less than 150JD
 - 150-250JD
 - 251-350JD
 - 351-450 JD
 - 451 and above

Section B: Socioeconomics of Jordanian Society

1 represents that the participant strongly disagrees. 5 represents that the participant strongly agrees.

To what extent do you believe that it may be difficult for a young man from a family in the lower class (earning less than 250JD per month) to attain a higher degree of education (Bachelor's degree) in Jordan than if he were from a family in the upper class (more than 451JD per month)?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you believe it might be difficult for a man from the lower class to attain a high paying job in Jordan than if he were from the upper class?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you believe that it may be difficult for a woman from the lower class to attain a higher degree of education (Bachelor's degree) in Jordan than if she were from the upper class?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you believe it might be difficult for a woman from the lower class to attain a high paying job in Jordan than if she were from the upper class?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you believe the propensity to commit a crime increases with an increase of poverty?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you believe you are more likely to be the victim of a crime when living in an area with a very high poverty rate as compared to an area with a very low poverty rate?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

SECTION C: Gender in Society

To what degree do you believe that women have sufficient institutional protection and support from government organizations, NGOs, and other social institutions in Jordan?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what degree do you concur that women have an equal, fair and just position in a court of law, be they on trial, on subpoena, or employed by the court?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what degree do you believe that women have more difficulty than men in receiving higher educational attainment (especially university admission) in Jordan?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you agree that women have equal opportunity to attain jobs in Jordanian society?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you feel that women are well represented in the Jordanian government?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you believe women actually receive support by authoritative positions in government?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

Do you believe men are automatically attributed a higher status than women in Jordanian society, be it because of their educational attainment, occupational achievement, or other such characteristics?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you believe that women harbor complete equality in Jordanian society as a whole?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

Section D: Gender Roles and Family Honor

To what degree do you feel that a male is the head of your household?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you believe it is the responsibility of a male to provide for you financially?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you feel it is the responsibility of the males in the family to protect the females in the family?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you believe that one's honor depends on the behavior of others?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent might you believe your family's honor is connected to the conservation and purity of its women?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent might you feel an obligation to take it upon yourself to preserve your family's honor?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you feel the honor and respect of your family is an important identifier of yourself to society?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you feel your family honor would be jeopardized if a female member of your family were accused of premarital sex or promiscuity (1 being not at all, 5 being ruined)?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you feel your family honor would be jeopardized if the patriarch of your family had little control over the female members of your family?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

To what extent do you believe your education has increased your anonymity, individualism, and personal empowerment to seek your own independence and equal rights?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

SECTION E: MITIGATORY SENTIMENT

To what extent do you believe strict punishments are a good way to deter someone from committing a crime?

Strongly disagrees 1 2 3 4 5 **strongly agrees**

Do you believe it is right to mitigate someone found guilty of murder, because they committed the act in a "moment of rage?"

Yes

maybe

No

**if "maybe, please explain:

Do you think that a person should be mitigated for murder if they find their spouse or any female member of their family to be in an adulterous relationship?

Yes

maybe

No

**if "maybe" please explain:

Appendix D: WRITTEN FORM OF CONSENT

Honor Killings Research

Alex Miller, Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, Illinois, United States of America

School for International Training—Jordan: Modernization and Social Change

Instructions:

Please read the following statements carefully and mark your preferences where indicated. Signing below indicates your agreement with all statements and your voluntary participation in the study. Signing below while failing to mark a preference where indicated will be interpreted as an affirmative preference. Please ask the researcher if you have any questions regarding this consent form.

I am aware that this interview is conducted by an independent undergraduate researcher with the goal of producing a descriptive case study on the status of honor killings in Jordan.

I am aware that the information I provide is for research purposes only. I understand that my responses will be confidential and that my name will not be associated with any results of this study.

I am aware that I have the right to full anonymity upon request, and that upon request the researcher will omit all identifying information from both notes and drafts.

I am aware that I have the right to refuse to answer any question and to terminate my participation at any time, and that the researcher will answer any questions I have about the study.

I am aware of and take full responsibility for any risk, physical, psychological, legal, or social, associated with participation in this study.

I am aware that I will not receive monetary compensation for participation in this study, but a copy of the final study will be made available to me upon request.

I (do / do not) give the researcher permission to use my name and position in the final study.

I (do / do not) give the researcher permission to use my organizational affiliation in the final study.

I (do / do not) give the researcher permission to use data collected in this interview in a later study.

Date:

Participant's Signature:

Participant's Printed Name:

Researcher's Signature:

Thank you for participating!

Questions, comments, complaints, and requests for the final written study can be directed to:

Dr. Raed Al-Tabini, SIT Jordan Academic Director

Telephone (962) 077 7176318

Email: raed.altabini@sit.edu