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Perceptions, Attitudes, and Behaviors of Young Jordanian Women on their Second-Class Citizenship

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**Perceptions, Attitudes, and Behaviors of Young Jordanian Women on their Second-Class
Citizenship**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Refugees, Health and Humanitarian
Action program/SIT Study Abroad, Spring 2024

Table of Contents:

Access, Use, and Publication of ISP/FSP	3
Acknowledgements	6
Abstract	7
Introduction	8
Literature Review	10
Methodology.....	16
Findings	19
Group Interview	20
Interview #2	24
Interview #3	26
Interview #4	29
Interview #5	32
Conclusion.....	35
Limitations	38
Recommendations Further	38
Bibliography	39
Appendix	41

Acknowledgments

Firstly, I have to give credit to the amazing tour guide who showed me the best street art, souvenir shops, and restaurants in Amman. As well as this, she was the first to inform me about the societal issues in Jordan, especially how nationality laws impact the livelihoods of young men in Jordan. Thank you for inspiring this research project.

I would like to express gratitude to my host mom who informed me further about the issues with the nationality law and listened to me constantly as I expressed my shock with all the new information I learned. Thank you for sharing your experiences and views with me before I even had the idea to conduct a research project on this topic and for inspiring me to gather more perspectives of young women on this nationality law. Thank you so much Alaa' Househ for welcoming me into your home and family. You gave me the most amazing experience in Jordan and treated me like your own sister.

Thank you to the SIT program staff who helped me tremendously with the planning, designing, and recruiting for my research project. Thank you so much Dr. Bayan Abdulhaq for your insight into ensuring I was utilizing culturally appropriate research principles in my design. Thank you Razan Amirah and Farah Hasasneh for helping me get in contact with potential participants, and reviewing my interview questions.

Lastly, thank you so much to all the participants who made this research possible and for your insightful perspectives. I enjoyed all of our interviews and thank you for enhancing my understanding of cultural norms. I learned aspects of Jordanian culture that I could never learn about in a journal article. Thank you all for sharing your lived experiences, it has been an immensely valuable experience for me.

Abstract:

This case study examines the societal impact of Jordan's gender-discriminatory nationality law on the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of young women. Utilizing quantitative interviews with six Jordanian women, aged 21-37, the research explores their perspectives on the law's implications and justifications. Despite constitutional guarantees of equality, the 1954 Jordanian Nationality Law disproportionately favors men in citizenship transmission, violating international human rights principles ratified by Jordan. This results in Jordanian women who marry non-national men not being able to transmit their nationality to their children in most cases. Without Jordanian nationality, these children suffer many challenges such as limited employment and educational opportunities. It is hypothesized that participants will consider the nationality law as unfair, have a collective desire for equal nationality rights, not have a consensus of opinions on the justifications behind the law, and discuss the impact of the law on their approach to marriage. Findings reveal a consensus among participants that the law is unfair since it hinders women's equality and a collective desire for equal nationality rights. Also, showcases varying opinions of the justification of the law, and opinions on influence on their approach to marriage and family planning. The study utilized convenience sampling, conducting interviews in English, potentially limiting diverse perspectives. Despite limitations, it sheds light on Jordanian women's experiences with discriminatory laws, contributing to broader discussions on gender equality and human rights. Further research should employ inclusive methodologies and comparative analysis to address the multifaceted implications of such legislation. Ultimately, this study advocates for policy reform to uphold women's rights and foster inclusive societies.

Keywords: gender-discriminatory nationality laws, women's rights, policy reform

Introduction:

During my second week in Amman, Jordan, I went on a tour where the guide highlighted the hardships faced by her college friend who she referred to as a member of those called the Sons of Jordanian Mothers. Her friend is the son of a Lebanese father and a Jordanian mother and does not have Jordanian citizenship despite being born and living in Jordan his whole life. The guide discussed how he had to resort to breeding pigeons for income since he was unable to get a job in the tourism industry in which he had a degree in. Before selecting his tourism major, he checked with the authorities if this was a sector open to him as a non-citizen and was told that it was. However, the year he graduated tourism was added to the list of professions only Jordanian citizens can work in. This sparked my interest and to be frank my outrage at this reality. I began reading more about this situation and found out about how Jordan's nationality law is structured and how this law impacts those directly impacted like the guide's friend. Conversing with my host mom about her and her family's experiences with this law sparked my interest in understanding the impact this law has on the broader society. Upon learning that Jordanian citizenship is solely paternally-derived, I decided to conduct my research project on how young Jordanian women feel about this nationality law, what they know about it and if and how it impacts their behavior when it comes to marriage.

I was drawn specifically to the perspective of young women with Jordanian citizenship because I felt like it highlighted how laws can put people in vulnerable situations on varying levels. This law ensures that the choice young women make on who they decide to marry and have children with can have severe consequences on the lives of their children and themselves. If the husbands of women can negatively impact the citizenship status of their future children, do women truly have the freedom of choice to marry whom they want?

My current SIT program discusses how refugees lose a lot of their freedoms and the specific challenges refugees face in Jordan due to laws that restrict their livelihoods. The children of Jordanian women married to foreign men face many similar challenges and have their livelihoods restricted because of their inability to gain Jordanian citizenship. This issue is not unique to Jordan, and gender-discriminatory nationality laws are in place in 24 countries around the world (*Background Note on Gender Equality, Nationality Laws and Statelessness 2024 - World*, 2024). During my research, I found out that Somalia is included in those countries. Being born in Ethiopia and then becoming an American citizen, I was unaware of this reality in my family's country of origin. This discovery solidified my desire to conduct this research as if I were interviewing women from my own people.

This study will not cover many diverse perspectives of women due to time and financial constraints. Therefore, it will cover a limited scope of the varying perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors as a result of this nationality law. However, the responses to the questions will provide a decent understanding of the perspectives of some Jordanian women. The expected outcome of this study is an overwhelming disapproval of this law and a desire to see change. I anticipate that many of the women will feel that the nationality law serves to signal an expectation to them and foreign men. It is likely the participants will have varying thoughts on justifications for this law and opinions on the law's influence on individual and societal levels.

In the Jordanian Nationality Law of 1954, one way to be deemed a Jordanian national is if their “father holds Jordanian nationality” (Kingdom of Jordan, 1954). However, for women, this law states that only children born in Jordan “of a mother holding Jordanian nationality and of a father of unknown nationality or of a Stateless father or whose filiation is not established” will be deemed a Jordanian national. The differential treatment of nationality rights based on gender

is stark. The children of Jordanian men born anywhere can easily gain his citizenship. While the children of Jordanian women only gain her citizenship if born in Jordan and to a stateless or unknown father. In this report, any mention of Jordan's gender discriminatory nationality law or exclusively paternally derived citizenship is a reference to the structure of the Jordanian Nationality Law of 1954. Interestingly, there is a blatant contradiction between the Jordanian Nationality Law of 1954 and the Jordanian Constitution. Article 6 of the Constitution states that "Jordanians shall be equal before the law. There shall be no discrimination between them as regards to their rights and duties on grounds of race, language or religion" (Jordan: Constitution of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 1952). The Jordanian Nationality Law of 1954 violates this Article as well as the clear omission of gender as one of the grounds of discrimination on the rights and duties of Jordanians.

Literature Review

This review will cover the legal principles of equal nationality rights as a human right and how Jordanian nationality law violates these principles. It also explores the justifications for this law found in the existing literature. Lastly, it analyzes the impact of this nationality law on Jordanian women in cross-national marriages and their children. Understanding these elements will set the stage for understanding how young Jordanian women view how their citizenship is structured.

Human rights necessitates equal treatment under international law, barring discrimination based on protected identities like gender. Despite this, the denial of women's ability to pass down citizenship is common and exemplifies gender-discriminatory laws. Two common forms of discrimination exist within gendered citizenship. One form is the "dependent nationality"

principle in which a foreign wife renounces her nationality and automatically gains her husband's, while women cannot transfer their nationality to their foreign husbands in any case. The other is the citizenship of a child of parents of different nationalities is only determined by their father's nationality (Pradhan-Malla & Gautam, 2006).

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was created to address gender inequality with multiple prohibitions against all forms of discrimination against women. Article 9 of the CEDAW encourages all 189 of its state parties, including Jordan, to grant women equal rights concerning acquiring, changing, and retaining their nationality and passing down their nationality to children (Brennan et al., 2018). Additionally, Jordan ratified the Universal Declaration on Human Rights which deems nationality as a human right. Article 24 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Jordan ratified, mandates States to ensure every child's right to nationality. Lastly, Jordan ratified the Convention of the Rights of the Child which Article 2 states that all children have the right to get nationality with no discrimination of any dimension.

Despite these ratifications by Jordan and its constitution barring discrimination under the law, Article 3 of the Jordanian Nationality Law of 1954 is gender discriminatory. It states that "any person whose father holds Jordanian nationality" is deemed a Jordanian national (Kingdom of Jordan, 1954). While children of Jordanian mothers are only deemed nationals if born in Jordan and if their father is unknown or stateless. Jordan's gender-discriminatory nationality law is a clear violation of the rights afforded to women and children by international legal principles that Jordan has agreed to uphold by ratifying them.

Jordan is defined as a Muslim and Arab country (*Jordan: Jordanian National Charter of 1991*, 1991). Likely, these two aspects will heavily influence the justifications behind this

gender-discriminatory nationality law. One justification is using the Quranic verse “Call them by (the name of) their (real) fathers; It is more equitable in the sight of Allah” (The Quran, 33:5). One article argues that this verse is used to impose unequal citizenship rights, but is a faulty justification since children can still take the last names of their fathers while acquiring their mother’s citizenship (Kowalska, 2017, 185). I agree with their argument since the verse only discusses Islamic naming principles and has nothing to do with citizenship rights. Also, I argue that two verses of the Quran clearly state the equal rights of men and women which translates into all aspects including citizenship. One verse is “women have rights similar to those of men equitably” (The Quran, 2:228). The other is “men will be rewarded according to their deeds and women equally according to theirs” (The Quran, 4: 32) These two verses showcase how men and women should not be unequal in their rights or their benefits. This applies to citizenship rights and since children are the benefit of the father and mother, both should have equal rights in what they can provide for their children. It is a major contradiction of the teachings of Islam to provide men with more nationality rights than women.

Another argument set forth by the same article states that Jordan’s reservation about granting equal nationality rights stems from the politics of the Middle East. They argue that Jordan is desperate to hold on to its Jordanian national identity and fears it will be in danger by accepting the children of Jordanian mothers and their foreign fathers as Jordanians (Kowalska, 2017, 190). They go on to discuss how Jordan rejects being deemed an alternative Palestinian state and argues that it is protecting the Palestinian national identity by not offering citizenship to Palestinian men from Gaza married to Jordanian women. I specifically list Gaza because most long-term residents in Jordan without citizenship are Palestinians from Gaza, while many of the Palestinians from the West Bank have Jordanian citizenship (El Abed, 2006). However, this

argument quickly falls apart upon realizing that Jordanian men still can marry Palestinian women so how does that marriage not threaten the Palestinian nationality idea but the reverse does? Kowalska argues this too and I agree that a clear double standard is shown through this justification.

This line of reasoning could be understood from a patriarchal standpoint if you do not perceive the children of a Palestinian mother and a Jordanian father as not Palestinian enough, as well as perceiving the children of a Jordanian mother and a Palestinian father as not Jordanian enough. I argue that this perception is the only way that this political justification makes sense, and is a likely way of thinking according to Suad Joseph's literature on how citizenship is conceptualized in Middle Eastern states. She states that gender bias in the Middle East presumes males to be citizens while females are “dependent second-class members” (Joseph, 1996). She continues by arguing that women are often made into the “symbolic markers of the nation” leading to laws meant to control women’s reproduction, maternal rights, productivity, and wealth by regulating marriage, naturalization, inheritance, and property rights. Women becoming icons of the nation forces them into patriarchal structures and ideologies that lead to the subordination of women.

In my opinion, Jordan’s gender-discriminatory nationality law is a clear example of this where women are not afforded the same rights as men to pass their citizenship to their children and non-national husbands because women are equated with the reproduction of the nation. An interesting opinion by Kowalska based on her research is that Jordanian women married to foreign men are regarded as being disloyal to their nation. I believe that this unequal nationality law is a way to systematically punish Jordanian women who decide to marry foreign men and

have children. However, based on my interview I do not think all of Jordanian society regards these women as disloyal, but a segment of society likely does.

The perception that women are national icons is sustained through the preservation of “traditional” family units and codes of ethics, values, and conduct that are all born out of the patriarchy that privileges males and elders (Joseph, 1996). Suad argues that Middle Eastern states often create constructs of citizens based on membership in subnational communities leading to collective citizenship, instead of individualized citizens. The common categories of subnational communities include family units, religious sects, ethnicities, and tribal groups, but these communities often disempower women due to their patriarchal nature, forcing women into gender hierarchies. An example of this collective citizenship is depicted through children only gaining citizenship through their father, reinforcing a connection between fathers and national citizenship. Since women are not afforded individual citizenship, the nature of collective citizenship means that women's relationships with the state become mediated through family ties as they are only recognized as citizens in the context of their positions in patriarchal structures, may it be as daughter, wife or a mother (Joseph, 1996).

Lastly, another justification for this nationality law is that Jordan fears that broadening who can access its citizenship would lead to an increase in immigration, leading to a disastrous effect on its budget and water resources (Zayadin, 2018). I argue that this fear does not outweigh the harmful effects lack of citizenship has on its current residents and their livelihoods should not be sacrificed because of this fear.

Now, let's discuss what those harmful effects are on the children of Jordanian mothers and foreign fathers. Human Rights Watch reported that in 2014 there were 88,983 Jordanian women married to foreign nationals with 355,923 children born from these pairings.

Additionally, a 2023 study by the Higher Population Council and United Nations Population Fund found that 7% of Jordanian women marry non-national men compared to 5% of Jordanian men (“Jordan's Matrimonial Trends”, 2023). It is a plausible assumption that the 2014 numbers have only increased and that even more people are impacted by this law.

A policy brief by the coalition of civil society organizations and individuals named “My Nationality is the Right of My Family” in conjunction with the King Hussein Foundation discusses the consequences for Jordanian families with non-national fathers. The entire family is stressed by not being able to access government resources like medical services, health insurance, and public education since the children and fathers do not have Jordanian nationality. Jordanian mothers are stressed by the fear of deportation of their children and husbands and feel helpless to secure a better future for their children. Their husbands and children have limited access to jobs and economic opportunities regardless of whether they are highly educated. When it comes to higher education, public universities mandate children of Jordanian mothers to pay international student fees since their children are considered foreigners. Their children are unable to receive government scholarships leading to many people being discouraged from attending university and those who did were left regretting their expensive education due to a lack of employment opportunities post-graduation (Zayadin, 2018). Additionally, these families face the high prices of getting and renewing work and residency permits. The non-national husbands and children of Jordanian mothers face potential exploitation from employers and the risk of facing arrests for working or residing without these permits (Zayadin, 2018). More risks for females in this position exist since girls in these families are more vulnerable to forced and/or early marriages where they can obtain Jordanian citizenship. While the sons of Jordanian mothers do not have this pathway open to them at all. Also, in the case of divorce Jordanian women face

additional barriers to getting custody or even access to their children with their non-national husbands.

Methodology

This study recruited participants using a convenience sampling method where faculty at the SIT program referred participants to the researcher. These participants all met the inclusion criteria of identifying as women, being within the age range of 18-40, having Jordanian citizenship, and being proficient English speakers. Our interviews were conducted in either a private office, a secluded area of a coffee shop, participant homes, or on Zoom.

For this research, six women were interviewed between the ages of 21-37. The marital status of the women ranged between single, engaged, and married. All had Jordanian citizenship and all of their fathers and mothers held Jordanian citizenship too. All were Muslim and completed 4-year universities, and all were proficient English speakers. Originally, the intended participants were limited to unmarried women. After deliberation, it was preferred to gather a wider range of opinions due to the small participant pool, leading to include married women with no children. Interview questions were only minimally tweaked to address married women, and still had the same content as other questions. By widening the participants the research would be able to go deeper into the different perspectives of how Jordanian women perceive, feel, and are impacted by this law.

Before collecting any data from the women, an informed consent form was distributed that discussed the rights of participants to withdraw from the study at any time and refuse any questions at any time. The women were able to ask any questions about the form and were requested to sign if they consented to the study and indicate if willing to be quoted in the report

and to be audio-recorded. The form outlined the purpose of the study and its procedures, the potential risks and benefits, and confidentiality. It stated that the identity and integrity of each participant were protected by not collecting names on the questionnaire and no names would be attributed to the transcription of the interview recording. The recordings would be kept in a locked folder on the local computer and deleted after transcriptions were completed. The transcription of recordings was labeled with a code number. Also, the researcher made sure to reframe misunderstood questions and use follow-up questions to truly understand the participants' perspectives. Additional ethical considerations outside of the informed consent forms served to minimize potential misunderstanding of questions by providing a copy of the interview questions. This action helped participants not have to rely solely on listening but could read the questions to increase their comprehension and made it easier for them to point out unfamiliar words to be rephrased by the researcher. It was unexpected to provide participants with all questions, but there was no perceived effect on the quality of responses. In the future, it would be better to accompany the questions with the Arabic translation to maximize comprehension of the questions.

During the interview process, a few issues arose around unfamiliar words, unanswering of all parts of questions, lack of generalizable questions, differences in transparency between audio-recorded interviews and non-recorded, and a group interview conducted. Despite being proficient English speakers, some were unfamiliar with some English words, necessitating replacement with their more familiar synonyms. However, this was difficult to anticipate, but after two interviews I prepared to reframe every question without using the same English words. Ultimately, this worked to help guarantee that participants understood the interview questions thoroughly. During transcription, the researcher noticed that sometimes participants did not

answer all parts of the questions, like when asked if and why they believed the nationality to be unfair and unjustified. Some women addressed why they deemed the law unfair but ignored addressing why it was unjust. Thankfully, other questions were able to obtain the participant's views on this topic. Another issue was that some questions would have been more impactful if they were generalizable, like when asking about the impact of the nationality law on your life. My current questions separately asked about the positive impact and negative impact of the nationality law on Jordanian women, whereas it would have saved time for everyone to simply ask about the impact rather than singling out the particular impact of the nationality law. The interviewees would often address both negative and positive impacts when responding to the positive impact of the nationality law. A discrepancy was observed between the participants who consented to audio recording and the ones who did not. Those being recorded were more guarded discussing shortcomings of the government and sharing insider information on cultural differences and inequality in Jordanian society. However, this is not a definite difference since the study is based on a small sample, especially of those who did not consent to be audio-recorded but would be an interesting point to consider in further research. Lastly, issues with a group interview arose from new participants accompanying a planned participant on a day with a tight interview schedule that was not ideal. Since the study only intended to conduct single-participant interviews, yet had to make accommodations for the participants. All of the women, a group of friends, consented to the group interview after being informed that the interview would discuss sensitive topics like xenophobia and marriage behavior. However, it was a necessary accommodation to obtain the perspectives of willing participants. One issue observed during the interview and transcription was the disproportionality in the women's responses. Two of the women expressed more views, while one woman expressed her views less. It may have been

better to insist on single interviews so each woman could express her views in depth. To be fair, the differences in responses could be attributed to personality differences where the other women just had more to express than the other women.

Findings

The responses to the interview questions were eye-opening into how different women perceive the nationality law, their interpretations of the purpose behind it, and their experiences with the culture of Jordan. The research hypothesis is that young women will overwhelmingly consider Jordan's nationality law as unfair, will have a collective desire for equal nationality rights, and will not have a consensus of opinions on the justifications behind the law. Also, it hypothesized that the responses will show that young women's approach to marriage will be impacted by the nationality law. This hypothesis is based on the researcher's research of literature on the Jordanian nationality law, Islam, and Arab culture and personal projections of how other young women from a similar conservative Muslim culture will regard the law.

This small sample of Jordanian women's perspectives affirmed both of these hypotheses. All of the women viewed this law to be unfair but had different opinions on whether and why it was justified or not justified. All of the women discussed how this law made life difficult for the Jordanian women and their children. Some spoke from personal connections with those affected while others spoke more generally. All of the women were supportive of the nationality law being changed to favor gender equality. Additionally, the women had varying opinions on the purpose behind the law as well as the impact of this law on their approach to marriage. Only one of the six interviewees was not aware of how the nationality law was structured, but she was still aware of the negative consequences of being a non-citizen living in Jordan. The interview

questions were structured based on the following seven topics in order: cognizance of second-class citizenship, personal attitudes towards the law, perceptions of the law's existence and justifications, perceptions of the law's intentions, society's reaction to this law, the effect of the law on their behavior, and desire and efforts for change.

Within these topics, the recurring themes include the culture around marriage, feeling limited in marriage options, fear of potential consequences for their children and themselves, the importance of a suitors nationality, male privilege, the dominance of original Jordanian tribal culture, apathy from those unaffected, and the effects on the people most affected. The following section will explore the responses from each interview.

Group Interview

In the group interview, three women shared their perspectives. Only one of the women was uninformed of Jordanian women's second-class citizenship. The other two learned about it through family members affected by the unequal nationality law. The unaware woman cited that all her female family members were married to men with Jordanian citizenship. One of the women was born to parents of different nationalities with her father being Jordanian. Her mother's family does not have Jordanian citizenship and noted her cousin's potentially gaining citizenship upon marriage to a Jordanian. The other woman cited her aunt's marriage to a non-Jordanian and the consequent suffering of her cousins who are non-citizens.

When discussing personal attitudes, they unanimously disapproved of the law, considering it unfair and unjust, with no perceived positive impact on their lives. One woman contended that individuals residing in Jordan with one Jordanian parent should not face consequences because of their non-national parent. She asserts that lives are made difficult by

this law since they are discriminated against for jobs and marriage since they lack Jordanian citizenship. Another woman stated that the effect on the children of Jordanian mothers is unfair.

Regarding their perceptions of the law's existence and justifications, two women mentioned the law is in place due to the substantial refugee population, aiming to safeguard the Jordanian demographic by restricting easy access to citizenship. One woman cited the interpretation in Islam that the father's religion determines the children's religion as justification for unequal nationality rights along with male privilege enabling gender inequality. All participants believe the Jordanian government fails to clarify justifications to the public, disregards public input, and acts based on political motives. The women perceive this law as harming the livelihoods of children born to Jordanian mothers, treating them as foreigners by restricting their access to regular jobs and education and subjecting them to expensive international student fees. They perceived this law to be targeting non-Jordanian nationalities such as Egyptians, Syrians, Palestinians, Iraqis, and particularly those seeking refugee in Jordan. One woman stated that the law was created to target Palestinians who were the first refugees in Jordan. One woman argued that this law is not specifically targeting women as sons born to Jordanian mothers face significant struggles due to lack of easy access to citizenship. None of the women believed the government aimed to communicate anything to young Jordanian women. When asked if the law aligned with societal expectations of young Jordanian women, participants shared the opinion that women are expected to only marry Jordanian men, though each family varies in their acceptance of their daughter's choice to marry a foreigner. Regarding whether the law targets foreign men residing in Jordan, two women believed the government was conveying to these men that they would be unable to marry Jordanian women and live

comfortably in Jordan, suggesting it would be preferable for them to return to their own countries and marry there.

The women shared their perceptions on how society views the law and cross-national marriages. The participants shared that cross-national marriages are generally not supported but views vary for each family. The woman, who is the daughter of parents from different nationalities and visibly appears non-Jordanian, mentioned that she receives better treatment from people, as society perceives foreign women as more delicate and classy compared to Jordanian women. Participants observed that supporters of the nationality law were those unaffected, adopting an attitude of if I am not impacted why should I care? Conversely, those who disagreed tended to be directly impacted or knew individuals affected by the law. One woman expressed that Jordanian society blames women who marry non-Jordanians, particularly in strict families, suggesting they brought their situation upon themselves. Participants observed that affected young people are more likely to challenge the law, whereas original Jordanians who are non-refugees tend to support it. Two women believed that original Jordanians sought to gatekeep their country and feel territorial, perceiving their Jordanian heritage as superior. A woman added that when Palestinian refugees first got Jordanian citizenship, many of the original Jordanians were upset and felt their country was being taken away and believed that after this the government began limiting access to Jordanian citizenship. One of these women argued that Jordanian men overwhelmingly support the law as it minimizes competition in the workplace.

On the impact of the nationality law on their behavior and the negative impact on their lives, the participants expressed varying perspectives. One woman indicated that while her life is not affected, her cousin relies on marrying a Jordanian for citizenship. Another woman expressed her plans to leave Jordan but stated she would be restricted to marrying Jordanian men if she

stayed to avoid negative impacts. A third woman feels that her marriage options are limited to Jordanians due to this law. All of the women expressed that this law affected their approach to marriage due to not wanting their future children to struggle and that the law limited their marriage prospects. One woman recounted the experiences of her aunt who moved away to be with her children who struggled to attain employment in Jordan and how she did not want to be in that situation. When asked if their family considers the law when considering suitable husbands, all of the women stated that inquiry on their citizenship is the first question asked. Two women noted that the prospect's wealth was an important factor in families feeling more accepting of and confident in a potential husband who may not have a Jordanian or strong nationality.

None of the women had been involved in efforts to change this law or advocate for more rights for those affected. All were supportive of changing the law to provide equal nationality rights. One woman highlighted the importance of at least granting citizenship to current children born to Jordanian mothers, emphasizing the absurdity of providing identification cards acknowledging their Jordanian mother without granting them more rights than true foreigners. Despite their support for change, none of the women were hopeful for change soon, attributing it to the lack of a large movement, as only a small portion of Jordanian society is impacted. One woman noted that this population remains small because everyone is aware of the law's effects on their lives. The women argued that change could only happen if people were more compassionate to those affected and had more awareness, especially since many women are unaware of how the nationality law is designed.

Interview #2

The fourth woman interviewed demonstrated awareness that Jordanian citizenship is exclusively paternally derived, learning this through listening to parliamentary discussions. She viewed the law as a manifestation of gender inequality, deeming it unfair and unjust, with no positive impact perceived. She feared her children would suffer from a lack of citizenship if she married a non-Jordanian. Unaware of the law's purpose, she believed the government would swiftly resolve the issue if men faced the same citizenship rights issue due to male privilege. She pointed out that Jordanian nationality inequities extend beyond gender, highlighting the difficulties faced by people from Gaza in obtaining citizenship due to the complex processes. She felt the government did not need to justify the law, as it reflects societal norms and interests.

This participant perceived the law as significantly restricting women's freedom of choice, as they must consider its impact on their children. She believed the law targets the minority population of Jordanian women in cross-national marriages and their children, arguing that it is not a major problem for most Jordanians. She perceived the law to communicate to young women that they would be disconnected from their families and country by marrying a non-Jordanian due to the pressure to move elsewhere for educational and employment opportunities for their future children. She argued that the law compels young women to greatly consider the nationality of their prospective partners, and prioritize strong nationalities over weak nationalities that could at least grant their children citizenship in a country better than Jordan. Instead of focusing on love or compatibility, women must prioritize the strength of the partner's nationality and weigh the implications of potentially giving up their Jordanian nationality for a foreign one, such as American or Canadian. The result of this is more inclination to marry someone from a better country than a worse country, compared to Jordan. Along with preparing

for the possibility of uprooting their lives to move to a different country, which may not be ideal for the woman or their children.

When asked about whether the law is aligned with societal marriage expectations of women, she expressed that most families are resistant to non-Jordanian men so if a woman desired one she would face many obstacles. She viewed this law as a reflection of how Jordanian society views cross-national marriages and the preference for marriages within clans. She made a distinction on views on cross-national marriages based on generation, while older generations either explicitly refuse, do not encourage, or place obstacles on cross-national marriages. Younger generations are more accepting and even desire it, especially Jordanian men who want non-Jordanian wives while Jordanian girls evaluate based on love. This participant argued that if the government wanted to target marriages with foreign men there would be an explicit ban, but this law communicates that marriage is not a path to Jordanian citizenship for them so their stay cannot be permanent.

Similar to the group interview, she argued that unaffected people are indifferent towards the law, especially since it is uncommon for women to marry foreigners. She noted that those who strongly oppose cross-national marriage approve of this law, while human rights organizations and affected individuals, especially mothers and children, are likely to challenge it. She viewed that the tribal families of the original Jordanians approve of this law since they exert a lot of control due to their tribal laws' influence on societal norms. These Jordanians seek to prevent their daughters from marrying foreigners to preserve their culture and shield it from external influence. She argued that original Jordanians fear that cross-national marriages will alter the children's beliefs, norms, and religion. She stated that they believe that Jordanian men married to foreign wives can maintain Jordanian norms while Jordanian women cannot.

Regarding the law's effect on her behavior, she expressed no personal concern like those directly affected but acknowledged its influence on her approach to marriage. She recounted declining marriage proposals solely due to lack of Jordanian citizenship, acknowledging the weight of the law on her decisions and the necessity of considering its implications for her future children. She expressed this line of thinking is common for Jordanian women. She felt the law further limited her marriage options in addition to the limits imposed by her strict family. Her family prioritizes a potential husband's commitment to religion over citizenship. Additionally, she perceived her exposure to foreign men as limited due to her strict upbringing and lack of experience abroad.

Although she has not participated in formal efforts to change the law or advocate for increased rights, she has engaged in discussions within her immediate community, including family and friends. She supports changing the law to provide equal nationality rights but remains pessimistic about change shortly. However, she holds hope that the younger generation's use of social media and increased exposure to other cultures will lead to societal changes in laws and attitudes over the next few decades.

Interview #3

The fifth interviewee, the only married woman, became aware of Jordan's unequal nationality during her engagement to a non-Jordanian. Her father would reject anyone without Jordanian citizenship but accepted her husband because of his British nationality. She characterized the law as old-fashioned, unfair, and unjust. She expressed that in the past it might have been justified, but currently, the law is disrespectful and discriminatory to Jordanian women and their children. The law negatively impacts the couple by barring them from opening

a business together and getting a loan for a car, as well as lengthening her husband's costly driver's license process. Her husband found employment without a work permit at an international company due to the appeal of his foreign passport. The interviewee believed the purpose of this law is to benefit original Jordanians by creating challenges for foreigners to acquire citizenship, and to create distance between them.

She was uncertain about specific targets of the nationality law but echoed similar sentiments of other interviewees, suggesting that notions of Jordanian superiority and their desire to limit mixed heritages may have influenced the law's purpose. She expressed that Palestinians with Jordanian citizenship are not regarded on the same level as original Jordanians, attributing the discrepancy to lesser connections to power and influence and income inequality. She highlighted the importance of a family name for employment opportunities, loans, and property ownership, noting that a Jordanian family name carries more weight. However, she acknowledged that a Palestinian family name could gain recognition through prominence. She provided insight into the culture of marriage in this society, claiming that Jordanian women prefer to marry Palestinian-Jordanian men since they are perceived as more family-centered. Jordanian women's feminist and demanding personalities often clash with the dominant personalities of Jordanian men. She argued that the nationality law is driven by political motives rather than sexist ones, suggesting that it is used to control the choices of Jordanian women to marry only men with Jordanian citizenship.

Similar to other participants, she stated that society expects marriages between Jordanians due to their similarities and lack of trust for foreign nationalities. She shared that in her experience Palestinian-Jordanians feel anxious when their daughters marry Jordanian men due to fears of mistreatment and domestic violence. She noted this fear stemming from perceived

cultural differences, highlighting Jordanian's emphasis on culture rather than religion. However, she acknowledged that domestic violence exists within Palestinian marriages too. When asked, the participant felt that foreign men are targeted by the nationality law and are informed that they will have fewer rights and need to relocate, as they will not gain any power in Jordan or be treated as Jordanian.

The interviewee stated that cross-national marriages are not encouraged unless planning to leave Jordan and move to a richer country. However, cross-national marriages are more accepted by Palestinians and Syrians, who often ask for less dowry than Jordanians. The dowry of Syrian women may be the lowest which can cause them to be disrespected and underappreciated more. In her case, her extended family reacted positively to her marriage since her children would acquire British nationality. If her husband had a weak nationality compared to the Jordanian one, her family would have opposed the marriage and tried to convince her father to disapprove.

In her opinion, most people disagree with the nationality law since it causes many difficulties for people, especially Palestinians who are most affected. She felt that successful non-Jordanians were most likely to challenge the law while those privileged to be born with Jordanian citizenship are more approving of the law. She claimed that these people could not empathize with the issues of those without citizenship especially if born into generational wealth.

This law worries her as she may have to leave Jordan and experience homesickness if her future children face limited opportunities.

In her approach to marriage, nationality was a primary consideration and regarded as important as a dowry offer. Her parent's initial inquiries revolved around citizenship, leading them to automatically reject those lacking Jordanian citizenship. She recounted instances where

male friends were rejected in their marriage proposals, regardless of their dowry offer since they lacked Jordanian citizenship. These men were left heartbroken and felt that regardless of their efforts they could not attain marriage. In her own experience, she did not feel restricted in her marriage prospects, as a Palestinian with Jordanian citizenship, she could afford to be selective compared to women without Jordanian citizenship. Also, she had limited interactions with people from other nationalities.

The participant did not engage in formal efforts to change the nationality law, yet is supportive of equal nationality rights. She felt that those born and raised in Jordan should gain automatic citizenship along with refugees in host communities, but citizenship should not apply to refugees whose affairs are handled by UNHCR rather than the Jordanian ministry. She is pessimistic about change in the near future, stating that the movement for equal nationality rights lacks the strength to challenge the ministry. She argues that political changes are necessary to reduce the monarchy's influence on the government. She emphasizes that people tolerate unfair treatment and laws out of fear that political movements could endanger their peace and safety, citing the example of civil wars in countries after the Arab Spring, particularly the Syrian Civil War.

Interview #4

The sixth woman interviewed was aware of Jordan's exclusively paternally derived citizenship. She was informed by a college friend with a Jordanian mother and a Lebanese father, after observing her struggle with employment and annual residency renewals. The participants attributed her lack of awareness to growing up in Saudi Arabia and the absence of personal experiences with those affected since all her female family members are married to Jordanians.

She disapproved of the law, viewing it as unfair but potentially justified. She noted that all Arab countries prohibit dual citizenship, so the government does not want to give people the option of renouncing their Jordanian nationality by restricting access to it. She argued that living in a male-dominated world is why equal nationality rights are non-existent. She stated that Jordanian men had a simple process for approval to marry a foreign woman, compared to the lengthy process Jordanian women faced for approval to marry a foreign man which required additional documents. The participant perceived the government to justify this law based on population control to prevent overpopulation since there are more unmarried women than men. She stated that this imbalance in demographics increases the challenges for women to marry only Jordanians.

From her perspective, the effect of this law is to dissuade women from marrying other nationalities, especially if they desire to reside in Jordan. She shared that it was now common practice for those in cross-national marriages to move to a third-party country in the Gulf or West. She noted that regardless of the foreign husband's work status in Jordan, the law will limit the education opportunities of their children and force them to deal with lengthy annual renewal processes. She believed the law to target women but was not used to directly communicate anything to young women. Similar to other participants, she believed that society expects marriages between Jordanians, with some areas solely expecting marriages within clans and barring marriages with other clans or other areas of Jordan. She believed that the law targeted foreign men too, and conveyed that in Jordanian society it is believed that children adopt the religion, traditions, and national loyalties of their father. She expressed the law may serve to protect national security from the influence of foreign men on the population.

Similar to other interviews, she made distinctions based on generational opinions on cross-national marriages that differ depending on the level of ignorance compared to the willingness to be open-minded. She felt that original Jordanians are the most open-minded when it comes to cross-national marriages, and stated that within her friend group, cross-national marriages were encouraged. In the broader Jordanian society, she stated that approval or disapproval of this nationality law depended on people's conservativeness, open-mindedness, and exposure to other cultures. She perceived that the law impacted and/or had family members impacted mainly challenged this law, while more men and conservatives approved of this law.

In her personal experience, the law was not a cause for concern that she felt limited by, and stated that as she gets older its impact on her approach to marriage diminishes due to her changing mentality. Her father kept the law in mind because of concerns that a non-Jordanian suitor was not suitable to financially provide for her in Jordan, especially if not settled in his country of origin. Her father struggled due to gender-discriminatory nationality laws while attending college in Lebanon as the son of a Lebanese mother who could not provide her citizenship to him.

The interviewee had not participated in efforts to change the law, yet is supportive of equal nationality rights especially since many of her friends are married to non-Jordanians. She was the only one who was optimistic about change in the near future and cited that the reforms of Queen Rania and women's rights organizations to provide ID cards would minimize the annual renewal process. She believes that change will only happen with different people in the Jordanian parliament.

Interview #5

The final woman interviewed was aware of Jordan's nationality law and learned about it in a mandatory high school citizenship class. She perceived the nationality law to be unfair and unjust. Personally, she had no issues with the nationality law but was sympathetic to the negative impact on the children of Jordanian mothers and frustrated with the ineffective campaigns to grant them their rights. She felt that the law had neither a positive nor negative impact on her life. She read an article that argued the law's purpose is to control the demographics of Jordan to not include too many people originally from other nationalities. She partially believed this reason and noted the intention is to safeguard the original Jordanian demographics as much as possible. She noted that there should be no difference between the nationality rights of women and men, and felt that the law worked to portray men as superior. She believed that many rules and laws in the Arab world served to favor men over women and divide them into separate classes. She was unaware of the government's justifications for the law but heard about the efforts to improve women's rights but saw no tangible changes to provide equal nationality rights. She conveyed that it is common in Arab culture for men to marry out of their culture while uncommon for women. She argued that it is a rare case for a Jordanian woman to marry a foreign man, so it was not a serious societal problem.

The interviewee discussed that families affected by this law are treated as foreigners and struggle with living a normal life when it comes to employment, education, and property ownership. This reality is compounded for those who are stateless who are unable to gain either parent's nationality. She believed the law targets Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians and favors original Jordanians who preferred the preservation of Jordanian heritage by discouraging mixed-nationality marriages, particularly those where the husband is not Jordanian.

She believed that the government used the law to deter women from considering marrying foreign men by signaling to young Jordanian women to greatly consider the potential harm to their future children's lives. However, this message does not apply if the man's citizenship is better than the Jordanian one, like a Western nationality. She states that the law aligns with societal expectations where it is customary for both genders to marry a local person. While it is more common for men to marry outside their nationality than for women. In her extended family, it is frequent to hear of cross-national marriages of Jordanian men and infrequent for Jordanian women. She cites both the law and culture as to why it is rare for women to marry non-Jordanians, as the law places pressure on marrying within one's nationality. She states that in the Levant region, it is common to marry from the same nationality or a neighboring country, and that marriage with Gulf or Western countries receives a shocked reaction from Levant societies. She noted that the law might be targeting foreign men, but usually is not a major problem since his children can acquire his nationality and the larger issue is women being unable to provide their children with her nationality. She added that the law does not need to signal anything to foreign men since the culture tells them marriage between them and Jordanian women is unacceptable.

In her experience, cross-national marriages are not encouraged, yet tolerated if the individual insists on marrying a non-Jordanian. Unless it's a marriage between Jordanians and Palestinian-Jordanians due to their long-time residence and demographic majority. She argued that marriages with long-time Syrian residents will be encouraged after a decade-long residence in Jordan. In her circle, people disagree with the law and she thinks that most of society disagrees too especially if aware of the effects on individuals close to them, while those unaware may agree. She believes that even those affected are not challenging the law since they feel too

weak to affect any real change and rely on the efforts of legal professionals. She believed that those unaffected either see the problem as minimal or are unaware of the issues people face. She believes that it is mainly lawyers and activists who challenge the law, apply pressure on the government, and conduct campaigns to spread awareness. She believes much of the approval for this law comes from Jordanian tribes who prefer marriages between people from the same clan or area and are staunchly opposed to marriages with non-Jordanians.

Personally, the law is not a concern for her since it aligns with her desires. She does not wish to marry anyone who is not Jordanian so the law does not impact her approach to marriage. She claims that it is rare for women who wish to stay in Jordan to desire to marry non-Jordanians so the law does not play a part in their approach, but the law affects those women who desire non-Jordanian spouses. Since her preference is a Jordanian, she does not feel that there is an imposed limit on her marriage options. If she did wish to marry a non-Jordanian, she would think logically about the consequences of her choice on her future children's rights and the likelihood of instability in her cross-national marriage. In her experience, families are not overly concerned with the law since the non-Jordanian population is minimal compared to Palestinian-Jordanians and original Jordanians, so it is likely for people to only meet other locals. However, families automatically turn away anyone who is Iraqi or Lebanese due to the law's effects. Ultimately, she felt that the culture was not flexible and feared that other nationalities would be unsafe for their daughters, even if Muslim or Arab. In her opinion, the law is sourced from cultural norms, and change would be more likely if the government believed that most people truly disagreed with the nationality law and were accepting of marriages with non-Jordanians. In her opinion, since this is the case the government believes only a small minority opposes the nationality law.

The interviewee has not been a part of efforts to change the law but is supportive of equal nationality rights. She is not confident in change soon and noted the unfulfilled promises from campaigns to provide more rights for those affected. She believes that there needs to be representation in the government that prioritizes and uplifts the voices of Jordanian women and addresses their concerns.

Conclusion

The perspectives of the six women interviewed were extremely enlightening into aspects of this topic I did not know and possibly could have never read about. Hearing each of the women's perspectives on why the law exists and the impact of the law on their own lives and on how marriage is conceptualized in Jordan was especially interesting. To reiterate, it was hypothesized that women will overwhelmingly think the nationality law is unfair and wish to change it to reflect gender equality. Also, it was hypothesized that the women's approach to marriage is impacted by the law, but would have different opinions of whether the law is justified.

The responses affirmed this hypothesis since all of the women thought the law was unfair and wished for equal nationality rights. Some of the women thought this law was unequivocally unjustified, while others thought it could have been justified in the past or justified based on the dual nationality rules of Arab countries. When it came to discussing the purpose of the law and the justifications for its existence, the women had varying perspectives. One woman thought the law was based on an interpretation in Islam that it is only men who can transmit their religion to their children which is then applied to only providing their children's citizenship. One woman discussed a belief in Jordanian culture that it is men who transmit religion, traditions, norms, and

national loyalties to children and not mothers. Most women perceive the law to be born out of Jordanian culture where it is expected to marry within their clan, tribe, area, or simply another Jordanian especially for women. A recurring theme was that the intention behind the law was to safeguard the Jordanian national identity from foreign influence that could challenge its dominance and benefit the small population of original Jordanians. One woman stated that the issue of unequal nationality rights in Jordan is politically motivated, rather than sexist, suggesting it is used to control the choices of Jordanian women to marry only men with Jordanian citizenship.

These responses affirmed that collectively women's approach to marriage is impacted by the law, if not individually. Three of the women expressed that the nationality law had no impact on how they approached marriage because of their personal preferences, aspirations, and mindset changes, but would have an impact without it. One woman stated that she preferred to only marry a Jordanian and that it is unlikely to meet a foreigner while in Jordan due to their low population. She stated that it was rare for a woman who wishes to stay in Jordan to desire to marry a non-Jordanian. She did note that if she did desire to marry a non-Jordanian, she would think critically of the potential consequences on the rights of her child and the likelihood of instability in her marriage. Another woman noted that she did not intend to stay in Jordan, so she felt no need to limit herself solely to Jordanians. Similar to the first woman, she noted that if she did intend to stay in Jordan she would strictly marry a Jordanian to avoid the negative impacts of the law. The last woman stated that the law had impacted her approach to marriage in the past, but no longer does as she has gotten older and had a mindset change. She noted that many of her friends are married to non-Jordanians, and it is common to marry a non-Jordanian and relocate to

another country. She did state that the law is more restrictive on women who wish to stay living in Jordan since it discourages them from marrying a non-Jordanian.

Four other women stated that their approach to marriage is impacted by the nationality law. They felt like they had to think about the nationality of a potential husband since it would have an immense impact on the future of their children and themselves, either providing or limiting educational and employment opportunities. The women discussed how nationality is one of the first or second questions asked about marriage prospects, and that men with weak or no citizenship are turned away without a meeting in some cases. One woman recalled turning down marriage proposals from men for no other reason besides their lack of Jordanian nationality. The married woman stated that nationality is as important as dowry in Jordanian society and spoke on the perspectives of male friends who have their marriage proposals turned down due to their lack of Jordanian or a different strong nationality despite their wealth or efforts. One woman recalled the story of her aunt having to leave Jordan since her children could not find work as medical doctors since it is limited to only Jordanian nationals and stated how she did not want to be in that situation.

To conclude with three questions to lawmakers and supporters of this nationality law. If a Jordanian woman relies on marrying a man to give her children her citizenship, how can women be equal members of society while being critically dependent on a man? This applies to the daughters of Jordanian women who need to be married to Jordanian men for three years to acquire the citizenship of their mother. Also, if the husbands of Jordanian women can negatively impact the citizenship status of their future children, do women truly have the freedom of choice to marry who they want? Lastly, how much of an individual woman's desire to truly marry a

Jordanian is their choice and how much are they internalizing the consequences of a hard life for their children, the possibility of leaving their home country, and the expectations of society? Swift change is necessary for the betterment of Jordanian society. The people affected cannot wait any longer, and the future children of Jordanian women cannot be facing the same challenges as the current ones. Instead of prioritizing nationality when considering marriage, young women should be prioritizing compatibility, and their choice should not be contingent on whether her future husband can provide citizenship to her children or not.

Limitations

In this study, several potential limitations warrant consideration. Firstly, the interviews being conducted solely in English may have limited the women's ability to express their nuanced perspectives compared to their potential responses in their first language of Arabic. Additionally, only representing English speakers, who are often more highly educated, could skew the findings toward viewpoints prevalent among this demographic, potentially neglecting the experiences of individuals with different educational backgrounds. Furthermore, the study's limited sample size and scope hinder its generalizability, particularly regarding discussions on differences based on parameters like ethnic or socioeconomic backgrounds. Focusing solely on this specific demographic of women with Jordanian citizenship risks overlooking the experiences of other marginalized groups whose perspectives are equally important such as the daughters of Jordanian mothers without citizenship.

Recommendations Further

Expanding upon this study can be achieved in a multitude of ways for future research and inquiry. Firstly, a comparative analysis between many different communities of young women

with or without Jordanian citizenship would enrich our understanding of the intersecting factors shaping different women's experiences with the nationality law. This could include women from diverse backgrounds, such as Palestinians in refugee camps, Palestinians in host communities, Syrian refugees, Syrian residents of Jordan before the civil war as well as Jordanian women from tribal communities, rural areas, urban centers, and those living outside of Jordan. Many of the same interview questions could be asked but for women without citizenship, a new study could investigate the extent to which these women's goals hinge on marrying non-Jordanians, their perceptions of their agency in partner selection, and the perceived constraints on their ability to be selective in marriage partners. Additionally, delving into different women's interpretations of the impact of the nationality law and its underlying intentions and justifications could provide crucial insights into how their socioeconomic and ethnic background might influence their perspective. Also, exploring different women's perspectives on their support for equal nationality rights and what is needed to achieve it would inform strategies for women's rights advocacy and policy reform. Also, it would be critical for future research to be solely conducted in Arabic which would ensure more inclusive participation and accurate representation of participants' voices and perspectives.

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Appendix

Informed Consent Form

Perceptions, Attitudes, and Behaviors of Unmarried Jordanian Women on their Second Class Citizenship

My name is Umulkair Mohamed and I am a student with the School for International Training Refugees, Health and Humanitarian Action program. I would like to invite you to participate in a study I am conducting as a partial fulfillment of my Study Abroad Program in Jordan. Your participation is voluntary. Please read the information below, and ask questions about anything you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and you will be given a copy of this form.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this exploratory study is to understand the attitudes and perceptions of unmarried Jordanian women on exclusively paternally derived Jordanian citizenship and how it may impact their behavior when looking for marriage projects.

STUDY PROCEDURES

Your participation will consist of completing a brief questionnaire on your demographic information and an interview and will require approximately an hour of your time. The interview can be held at the SIT office, online, or another private place of your choosing. For easy collection of information from your answers, the researcher would like to audio record the interview portion. If you are not comfortable with being audio recorded, the study can still proceed but please give me some time to write down your responses.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this study and no penalties should you choose not to participate; participation is voluntary. During the questionnaire or interview portions, you have the right not to answer any questions or to discontinue participation at any time. Potential discomforts could be discussing views on politics.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no direct anticipated benefits from your study participation to yourself or society.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. We will not collect and store any information such as your name, contact information, or address. The questionnaire demographic data will be used by the researcher to make comparisons between the interviews based on age, marital status, personal and familial citizenship status, educational attainment, and occupation, but will not be mentioned in the final paper. Except for a breakdown of participant ages, marital status, and personal and familial citizenship status in the participant section of the methodology. There will be no one besides myself who will have access to the questionnaire or interview audio recording data. The audio recording will be kept password-protected on a local computer until transcribed by the researcher and then erased. Any notes from the interview or written responses in case of no audio recording will be digitally transcribed and then shredded. Questionnaires will be digitally transcribed and the physical papers will be shredded. All transcribed data will be password protected on the researcher's local computer until the researcher's paper and presentation are completed and then will be erased from the computer. All transcribed data will be attributed to a number based on the order of participants, like 001, 002, 003, for organizational purposes. If the results of the research are published through SIT, no identifiable information will be used and a copy of the research can be sent to you if you wish.

Consent to Quote from Interview

I may wish to quote from the interview with you either in the presentations or articles resulting from this work. A pseudonym will be used in order to protect your identity.

Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

- () I agree to consent to quote from my interview
- () I do not agree to consent to quote from my interview

Consent to Audio-Record Interview

Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

- () I agree to consent to audio record an interview
- () I do not agree to consent to audio record an interview

RESEARCHER’S CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or want to get more information about this study, please contact me at umamohamed242@gmail.com or my advisor at bayan.abdulhaq@sit.edu.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION

In an endeavor to uphold the ethical standards of all SIT proposals, this study has been reviewed and approved by an SIT Study Abroad Local Review Board or SIT Institutional Review Board. If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your rights as a research participant or the research in general and are unable to contact the researcher please contact the Institutional Review Board at: *School for International Training, Institutional Review Board, 1 Kipling Road, PO Box 676, Brattleboro, VT 05302-0676, USA irb@sit.edu, 802-258-3132*

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your participation is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of your participation in this research study.

“I have read the above and I understand its contents and I agree to participate in the study. I acknowledge that I am 18 years of age or older.”

Participant’s signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher’s signature: _____ Date: _____

Questionnaire

Inclusion Criteria:

- Identifies as a woman

- Between the ages of 18-40
- Have Jordanian citizenship
- Proficient English Speaker

Personal Information

1. What is your gender?
2. What is your age?
3. What is your marital status?
 - a. Unmarried and not actively seeking out marriage
 - b. Unmarried and actively seeking out marriage
 - c. Engaged
 - d. Married
 - e. Divorced
 - f. Widowed
4. Do you have Jordanian citizenship currently?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
5. Do your parents have Jordanian citizenship currently?
 - a. Yes, both my parents do
 - b. No, only my mother does
 - c. No, only my father does
 - d. Neither of my parents has it
6. What is your religion?
 - a. Muslim
 - b. Christian
 - c. No religion

Education and Employment

1. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - a. No school
 - b. Primary (1st, 2nd, 3rd, grade)
 - c. Secondary (3rd-10th grade)
 - d. High School (no Tawjihi)
 - e. Tawjihi
 - f. College (2 years)
 - g. 4-year university
 - h. Masters degree
 - i. PhD
2. What is your occupation?

Interview Guide for Unmarried Women

Cognizance of second-class citizenship

1. What do you know about how Jordanian citizenship is acquired?
 - a. Are you aware that in Jordan's nationality law only gives men the ability to pass their citizenship to their child in all cases while women can only pass on their citizenship if the father is stateless or unknown?
 - i. If **yes**, when and how did you become aware that Jordanian citizenship is only paternally derived?
 - ii. If **not**, why do you think you were not aware of this?

Personal Attitude towards the law

1. How do you feel about the nationality law?
2. Do you feel like this law has any positive impact on your life? How?
3. Do you feel like this law has any negative impact on your life? How?
4. Do you think this law is fair and justified? If so, why not?

Perception of law's existence and the justifications used

1. What purpose do you think this law serves?
 - a. Why do you think equal nationality rights are not mandated in Jordan?
2. How do you think the existence of the nationality is justified within Jordan's legislation?

Perception of law's intentions

1. What effect do you perceive this law to have?
2. Who do you perceive this law to be intentionally targeting?
3. Do you think this law is the government trying to communicate something to young Jordanian women and their families?
 - i. If so, what do you think that is?
 - ii. Do you think the effect this law has is aligned with what is expected from unmarried women when it comes to marriage in Jordanian society?
4. On the other hand, do you perceive the purpose of this law to be intentionally targeting foreign-born men within Jordanian society?
 - a. Do you think this law is the government trying to communicate something to them too about marriage?
 - i. What else do you think the government is trying to communicate to them?

Society's reaction to this law

1. Are cross-national marriages in Jordan encouraged or frowned upon?
2. Do you think most people in Jordanian society agree or disagree with the nationality law being structured this way?
 - a. Why do you think this is the attitude of the people in Jordanian society?
3. Do you perceive this law to be challenged by people? If so, what types of people challenge it?

4. Do you perceive this law to be approved by people? If so, what types of people approve of it?

Effect of law on their behavior

1. Is this nationality law a cause for concern for you? If so, in what ways?
2. Does the existence of this nationality law have any effect on how you approach marriage?
3. Do you feel limited in whom you can consider as a potential for marriage because of this nationality law?
 - a. If not, why do you think you do not feel limited by this nationality law?
4. Do you feel like your family and parents keep this law in mind when it comes to their criteria for suitable husbands for women in your family?
 - a. If yes, how does that materialize in their outlook for marriage prospects?
 - b. If not, why does this law not come to mind when thinking of marriage prospects?

Desire/Efforts to change this law

1. Have you ever been a part of efforts to change this law or demand more rights for those affected by this law?
2. Would you be supportive of changing this law?
 - a. If so, what would you change it to?
3. Do you think it is likely that the government will allow equal nationality rights for women and men in the near future and if so why?
 - a. If not, why do you think the law won't change?
4. What efforts do you think need to be in place to change this law?

Interview Guide for Married Women

Cognizance of second-class citizenship

1. What do you know about how Jordanian citizenship is acquired?
 - a. When and how did you become aware that Jordanian citizenship is only paternally derived?
 - i. Were you aware before getting married?

Personal Attitude towards the law

1. How do you feel about the nationality law?
2. What is the impact of this law on you and your husband's lives?
 - a. Does it have a negative or positive impact on your lives?
3. Do you think this law is fair and justified? If so, why not?

Perception of law's existence and the justifications used

1. What purpose do you think this law serves?
 - a. Why do you think equal nationality rights are not mandated in Jordan?
2. How do you think the existence of the nationality is justified within Jordan's legislation?

Perception of law's intentions

1. What effect do you perceive this law to have?
2. Who do you perceive this law to be intentionally targeting?
3. Do you think this law is the government trying to communicate something to young Jordanian women and their families?
 - i. If so, what do you think that is?
 - ii. Do you think the effect this law has is aligned with what is expected from unmarried women when it comes to marriage in Jordanian society?
4. On the other hand, do you perceive the purpose of this law to be intentionally targeting foreign-born men within Jordanian society?
 - a. Do you think this law is the government trying to communicate something to them too about marriage?
 - i. What else do you think the government is trying to communicate to them?
5. How does this law impact you as a woman married to a non-Jordanian?

Society's reaction to this law

1. Are cross-national marriages in Jordan encouraged or frowned upon?
 - a. What has been your experience with people and families' reactions to your marriage?
2. Do you think most people in Jordanian society agree or disagree with the nationality law being structured this way?
 - a. Why do you think this is the attitude of the people in Jordanian society?
3. Do you perceive this law to be challenged by people? If so, what types of people challenge it?
4. Do you perceive this law to be approved by people? If so, what types of people approve of it?

Effect of law on their behavior

1. Is this nationality law a cause for concern for you? If so, in what ways?
2. Did the existence of this nationality law have any effect on how you approached marriage?
3. Did you feel limited in whom you could consider for marriage because of this nationality law?
 - a. If not, why do you think you do not feel limited by this nationality law?
4. Do you feel like your family and parents kept this law in mind when it came to your marriage to a non-Jordanian?
 - a. If yes, how does that materialize in their outlook on your marriage?
 - b. If not, why does this law not come to mind when thinking of marriage prospects?

Desire/Efforts to change this law

1. Have you ever been a part of efforts to change this law or demand more rights for those affected by this law?
2. Would you be supportive of changing this law?
 - a. If so, what would you change it to?
3. Do you think it is likely that the government will allow equal nationality rights for women and men in the near future and if so why?
 - a. If not, why do you think the law won't change?
4. What efforts do you think need to be in place to change this law?

Observation Sheet

Setting and Participant ID:	ID: Date: Time: Location:
Signed Informed Consent:	
Completed Questionnaire and Meet Inclusion Criteria:	
Did agree to Recording, if not transcribe:	
Any questions unwilling to answer:	
Behavioral Observations:	
Any observed visible or expressed discomfort and what is question:	
Any observed lack of demonstrated focus or active listening:	
Engagement Level:	
Overall Summary:	