NO REDRESS? INVESTIGATING WIFE ABUSE
THROUGH THE LENS OF FEMINIST THEORY AND RESOURCE THEORY IN JORDAN

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PhD

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Women's Studies

October 2015

Abstract

This research investigates wife abuse in Jordan. Several studies have been conducted on this phenomenon in Jordanian culture. Yet, the effect of particular nushuz-related aspects of the law, as promoting specific forms of violence, on women's experiencing wife abuse, the effect of family intervention on women's reporting wife abuse, in addition to the effect of Muslim clerics' assistance on women's reporting wife abuse are aspects of wife abuse that have not been addressed. In dealing with these issues, I draw on resource theory, feminist theory, and the empirical data I gathered from interviewing Jordanian abused women and lawyers specialized in wife abuse issues in Jordan in 2012.

Empirically, a qualitative approach was utilized to explore the reported experiences of the women. This included semi-structured interviews, in a few cases questionnaires and legal records I accessed after contacting lawyers specialized in resolving wife abuse-related issues in Jordan. Interviews are rarely conducted in Jordan because wife abuse victims are hard to reach and because interviewing is regarded as intruding into the personal sphere which is protected by law. I address four key issues in my thesis: a) the forms of wife abuse that were reported by my research participants; b) the cultural acceptability of wife abuse in the light of the participating abused women's parents' intervention to stop this phenomenon; c) the legitimizing of wife abuse in Islam and the role that Muslim clergy play in combating wife abuse as reported by my research participants; and d) the role of lawyers in assisting the women who took part in my research.

Physical violence was the most reported form of wife abuse among my participants in Jordan. The second most reported form of wife abuse was verbal abuse, emotional abuse the third, and financial abuse the least reported. I highlight a particular form of wife abuse that is not often investigated in western and non-western research on wife abuse which is in-law-perpetrated violence. I also argue that consulting religious clerics is not an effective measure to stop wife abuse. After exploring the effects of the predominant patriarchal cultural values in Jordanian society that legitimize and maintain wife abuse, I argue that the Islamic values that prohibit wife abuse must be reinforced by legislation that criminalizes wife abuse and penalizes its perpetrators. Finally, this research stresses the necessity to modify the provisions of the Jordanian Law of Personal Status[1] as the ambiguity of its provisions caused some of my research participants to experience law-enforced abuse.

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[1] See Appendix 1 on the content of the Jordanian Law of Personal Status.

List of Contents

List of Tables

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the women who courageously challenged the prevailing norms governing gender relations in Jordan and took part in my research. I would also like to thank my family: my late grandfather, my parents, aunts, cousins and friends who surrounded me with love and encouraged me throughout the past three years. Although my words do not seem to be enough in terms of showing how grateful I am, but thank you late grandfather for making the dream of my life to come back to the UK come true. Thank you my late grandmother; for wishing me the best of luck before I left Jordan and for thinking of me always. I promise I will always try my best.

Mom, you always had faith in me, taught me how important it is to be persistent and patient, which definitely was a tough job for you, knowing the quick-tempered person that I am, and most importantly taught me how to be organized. Although I hated having to make my bed before going to school every day, I must admit that being forced to clean my room finally became a habit of mine and that came in handy. Thank you for all your prayers and love. Dad, thank you very much for your support. I appreciate every single thing you did to help me when I was facing issues related to my scholarship. And to my role model, Dr. Ibrahim Sbeih, the brilliant neurosurgeon and most kind-hearted soul in the world, I hope I lived up to your expectations when you told me before I left Jordan: 'You are like a daughter to me and my daughter, referring to me, can always do whatever she puts her mind to'.

I owe a great deal to my supervisor Professor Gabriele Griffin, whose encouragement, punctuality, valuable academic comments and expertise guided me and enlightened me

Author's Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning. I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. All sources are acknowledged as References.

Chapter 1: Introduction

> After visiting the religious courts for over two years, Umm Samira, 33, who lives in Amman, gave up the custody of her children in June 2009, and agreed to marry the first man who proposed. Her decision was the result of a long and fruitless journey within the judicial system, in an attempt to gain a measly support payment of no more than JD 205 per month (1JD=$1.5) from her ex-husband, to assist in supporting her and her four children (UNESCO, 2012: 42).

This thesis examines a group of abused Jordanian women's understanding of and response to wife abuse in order to analyse the complexity of these women's status in Jordanian culture and its legal system. In its main analysis chapters, this thesis investigates the forms of wife abuse that my research participants experienced (Chapter Four), and the forms of assistance that these women received from their families in addition to the reasons why some of these women did not receive any support from their families (Chapter Five). In Chapter Five, I focus on investigating the underlying cultural ideologies governing the marital relationships of women like my research participants that render these women second-class subjects in comparison to their male counterparts in patriarchal societies such as Jordan (Haj-Yahia, 2002; Sonbol, 2003; Becknell, 2005; Haddad, Shotar, Younger et al., 2011). In Chapter Six, the particularity of the needs of the Jordanian women who participated in my research will be revealed through the investigation of two aspects related to wife abuse: clerical intervention to stop wife abuse, and the emancipatory provisions of international organizations such as CEDAW that have become embedded in the Jordanian Personal Status Law in an attempt to combat all forms of gender-based

discrimination against women. One of the most recent publications on this matter is Al-Moussa's (2009) *Using CEDAW in the Jordanian Legal System: A Handbook for Practitioners*, a book that I was able to get hold of during my visit to a legal firm during my first fieldwork trip to Jordan in May 2012. I am also concerned with investigating the effects of western feminists' efforts related to combating wife abuse on a non-western country such as Jordan where such abuse continues to be a serious issue. The main analysis chapters thus focus primarily on the cultural, religious and legal facets of wife abuse. These chapters address my main research question: What do Jordanian women who took part in this research and have been victims of wife abuse say about their experiences? In order to address this question, taking into consideration the cultural, religious and legal aspects of my interviewees' wife abuse experiences, four secondary research questions were addressed. Chapter Four focuses on answering the secondary question 'What is the nature of the forms of wife abuse that my research participants experienced?' Chapter Five centres on answering the question, 'In what ways did the participating women's families assist them to put an end to their wife abuse experiences?' Chapter Six then focuses on answering the questions, 'What are the nature of and limitations to the forms of assistance that the participating women received from the Muslim Clerics whom they consulted?', and 'What are the nature of and limitations to the forms of assistance that the participating women received from the lawyers whom they consulted?'.

For the purpose of addressing the first, second and third secondary questions above, I interviewed wife abuse victims. In relation to the fourth secondary

question, I spoke to lawyers and explored wife abuse laws and regulations provided by a legal aid agency as well as complaints against abusive husbands that had been filed by their wives at court.

Up until my arrival in the UK in October 2011, I used to think that being personally concerned about improving the status of abused wives in Jordan was a strong enough reason for my thesis. However, I found that this was not the only motive that triggered my concern to investigate wife abuse in Jordan. Actually, it was a visit I paid to a male friend of mine in the UK who originally comes from Jordan. He made me aware of the importance of enlightening Jordanian people about the rights of wives in Islam and the realities regarding wife abuse. My friend was doing a PhD in law. On the day of my visit, he and his housemate invited a few friends, who were all of Arab background, over. We had a chat during which we introduced ourselves to one another, and started talking about the reasons why we had come to the UK and what our subjects were. When it was my turn, I told everyone that I was doing a PhD in Women's Studies. To my surprise, none of them understood what Women's Studies actually meant. So, I explained to them that one of the focal points of Women's Studies is the exploration of gender roles or, in other words, how people interpret differences between men and women as defining of women's and men's culturally accepted roles at home and in the workplace (Haj-Yahi, 2002). I added that in my research I would focus on wife abuse in Jordan.

Suddenly, there was a moment of silence during which I realized that I was the only one who was not a 'man' in the flat. Then, one of the men broke the silence and said he thought the notion of 'gender roles' was interesting, bearing in mind all the alarming stories about wife abuse and inequality that are heard of in Jordan. He said that all human beings should be treated equally, be they men or women. However, what another man said about women made me very angry and disappointed. He actually believed that women were inferior to their male counterparts, and that only men should be given the chance to travel abroad for education. To him, men were created physically and intellectually superior to women and this made it utter nonsense for women to participate in the public sphere and 'try to' compete with men for key positions. He defended his belief in men's superiority by reciting verse 34 of surat Al Nisāa which states:

> Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard. As to those women on whose part you fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (next) do not share their beds, (and last) beat (tap) them (lightly); but if they return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance): for Allah is Most High, Great (above you all). (Ibn Kammuna, 2009: n.p.)

He explained that God had appointed men to be the 'protectors' of women because God had created men 'more' capable of handling intellectual and physical tasks. He literally said that women were therefore 'lacking', adding that young Jordanian women should not be given the chance to travel abroad for education because their 'lacking nature' might lead to possible 'misbehaviour' which would bring 'shame' on their families. I then could not help but interrupt him to ask furiously: 'Couldn't young men misbehave as well?' To my surprise,

4

the decent, calm, open-minded man I had imagined him to be turned out to be quite the opposite. He was not even willing to listen to any explanation of why women should be granted equal rights to education. He then justified his standpoint saying: 'If a woman's virginity is lost, that may damage the reputation of her whole family. Yet, when it comes to men, nobody questions their virginity. I mean their being virgins or not would not show.' To top it all, he denied that many women are beaten and abused physically and emotionally. He honestly believed that no man in Jordan beats his wife unless 'she' has done something damning both religiously and culturally, such as having an extramarital affair. His last words made me so angry that I could not sleep that night, and I decided that my thesis had to wake him and many others up to the horrifying reality of women's situation in Jordan.

In order for my thesis to achieve this goal in the light of the focal points of its main discussion chapters explained above, I investigate wife abuse from a socio-cultural perspective. I draw on resource theory, feminist theory and the empirical data I gathered from interviewing Jordanian abused women and lawyers specialized in wife abuse issues in Jordan. To begin, I shall analyse Jordanian women's status in their culture, and particularly the status of my research participants, utilizing resource theory. This states that intimate partner relationships and family bonds are based on power dynamics (Cromwell and Olson, 1975), and that family power operates on three levels: power resources, power processes and power outcomes (Cromwell and Olson, 1975; McDonald, 1980). Power resources include financial possessions (Cromwell and Olson,

1975). Cromwell and Olson define power processes as the means of interaction and communication within the family that allow a certain member to achieve his desired goals, and power outcomes as the intended goals the individual aims to realize within the family (Cromwell and Olson, 1975; Jory and Yodanis, 2010). The premises of resource theory entail that the less access to power resources a woman has, the more likely it is for her to be unable to get out of an abusive relationship (Gharaibeh and Oweis, 2009).

In this thesis, organizational interventions to stop wife abuse affecting women with limited access to educational and financial resources and to help such women reclaim their rights will be investigated. Despite the fact that 'Arab feminism had a different history of development from those of America and Europe' (Darraj, 2002: n.p.), western feminists' emancipatory efforts have been reflected in the provisions of international organizations in terms of supporting abused women and resulted in the awakening of local personnel in Arab countries including Jordan to the importance of combating wife abuse (Al-Moussa, 2009). In this respect, the researchers who have investigated the views of third-wave western feminism in relation to the liberation of women, and particularly in relation to human rights, fall under two categories. While the first category argues that western feminism is constantly developing towards the acknowledgement of the difference and diversity among women in terms of their needs and experiences, the second continues to view the approach of some western feminists to addressing women's issues as mono-centric (i.e. eurocentric).

For instance, Offenhauer (2005) has a positive view of western feminism.

Offenhauer argues that secular 'feminists now recognize value in the other camp's

preoccupation with providing woman-friendly "rereading" of Islam's sacred texts.

Justifying feminist activism in Islamic terms shields feminist demands from the

charge that they are alien Western impositions' (Offenhauer, 2005: 4). Spegele

(2014) argues that feminist 'emancipatory postmodern theory aims to emancipate

women not by seeking a unitary absolute or transcendental truth but by

subverting, displacing, disrupting and transgressing all dichotomies, normalizings,

unities and totalities' (Spegele, 2014: 18). Spegele adds that feminist

'emancipatory postmodern theory shifts *away* from any modernist feminist

epistemology which presupposes the need for foundations or some sort of fixity

for the identity of "woman" to a discourse which sees the "female" subject as

variably and multitudinously constituted' (Spegele, 2014: 18). Spegele stresses

that feminist postmodern values offer 'sites for resistance to non-western women

and, in particular, to women who are marginalized and whose voices as stifled by

masculinist and heterosexual codings of one kind or another' (Spegele, 2014: 18).

However, scholars such as Parpart (1993), Bunting (1993) and Malik (2010)

continue to view some values of postmodern western feminism as

misrepresentations of non-western women. Malik (2010) proposes that some

> 'Western feminists' are attacked for assuming that the path they took in
> their struggles ought to be replicated by other women across the world and
> for neglecting the fact that these women, who have different histories,
> different circumstances, and differently structured desires may choose to
> define their future in different ways and through different frameworks
> (Malik, 2010: n.p.).

Parpart (1993) argues that many scholars and activists concerned with issues related to Third World women have critiqued some postmodern western feminists for misprepresenting non-western women (Parpart, 1993). In relation to issues concerning Arab Muslim women, for instance, Parpart (1993) maintains that because of the approach of some western third-wave feminists, 'Arab women are presented as passive pawns, trapped in a world dominated by hopelessly outdated and retrogressive religious traditions' (Parpart, 1993: 444-5). These western postmodern feminists' misrepresentations of Arab women are also reflected in the 'universal' approaches of international human rights organizations. Bunting (1993) proposes that in some instances, 'the strategic implementation of universal human rights' by international organizations that deal with women's issues 'suppresses and devalues cultural diversity' (Bunting, 1993: 10).

Acknowledging the relationship between women's liberation and wearing the veil is another matter that highlights the importance of acknowledging women's cultural diversity. The clashing views of some third-wave western feminists such as Turner (2008) and Muslim feminists such as El Guindi (1999) around the relationship between wearing the veil and Muslim women's liberation clearly reveal that women's needs and demands are diverse and cannot be universalized. The investigation of veiling, a common practice in Muslim cultures, exposes the misrepresentations of some western feminists such as Turner (2008) and Lemon (1995) of women's reality in Arab Muslim cultures. Veiling is supported by many Arab Muslim feminists such as Leila Hessini, but is considered to limit the freedom of women and mirror their state of oppression from the perspective of

some western feminists (*Encyclopedia of Women in Today's World*, 2011).

Hessini (1994) acknowledges the importance of veiling and separation between men and women in Arab societies such as the Morroccan one, and suggests that such practices contribute to the empowering of women in Arab Islamic cultures by allowing them a greater chance to access and participate in the public sphere. Hessini (1994), quoted by Cole (1994), states that in a conservative society such as Morocco, 'Women can enter men's public space only by remaining shielded in their private space.' Cole (1994) clarifies this double, seemingly contradictory role of the veil in modern Arab Muslim societies. While the veil could be conceived of as a tool of segregation, Cole argues it is simultaneously a means of emancipation (Cole, 1994: 27). That is, although the veil physically covers women's bodies and segregates women from men, which might be considered as a form of oppression especially in western cultures, it serves to reinforce women's emanicipation by increasing their taking part in the public realm that would be otherwise entirely restricted to men:

> Veiling is one way for women to redifferentiate social space, even in the new, mixed-gender environment, a way of recovering their privacy even in public and of refusing to become a spectacle. From the point of view of these Moroccan conservatives, veiling helps protect women from sexual harassment and strengthens the public moral code (Cole, 1994: 27).

For some western feminists, failing to acknowledge the necessity to wear the veil in order to liberate oppressed Arab Muslim women and increase their productive participation on the social level reflects the fact that the demands of feminisms from other cultures, such as the Arab culture in general and the Jordanian culture in particular, are not really known to all western feminists.

Although third-wave feminists acknowledge the differences that exist within the category of 'woman' (Young, 1994; Davis, 2008; Snyder, 2008), including differences related to class, race, age, sexuality and location (Mookherjee, 2009), some third-wave western feminists' writings do not reflect their understanding and acknowledgement of the particularities [2] related to their non-western counterparts (Booth, 2007). Drawing on the views of Grewal (1999) and Razak (2008), Reilly (2011) argues that religion is 'frequently implicated in endorsing subordinate roles for women relative to men and/or harmful cultural practices' (Reilly, 2011: 20). In this respect, Reilly (2011) argues that much 'criticism has been levelled against' some third-wave western feminists who tend to 'view religion primarily as a threat' (Reilly, 2011: 20) to women's liberation, reflecting 'western-centric' rather than intersectional[3] and transnational [4] thought.

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[2] The cultural particularities surrounding women (Cole, 1994; Hessini, 1994; Al Maaitah, Oweis, Olimat et al., 2012; Bibars, n.d.) render their needs diverse rather than unified. Despite western feminists' attempts to address not only issues that are related to western women but also issues that concern non-western women (Young, 1994; Offenhauer, 2005; Davis, 2008; Snyder, 2008; Acar, n.d.; Mookherjee, 2009; Maral-Hanak, 2009; Spegele, 2014), some researchers and Muslim feminists continue to critique the misrepresentation of and exclusion of non-western women from the discourse of western feminists (Ahmed, 1992; Parpart, 1993; Bunting, 1993; Ghadbian, 1994; Grewal, 1999; Darraj, 2002; Booth, 2007; Razak, 2008; Malik, 2010; Reilly, 2011; Al Jabiri, 2012). Non-western women's exclusion has also been critiqued by feminists of colour (e.g. Irigaray, 1980 and hooks, 1986), and post-modern Arab feminists (Kahf, 2000; El Guindi, 2005; Amireh and Majaj, 2012).

[3] "Intersectionality" refers to the 'interaction between gender, race, and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power' (Davis, 2008: 68).
[4] 'Relying on concepts of feminist postcolonialism on representation, diversity and coalition-building, some feminist scholars from Africa, Asia and Latin America have used the term 'transnational feminism' to describe their vision of an autonomous feminist practice (for example, Grewal 1999). These authors differentiate 'transnational feminism' from 'global feminism', a term that is used to denote universalism and Western Hegemony in feminist discourses on development. . . Transnational feminisms, in contrast, are conceptualized as a plurality of non-Western, independent feminisms, represented through autonomous women's movements and feminist thought in Africa, Asia and Latin America'. The main aim of transnational feminists is to avoid 'the instrumentalism and Western dominance of mainstream development discourse' (Maral-Hanak, 2009: 109).

Arab women in postmodern times continue to be misrepresented not only by western men but also by some western women as seeking to obtain the same goals and rights as do western feminists (Amireh and Majaj, 2012). Instead Amireh and Majaj (2012) stress the importance of paying attention to the particularity of women's needs in the light of their ethnicity, cultural background, social class, financial status and education. In the context of human rights, Reilly (2011) echoes the views of Grewal (1999). Reilly (2011) considers the issue of misrepresenting non-western women's needs from some white western feminists' perspectives as an aspect of the marginalization of Third World women including Arab Muslim women. Reilly, drawing on the views of Grewal (1999), argues that women's human rights activism perpetuates earlier 'global sisterhood discourses' (Reilly, 2011: 65). Crowley (1991) argues that unifying western and non-western needs and demands renders non-western women silenced and their issues unaddressed. This contributes negatively to the status of non-western women and reinforces their oppression.

El Guindi (2005) proposes that feminism is influenced and shaped by culture. The needs and demands of women vary, she argues, in accordance with their cultural background. For instance, Jordanian abused women are in dire need of social security in order to facilitate their escaping abusive marriages (Bibars, n.d.). This is an issue that the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), viewed as echoing the liberating egalitarian values of western feminism (Acar, n.d.), fails to address. And since Jordan is a signatory to the provisions of CEDAW since 1980 (Naffa, Dabbas, Jabiri et al., 2007), the

Jordanian legislator is supposed to be responsible for the implementation of its provisions.

In my exploration of how lawyers help victims of wife abuse, I will focus on how western CEDAW provisions that are presumably directed towards the establishment of equality between spouses in the private sphere around the globe and the ending of women's oppression through wife abuse worldwide reflect notions of a false sisterhood (Kahf, 2000). Al Jabiri (2012) explains the clash between the supposedly transnational provisions of CEDAW and the views of national Islamic authorities: '... the Juristic Islamic Rulings Department (Al Ifta'), a public department, declared that it opposes the Convention because it contradicts Islam and Jordan must renounce being a party to it' (Al Jabiri, 2012: 5-6). Thus, such provisions marginalize Arab women from the agenda of western feminism, placing abused Arab women in a state of double seclusion from the prevalent patriarchal ideologies (Becknell, 2005) and the so-called liberating views of western feminism (Crowley, 1991).

Al-Moussa (2009) argues that the provisions of international organizations defending women's rights such as CEDAW derive their position from the views of western feminism, thus primarily focusing on the emancipation of women through the application of western feminists' views. Such organizations, however, overlook the fact that the particularity of women's needs in a given society such as Jordan may prevent them from benefitting from the liberating efforts of western organizations. Jordanian women's lack of resources (Al Maaitah, Oweis,

Olimat et al., 2012), governmental institutional leniency towards perpetrators of wife abuse (The United Nations, 2006) and the absence of governmental financial support for the victims of wife abuse in Jordan (Al-Badayneh, 2012) rob such internationally uniform provisions of their efficacy to improve Jordanian women's status. Governmental leniency in the enforcement of preventive measures against wife abuse appears in article 304 of the Jordan Penal Code which states: 'A husband or a close blood relative who kills a woman caught in a situation highly suspicious of adultery will be totally exempt from sentencing' (Wasti, 2010: 403). The United Nations report (2006), by contrast to CEDAW, addresses the issue of state leniency in Jordan as an important aspect of wife abuse that serves to increase the risk of wife abuse:

> When the State fails to hold the perpetrators of violence accountable, this not only encourages further abuses, it also gives the message that male violence against women is acceptable or normal. The result of such impunity is not only denial of justice to the individual victims/survivors, but also reinforcement of prevailing inequalities that affect other women and girls as well (United Nations, 2006: iv-v).

Moreover, the role of international organizations specialized in combating discrimination and violence against women is not only to propose but also monitor the implementation of laws and regulations that focus on eliminating all forms of inequality that women might encounter worldwide (The United Nations Department of Public Information, 1996). Yet, CEDAW's failing to monitor the implementation of its recommendations that are embedded in the Jordanian Penal Code and Law of Personal Status, I would argue, is a reflection of the leniency of international organizations towards the implementation of international anti-discriminatory laws against women.

13

Another issue that reinforces wife abuse in Jordan that CEDAW fails to address is the issue of financial support. In Jordan, for instance, the only financial support an abused woman receives is alimony money which is often inadequate (Sonbol, 2003; UNESCO, 2012). In the UK, in contrast, victims of wife abuse are not necessarily hindered by their limited financial resources when attempting to leave an abusive marriage. Unlike Jordanian women, abused women in the UK may receive governmental financial support in terms of a variety of benefits until they enter the paid labour force. This enables such women to escape their violent relationships more easily than their Jordanian counterparts (O'Donnell, 2008).

Additional financial resources for abused Jordanian women, especially on the event of marriage annulment, are not suggested by the provisions of CEDAW. This makes it difficult for wife abuse victims to leave their abusive husbands. My concern in this thesis is to highlight the issues and circumstances related to a particular group of women in Jordan who have experienced abuse themselves. The richness of this project lies in its focus on these women's accounts of their horrifying experiences that are normally either kept secret within Jordanian homes (Haj-Yahia, 2002) or over-simplified in governmental research as 'cases' (United Nations Population Fund, 2008). In this chapter, I provided an introduction to my research. The second chapter offers a review of the literature on wife abuse. After that, I discuss the methodological approach I took in order to investigate the experiences of a group of women in relation to wife abuse in Jordan in Chapter Three. In the fourth chapter, I explore the forms of wife abuse that have been reported by my interviewees. In Chapter Five, these women's parental

intervention experiences when they attempted to escape their abusive marriages are explored. I focus on investigating the impact of the gendered socio-cultural values that shape the position of women in relation to their male counterparts in Jordan on the effectiveness of the participating women's parents' intervention to stop wife abuse.

From an Islamic feminist lens, I intend to show in this research that although the Islamic values that are prevalent in Muslim countries such as Jordan forbid wife abuse, as the Muslim clerics my research participants consulted made clear, the patriarchal cultural values that support women's subordination to men continue to have a greater impact on Jordanian socio-cultural structure and the legal system. The focal point I highlight throughout my research is that the clash between counter-violence Islamic values and pro-wife-abuse patriarchal values often results in discrimination and oppression being imposed upon abused Jordanian women such as my research participants. This discrimination and oppression is reflected in the wife-abuse-related laws implemented in Jordan. That is, while supposedly being centred on the values of Islam that support abused women's right to violence-free lives, wife-abuse-related laws in Jordan and particularly the civil Jordanian Law of Personal Status rob Islamic values of their power to fight wife abuse. Finally, the seventh chapter concludes the thesis. It presents the main findings of my research, and pinpoints the research limitations and implications. It also provides some recommendations for future research in the field of wife abuse.

The recurrent key terms in this thesis are: domestic violence, wife abuse victims, Shari'a and divorce or talaq in Islam. As for domestic violence, the term stands for various forms of aggression between family members at large and is not solely restricted to couples or spouses involved in intimate relationships. Domestic violence includes wife abuse (Dobash and Dobash, 1992; Latham, 2009) and other forms of aggressive behaviour within the family such as child abuse (Perry and DiLillo, 2007), elder abuse (Chalk and King, 1998), honour-based violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, domestic abuse within gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender relationships, stalking and domestic violence against men (NHS Barking and Dagenham, 2013). Therefore the terms 'domestic violence' and 'wife abuse' must not be used interchangeably.

From a legal standpoint, Latham (2009) defines domestic violence as a criminal action. In his words, it is 'abuse committed against an adult or a minor who is a spouse, former spouse, cohabitant, former cohabitant, or person with whom the suspect has had a child, or is having or has had a dating or engagement relationship' (Latham, 2009: 39). He further defines the term 'abuse' as 'intentionally or recklessly causing or attempting to cause bodily injury, or placing another person in reasonable apprehension of imminent serious bodily injury to himself, herself, or another' (Latham, 2009: 39). Latham's (2009) definition of domestic violence echoes the UK Home Office's (2013) definition of domestic violence which includes: 'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members

regardless of gender or sexuality.' (UK Home Office, 2013: 2.) However, the

provisions of the Protection against Domestic Violence Law (2008) abided by in

Jordan limit the definition of domestic violence to abusive actions within

heterosexual marriages which are legally and religiously binding. This does not

include cohabitation as in the case of the UK Home Office's definition of

domestic violence (2013). Article (3) of the Protection against Domestic Violence

Law in the Jordanian constitution (2008) states: 'The following words and phrases

are to be used in accordance with the definitions specified hereunder unless

proven to indicate otherwise: Members of the family are the husband and wife

who must be joined in holy matrimony, their children and their grandchildren'

(Mizan Law Firm, 2008: n.p.).

The second term to be defined in this thesis is 'wife abuse victims'. Dunn (2005)

argues that the term used to describe the status of women who have experienced

wife abuse could be either 'victims' or 'survivors'. The choice between the terms

depends on whether the woman who has experienced wife abuse took

counteraction to end her abusive relationship or not:

> Early images of battered women as (mostly) 'victims' and more recent
> images of battered women as 'survivors' are very different ideal types. To
> the extent that victims are presented as trapped, and survivors, conversely,
> are shown as making choices, they are constructed in ways that place them
> at opposite poles of an agency continuum. The resulting discursive
> dichotomy influences people in several important social problem arenas…
> and in many of these, the latter representation has come to be preferred
> (Dunn, 2005: 2).

The women who participated in this research will be referred to as wife abuse

'victims' rather than survivors because although they consulted professional

institutions and organizations in order to escape their violent marriages, they were still oppressed by cultural values and legal provisions that limited the effectiveness of their family members' efforts to assist them, and limited the assistance efforts of the Muslim clergy and lawyers whom they consulted.

As for the third term that is to be defined, it is the concept of Shari'a in Islam. Shari'a stands for the implementation of the Quranic and Prophet Mohammad's teachings and views that are carried out by four Sunni schools, all of which attempt to abide by God's will despite the differences that exist amongst the beliefs of the schools. The legislations and verdicts of Shari'a Courts in Jordan derive their essence from the teachings of these four schools:

> the Sharia Courts shall in the exercise of their jurisdiction apply the provisions of Sharia law. Therefore the proposed draft personal status law uses the Sharia as its framework but does not conform to one school of fiqh, rather it applies ijtihad[5] in an effort to find the most appropriate, just and applicable laws for today's world (Jordan Economic and Social Council, 2010: 1).

In Sharia courts, marital dissolution is referred to as talaq. It may be a process of over-simplification to say that talaq is equivalent to divorce or marriage annulment. In fact, the word entails the implementation of a complex set of procedures depending on the type of talaq in question. The term divorce or 'Talaq', as Bilal Abu Aisha (2003) points out, is the act of 'setting free' in the Arabic language, which in Islam stands for the annulment of the marriage contract

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[5] In general usage, the Arabic word ijtihad is defined literally as 'striving, exerting' and, in the jurisprudential sense, 'the capacity for making deduction in matters of law in cases to which no express text or rule already determined by Ijma (consensus) is applicable'. However, it has also been described as 'rethinking'. Commonly known as 'independent reasoning' (Falahi, n.d.: 2).

as confirmed in the plain declaration: 'I hereby divorce you!' or indirectly, by saying, 'I hereby consider you unlawful to me!' (Abu Aisha, 2003: n.p.).

After this verbal declaration of divorce, marriage annulment takes place either under the category of 'Al Talaq Al Bid'I' or 'Al Talaq Al Sunni'. According to Sharif Abdul Azim (2007), 'Al Talaq Al Bid'I' occurs when the husband divorces his wife with whom he has had sexual interaction after the last menstruation or postnatal bleeding or when the utterance of divorce is repeated three times in one sitting, whereas 'Al Talaq Al Sunni' takes place when the husband divorces his wife and has not had sexual interaction with her after the last menstruation or postnatal bleeding. 'Al Talaq Al Sunni' is further divided into two types: 'Al Talaq Al Raji' or revocable divorce and 'Al Talaq Al Bain' or irrevocable divorce. Jamila Hussain (2004) states that the former is revocable because the husband, after having uttered the divorce words once or twice, may return to his wife during 'iddah', the period of waiting in which the wife is not allowed to get married to another man. The 'iddah' may last for three months. However, if the divorced wife is pregnant, then she must wait until she delivers her child (Hussain, 2004). This restriction springs from the need to determine the fetus's right to paternal custody, financial support and inheritance in the case of pregnancy, and allows the former spouses to reconsider their decision. Jamal Nasir (1990) states:

> The revocable repudiation, which is usually the rule, does not dissolve marriage until the period of iddat is completed. At any time during this period, the husband has the option to revoke the pronouncement either expressly by word of mouth or implicitly by resuming marital relations,

19

without the necessity of a new contract or a new dower, and without even the consent of the wife (Nasir, 1990: 120).

However, irrevocable divorce happens when the husband has uttered the divorce-marking words in three different sittings. This type prohibits the former spouses' reunion unless the wife marries another man and their marriage is terminated.

In the light of the forms of divorce defined above, one might assume that Islam supports male dominance by restricting the right to break the marriage contract to the husband, allowing him thus to exercise control over his wife. However, in Islam the wife can also annul the marriage through what is known as 'khulu', as women in Islam are in theory considered men's equals rather than their slaves (Engineer, 2004). 'Khulu' gives the wife the right to put an end to the marriage contract if the husband refuses to consent to her plea to divorce, provided that she is exposed to 'legal cruelty' or what is referred to as 'darar' in Islam. Engineer defines the Islamic principle of 'darar' as:

> The inability or unwillingness of the husband to consummate the marriage on account of life imprisonment, mutilation or sentence of death . . . Not only that; if the man becomes unable to fulfill his marital obligation, such as providing shelter and maintenance, the woman may be entitled to 'Khula' (2004: 164).

Al-Mughni (2009) further adds wife abuse, whether causing 'physical or moral injury', to the types of 'darar' that legitimate marriage annulment through 'Khulu' (Al-Mughni, 2009: 9).

Until the year 2010, the implementation of divorce or 'Khulu' in the case of wife abuse in Jordan was subject to the provisions of Shari'a law (Jordan Economic

and Social Council, 2010). However, women's right to Khulu was amended by

the 2010 Personal Status Law (CEDAW, 2011). Thus, most of the women

interviewed in this research had to abide by the provisions of the new Personal

Status law in which the Khulu law 'that was passed as a temporary law in

December 2001 and that allowed for women to file for divorce without providing

any justification, but return money or jewelry given to them by their husbands

before the wedding and forsake any right to alimony' was no longer valid

(CEDAW, 2011: 6). This amendment was claimed to be protective of women's

interests. The amendment was justified on the grounds that a woman demanding

Khulu is forced to return the dowry paid by the husband. And since Jordanian

women lack financial resources (Al-Badayneh, 2012), denying a woman the right

to file for Khulu, the Jordanian legislator claimed, would save the woman in

question further potential financial burdens in the event of marriage annulment.

Yet, I consider this amendment as a form of bias that facilitates Jordanian abused

women's exposure to legally enforced violence. I pinpoint a particular form of

legally enforced violence that Jordanian abused women are subject to under the

adjusted Jordanian Law of Personal Status in 2010 in Chapter Four, and critique

the Jordanian Law of Personal Status in 2010 for reinforcing gendered bias rather

than equality between men and women in Jordan in Chapter Six.

While investigating marriage annulment in the light of the provisions of CEDAW

in the event of wife abuse in Chapter Six, I focus primarily on the complex

limitations, hindrances and obstacles that my sample of abused women were

exposed to not only by the Jordanian legislation but also the prevailing cultural

patriarchal values (Haddad et al., 2011) and the measures of western NGOs that claim to be concerned with the wellbeing of women worldwide regardless of their background. The abused women who took part in this research experienced 'double alienation' (Ghadbian, 1994) when acting in accordance with the assumed egalitarian provisions of the Jordanian Law of Personal Status and CEDAW because such provisions do not take the particularity of the prevailing Islamic values and the limitations that restrict women's emancipation into account (Ahmed, 1992).

In this introductory chapter, I have highlighted some of the specificities of the cultural, religious and legal restrictions that govern abused women's lives in Jordan. Due to the recent history of feminist research on wife abuse in Jordan (Becknell, 2005), this chapter has also drawn on research conducted in the US and the UK. In the following chapter, I present my literature review.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature reviewed in this chapter provides an overview of research relevant to wife abuse in Jordan. It covers research that has been conducted in western countries such as the UK and the US and non-western countries including Arab Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan from the 1970s, when wife abuse and intimate partner violence against women emerged as an issue in the west (Kelly and Johnson, 2008; Sun, Su and Wu, 2011). The aim behind reviewing literature on wife abuse in western and non-western countries is to highlight the particularity of wife abuse in Jordan and the shortage of research available on certain aspects of wife abuse in that country. This review is therefore divided into eight sections. The first section highlights the definitions and forms of domestic violence, including wife abuse, in both western and non-western countries. The second section engages with the discussion of particular forms of wife abuse that are found in non-western cultures. The third section discusses the prevalence and forms of wife abuse in Jordan. The fourth section reviews the research on the factors that affect the occurrence of wife abuse. In order to address the factors that affect the occurrence of wife abuse globally, and in non-western countries, the fourth section is subdivided into two subsections. The subsection on non-western countries focuses on culture, honour, religion and law as key factors here. The fifth section reviews research that has been conducted to investigate the theoretical frameworks related to intimate partner violence including wife abuse. Section five is subdivided into two subsections to address

resource theory and feminist views on wife abuse respectively. The sixth section

explores the socio-cultural position of women in Jordan. The seventh and eighth

sections address the provisions available for the assistance of abused wives in

Jordan, and the limitations surrounding these provisions respectively.

2.1 Domestic Violence: Definitions and Forms

Wife abuse is a 'global phenomenon' (UNICEF, 2006: 5; Mehraein, 2013), as

'more than half the world's women experience violence in intimate relationships.

The abuse is severe, debilitating, and deadly' (Meyersfeld, 2008: 62). Yet, the

diverse cultural and religious considerations surrounding wife abuse practices

around the world render this issue culturally specific rather than globally

homogenous. Therefore, there are particular forms of wife abuse that are more

commonly practiced in non-western countries rather than in western ones.

Domestic violence[6], including wife abuse, became a recognizable issue in the

west in the 1970s (Dobash and Dobash, 1992; Kelly and Johnson, 2008; Sun, Su

and Wu, 2011). Since then, numerous attempts have been made by researchers

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[6] Some of the western scholars, organizations and institutions that have attempted to define the various practices underlying domestic violence include Sinnot (n.d.), Charity Vault (n.d.), Equity Now (2012), Human Rights Watch (2013 a), the NHS in Barking and Dagenham (2013) and the UK Home Office (2013). With regard to non-western organizations and institutions that have attempted to define domestic violence, including wife abuse, and provide abused individuals with assistance, examples of such organizations in Jordan include the Private Sector Project for Women's Health PSP (2010), the Jordanian Women's Union and Mizan Law Firm. Mizan Law Firm is specialized in providing legal assistance to abused wives (Mizan Law Firm, 2008), whether these women are classified as domestic violence survivors or victims (Dunn, 2005). In line with some western organizations that are specialized in assisting abused women (O'Donnell, 2008), other organizations in Jordan such as the Jordanian Women's Union provide abused women with shelter and financial support (The Jordanian Women's Union, 2012) because Jordanian women have access to limited financial resources after separating from their abusers (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, 2011).

and organizations to define different forms of domestic violence and investigate

their impact on people's lives (Volpe, 1996). During the early 1970s, western

research on wife abuse focused mainly on addressing physical violence:

> When violence between intimate partners emerged as a recognizable issue
> in our society in the mid-1970s . . ., empirical knowledge of this social,
> psychological, and legal phenomenon was very limited. As advocates for
> women organized shelters across the nation to provide safety and
> assistance for abused women, clinical information emerged that described
> patterns of severe physical and emotional abuse. The victims were most
> notably described by Walker (1979) and others as 'battered women,' and
> the male perpetrators were labelled 'batterers.' (Kelly and Johnson, 2008:
> 476)

In time, other forms of wife abuse than battering were also explored in the

literature on wife abuse. On the whole, domestic violence is a term that includes

various forms of aggressive behaviour within the family such as wife abuse

(Dobash and Dobash, 1992; Latham, 2009), child abuse[7] (Perry and DiLillo,

2007; Metheny, Coble, Schenkhof et al., 2011) and elder abuse[8] (Chalk and King,

1998). Wife abuse in particular might be carried out in a multitude of practices

ranging from emotional, physical and sexual assault (Dobash and Dobash, 1992;

Haddad et al., 2011, WHO, n.d.) to verbal (Dobash and Dobash, 1992; United

Nations Population Fund, 2008), financial (McGuire, 1998; Dobash and Dobash,

1992), and mental abuse (United Nations Population Fund, 2008). Although

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[7] 'Most statutes define child abuse in terms of physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Physical
child abuse is the physical injury of a child, resulting from, but not limited to, strikes, shoving,
shaking, biting, burning, poking, twisting limbs, and bodily throwing. Child sexual abuse can
occur as a single act or a series of abusive behaviors. It can occur in a single event or over the
course of many years. Child neglect occurs when a caretaker by act or lack of actions places the
child in a dangerous situation' (Bernades and Wallace, 2007: 704).

[8] 'Elder abuse is conduct that results in the physical, psychological, or material neglect, harm, or
injury to an elderly person. This definition includes abuse by family members as well as
institutional abuse. The term material in this definition refers to the exploitation of the elderly
person's financial resources. An elderly person is usually someone over the age of sixty-five'
(Bernades and Wallace, 2007: 704).

minimal (Hajjar, 2004 a; The United Nations Population Fund, 2008), wife abuse

research in Arab countries such as Jordan has also addressed these forms of

violence (The United Nations Population Fund, 2008; Clark, 2013).

Another form of wife abuse is 'post-separation violence'. According to Ellis

(1987), post-separation abuse 'refers to the physical harms or threats of physical

harm that are intentionally inflicted upon a woman by the man she formerly lived

with. Subsumed under this definition are . . . offences of murder, manslaughter,

assault bodily harm, assaults, and threats' (Ellis, 1987: 408). This type of violence

has been reported in western countries (Ellis, 1987; Coker, 1994; Kurz, 1996;

Cianciarulo and David, 2009) and non-western countries as well, including

Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Persia (Thiara and Gill, 2012) and Jordan (Human

Rights Watch, 2013 b; The U.S. Department of State, 2013a).

Many attempts on the part of western and non-western scholars, researchers and

formal institutions and organizations investigating wife abuse have been directed

towards clarifying its forms. With regard to physical wife abuse, western and non-

western scholars and researchers have identified physically abusive behaviour

against intimate partners as

> The intentional use of physical force with the potential for causing death,
> disability, injury, or harm. Physical violence includes, but is not limited to:
> scratching, pushing, shoving, throwing, grabbing, biting, chocking,
> shaking, poking, hair-pulling, slapping, punching, hitting, burning, use of
> a weapon (gun, knife, or other object), and use of restraints or one's body,
> size, or strength against another person. Physical violence also includes
> coercing other people to commit any of the above acts. (Saltzman,
> Fanslow, McMahon et al., 1999: 11-12)

Verbal wife abuse may involve the uttered 'insults, criticism, ridicule, name

calling, discounting, and discrediting' (Carlson, Worden, Van Ryn et al., 2003: 3).

Emotional wife abuse has been defined as

> the use of verbal and nonverbal acts which symbolically hurt the other or
> the use of threats to hurt the other . . . behaviors that can be used to
> terrorize the victim. . .that do not involve the use of physical force . . . the
> direct infliction of mental harm and threats or limits to the victim's well-
> being . . . and . . . an ongoing process in which one individual
> systematically diminishes and destroys the inner self of another. The
> essential ideas, feelings, perceptions, and personality characteristics of the
> victim are constantly belittled (Mouradian, 2000: n.p.).

According to the definition of emotional wife abuse stated above, the

conceptualization of verbal wife abuse might intersect with the conceptualization

of emotional wife abuse. These two forms of wife abuse might intersect in terms

of their ability to hurt wives' feelings. A distinguishing feature of emotional wife

abuse, however, is that it might be carried out in a non-verbal manner

(Mouradian, 2000).

Finally, financial wife abuse refers to a form of abuse that is directed at exercising

control over women by means of preventing them from accessing the financial

resources they require in order to carry on with their daily lives (Adams, Sullivan,

Bybee et al., 2008; Pollet, 2011). Adams, Sullivan, Bybee et al (2008) define

financial wife abuse, also known as economic wife abuse, as involving 'behaviors

that control a woman's ability to acquire, use, and maintain economic resources,

thus threatening her economic security and potential for self-sufficiency' (Adams,

Sullivan, Bybee et al., 2008: 564). Menon (2008), drawing on the views of

Duvvury et al (2004), highlights behaviours that reflect financial abuse such as

27

the 'deprivation of material goods, control of money, and control of assets' (Menon, 2008: 14). O'Rourke (2010) and Howard and Skipp (2015) also provide examples of practices that reflect financial abuse. O'Rourke (2010) proposes that financial abuse includes 'limiting women's access to funds' (O'Rourke, 2010: 1). Howard and Skipp (2015) also argue that financial abuse includes 'control of money', 'exploitation' of the victim's income, in addition to preventing her from accessing monetary resources such as paid work.

Although physical, verbal, emotional and financial wife abuse practices exist all over western and non-western countries, there are particular forms of wife abuse that are more commonly practiced in non-western cultures including Jordan such as dowry-related violence (Krantz and Garcia-Moreno, 2005; UNICEF, 2000), forced sterilization (Moore, Frohwirth and Miller, 2010; UNICEF, 2000), forced abortion (World Health Organization, 2014), female infanticide, and prenatal sex selection (Watts and Zimmerman, 2002; Ellsberg and Heise, 2005). These forms of abuse have been more widely investigated in western research since the 1970s (Wedding and Corsini, 2014) than in non-western research in countries such as Jordan. The investigation of men's role in making contraception and birth control-related decisions in Jordan is limited and began to be addressed from the year 1985 onwards (Petro-Nustas and Al-Qutub, 2002). With regard to research on forced abortion in Jordan, there are no data on this particular form of wife abuse (Almasarweh, 2003). In the following subsection, particular focus will be given to the literature on specific forms of wife abuse which women are more commonly exposed to in non-western nations rather than in western countries.

2.2 Forms of Wife Abuse That Are More Commonly Practiced in Non-Western Countries

In this section, the literature on particular forms of wife abuse that are practiced in non-western societies will be outlined. Beginning with dowry-related violence or bride price-related violence, these forms of violence occur when the parents of the bride or groom are dissatisfied with the amount of dowry or bride price that they should pay for or receive from the family of the bride (Banerjee, 2014). Dowry-related or bride price- related violence takes multiple forms, including bride burning (Hajjar, 2004 b), kidnapping for the purposes of prostitution, and honour killings (Niaz, 2003). Dowry-related or bride price-related wife abuse is witnessed in countries in certain parts of Africa, the Middle East and China and Asian countries such as Bangladesh (Ambrus, Field and Torero, 2008) where the dowry is an essential requirement to the fulfilment of the marriage process (Botticini and Siow, 2002).

While in some dowry-paying cultures the potential groom is expected to pay the dowry to the family of the bride (Cohen, 2006), such as those of the Muslim Middle-eastern Arab world (Nikolajeva, 2014; Botticini and Siow, 2002), in other cultures such as those of certain parts of India and some southern Asian countries, the family of the potential bride is expected to pay a dowry to the family of the groom (Krantz and Garcia-Moreno, 2005). Payments that the husband receives in order to fulfil the marriage are referred to as the bride price. Regardless of whether the bride's family or the groom's is expected to pay the dowry, in non-

western countries where dowry payment is practised, disputes and disagreements between the potential spouses' families over the amount of dowry that must be paid pave the way for the occurrence of dowry-related wife abuse (Babu and Babu, 2011). Banerjee (2014: 34) argues: 'Violence can occur when the dowry or bride-price is deemed unsatisfactory by the recipient'. The severity of dowry-related wife abuse can increase from harassment to murder. In her report, Manjoo (2012) addresses the severity of dowry-related wife abuse, highlighting South Asian countries as an example:

> In some South Asian countries, a widespread practice is that of dowry-related murders. This term covers the deaths of young brides who are murdered, or driven to suicide by continuous harassment and torture perpetrated by the groom's family in an effort to extort dowry payment or an increased dowry of cash or goods. The most common manifestation of this practice is the burning of the bride. These incidents are often presented as, and accepted to be, accidents, such as death as a result of an 'exploding stove' (Manjoo, 2012: 14).

Manjoo (2012) addresses not only the severity of dowry-related wife abuse but also the issue of reporting such crimes against women. Manjoo proposes that severe dowry-related wife abuse that results in the death of the women is often masked, and not overtly spoken of.

With regard to the issue of reporting dowry-related wife abuse, researchers and scholars who have investigated this issue fall into two groups: the first group of researchers argues that dowry-related wife abuse is often hidden and therefore cannot be easily identified (Heise, 1993); the second group proposes that it is difficult to veil such crimes, especially when the severity of the dowry-related wife abuse escalates to murder (Drèze and Khera, 2000). Agreeing with Drèze

and Khera (2000), Sekhri and Storeygard (2013) also maintain that it is difficult to hide dowry-related murder. They point out that while 'shame, cultural norms, or fear often discourage women from reporting crimes committed against them, suspicion of dowry death is of course reported by others, typically family and friends, and not the victim. Hence, shame and fear are less likely to directly influence reporting' (Sekhri and Storeygard, 2013: 3). Sekhri and Storeygard (2013) also argue that one reason behind the under-reporting of dowry-related wife abuse that leads to death could be associated with the women's natal families having been given some kind of bribe by the perpetrator to keep them silent, especially if they are poor. Other reasons associated with the lack of reporting dowry-related wife abuse, as documented in the literature on this specific form of wife abuse, include 'improper classification—for example, a case of burning may get reported as an accident versus the more sinister, punishable "dowry-accident"' (Banerjee, 2014: 34).

A second type of wife abuse that is more common in non-western countries is forced sterilization. The type of forced sterilization discussed in this section is not sterilization for the purposes of carrying out governmental child reproduction plans (Littlejohn, 2011), practices that commonly occur in many countries (Scott and Glasier, 2003), but rather forced female sterilization that is done on behalf of a male partner who does not wish to have children. There has been limited research to explore this phenomenon. As defined by the Human Rights Watch (2011), sterilization is 'a process or act that renders an individual incapable of

sexual reproduction' (Human Rights Watch, 2011: 1). Thus, forced-sterilization-related wife abuse takes place when a woman undergoes a sterilization procedure against her will (Sifris, 2010). As argued by Moore, Frohwirth and Miller (2010), the absence of personal consent to sterilization has been identified in the literature on wife abuse as an aspect of 'coercive control of women' and a 'central motivation of abuse' (Moore, Frohwirth and Miller, 2010: 3). De Boer (2011: 14) states that 'there are no systematic quantitative studies' to provide an in-depth examination of forced sterilization practices against women (de Boer, 2011). Most of the available research has simply listed this form of abuse as an aspect of domestic violence (Becknell, 2005; World Health Organization, 2005; Lundwall, Fons and de Boado, 2009).

Research exploring this specific form of wife abuse has found that forced sterilization affects women's experiencing violence that is perpetrated by their partners even after the former have undergone the sterilization procedure. In a study conducted in Southern India, Rao (1997: 1169) argued that 'women who are sterilized or have fewer male children are more likely to be abused'. The literature on forced or coerced sterilization in the context of wife abuse that has explored which groups of women are more likely to be exposed to such abuse, has found that the 'women most affected are from marginalized populations' in socio-cultural contexts where forced or coercive sterilization is still practised (Open Society Foundations, n.d.).

Another form of wife abuse that is more commonly practiced amongst non-western nations is that of male partners' intervention in women's use of contraceptives. This issue has been investigated by both western and non-western researchers. Among the examples of research on wife abuse through birth control intervention are the works of Wilson-Williams et al (2008), Alio, Daley, Nana, et al (2009), Trawick (2012), and Debnath, Roy and Mazumder (2013). Wilson-Williams et al (2008), for instance, argue that on the whole and apart from 'studies conducted in the United States, few studies have linked domestic violence and contraceptive use' (Wilson-Williams et al, 2008: 1183). While some literature on non-western countries such as a review by Somach and AouZeid (2009) on women in Egypt and a study conducted by O'Hara, Tsai, Carlson et al (2013) on women in Jordan highlight that wife abuse results in women not using contraception, other researchers such as Debnath, Roy and Mazumder (2013) in relation to women in India, and Alio, Daley, Nana et al (2009) in relation to sub-Saharan African women, concluded that women's fear of violence does not impact on their use of contraceptives negatively.

Of the limited research available on contraceptive control, Wilson-Williams et al (2008) highlight the work of Renne (1993), Wood and Jewkes (1997) and Biddlecom and Fapohunda (1998). These scholars have all confirmed that women's use of contraception affects their experiencing wife abuse. The African women who took part in their research 'expressed reluctance to refuse sex or use contraceptives due to their fear that these actions would lead to violence and/or divorce' (Wilson-Williams et al, 2008: 1184).

Trawick (2012) also addresses wife abuse through male partners' intervention in women's use of contraceptives. She refers to this form of violence as 'birth control sabotage' (Trawick, 2012: 725). Trawick (2012) points out that this form of wife abuse 'occurs when a sexual partner destroys, or fails to use, a form of contraceptive or contraceptive method without notifying his partner, in hopes of deceptively coercing her to become pregnant with his child' (Trawick, 2012: 730).

Finally, the last form of wife abuse that is more commonly experienced amongst women of non-western countries is in-law wife abuse (Somach, 2012). This form of violence has been addressed in wife abuse research in India (Ahmed-Ghosh, 2004; Rocca, Rathod, Falle et al, 2008) and South Asia (Niaz, 2003). Yet, the research that has been done to explore this form of wife abuse remains limited, especially in patriarchal Middle Eastern countries such as Jordan (Clark, Silverman, Shahrouri et al, 2010). In his article 'Chattels of Society: Domestic Violence in India', Ahmed-Ghosh (2004), for example, explains the mechanism according to which in-law wife abuse against Indian women is practised. Ahmed-Ghosh draws on the views of Kishwar (2000) who states that the 'retaining of the daughter-in-law into total subordination is an essential part of her transition from the natal to the marital home' (Ahmed-Ghosh, 2004: 108). Part of the wife's culturally constructed and socially acceptable gender role as a wife, Ahmed-Ghosh adds (2004), includes her being totally obedient towards the in-laws. If a wife is unable to maintain her subservience towards her husband and in-laws, she

risks being exposed to wife abuse. After having briefly reviewed the literature on the various forms of wife abuse, the following section centres on research that has been conducted to investigate the prevalence and forms of wife abuse in Jordan.

2.3 The Prevalence and Patterns of Wife Abuse in Jordan

The prevalence [9] of intimate partner violence against women, including wife abuse, was estimated by Global Health to be as high as 30% globally (Devries, Mak, García-Moreno et al., 2013: 152). In Jordan, however, there is limited up-to-date research to measure the prevalence of wife abuse at national level (Keeling, 2010). The most recent data available to measure the prevalence of wife abuse at national level in Jordan are presented in a report done by Al Mayadeen News Agency (2014) that was based on a study conducted by the National Council for Family Affairs (2013) and in a survey conducted by the Jordan Population and Family Health (2007), a survey that was the joint contribution of the Department of Statistics, the Ministry of Health, the University of Jordan and Macro International Inc. The prevalence of wife abuse in Jordan is difficult to estimate because of the 'cultural differences in defining terms such as abuse and violence' (Haddad, Shotar, Younger et al., 2011: 85), and because many studies have focused on addressing domestic violence against females which includes violence not only against wives but also against girls (the National Council for Family Affairs, 2008: 20).

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[9] There are many studies that have investigated the prevalence of wife abuse in western countries (e.g. Campbell, 2002).

As indicated in a quantitative study that was conducted by the National Council for Family Affairs (2013), 86.3% of Jordanian wives have experienced wife abuse. The study investigated a randomly selected sample of 592 cases of wife abuse in a survey, including women who had reported having experienced wife abuse to the Family Protection Directorate offices that are distributed across five cities in Jordan, namely: Amman, the capital of Jordan, Zarqa, Irbid, Balqa and Aqaba. The research sample represented 35.9% of the research population. The percentage of wife abuse cases amongst the research sample (the National Council for Family Affairs, 2013) provides a much larger percentage than the one presented by the Jordan Population and Family Health Survey (2007). The latter included a randomly selected sample of 15.000 households and 11.000 ever-married women, and stated that 23% of Jordanian wives experience at least one form of wife abuse, and that over 7000 cases of wife abuse are reported in Jordan annually.

These varying prevalernce percentages could be attributed to the different locations in which the samples were selected. That is, the sample of the quantitative study that was conducted by the National Council for Family Affairs (2013) included women who had gone to the Family Protection Directorate offices, locations in which there are lots of abused women. However, the Jordan Population and Family Health Survey (2007) included a sample of households, locations where there might not necessarily be lots of abused women. Clark (2013) presents figures on the prevalence of wife abuse in Jordan in a survey based on a sample of 517 Jordanian women. Amongst the 517 women who participated in the survey, 97% experienced spousal control, 73% experienced

psychological wife abuse, 31% experienced physical wife abuse, and 19% experienced sexual wife abuse. The magnitude of the percentages presented by Clark (2013) could be also explained in relation to the locations from which the research sample was selected. These locations included 7 health clinics dealing with wife abuse and operating in cooperation with the Jordanian Association for Family Planning and Protection, locations in which there are lots of abused women. The figures presented by Clark (2013) are alarming and ought to draw researchers' attention to the importance of investigating and counteracting wife abuse in Jordan.

The most prevalent form of wife abuse on a national scale in Jordan is physical abuse, reaching up to 86% (National Council for Family Affairs, 2013). The most commonly experienced forms of physical wife abuse are slapping and kicking. Other forms of wife abuse include verbal abuse (e.g. name-calling), emotional abuse (e.g. humiliating the wife) and financial abuse (e.g. denying the wife financial support) (the National Council for Family Affairs, 2013). In addition, as stated by the Jordan Population and Family Health Survey (2007), one out of five 'ever-married women report that they ever experienced physical violence by their husband' (the Department of Statistics, the Ministry of Health, the University of Jordan and Macro International Inc., 2007: xix).

The figures in the Jordan Population and Family Health Survey (2007), like the prevalence rates documented by official governmental institutions in western countries such as the UK and the US, are based on national-level studies. These studies are thus more inclusive of the research populations they are designed to investigate than studies

37

like the one presented by the National Council for Family Affairs in Jordan (2013). This

is because the study by the National Council for Family Affairs in Jordan (2013) was

restricted to a sample of 592 women who went to the Family Protection Directorate

offices in the 5 largest cities in Jordan, and did not include women who live in the

remaining 8 cities in Jordan [10] and those who live in rural areas. In other words, the study

was not conducted on a national level.

However, the prevalence rates of intimate partner violence against women, including

wife abuse, in official records found in the UK and the US, are calculated on a national

level to include women in the households and the centers and institutions providing

protection from intimate partner violence throughout the various populated areas in those

countries. In the UK, for instance, based on the Crime Survey for England and Wales

(2012/13), 30% of women involved in intimate relationships experience violence from by

their partners (Office for National Statistics, 2014: 4; Gay, 2015: 1). With regard to the

prevalence of intimate partner violence against women in the US, based on the National

Crime Victimization Survey (2003-2012), 25% of women involved in intimate

relationships experience violence that is perpetrated by their partners (National Crime

Victimization Survey, 2003-2012; Department of Justice, 2014). The prevalence of

intimate partner violence against women percentages on national levels in the UK and US

highlighted above are greater than the ones presented in the Jordan Population and

Family Health Survey (2007). This could be explained by drawing on the views of

Oweis, Gharaibeh, Al-Natour et al. (2009) and Haddad, Shotar, Younger et al. (2011)

who maintain that wife abuse in Jordan is under-reported due to people's fear of shame.

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[10] Jordan is divided into a total of 13 major cities.

The prevalence of intimate partner violence against women in western countries, such as the UK and the US, and non-western countries, such as Jordan, is affected by various factors that will be explored below.

2.4 Factors Affecting Domestic Violence against Women

Studies on intimate partner violence worldwide have differed in their identification of the factors which affect the emergence of violence between intimates and married couples. The first group of factors that I will discuss in this chapter are those that are non-particular in the sense that they have been reported in the literature on intimate partner violence against women and wife abuse all over the world.

2.4.1 Factors Affecting Intimate Partner Violence against Women and Wife Abuse in Western and Non-Western Countries

Amongst the factors reported in intimate partner and wife abuse literature across the globe are the family's financial status (McGuire, 1998; Wiktorowicz and Farouki, 2000; Fageeh, 2014), the spouses' educational levels (Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz, 1980; Kaufman-Kantor and Jasinski, 1997; Lenze and Klasen, 2013; Anderberg, Rainer, Wadsworth et al., 2013), unplanned pregnancy (Eyler and Cohen, 1999), the husband's unemployment (Atkinson and Greenstein, 1990; Buset and Pepler, 2002; Keeling 2004; Becknell, 2005; Haddad et al., 2011), in addition to having children (Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz, 1980; Rose, Trevillion,

Woodall et al., 2011). Other factors under this category range from the spouses'

lack of employment and education (Haj-Yahia, 2002; Chandrasekaran, Krupp,

George et al., 2007) to alcohol and drug consumption (Buset and Pepler, 2002),

the husband's frustration and depression due to pressure at work and at home

(Buset and Pepler, 2002; Haj-Yahia, 2002), the age of the spouses (Kaufman-

Kantor and Jasinski, 1997; Ibrahim and Abdalla, 2006), the type of marriage

arrangement (Gangoli, Razak and McCarry, 2006; Fulu, 2014), the spouses'

residential arrangements (McCloskey and Eisler, 2008; Mohammadhosseini,

Sahraean and Bahrami, 2010) and parental and in-law intervention (Abu Baker,

2003; Panda, 2005; Wahed and Bhuyia, 2007 and Clark, Silverman, Shahrouri et

al., 2010).

Researchers differ in their agreement on the effects of these various non-particular

factors on women's experiencing intimate partner violence including wife abuse.

For instance, McGuire (1998) and Fageeh (2014) concluded that such violence

was directly affected by women's financial dependence. Straus, Gelles and

Steinmetz (1980) and Anderberg, Rainer, Wadsworth et al (2013) confirm the

proposition that intimate partner violence might take place upon the emergence of

employment issues. However, Kaufman-Kantor and Jasinski (1997) found that

employment has no impact on the practice of intimate partner violence against

women.

With respect to the research that has explored the effect of women's pregnancy on

their potential exposure to intimate partner violence, Jasinski (2004) argues that

although 'the sheer magnitude of this problem has generated a great deal of interest on the part of the public health advocate, and academic communities, it has only been recently that significant attention has been paid to the intricacies of the relationship between pregnancy and violence' (Jasinski, 2004: 47). Some researchers have proposed that pregnancy leads to an increase in women experiencing intimate partner violence and wife abuse (Campbell, Oliver and Bullock, 1993; Mezey and Bewley, 1997). Brownridge, Taillieu, Tyler et al. (2011) support this argument, stating that women who experience 'pregnancy violence are more likely to report having experienced all forms of violence, particularly severe forms, and have higher odds of experiencing several postviolence [*sic*] indicators of severity and adverse health consequences' (Brownridge, Taillieu, Tyler et al., 2011: 858). However, other researchers who have explored the effect of pregnancy on women's experiencing intimate partner violence have argued that pregnancy is not considered to be amongst the risk factors (Martin, Arcara and Pollock et al, 2012).

Another factor that has been focused on by the researchers who have investigated wife abuse is alcohol consumption. Kyriacou, Anglin, Taliaferro et al. (1999) argue that in spite of 'the strong association between alcohol use and injury from domestic violence in biomedical, pharmacologic, psychological, and sociological studies, there is still controversy about the precise effect of alcohol use in this setting' (Kyriacou, Anglin, Taliaferro et al., 1999: 1896). Adding to the controversial effect of alcohol consumption on wife abuse is the lack of research on this particular aspect. Exploring the magnitude of alcohol consumption is very

difficult due to the absence of 'figures' related to this behaviour even in cultures where drinking alcohol is considered to be normative behaviour (Galvani, 2010). However, researchers and scholars who have addressed the impact of alcohol use on wife abuse fall into two groups: those who argue that alcohol does not lead to intimate partner violence against women (Galvani, 2010: 1), and others who think it does (Sabia, 2004: 191). In the light of the above review of the research on the factors that might affect intimate partner violence against women, western and non-western researchers have had varying views on the effect of these factors depending on their research participants' circumstances and experiences. Thus, the findings conluded from a particular research could not be said to apply for different research samples. After having reviewed research on intimate partner violence factors that are found in western and non-western countries, research on other factors affecting intimate partner violence against women that are more common in non-western countries is reviewed in the following section.

2.4.2 Intimate Partner Violence against Women: Factors that Are Particular to Non-Western Societies

The group of factors that shape intimate partner violence against women that I discuss here is particular in the sense that although research has confirmed that they impact on intimate partner violence all around the world, the way in which they shape intimate partner violence behaviours against women still varies from one socio-cultural context to another. Under this particular group of factors, cultural values (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2000; Haj-Yahia, 2002) in relation to religion and the law (CEDAW, 2011) are the most important.

2.4.2.1 The Impact of Culture on Intimate Partner Violence Including Wife Abuse

Some scholars and organizations have foucsed on the impact of culture on the practice of and response to intimate partner violence against women (Bureau of Consular Affairs, n.d.; CEDAW, 2007; Oweis, Gharaibeh, Al-Natour et al., 2009; Şahin, Timur, Ergin et al., 2010; Seelinger, 2010; World Health Organization, 2013). For instance, The World Health Organization (2009) has affirmed that rules 'or expectations of behaviour – norms – within a cultural or social group can encourage violence' (World Health Organization, 2009: 1). In a study conducted by Garcia and Herrero (2006) to explore the impact of cultural values on the acceptability of intimate partner violence against women, the researchers confirmed that the 'acceptability of domestic violence against women (DVAW) plays an important part in shaping the social environment in which the victims are embedded, which in turn may contribute either to perpetuate or to reduce the levels of DVAW in our societies' (Garcia and Herrero, 2006: 123). Different cultural values affect intimate partner violence behaviours against women in different ways, as I shall show.

Intimate partner violence against women from a cultural perspective has been investigated in two types of cultural contexts, namely 'patriarchal' and 'egalitarian' ones. In relation to patriarchal contexts Wallach, Weingram and Avitan (2010) for instance argue:

> Patriarchic societies believe in male dominance. In these societies, force used by a man to control his wife is seen as legitimate . . . Studies have found that males within patriarchic societies are more violent toward their wives and children than are males in egalitarian societies. They also hold

43

more lenient opinions about domestic violence . . . These differences hold true even when a man moves from a patriarchic society to one that is more egalitarian (Wallach, Weingram and Avitan, 2010: 1285).

However, patriarchal socio-cultural values are far from unified (Meyersfeld, 2003). Wallach, Weingram and Avitan (2010) highlight Ethiopian society as an example of a traditional patriarchal society where gender roles that support male dominance over women are the norm, and any potential deviation from or rebellion against this socio-cultural behavioural framework constitutes a ground for the use of violence against women (Wallach, Weingram and Avitan, 2010: 1287). Other research that has been done to discuss the impact of patriarchal cultural values and beliefs on the exercise of intimate partner violence against women has drawn particular attention to Chinese society. For instance, a study conducted by Parish, Wang, Laumann et al (2004) affirmed the direct impact of predominant patriarchal cultural views on women's encountering intimate partner violence and wife abuse in China.

There is also work on the impact of patriarchal cultural values on men's exercise of intimate partner violence in the conservative socio-cultural contexts of the Arab Muslim world including Jordan (Haj-Yahia, 2002; the United Nations Population Fund, 2008 and CEDAW, 2012). However, the cultural values that support male domination in Arab countries vary in their rigidity. That is, in certain Arab cultures such as those of Saudi Arabia (Doumato, 2010: 12-13; Kelly, 2010) and Yemen (Basha, Ghanem and Abdulhafid, 2005; Manea, 2010), patriarchal beliefs justifying male dominance over women are stricter than the

prevailing patriarchal values in countries such as Tunisia (Ben Salem, 2010) and Jordan (Husseini, 2010).

Doumato (2010) elaborates on discrimination against women in the highly conservative patriarchal culture of Saudi Arabia. Doumato states that a 'healthy majority of Saudi citizens agree with the social agenda of the ulema, and would not view the inequalities between men and women as discrimination, but as equivalence—a balance between the rights and duties of men and women as prescribed in Islam and necessary to uphold honor and family values' (Doumato, 2010: 1). Renowned international organizations concerned with the elimination of wife abuse worldwide, such as Amnesty International, also agree that in 'Saudi Arabia we take patriarchy to the extreme' (Amnesty International, 2014: n.p.). Overt discussion of domestic violence against Saudi Arabian wives, Dumato (2010) points out, is widely unacceptable. According to a study conducted by Kelly (2010), which confirmed the arguments made in a report by the Human Rights Watch (2008), wives in Saudi Arabia are not allowed to represent themselves and file for wife abuse complaints in person due to the strict prevalent guardianship rules (Kelly, 2010). The particular exacerbation of wife abuse against Saudi women is related to the cultural values adopted in the country (Human Rights Watch, 2008). Spencer and Chesler (2007) argue that 'women . . . who walk unaccompanied, or are in the company of a man who is neither their husband nor a close relative, are at risk of arrest on suspicion of prostitution or other "moral" offences' (Spencer and Chesler, 2007: 6).

In less conservative Arab Muslim cultures of the Middle East such as Jordan,

experiencing wife abuse (Sonbol, 2003) and reporting such experiences

(Gharaibeh and Oweis, 2009; Keeling, 2010; Safadi, Swigart, Hamdan-Mansour,

et al., 2012 and Al-Badayneh, 2012) are also influenced by cultural values of male

supremacy[11] over women, values that sustain women's subordination through

reinforcing practices such as beating them by natal family members (Safadi,

Swigart, Hamdan-Mansour et al, 2012), early marriage (Gharaibeh, Oweis,

Shakhatreh et al., 2011), forced marriage (Sonbol, 2003) and honour-based wife

abuse (Al-Badayneh, 2012). Yet, despite the complexity of the cultural values that

support wife abuse in Jordan (Haj-Yahia, 2002; Sonbol, 2003 and Al-Badayneh,

2012), and unlike Saudi Arabian women, Jordanian women are allowed to

represent themselves when filing for wife abuse complaints and to seek

professional assistance in this (The Jordanian Women's Union, 2013).

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[11] Researchers, organizations and institutions have investigated the change that has affected the patriarchal cultural values related to women's status in Arab countries (Al Sharabi, 1988) including Jordan (Kawar, 2000; the European Training Foundation, 2005; Ouis, 2009; Oweis et al, 2009 and Haddad et al, 2011). Other researchers and institutions that have addressed women's position-related cultural value changes in Jordan include Sabbagh (2005), Metcalfe (2006), Oweis, Gharaibeh, Alhourani (2009), Al-Badayneh (2012), the Jordanian Women's Union (2012), Adeley (2012) and Musawah (2014). Some of these researchers and institutions have focused on investigating particular aspects of Jordanian women's position which are related to their conformity with arranged marriages (Sabbah, 2006; Adeley, 2012; The Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. State Department, n.d.) and their acceptance or rejection of domestic violence (Becknell, 2005; Naffa, Dabbas, Jabiri, 2007; Husseini, 2010; International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (INCL) and World Movement for Democracy Secretariat at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), 2008 and Steityeh, 2010). On the whole, social researchers in Jordan agree that traditional patriarchal values render domestic violence normative. Their opinions differ however regarding the extent to which the cultural values supporting women's subordination have actually changed (Moghadam, 1992; Miles, 2002; Cinthio and Ericsson, 2006; Pettygrove, Nasser and Fauss, 2006; Al Kharouf and Weir, 2008; and The Arab Women Organization, Musawah Network and members of the campaign 'My Mother is Jordanian and Her Nationality Is My Right', 2012).

The impact of culture on the exercise of wife abuse in Jordan has captured the attention of social scholars and researchers such as Haj-Yahia (2002), Sonbol (2003), Oweis et al. (2009) and Haddad et al. (2011) since the 1980s (Becknell, 2005). The cultural values they focus on when investigating wife abuse are divided between the acceptance of this phenomenon (Haj-Yahia, 2002; Oweis et al., 2009) and the rejection of it on the part of those holding liberal views (Oweis et al., 2009; Haddad et al., 2011).

Some researchers in Jordan (Btoush and Haj-Yahia, 2008; Al-Badayneh, 2012), as in the Arab world (Ghanim, 2009) and western countries (Kordvani, 2002; Kimmel, 2002), have focused on investigating the impact of the gendered cultural values of masculinity on the exercise of intimate partner violence against women including wife abuse. Other organizations (the United Nations Population Fund, 2008) and researchers in Jordan, as in the west (Yllö, 1993; Paludi, 2004), have investigated the gender roles underlying wife abuse (Haj-Yahia, 2002; Al-Hibri, 2003; Hajjar, 2004 a; Becknell, 2005; Oweis et al., 2009; Oius, 2009 and Haddad et al., 2011) and men's position in society in comparison with their wives and partners (Al-Badayneh, 2012). In line with the literature on intimate partner violence in the west (Buset and Pepler, 2002), the literature on wife abuse in Jordan concluded that challenging a man's gendered image of masculinity and deviating from women's acceptable gender roles were factors directly affecting men's exercise of wife abuse (Btoush and Haj-Yahia, 2008; Al-Badayneh, 2012).

47

Wife abuse against Jordanian wives is based on a gendered hierarchy of masculine power relations. Men's sovereignty over women is considered a natural state (Haj-Yahia, 2002, Oweis et al., 2009), the outcome of power dynamics (Al-Badayneh, 2012) and patriarchal ideologies (Btoush and Haj-Yahia, 2008). Btoush and Haj-Yahia (2008) explain: 'Patriarchal societies, in general, view men with greater power, privilege, and control of women and children and consequently the right to punish them for misbehavior' (Btoush and Haj-Yahia, 2008: 1532). The 'naturalness' of this hierarchal sex-based position men occupy corresponds to males' understanding of masculinity as being equivalent to women's inferiority and male superiority and power over not only women (Ghanim, 2009) but also certain other men within the social structure. Mansley (2009), quoting Johnson and Ferraro (2000), explores the complexity of the effect of power and masculinity on wife abuse, stating that for wife abuse to be thoroughly investigated, researchers must acknowledge that men's urge to control women is not only reflected on the individual level but also on the wider social level.

Research on wife abuse in Jordan in the context of masculinity falls primarily under two categories: social studies and feminist investigations. Feminists argue that wife abuse is constructed upon gender-based cultural values and beliefs that stress women's inferiority in comparison to men (Sonbol, 2003; Haddad, Shotar, Younger et al., 2011). In patriarchal cultures, such as the Jordanian one, Haddad, Shotar, Younger et al. (2011) explain, women are considered second-class

subjects in comparison to men. In such contexts, women are not expected to object to or rebel against the gender roles to which they are confined, and that maintain their 'natural' subordination to men. Acceptable female gender roles for instance, Paludi (2004) argues, include staying with wife abuse perpetrators: 'Since the traditional female role is to be passive and submissive, the wife is supposed to remain with the husband regardless of the severity of the abuse' (Paludi, 2004: 34).

Women's relationships with the opposite sex should thus mirror their selflessness and sense of self-sacrifice to patriarchs. Any violation of this socio-cultural framework constitutes a ground for wife-beating in addition to other forms of wife abuse in order to reinforce male superiority (Yllö, 1993; Becknell, 2005; Mansley, 2009) and reclaim the social hierarchal order where men dominate women (Ghanim, 2009):

> Domestic violence is an expression of dominance and control within the family structure. Understood in a broad and comprehensive sense, it is the manifestation and the intersection of male and female power. Violence reflects the relationship between the socially acknowledged and the religiously sanctioned dominant power and authority of the male, and the unacknowledged, hidden power of the female. In fact, the significant disparity between these two powers is why domestic violence is so extreme and damaging. The fact that one power is culturally sanctioned and expected from society while the other power is suppressed increases the rate and intensity of violent marital unions. (Ghanim, 2009: 170)

Social scholars have also proposed that men's sovereignty is based on their embracing a particular image of 'masculinity': 'Femininity and masculinity are socially constructed through complex processes involving: gender alienation and segregation, gender assignment, and the relationship between the self and the

other. These gender constructions exaggerate the differences between the category of passive females and active males as well as the opposition of the two' (Ghanim, 2009: 80).

Buset and Pepler (2002) and Ghanim (2009) explain the mechanism according to which patriarchy paves the way for the exercise of violence as the result of unequal power distribution. They point out that men are culturally raised to defend an accepted image of masculinity. Over time, a man's gendered notions of masculinity become equal to his sense of identity. Thus, they argue that one reason why some patriarchal men resort to violence is that they are faced by obstacles and challenges that keep them from their gender-based roles such as being responsible for the maintenance of their families' well-being and reputation. These men use violence to reinforce their domination within the household, or in other words to preserve their identity. In the Jordanian context, McCleary-Sills (2013) argues that researchers have attributed the complex strict gendered control over women to the cultural conceptualization of masculinity that defines women as a potential threat to male honour (Ghanim, 2009).

Moghadam (1992) proposes that the protection of family honour is the most crucial cultural aspect of masculinity that Arab men on the whole strive to defend. Arab women, in the context of honour, are depicted as lacking subjects, constantly in need of male guardianship. Male guardianship is carried out through men's 'control' of their female family members. Women's challenging male control in the name of guardianship is considered an unacceptable rejection of the

presumed natural order of society, a rejection that triggers practices such as honour-based wife abuse (Fryman, 2013).

2.4.2.2 The Impact of Honour on Wife Abuse

Honour-based wife abuse is not restricted to a particular culture. Research has revealed that honour-based wife abuse is exercised in Muslim, Hindu (United Nations, 2014) and Sikh (United Nations, 2014; Aujla and Gill, 2014) as well as Arab communities (Welchman, 2007; Fryman, 2013; United Nations, 2014) across the world. Honour-based wife abuse is more common in non-western cultures than in western ones (Araji, 2000). Women in some parts of the world, particularly in the Middle East, continue to struggle with certain extreme forms of wife abuse – honour crimes (Devers and Bacon, 2010: 359). Jordan is an example of these countries (Welchman, 2007; Ghanim, 2009). The impact of the concept of honour on wife abuse has captured the attention of western researchers (Peratis, 2004; Becknell, 2005; Welcman, 2007; Chesler, 2010), non-western researchers (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2000; Sonbol, 2003), including scholars in Jordan (Haj-Yahia, 2002; Sonbol, 2003; Al-Badayneh, 2012; Al-Matalka and Hussainat, 2013), and international organizations (The United Nations Population Fund, 2008; United Nations, 2009) who have focused on investigating the prevalence, mechanism and severity of honour-based wife abuse. It is difficult to calculate the precise figures of honour-based wife-abuse incidents in Jordan (Chesler, 2010). Chesler (2010) attributes this lack of accurate statistics to the misclassification of that abuse, a classification that does not acknowledge the violence against wives as honour-based. Another reason behind the scarcity of the available statistics on

honour-based wife abuse is its cultural stigmatization (Al Badayneh, 2012). Honour-based wife abuse is not overtly spoken of in public for fear of bringing shame onto the families in which such abuse occurs. In relation to the limitations surrounding the attainment of accurate honour-based wife-abuse statistics, Devers and Bacon (2010) state that many 'observers such as the police and nongovernmental organizations acknowledge that existing data are often unreliable and that most cases go unreported' (Devers and Bacon, 2010: 362). Despite these limitations, the number of honour crimes reported in Jordan reach up to 20 murders per year (Husseini, 2010). Since there is no national level database showing honour-based abuse statistics in Jordan, this figure Husseini presents is an individual effort that is grounded on governmental police and forensic records that she accessed in Jordan (Husseini, n.d.). These statistics are random and do not cover honour crimes in Jordan on a national scale. The US Department of State (2013b) provides a greater number of honour-based crimes than that presented by Husseini (2010). Drawing on the records of the Supreme Criminal Court in Jordan, an official body responsible for dealing with honour-based legal prosecutions in Jordan on the whole, the US Department of State points out that 12 honour crimes have been reported in Jordan during the year 2013 (US Department of State, 2013b). Yet, this figure does not necessarily indicate a drop in the rates of honour-based crimes in Jordan as such crimes are under-reported (Fryman, 2013). Also, this figure does not specify the number of honour-based wife-abuse crimes as it also includes honour-based violence against unmarried women.

In Jordan researchers and organizations investigating honour-based wife abuse have considered the concept of 'honour' as a triggering factor in wife abuse (Faqir, 2001; Haj-Yahia, 2002; Welchman, 2007; United Nations, 2009; Al Badayneh, 2012). Fryman (2013) distinguishes between lethal forms of wife abuse and honour-based wife abuse and summarizes the differences between lethal and honour-based wife abuse as follows:

> Honor killings diverge significantly from domestic violence in four basic ways. First of all, most domestic violence murders result from escalating episodes of abuse accompanied by alcohol and/or drugs, while honor killings are perpetrated within a relatively peaceful family unit. Secondly, honor killings are aggregated acts in which at least one other family member approves of or is active in the killing, while the majority of domestic violence cases involve a single person, normally a husband or a boyfriend, who acts alone. The third reason is based on men's putative right to control women's sexual and social choices, with the perception that women are seen as the property of men. The fourth difference is the valorizing or not condemning the perpetrators of the honor killing. (Fryman, 2013: 219)

Western (Fryman, 2013) and non-western (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2000; Sonbol, 2003) researchers who have investigated honour-based wife abuse in Jordan, including Faqir (2001), Haj-Yahia (2002), Peratis (2004), Warrick (2005), Ghanim (2009) and Al Badayneh (2012), agree that this particular type of wife abuse is caused by a perceived or actual wife's deviation from her culturally acceptable gender role, a rebellion that damages the family's chastity or honour. Honour-based wife abuse can be triggered by acts such as 'perceptions of lost virginity outside of marriage, premarital pregnancy, infidelity by the woman (not the man), refusal of an arranged marriage, seeking a divorce or child custody, leaving the marital or familial home without permission, or somehow causing gossip in the community' (Fryman, 2013: 221).

Feminist researchers have also confirmed the impact of masculinity-related values

on honour-based wife abuse (Faqir, 2001). Muslim feminists Wadud (1999) and

Sonbol (2003) provide some of the most prominent views on wife abuse. Wadud

(1999), for instance, discusses wife abuse within the context of the religious

background of Arab Muslim countries. Wadud explains how the justification of

wife abuse is based on the gendered misinterpretation of the verses of the Holy

Qur'ān (Wadud, 1999: 2). The Holy Qur'ān, she argues, has not introduced and

supported the use of violence against wives, but rather has contributed to the

elimination of its severity and frequency (Wadud, 1999: 76). Fatima Mernissi also

stresses that the idea of an inferior sex is alien to Islam:

> Islam does not advance the thesis of women's inherent inferiority. Quite
> the contrary, it affirms the potential equality between the sexes. The
> existing inequality does not rest on an ideological or biological theory of
> women's inferiority, but it is the outcome of specific social institutions
> designed to restrain her power: namely, segregation and legal
> subordination in the family structure. (Mernissi, 1975: 19).

Thus, Arab feminists have attempted to remove the vagueness that has engulfed

the issue of wife abuse as supported by textual religious evidence in Arab Muslim

countries. Patriarchs in Arab Muslim countries (Douki, Nacef, Belhadj, et al.,

2003) such as Jordan are aware of the great impact of Islamic belief on the

maintenance of dominant cultural values and on individuals' behaviour (Haj-

Yahia, 2002: 283). Through their citing verses of the Holy Qur'ān, abusive

Jordanian patriarchs seek to guarantee that any inhumane, but culturally

acceptable attitude or action on their part towards women is not questioned. In the

remainder of this section, I will address the changing cultural acceptance of wife

abuse.

On the whole, the literature on intimate partner violence against women highlights

that this phenomenon is more acceptable in non-western conservative countries

than in western socio-cultural contexts (Prierotti, 2013). In *Women, Violence and*

Social Change, Dobash and Dobash (1992) tackle the rising public awareness of

the necessity to combat intimate partner violence against women. They attribute

the awakening of the UK and US societies to the necessity of taking action against

intimate partner violence against women to the efforts of feminist activists in the

1970s. In his article, 'Tackling Domestic Violence in UK: Persistent Problems',

Kwan Choi (2009) also stresses the crucial role feminist activists played in

addressing domestic violence and fighting for women's rights. Choi argues that it

'is only since the 1970s and 1980s that this attitude has been changed and

domestic violence, a once "tolerated" activity, has regarded [*sic*] widely as an

unjust act' (Choi, 2009: 18).

Although women in the 1970s had limited rights (Dobash and Dobash, 1992),

more recent literature exploring the cultural acceptance of wife abuse confirms

the gradual and increasing access of western women to their rights (Howard-

Hassmann, 2011). From a different point of view, Pierotti (2013) investigates the

impact of culture on wife abuse. The samples included in Pierotti's study 'come

from 52 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) datasets, including two from

each of 26 countries'. Every country had 'two waves of DHS data on women's

attitudes about intimate partner violence' all of which are included in the analysis.

These countries are Armenia, Benin, Bolivia, Cambodia, Dominican Republic,

Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Madagascar,

Malawi, Mali, Nepal, Nigeria, Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Turkey, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe' (Pierotti, 2013: 248). Sampling 'for each DHS study was conducted by randomly selecting primary sampling units (PSUs) and then randomly sampling households within selected PSUs' (Pierotti, 2013: 248).

She concludes that there has been an improvement in non-western and western women's awareness of their rights, in terms of women's reported acceptance of wife abuse in modern times. Pierotti (2013) presents statistics revealing that women of the Dominican Republic, Armenia and Bolivia expressed their rejection of intimate partner violence against women in higher rates than women in non-western countries such as Jordan, Mali and Ethiopia. Pierotti (2013) found that the majority of the women who took part in her study (i.e. women representing 23 countries out of 26) had made positive progress towards the adoption of a more liberal stance with regard to the rejection of violence against women in the private sphere. Amongst those 23 countries, Pierotti points out, 'Nigeria had the largest change, with a 19-percent point increase in the proportion of women who reject intimate partner violence, followed by Zambia, Kenya, Rwanda, and Armenia with approximately 15-percentage point increases in the rejection of intimate partner violence' (Pierotti, 2013: 252). The literature on intimate partner violence has confirmed the direct effect of the cultural acceptance of domestic violence and gender roles on the continuation of this phenomenon in western countries (Wendt, 2009; Malik, 1998) and non-western countries (Sayem, 2012) such as Jordan (Haj-Yahia, 2002; Sonbol, 2003). For instance, addressing the impact of culture on wife abuse in Egypt, Ammar (2000) states:

Domestic violence in Egypt shares many of the features identified in Western-feminist scholarship: the hidden or invisible nature of the problem, the tendency toward 'victim blaming', and the failure to make adequate provision for social and other support for women living with violence. In Egypt, however, these problems are exacerbated by the rigid interpretation of Qur'anic law and the patriarchal values that condone the use of violence against wives as a legitimate form of discipline (Ammar, 2000: 30).

Other particular factors in research related to intimate partner violence against women that underlie the factor of culture are religion and the law. In the following subsections, I will address these.

2.4.2.3 The Impact of Religion on Intimate Partner Violence Including Wife Abuse

Despite the commonality of practising wife abuse in Christian, Jewish and Muslim cultures, its connection to religion has not been widely investigated (Potter, 2007). The existing literature on wife abuse in relation to religious values has investigated this phenomenon on two levels. The first[12] seeks to clarify religious interpretations of Holy Scriptures in relation to wife abuse (Heath, 1996; Abu Aisha, 2003; Stalinsky and Yehoshua, 2004; Hussain, 2004; Guechi, 2005; Bakhtiar, 2007; Abdul Azim, 2007 and Chaudhry, 2011). This includes scholars such as Lemu (2007), Abu El Fadl (2009) Dunn and Kellison (2010) and Hasan (2013). They explore the impact of religious values and interpretations of Holy Scriptures on the reinforcement of gender roles and wife abuse (Onwutuebe, n.d.;

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[12] Researchers who have investigated religious interpretations in relation to wife abuse include Nasir (1990), Chodkiewicz (1993), Stowasser (1994), Abusulayman (2003), Badran (2002), Falahi (n.d.), Mubarak (2004), Engineer (2004), Abu Bakar (2004), Whitaker (2005), Offenhauer (2005), Moallem (2005), Ammar (2007), MacFarquhar (2007), Jamil (2007), Islam (2009), Shehada (2009), Equitas (2009), Al-Mughni (2009), Ibn Kammuna (2009), Blore (2010), Fadel (2010), Kabbani and Ziad (2011); Yuksel (2012). The importance of focusing on the effect of religious scripture interpretations on domestic violence in this research is attributed to the impact of Islamic values on Jordanian society (Underwood, 2000).

Soares, 2012; Douki et al., 2003). The second level seeks to investigate the role that religious clerics[13] play in the assistance of women who experience wife abuse (Horton and Williamson, 1988; Griffith and Young, 2004; Gillum, Sullivan and Bybee, 2006; The Archbishop's Council, 2006). Researchers who have investigated the interpretations of Holy Scriptures have shown that these interpretations vary (e.g. Hussain, 2004; Mubarak, 2004; Abdul Azim, 2007). In addition, researchers who have investigated the role of clerics in helping abused women have found that some clerics might provide material and spiritual assistance for abused women and some might not (The Archbishop's Council, 2006).

In the non-Muslim context, Heath (1996) and Shannon-Lewy and Dull (2005), drawing on the outcome of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (1992), argue that abusing wives is unacceptable in biblical scripture. Heath (1996), for instance, suggests that when read in its original contexts and in light of the overarching biblical message of redemption, Malachi 2: 16 presents wife abuse as a form of covenant-breaking, equal to divorce. However, the literature on Holy Scripture interpretation has not entirely supported this argument. Barnish (2004: 14), drawing on the views of Mama (1989), highlights the fact that both 'the Bible and the Koran simultaneously contain passages that can be read as justifying and condemning violence against women'. There are fundamentally two groups of scholars who have focused on interpreting Holy Scripture: the fundamentalists

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[13] Skiff, Horwitz, LaRussa-Trott et al (2008), Vaaler (2008) and Hamid and Jayaker (2015) investigated the impact of clerical assistance on wife abuse.

and the non-fundamentalists (Onwutuebe, n.d.). The importance of highlighting these two groups of scholars arises from the fact that cultural, 'social and religious norms may deter women from seeking help or exposing the problem through a prosecution, as they may fear censure from within their families or communities, or fail to receive the necessary validation to name their experience as victimization' (Barnish, 2004: 14).

With regard to the impact of clerical intervention against wife abuse in non-Muslim nations, Rzepka (2002) argues that it may be ineffective. Some of the statements reflecting the clergy's uncooperative response to wife abuse situations include sentences such as 'stay and work things out. God expects that'; 'Christians don't get divorced unless adultery is involved' and 'Hope for the best. God will change him. Pray'. Other clerical advice is given with statements such as 'He is hopeless and cruel but you are married him', 'try harder not to provoke him', a statement that is utterly 'useless' according to Rzepka (2002: 2). Tracy (2007) has critiqued the inadequacy of clerical intervention in the assistance of wife abuse victims as clerics 'often minimize the frequency and damage of domestic violence' (Tracy, 2007: 1).

Nason-Clark (1997) like Rzepka (2002) addresses the lack of support that abused wives find when consulting religious clergy for assistance. She also discusses the reasons behind religious clerics' lack of such assistance. She maintains that because the main concern of religious clergy is to safeguard the 'sanctity' of

marriage, they consider potential solutions to wife abuse such as separation or divorce to be 'threats' to the marital institution.

Researchers have explored the impact of religious values *per se* on wife abuse in Islam (Douki et al., 2003; Mubarak, 2004; Scott, 2009). While some researchers have critiqued Islamic values for encouraging wife abuse (Spencer and Chesler, 2007), others have rejected this proposition (Scott, 2009; Al-Hibri, 2003). Most of the research that has investigated Muslim interpretations of Holy Scripture in relation to wife abuse focuses on religious interpretations of the Holy Scripture in terms of patriarchal values. A number of researchers[14] have attempted to clarify the vagueness around the meaning and interpretations of Muslim Qur'anic verses related to spousal conflict and the use of disciplining. These include Mubarak (2004), Scott (2009), and Dunn and Kellison (2010). Yet, the views of feminist scholars on wife abuse and Islam are not widely perceived as acceptable (Mir-Hosseini, 2011).

2.4.2.4 The Impact of the Law on Intimate Partner Violence Including Wife Abuse

The last cultural issue that relates to wife abuse covered in this literature review revolves around the law. The impact of the law on wife abuse has been addressed by many organizational programmes and researchers including Euromed Gender Equality Programme (2009-2010), Barnish (2004), Wasti (2010) and Human Rights Watch (2013 a, b). Barnish (2004) argues that interventions 'to address

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[14] Feminist researchers such as Mernissi (1991), Sonbol (2003) and Al-Hibri (2003) have also discussed wife abuse and disciplining in Islam.

domestic violence suggested by feminist and socio-structural theories include macro-level changes to social norms and structures, driven by policy and law which takes public ownership of the problem and adopts a proactive, systematic approach to eliminating domestic violence' (Barnish, 2004: 19).

Intimate partner violence literature has addressed the impact of the law on wife abuse from two perspectives. The first perspective deals with the impact of passing laws on the elimination of wife abuse, and the second investigates the effect of implementing these laws on the augmentation/reduction of this phenomenon. In non-western countries such as India, for example, the effect of legal provisions on wife abuse has been confirmed. Amongst the scholars and researchers who have addressed the issuing and content of wife abuse laws are Ahmed-Ghosh (2004), Kaur and Garg (2008) and Babu and Babu (2011). In his article entitled 'Chattels of Society: Domestic Violence in India', Ahmed-Ghosh (2004) argues that wife abuse is reinforced by the wife abuse laws of India, particularly the Protection from Domestic Violence Act that was introduced in 2002. He argues that in 'its current form, the act upholds the sanctity of marriage, protects the husband, and even justifies occasional beatings of the wife. The act does not at any level protect women in their natal or marital home' (Ahmed-Ghosh, 2004: 94). Ahmed-Ghosh also stresses that family ideology 'naturalizes and universalizes the construction of women as wives and mothers, as economically dependent, as passive, dutiful and self-sacrificing, across a broad range of personal laws' (Ahmed-Ghosh, 2004: 96). In order to highlight the issue of legally reinforced dependence, for instance, Ahmed-Ghosh provides a critique

of the laws on marital residence issues that arise upon the occurrence of wife

abuse. He argues that abused wives are not provided with any residential support

guarantees, which in turn reduces their reporting abuse. That is, men are not

legally obliged to leave the marital home in the event of abuse. And since women

might not have any other place to stay, they find themselves trapped within one of

two options: either to become homeless or to remain in the same residence with

the abusive husband.

Another aspect of legal bias that abused wives in India are exposed to, Ahmed-

Ghosh argues, is related to legal provisions of self-defence. Ahmed-Ghosh states

that under the laws of India, if an act of violence is carried out in self-defence,

such acts are not considered to be wife abuse. Therefore presumed acts of

violence in self-defence are not subject to legal counteraction. The looseness in

defining what is meant by 'self-defence', Ahmed-Ghosh states, may 'limit or

prohibit women from filing complaints because the testimony of the husband is

essential to corroborate the charge of domestic violence' (Ahmed-Ghosh, 2004:

98). Ahmed-Ghosh proposes that the perpetrator of violence against a wife has

protection in accordance with the laws implemented in India, 'an environment of

patriarchal law-enforcing institutions' (Ahmed-Ghosh, 2004: 98).

Researchers have also addressed the effect of the law on the continuation or

ending of intimate partner violence against women in the west:

> At the heart of debates about legal responses to violence against women
> by male partners is the question, 'should the law be used to tackle this
> violence?' The debates interrogate the ability of the law, potential or

realised, to respond appropriately to men's violence against intimate partners. Can legal systems be effectively mobilized to help protect women and prevent future violence? Or are the law and its agents inherently incapable of understanding and responding to the complexities of this violence? If so, might this be due to an inability to incorporate a pro-feminist understanding of the gender politics, violence and power? (Lewis, Dobash, Dobash and Cavanagh, 2001: 106).

Researchers such as Choi (2009), despite their acknowledgement of the important changes that have been made, have critiqued the shortcomings of the British legal system. Choi (2009) argues that the legal system in the UK has not yet been successful in addressing intimate partner violence against women. Choi (2009) acknowledges the residues of patriarchal values that support male superiority in the UK. Yet, he argues that women in the UK are increasingly being liberated from such cultural restrictions (Choi, 2009: 6). These liberal views of the cultural position of British women have, in turn, positively shaped the legal system in the UK. As a result, police authorities in the UK were urged to deal with wife abuse incidents as criminal offences. The increased level of professionalism with which intimate partner incidents against women are handled has yielded 'better chances for escaping domestic abuse' (Choi, 2009: 14). However, police authorities do not always express their cooperation with abused women. In certain instances, patriarchal cultural values influence their decisions not to help abused women:

> Police may show reluctance to arrest or offer help if the victim is not living up to her [*sic*] patriarchal ideal, if the victim has been drinking alcohol, has been found with another man, or [*sic*] in any way challenging her expected female role it is often considered a provocation of violence. (Choi, 2009: 37-38)

Despite Choi's acknowledgement of an improvement in the British legal system, he highlights the failure of the system to resolve intimate partner violence issues

in many instances. The reasons he presents in order to explain the system's

failings are mainly two. The first reason is the limited awareness and training

received by those working within the system. The second, however, is the limited

financial resources that the relevant authorities have in order to respond

adequately.

With regard to law-related wife abuse literature in Muslim Middle Eastern

countries, gaps in wife abuse laws' content, and poor implementation and support

mechanisms for the abused wives have been highlighted. However, the severity of

the bias found in wife abuse laws differs from one country to another. In

extremely conservative countries such as Saudi Arabia for example, laws

addressing the violence against and suppression of wives are objected to because

of the prevailing misogynist cultural values. Andersson and Togelius (2010) point

out:

> In Saudi Arabia women are legal minors who need permission from a
> male guardian in, among others, matters concerning education,
> employment and health care. Despite the obvious subordination of women
> in the country, Saudi Arabia has ratified the Convention on the
> Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, with a
> reservation saying that in cases of contradiction between the Convention
> and Islamic law they do not obligate themselves to follow the rules of the
> Convention. (Andersson and Togelius, 2010: 1)

In Saudi Arabia, Andersson and Togelius argue, male dominated cultural values

are responsible for the national rejection of women's liberation. Bearing in mind

the strong effect of religion on Saudi society, oppressive men utilize religion as a

tool to sustain women's subordination to their male counterparts (Doumato, 2010;

64

Andersson and Togelius, 2010 and Human Rights Watch, 2014). A particular

group of these misogynist men are specialized in theological studies and

legislation in the context of Islam. They are the most powerful in terms of

reinforcing women's oppression because they 'view their own authority on

religious matters as unquestionable; their interpretation of Islam is flawless'

(Ismail, 2012: 418). In this respect, international organizations such as Amnesty

International have also addressed the legally enforced bias against Saudi women,

maintaining that 'discrimination in law and practice, as well as the absence of a

law criminalizing domestic violence, fosters an environment in which domestic

violence is rife' (Amnesty International, 2013: 12).

The literature on wife abuse in less conservative cultural and legal contexts such

as those of Jordan and Tunisia has also investigated the impact of the law on wife

abuse. In Tunisia, Ben Salem (2010) tackled the lack of changes that have been

made in wife abuse-related laws in recent years. 'Since the year 2000, very few

new laws that favor women have been adopted' (Ben Salem, 2010: 3). Ben Salem

argues that following 'the 1993 amendments to the personal status code, the penal

code was amended to criminalize domestic violence and remove gender-

discriminatory language that had allowed for a reduction in sentencing for a man

who committed acts of violence against his spouse' (Ben Salem, 2010: 5).

Yet, in spite of these legal changes, and despite the better access of Tunisian

women to their civil and legal rights (Ben Salem, 2010), like women of other

Arab countries such as Jordan for instance (Husseini, 2010), Tunisian women

continue to struggle under the looseness of the implementation measures related to wife abuse conflicts: 'Law-enforcement authorities routinely dismiss domestic violence as "private" disputes. Female victims attempting to register complaints of abuse are often turned away and advised, or pressured, by the police to reconcile with their abusive spouses' (Douki et al., 2003: 168). This looseness in the implementation of counter-wife abuse regulations results in maintaining wife abuse in Tunisia (UNHCR, 2014 a).

In line with intimate partner violence literature in western and non-western countries, research on wife abuse in Jordan has also confirmed the direct impact of the law on practicing wife abuse in the country, as evidenced in the lack of lawsuits and convictions against abusive men in Jordan (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 2011). Research on wife abuse in Jordan has highlighted the role of the law in fighting against (Al-Rawashdeh, 2012) or reinforcing wife abuse and maintaining the subordination of women (Husseini, 2010). Despite the efforts of international organizations in combating wife abuse worldwide (The International Rescue Committee, 2012), especially in terms of enforcing law reform (Al-Moussa, 2009), wife abuse continues to be widespread in Jordan (The United Nations Population Fund, 2008).

There have been many efforts by international organizations to introduce counter-violence legislations (Naffa, Al Dabass, Jabiri et al., 2007). Yet, an important reason behind the continuing practice of wife abuse in Jordan is related to coordination issues on the governmental, institutional and organizational levels

(The United Nations, 2006). In the literature on wife abuse in Jordan, the aspects

of the Jordanian law that are highlighted are related to marriage dissolution

provisions (Welchman, 2007), especially after the changes that were made in

2010 to the Jordanian Law of Personal Status. The literature on wife abuse in

Jordan has also highlighted the contradiction between Islamic principles and laws

(Hassan, 1995; Tabet, 2005: 1), and the current Personal Status laws implemented

in the country (Husseini, 2010: 10). Some researchers have attempted to explore

the sources of the bias against women in Jordanian laws (Haj-Yahia, 2002;

Sonbol, 2003), especially in marriage dissolution situations. Amongst the types of

legally approved bias against wives in Jordan is polygamy which some view as a

violent marital relationship. Some researchers on polygamy in Jordan have

addressed the pervasiveness of this phenomenon (the National Council for Family

Affairs and UNICEF, 2007; Tertilt, 2005), while others have explored its

acceptability (Sheriff, 1977; Philips and Jones, 2005) and the abusiveness of

polygamous unions (Mashhour, 2005; Brooks, 2009).

Other aspects of legal bias that wives in Jordan encounter are associated with

custody-related issues. A number of organizations and legal bodies have

investigated custody provisions in Jordan (The Law Office of Jeremy D. Morley,

2009; Jordan Economic and Social Council, 2010), and some have explored these

as triggering factors of wife abuse (UNESCO, 2012). Some researchers have

however critiqued the approach of international organizations and laws in dealing

with wife abuse issues in non-western cultures. The point around which the

criticism revolves is related to notions of 'othering' (Hua, 2006). Researchers

such as Crowley (1991), Miller and Metcalfe (1998), Malik (2010), Julia

Teschlade (2010) and Gunjate and Shivaji (2012) have also addressed notions of

'othering' in non-western feminist research. Amongst the most prominent

sociologists who have tackled the issue of double exclusion or double

marginalization in the Arab World are Darraj (2002) and Golley (2004). Darraj

(2002) argues:

> Of course, over the years, American feminism has opened its gates (after
> much pounding) to other versions of feminism, such as black feminism
> and other non-white, non-upper-middle-class feminisms. Therefore, the
> focus on Arab women's issues illustrates the good intentions of American
> feminism (Darraj, 2002: n.p.).

Darraj (2002) however critiques western feminist approaches to the investigation

of Arab women's issues, arguing that often 'Arab women's voices are excluded

from discussions concerning their own lives' (Darraj, 2002: n.p.). That is, modern

western feminism continues to 'assume that all women in the globe have the same

power and strength to resist the implicit patriarchal society and the male dominant

societies they live in' (Abu Sarhan, 2011: 34-35).

2.5 Theoretical Views on Wife Abuse

Western researchers have proposed a multitude of theoretical perspectives in

order to investigate wife abuse including 'systems theory, resource theory,

exchange or social control theory, and subculture of violence theory' (Hunnicutt,

2009: 556). With regard to general systems theory, Straus (1973) introduced its

premises, arguing that family violence emerges as the outcome of a 'positive',

complex 'feedback' system, operating at the individual, family, and societal

levels. In addition, family violence is affected by factors such as the level of

conflict inherent in the family, high levels of violence in society, family

socialization to violence, cultural norms legitimizing violence, the sexist

organization of society, and the multitudinous reasons for the battered person's

toleration of the violence (Straus, 1973: 116-123).

In other words, wife abuse, as other forms of violence within the family, is shaped

by the interaction and friction or tension between individuals within and outside

the context of the family. Drawing on the views of Adams (1988), Harne and

Radford (2008: 156) argue that researchers employing general systems theory-

based approaches have received considerable criticism due to their tendency to

view women as just as responsible for their exposure to violence as men since

some women, according to this perspective, might willingly choose to remain in

an abusive marriage, risking the constant exposure to abuse, because staying is

more rewarding and less costly, especially in the absence of skills and resources

available for the abused wife to use (Miller and Knudsen, 1999). Another critique

that researchers utilizing a general systems theory-based approach have received

is that such an approach does not take into consideration the impact of gender

inequality on the emergence of violence against wives and merely acknowledges

sex-based differences between the abused women and their abusers (Howard and

Hollander, 2000: 51-52).

With regard to the subculture-of-violence theory, the premises of this theory were introduced by Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967) (Singh, 2010). In line with Batistich (2004), Magwa (2013) argues that the subculture-of-violence theory proposes that in every society 'there is a subculture of violence in which some groups within society hold values that permit and even encourage the use of violence' (Magwa, 2013: 585). This theoretical framework was also discussed earlier by Brewster (2002: 28) who argued that the subculture-of-violence theory 'holds that domestic abuse occurs more often in certain subcultures than in others', such that 'violence is a more acceptable way to settle conflict in the lower-class subculture'. However, these views of subculture-of-violence theory have been critiqued for failing to address the impact of gender differences on domestic violence practices such as wife abuse (Currie, 1998), an aspect that was also overlooked by the supporters of general systems theory (Howard and Hollander, 2000: 51-52).

2.5.1 Wife Abuse and Resource Theory

Since the impact of gender differences is important for the investigation of wife abuse from a feminist perspective, I draw on the views of Islamic feminists such as Fatima Mernissi in my work. I use resource theory because it brings together a number of factors that affect wife abuse victims such as those related to power and coercion in addition to resources (Cromwell and Olson, 1975; McDonald, 1980; Jory and Yodanis, 2010), and shows how these factors intersect while shaping the position of abused women in Jordan. Another reason behind my

70

choice of resource theory is that domestic violence against wives in Jordan is

mostly tolerated by abused women due to their lack of access to resources that

allow them to make the decision to leave the abusive marital relationship (Haj-

Yahia, 2002; Haddad, Shotar, Younger et al., 2011).

The premises of resource theory were first introduced by French and Raven

(1959). They analysed family power as constructed of power bases, power

processes and power outcomes. French and Raven further subdivided power bases

into six sections. First, they introduced 'legitimate power', which is the culturally

supported authority rooted in the prevailing 'belief system' in a given society. In

other words, a family member in a certain society is entitled to interfere in the

decision-making process of other family members because of the degree of

kinship that bonds the two together (French and Raven, 1959). Such behaviour is

considered acceptable in certain cultures, yet may be regarded as a form of

unacceptable intrusion in others (Jory and Yodanis, 2010). Secondly,

informational power was defined as the type of power a family member acquires

on the account of being 'knowledgeable' in a certain field more than other

members in the family (French and Raven, 1959). The informed family member's

ability to impose his opinions on the less-informed spouse is based on the notion

that his being more informed in a certain field allows him to make better decisions

for the family. This standpoint allows him to carry out his goals. Informational

power thus enables men to be the decision-makers in the family and control their

wives. Yet, when men are 'unable to effect [*sic*] their intentions through

negotiation' and 'find that nonphysical coercion may be insufficient in their

attempts to achieve their own intentions', they may 'resort to pushing, slapping, beating, and so forth' (Babcock et al., 1993: 41).

Coercive power is the third type French and Raven (1959) introduced, incorporating the power that emerges from one family member's fear of being exposed to punishment in case he or she does not yield to the demands of the member in control. Usta, Antoun, Ambuel et al. (2012) categorize Arab women's disclosure of wife abuse as actions that may be considered rebellious and unacceptable by abusive husbands, and that may therefore trigger spousal abuse. Consequently, abused women may be hesitant to report wife abuse: 'Fear of retaliation by the spouse may also be more pronounced among Arab women, whose concerns would not be limited to increasing violence, but also to being separated from their children, a strategy commonly used by violent spouses and condoned by the society' (Usta, Antoun, Ambuel et al., 2012: 219).

In 1975, Cromwell and Olson provided an exploration of resource theory in an attempt to explain spousal conflict (Cromwell and Olson, 1975). They maintain that: 'The most important aspect of family structure is the power position of the members' (Cromwell and Olson, 1975: 4). They stress that power shapes the interpersonal relationships among family members. Cromwell and Olson also focus on material resources in their study of family power, which provides, in their opinion, a means to understand wife abuse. Philip Blumstein and Pepper Schwartz (1983) also argue that there is a direct association between men's marital power and their income. Cromwell and Olson define power processes as the means of interaction and communication within the family that allow a certain

member to achieve his desired goals, and by power outcomes they mean the

intended goals and aims the individual wants to realize within the family

(Cromwell and Olson, 1975; Jory and Yodanis, 2010). The views of Cromwell

and Olson (1975), like those of McDonald (1980), are built upon the idea that for

some abusive husbands, the less resources the husband has access to, the greater

the chance becomes that he exercises violence against his wife in reinforcement of

his position and authority as the leader of the family.

While such reasoning about the power dynamics that might trigger wife abuse

might apply to some such cases, other wife abuse incidents however cannot be

explained as having occurred due to the husband's lack of access to power

resources. Some men, for example, exercise violence against their wives simply

because they can (Paymar and Barnes, n.d.: 7). Researchers who have attempted

to investigate wife abuse in Jordan through the premises of resource theory

include Al-Badayneh (2012) and Gharaibeh and Oweis (2009). They agree on the

proposition that women's lack of resources in Jordan increases their experiencing

wife abuse.

2.5.2 Feminist Views on Domestic Violence

Feminists have centred their efforts on questioning and combating the sexist

domination of men in the private as well as the public sphere (hooks, 2000). They

mainly reject patriarchal cultural beliefs that support inferiorizing and

marginalizing women (hooks, 2000). A particular aspect of inequality against

women that feminists focus on is intimate partner violence including wife abuse. In the context of intimate partner violence, feminist theory 'provides the basis and justification for the existence of domestic violence throughout history. The theory posits that intimate partner violence grows out of inequality within marriage (and other intimate relationships modelled on marriage) and reinforces male power and female subordination within the home' (McCue, 2008: 15). Yet, feminist theoretical views in relation to intimate partner violence are far from unified (McCue, 2008). Feminists investigating this phenomenon have developed many theoretical perspectives, including radical feminist, Marxist feminist, and Arab feminist ones.

During the second wave of the feminist movement, extending from the 1960s to the 1980s, both radical feminists and Marxist feminists introduced theoretical frameworks through which they endeavoured to investigate the reasons behind women's oppression. Radical feminists had a pioneering role in drawing public attention to the severity of intimate partner violence against women. Radical feminists' focal point was to investigate this phenomenon in relation to male-dominating patriarchal values (Hanser, 2007). Patriarchy is, from a radical feminist perspective, a social unit of male power. The advocates of patriarchal values, radical feminists argue, utilize various forms of violence against women in order to reinforce men's power and social control (Hanser, 2007). According 'to radical feminists, women, as women, regardless of class, race, ethnicity, and other differences, are vulnerable to rape, domestic violence, and homicide at the hands of their intimate partners' (Berberoglu, 2005: 143-144).

However, radical feminist views in relation to intimate partner violence against women have been subject to the criticism of feminist theoreticians such as liberal and Marxist feminists. The 'flaws that critics of Radical feminism discerned are fairly obvious. Critics alleged that the central idea of patriarchy as the root and cause of all things was overstated' (Inglis and Thorpe, 2012: n.p.). Instead of restricting the causes of intimate partner violence against women to the power of patriarchal cultural ideologies, Marxist feminists, agreeing with the advocates of resource theory (McDonald, 1980; Babcock et al., 1993), proposed that 'women's subordination was the result of a system in which men held and controlled most private property in society' (Hanser, 2007: 323). For Marxist feminists, patriarchy is not the sole source of women's oppression. Marxist feminists maintain that gender roles 'are built around the economic system whereby men are perceived as the breadwinners. When they feel they cannot be successful as providers, the result might be violence against women as a means of reasserting feelings of power and control' (Finley, 2013: 389). Finley elaborates saying that research 'does bear out that women are at highest risk for lethal abuse when they are employed and their abuser is unemployed, suggesting this situation is perceived as a threat to the man' (Finley, 2013: 389). Some researchers argue that concentrating on the individual *per se* has diverted the investigation of this phenomenon from the social interest in exploring and combating intimate partner violence against women to focusing on the individual. This in turn has resulted in an increase in the tendency to blame the victim instead of the perpetrator who has initiated the assault (Senn, 2002: 483).

Third-wave feminist views on wife abuse have been introduced since the 1980s and have continued until today. Hanser (2007) argues that in the third wave of feminism 'the women's movement had grown to encompass a wide variety of different and often conflicting subgroups of membership' (Hanser, 2007: 322). Third-wave feminism was not only concerned with issues related to western white middle-class women, but also focused on issues that concern women of colour and non-western women, employing an intersectional approach to the investigation of issues that concern women such as wife abuse.

The 'concept of "intersectionality" refers to the interactivity of social identity structures such as race, class, and gender in fostering life experiences, especially experiences of privilege and oppression' (Gopaldas, 2013: 90). The term 'intersectionality' was first introduced by the legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) in her article 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics' to address issues related to multiple oppressions and the complexity of identity from a feminist perspective (Crenshaw, 1989: 140). Crenshaw's main critique of mainstream liberal discourses revolves around their tendency to suppress the variant voices and experiences of sub-groups, such as the diverse experiences of black women for example, an approach that gives primary attention to 'the most privileged group members' (Crenshaw, 1989: 140) and 'marginalizes those who are multiply-burdened' (Crenshaw, 1989: 140).

In her article 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color', Crenshaw (1993) critiques the identity politics of liberal discourses not for their inability to 'transcend difference' but because these discourses ignore the aspects of dissimilarity that exist within each group (Crenshaw, 1993: 1242). Crenshaw (1993) argues that following a feminist intersectional approach thus serves to pinpoint the racial differences that exist within gender categories and the gendered differences that exist within racial groups: 'My focus on intersections of race and gender only highlights the need to account for multiple grounds of identity when considering how the social world is constructed' (Crenshaw, 1993: 1245). Crenshaw (1993) stresses the importance of following an intersectional approach when dealing with issues that women encounter in their everyday lives such as violence-related issues, in order to resolve these effectively: 'In the context of violence against women, the elision of difference in identity politics is problematic, fundamentally because the violence that many women experience is often shaped by other dimensions of their identities, such as race and class' (Crenshaw, 1993: 1242). Crenshaw (1993) explains the negative consequences of overlooking sub-group differences, saying: '. . . ignoring difference *within* groups contributes to tension *among* groups, another problem of identity politics that bears on efforts to politicize violence against women' (Crenshaw, 1993: 1242).

The conceptualization of 'intersectionality' since its coinage in the late 1980s has been the target of constant adjustments and modifications. Forming an understanding of 'intersectionality' has attracted the attention of social and

feminist researchers who have proposed criteria or categories on the micro, or individual level, and other criteria on the macro, or national and global levels, according to which differences between women may be pinpointed and investigated (Hankivsky, 2014: 9). Social and feminist researchers have expanded the term 'intersectionality' to transcend gender and race diversities on the micro level and encompass other aspects of dissimilarity found between individual women such as those related to class, nationality and sexuality (Nash, 2008: 7) in addition to 'age, attractiveness, body type, caste, citizenship, education, ethnicity, height and weight assessments' and 'immigration status, income, marital status, mental health status, nationality, occupation, physical ability, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and other naturalized—though not necessarily natural—ways of categorizing human populations' (Gopaldas, 2013: 91).

Differences between women on the macro level, however, were also pinpointed by intersectional feminist researchers to include 'global and national-level institutions and policies' (Hankivsky, 2014: 9). From a feminist intersectional perspective, the lived experiences of every woman are unique as multiple, rather than single, social identity structures that a woman possesses and that shape her experiences both on the individual level and the national level which differ from the social identity structures possessed by and impacting on the lives of other women. Thus, feminist intersectional researchers have rejected the proposition that a particular group of women's issues and experiences can be generalized and assumed to represent the status of all women:

It has become commonplace within feminist theory to claim that women's lives are constructed by multiple, intersecting systems of oppression. This insight – that oppression is not a singular process or a binary political relation, but is better understood as constituted by multiple, converging, or interwoven systems – originates in antiracist feminist critiques of the claim that women's oppression could be captured through an analysis of gender alone. (Carastathis, 2014: 304).

McCall (2005) argued that it is difficult to identify a particular set of social identity structures through which one can accurately measure and investigate women's oppression.

The most important social identity structures that are focused on in this research and that make the experiences of the Jordanian women who participated in this research and their responses to wife abuse unique include the wives' age, educational attainment (Haj-Yahia, 2002; The Jordanian Department of Statistics, the Ministry of Health, the University of Jordan and Macro International Inc., 2007) and number of children (Btoush and Haj-Yahia, 2008; O'Hara, Tsai, Carlson et al., 2013). Additional social identity structures, however, include religion, particularly Islam, patriarchal cultural values (Haj-Yahia, 2002), and wife abuse related laws (Welchman, 2007; United Nations, 2009; Husseini, 2010). With regard to the impact of Islam, as a social identity structure, on the experiences of abused women, Salem (2013) argues that 'Islam has long played a central role in feminist debates, and has consistently been defined as being outside of the parameters set by Western mainstream feminism and thus as intrinsically patriarchal' (Salem, 2013: n.d.). Third-wave Arab feminists, for instance, focus on investigating the influence of cultural values on maintaining the subordination of Arab Muslim women through the lens of Islam (Sonbol, 2003; Al-Hibri, 2003).

After having discussed the theoretical perspectives from which wife abuse has been investigated, the following section will cover the socio-cultural position of women in Jordan in relation to wife abuse.

2.6 The Socio-Cultural Position of Women in Jordan

Jordanian patriarchal society, in terms of the rigidity of its prevailing male dominating ideologies restricting women's rights, is gradually responding to the global trends of modernization (Becknell, 2005). Since the 1980s, women have become more knowledgeable about their social value and personal rights (Becknell, 2005). Becknell attributes this increasing awareness amongst Jordanian women to the work of the feminist movement in Jordan which has directed its efforts to challenging the various injustices Jordanian women encounter on a daily basis, including wife abuse. Amal Sabbagh (2005) also acknowledges the contribution of the Jordanian women's movement to combating male domination and points out that such efforts have led to increasing women's participation in political life (Sabbagh, 2005: 63).

In response to the emerging modernization values that call for women's liberation, the patriarchal system in Jordan has gradually weakened due to the emerging redistribution of family structures (i.e. the transformation of many extended families into nuclear families in which men have less control over women and younger men) (Al-Badayneh, 2012, n.p.). Women's advancing access to financial resources and the labour market (Moghadam, 1992; Metcalfe, 2006)

has had a negative impact on male authority. Traditionally, women's sources of income in Jordan were either their fathers' or their husbands' (Kelly and Breslin, 2010). As a result, these women's dependence on men for monetary support, as modern research on wife abuse reveals, rendered them more vulnerable targets for their husbands' violent attacks (Oweis et al., 2009). In modern Jordan by contrast, women increasingly join the labour force (Miles, 2002). This has resulted in more urban women becoming financially independent and their challenging traditional patriarchal views about the acceptable roles assigned to women (The Arab Women Organization, Mosawa Network and members of the campaign 'My Mother is Jordanian and Her Nationality is My Right', 2012), including their tolerance of wife abuse (Paludi, 2004: 34). The statistics of the European Training Foundation (2005) and the Department of Statistics in Jordan (2013 a, b, c) shown in Table 1 below indicate that although Jordanian women's socio-cultural position is gradually improving and although they are increasingly being emancipated

Table 1: Jordanian Men and Women's Economic Activity Rates for Population Aged 15+ (%) from 1979-2013.

Year	Male	Female
1979	76.3	6.4
1987	70.7	9.3
1995	70.1	12.3
2000	66.1	12.3
2003	63.2	11.2
2007	64.3	14.9
2010	63.2	14.3
2013	59.7	13.1

Source: The European Training Foundation (2005) Unemployment in Jordan; Department of Statistics (2013 a, b, c) Jordanian Population Age15+ Years by Activity Status, Sex and Broad Age Groups (Percentage Distribution). Fourth Round -2007; Department of Statistics (2013) *Jordanian Population Age15+ Years by Activity Status, Sex and Broad Age Groups (Percentage Distribution). Fourth Round -2010*; Department of Statistics (2013) *Jordanian Population Age15+ Years by Activity Status, Sex and Broad Age Groups (Percentage Distribution). Third Round -2013.*

from the prevailing gendered norms, their participation rates in public-sphere

activities, such as joining the labour force for example, remain low.

Jordanian women's economic activity rates have gone up from 6.4 % in the year

1979 to only 13.1% in 2013 (Foundation, 2005: 22; Department of Statistics,

2013: n.p.). Hence, Jordanian women's economic activity rates in 2013 were

equivalent to less than 25% of male economic activity rates in the same year.

Moreover, the documented increase in Jordanian women's participation in the

labour market between the years 1979 and 2013 was not steady. The data

provided by the European Training Foundation (2005) and the Jordanian

Department of Statistics (2013 a, b, c), for instance, reveal that Jordanian

women's participation in the labour market dropped from 12.3 in the year 2000 to

11.2 in 2003 and from 14.9 in 2007 to 14.3 in 2010 (The European Training

Foundation, 2005; the Department of Statistics, 2013).

The second aspect reflecting gender inequality in Jordanian women's socio-

cultural position can be seen in Jordanian women's decision-making and voting

rates. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (2013) provides

numeric evidence of this aspect of gender inequality (Table 2).

Table 2: Jordanian Women's Voting Rates.

Indicators	1989	1993	1997	2003
Percentage of voters registered on the voting list	54.5	56.12	44.9	48.1

Source: The United Nations Development Fund for Women (2013) Voter
Turnout: General Characteristics.

Table 2 summarises women's parliamentary voting participation rates over the years 1989-2003 as reported by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (2013). The percentage of Jordanian women who voted during the parliamentary elections, as registered on the official national voting list, increased from 54.5% in 1989 to 56.12% in 1993 (the United Nations Development Fund for Women, 2013: 22). However, this increase was not steady. The percentage of their participation in the parliamentary elections went down to 44.9% in 1997 and increased once more to 48.1% in 2003. These percentages might seem to reflect an improvement in Jordanian women's access to their political rights. However, they could be interpreted otherwise. They could reflect an increase in male authority and dominance over women in Jordan. This is because the choices of women in Jordan 'even in voting during elections . . . are significantly controlled by men in the family' (World Bank, 2005: 51).

Thus, the increase in Jordanian women's voting rates in 2003 does not necessarily relate to an improvement in their access to political rights nor does it relate to an increase in their representation in the government. Jordanian women remain 'significantly underrepresented in overall government decision making' (World Bank, 2005: 52), which in turn affects their ability to improve the laws and regulations abided by in Jordan including those related to wife abuse issues (United Nations, 2006: vi) as there is a lack of 'coordination between government and civil society organizations working in the field of protecting women victims' (Arab Women Organization of Jordan, n.d.: 9).

The issue of Jordanian women's weak representation in the government and access to decision-making positions has also been investigated by UNESCO and UNIFEM (2006) and Al Maaitah, Oweis, Olimat et al. (2012). UNESCO and UNIFEM (2006) identify women's power positions as:

> The paths by which women and men train for legal and judicial professions; the existence of associations for women lawyers and judges; the identification of codified discrimination against women; and the identification of policies that promote women's participation in the law and in the judiciary. For example, we need information on whether or not anti-discrimination legislation exists, and if mechanisms exist for its implementation and enforcement. (UNESCO and UNIFEM, 2006: 3-4)

Al Maaitah, Oweis, Olimat et al. (2012) attribute women's weak representation in the government and access to decision-making positions in Jordan to a number of reasons including: 'Male dominant culture when assigning for top level jobs as women are seen as a second class'; men's 'disagreement with the idea of women assuming high political and leadership positions'; the difficulties facing women who 'work and participate in teams, groups or committees because of a male dominated environment' in addition to the fact that 'most decisions are based on top managers' personal preferences and favours' (Al Maaitah, Oweis, Olimat et al., 2012: 108). Thus, despite the 'fact that women make 44% of public sector employees, they only constitute 10% of those in leadership positions' (Nims, 2015: 4).

The third aspect reflecting Jordanian women's socio-cultural status is that of forced marriage. Statistics showing the prevalence of forced marriages in Jordan is scarce (Almasarweh, 2003; IRIN, 2006): 'Compiling statistics on forced marriage can prove difficult, as many of the marriages are unregistered, the

practice is accepted in many communities, and victims are often reluctant to speak out against family members' (Gott, 2013: 175-176). Despite the scarcity of statistical data on the prevalence of forced marriages in Jordan, international organizations such as the UNHCR and UNICEF for example, have conducted studies exploring a particular form of forced marriage known as early[15] marriage. According to UNHCR (2014 b), for instance, '13% of all registered marriages for Jordanians' were classified as early marriages, a particular form of forced marriage. UNICEF's (2014) statistics regarding early marriages in Jordan between the years 2005 and 2013 (see Table 3 below) show that the figures have gone up gradually.

Table 3: Forced Early Marriages in Jordan (2005-2013).

Year	Registered marriages in Jordan (all ages)	Girls 15-17*	Girls 15-17 (as % of registered marriages)	Boys 15-17*	Boys 15-17 (as % of registered marriages)
2005	58 932	8 198	13.9	232	0.4
2006	62 612	8 471	13.5	241	0.4
2007	65 027	8 426	13	232	0.4
2008	66 581	9 014	13.5	242	0.4
2009	64 738	5 349	8.3	180	0.3
2010	61 770	8 042	13	152	0.3
2011	64 257	8 093	12.6	211	0.3
2012	70 400	8 859	12.6	267	0.4
2013	72 860	9 618	13.2	272	0.4

Source: UNICEF (2014) Early Marriages in Jordan.

Gott (2013) argues that the factors that lead to early marriages include 'beliefs about sexual purity, honor, and appropriate gender roles' in addition to economic motivations (Gott, 2013: 178). Gott (2013) provides examples of actions that might trigger early marriages: 'For example, parents seek to prevent premarital sex, to break up an ongoing relationship or other behavior the family disapproves

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[15] Early marriages are marriages in which minor girls are wed usually at the age of 15-17. Cases of early marriages for girls under 15 in Jordan cannot be identified because marriages 'cannot be registered with the *shari'a* courts in Jordan for persons below the age of 15' (UNICEF, 2014: 18).

of, to mitigate the shame of rape, or to hide or "cure" homosexuality' (Gott, 2013: 178). Early marriages are forced because girls are not in a position to give their consent to the marriage arrangement (Welchman, 2007). In early marriages, the brides are minors, whereas in forced marriages the brides could be minors or adults (Welchman, 2007). Forced marriages are not always perpetrated by the women's family members. Women might also be kidnapped. In addition, in 'communities where "widow inheritance[16]" is practiced, a widow may be forced by her husband's relatives to marry her brother-in-law or another member of her husband's family" (Gott, 2013: 175).

Researchers such as Khoury and Massad (1992) and Hamamy, Jamhawi, Al-Darawsheh et al. (2005) have also investigated a version of forced marriage known as 'consanguineous marriages'. Hamamy, Jamhawi, Al-Darawsheh et al. (2005: 511) define consanguineous marriages as 'marriages contracted between blood relatives'. What is problematic about consanguineous marriages is that women might be forced to accept such marital arrangements (Hasan, 2009). The tendency of Muslim and Arab women, including women in Jordan, to get married to men who are their blood relatives is high. After having investigated approximately 2000 households, Khoury and Massad (1992) found that the prevalence of consanguineous marriages was about 50% of the research sample. Hamamy, Jamhawi, Al-Darawsheh et al. (2005) interviewed 1032 research participants and found that the rates of consanguineous marriages range from 38%

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[16] Peterman (2011), drawing on the views of Malungo (2001), states that widow inheritance or 'levirate marriage' is 'the practice whereby a male relative of the dead husband takes the widow as a wife, traditionally in part to provide economic security for the woman' (Peterman, 2011: 7).

of those interviewed in rural areas to 30% among those interviewed in urban areas in Jordan.

However, the rates of consanguineous marriage are gradually declining in Jordan (Hamamy, Jamhawi, Al-Darawsheh et al., 2005). The reasons behind this decline are directly related to women's improving education and financial status. The more educated and financially stable women are, the less likely they are to accept a consanguineous marriage arrangement (Hamamy, Jamhawi, Al-Darawsheh et al., 2005). The following subsection addresses the role that NGOs play in raising individuals' awareness to the unacceptability of wife abuse in Jordan.

2.7 The Role That NGOs and Feminist Activists Play in Raising Individuals' Awareness to the Unacceptability of Wife Abuse and Women's Increasing Access to their Rights

There are increasing numbers of NGOs whose core interests lie in the protection of abused women; the adjustment of discriminatory legislations that reinforce women's subordination to men through their support of wife abuse; and raising public awareness about the negative influence that domestic violence against women has on the national advancement of Jordan. Non-governmental organizations' public campaigning against abusing women (Naffa et al., 2007) along with the efforts of women activists in Jordan have broken the silence around wife abuse in Jordan which prevailed before the late 1980s (Becknell, 2005: n.p.). These efforts that have contributed positively to public campaigning

87

against wife abuse and the protection of women from wife abuse practices, are also signs of modern Jordanian women's gradually improving socio-cultural status: 'A number of NGOs[17] have had much success in breaking the silence on the issue of domestic violence by lobbying decision-makers to denounce violence and by increasing debate in the media. Civil Society [*sic*] activities include lobbying for legal reforms, enforcement of legal rights, and better protection by government and law enforcement' (Naffa et al., 2007: 7). Steityeh (2010) also maintains that positive changes are being made regarding women's rights and gender roles in male-dominated societies such as Jordan. She argues that due to the efforts of governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations, Jordanian women are increasingly made aware of the legal and cultural unacceptability of wife abuse (Steityeh: 2010).

However, governmental facilitation of the progress attained by NGOs in counteracting wife abuse in Jordan is still lacking. The advancement of NGOs in Jordan at large and particularly those specializing in defending women's rights continues to be impeded by the 'pervasive' interference of the government (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law[18] (ICNL), 2012: n.p.). By 'making it difficult or even illegal for individuals and groups to gather or meet (i.e. to exercise freedom of assembly), the law directly hinders the ability of NGO

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[17] These NGOs include the Jordanian Women's Union (2012), the Jordanian National Women's Commission (Keeling, 2010) and the Women's Complaint Office (Keeling, 2010).
[18] ICNL is the leading source for information on the legal environment for civil society, philanthropy, and public participation. Since 1992, ICNL has served as a resource to civil society leaders, government officials, and the donor community in over 100 countries (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), 2012: n.p.)
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representatives, and individuals generally, to plan and/or engage in advocacy activities' (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) and World Movement for Democracy Secretariat at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), 2008: 16).

It was not until the late twentieth century that wife abuse and women's rights became an issue of public debate in Jordan. As Becknell (2005) makes clear, between the years 1944 and 1979 Jordanian feminist efforts 'ignored social issues and focused heavily on making better mothers out of women, and the raising of the next generation of children' (Becknell, 2005: n.p.). Feminist contributions from the 1990s onwards in Jordan led to a drastic shift in the legal framing of women's socio-cultural position through their petitions to change discriminatory laws against women:

> Jordan signed CEDAW in 1980 and ratified it in 1992, although the
> country included reservations concerning Article 9(2), on nationality;
> Article 15(4), on freedom of housing and movement; and Article 16(1),
> paragraphs (C), (D), and (G), related to marital, custody, and personal
> status issues. In May 2009, Jordan formally reported that it was lifting its
> reservation on Article 15(4), leaving just two reservations in effect. The
> convention's publication in the official gazette on August 1, 2007,
> represented a key step toward its full implementation. The move was the
> result of persistent efforts by the majority of women's organizations, and
> had the effect of giving CEDAW the force of law. (Husseini, 2010: 6)

Husseini presents statistical findings on the improvement in Jordanian women's status measured in terms of the increase in women's access to justice, their autonomy, security and personal freedom, their economic rights and opportunities, their political rights and civic voice, and their social and cultural rights (see Table 4). The ratings of Jordan in this table are measured on a scale of

1 to 5, with 1 representing the lowest and 5 the highest level of freedom women

have to exercise their rights.

Table 4: Women's Rights in Jordan.

Country Ratings	2004	2009
Nondiscrimination and Access to Justice	2.4	2.7
Autonomy, Security, and Freedom of the Person	2.4	2.7
Economic Rights and Equal Opportunity	2.8	2.9
Political Rights and Civic Voice	2.8	2.9
Social and Cultural Rights	2.5	2.8

Source: Husseini (2010).

These figures present a trajectory of Jordanian women's slow advancement

towards their liberation from male domination. Such figures give some hope for

the future especially when compared to the greater male-dominated status of

women in Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia for instance (Table 5).

Table 5: Women's Rights in Saudi Arabia.

Country Ratings	2004	2009
Nondiscrimination and Access to Justice	1.2	1.4
Autonomy, Security, and Freedom of the	1.1	1.3
Economic Rights and Equal Opportunity	1.4	1.7
Political Rights and Civic Voice	1.0	1.2
Social and Cultural Rights	1.6	1.6

Source: Doumato (2010).

Human Rights Watch (2014) attributes Saudi women's minimal access to rights to

the guardianship system abided by in Saudi Arabia: 'Saudi guardianship system

continues to treat women as minors. Under this discriminatory system, girls and

women of all ages are forbidden from traveling, studying, or working without

permission from their male guardians' (Human Rights Watch, 2014: n.p.). Male

guardianship is also found in Jordan (Husseini, 2010: 8). However the

implementation of male guardianship values, according to Human Rights Watch

(2010), is less strict in Jordan than in Saudi Arabia. Women in Jordan, unlike

Saudi women (Human Rights Watch, 2010: 2), 'have the right to own property

and enter into business contracts, and do not require their husband's or guardian's

approval for such activities' (Husseini, 2010: 15), an aspect of freedom which

gives Jordanian women and particularly those who are abused a greater chance to

end their violent marriages and support themselves and their children. In the

following subsection, the limitations that surround the provision of assistance to

abused women in Jordan will be addressed.

2.8 Limitations Surrounding the Provision of Assistance to Abused Wives in Jordan

There are many limitations surrounding the provision of assistance to abused

wives in Jordan. These limitations are related to women's ability to disclose their

abusive experiences and the availability of NGOs and institutions that provide

assistance for such women as I shall show.

2.8.1 Disclosure of Wife Abuse and Cultural Restrictions

With regard to the cultural restrictions, abused women are often discouraged from

disclosing such abuse because of the prevailing cultural norms that consider this

phenomenon a private family matter (Haj-Yahia, 2002: 287; Gharaibeh and Oweis, 2009: 381; Haddad, Shotar, Younger et al., 2011: 81). These norms affect rural women's lives to a greater extent than urban women (The Jordanian Department of Statistics, the Ministry of Health, the University of Jordan et al., 2007). As a result, women in rural areas are less willing to report issues related to their personal lives such as wife abuse compared to women in urban areas (The Jordanian Department of Statistics, the Ministry of Health, the University of Jordan et al., 2007). The lack of willingness to disclose wife abuse among rural Jordanian women could be explained by drawing on the views of Haj-Yahia (2002) who has argued that women living in those areas are more likely to justify wife abuse because they are more influenced by cultural values that support male domination than their urban counterparts (Haj-Yahia, 2002).

2.8.2. The Availability of NGOs and Wife Abuse Shelters

A particular reason why many women, particularly women in rural areas, in Jordan do not report wife abuse is that these women have difficulty accessing relevant NGOs (Husseini, 2010). Only two shelters are available to assist wife abuse victims in Jordan: the Ministry of Social Development shelter and the Jordanian Women's Union shelter (CEDAW, 2012; Abu Hassan, 2005). Dar Alwifaq, the shelter managed by the Ministry of Social Development, clearly states that abused women can stay at the shelter for a maximum period of 6 months (Kelly and Breslin, 2010). The shelter run by the Jordanian Women's Union provides accommodation, psychological counselling and crafts-related

training for abused women to help them learn a skill and get a job to support

themselves after they leave the union (The Jordanian Women's Union, 2012).

However, in addition to the fact that these shelters are only available in Amman,

the capital of Jordan, which makes it difficult for Jordanian women living in rural

areas to receive assistance, it is not clear what happens to the abused women after

they leave the shelters. This lack of NGOs and shelter services has been addressed

by the United Nations Population Fund (2008): 'most of the NGOs offering

services to victims of violence are based in Amman. Unfortunately, the

availability of such services in the governorates remains limited' (United Nations

Population Fund, 2008: 24). Approximately 4 million people live in the urban

setting of Amman (*The Jordan Times*, 2014), the remainder of 7,930,491

Jordanian citizens (CIA Factbook, 2014) reside in rural areas. In other words,

NGOs and shelter services are not accessible to more than half of the women in

Jordan because such services are not close to their places of residence.

In conclusion, there are various forms of wife abuse; some are more commonly

practiced in non-western countries such as Jordan than in western countries.

Those practiced more commonly in non-western societies are dowry-related

violence (Krantz and Garcia-Moreno, 2005; UNICEF, 2000), forced sterilization

(Moore, Frohwirth and Miller, 2010; UNICEF, 2000), male partners' intervention

in women's use of contraceptives (Wilson-Williams et al., 2008; Alio, Daley,

Nana et al., 2009; Trawick, 2012; and Debnath, Roy and Mazumder, 2013) and

in-law wife abuse (Clark, Silverman, Shahrouri et al., 2010). Wife abuse in its

different forms is highly prevalent in Jordan (the National Council for Family

Affairs, 2013). Its prevalence is affected by numerous factors, including factors commonly reported in the literature on intimate partner violence in western countries and, more importantly, others that are more commonly reported in non-western countries, such as cultural values (Haj-Yahia, 2002; Al-Badayneh, 2012), honour-related values (Araji, 2000; Al-Badayneh, 2012), living with in-laws (Clark, Silverman, Shahrouri et al., 2010), religious values (Haj-Yahia, 2002; Hussain, 2004) and the law (Welchman, 2007; Husseini, 2010; Al Rawashdeh, 2012). Western and non-western researchers and organizations have been far from unified in their approach to the investigation of wife abuse, and in the outcomes they concluded in their research. However, researchers and organizations have generally agreed that this phenomenon is wide-spread and cultural, religious and legal reforms have to be carried out to combat it effectively. The following chapter discusses the qualitative approach I followed to explore the experiences of my research participants.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Because I investigate wife abuse in Jordan in this thesis, I divided my research into three stages: an initial scoping exercise followed by semi-structured interviews with wife abuse victims, questionnaires that were given to two of my research participants, and semi-structured interviews with lawyers. The initial scoping exercise was a preparatory stage designed to help me find out how I would be able to contact wife abuse victims and what legal provisions there were to assist such women in Jordan. Attempting to contact wife abuse victims through advertising for instance would have been fruitless since the issue of wife abuse is taboo in Jordan (Becknell, 2005). I thought victims would be hesitant to come forward and talk to me for fear that the interviews might be video-taped and their identities publicized.

In order to explain the initial scoping exercise and interviewing process, I first outline my research design and discuss the research sample. Then, I shall explain my feminist perspective. After that, I discuss how I began looking for organizations and institutions that provide shelter for wife abuse victims as I originally intended to interview wife abuse victims only. I explain how I found my interviewees and the role of gatekeepers in controlling my access to these interviewees. While talking about the role of gatekeepers (Reinharz, 1992), I explain why formal gatekeepers were favoured over personal connections in approaching the abused women. I discuss the difficulty of approaching the victims

at the beginning and getting them to open up to me as a stranger trying to investigate their perceptions of their experiences. I then analyze the interviewing process. I discuss how I decided to approach lawyers specialized in assisting abused women, explaining the issues that arose while I tried to get the lawyers to provide me with court case records on wife abuse. Finally, I explain my data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

Research on wife abuse in Jordan is mostly based on statistics provided by 'organizations that provide services for the victims' or 'based on interviewing representative samples from the society to examine certain issues relevant to domestic violence, such as attitudes, general public awareness on the subject or on services providers' (United Nations Population Fund, 2008: 9). For my exploration of wife abuse in Jordan, I decided to interview women who were wife abuse victims. I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews rather than organizing focus groups, for instance, because although the latter method may encourage[19] abused women to talk about their experiences in more detail (Khan, Anker, Patel et al., 1991: 145), sensitivity towards the disclosure of private family issues such as wife abuse still prevails in Jordanian culture (Haddad, 2011, p. 81).

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[19] Farquhar and Das (1999) have discussed the reasons why focus groups might encourage participants' disclosure of personal experiences, especially when these experiences revolve around cultural taboos: 'To those working from a feminist perspective, the fact that focus groups can facilitate, rather than inhibit, discussion may come as no surprise. By foregrounding inherent power differentials between researchers and research participants, feminist critiques of one-to-one interviews… anticipate the more recent finding that people can feel relatively empowered and supported in a group situation, surrounded by their peers or friends…They may also be more likely to share experiences and feelings in the presence of people whom they perceive to be like themselves in some way' (Farquhar and Das, 1999: 47).

Therefore it might have been difficult to get victims to speak openly about their experiences in a group setting. I also favoured this qualitative approach over quantitative approaches because by contrast to quantitative approaches, such as using questionnaires that provide researchers with numerical data on the prevalence or extent of a particular phenomenon (Fox and Bayat, 2007: 78), using qualitative interviews enables the researcher to explore details about the reported experiences of the interviewees (Mason, 2002: 28). In order to be able to explain the qualitative approach adopted in this research thoroughly, the following discussion will provide a comparative investigation of the main differences between quantitative and qualitative research methods.

Initially, quantitative researchers set hypotheses prior to collecting data (Creswell, 2003 and Bryman, 2012). With regard to the data collection methods used in quantitative research approaches, these are based on fully structured questions (i.e. a fixed set of closed-ended questions is directed towards every research subject within the research sample) (Creswell, 2003: 17). An important dimension of the difference between qualitative and quantitative research methods concerns the sampling processes. Many researchers have investigated quantitative and qualitative research methods, arguing that they involve different types of sampling strategies. These sampling strategies are probability sampling, applied when conducting quantitative research, and non-probability sampling, applied when conducting qualitative research (Pathak, 2008; Marlow and Boone, 2011). Teddlie and Yu (2007: 77) explain probability sampling as taking place when the researcher selects 'a relatively large number of units from a population, or from

specific subgroups (strata) of a population, in a random manner where the probability of inclusion for every member of the population is determinable'. In addition, research subjects cannot be selected more than once in a single sample (Marlow and Boone, 2011). Yet, probability sampling is an umbrella term that includes four sampling strategies: simple random sampling; systematic random sampling; stratified random sampling; and cluster sampling (Pathak, 2008; Marlow and Boone, 2011). Researchers such as Creswell (2003), Pathak (2008) and Marlow and Boone (2011) have directed their efforts towards the investigation of how the aforementioned probability sampling techniques are applied. These researchers among others have proposed that simple random sampling, for instance, is done when the whole population is considered to be a whole unit and each element or individual within that population has an equal probability of being selected in the sample (Creswell, 2003; Pathak, 2008; Marlow and Boone, 2011).

With regard to the second probability sampling technique, systematic random sampling, this method of sampling refers to a process of research sample selection in which the first research participant is chosen randomly, then an interval is applied for the selection of the rest of the units or participants within the intended research sample (Babbie, 2008). A shared feature of simple random selection and systematic random selection is that each element in the larger population has an equal chance of selection (Babbie, 2008). Simple and systematic random sampling, due to the possibility of selection they offer to the researched elements, reduce the chance of research bias. As for the third method of sample selection,

stratified random selection, this method is applied when 'some prior knowledge about the study area is used to divide the area into groups or strata, and then each strata is randomly sampled' (Congalton and Green, 1999: 23). Pathak (2008) defines the fourth method of probability research sampling, cluster sampling, as a technique through which the entire population is divided by the researcher into groups, also known as 'clusters', and random or systematic selections of these groups are made (Pathak, 2008).

Stratified random sampling and cluster sampling are conducted differently. In cluster sampling, the researcher aims to divide the population into clusters and focuses on pinpointing the diffewrences in the qualities or features of the research units or subjects within the clusters (i.e. focuses on creating clusters that are as heterogenous as possible). However, when doing stratified random sampling, the researcher focuses on creating strata that are as homogenous as possible (Lloyd, 2004). In addition to these four quantitative research sampling techniques, researchers have identified a fifth method, stratified systematic unaligned sampling (Congalton and Green, 1999). Stratified systematic unaligned sampling is a sampling technique that includes features of the systematic, stratified and random sampling. This sampling method also has an element of randomness, yet it is one that does not result in the researcher experiencing periodicity or recurrence at regular intervals which is experienced in systematic sampling (Congalton and Green, 1999). Stratified systematic unaligned sampling was introduced by Quenouille in 1949. This technique is preferred when conducting spatial research (Campbell, 1996) and soil and vegetation research (Burt, Barber

and Rigby, 2009). Following this technique, the researcher first divides the investigated area into square-shaped strata (Burt, Barber and Rigby, 2009). The square-shaped strata are created after dividing the area into rows and columns that might be irregular but fairly even distributed (Campbell, 1996; Burt, Barber and Rigby, 2009). In this sampling technique, randomness 'assures that all portions of a region are equally subject to selection for the sample, thereby yielding data that accurately represent the area examined' (Campbell, 1996: 375), a measure that reduces research bias (Campbell, 1996; Burt, Barber and Rigby, 2009). Following simple random selection, a researcher may wish to further conduct stratified sampling techniques by assigning observations to 'subregions' of the selected area of study in order to 'ensure that the sampling effort is distributed in a rational manner' (Campbell, 1996: 375).

The researcher's choice of a sampling technique or sampling techniques, whether conducting quantitative or qualitative research, affects her ability to make generalizations based on her research sample. Many researchers have investigated the conditions that must be present in the sampling process in order to enable the researcher to make generalizations including Creswell (2003), Pathak (2008), Marlow and Boone (2011), Creswell (2014) and Lennon-Dearing and Neely-Barnes (2014) for example. Donmoyer (2008), for instance, argues that 'if a study's sample is large enough and was selected randomly, the statistical analysis is likely to show that there is only a very slim possibility that the study's results are a product of chance. In such cases, the study is said to exhibit external validity and the study's findings are judged generalizable' (Donmoyer, 2008: 372). In

other words, the importance of ensuring that the sample was randomly selected

for the researcher's ability to generalize his/her research findings lies in the idea

that random selection allows individuals or research units equal chances of being

chosen to take part in the proposed research. This provides the researcher with the

best possibility of gaining a sample that accurately represents the population

(Creswell, 2014: 158).

Lennon-Dearing and Neely-Barnes (2014) also address the impact of research

representativeness on the researcher's ability to make valid generalizations. They

stress that so long as the sample is representative of the population in simple

random sampling, including the widest range possible of research units, simple

and systematic random sampling allow the researcher to make valid

generalizations that go beyond the research sample. Yet, if bias is detected in

systematic random sampling, generalizations cannot be made based on this type

of sampling because research bias affects the representativeness of the research

sample negatively (Lennon-Dearing and Neely-Barnes, 2014). The possibility of

generalizing based on a stratified random sampling method depends on the

efficiency of the number of the subjects included within each stratum (Marlow

and Boone, 2011). In other words, a researcher using stratified random sampling

has to make sure that he or she was not selective in his or her choice of the units

or subjects within the strata that are included in the research sample. Finally,

generalizations can be made based on cluster sampling methods. Generalizability

in cluster sampling method relies heavily on whether the initial sample was

selected randomly or not. If bias is detected, then valid generalizations cannot be

made based on cluster sampling (Pathak, 2008; Marlow and Boone, 2011; Lennon-Dearing and Neely-Barnes, 2014).

To analyze the intended data, quantitative researchers adopt deductive reasoning (Creswell, 2003; Bryman, 2012). That is, a quantitative researcher, 'on the basis of what is known about a particular domain and of theoretical considerations in relation to that domain, deduces a hypothesis (or hypotheses) that must then be subjected to empirical scrutiny. Embedded within the hypothesis will be concepts that will need to be translated into researchable entities' (Bryman, 2012: 24). In quantitative research, there are four types of analysis that could be done: descriptive statistics analysis, inferential statistics analysis, simple interrelationships, and multivariate analysis (Crowther and Lancaster, 2008). Descriptive statistics analysis focuses on measuring frequencies, averages and ranges (Crowther and Lancaster, 2008). Inferential analysis can be used to measure the 'significance of data and results using statistical techniques such as, for example, Chi-square, the student's *t*-test, or other more powerful tools of inferential statistics' (Crowther and Lancaster, 2008: 180). With regard to simple interrelationships analysis, also known as cross tabulation or bivariate analysis (Bryman and Cramer, 1996), it focuses on exploring the causal relationship between the investigated phenomenon and two variables that are specified by the researcher (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2010; Crowther and Lancaster, 2008). Variables are qualities, characteristics or attributes based on which relevant objects or sampling categories differ such as age, gender, ethnicity and class, qualities that can affect the investigated phenomenon in different ways (Mason,

2002). Finally, multivariate analysis in quantitative research explores the connections between several variables and the impact of these connections on the examined phenomenon (Bryman and Cramer, 1996; Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2010). After analyzing the research data, conclusions are made based on the tested hypotheses (Creswell, 2003). These conclusions or findings can then be generalized and replicated (Creswell, 2003; Aliyu, Bello, Kasim et al., 2014: 89).

Generalizability, a quality of quantitative research (Shank and Brown, 2007; Morecean, 2010; Martella, Nelson, Morgan et al., 2013), has been defined as 'the ability of extending the validity of one's case study conclusions to other cases of the kind' (Moriceau, 2010: 419). In other words, generalizability refers to the researcher's ability to ensure the external validity of his or her research findings (Donmoyer, 2008; Martella, Nelson, Morgan et al., 2013; Dick, 2014). Researchers have identified three different ways of making generalizations in quantitative research: universal generalizability (Dick, 2014), statistical generalizability and analytical generalizability (Freeman, DeMarrais, Preissle et al., 2007; Dick, 2014). Dick (2014) argues that universal generalizability is related to fixed scientific facts found in the laws of physics such as generalizations related to the speed of light for example. Seondly, Dick (2014) refers to statistical generalization as a form of generalization that is applied from the particular studied case or sample to the wider population. Finally, drawing on the views of Yin (2009), Dick (2014) refers to analytic generalizability as related to the process in which the findings of a particular study are 'used to refine

existing theories' (Dick, 2014: 379). As a result, the refined theory may be applied to other contexts and by other people.

However, in qualitative research, hypotheses are developed from the data as collected (Creswell, 2003). Qualitative researchers pose open-ended questions to investigate the nature of a certain phenomenon in detail (Mason, 2002). Qualitative researchers adopt an inductive stance, collecting data to generate categories as well as statements (i.e. build theory), arguing that phenomena and behaviours are best understood in relation to their context or setting (Newman and Benz, 1998; Mason, 2002; Creswell, 2003; Joubish, Khurram, Ahmed et al., 2011; Bryman, 2012). That is, knowledge is built or constructed by focusing on the interaction between individuals in certain contexts (Creswell, 2003). With regard to qualitative research sampling methods, or non-probability research sampling techniques, these include convenience sampling, quota sampling, purposive sampling and snowball sampling (Lennon-Dearing and Neely-Barnes, 2014). Convenience sampling means that the researcher specifies particular criteria according to which he or she selects the research subjects based on their availability and willingness to take part in the research (Teddlie and Yu, 2007; Lennon-Dearing and Neely-Barnes, 2014). Convenience sampling exposes the researcher to a high degree of bias because it is very likely for the sample to lack representativeness of the population (Rubin and Babbie, 2007; Lennon-Dearing and Neely-Barnes, 2014).

Quota sampling is a method of sampling utilized when conducting surveys, where survey administrators 'assign quotas to the interviewers that define groups of respondents by using a few key demographic characteristics' (Henry, 2004: 906). Then, 'interviewers fill their quotas by choosing individuals whose characteristics match these characteristics as respondents' (Henry, 2004: 906). However, bias may occur in quota sampling. Such bias may be due to the researcher's being 'selective' (Henry, 2004; Rubin and Babbie, 2007; Pathak, 2008). That is, whenever 'human judgment is allowed to determine who is selected . . . unintentional bias creeps into the selection process' (Henry, 2004: 906).

Purposive sampling is a process where selecting the research sample depends on the researcher's purposes. A researcher doing purposive sampling 'uses his or her judgment about which respondents to choose, and picks only those who best meet the purposes of the study' (Bailey, 1994: 96). In other words, the researcher includes research subjects in the sample whom he or she believes are the most informative in a certain area of knowledge. Thus, using this method of sampling, the researcher risks being biased. Research findings in qualitative research cannot be generalized as applying to the wider population. This is because the individuals or subjects within the targeted population are not given equal chances to be included in the research sample, and the research sample is not representative of all the segments of the wider population (Paler-Calmorin and Calmorin, 2007). Finally, snowball sampling refers to 'the process of accumulation as each located subject suggests other subjects' through which the research sample is gradually enlarged (Babbie, 2008: 201). Research findings based on this form of sampling

can also not be generalized because the subjects are not representative of all the segments of the wider population (Babbie, 2008; Pathak, 2008).

Various analysis processes may be applied when conducting qualitative research. Qualitative researchers might employ analysis approaches such as content analysis, thematic analysis, conversational analysis, discourse analysis and narrative analysis (Tesch, 1990; Mason, 2002). In content analysis, the data that is in the form of narratives or stories are read as sentences or paragraphs by the researcher with the aim of coding the content or proposing content categories based on the content of the written or spoken words. However, the categories of the various ideas that the researcher intends to investigate in a particular content-based study may be set by the researcher before conducting the analysis process. After the content categories are created by the researcher, the text is divided into segments based on the meanings of the written words. Each group of speech segments with a shared idea or aspect of the topic has sentences or utterances categorized under it that are each given an identical code to the other utterances within the same group (Tesch, 1990). Codes differ from one group of speech segments to the other (Tesch, 1990; Mason, 2002). A content category is proposed as a division in the data based on a certain idea related to the research purpose. After the researcher pinpoints several content categories, words and sentences that are classified under each content category are investigated in detail to explore the particular aspect of the research that this category addresses (Tesch, 1990; Monette, Sullivan, Dejong et al., 2014). Content analysis is considered to be a basic aspect of more complex analytical approaches such conversation

analysis, discourse analysis and narrative analysis. That is, conversation analysis, discourse analysis and narrative analysis focus on written or spoken words and take other elements beyond the written or spoken words into consideration when conducting the analysis process.

Thematic analysis, a qualitative analysis method, also focuses on coding the research data and identifying recurrent themes (Roulston, 2010; Grbich, 2013). The process of thematic analysis, as a method of qualitative analysis, is a process in which the researcher gives 'minimal attention to the structures selected by the narrator to tell her/his story, function or contextual details of the story' (Frost, 2011: 108). Rather, a researcher employing thematic analysis starts by reading the raw data to familiarize himself or herself with their content (Mason, 2002; Williamson and Whittaker, 2011; Frost, 2011). Secondly, the researcher codes the data at hand (Williamson and Whittaker, 2011; Frost, 2011). That is, the researcher pinpoints the main ideas or thoughts that are discussed in each sequence of content words. Thirdly, the researcher builds 'a set of themes by looking for patterns and meaning produced in the data, labelling and grouping them in connection with the theoretical framework of the research' (Frost, 2011: 108). Finally, the researcher gathers the different narratives under each highlighted theme and compares between the different narratives categorized under each theme (Frost, 2011). However, unlike content analysis in which categories of themes or ideas could be set before the data collection process, the categories of themes or ideas in thematic analysis are derived from the data after the data collection process is completed (Roulston, 2010; Grbich, 2013).

Categories of themes or ideas are also derived from the data while conducting the

conversation analysis process (Sigman, Sullivan, and Wendell, 1988). Some

researchers consider conversation analysis to be part of discourse analysis (Cook,

1989; Cameron, 2001; Wooffitt, 2005). However, others regard it as distinct from

discourse analysis (Wooffitt, 2005). Conversation analysis refers to the

exploration of '*how* conversations begin and end, the turn-taking of speakers, and

how agreement/disagreement was reached or avoided within the conversation'

(Hyde, Lohan, and McDonnell, 2004: 48). In the light of the aforementioned

definition of conversational analysis, a distinction may be made between

conversation analysis and discourse analysis. While discourse analysts take into

account the context surrounding the uttered words or the conversations they

analyze, conversation analysts restrict their analysis solely to the conversation

(Hyde, Lohan, and McDonnell, 2004).

In discourse analysis, the analysis process is not limited to the written words or

utterances. Rather, the researcher takes into consideration the written words, the

speakers, the addressees, the context and the situation in which the utterances or

words are said (Mason, 2002; Markula and Silk, 2011; Coates, 2012). In discourse

analysis:

> . . . utterances can be considered in terms of three features: (a) their
> locutionary or referential meaning (what they are about), (b) their
> illocutionary force (what the speaker does with them) and (c) their
> perlocutionary force (their effects on the hearer). . . the emphasis in
> discourse analysis is on what talk is doing and achieving (Wood and
> Kroger, 2000: 5).

Echoing the views of Nunan (1992), Markula and Silk (2011) argue that the researcher conducting discourse analysis 'focuses on how language is used in context by looking at discursive strategies of particular people in particular socio-cultural situations' (Markula and Silk, 2011: 100).

The term discourse analysis may be understood as including elements of both content analysis and conversation analysis (Koeszegi and Vetschera, 2010). Some researchers have differentiated between content analysis and discourse analysis, arguing that in content analysis the focal point of the researcher is the actual content of the spoken/written words, whereas discourse analysts transcend this research focus (Wood and Kroger, 2000; Harasim, 2004; Scott, 2006):

> *Content analysis* is a commonly used term, although it is sometimes mistakenly used to describe what is actually *discourse analysis*. Some researchers distinguish between the two by defining content analysis as categorization of text (focusing on the subject matter of the discourse) and discourse analysis as studying communication processes (social and cognitive) and change over time. (Harasim, 2004: 138)

The conception of discourse analysis is broader than that of content analysis. Discourse analysis is more appropriately referred to as 'the study of language above the level of the sentence, of the ways sentences combine to create meaning, coherence and accomplish purposes' (Gee and Handford, 2012: 1). In discourse analysis, the researcher explores the elements that constitute a well-structured discourse. These elements are textual factors, including reference, conjunction, cohesiveness, in addition to speech acts. Speech acts investigate aspects of discourse such as inviting, apologizing and denying (Nunan, 1992; Hammond and Wellington, 2013).

Narrative analysis 'considers how the narrator, the leading character of the told story, makes meaning of her/his life and/or experiences while telling the story. The analyst makes a systematic interpretation of these meaning-making processes by considering various aspects of the story being told' (Frost, 2011: 97). These aspects include the content, structure, performance and context of the narrative (Frost, 2011; Wells, 2011). Like content analysts, conversation analysts and discourse analysts, the narrative analyst explores the actual words found in the research data. Yet, narrative analysts take into consideration an additional dimension to the research process that goes beyond the rigid content of the research data which is the context in which the narratives were told (Frost, 2011). Narrative analysis also differs from conversation analysis so far as the number of the individuals taking part in the conversation/narrative is concerned. That is, conversation analysis involves text from more than one speaker or research participant, whereas narrative analysis involves text generated by one speaker at a time (Newby, 2010).

Grounded theory 'is a method of explication and emergence. The method takes a systematic, inductive, comparative, and interactive approach to inquiry and offers several open-ended strategies for conducting emergent inquiry' (Charmaz, 2008: 156). Grounded theory centers on generating a theory from the data collected by the researcher (Bryman, 2012). Researchers employing grounded theory follow an inductive approach through which they use their observations of the research sample to develop new theories and hypotheses (Sbaraini, Carter, Evans et al., 2011). Data are collected by observing and taking notes, then the researcher codes

the data (Charmaz, 2008; Sbaraini, Carter, Evans et al., 2011).The analysis

process starts during the data collection and continues after data collection. The

analysis process begins by coding the research data and pinpointing the various

aspects of the data that are related to the research topic. Then the researcher

compares sets of data under each identified code with other sets of data (Sbaraini,

Carter, Evans et al., 2011). Grounded theory, however, differs from content

analysis as 'the codes are not given in advance but emerge gradually from the

researcher's work with the text' (i.e. the researcher's analysis of the data)

(Johannesson and Perjons, 2014: 65).

After having discussed the various forms of qualitative research analysis, the last

aspect of difference between qualitative and quantitative research that will be

discussed is generalizability. Generalizability is limited in qualitative research

because of issues related to the complexity of social phenomena and the

constantly changing cultural dimensions of social life. Generalizability in

qualitative research may also not be attainable because of considerations related

to the sampling process. That is, because the sampling processes in qualitative

research are context-bound and not representable of the whole population,

generalizations cannot be made based on qualitative research processes (Mason,

2002, Bryman, 2012). Instead, in qualitative research 'transferability' may apply

to the research findings rather than generalizability (Freeman, DeMarrais, Preissle

et al., 2007; Gliner, Morgan and Leech, 2009; Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen et al., 2014).

Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen et al (2014: 535) define transferability in qualitative

research as the possibility to 'apply qualitative findings to other people, settings

and times' than those in the original study. This process of making connections or

drawing on similarities between the source sample (i.e. the sample that was

investigated) and the target sample (i.e. the sample onto which the results are

applied) must be carefully conducted in order to ensure that the settings of the

studies and the researched qualities or characteristics of the subjects are identical

(Freeman, DeMarrais, Preissle et al., 2007; Gliner, Morgan and Leech, 2009; Ary,

Jacobs, Sorensen et al., 2014).

The use of a qualitative research approach has many advantages that have been

highlighted in the literature. Qualitative research, for instance, enables the

researcher to explore the nature of and reasons behind a certain phenomenon

(Mason, 2002), describing its complexity in depth (Mason, 2002; Smith and

Bowers-Brown, 2010). When investigating a certain phenomenon, a qualitative

researcher may not limit her investigation to the events she witnesses or the

accounts and experiences of her research participants. Rather, the researcher may

take into consideration the context surrounding the explored phenomenon which

broadens her understanding of that phenomenon and gives rich details about it

(The World Bank, 2000; Mason, 2002; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The

richness of the details that result from the adoption of a qualitative approach may

be also attributed to their allowing the researcher to conduct cross-case analysis.

Through this analytical approach, cases or the experiences of study subjects may

be investigated not only individually, but also in relation to other cases or study

subjects within the research sample (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). In

addition, qualitative approaches are flexible, allowing the researcher to expand

her focal points when exploring a certain phenomenon (The World Bank, 2000;

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004) by posing open-ended questions (Choy, 2014).

Using a qualitative research method enabled me to explore my research

participants' accounts of wife abuse in depth. The respondents I intended to

interview were victims of wife abuse located in shelters, where I thought the

greatest number of wife abuse victims would be found. I thought that shelters

were located in different cities in Jordan. Interviewing women from different

cities might have enriched my research by providing access to the experiences of

women from different socio-cultural backgrounds. My plan was to interview 30

women and 3-5 lawyers. I thought that the interviewees would provide me with

detailed accounts of their abuse experiences and that contacting the lawyers

would enable me to interview more victims than those staying in shelters.

Interviewing abused women in person was crucial because it allowed me to

explore their views in more detail. According to Gill et al. (2008), semi-structured

interviews

> consist of several key questions that help to define the areas to be
> explored, but also allows [*sic*] the interviewer or interviewee to diverge in
> order to pursue an idea or response in more detail...The flexibility of this
> approach, particularly compared to structured interviews, also allows for
> the discovery or elaboration of information that is important to participants
> but may not have previously been thought of as pertinent (Gill et al., 2008:
> 291).

I intended to record the interviews using my smart phone. I was then going to

transcribe the victims' responses and translate them.

I had approximately three months to interview wife abuse victims and complete

the data collection (see Appendix 2). From 30 April 2012 to 14 June 2012, I

contacted formal organizations during my first field trip to Jordan in order to find

gatekeepers who would facilitate contacting and interviewing wife abuse victims.

I also contacted lawyers to ask about wife abuse complaint records. The actual

contact with the abused women and the interviews took place during my second

field trip to Jordan from 2/9/2012 to 2/11/2012. That trip was divided into two

periods. During the first one extending from 8 September 2012 to 30 September

2012, I contacted wife abuse victims at the Jordanian Women's Union, conducted

interviews, and translated the given data. During the second period, from 11

October 2012 to 18 October 2012, I conducted two interviews at the Ministry of

Social Development, one interview on 11 October 2012, the second on 18

October 2012. These interviews were translated by 23 October 2012. Finally,

from 25 October 2012 to 2 November 2012, I typed up the translated interviews

and saved them as Microsoft Word files on my laptop.

In Jordan, wife abuse victims may be divided into two categories. The first

category consists of women who have not officially sued their husbands in court.

These women had sought assistance from either governmental institutions such as

the Jordanian Ministry of Social Development or NGOs such as the Jordanian

Women's Union[20]. The second category, however, includes those who have been

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[20] 'The JWU shelter provides female victims of abuse and violence with protection, counselling
and rehabilitation services that would otherwise be denied them because of circumstances beyond
their control. The services offered are meant to help women help themselves and thereby improve
the quality of their lives. As the quality of their lives improves, women will be able to contribute

classified in official police records as 'survivors of spousal criminal offence.' On

my trip to Jordan in May 2012, I was informed by the secretary of the Jordanian

National Commission for Women[21] that the second category of women was

placed under high security, and therefore contacting these women would require

official police consent which might take more than three months. Therefore, I

decided to interview women who had not sued their husbands in order to avoid

being caught up in a lengthy procedure to gain access. Interviewing was the most

appropriate research method in order to reach out to such marginalized

respondents as abused wives in Jordan, pose sensitive questions and address

complex issues related to wife abuse (Holstein and Gubrium, 2003).

3.2 My Feminist Perspective

Standpoint theory is a term that was introduced by the American feminist

theorist Sandra Harding (Borland and Petruzzello, 2014). In *The Feminist*

Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies (2004a),

Harding argues that feminist standpoint theory fundamentally questions the

approach of mainstream western male-oriented scholars (Harding, 2004a). Their

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in a much more meaningful way to their own society. The JWU's shelter is the only facility of its
kind in Jordan' (The Jordanian Women's Union, 2011: n.p.).

[21] 'The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) was established by the Jordanian
Government in 1992 as the focal point for public policy formulation with the mandate to
mainstream women's issues in the development process and establish mechanisms and process of
co-ordination, networking and monitoring...The Jordanian National Commission for Women
(JNCW) being the institutional mechanism at the national level for the advancement of women is
the responsible authority for implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action which calls for
formulation of the Jordanian Strategy and Programme of Action.
JNCW is chaired by HRH Princess Basma Bint Talal and its membership consists of the highest
level of authority in government and of civil society representatives of NGO's, academic, research
and professional institutions. As such, it has the requisite commitment at the political level'.
(National Programme of Action for the Advancement of Jordanian Women 1998-2002, 2013: n.p.)

source of bias, Harding postulates, is that there is an implied 'speaker' or a voice in mainstream western male-oriented epistemology, a speaker that focuses on the construction of knowledge based on the interests and experiences of men (Harding, 2004b: 29), rather than women's experiences even when addressing issues concerning women (Harding, 2004b). Thus, such biased male-oriented approaches lack 'neutrality'. Harding (2004 a) gives intimate partner-related issues within the legal system as a social context reflecting the bias of mainstream western male-oriented epistemology. Harding argues that if women's perspectives are not taken into consideration when addressing intimate partner issues, the end result might be blaming the abused women rather than supporting them (Harding, 2004a). By contrast to mainstream western male-oriented approaches, feminist standpoint theorists recognize the importance of acknowledging and addressing the different socially-constructed experiences of individuals as this approach enriches researchers' understandings of the social issues they investigate (Harding, 2004a; Intemann, 2010). Exploring the experiences of others who have led lives different from that of the researcher enhances the latter's ability to 'generate less partial and distorted accounts not only of women's lives but also of men's lives and of the whole social order' (Harding, 2004a: 128). In line with Harding (2004a), Brooks (2006) addresses the importance of adopting a feminist standpoint, focusing on the experiences of the women involved in a particular social problem. Brooks argues:

> Building knowledge from women's actual, or concrete, life experiences is acutely important, feminist standpoint scholars argue, if we hope to repair the historical trend of women's misinterpretation and exclusion from the dominant knowledge canons. And only by making women's concrete, life experiences the primary source of our investigations can we succeed in

constructing knowledge that accurately reflects and represents women. (Brooks, 2006: 56)

In my investigation of wife abuse in Jordan, I explored the particularity of each of my participants' reported experiences as socially constructed experiences in the context of Islamic values. The women's stories were important to me as a researcher because they showed wife abuse was not a mere matter of violating the law in a recurrent scenario where the victim is the wife and the perpetrator is the husband. It is a social phenomenon saturated with oppressive, gender-based connotations (United Nations Population Fund, 2008) that need to be highlighted in order for this phenomenon to be effectively combated. Shulamit Reinharz (1992), for instance, stresses the importance of gender-based knowledge for the analysis of social issues. Thus, focusing on the gendered connotations underlying the control of women through wife abuse is what makes this research feminist rather than the interviewing approach *per se*. The interviews conducted were feminist in content. This means that I mainly focused on gender-based issues related to discrimination against women.

With regard to the issues of power and hierarchy that I encountered as a feminist researcher, most of the women were in a more subordinated position than I, not only because of their lack of education or lack of financial resources but also because of their having been exposed to wife abuse. These differences put me in a greater power position than the positions of my participants which made it difficult for me to get these women to open up to me about their wife abuse

experiences at the beginning of my interviews. These power differences could have affected the participants' responses to my interview questions negatively because they made them feel intimidated. To make my participants feel more comfortable about telling me their experiences and reduce their sensitivity towards these power differences between us, I was careful to approach them calmly and ask them in a friendly way for their permission to be interviewed after the member of staff who had initially talked to them about my research and asked for their approval to participate had left. I told them that their participation was highly appreciated and reassured them that their identities would not be exposed.

In their article entitled 'The Power Dance in Research Interview: Manifesting Power and Powerlessness', Vähäsantanen and Saarinen (2013) discuss the issue of the power hierarchy between the interviewer and the interviewee. They argue that the 'research interview is typically viewed as a specific institutional and instrumental form of conversation, with a clear power asymmetry between the interviewer and the interviewee' (Vähäsantanen and Saarinen, 2013: 2). Drawing on the views of Kvale (2006), Vähäsantanen and Saarinen (2013) explain how the issue of power differences between the researcher and the researched affects the interview process. The interviewers get to 'determine the place and topic for the interview, initiate the interview, pose the questions, critically follow up the answers, and close the conversation' (Vähäsantanen and Saarinen, 2013: 2). They argue that because of the interviewer's ability to control the interview process, the interviewees might in turn keep information from the interviewer, or attempt to avoid answering some of the questions that the interviewer poses (Vähäsantanen

and Saarinen, 2013). Tang (2002) also discusses the issue of power relations between the interviewers and the interviewees from a feminist perspective, quoting Ann Oakley (1981) who argues that 'in most cases, the goal of finding out about people through interviewing is best achieved when the relationship of interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchical and when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her own personal identity in the relationship' (Tang, 2002: 704). Achieving a non-hierarchical relationship between the interviewees and myself was not possible. I recognized that the differences between us remained despite my friendly approach to the participants. As a researcher, I controlled the questions, decided the research design and interpreted what my participants said. That is, I had significant control over the research and there is nothing that changes this given the circumstances in which the interviews were conducted. In the following section, I explain how I started searching for organizations and institutions that provide shelter services for abused wives in Jordan.

3.3 Gatekeepers

In this section, I explain how I began looking for organizations supporting abused wives in Jordan. Initially I called my mother before leaving the UK on 30 April 2012 and asked her if she knew any such organizations. She mentioned the Jordanian Association for Family Planning and Protection,[22] but she did not know

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[22] The Jordanian Association for Family Planning and Protection was founded in 1989 with the aim of providing 'programmes and services in the sexual and reproductive health awareness, and

whether this association provided shelter for victims or not. However, she told me that one of my cousins had a friend who works for the Family Protection Department[23] at the Public Security Directorate[24] who would probably be able to put me in touch with wife abuse victims and arrange interviews.

I thought that having personal connections was crucial at this point of my research in order to gain access to the victims. Caroline Ronsin (2010) explains the issue of connections, also known as '*wasta*', in Jordan as: 'The use of informal channels (mostly based on kinship ties) to obtain any kind of service, such as avoiding a fine, speeding-up an administrative process, getting a job or a better grade at university' (Ronsin, 2010: 1). Thus, thinking that the assistance of personal connections would ease the process of accessing wife abuse victims, I discussed the idea of using these connections with my then supervisor, Dr. Ann Kaloski Naylor, who was patient and understanding about the difficulty of gaining access. She made me realize, however, that contacting the victims through the assistance of a governmental authority might cause the victims to feel intimidated due to the resulting formal stance as I would be associated with the official gatekeeper. This in turn might affect their accounts negatively:

> Miller (1998) and Miller and Bell (2002), observe that gatekeepers may
> exert leverage on participants in research, inhibiting participants'

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tackling some issues related to education, health, rights and physical education' (Jordan Civil Society, 2009-2012: n.p.).

[23] 'The Family Protection Department, under the Public Security Directorate was established in 1997. It receives information and complaints of abuse, including sexual abuse, regardless of the age of the victim, or whether the abuse occurred within or outside the family; it also deals with cases of child neglect. The department enacted a mechanism to hear the testament and statements of children through video recording in order to alleviate the suffering of children and offer the best comprehensive services to them' (Yale Law School, 2005: n.p.).

[24] According to Lawrence (2004), the Public Security Directorate (PSD) controls general police functions. The PSD, The General Intelligence Directorate (GID), and the military share 'responsibility for maintaining internal security, and had authority to monitor security threats.' (Lawrence, 2004: 53).

continued engagement through the power they hold over participants. However, the literature almost exclusively addresses the instrumental role of gatekeepers in mediating access for researchers (Emmel, Hughes, Greenhalgh, et al., 2007: n.d.).

To be honest, that was really disappointing for me, even though it made absolute sense, because it meant I had to start over. I had to look for people whom I did not know to provide me with access to places I had never been to in order to talk to people whom I had never met, and who would think of me as an intruder. I dismissed the use of '*wasta*' and visited Jordanian non-governmental organizations and governmental institutions that provide protection services against wife abuse in order to pave the way for my research.

Identifying gatekeepers was an important introductory stage before conducting the actual fieldwork because the security of and access to wife abuse victims at non-governmental organizations and governmental institutions in Jordan is the direct responsibility of official personnel or gatekeepers. Without their permission, contacting the women would have been impossible. Such restrictions are due to the fact that discussing wife abuse, especially with residents of shelters, is both a cultural taboo and governed by rigid legal restrictions in Jordan. During her interview with Reem Abu Hassan, a Jordanian lawyer and President of the Jordanian Society for Protecting Family Violence Victims (JSPFVV), reporter Zaina Steityeh described the discretion surrounding wife abuse in Jordan: 'The issue is one that has long been couched in social taboo and therefore dialogue on the topics of domestic violence and family protection has been limited' (Steityeh, 2010: 68).Thus, discussing such an issue could have put me in trouble, had I not

followed a systematic approach using gatekeepers of the highest rank in the organizations and institutions I contacted. I approached these for permission to access the victims.

Carla Reeves (2010) explores the influence that gatekeepers exert on the progress of research. Reeves defines gatekeepers as individuals who 'can help or hinder research depending upon their personal thoughts on the validity of the research and its value, as well as their approach to the welfare of the people under their charge' (Reeves, 2010: n.p.). Johl and Renganathan (2010) describe the difficulty of dealing with gatekeepers in formal organizations: 'Organizations are usually skeptical about the role of outsiders and may not value academic studies . . . In addition, many organizations deny access due to academics' failure to provide answers about what, how and why they are carrying out the study, and whether the study would provide value to the organization itself' (Johl and Renganathan, 2010: 42). All this meant that I had to think about the proper way of approaching the formal organization gatekeepers I would be dealing with. It meant that I had to make an appearance as an 'expert' in order to convince the gatekeepers that my investigation was serious and concerned with helping the abused wives (Seale, 2004: 231). Therefore I had to have printed copies of my research proposal and my ethics form, and my reason for investigating wife abuse in Jordan needed to be convincing to the managers of the organizations and institutions I intended to contact. After all, these managers had the authority to either let me in or keep me out and prevent me from getting in touch with the victims. Personal appearance was also important in order to facilitate approaching and communicating with the

victims (Shenton and Hayter, 2004) as it provides those women with an important first impression of my being concerned for their wellbeing:

> People make inferences about who you are, at least in part, from the way you dress. Whether these inferences are accurate or not, they will influence what people think of you and how they react to you. Your socioeconomic class, your seriousness, your attitudes (for example, whether you're conservative or liberal), your concern for convention, your sense of style, and perhaps even your creativity will all be judged in part by the way you dress (De Vito, 2002: 145).

After having explained directly to the managers of the Jordanian Women's Union and the Ministry of Social Development (i.e. the organizational gatekeepers I had to deal with) that my research was intended to show the efforts that are being made on the part of such institutions to support abused wives during my first field trip to Jordan, these managers facilitated the process of contacting the intended women. The manager at the Jordanian Women's Union, for instance, whom I first contacted on 7 May 2012, told me that there were thirteen non-governmental organizations dealing with domestic violence including wife abuse distributed across the cities of Jordan in addition to the Ministry of Social Development. However, the Jordanian Women's Union and the Ministry of Social Development located in Amman are the only institutions that provide shelter services to wife abuse victims. The manager of the Jordanian Women's Union also enabled me to interview wives at the Union.

3.4 Attempting to Find Appropriate Organizations to Facilitate the Research Process

Attempting to find appropriate organizations to facilitate the research process, I

began a web search. Then, I came across the Jordanian National Commission for

Women, the National Council for Family Affairs[25] , and the Jordanian Women's

Union. These organizations are specialized in increasing Jordanian people's

awareness of women's contributions to the development of Jordanian society and

are primarily concerned with supporting women's needs and rights, including

their right to live in violence-free environments. I took note of their locations,

telephone numbers and e-mail addresses a month before heading back to Jordan in

April, 2012. This was a necessary preparatory step before the actual contact with

the victims took place in order to guarantee access to the greatest number of

research subjects possible.

Upon my arrival in Jordan for the first field trip, I telephoned the Jordanian

National Commission for Women and the National Council for Family Affairs

and made appointments with their secretaries. At the Jordanian National

Commission for Women, the secretary told me that contacting abused wives

through the Jordanian National Commission for Women would not be possible

because this organization did not have a shelter, and because the organization did

not supervise 'parental visits'. 'Parental visits' are visiting times fixed by court

order to enable children whose parents have divorced to see the parent who is not

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[25] According to The United Nations Population Fund, the 'National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) was established in 2001 as "an umbrella organization that supports, coordinates and facilitates the work of its partners and relevant institutions which are involved and influential in the field of family affairs." Since its establishment the council has been an active institution working in various fields relevant to family welfare including family empowerment, early childhood development, the National Plan of Action for children, the National Framework for Family Protection and the National Strategy for Family Protection' (The United Nations Population Fund, 2008: 20).

appointed the legal custodian. Such visits which occur in official settings are one context in which one may meet victims of wife abuse. The secretary pointed out that contacting wife abuse victims through NGOs in Jordan would be possible only during parental visits or if the organization in question ran a family violence shelter. Eventually, she recommended the Jordanian Women's Union since it had such a shelter. I then asked her about the services provided by the National Council for Family Affairs; according to her, it did not provide accommodation and supervised visit services. I also phoned the National Council for Family Affairs to enquire about the services provided there and found that the council neither supervised visits nor had accommodation services.

My first visit to the Jordanian Women's Union was on 7, May, 2012. There I had a brief meeting with the manager during which she explained that it was of great importance that the victims' identities be kept secret. However, the manager did not tell me that I would not be allowed to video-tape the interviews or even tape-record them as this would risk the revelation of the victims' identities. It was not until after I had recorded my first interview that I was informed of these legal restrictions related to interviewing the victims. At the end of my first meeting with the manager of the Jordanian Women's Union, she introduced me to the head of the women's shelter, and the psychologist at the Jordanian Women's Union who, she said, would guide me so as to facilitate contacting the victims and gaining their consent to participate in the interviews.

The psychologist told me during our first meeting in May that visit days were the most likely times for me to meet abused wives. Visit days were intended to guarantee that children who had been raised in abusive families were not deprived of either of their parents even in the aftermath of the parents' divorce. These visit arrangements are called 'viewings'. Visits, also known as 'viewing permissions', are granted by Shari'a courts and are limited to fixed days that are determined in order to suit the conflicting spouses' jobs and lifestyles. 'Both parents have to be present at the time of the viewing,' said the psychologist. She reiterated that 'viewing' days were the best chance for me to contact the abused wives.

Therefore, it was important for me to try to find out during which days the Jordanian Women's Union supervised the greatest load of parent-child viewings so that I would be able to save time. The psychologist also told me that she saw the Jordanian Law of Personal Status as a form of legal abuse. She argued that along with the prevalent patriarchal ideologies, Jordanian legislation serves to reinforce women's submissiveness. To support her argument, she drew on laws of custody. She said that although the age of legal custody had been raised to fifteen for boys and eighteen for girls in 2010 instead of twelve for girls and ten for boys, as previously stated by the Jordanian Law of Personal Status (2005), the issue of insufficient financial support for abused wives in the aftermath of divorce if they are appointed the legal custodian of the children continued to arouse feelings of resentment. Changing the age of custody was progress, accomplished due to the efforts of feminist activists at the union, she said. Yet, financial support was still a pressing issue.

According to the International Islamic Committee for Woman and Child[26] (1999-

2012), the reason for financial oppression is attributed to the fact that the law does

not determine custody payments. This exposes wives to the financial control of

their husbands (Allan, 2009). According to article (59-B) of the Jordanian Law of

Personal Status: 'A wife's right to financial support entails her right to food,

clothing, the provision of residence and healthcare, and the provision of servants

if that complies with the living standards to which she is accustomed'

(International Islamic Committee for Woman and Child, 1999-2012, n. p.).

By the end of the conversation, I was able to develop a clearer understanding of

how wife abuse in Jordan is dealt with. However, I was still preoccupied with

many questions regarding custody matters. For instance, I was not sure why the

alimony and child support payments the female custodian receives remain

minimal, equivalent to less than 50 pounds a month, as the psychologist pointed

out, despite the high costs of living in Jordan. So, I decided to consult lawyers on

the legal measures according to which custody payments are determined in the

aftermath of divorce. In the following section, the process of meeting the wife

abuse victims will be addressed.

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[26] The International Islamic Committee for Woman and Child's website is:
http://iicwc.org/lagna/iicwc/iicwc.php?id=936. Accessed 14/7/2013.

3.5 Meeting the Victims

In order to be able to interview the largest number of victims possible during my short stay in Jordan, I began thinking of a timetable according to which I could organize and divide the fieldwork and the data analysis. Before planning the fieldwork timetable, I decided to consult the psychologist at the Jordanian Women's Union because she was in charge of scheduling parental visits. Most of the viewings took place on weekends, meaning Saturdays. Weekends in Jordan are Fridays and Saturdays. And because it was impossible for the union to offer any services on Fridays since they are the days on which the 'juma prayer'[27] or 'salat al juma' is held, the Union's weekend services shifted to Saturdays instead. 'Saturdays', the psychologist clarified, 'are fully booked with parents who have jobs and so cannot see their children except on weekends.'

Just to make sure that I did not miss any viewing opportunity that I thought might come up at the Jordanian Women's Union on non-viewing days, since the sampling methods I followed were based on convenience and purposive sampling techniques in which I interviewed as many women who had experienced wife abuse and were willing to be interviewed as possible and those women were the most informative of their wife abuse experiences, I went to the Jordanian Women's Union every day from Saturday 8, September, 2012 to Thursday 13, September, 2012. I stayed there from 9 am till 5 pm. However, abused women

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[27] According to Zamani (2013), 'Friday, is a religious festival for the Muslims. In [sic] this holy day, the Muslims gather at the mosques...The time for Friday prayer (Salat al juma) is the time for noon salat.' (n. p.).

came to the Jordanian Women's Union only on viewing days. On viewing days, it

was important for me to sit in the main reception hall so that I would be able to

see any victim upon her arrival. I identified each woman by the 'viewing' form

she was holding and the child or children she brought along. I found out that the

viewings which were arranged during weekdays were grandparents-children

viewings. During such viewings, the child would be accompanied by a relative,

such as an uncle or aunt, to see his or her grandparents, and the abused mother

would not be present at the time of the viewing. On Saturdays, children either

came to the Union with their mothers to see their fathers or vice versa.

On 8/9/2012, I was able to do three interviews at the Jordanian Women's Union.

To gain an understanding of the experiences of spousal abuse such women go

through, I wanted to talk to the victims, to know more about their families'

reactions to the spousal maltreatment they had undergone, to understand whether

religious figures had played a supportive role in trying to save them from their

abusive husbands and to know whether Shari'a courts and lawyers facilitated their

marriage annulment and supported them through awarding them their post-marital

rights after divorce. In the interviews, my main concern as a feminist researcher

was to help silenced disadvantaged wives to break free from their silence and

describe their abusive experiences. I was eventually able to interview 16 wives

and have two fill out questionnaires at the Jordanian Women's Union (i.e. the

total number of participants at the Jordanian Women's Union was 18), and I

managed to interview two at the Ministry of Social Development, which is less

than the number of women I had planned to interview before travelling to Jordan (see Table 6).

Table 6: Locations and Numbers of Research Participants.

Place	Interviewws	Questionnaires	Total
The Jordanian Women's Union	16	2	18
The Ministry of Social Development	2	0	2

The interviewees at the Jordanian Women's Union were wife abuse victims who had either been divorced or had filed for divorce due to their husbands' abusive behaviour. The women interviewed at the Ministry of Social Development, however, were still married and had not filed for marriage annulment yet. I was told by the general manager of the Social Defence Department that these women were still trying to arrive at some settlement with their husbands as they did not wish to terminate their marriages. The women I interviewed in the Jordanian Women's Union and in the Ministry of Social Development, and those who filled out the questionnaires in the Jordanian Women's Union had resorted to these professional bodies either to terminate their abusive marital relationships, or to seek conciliation with their husbands.

I was not allowed by the manager of the Jordanian Women's Union and the manager of the Social Defense Department at the Ministry of Social Development to contact any of the victims before a member of staff had asked for their consent to be interviewed. I clarified to these gatekeepers that I had sought the ethical approval from the University of York to conduct the interviews. I also explained

that this ethical approval mandates that I follow guidelines from the Centre of Women's Studies' policy at the University of York on ethics and the ethical guidelines of the relevant association (ESRC), guidelines that safeguard the participants and myself as a researcher. Yet, the gatekeepers' having a member of staff ask for the participating women's consent to be interviewed before I contacted the participants myself remained a compulsory measure insisted on by those gatekeepers. The reason was that the victims might feel intimidated by my presence, thinking that I was sent by their abusers to spy on them. This might cause the women to refuse to participate in the interviews. The manager of the Jordanian Women's Union, reflecting the same views as the manager of the Social Defense Department, said that the women might also feel pressured to participate because they simply felt too shy to say 'no'. This might also affect their accounts because they might change their stories or keep parts of their accounts from me. Therefore whenever I interviewed a victim at the Jordanian Women's Union, I was initially introduced to her by a member of staff after the member of staff had gained the victim's oral consent to participate in my interviews. Of course, information about who I was and the aim of my research was provided to the victim by this staff member before gaining consent. I was also careful to ask for each participating woman's oral consent before each interview just to make sure she did not feel pressured to take part in my research in any way.

My meeting with the manager of the Social Defense Department on 8 May 2012 had provided me with an idea about the hesitation and scepticism that I might face

when communicating with the victims for the first time. In October, I was allowed to interview two women who told the general manager that they did not mind being interviewed. As explained earlier in this section, I was not able to contact the victims myself. In order to make sure that the women to whom I was introduced at the Ministry of Social Development as potential research participants had come forward to take part in my research willingly, I was careful to ask them to give me their oral consent before beginning with the interviews.

The interviews at the Jordanian Women's Union sometimes took place before the viewing and sometimes afterwards. When the interviews were held after the viewings, the women were more comfortable to talk to me about their experiences. This is because when the husbands or ex-husbands had already left, they felt under less pressure emotionally. The victims' children were sent to the 'play room' by one of the staff members during the interviews. With regard to the interviews I conducted at the Ministry of Social Development, the participating abused wives were comfortable to talk to me about their experiences because the Ministry of Social Development, although administering its own shelter for abused wives, did not supervise parental viewings and so the participating women were not pressured by the presence of their abusive husbands at the time when the interviews were taking place.

3.6 Approaching and Interviewing Abused Women

I had prepared questions (Appendix 3) that covered the cultural, religious and legal aspects I intended to address prior to the interviews. As for other questions about the victims' feelings while under attack, these were left unwritten at the beginning. I thought I would add them when talking to the victims. This was because I did not want the interviews to feel rigid as is the case with fully-structured interviews. Key (1997) explains: 'Collecting quantified, comparable data from all subjects in a uniform manner introduces a rigidity into the investigative procedures that may prevent the investigator from probing in sufficient depth' (Key, 1997, n. p.).

At the beginning of the interviews, I found it difficult to approach these victims and get them to interact openly with me, a complete stranger to them. In *Feminist Methods in Social Research* (1992) Reinharz discusses the difficulty interviewing women from a feminist perspective. Reinharz attributes this difficulty to a multitude of reasons associated with both the researcher and the interviewees: 'feminists' access to women is potentially as problematic as men's access has been to men, particularly when there are differences of social class, race, ethnicity, or sexual preference' (Reinharz, 1992: 65).

Marital status and educational differences between myself and the interviewees also served to inhibit the progress of my research. I was not married and had higher education, whereas the interviewed women were still married or had been

married at one point in their lives and most of them had received little or no education at all. One of the interviewees was illiterate, four had not graduated from high school, six were high school graduates and only five were either college or university graduates. Such differences potentially labelled me as an unconcerned outsider in the eyes of the victims. In such situations, Reinharz (1992) stresses the importance of gaining the interviewees' trust. She argues that being a woman and a feminist does not necessarily guarantee the researcher the trust of the interviewees. Building rapport is achieved through the expression of feelings of genuine concern towards the interviewed subjects. Watts (2008) also argues:

> The careful use of language that reflects the needs and preferences of this research population . . . together with maintaining eye contact with them are the combined techniques I use to 'do' empathy, which I understand to be the giving of one's whole attention as committed presence . . . Listening with concern and compassion but without judgement and absorbing the feelings of others are further features of my empathic approach that are centred on the participant rather than on me as researcher (Watts, 2008: 9).

In order to achieve rapport with the victims, I asked the psychologist at the Jordanian Women's Union to facilitate breaking the ice by introducing me as a concerned friend who was trying to help address wife abuse in the country. Of course, the interviewees were made aware that I was doing this research in the UK, and that the information provided would be used for academic purposes. I also told the interviewees prior to the interviews that their identities and any information they gave me would remain confidential. They were informed verbally that they retained the right to refuse to answer or to stop the interview if they felt uncomfortable with or intimidated by any of the questions posed. The

presence of a member of staff whom the victims trusted helped to introduce

myself to the victims, explain the aims of my research, and clarify that the

interviews would not threaten their lives in any way. This issue would have been

avoided completely had I used questionnaires sent out to the victims via e-mail,

but such an approach would have limited the responses and reduced the advantage

of using direct personal communication with the victims. This is because most of

the victims were under-educated, as pointed out above, and so had not received

the tutoring and training which would enable them to deal with computers or

other forms of technology through which they would have been able to

participate. Also, one of the victims was illiterate, so she would not have been

able to read the questions and respond to the questionnaire at all.

In order to make the victims feel more secure, I showed them the consent form.

Although I thought the victims would feel much safer after reading that form,

their reactions were quite the opposite. The formal format of the consent form that

showed the University of York logo made the victims think that their identities

might be revealed through this research not only in Jordan but also internationally

which they considered a potential risk for scandal. Yet, my asking each

interviewee to give her oral consent before the interview took place, as discussed

in section 3.5, helped me overcome this ethics-related issue as this approach made

the women more certain that their identities and privacy were protected from

potential revelation.

One obstacle I faced while attempting to approach my research participants was

related to my marital status. My being single, or in other words that I myself had

not been exposed to wife abuse, meant to the victims that I would not be able to actually understand the difficulty of what they had been through, and so I would not appreciate the courage they had shown in deciding to contact NGOs and maybe other governmental institutions for help. One of the victims I interviewed, whom I will refer to as 'Eman', actually asked me about the reason behind my interest in investigating wife abuse although I was not a victim myself, saying:

> But why are you interviewing the women here at the Jordanian Women's Union? You look young and you are not wearing a wedding ring. You must be single. A woman who is not married can never understand how much it hurts to be struggling in silence. Why should you care anyway? You were never slapped in the face or dragged across the bedroom floor by your husband like a dog. It is no use talking about all that anyway. What is your work going to change?

That woman told me she thought my research was a waste of time. I explained to Eman that even if I had not been a victim of wife abuse myself, I was still a woman who believed that beating a woman was dehumanizing and that women must be treated with respect.

The interviews took place in a separate room and the door was always shut during the interviews so as to guarantee that the information given by the victims was kept confidential. I introduced myself before beginning each interview and explained that I was doing a PhD on wife abuse. I also pointed out that I was doing this because Jordanian people need to become aware of the problems abused women are exposed to. I gave each woman the chance to read the questions I had prepared, except for the woman who was illiterate to whom I read the interview questions. This step was necessary as I had to make sure that the

victims did not find any of the interview questions intrusive or intimidating. After

the women had agreed to be interviewed, I had to find a way to get into discussing

wife abuse.

Thus, I began each interview by talking about the importance of treating women

with respect in Islam, reciting the Prophet Mohammad's behaviour as an example.

Prophet Mohammad, I said, never resorted to violence against any of his wives.

This was a good way to break the ice and start the interviews as all the women,

whether educated or not, were aware of how respectful the Prophet was towards

his wives. Such knowledge encouraged the interviewees to participate as they

were able to find a common ground between themselves and me from which they

began to comment on what I had said about the importance of taking the Prophet

as a role model for Muslim Jordanian men to follow. After the interviewees

agreed on the unacceptability of wife abuse in Islam, I began by asking the

victims to introduce themselves to me. For instance, I asked them about their

names, how old they were, how many children they had and what their

educational level was. The rest of the interview questions were posed following a

semi-structured approach. Using 'semi-structurted' interviews meant that I had a

guide (see Appendix 3). The sequence of the questions and the language used to

pose the questions varied across the interviews. When I interviewed victims with

poor educational backgrounds, I realized that the language I used to formulate the

questions was difficult for these women to understand. Therefore I had to

paraphrase the questions to simplify communicating with them. Some victims

with little or no education, for instance, found it difficult to understand the term

'wife abuse'. In such cases, I said that this term might refer to any verbal or physical harm inflicted on women by their husbands, including sexual abuse which is a particular form of physical abuse that is not openly discussed in Jordan because it is considered to be taboo. I added that violence could also be emotional such as when the husband neglects his wife's needs and desires. Despite my sympathizing with the victims, I had to remain neutral while posing the interview questions. I tried not to use words that influenced the interviewees' answers in obvious ways.

Each interview took between 45-70 minutes. Interviewing victims who were either illiterate or who had not completed their school education took longer than interviewing victims with higher levels of education. The greater time illiterate and slightly educated victims took was because I had to explain the interview questions to them in more than one way. The victims referenced examples of the abusive behaviours that forced them to seek professional assistance in their marital lives. Throughout the interviews, I tried to converse with the women and make them feel comfortable as I told them that I was concerned for their wellbeing. Whenever I felt that they were beginning to feel uncomfortable or upset about a question, I was sure to ask if it was OK with them to respond and to let them know that they could skip answering or stop the interview at any point.

After having recorded the first interview, I was told that the manager at the Jordanian Women's Union wanted to see me urgently. I went to her office immediately, where she informed me that recording the interviews was illegal

even if it was only a voice recording. I was surprised as I had not been informed

of this during my previous visit in May although I was careful to ask about all the

restrictions and regulations that I might have to deal with when interviewing. I

was shocked to hear that, and asked her about the reason. She explained that the

identity of the victim might be revealed through the voice recording, which would

risk my being sued for 'Intihak hurumat al manazel' or 'penetrating the sanctity of

homes', an act that could lead to 'Ifsad al rabita al zawjiyeh' or violating marital

bonds.

The third paragraph of article 304 of the Jordanian penal code states that any

individual who convinces a wife to leave her marital home or turns her against her

husband is sentenced to imprisonment for attempting to break or 'violate' marital

bonds (LawJO, 2011). Thus, discussing family matters such as wife abuse and

pointing out that the wife should take action against her abuse can be interpreted

as an attempt to break the marital bonds. Discussing family issues with a stranger

without the husband's consent is also understood under the provisions of this

article as attempting to break marital bonds. This is the legal reason why the

victims would think, as I was told at the Jordanian Women's Union on my first

visit, that if what they told me was heard by members of staff in the absence of

the victims' lawyers, the information the former gave me might be held against

them in court.

Of course, the insistence of the general manager at the Jordanian Women's Union

on preventing me from recording the interviews was tangible proof that risking

the revelation of the victims' identities was taken seriously and handled with professionalism at the union. Discretion was key to the union's code of conduct. This was the reason why I was advised to take written notes instead. And when I asked the general manager about the duration of time that I was allowed to spend with each victim, she said that it was up to the victim to decide and that there were no restrictions in that respect. While taking written notes of the women's answers, I had to let the literate women see what I was writing down in order to reassure them that I was not revealing their identities or writing inaccurate notes of the accounts provided. Although taking written notes of my participants' accounts prolonged the interviews' durations, this approach enabled me to document detailed accounts of the women's experiences. When I felt that a certain aspect of a woman's experience needed to be clarified or elaborated on, I stopped taking notes, asked for further details and added the woman's answers word for word. This approach enriched my research with details that would not have been accessible had I used questionnaires to collect my data.

When each interview at the Jordanian Women's Union was over, I gave the woman a hug and thanked her for her time and cooperation. I also told the interviewees that their participation showed courage as they had challenged the cultural norms that silence abused women in Jordan, and that their participation would eventually contribute positively to combating wife abuse in Jordan.

Two of the victims who were staying at the shelter of the Jordanian Women's Union found it intimidating to talk to me in person about their experiences as they

were severely beaten by their husbands and so were emotionally incapable of participating in face-to-face interviews. I therefore had to take their emotional wellbeing into account and show that I respected their status and concern over their privacy. I rewrote my interview questions to form a questionnaire that included a fixed set of open-ended questions (Appendix 3). I photo-copied the questionnaire and gave the questions to the victims with the assistance of a member of staff. This method was intended to allow the women to provide me with details of their experiences and to give them a chance to express themselves without having to worry about their safety.

Like the Jordanian Women's Union, the Ministry of Social Development was legally bound to maintain the confidentiality of the victims' identities. I was therefore not allowed to videotape or tape-record the interviews. With regard to the age range of the interviewees at the Ministry of Social Development, the manager of the Social Defence Department also told me that the victims I was aiming to interview fell into two categories: adults and minors[28]. He pointed out that adult victims might be more understanding and trusting regarding issues related to research ethics and confidentiality. Minor victims were more likely to be less trusting and therefore less cooperative. In the end, he said that he was willing to help me arrange the interviews by asking for the consent of each of the victims listed in the ministry's database. The general manager of the Social Defence Department also told me that only two of the women staying at the

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[28] According to Gihane Tabet (2005), the provisions of the Jordanian Law of Personal Status classify citizens under the age of 18 as minors (14).

shelter were adults. The rest of the victims there were minors. It was therefore

illegal for me to interview them in the absence of their husbands. The ages of the

participants I interviewed at the Jordanian Women's Union and the Ministry of

Social Development were between 20 and 42. I chose this age range because I

thought that victims of this age would be more open to talk to me about their

experiences. I made this decision after the general manager of the Social Defense

Department informed me that victims between the age of 18 and 19 would be

more hesitant to participate because they were young and untrusting.

The manager of the Social Defence Department was kind enough to allow me to

conduct the interviews in a separate waiting room, instead of having them at his

office. This approach enabled me to provide the victims with a greater sense of

privacy. I used the same approach I had previously followed at the Jordanian

Women's Union. The victims at the Ministry of Social Development were

interviewed individually. These women were also given pseudonyms for the

purpose of protecting their privacy. At the beginning of each interview, I

introduced myself and explained the aim of my interviews. I also told the women

that their identities would not be revealed and that the information given would be

used for academic purposes. I gave the women the chance to read the interview

questions and explained the questions to them. The first interview took about

thirty minutes and the second about forty minutes during which time I took notes

of the interviewees' responses. After I had finished the interviews, I went over to

the manager's office to thank him for his understanding and cooperation.

After having contacted NGOs and governmental institutions, I contacted the Family Protection Department at the Public Security Directorate which classified victims of spousal assault in police records. However, upon my arrival, I found that the shelter was highly secured. I was not allowed to enter it before gaining official consent from the Public Security Directorate's main headquarters in Amman. I had hoped to attract a group of participants with different backgrounds at this shelter. What I mean by 'different backgrounds' here is that the participating women would be of varying social classes and economic statuses. Paying attention to the differences in women's experiences by focusing on their varying social classes, economic statuses and wife abuse accounts was my way to stress that these women's experiences were each unique. From this perspective, women of diverse backgrounds and with different resources (e.g. education) might have different definitions and standpoints of and responses to wife abuse. The reason why I thought this diversity of the victims' backgrounds would add depth to my research was that it would show whether the wife's belonging to a particular class served to increase the severity of wife abuse she faced, for example.

Yet, things did not work out the way I had expected them to. It was not possible for me to acquire signed consent to interview the victims in the absence of a member of staff. Although I filled out the application form that was required according to the Public Security Directorate's regulations, my application was rejected a month and a half later. When I asked about the progress of my application, I was informed by a member of staff that my application was not

accepted because interviewing victims in the absence of staff members was against the security codes of conduct abided by in the department. These strict regulations were implemented to protect the victims' lives. Consequently, I decided not to interview the women at the Public Security Directorate, although I might have been able to gain access through personal connections.

3.7 Interviewing Lawyers

I realized that interviewing Jordanian abused wives in family protection shelters would not provide answers to all my concerns, such as questions about the legal measures according to which custody payments are determined, and the role of the legislative authority in the improvement of custody laws. Thus on 12 May 2012, I decided to contact legal agencies for further insight into the procedures according to which custody payments are estimated. I got in touch with a legal firm which is a non-governmental organization funded by international organizations and agencies to provide legal consultancy on issues including wife abuse. Initially, I was received by a project officer at the organization. I told her that I would like to talk to lawyers specialized in the field of family law to enquire about the measures according to which custody wages are determined, and to ask them about the possibility of gaining access to wife abuse records. These records include documentation of spousal assault along with background information concerning both the abuser and the victim.

This project officer then introduced me to two of the lawyers at the organization

to whom I talked for almost an hour. They told me that gaining access to wife

abuse records would be difficult because it would require special consent from a

Shari'a court. I would not get this because I was neither documented as the

perpetrator nor the victim in any of the wife abuse records. Eventually, I was

given brochures including details of the services provided for the clients of the

organization in addition to the second chapter of the Jordanian constitution which

includes articles declaring that all Jordanian citizens are equal before the law in

terms of their rights and duties and prohibiting discrimination against women. I

was told by the project officer that the only staff member who could provide me

with signed consent to access the documents was the executive director of the

legal firm, but she was busy at court throughout the day. I was told to send her an

e-mail including a copy of my proposal. On 13 May 2012, I sent that e-mail. I told

her of my previous meeting with the project officer and asked her to meet me in

order to discuss the possibility of gaining access to case records. However, I

received no response.

After having received no response from the legal firm I visited, I searched for

other legal firms through the internet. I started calling them one by one. Some

were not specialized in issues related to wife abuse and child custody, others were

not willing to provide assistance to a PhD student because there was no money for

their involvement and only a few gave me appointments to go and see specialized

solicitors in the field. One of the most cooperative law firms I contacted was the

Arida Law Firm. There I talked to a specialized attorney in family law, who

informed me that he had published an article online entitled 'Adoption in Jordan' (Arida Law Firm, 2010: 1). The article covered issues related to child custody in the Jordanian Law of Personal Status. He also pointed out that gaining access to court records on individual wife abuse incidents would be difficult and might require special legal consent by the Civil Court in Amman. He recommended a certain legal firm for its expertise as an NGO in dealing with wife abuse as well as the Ministry of Social Development. Since I had already contacted that legal firm and the Ministry of Social Development, I decided to approach other private legal firms for assistance. After most of my attempts to make appointments with lawyers by phone had failed, I decided to visit the companies in person to ask for assistance.

Finally, I came across a firm that specialized in a multitude of legal domains including civil issues such as wife abuse. Seeking the expertise of the lawyers at that firm was necessary since they were the only source through which I could have gained access to court records related to wife abuse, become aware of particular forms of wife abuse such as 'nushuz-based wife abuse' (see Chapter Four); bearing in mind that this particular form of wife abuse has not been addressed in wife abuse research in Jordan, and gained more knowledge about custody-related issues that abused women encounter. I talked to a trainee lawyer at that firm. He was willing to help but he expressed his concern regarding the possibility of gaining access to certain documents, saying that such an approach might get me into trouble if used without special legal consent from the Civil Court in Amman. Consequently, he asked me to give him a few days so that he

could provide me with the consent form I needed and the reported abuse cases that he said he would be able to get hold of.

On 6 June 2012, I called this trainee lawyer once more to enquire about the consent procedures. He introduced me to his brother, also a lawyer at the firm, who dealt with a good number of wife abuse cases, and was therefore capable of directing me to the safest way to use court records. We had a brief meeting during which I explained the main aim of my research and the reason why I needed the court records. I did not specify how many records I needed because I wanted to gain access to the greatest number possible. Ultimately, he provided me with five copies of official court records including wife abuse complaints that had been filed at the firm, after having removed the names of the parties involved. He pointed out that this was, in his opinion, the best way to guarantee that no exposure of the identities of the parties involved would take place. After I collected the data from the participating women, now I will be analyzing them.

3.8 Analysing the Data

The accounts of the participants were first written down in Arabic during the interviews that took place at the Jordanian Women's Union and the Ministry of Social Development, and then translated into English. This meant that I was mostly able to document the victims' summaries of their experiences, and the notes I took during the interviews were therefore sometimes brief. The brevity of my notes was due to my sense that I needed to give the interviewees my full

attention and make them feel that I was genuinely interested in knowing about their stories. At times I needed to intervene and give examples of abuse stories[29] from newspapers to encourage the interviewees to open up to me about their own experiences. I had to be careful not to overpressure my interviewees in order to gain extensive accounts of their experiences (Haddad, Shotar, Younger et al., 2011: 81). Too much pressure might have risked the interviewees' giving false responses to the questions posed in order to escape revealing details that they considered embarrassing or shameful. Thus, the summaries I wrote down were as in the example below:

Background Questions

Q: Could you tell me a little bit about yourself? How many kids do you have? What is your educational level (elementary school, high school, university)?

A: My name is Alia. I have completed the second upper elementary year of school. I am 35 years old. I have three children.

Q: How did you first get to meet your husband? Was it an 'arranged' marriage in the traditional sense or was it that you two were in a relationship before deciding to get married?

A: It was a traditional marriage. My sister's husband is his brother.

Q: How did you feel about the idea?

i) (If arranged) Did your parents take your opinion into consideration?

ii) How did you manage to talk to your parents about your relationship?

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[29] See Appendix 5 for more details about an abuse story that I used to encourage the women to respond to my research questions.

A: I was forced to say 'yes' because all of my brothers have health issues that prevent them from providing me with assistance. I do not have anybody else to support me. (Interview with Alia, aged 35).

Although some of my interviewees dictated lengthy details of their experiences to me which I wrote down word for word, the questionnaire responses and some of the interview accounts were brief. The brevity of some of the data collected meant that I had to conduct a thematic analysis rather than a discourse analysis of what was said. That is, I focused on the content of what the women told me rather than on how they told it to me. The content of what the women told me covered different aspects of the participating women's abusive experiences as I shall show.

The content of the interviews was mainly divided into two categories based on the questions that were posed during the interviews: background questions content and main interview questions content. The content of the first group of questions or the background questions was based on the participants' responses to three questions. The first question was demographic to get an idea about each victim's age, educational background and the number of children she had. This question was posed to show if my research participants who reported wife abuse were mostly women below 25 years old or women over 25 but less than 50 years old. This question was also asked for two additional reasons. It was designed to show if the educational level of the abused women who participated in my research affected their reporting their wife abuse experiences, and seeking professional

assistance to end their abusive marital relationships. The question was also posed

to show if the number of children the women who participated in my research had

affected their reporting their wife abuse experiences, and seeking professional

assistance to end their abusive marital relationships. As for the second and third

questions in the first group, these were designed to show whether each woman

married in a traditional or non-traditional way, whether the victim's opinion was

taken into account by her parents or not, and what her feelings were about getting

married. The second question was intended to show if the type of marriage (i.e. its

being traditional or non-traditional) affected the risk of being exposed to wife

abuse. The third question was designed to find out about the victims' awareness

of the meaning of marriage and the circumstances that had led them to agree to

their marriage procedures, especially when their grooms were total strangers to

them.

The second group of questions, or the main interview questions, were designed to

reveal whether wife abuse was limited to physical violence, to give examples of

the various forms of abuse that the women had encountered and to highlight the

role of the wife's natal family in eliminating wife abuse. The other questions

within this group were designed to discover the forms of assistance the abused

women sought (i.e. the assistance of Muslim clerics and lawyers).

In my analysis of the interviews and in the light of the previously stated

explanation of the aims behind the interview questions, I conducted a thematic

analysis. First, I read the raw interview material in order to gain a clear

understanding of the content of the interviews. Then, I began coding the interview data. I created seven key codes:

1. the participant's age
2. the number of children that the participant has
3. the participant's educational level.
4. types of wife abuse
5. parental assistance
6. clerical assistance
7. lawyers' assistance

The codes were used to set up excel sheets with the demographic and other information from my participants (Appendixes 5-12). The first table (Appendix 5) detailed the victims' pseudonyms, the place where the interviews were conducted, the victims' ages, how many children each victim had and the victims' educational levels. The second table (Appendix 6) details whether the marriages of the victims were based on relationships or traditionally arranged. The third table (Appendix 7) details how many women experienced in-law intervention. The fourth table (Appendix 8) focused on whether the husbands' abusive behaviour was evident at an early point in the marriages or not. The fifth table (Appendix 9) centred on the victims' main sources of conflict with their abusive husbands. The sixth table (Appendix 10) showed whether the abused women had received parental support or not. The seventh table (Appendix 11) highlighted whether the victims consulted Muslim clergy for assistance with their marital lives. Finally, the eighth table (Appendix 12) detailed whether the research participants had received lawyers' assistance in order to reclaim their marital rights and abandon their abusive husbands. These codes were descriptive intended to organize my data. Different information provided by each of my research participants that were given the same code were compared to one another so as to

highlight the particularity of these women's experiences. After having explained

my methodological approach in this chapter, I will proceed to discuss the forms of

wife abuse that were reported by my research participants and the factors that

affected these women's disclosure of their wife abuse experiences in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Forms of Wife Abuse and Factors Affecting the Research Paticipants' Disclosure

4.1 Introduction

Modern Jordanian cultural views regarding wife abuse are contradictory. While traditional views of the naturalness of wife abuse prevail (Haj-Yahia, 2002), there are also emancipatory views calling for counteraction against this phenomenon (Oweis, Gharaibeh and Alhourani, 2009). Rising egalitarian democratization views have combated wife abuse (Haddad et al., 2011) and labelled it as problematic (Oweis, Gharaibeh and Alhourani, 2009). For instance, National Action Plans in modern Jordan are operating in compliance with the provisions of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women in order to clearly delineate and fight wife abuse (UN Women, 2012). Some of the important counter-violence efforts that were performed by the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women are defining violence against women, including wife abuse, as 'any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life' and calling for counteraction to such practices (Hajjar, 2004 b: 13).

Organizations such as Musawah[30], a global movement introduced by Sisters in Islam, have addressed the issue of wife abuse, attempting to bring 'Islamic and human rights frameworks together' and arguing 'for equality within the Islamic legal tradition' (Sisters in Islam, 2011: 1). The importance of re-visioning human rights provisions in the light of Islamic values arises from the fact that in Jordanian culture, as in Arab Muslim countries at large (Cinthio and Ericsson, 2006), there is a widespread belief that wife abuse is supported by Islamic values (Becknell, 2005).

In order to clarify this misunderstanding with regard to the association between wife abuse and Islamic values, wife abuse in Arab Muslim countries including Jordan has been addressed by many scholars and researchers such as Haj-Yahia (2002), Douki, Nacef, Belhadj et al. (2003) and Haddad, Shotar, Younger et al. (2011). These researchers have investigated the forms of wife abuse that are practiced in Jordan. They agree that some of the forms of wife abuse found in Jordan are common amongst different nations worldwide. Yet, they confirm that other forms of wife abuse are more common in Arab Muslim countries such as Jordan. In order to clarify the various forms of wife abuse in Jordan, including those that are culturally specific, I decided to divide this chapter into three sections. In the first section, I provide an introduction to this chapter. In the second section, I focus on the factors affecting the disclosure of wife abuse among

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[30] 'Musawah ("equality" in Arabic) is a global movement for equality and justice in the Muslim family. It was launched in February 2009 at a Global Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia attended by over 250 women and men from some 50 countries from around the globe. Musawah is pluralistic and inclusive, bringing together NGOs, activists, scholars, legal practitioners, policy makers and grassroots women and men from around the world' (Musawah, 2014: n.p.).

my research participants which contribute to the particularity of this phenomenon. Finally, in the third section, I explore the forms of wife abuse that were reported by my research participants, including forms that are more commonly reported in non-western Middle East countries such as Jordan. These wife abuse forms include forced marriages, in-law related wife abuse, nushuz-based wife abuse, polygamy-related wife abuse and divorce-related wife abuse.

4.2 Factors Affecting Women's Disclosure of Wife Abuse Amongst the Participating Women

The research on wife abuse in Jordan mainly investigates the various forms of this phenomenon and the factors that affect their occurrence (Haj-Yahia, 2002; The United Nations population Fund, 2008; Al-Badayneh, 2012). However, only some researchers such as Oweis, Gharaibeh and Alhourani (2009) have explored the factors that impact on abused women's disclosure and reporting of wife abuse. Disclosing and reporting wife abuse in Jordan is mainly affected by individuals' varying acceptance of such behaviour (Oweis, Gharaibeh and Alhourani, 2009). In my research, I focus on addressing not only the cultural values but also the demographic factors that affected my research participants' disclosure of wife abuse. I explored these women's disclosure of wife abuse in regard to their ages, educational levels and the number of children they had (see Appendix 5). Only 3 of my participants were under 25 years old. The rest of the abused women who took part in my research were distributed as follows: 10 women were aged between 25 and 35 years old and 4 women were over 35 and younger than 50. O'Hara, Tsai, Carlson et al. (2013) who undertook a quantitative survey in Jordan

155

with a sample of 10876 women found that participants who were above 25 years old reported wife abuse in greater numbers (87.5%) compared to 12.5% of women between 18-25 years old who reported wife abuse (O'Hara, Tsai, Carlson et al., 2013). The large proportion of women between 25 and 35 in my research who reported having experienced wife abuse mirrors O'Hara, Tsai, Carlson et al's findings. But as I was unable to interview younger females who were abused by their husbands this may just be a function of the bias in my selection process. I just want to stresses that in my research, a considerable number of participants who experienced wife abuse were aged 25-35. Women aged 25-35 did not specify how long they had been married. The abuse these women experienced may have happened over either a long period of time, or it had taken them a while to take steps to leave their marriage.

As for the effect of my research participants' educational levels on their reporting wife abuse to professional institutions, more than half of my research participants (i.e. 11 women) who had received little or no education at all sought the assistance of family members and reported their abusive experiences to professional institutions and organizations. It was certainly the case in my group that less educated women sought help.

Drawing on the premises of resource theory, the main reason why a greater number of poorer women and those with lower educational levels who participated in my research reported wife abuse may be because their limited financial resources and poor education prevented them from supporting

themselves after ending their abusive marriages. Therefore, they were in need of

assistance. For example, one of these eleven women explained her situation as

follows:

> My husband used to take medication for some psychiatric condition that
> he had, and he started beating me because he became addicted to it. Yet,
> he recovered after receiving treatment. I could not stand living with him
> because he was a drug addict. He used to beat me and call me names
> although there was no reason for him to do that... I did not leave the house
> even after I was divorced because I have no other place to go, and I do not
> have an income source to support myself...Where am I supposed to go?
> Am I supposed to live on the streets? (Raghad, 34 years old, completed the
> first high school year).

The woman's lack of education which meant that it was difficult for her to find a

job decreased the possibility of her accessing financial resources through which

she could have rented her own accommodation and left her abusive husband.

Therefore, she was exposed to more violence. Another woman said:

> He used to make me work as a cleaning lady and earn my own money, and
> he used to make me beg in order to provide for him and his son. After all
> the exhaustion and hard work, he used to deprive me of sleep. He used to
> treat me as though I were his servant. I was robbed of my dignity when I
> was with him by all means (Eman, approximately 30 years old, illiterate).

Lack of education and lack of financial resources were also the main barriers that

prevented this woman from abandoning her abusive husband but she had sought

support from official organizations.

Among my participants, the vast majority (i.e. 18 out of 20 women) had children.

Although researchers such as Rose, Trevillion, Woodall et al. (2011) and Al-

Badayneh (2012) have found that having children reduced reporting or seeking

assistance regarding intimate partner violence including wife abuse, this was not

157

the case among my interviewees. However, my sample was not representative so this might just be sample bias. I will now turn to discuss the forms of violence reported in the literature on wife abuse in Jordan and those that were reported by my research participants.

4.3 Forms of Wife Abuse in Jordan and Amongst the Participating Women

Fifteen of the women who participated in my research reported having experienced physical violence, and only one of these fifteen women specified the type of physical violence she had experienced as being sexual violence. This shows that physical violence was the most reported form of wife abuse among my participants in Jordan. The second most commonly reported form of wife abuse by them was verbal abuse. Eleven of the women who participated in this research stated that they had been exposed to verbal abuse. Emotional abuse was the third most commonly reported form of wife abuse as seven participants reported having experienced it. As for the least common form, only six participants reported financial abuse. The numbers highlighted above indicate that the most reported form of wife abuse as reported by my sample was physical abuse. Physical abuse has been reported as the most commonly experienced form of wife abuse in some previous research on wife abuse in western countries such as the US and Canada (Campbell, 2002: 1331) and also in non-western countries such as Jordan (Btoush and Haj-Yahia, 2008: 1540).

However, my research highlighted particular forms of wife abuse that are not often investigated in western and non-western research on wife abuse which are early and forced marriage, in-law-perpetrated violence, polygamy and nushuz-based violence. Early marriage, as indicated in the literature review, is also identified as a form of wife abuse in Jordan (UNHCR, 2014 b; UNICEF, 2014). This form of marriage is encouraged by the belief that girls are merely a financial burden, especially in families with limited financial resources (Gharaibeh, Oweis, Shakhatreh, et al., 2011). This is because girls are financially supported by their parents as children, yet, unlike boys, are not culturally expected to provide for their parents as adults (Sonbol, 2003). This depiction of girls not only serves to position them as second-class family members, but may also expose them to violence from their parents and their male siblings as children (Al Badayneh, 2012). Al Badayneh (2012) argues that family violence against girls in Jordan is best understood in accordance with an intra-familial hierarchical authority scale. In this context, the father/husband can exercise violence against the children and wife, the wife can exercise violence against the children, and the male children can exercise violence against their female siblings.

Although none of the women who participated in my research got married at a very young age (i.e. when they were still minors), most of them (i.e. 13 out of 20 women) had traditionally arranged marriages by their parents. Three were married after having had relationships with their husbands, and four women were forced to get married. Fifteen of the 20 women who took part in my research had never met their husbands before being married and only two women were related to

their husbands (see Appendixes 5 and 6). Lack of prior acquaintance has been

identified by Ṣahin, Timur and Ergin et al. (2010) as potentially promoting wife

abuse. The opinions of 16 [31] of my 20 research participants were taken into

consideration by their parents regarding the former's approval of their future

husbands (see Appendix 6). Yet, the fact that these women's opinions were taken

into consideration by their parents does not necessarily mean they were in

agreement. I have no data to help me explore this. So, maybe this issue needs to

be investigated further. Nonetheless, the number of women who were in arranged

marriages where they had not met their partners before was high. This aspect of

the inter-relation of arranged marriages and wife abuse would benefit from further

exploration. However, it is noteworthy that few of my participants had forced

marriages.

Four of my research participants had forced marriages. Sonbol (2003) explains

that Jordanian women might be forced to accept whatever conditions their natal

family imposes on them because their family provides them with 'perhaps the

only support and security system in a culture that gives husbands unlimited right

to divorce and patriarchal powers' (Sonbol, 2003: 128). Yet, Sonbol (2003) points

out that in modern Jordanian society, a woman cannot be sure of her family's

support even if she yields to their desires and tolerates their demands which could

be exercised in the form of forced marriage (Sonbol, 2003). Among my four

participants who had forced marriages, for example, three of these women had

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[31] These 16 women are divided as follows: 13 had traditional marriages and 3 were married based on a relationship with their husbands.

received assistance from their families to solve their wife abuse issues and one had not. I highlighted the particularity of these women's wife abuse experiences when discussing how their marriage types impacted on their wife abuse experiences in different ways in terms of whether they had received parental assistance or not. This woman's having been denied parental assistance allowed her husband to continue being violent towards her. However, being denied parental assistance to resolve wife abuse issues among my participants was not restricted to that woman who had a forced marriage. The other woman who was denied parental assistance to stop her husband's abuse had a traditional marriage. This shows that among the women who took part in my research, a woman's having a forced marriage did not necessarily restrict her receiving parental assistance to stop her husband's abuse. The fact that fifteen of the sixteen women who had either arranged or relationship-based marriages were encouraged by their parents to seek the assistance of professional organizations and institutions in order to stop the abuse they were exposed to also reinforces the idea that a woman's having a traditional or relationship-based marriage does not necessarily restrict or guarantee her receiving parental assistance to stop her husband's abuse.

With regard to in-law intervention, also known as in-law-perpetrated violence, this form of wife abuse has been investigated by Clark, Silverman, Shahrouri et al. (2010) who found that in-law intervention in the spouses' lives reinforces women's exposure to wife abuse. This form of abuse is more common in 'traditional' patriarchal societies where extended family structures prevail (McCloskey and Eisler, 2008: 3). The conservative Jordanian society of the

twentieth and twenty-first centuries is hidden under the cloak of modernization. Jordanian people, like other Arabs, are being exposed to modern cultural values, and their response to modernization is constantly interwoven with prevalent traditional tribal cultural views (Cinthio and Ericsson, 2006). Moghadam (1992) maintains that Arab societies on the whole have created a state of false modernization in the sense that they have not managed to break free from male authority over women and children despite the increasing space for women's liberation and their participation in the public sphere (Moghadam, 1992).

In Jordan, two views regarding the modernization of Jordanian patriarchal society exist: the first maintains that Jordanian patriarchal socio-cultural structures, in terms of men's control over women, are entirely static and have not changed for decades (Kawar, 2000; Al Kharouf and Weir, 2008). The second, however, argues that the Jordanian patriarchal system is being overtly challenged by and has indeed been changed due to modern human rights ideologies that have been introduced by international organizations and directed towards the liberation of women (The Arab Women Organization[32], Mosawa Network and members of the campaign 'My Mother is Jordanian and Her Nationality is My Right'[33], 2012; Adely, 2012).

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[32] 'AWO was founded in 1970 by a group of women activists who dreamt of a society where gender equality and social justice would reign for all citizens. AWO has been involved in a long process to strengthen the status of Jordanian women to become equal and effective partners in development. AWO is affiliated to the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) and the Recycling Coalition (RC). AWO is a founding member of the Network of the Arab NGOs and a member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)' (Charity Vault: n.d.).
[33] 'Under Jordanian Law No.6 of 1954 on Nationality, last amended in 1987, with few exceptions, women cannot transmit their nationality to their children or upon marriage to their husbands. To

Researchers who have labelled the Jordanian society in terms of its challenging

patriarchal norms as a static or *neo-patriarchal* society include Al Sharabi (1988)

and Amal Al Kharouf and David Weir (2008). Al Sharabi (1988) first

distinguished the term *neo-patriarchy* from *tribal patriarchy* in the pre-modern

Arab World and argued that neopatriarchy integrates traditional values along

modern conceptions of liberation. It neither advocates entirely the traditional nor

transcends it to the modern. Like patriarchal societies, neopatriarchal societies

embrace ideologies that support male domination through the exercise of unequal

power distribution. Amal Al Kharouf and David Weir (2008) describe Arab

societies as neo-patriarchal, adopting the views of Hisham Sharabi (1988):

> A basic assumption of this study is that over the last one hundred years the
> patriarchal structures of Arab society, far from being displaced or truly
> modernized, have only been strengthened and maintained in deformed,
> 'modernized' forms. That is to say, the Arab awakening or renaissance
> (nahda) of the nineteenth century not only failed to break down the inner
> relations and forms of patriarchalism but, by initiating what it called the
> modern awakening, also provided the ground for producing a new, hybrid
> sort of society/culture- the neopatriarchal society/culture we see before us
> today. Material modernization, the first (surface) manifestation of social
> change, only served to remodel and recognize patriarchal structures and
> relations and to reinforce them by giving them 'modern' forms and
> appearances (Al Kharouf and Weir, 2008: 308-309).

Pettygrove, Naser, and Fauss (2006) investigate the historical evolution of

Jordanian society, particularly in relation to family structures and male authority

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combat this law which does not apply equivalently to Jordanian men and which is negatively
impacting the security and livelihood of Jordanian women married to non-nationals, Nima
Habashna founded the campaign "My mother is Jordanian, and her nationality is a right for me."
Led by Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians and with the support of the Arab Women
Organization, Nima is leading a series of sit-ins in front of the Ministry of the Interior and other
government offices calling on the government to amend the nationality law in line with Jordan's
international legal obligations' (Equality Now, 2012: n.p.).

and control over women in the private sphere. They point out that tribal Jordanian patriarchal culture was fundamentally constructed upon extended family units, which gradually evolved into nuclear family structures. They further describe the importance of extended family units to the solidarity and survival of 'tribal' Jordanian society: 'The family or tribe in Jordan is an all-encompassing social structure which provides fully for the basic needs of its members, and thus negates the need for or ability to dissent' (Pettygrove, Naser and Fauss, 2006: 8). They refute the assumption that the emergence of nuclear families in replacement of extended family structures provides evidence that Jordanian women have been liberated from male control (Pettygrove, Naser, Fauss, 2006: 10).

Clark, Silverman, Shahrouri et al. (2010) draw connections between extended-family intervention in nuclear family settings and women experiencing wife abuse. Whether women lived in extended or nuclear families, Clark, Silverman, Shahrouri et al. (2010) argue, in-law intervention renders them at greater risk of experiencing wife abuse. Mohammadhosseini, Sahraean and Bahrami (2010) add that living with in-laws increases parental or in-law intervention, which therefore increases women's experiencing wife abuse.

Six of the twenty women who took part in my research stated that they experienced intervention by their extended family members, particularly their mothers-in-law, compared to 14 who did not (see Appendix 7). The six women who experienced in-law related extended-family intervention said that their marriages were traditionally arranged and that their parents took their opinions

164

about their grooms into consideration. Three of the six women who experienced

in-law-related, extended-family intervention lived with their in-laws. A total

number of 17 of the 20 women who took part in my research (i.e. the 14 women

who did not experience in-law intervention and 3 of the 6 women who did) did

not live with their in-laws. These numbers, in line with the views of Pettygrove,

Naser and Fauss (2006) on the adoption of pro-modernization values and the

redistribution of family structures in Jordan, indicate that most of my research

participants lived in nuclear family settings. Most also agreed to the choice of

their future spouses. However, such changes did not necessarily have a positive

impact on reducing the participating women's experiencing wife abuse. Among

my participants, not living with the in-laws did not limit their experience of in-law

interventions, though overall that figure was still quite high. But, again, no

generalizations can be made, given my sample.

'Parental intervention' or 'in-law intervention' is rarely witnessed in modern

western nations such as the US and the UK. Parental intervention in the spouses'

private lives (Oweis et al., 2009) and dowry-related issues (Becknell, 2005) occur

in Jordan and can increase aggression against married women. Some women who

participated in this research, for instance, complained about the interference of

their parents-in-law and particularly their mothers-in-law, describing the in-laws'

attitudes as destructive to women's marital lives. One of the wife abuse victims

interviewed at the Jordanian Women's Union, for instance, said:

> His parents intervened ever since we got married and our life was
> uncomfortable. We lived right next door to his parents. My mother in-law
> used to intervene in the slightest details of my life like for example when I

must go to bed and when I must work until I started having nightmares. She's a frightening character (Reema, 35 years old).

Here, although the in-laws did not cohabit with the couple, their proximity in the neighbourhood made their access easy. It may therefore be that simply comparing nuclear versus extended family cohabitation forms may be insufficient when considering wife abuse. The intervention of in-laws in a wife's private life can rob that wife of her simplest rights like maintaining the capacity to co-organize her family with her husband in ways they see fit. Interference of that sort reinforces a woman's disempowerment. Another woman complained:

> He beat me because of his mother one week after our marriage . . . His parents used to intervene in our life. We used to live with them. He never took my opinion into consideration and he used to beat me when I did not do anything. He took his parents' opinions into consideration instead. His mother used to say that I am the fruit of an illegitimate relationship. That was the most upsetting behaviour on the part of his parents. I was not allowed to go out or visit my parents. When he used to visit my parents, he did that behind his parents' back (Lamya, age not specified).

The reinforcement of this participant's disempowerment was attributed to the state of double oppression that she experienced. Controlling behaviour against her was not only carried out by her in-laws but also by her husband. A third woman stated: 'My mother in-law destroyed our life. Once I wrote to my husband Quranic verses and she said I was practising "witchcraft"' (Hala, 26 years old).

The destructive role of mothers-in-law can also affect the marital relationship indirectly. The mother-in-law may seek to upset her daughter-in-law by abusing the latter's children. One of the women interviewed in this research said: 'My son's body was burnt. My mother in-law used to heat a knife and burn him. She

used to cut my son's clothes with a pair of scissors or a blade because the clothes were bought by my parents' (Miran, 32 years old). The reported experience of this research participant reveals that if an abusive mother-in-law fails to subjugate her daughter-in-law, an alternative way for her to maintain a dominant position over her daughter-in-law can be abusing the latter's children. This is because in such circumstances, the targeted daughter-in-law may be forced to yield to the mother-in-law's demands in order to protect her children who are at the very bottom of the power relations hierarchy within the family.

Most of my participants did not suffer from extended-family abuse. Clearly, some mothers-in-law respect their daughters-in-law's privacy and marriage and their relations with the rest of the husbands' family members. Clark, Silverman, Shahrouri et al. (2010) quote a Jordanian thirty-three-year-old survivor of wife abuse's opinion on her mother-in-law: 'my mother- in-law is so nice. I told you that my new neighbor thought that she is my mother. She takes care of me and sends me things and asks about me all the time. She does things as if she is my mother' (Clark, Silverman, Shahrouri et al., 2010: 148). Recent western research on wife abuse does not widely address in-law intervention as a risk factor that potentially increases wife abuse which is at least in part due to the fact that modern western societies have evolved into nuclear families (Goody, 1997). Cliquet (2003) argues that:

> The 20th century has witnessed remarkable changes in family structures and dynamics in Western Europe and North America: smaller household sizes, a further shift from extended to nuclear families, a decrease in nuptiality and an increase in separation or divorce, the appearance of new forms of unions such as unmarried cohabitation and living-apart-together,

changing gender and intergenerational relations, and, last but not least, a substantial decrease in fertility, often to below-replacement levels. (Cliquet, 2003: 1)

Living apart from in-laws in western societies has reduced in-laws' possibility for intervention in the lives of their daughters-in-law which, in turn, has led to the reduction of wife abuse that is perpetrated by in-laws (Somach, 2012).

With respect to the impact of traditional marriages on women's experiencing wife abuse, western and non-western research on wife abuse confirmed that traditional marriages affected women's experiencing wife abuse (Paludi, 2004; Gangoli, Razak and McCarry, 2006; Fulu, 2014). Traditional marriages in Jordan have not come to an end and continue to be the norm rather than non-traditional marriages. Traditional marriages include arranged and forced marriages (The Bureau of Consular Affairs). They also include 'cousin marriages'. Thirteen of the 20 women who took part in this research said that their marriages were traditionally arranged. These 13 women were not forced or coerced into accepting the marriages that their parents had arranged. Nonetheless they experienced wife abuse. This could be attributed to the fact that there was no prior acquaintance between the potential brides and grooms, as in the case of the 13 women[34] who took part in my research who said that they had had arranged marriages in which their opinions regarding their acceptance of their husbands were taken into consideration by their parents. However, as divorce rates in western countries

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[34] Twenty women took part in my research. Four women were forced to get married, three women got married to men with whom they had relationships, and 13 women had traditional marriages (i.e. They were neither forced or coerced to get married). See Appendix 7.

show (e.g. The National Marriage Project and the Institute for American Values, 2010 and the UK Office for National Statistics, 2013), prior acquaintance which is the norm in such countries, is also no guarantee that the relationship will work.

The main reason why 13 of my research participants adhered to such traditionally arranged marriage practices is that these are a straightforward way through which women can get married and so declare their maturity and independence, for even financial stability and professional success cannot guarantee a woman freedom from the 'influence, guidance, or control' of others, especially her male kin who assume the role of guardians (Adely, 2012: 126) unless she is married. Only three women who took part in my research said they did not marry traditionally, whether their marriages were 'arranged', 'forced' or cousin marriages. This small number suggests that my research participants' families were only slowly moving towards the acceptance of the liberation of women from traditional gender roles in accordance with which a woman is not allowed to choose her husband before he proposes through the parents initially.

Another form of wife abuse that is more commonly exercised in non-western cultures such as Jordan is nushuz-based wife abuse. This occurs when the wife departs from her marital home after an incident of abuse perpetrated by her husband. If the wife fails to prove that her husband's abuse threatens her safety by providing a forensic medical report about the abusive incident or bringing witnesses to testify that the husband's abusive behaviour was threatening, then

she might find herself being labelled 'nashiz [35]'. This means that a case of nushuz can be brought by an abusive husband when his wife has left her marital home willingly, or after he has kicked her out and she refuses to return even after her husband has attempted to reconcile with her.

Nushuz can increase the risk of women's experiencing wife abuse because it suggests that all non-lethal forms of abuse that are not serious, must be endured and do not require the legal protection of an abused woman by allowing her to leave her marital home (i.e. the violent setting). This new, legally-enforced form of wife abuse is evident in examples of abused women's experiences regarding marital disputes that have been documented in court records. I refer to this form of wife abuse as 'nushuz-based violence'.

The 20 women who were interviewed or participated in my research by filling out questionnaires and the five women whose abusive experiences records I accessed at a legal firm all reported having been forced to leave their marital homes after their husbands' violent actions. Three of the five women whose violence records I accessed at the legal firm were subjected to 'nushuz-based violence'. These three women sought legal assistance regarding their abuse either in 2010 or after. The time during which these women sought legal assistance was after the adjustment of the Jordanian Law of Personal Status in 2010. They were thus denied the chance to initiate marriage annulment through khulu. They were also legally forced to ask their abusive husbands for a divorce and supposed to remain in their

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[35] Nashiz is an adjective that describes a woman's state of nushuz.

marital homes until their husbands agreed to divorce them. And because these women left their marital homes, they were exposed to 'nushuz-based violence'. This means that these women were legally labelled as 'nashizat' and that they lost[36] their right to financial support from their husbands (Al-Rawashdeh, 2012: n.p.). The only legally acceptable reason that would have justified these women's departure from their marital homes without risking their exposure to 'nushuz-based violence' was for their husbands to confess that their violent behaviour towards their wives threatened the latter's safety.

However, the husbands of my three research participants who were exposed to 'nushuz-based violence' did not agree that their violent behaviour towards their wives was threatening. In fact, they trivialised their abuse in order to prove their wives' 'nushuz'. One of the abusive husbands for instance maintained that 'the conflicts that arose between him and his wife were simple and would not justify her refusing to go back to her marital home'. Moreover, in order to reinforce his wife's 'nushuz', he 'stressed that he provides fully for his wife, such as providing her with food, drink and clothing'. Since the provision of financial support[37] was proven, and because the abuse was not identified as life threatening, this woman's lawyer failed to help her repeal the 'nushuz' sentence. This was despite the fact

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[36] According to article 37 of the Jordanian Law of Personal Status, 'after the wife receives her dowry, she is obliged to be obedient towards her husband, to remain with him in his marital home, and to accompany him to whichever destination he chooses, even if he chose [*sic*] to leave the country. This obligation applies provided that the wife's safety is guaranteed, and that she did not state in her marriage contract that she maintains the right to choose whether to accompany her husband to whichever destination he chooses or not. Otherwise, she would lose the right to financial support from her husband' (Al-Rawashdeh, 2012: n.p.).

[37] Providing a suitable marital home, food, drink and clothing are amongst the most important financial obligations that a Muslim husband has towards his wife (Uhlman, 2004: 6, see Chapter 5).

that it was clearly stated in the case record that the woman 'refused to go back to her husband's home; fearing that another conflict would take place between her and her husband during or after which he might react in a way that could endanger her life, such as beating her for example'.

The husband of another woman who was exposed to 'nushuz-based violence' said according to the records that on 'Wednesday 8\5\2012 and after a verbal quarrel that arose between the prosecutor [i.e. the wife] and her husband, the prosecutor called her brother and left the house with him without having an acceptable justification for her departure according to the teachings of Islam'. Despite the fact that the records documented that 'the wife insisted on her refusal to go back to her marital residence, explaining that she could not tolerate her husband's constant verbal abuse any longer', the court ruled that the woman was a 'nashiz' and that her exposure to verbal abuse was not an acceptable reason to justify her leaving her marital residence. The woman was accused of nushuz because verbal abuse does not provide a legally acceptable reason for her departure from her marital home without her husband's consent. Welchman (2007) explains Jordanian nushuz-related laws stating that only 'if any part of the prompt dower remains unpaid or under the control of the husband, if he has taken over his wife's property or injured her person and therefore cannot be trusted with her, or if the marital home does not fulfil the various requirements of a "shar'i dwelling"', the wife should be protected from any nushuz accusations (Welchman, 2007: 98).

Finally, the husband of the third woman who was exposed to nushuz-based violence stated, according to her case records, that after 'a trivial dispute on Sunday evening 29/01/2012, one that could arise between any spouses at home, even those who are living in harmony and show great understanding and appreciation towards each other, the prosecutor called her father and asked him to come and pick her up from her marital home.' In order to prove his wife's state of 'nushuz', it was important for the husband to stress that he 'tried to prevent' his wife 'from leaving her marital home' and that he tried repeatedly to contact his wife and her parents in order to settle the dispute. In this woman's case records her abusive husband referred to the Prophet Mohammad's behaviour in order to show himself as peaceful and against wife abuse:

> On 25/02/2012, the prosecutor's[38] husband called her father and barely convinced him to accompany him to King Abdullah the Founder Mosque at Al-Abdali district, where they would both attend the Maghreb prayer. After the prayer, the prosecutor's husband wanted to talk to her father in order to reconcile her. The mosque, the husband explained, would have been a calm religious setting suitable for the discussion and settlement of disputes, as highlighted during the times of Prophet Mohammad. However, on the way to the mosque, the prosecutor's father received many calls from his sons after which he refused to accompany the husband to the mosque. Her father was so persistent that he wanted to get out of the prosecutor's husband's car while it was still moving in the middle of the road. Therefore, the husband had to let him leave because he did not want to complicate the issue at hand or facilitate the emergence of any other potential issues.

The husband's choice of the mosque and the Maghreb prayer time to discuss his wife's refusing to go back to her marital home was strategic, directed at pacifying his father-in-law into agreeing with his demands to return his wife to her marital home. He stressed the idea that he had made a great effort to reconcile with his

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[38] The prosecutor is the wife.

wife as he asked 'go-betweens' to intervene. In addition, this man stressed the fact

that the marital home was 'a two-bedroom flat' which was 'safe, quiet and

comfortable'. These statements served to present him as a man who had fulfilled

all his financial marital obligations towards his wife. However, taking into

account his approaching his father-in-law in order to resolve his marital issues,

and the intervention of his wife's brothers which led the father-in-law to refuse to

cooperate with the husband, it is possible that the wife was not part of these

arrangements although they were about her personal life. This suggests that the

husband's actions were not merely directed towards reconciliation with his wife,

but towards pressuring her into going back to him, which is also an indirect form

of abuse. The lawyer to whom I talked at the legal firm was not able to determine

the extent to which the lawyer representing this woman was able to help her

defend herself and reclaim her rights because this woman's case was still in

process and the court's verdict was not finalized.

Polygamy could also be considered a form of wife abuse. Polygamy refers to the

practice of having two or more wives at the same time (Johnson, 2005; Sultana

and Bin Lazim, 2010). The acceptability of polygamy is a controversial topic in

the available western and non-western social research (Johnson, 2005; Sultana

and Bin Lazim, 2010). While some researchers address polygamous marital

unions as a religiously acceptable arrangement (Philips and Jones, 2005), others

consider them to be oppressive for women (Johnson, 2005; Brooks, 2009).

According to Philips and Jones (2005: 34), God 'has already instructed Muslims

in no uncertain terms not to make unlawful that which He has made lawful. Thus,

it is not fitting that those who choose to follow the Prophet's Sunnah be

condemned for availing themselves of an option given to them by Allah.

Polygyny is not a decadent or indecent relationship but a valid part of the

marriage system of Islam'. However, Brooks (2009) takes a different stance, and

considers polygamous relationships to reinforce gendered inequality. Brooks

(2009) proposes that women 'in polygamous marriages are typically subservient

to their husbands who hold their wives primarily responsible for child-bearing'

(Brooks, 2009: 111). These 'women are often unable to exercise any control over

the addition of new wives by their husbands, contributing to feelings of

powerlessness and emotional abuse . . . Women may also lack control over their

ability to seek employment, as several studies have found that only a small

fraction of women in polygamous marriages work outside the home' (Brooks,

2009: 111-112).

Feminists also hold negative views of polygamy because it is 'perceived to be

incompatible with universal standards of women's rights and gender equality'

(Mashhour, 2005: 563). As for the 18 women I interviewed in my research, six

identified with this feminist stance and considered polygamy as a factor that

increased women's exposure to abuse. Husseini (2010) has addressed the lack of

support of polygamous marriages in Jordan. Husseini (2010: 9) argues that

approximately 6.8% of the households in Jordan are based on polygamous

marriages. Husseini provides this percentage based on information that was

presented in a report by the Jordanian National Commission for Women (2005).

The commission had obtained this percentage from governmental agencies and

non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This percentage was representative of

Jordan on national level since it was based on governmental statistics[39] recording

marriages in Jordan at large. A more recent percentage highlighting the

prevalence of polygamy in Jordan on a national level was presented in the Annual

Statistics Report (2008) prepared by the Jordanian Court of Justice. The report

included all the marriages documented in official governmental records in the

country. According to this report, polygamy in Jordan has dropped to 4%. These

percentages, according to the National Commission for Women (2005) and the

Jordanian Department of Statistics (2008), indicate that polygamy is not widely

acceptable in modern Jordan and therefore gradually declining. The women I

interviewed in my research, despite their reinforcing that polygamy is not an

acceptable arrangement, suggested that polygamy is still practiced. Three of the

six women who expressed their rejection of polygamy in my research attributed

the collapse of their marital relationships to their husbands' marrying other

women, and three women said that her husbands' having extra-marital affairs

made their marriages fall apart. One of the women who was caught in a

polygamous marriage stated:

> He began to change. I felt that the way he provides for our family and his
> behaviour had changed, not to mention his being grumpy. He confessed
> that he was involved in a second marriage five months after our marriage.
> He told me the story. 'She is divorced and I have got to help her' he said.
> He spent all our savings on her. What he used to say was: 'I am a man. She
> has got nothing to do with me except for food and drink that I should
> provide her with.' 'You do not understand,' he used to say. He married his

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[39] It is a known fact in Jordan that religiously and culturally acceptable marriages must be
documented officially, so a polygamous marriage is identified if the same man's full name is
repeated in more than one marriage contract.

cousin and divorced her a week later. She's not his mistress though. He
went back to his mistress afterwards (Ghazal, 33 years old).

This woman rejected the idea that her husband should be allowed to have marital

relationships with multiple women. She referred to her husband's second

marriage as 'emotionally' and 'financially' destructive. She tried to fit in with

what he wanted her to be. She tried to please him, but her attempts were useless.

He was not going to stop having relationships with other women because he did

not consider such behaviour as damaging to his duties as a husband which he

articulated in terms of the mere provision of 'food and drink'. Eventually, as she

was not able to tolerate her husband's multiple relationships with women, Ghazal

sat down with her husband and discussed these issues. They arrived at a mutual

agreement to end their marriage and the husband eventually divorced her.

Another woman I interviewed who was caught in a polygamous marriage

described the abusive situation her husband's second marriage exposed her to:

> He married an old lady who is not thinking of working after she gets
> married. She is 46 years old, and she has her own bank account. My
> husband eventually said: 'I will not even let you see her', and he rented
> her her own flat. He provides for me and the children, but he left the
> house. He travels all the time with his new wife, while I, his old wife, am
> left at home with the children.
> (Maysa, 35 years old).

A woman whose husband chooses to start a polygamous relationship cannot

object or put an end to the husband's marriage because it is both religiously and

legally acceptable in Jordan. Maysa, a research participant aged 35, for instance,

was caught in a polygamous marriage to which she was not able to object. Maysa

experienced 'emotional' and 'financial' abuse after her husband married another

woman. He spent money on his second wife as he travelled with her to different places, while his first wife, Maysa, was never given that financial privilege. Maysa felt that she was emotionally neglected whenever her husband went out or travelled with his second wife rather than taking Maysa out or travelling with her. The husband's treating his second wife better might be because she had a lot of money from which he was able to benefit. He maintained a good relationship with his second wife because his goal was to secure a second source of income from his older wealthy wife. This is why she was more worthy of accompanying him in public and when he travelled abroad than his first wife, Maysa.The husband's treating his second wife better might be because she had a lot of money from which he was able to benefit. He seemed to maintain a good relationship with his second wife because according to my participant his goal was to secure a second source of income from his older wealthy wife. Maysa endured emotional and financial abuse but there were no legal charges she could press against her abusive husband. There is no law in Jordan that determines the amount of time and money a husband must spend on each one of his wives in a polygamous marriage. As for the remaining four women I interviewed who said that they had been exposed to polygamy, these women sought the assistance of lawyers in an attempt to reclaim their marital rights. They had to go through marriage annulment procedures.

Some forms of wife abuse continue after marriage dissolution. These are addressed in my thesis under divorce-related wife abuse. Divorce or *talaq* in Jordan is falsely assumed to end wife abuse. Even in the aftermath of divorce, some abused women in the country,

like the five women whose court records I accessed at a legal firm, continue to experience

abuse from their ex-husbands. Spousal violence after divorce or separation is

academically referred to as 'post-separation violence': 'Post-separation abuse refers to

the physical harms or threats of physical harm that are intentionally inflicted upon a

woman by the man she formerly lived with. Subsumed under this definition are . . .

offences of murder, manslaughter, assault bodily harm, assaults, and threats' (Ellis, 1987:

408). Post-separation violence was also addressed by Cianciarulo and David (2009) who

argue that it 'is a common misperception that leaving the abusive relationship will result

in increased safety for the victim. Empirical research shows, however, that a woman is at

greater risk of injury or death when she leaves an abusive relationship.' (Cianciarulo and

David, 2009: 348). Yet, post-separation violence has not been thoroughly investigated

worldwide. In the 1990s Kurz (1996) pointed out that there 'has been far too little

attention to the violence that women experience at the hands of male partners during and

after separation from a marriage' (Kurz, 1996: 63). However, available research on post-

separation violence identifies the following actions as forms of violence that are

perpetrated after divorce or separation:

> Tactics of control *post*-separation may include threats to take the children
> through legal or illegal means, dragging out litigation so as to deplete the
> woman's financial resources and thus diminish her willingness and ability
> to fight, as well as refusing reasonable compromises regarding custody
> and visitation arrangements. Evidence suggests that for some abusers,
> even a custody fight is aimed less at a genuine desire to be a primary
> caretaker than at a desire to harass and hurt his former wife. (Coker, 1994:
> 350)

In Jordan, post-separation violence might also include custody-related issues. This

form of violence is facilitated in accordance with the provisions of the Jordanian

Law of Personal Status 2010. For example, one woman who participated in my

179

research lost the custody of her children to their father although they were both minors. Because she is non-Muslim, she was not appointed their legal custodian: 'A non-Muslim mother forfeits her custodial rights after the child reaches seven-years-old [*sic*]' (Human Rights Watch, 2013 b). Another abused woman I interviewed at the Jordanian Women's Union also said that she was not granted the custody of her son simply because she was of non-Jordanian origin. She complained, saying that she had had to give up her Egyptian nationality so that she would be able to keep the custody of her child. This was her only option because according to custody laws in Jordan, her remaining an Egyptian would have made her legally ineligible to maintain the custody of her child.

> A mother can lose her primary right to custody of a child in a number of ways. The court can determine that she is incapable of safeguarding the child or of bringing the child up in accordance with the appropriate religious standards. The mother can void her right to custody by re-marrying or by residing in a home with people that might be 'strangers' to the child. The mother may not deny visitation rights to the father or the paternal grandfather and may not travel outside Jordan with the child without their approval and the approval of the court. In general, a Jordanian man divorcing his non-Jordanian wife will be awarded legal custody of their children by showing that any of the above conditions may not be met to the satisfaction of the court (The U.S. Department of State, 2013a: n.p.).

Therefore, the Egyptian woman was only able to depend on her Jordanian passport, which the husband insisted on hiding, threatening to take away her child if she decided to travel abroad. A third woman said:

> He accused me of abusing a minor (my daughter), violating the sanctity of our home, and of inflicting harm upon my daughter and this law suit is still in progress. He accused me of kidnapping my daughter during the visitation and I was set free after I was found innocent. He also accused me of offending religious sentiments because I said 'you do not fear God'. After this incident I paid a 20 JD fine. And they made me pay a 15 JD fine because I told him that 'I will make you disappear from this world.' [She

told me that the issue was considered a verbal threat] (Um Hawra, 37 years old).

By accusing her of abusing and abducting a minor, this woman's husband tried to deprive his wife of claiming the custody of their child which she should have been awarded since the girl was still under eighteen.

> Child abduction is a serious offense in Jordan. Any person, including a parent, who abducts a child in order to deprive the legal guardian of custody, or to unlawfully obtain custody and remove a child from Jordan, faces a prison sentence of three months to three years and a fine. A mother may also face serious legal difficulties if she attempts to take her children out of Jordan without the permission of the father. Border officials may ask to see such permission in writing before allowing children to exit. (The Law Office of Jeremy D. Morley, 2009: n.d.)

The husband in the case of my participant even took advantage of his wife's deteriorating psychological state. Out of anger and despair and after the custody of her child was unjustly taken from her, she made statements that her husband used in order to press charges against her in court, exposing her therefore to additional control and pressure. She was expected to internalize her rage and act passively in relation to the injustice imposed on her by her husband. A fourth woman I interviewed stated that her fear of losing the custody of her children in case of marriage annulment forced her to tolerate her husband's infidelity instead of filing for divorce.

Although 18 of the women participating in my research had children, only the four women quoted above basically considered the provisions of custody-related laws in Jordan to reinforce wife abuse by facilitating spousal control. As for the first two of these women, the main source of discrimination they encountered was

that Jordanian custody laws gave custodial priority to their abusive ex-husbands due to the wife's being of non-Jordanian Muslim background. The third and fourth woman, however, suffered during their marriage and after the separation because of the loose provisions of article 178 of the Jordanian Law of Personal Status 2010 which 'grants the custodial mother the right to claim childcare wages from the child's guardian from the date of request until the child reaches 12 years old' (Jordan Economic and Social Council, 2010: 3), and article 180 of the Jordanian Law of Personal Status 2010 which 'places the responsibility of insuring payment for a home for the child and his/her custodial mother on the guardian if the mother has no home of her own' (Jordan Economic and Social Council, 2010: 3).

The issue in article 178 lies in the fact that it does not specify the amount of childcare wages that a custodial mother is entitled to. This is a concern given the high costs of living in Jordan. This can facilitate wife abuse through the husband's financial control and lead to a woman being forced to give up her right to the custody of her children (UNESCO, 2012: 42). One of these women for instance stated that her husband used to say 'spending more than five pence a day is a waste of money' (Um Hawra, 37 years old). Therefore, this woman was exposed to a form of post-separation financial abuse because she had to work in order to support herself and her child. Article 180 does not provide a standard description of the home an ex-husband is expected to provide for the custodial mother after marriage dissolution. Therefore, the ex-husband can easily choose to provide a poorly-maintained house in order to force his ex-wife to give up her custody

rights. Such looseness can thus facilitate the continuation of a certain kind of wife abuse even after the dissolution of the marriage contract.

This is not to deny, however, that in some cases, it is possible for abused women to reclaim their marital rights after consulting lawyers and legal agencies specialized in dealing with issues related to wife abuse. One woman I interviewed for my research said that her consulting lawyers at the Jordanian Women's Union helped her to reclaim her rights.

These lawyers, as I was told by the manager of the Jordanian Women's Union, support women in the light of not only national but also international laws, and the recommendations of organizations related to human rights such as The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Therefore, when they deal with marriage dissolution cases, she explained, they approach the cases as being issues of gendered inequality rather than being merely issues of criminal assault. In the light of this gendered approach, abused women may understand that the issue of reclaiming their rights is considered a humanitarian cause rather than being a mere service performed in return for financial gain.

In conclusion, various forms of wife abuse were reported by the women who took part in my research. Some of these forms have been addressed in western and

non-western research on wife abuse such as physical abuse (Dobash and Dobash,

1992; The United Nations Population Fund, 2008), verbal abuse (Dobash and

Dobash, 1992), emotional abuse and financial abuse (The United Nations

Population Fund, 2008), while other forms are more commonly reported in non-

western cultures such as in-law wife abuse (Clark, Silverman, Shahrouri et al.,

2010), honour-based wife abuse (Al-Badayneh, 2012) and legally enforced wife

abuse (Husseini, 2010). Regardless of its forms, wife abuse was reported as

highly prevalent in the most recent surveys conducted to measure the

pervasiveness of this phenomenon in Jordan on a national level (the Department

of Statistics, the Ministry of Health, the University of Jordan and Macro

International Inc., 2007). Addressing this phenomenon effectively requires the

acknowledgement of the factors affecting its occurrence, particularly those that

are culturally specific such as honour (Al-Badayneh, 2012) and in-law

intervention (Clark, Silverman, Shahrouri et al., 2010). Chapter 5 addresses the

effect of my research participants' families' intervention on their wife abuse

experiences.

Chapter 5: Familial Intervention to Stop Wife Abuse amongst the Participating Women

5.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates the forms of familial intervention that the Jordanian abused women I interviewed received to stop wife abuse in the light of prevailing Islamic values. In order to investigate the forms of familial intervention and assistance they received, and explore the hinderances that prevented their families from offering them help, the chapter is divided into four sub-sections. After the introduction, in the second sub-section, I discuss the forms of familial intervention that the women who took part in this research received. After that, I explore the different views regarding the legitimacy of wife beating as a form of wife disciplining that are found in Muslim cultures such as Jordan. This section is essential since I would like to address why some of the abused women who took part in my research received different forms of assistance from their families, and why some did not receive any. I suggest that the families of the abused women who participated in my research held different views regarding the legitimacy of wife abuse as reflected in the religious values in Jordan (Haj-Yahia, 2002). Thus, in the third sub-section, the various views and provisions of Islamic schools with reference to verses from the Holy Qur'ān and records from sunnah[40] on the legitimacy of wife abuse are discussed. Finally, I explore the criticism that Muslim feminists have directed towards the views of Muslim scholars who support the legitimacy of wife abuse in Islam.

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[40] The record of the sayings and actions of the Prophet and the second source of Islamic law and practice (Majeed, 2010: 1).

5.2 The Interviewed Women's Families' Interventions and Assistance in Response to Wife Abuse.

I asked the women I interviewed about their experiences with regard to their families' willingness to support them when they were caught in abusive marriages. In Jordan, once an abused woman decides to speak out and put an end to her dysfunctional marriage, finding the individuals, entities, organizations and institutions that might help her to put her decision into action becomes her most important concern: 'It may seem that all windows are closed, but there must be an escape. We always need help from someone to guide us. When one has a problem, one cannot think properly, one becomes a child who needs help' (Safadi, Swigart, Hamdan-Mansour et al., 2012: 12). An abused woman might seek the assistance of family and friends, Muslim clergy, or organizations and institutions specialized in supporting abused women.

Amongst my sample of abused women, the first choice available for these women was to resort to family members for help and guidance. The families of abused women, according to the literature on wife abuse in Jordan, might choose to support them or give up on them (Oweis, Gharaibeh and Alhourani, 2009). For instance, one woman participating in my research said that the first time she got married her father had forced her to marry a complete stranger to her. Despite the fact that she had yielded to her father's decision, she did not receive any support from him when her husband became violent towards her: 'My parents did not intervene the first time my husband was abusive'. Although the woman's father

did not explicitly express his support of her husband's abusive behaviour, his lack of intervention gave her husband greater control over her and allowed him to continue his abusive behaviour. The victim's thinking of involving her father was more of a coping strategy 'to get some relief from mental stress' (Wahed and Bhuiya, 2007: 347).

The literature on wife abuse in Jordan confirms that notions of stigmatization are responsible for families' lack of willingness to support their daughters when they are caught in abusive marriages. Oweis, Gharaibeh and Alhourani (2009) and Safadi, Swigart, Hamdan-Mansour et al. (2012) stress that abused women in Jordan may be prevented from seeking parental and professional assistance to protect themselves from their abusive spouses by their own families. Such discouragement is mainly due to the fact that rejecting spousal abuse will end in marriage dissolution which is often considered a source of shame, or a threat to family honour (Human Rights Watch, 2004): 'One time I told my father and my older brother I want to get divorce and I can not [*sic*] go on like this. They said think about what people will say about you and us!! And think that if you get divorced no one else will marry you again!!' (Oweis Gharaibeh, Al-Natour et al., 2009: 74). A twenty-three-year-old woman I interviewed for my research said: 'Last time he slapped me and I went to the Family Protection Directorate. He tried to convince me to go back to him after that. I did not want to do that, but my uncle pressured me to. So, I dropped the lawsuit I had filed against him.' Notions of shame, or in other words fear of dishonouring the family's reputation, were

187

behind this woman's uncle's insisting that she drop the lawsuit she had filed and return to her marital home.

As stated by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (2011), there are no records to document the number of lawsuits, convictions or punishments carried out against abusive men in Jordan. The main reason behind dropping wife abuse complaints is that abused women's families fear becoming social outcasts. Al-Badayneh (2012) explains: 'An Abused [*sic*] woman cannot request divorce, because she will be socially ostracized and accused of being rebellious and not caring about her family and children. One major consequences [*sic*] of such behavior is being socially not accepted and stigmatized by other families' (Al-Badayneh, 2012, n. p.).

However, to assume that the attitudes of families in Jordan are always negative and ineffective would be a false generalization. Most of the abused women participating in my research (i.e. 18 women) stated that their families did not approve of their husbands' or ex-husbands' abusive behaviour and supported their decision to take action against the violence (see Appendix 10). For instance, one woman said: 'My parents were really upset with him, and they started talking to him about his behaviour, but he would not change his attitude. Eventually, I filed a complaint against him at the Family Protection Directorate' (Usayma, 25 years old, has once child, experienced physical violence). Another woman said: 'Filing for a divorce was my parents' reaction. Nobody says it's OK to abuse people. A wife must not be beaten at all whatever the reasons are. There's no excuse to

justify beating a woman; for she is not an animal' (Horet Sham, 36, childless, experienced physical violence). A third woman said: 'They supported me and did not justify his behaviour. They spoke to him about it, but he used to ignore what they told him' (Najwa, 37 years old, two children, experienced physical violence).

In the case of wife abuse, women's families might intervene to support the oppressed wives in several ways. Some might talk to the husband directly, attempting to make him stop his abusive behaviour. Yet, the abusive husbands may not always respond to this. Some abusive husbands' lack of consideration for or cooperation with their in-laws' attempts to stop the violence may be because such intervention methods are merely an expression of personal opinion with no legal force. Thus, the husband can simply choose to disregard such opinions. In such cases (e.g. Usayma, Horet Sham and Najwa), and especially when the abuse is physical and at times life-threatening as two of these women reported (e.g. Horet Sham and Usayma) or uncontrollable as the third woman (Najwa, 37 years old) said, the parents who choose to support their daughters are more likely to express zero tolerance for the abuse and resort to marriage dissolution. In less threatening physical abuse situations, however, an abused woman's parents might try to reconcile the spouses before resorting to marriage dissolution. For example, a woman I interviewed described how her parents played the role of go-between as they tried to mend the breach between the quarrelling spouses:

> My parents used to talk to him and provide him with guidance to what is best for us, but their attempts were fruitless. He is the one who used to leave the house; being upset with me in the aftermath of our quarrels. He once wanted to kick me out of the house for three months after having sworn by the name of God that he would divorce me if I stayed at home.

He wanted to leave me at my parents' house for three months, but my brother arrived at an agreement with him, one that entailed that I stay there for a week. The entire household had disappeared when I came back including our wedding tape, the tape recording of my departure from my parents' home before the wedding, my wedding ring and a bracelet that I had. They were not there. (Miran, 32 years old, traditional marriage, experienced physical violence).

The tape recording of a bride's departure from her parents' home on her wedding day and the tape recording of the wedding ceremony itself that the interviewee said had disappeared are considered valuable items for a Jordanian bride because they record the details of her wedding day, a day after which she will be culturally considered a mature woman who will start her own family with her husband (Adely, 2012). As for the wedding ring, it is equally important because it is given to her as part of her shabka[41].

Male family members other than the victim's parents might also intervene to help the victim escape her violent marriage. If the father is deceased, then protecting the woman in question and safeguarding her wellbeing becomes the duty of the victim's 'wali' or a male kin (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2000: 622). The 'wali' might be the abused woman's grandfather, uncle or brother (Sonbol, 2003: 119). However, an abused woman's brothers or uncles may intervene and help her not only when her father is dead, as in the case of three of my research participants (Aya, aged 23, Miran, aged 32, and Suha, aged 42), but also while her father is still alive, as in the case of Lamya (approximately 30 years old). These women reported that the support they received from male family members other than their

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[41] According to Wiktorowicz and Farouki (2000: 688) 'the groom must furnish gold for the bride to provide her with financial insurance, a practice known as shabka'.

fathers varied from offering protection against potential abuse (Aya, Miran, Suha) to financial assistance (Lamya).

This assignment of the protection of women's interests primarily to male family members through 'wilaya', however, can expose women to more abuse in two ways. First of all, it echoes the inherent cultural belief in gender inequality and discriminates against women as it pictures them as lacking and incapable of handling their own issues (CEDAW, 2012). Secondly, familial intervention to support abused women might lead to an increase in the severity of the abusive attacks (Clark, Silverman, Shahrouri et al., 2010). One of the interviewees at the Jordanian Women's Union who was 23 years old and had been in a traditional marriage for instance said: 'My father is dead. No one can influence my husband. My uncle tried to talk him out of this. He used to say "OK" and then became even worse than before. Uncle "Ahmad", my dad's brother, intervened the first time my husband beat me to solve the conflict and stop his abusive behaviour' (Aya 23 years old, a high school graduate, one child). The victim's uncle, however, lost interest in supporting his niece over time. When the husband disregards the family members' advice, abused women may lose the support of their families and even be asked to cope with their husbands' abusive behaviour (Abu Baker, 2003).

In their seeking the assistance from their family members, my research participants challenged the prevailing cultural notions of stigmatization. Yet, most of these women's decisions to seek familial assistance did not mark the end of their abusive relationships. That is, these abused women accepted the prevailing

cultural normalization of wife abuse for different periods of time and were caught in what I refer to as an 'on-violence/off-violence cycle' where they sought the assistance of family members, went back to their husbands, and when the violence escalated again they went back to their natal families for assistance. Such an 'on-violence/off-violence cycle' is documented in western and non-western research on wife abuse: 'Most women leave and return several times before finally deciding to end the relationship' (WHO, n.d.: 96). For instance, one of my research participants who had an 'on-violence/off-violence cycle' said: 'I used to spend a week at his place, and then we would fight. Consequently, I used to leave the house and spend three to four months away at my parents' (Usayma, 25 years old, arranged marriage). As it was difficult for this woman to make a final decision to leave her marriage, she sought the assistance of her parents hoping that the husband's violent behaviour would stop. Her parents tried to 'talk' to her husband but he 'would not change'.

My research participants' inability to tolerate their husbands' abuse was the main reason why they began to look for help to end their violent marriages. Fifteen women who participated in my research experienced wife abuse within the first year of their marriages (see Appendix 8). The abuse was recurrent, but the women endured it for years before taking action. Eighteen women who participated in my research had one child or more before seeking any form of assistance. Some had four to six children before taking action to stop the abuse. These women's decision to leave their abusers can be largely attributed to the support that they received not only from their family members, but also from non-governmental

organizations and governmental institutions in Jordan. The varying decisions of

the families of my research participants regarding whether they should support

those women to end their abusive marital relationships or not may be due to

different views related to the legitimacy of wife beating as a form of wife

disciplining that are found in Muslim cultures such as Jordan as I explain below.

5.3 The Complexity of the Legitimacy of Wife Beating as a Form of Wife Disciplining in Islam

Wife beating in Islam is a controversial matter. While some western researchers

argue that wife beating in Islam is merely a religiously authorized form of wife

abuse (Spencer and Chesler, 2007), other Muslim and western researchers

maintain that wife abuse is unacceptable in Islam (Scott, 2009; Kabbani and Ziad,

2011). This disagreement on the permissibility of wife beating or wife

disciplining in Islam, according to Ammar (2007), arises from the different

understandings and interpretations that Muslim scholars of various sunni Shari'a

schools[42] of *fiqh*[43] have produced in their attempt to explain the meaning of verse

34 of surat Al Nisāa. Some have been strongly influenced by the patriarchal

ideologies held by their followers (Ammar, 2007).

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[42] 'The four legal schools, which vary on certain issues from strict to broad interpretations, are (1) the Hanafi: this is the oldest school of law. It was founded in Iraq by Abu Hanifa (d. 767 AD). It is prevalent in Turkey, Central Asia, the Balkans, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh; (2) Maliki: this was founded in the Arabian Peninsula by Malik Ibn Anas (d. 795 AD). It is prevalent in North Africa, Mauritania, Kuwait, and Bahrain; (3) Shaf'i: this school was founded by Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shaf'i (d. 819 AD). It is prevalent in Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, parts of Yemen, Indonesia, and Malaysia; and (4) Hanbali: this was founded by Ahmad Hanbal (d. 855). It is prevalent in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, parts of Oman, and the United Arab Emirates' (Blanchard, 2009: 3).

[43] Fiqh, according to van Wichelen, refers to 'the codification of principles of conduct drawn by religious scholars from the Qur'an, from Traditions, from an analogy of those two sources, and from the consensus of legalists' (van Wichelen, 2006: 5).

193

The first group of scholars supports 'the inherent superiority of men over women, and the legality of men beating women' (Scott, 2009: 61). As for the second group, Dunn and Kellison (2010) point out that these scholars defend the idea that men maintain the right to exert limited discipline towards wives in case of the latter's disobedience (Dunn and Kellison, 2010). According to this group of scholars, including the well-known contemporary religious figure Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi (Whitaker, 2005), wife beating is understood as a measure that is used to keep the family from falling apart upon divorce. Muslim intellectuals of this group consider wife disciplining or wife beating as the last resort for a husband, after having tried a number of preliminary remedial actions towards the wife in case of disagreement. Such remedial actions have been prescribed overtly in the Holy Qur'an as part of wife disciplining. The husband should first 'admonish' her, next refuse to share her bed, and last beat her '(lightly)' (Hasan, 2013: n.p.). Yet, such disciplining should only take place on the event of 'nushuz' (Engineer, 2004: 51).

The third group of Muslim scholars, however, although acknowledging wife beating, categorize it as undesirable behaviour (Stalinsky and Yehoshua, 2004). Contemporary Muslim scholar Abu El Fadl belongs to this group of intellectuals. The supporters of such views on wife beating draw on the actions of Prophet Mohammad to back up their argument that wife abuse is unacceptable in Islam (Abu El Fadl, 2009). As reported by Aisha, one of the prophet's wives, the prophet 'never hit a servant or a woman' (Lemu, 2007: 15).

Finally, the fourth group of Muslim scholars who have investigated the legitimacy of wife beating in Islam argues against the legitimacy of such practices. This group of scholars supports its argument by shedding light on the numerous possible linguistic terms into which the Arabic verb 'idribuhunna', an imperative often cited to seek support for wife beating, could be translated. According to Yuksel (2012), the verb to 'beat' is a misinterpretation of the Arabic verb 'idribuhunna' which could also be translated into the act of 'isolation, separation, or parting' (Yuksel, 2012: n.p.) rather than actual violence as the verb 'to beat' implies. Chaudhry (2011), drawing on the views of Abusulayman (2003) and Bakhtiar (2007), echoes the views of Ammar (2007) regarding the possibility of interpreting the Arabic verb 'd-r-b' as synonymous with the verb to 'go away' (Chaudhry, 2011: 419) or to 'separate from' one's wife at times of conflict before deciding to terminate the marriage, offering thus a violence-free culmination to spousal dispute because God would not 'sanction harming another human being except in war' (MacFarquhar, 2007: n.p.). Chodkiewicz (1993) stresses that the choice of which meanings to adopt is not a haphazard process. Chodkiewicz argues:

> As far as the Word of God is concerned, when it is revealed in the language of a certain people, and when those who speak this language differ as to what God meant by a certain word or a group of words due to the variety of possible meanings of the words, each of them —however differing their interpretations may be—effectively comprises what God meant, provided that the interpretation does not deviate from the accepted meanings of the language in question. (Chodkiewicz, 1993: 30)

Chodkiewicz stresses that the proposed meanings for the interpretation of a Qur'anic verse must be restricted to the range of acceptable interpretations.

God knows all these meanings, and there is none that is not the expression of what he meant to say to this specific person. But if the individual in question deviates from accepted meanings in the language, then neither understanding nor knowledge has been received . . . As for him to whom understanding of all the faces of the divine Word has been given, he has received *wisdom and decisive judgement* [Qur'ân 38:20], that is, the faculty of distinguishing among all these faces, in other words, that of determining, according to the circumstances, which of the possible meanings is pertinent (Chodkiewicz, 1993: 30).

Abused Muslim Jordanian women's knowledge of the various interpretations of verse 34 of surat Al Nisāa, as in the case of two women I interviewed in my research, could encourage them to think of ways in order to reclaim their right to violence-free lives. Such women's knowledge of egalitarian non-traditional interpretations of the verse might give them confidence to seek the assistance of professional institutions. The proposition that different interpretations of verse 34 of surat Al Nisāa are possible constitutes the ground on which Arab Muslim feminists base their rejection of wife beating (Scott, 2009), as I explain below.

5.4 Feminist Criticism of Qur'anic Interpretations Legitimizing Wife Beating in Islam

The issue of wife beating or wife disciplining in Islam has been viewed as a form of oppression by Arab feminists. Scott explains that Muslim Arab feminists have found wife beating unacceptable for 'no verse of the Qur'ān can really have an oppressive androcentric intent; such an intent comes only from the male dominated interpretive tradition' (Scott, 2009: 60). Therefore, Arab feminists have directed their efforts towards pinpointing such male-oriented values supporting the subordination of women, values that have affected Qur'anic interpretations in an

attempt to reinforce male supremacy (Scott, 2009). The views of these feminists

have been condemned for promoting secular values: 'Islamists continue to portray

"feminism" as an extension of colonial politics, as a Western plot to undermine the

Muslim way of life, that had to be rejected in the name of Islam' (Mir-Hosseini,

2011: n.p.). Scott (2009) also discusses the dispute between conservative Islamists

and Muslim feminists:

> Like modernist Islam in general, feminist scholarship has faced resistance
> from conservative exegetes. This resistance has included the accusation
> that feminist scholarship is disloyal to Islam and denies its heritage. Such
> heritage (turāth) is the product of a male interpretive elite, the 'ulamā'
> (religious scholars) who in classical Islam 'spoke authoritatively for
> Islam' (60-61).

According to Sonbol (2003) who investigates the role of 'ulamā' in Jordan, some

'ulamā' falsely utilized their knowledge of Islamic principles in order to spread

their culturally-constructed belief in women's inferiority, citing 'medieval'

religious views as evidence of their biased opinions. The views of these 'ulamā'

stress the importance of limiting women's access to their rights as active

productive members of the society (Sonbol, 2003: 27).

In her investigation of wife disciplining in Islam, Mernissi also critiques the

ulamā's equation of wife disciplining with wife beating, describing such views as

values alien to Islam and infected with androcentric beliefs that support the

subordination of women (Mernissi, 1991). To support her argument, Mernissi

draws on the way in which the Prophet Mohammad disciplined his wives when he

was displeased with their behaviour: 'The prophet stayed away from his wives for

29 nights. He was so angry with them that he declared that he would not go back

home for a month, and God censured him for this' (Mernissi, 1991: 157). To calm himself and put the conflict between himself and his wives to an end without resorting to violence, the Prophet Mohammad decided to avoid communicating with his wives by choosing to leave their marital homes (Mernissi, 1991). Mernissi utilizes this example to explain that wife disciplining in Islam does not involve the use of physical force in order to inflict harm on women (Mernissi: 1991).

Mernissi also quotes the Prophet Mohammad's explicit rejection of using violence against women as he said: 'Do not beat women' (Mernissi: 1991: 157). As revealed by other accounts of Al Sunnah, the Prophet also expressed his disapproval of wife abuse by saying: '*Are you not ashamed to beat your wives as one beats a slave; you beat her in the daytime and have intercourse with her in the night?*' (Kabbani and Ziad, 2011: n.p.; italics as in original). Al-Hibri (2003) condemns wife beating, considering it a form of backward behaviour belonging to 'jahilia, the Age of Ignorance' before the advent of Islam. According to Sonbol (2003), wife beating constitutes a solid reason for marriage annulment.

In Jordan, some religious men, as I was told by one of my interviewees, might assume the role of Islamic preachers whose mission is to spread the true values of Islam. Yet, in real life, some of those religious men do not practise what they preach. That is, they do not bother to spread the notion that Islam regards men and women as equals for example. Instead, such religious men adopt the role of passive observers whenever they hear of or witness acts of discrimination against

women such as wife abuse. As a result, abused women's families may doubt that contacting religious clergy might be of actual use and might disregard the whole idea of doing so as I shall show in Chapter Six.

In conclusion, the women interviewed were caught, as far as their responses to wife abuse are concerned, between the modernized liberating provisions of NGOs that encourage abused women to escape their violent marriages and the traditional cultural values that continue to stress the importance of the family unit and condemn women who refuse to stay in marital relationships even if such relationships are abusive. Due to such contradictory cultural values in Jordan, and because of the varying religious views on the legitimacy of wife abuse found in Muslim countries such as Jordan, the parents and families of the abused Jordanian women who took part in my research fell into two groups: supporters of the victims and supporters of the perpetrators. While the former group assumed the role of the mediator in its attempt to mend the breach between the conflicting spouses and to assist the abused woman in order to reclaim her marital rights, the latter chose not to intervene, leaving the victim to face her marital issues on her own. After having explored the impact of familial intervention on my research participants' wife abuse experiences, Chapter 6 explores the impact of clerics' and lawyers' intervention on these women's wife abuse experiences.

Chapter 6: Clerical and Legal Intervention to Combat Wife Abuse in Jordan

6.1 Introduction

Abused women in Jordan may seek the assistance of Muslim clergy and lawyers when parental intervention is incapable of putting an end to their husbands' violent behaviours. In order to address the effectiveness of clerics' and lawyers' intervention to help the abused wives who took part in my research put an end to their abusive marital relationships, this chapter will be subdivided into seven subsections. After the introduction, the second subsection discusses the conditions that legitimize wife disciplining in Islam in the light of traditionalist and progressive interpretations of the Holy Quran that my research participants had to take into account before consulting Muslim clerics for assistance on their abusive marital relationships. The third subsection addresses my research participants' experiences when they consulted Muslim clergy or sheikhs for assistance. In the fourth subsection, I will discuss wife abuse-related laws that affected my research participants' attempts to end their violent marital relationships. The fifth subsection addresses the negative effects of men's solely having the right to initiate marriage annulment in Jordan. The sixth subsection, however, focuses on discussing the national and international laws related to discrimination against women that are abided by in Jordan. Finally, the seventh subsection discusses my research participants' experiences when they sought the assistance of lawyers, and the extent to which the lawyers they consulted were able to help these women in

the light of wife abuse-related laws and the recommendations of CEDAW that are

abided by in Jordan. In order to address the issue of what I consider to be legal

abuse, I will draw on records of court cases that I accessed with the assistance of

the lawyers I talked to at the legal firm in 2012.

6.2 Conditions that Legitimize Wife Disciplining in Islam in the Light of Traditionalist and Progressive Interpretations of the Holy Quran

There are a number of conditions that legitimize wife disciplining in Islam that

my research participants had to consider before consulting Muslim clerics for

assistance. Muslim scholars and intellectuals who explain verse 34 of surat Al

Nisāa in relation to wife disciplining are categorized under two groups:

'traditionalist' and 'reformist' (Dunn and Kellison, 2010: 11). Rejecting the

subordination of women by their male counterparts in Arab Muslim societies such

as Jordan, Muslim feminists question the interpretations of 'traditionalist', also

known as '*fundamentalist*'[44] Muslim scholars. The biased oppressive image of

Islam is constructed and reinforced through the conservative approach of

fundamentalist scholars (Moallem, 2005) who insist on the necessity to interpret

Qur'anic scripture word for word (Stowasser, 1994). In the context of wife

beating, for instance, two aspects reflecting the disagreement between

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[44] Stowasser (1994) maintains that 'The Fundamentalists are scripturalist activists who see themselves as the conscience of the Islamic way of life, soldiers in Islam's battle against the forces of darkness without and within, whose ambitions parallel, in no small part, those of America's Puritan tradition and Europe's Radical Reformation. Fundamentalists insist on the literal interpretation of scripture and translate the sacred text directly into contemporary thought and action; thereby, they often bypass and disregard the work of centuries of theological-legal experts' (Stowasser, 1994: 6).

traditionalist and reformist Muslim scholars' interpretive stances are found in the definitions of wife disciplining and '*nushuz*', the condition upon which wife disciplining is religiously acceptable in Muslim countries such as Jordan (Islam, 2009: n.p.). Traditionalists argue that a husband's superiority over his wife is a natural right granted by God that must be maintained through wife disciplining in case of the wife's rebellion against her husband's authority in the family (Shehada, 2009). Reformists or progressive Muslim scholars however reject such a definition of nushuz, arguing that God considers men and women complementary and equal (Equitas-International Centre for Human Rights Education, 2009). Therefore, progressive Muslim scholars or sheikhs propose the constant reconsideration of Islamic principles in order for these principles to fit contemporary issues facing Muslims: 'Progressive historicism might be used to generate readings of revelation that render rules reinforcing a system of gender subordination obsolete by, for example, limiting their application to the unique circumstances of pre-modern societies on the ground that they lacked the economic and institutional means to support a system of gender egalitarianism' (Fadel, 2010: 135).

The progressive definition of '*nushuz*' paves the way for a more egalitarian relationship between the husband and wife. This is because progressive scholars limit women's obedience to God and not the women's husbands. The progressive definition of nushuz protects women from being forced to succumb to a state of second-class subjectivity as it clarifies that women's relationships with their husbands must not be based on servitude and subjugation. Progressive Muslim

scholars argue that women's disagreement with or refusal to yield to their husbands' demands does not mean that they are committing sinful acts that beget God's wrath. Moreover, contemporary progressive Muslim scholars such as Shaykh Amer Jamil (2007) argue that the authorization of wife beating in Islam is conditional upon the certainty of the husband that beating his wife will terminate the conflict between the spouses and restore tranquillity and peace to the marital institution. Yet, if the beating might increase the severity of the marital dispute, then wife beating becomes 'unlawful'. Jamil also states that violent behaviour, whether on the family level or the social level, is a sign of deviation from Islamic faith (Jamil, 2007: 9). Even in the case of severe marital conflict, Islam allows marital dissolution rather than beating (Sonbol, 2003).

With regard to my research participants' accounts, Muslim clerics views on the permissibility of wife abuse and their responses to this phenomenon in Jordan were found to directly affect these women's decisions on whether they should seek clerical assistance. For instance, two women of the fifteen I interviewed who said that they did not consult religious clergy for assistance, stated that their fathers-in-law did not object to their husbands' violent behaviour towards them although their fathers-in-law claimed to be religious. Such negative attitudes made these women disregard the idea of contacting religious figures for help. One of these two women stated: 'My father in-law is a religious figure. I used to complain to him about his son, but he did not help, neither being a religious figure nor being my father in-law. Their religious claims are merely for the sake of maintaining a good outer appearance' (Miran, 32 years old, 1 child). The second

victim pointed out that she did not contact religious men for help because both her husband and her father-in-law were not religious people in any way which made her doubt that consulting clergy for assistance would affect her husband's abusive behaviour towards her (Eman, approximately 30).

The 15 women participating in my research who did not get in touch with Muslim clergy did not do so for additional, different reasons such as having sought the assistance of friends, having left the marriage dissolution procedures to be sorted out legally, and having been forced to endure the abuse because it is legally acceptable: 'I did not consult a religious figure. Everything happened at court' (Hala, 26 years old). Hala did not have the chance to consult a religious figure in order to stop the violence before going to court to complete her marriage dissolution procedures because her husband divorced her before she could take this step. Another woman who did not get in touch with Muslim clergy said that she was forced to accept the abuse because the husband's disregard for his wife's feelings was both legally and religiously acceptable, as in the case of polygamous relationships (Aya, 23 years old). One woman who was forced to accept her husband's polygamous marriages told me: 'I do not have the right to complain to a religious figure (Sheikh) about him because he is formally married' (Maysa, 35 years old). But a small number of abused women I interviewed did consult Muslim clergy or sheikhs for assistance. I shall now proceed to discuss the extent to which these women's consulting Muslim clerics helped them in resolving their wife abuse issues.

6.3 Consulting Muslim Clergy or Sheikhs

Abused Muslim women in Jordan may seek the assistance of Muslim clergy or Sheikhs, to either reclaim their marital rights or facilitate the termination of their abusive marriages. Available 'research on the rates and effectiveness of clergy interventions' on the event of wife abuse is limited (Vaaler, 2008: 79). 'Given the lack of research on relationship violence and assistance from the clergy' in Jordan (Vaaler, 2008: 80), it is unclear why abused women seek or do not seek the assistance of Muslim clergy. Therefore, drawing on western and non-western research on wife abuse, I will attempt to explain in this section the impact of religious clerics on the resolution of wife abuse issues and reclaiming abused women's marital rights.

Western research on wife abuse has revealed that clerics and religious institutions may provide abused women with assistance in five ways: psychological assistance (Gillum, Sullivan and Bybee, 2006: 240); spiritual guidance that makes them feel calmer emotionally (Griffith and Young, 2004: 43); material assistance (Horton and Williamson, 1988: 229) such as financial support and housing (The Archbishop's Council, 2006: n.p.); recommending other sources of help (The Archbishop's Council, 2006: n.p.); and providing abused women with guidance on ways through which such women could actually escape their violent relationships. Based on the available research on wife abuse and clerical intervention, the effectiveness of clerics' interventions in cases of wife abuse relies heavily on three main conditions. These conditions, based on western and

non-Arab Muslim wife abuse literature, are clerics' knowledge of partner

agencies that can provide abused women with assistance (The Archbishop's

Council, 2006: ix) and their knowledge of the services such agencies can provide

(The Archbishop's Council, 2006: ix); 'the training and experience' clergy have

in ways to address wife abuse (Hamid and Jayakar, 2015: 412); and of the

methods of referral that must be followed in order to put abused women in contact

with such agencies (Richardson, 2008: 101). The greater the collaboration and

organization between clerics and organizations and agencies specialized in abused

women's assistance, the more effective the intervention of clerics may be in terms

of combating wife abuse.

Yet, since there are no collaboration programs between Muslim clerics and the

organizations and institutions that deal with wife abuse issues in Jordan and

because Muslim clerics do not have access to financial resources or sheltering

options with which they could help women, the five women who consulted

Muslim clerics for assistance in my research (see Appendix 11) found that the

role that Muslim clerics played in situations related to marital conflict was not

helpful as it was merely about offering guidance. The mother of an abused woman

interviewed at the Jordanian Women's Union, who answered my question on

behalf of her daughter because the former was the one who contacted Muslim

clergy for assistance, for example, stated: 'I explained everything over the phone

and the advisor then suggested trying to mend the breach through a go-between,

or filing for a discord and dispute suit in order to annul the marriage.' The role of

the Muslim cleric in this woman's case was ineffective in terms of providing

tangible ways of stopping the abuse. Such intervention merely served to redirect the woman to seek more effective ways in order to escape her violent marital relationship.

Another abused woman at the Jordanian Women's Union said: 'I consulted religious figures. When my husband began to ask me to do things that are religiously unacceptable in order to satisfy his appetites, they said I must leave him' (Ghazal, 33 years old). This woman's husband, as I was told by one of the key employees at the Jordanian Women's Union before conducting the interview, used to ask her to have anal sex, a practice which, according to Mernissi (1991) quoting Al-Tabari, is prohibited in Islam.

A third woman declared: 'I consulted some religious figures (Sheikhs) about this situation. They said: "You are supposed to be divorced by now because he had uttered the divorcing statement more than once".' The religious figures she spoke to also advised her to leave her husband's house. Lacking access to shelter services or financial support, they gave her advice on what she should do so as not to commit a sin, as remaining in the same house with an ex-husband is not acceptable action according to the teachings of Islam.

Some women might be advised by clerics to cope with their situation, especially when their complaints are related to issues that are religiously acceptable. For example, Suha, a 42 year old interviewee who had a traditionally arranged marriage, stated that when a woman complains to a Muslim cleric about her

husband's forcing her into a polygamous relationship, the cleric cannot pressure the husband to leave his second wife because polygamy is acceptable in Islam. Moreover, some women might be advised to solve their marital issues through go-betweens (e.g. Lamya, approximately 30 years old, had an arranged marriage), whereas others might be advised to leave their husbands (e.g. Ghazal, 33 years old, had an arranged marriage; Raghad, 34 years old, had a relationship-based marriage).

There is another point to keep in mind that reduces the effectiveness of clerical intervention in combating wife abuse. In the absence of legal provisions that ensure perpetrators receive legal punishment for their violent actions, as is the case not only in Jordan (Amnesty, 2013b) but also in Saudi Arabia for instance, Shari'a values that condemn the exercise of wife abuse are robbed of their effectiveness to combat this phenomenon (Human Rights Watch, 2013a). This, I would argue, discourages many women from consulting religious figures for assistance as consulting such figures does not guarantee that the victims receive the assistance they need. With regard to my research participants, 12 initially consulted lawyers rather than clerics for assistance (see Appendix 12) and four directly went to court to finalize their marriage dissolution procedures. The 12 women's choice of lawyers may suggest that they were looking for a presumably more effective way to reclaim their marital rights than clerics were.

Consulting Muslim clerics was not effective in terms of ending the violence for all the women in my research who tried this solution. In fact, it merely delayed

their taking more effective action such as pressing abuse charges against their

perpetrators at court. This latter choice of action is more effective as stopping the

abuse can be enforced by law, a power of enforcement that religious clerics lack.

In the following subsection, I discuss wife abuse-related laws that affected my

research participants' attempts to end their violent marital relationships.

6.4 Jordanian Women and Wife Abuse Related Laws

In their attempt to find effective ways to address their wife abuse issues, the

abused women who took part in my research either consulted lawyers who work

in collaboration with non-governmental organizations specialized in dealing with

wife abuse or lawyers working for private legal firms. Laws dealing with wife

abuse in Jordan that these lawyers might have relied on to resolve twelve of my

participants' issues are mainly found in the civil Jordanian Law of Personal Status

(Jordan Economic and Social Council, 2010) (Appendix 1), the Protection from

Domestic Violence Law issued in 2008 (Husseini, 2010; Corpus of Laws, 2012;

Social Institutions and Gender Index, 2015) (Appendix 13) and the Jordanian

Penal Code (Husseini, 2010; The Ministry of Interior, 2010: n.p.).

In theory, these laws may be effective in assisting abused women like my research

participants. Yet, there have been no measures proposed by the government to

ensure the effective implementation of the Protection from Domestic Violence

Law (2008) (Husseini, 2010; Corpus of Laws, 2012; Social Institutions and

Gender Index, 2015). The reasons that prevent the complete effective

implementation of the Protection from Domestic Violence Law (2008) have been explored by The Arab Women's Organization (n.d.: 8): 'In 2008, Jordan has passed the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence. However, regulations governing its implementation have not yet been issued, nor have the committees whose creation is stipulated by the law been formed. This effectively prevents the enforcement of the law'. With regard to the provisions of the Jordanian Penal Code, also referred to as the Jordanian Criminal Code, as I was told by the two lawyers I talked to at the legal firm, these are not always implemented to resolve wife abuse-related disputes and the condition governing the implementation of its laws to resolve wife abuse-related issues will be addressed below.

In the Jordanian Penal Code, there are no particular sections that are overtly labelled as penalizing 'wife abuse' (Husseini, 2010; Social Institutions and Gender Index, 2015), yet a number of its laws deal with violence-related actions that may be applied in wife abuse situations. Articles 333, 334-1, 334-2 and 335 explain the penalties an individual is exposed to when inflicting 'bodily harm' on others. Article 333 states: 'Any individual who intentionally inflicts harm on another by beating or injuring him or her, especially if the inflicted harm has resulted in the abused person's illness or inability to work for more than 20 days, may be sentenced to an imprisonment for a period extending from three months to three years' (The Ministry of Interior, 2010: n.p). Article 334-1 entails that 'if the inflicted harm has not resulted in the abused person's illness or inability to work or if the abuse resulted in illness or inability to work that lasted for a period of

less than 20 days, the perpetrator may be imprisoned for no more than a year, pay

a fine of 25 Jordanian Dinars or be subjected to both penalties' (The Ministry of

Interior, 2010: n.p).

In the case of mild abuse, if the abuse, according to Article 334-2 of the Jordanian

Penal Code, has resulted in the abused person's illness or inability to work that

did not last for more than 10 days, the abused may press legal charges against the

perpetrator as well. Other forms of abuse are addressed in the Jordanian Penal

Code such as forced abortion. Article 323-1 states that whoever 'forces or coerces

a woman to have an abortion is sentenced to hard labour for a temporal period

that does not exceed 10 years' (The Ministry of Interior, 2010: n.p). Also, article

323-2 states that 'if the forced abortion results in the death of the woman, the hard

labour sentence that the abuser receives shall be of no less than 10 years' (The

Ministry of Interior, 2010: n.p). However, Article 326 of the Jordanian Penal

Code addresses severe a form of bodily harm. It states: 'Whoever commits

murder intentionally is sentenced to 15 years of hard labour in prison' (The

Ministry of Interior, 2010: n.p). All of these regulations might have been useful in

terms of helping my participants to reclaim their rights. Yet, in order for the

criminal laws or the Jordanian Penal Code to be implemented in a case of wife

abuse, the lawyers I talked to explained, an abused wife must officially press legal

charges of 'bodily harm' against her abusive husband in writing at court. And

because none of my research participants have officially sued their abusive

husbands for 'bodily harm' at court, these women were assisted by the lawyers

they consulted to resolve their wife abuse-related disputes relying mainly on the provisions of the civil Jordanian Law of Personal Status (2010) as no official body has yet issued and approved guidance measures on the implementation procedures to be followed to enforce the Protection from Domestic Violence Law (2008). The issues these women were mainly concerned with were divorce-related issues, hence focal point of my discussion is on divorce-related issues.

Although the idea of initiating divorce at a civil court in Jordan might sound like an uncomplicated matter- that is once a lawyer is appointed to represent the abused woman in a civil court and wife abuse is given as the main justification for the divorce initiation process - this step is very complex and time-consuming. In order for a woman to end her marriage in Jordan before 2010, she had the choice, in accordance with the civil Jordanian Law of Personal Status, to either file for a marriage annulment through khulu or through discord and dispute.

Under the provisions of the civil khulu law, in article 126 of the Jordanian Law of Personal Status (2001), a wife was entitled to marriage annulment initiation. Shari'a civil courts in Jordan between the years 2001 and 2009 carried out khulu in two ways, depending on whether the spouses involved agreed on ending their marriage contracts or not. If both spouses agreed, then the marriage contract would terminate once the khulu was documented at a civil court. If they failed to agree on khulu, the civil court would first attempt to mend the breach between the conflicting spouses (Welchman, 2007).

In accordance with civil khulu law, marriage annulment initiated by the wife gave an abused woman a greater chance to escape her violent marriage. This is because such provisions enabled women 'to file for divorce without providing any justification' as to why they wanted to dissolve their marriage contracts (CEDAW, 2011: 6). However, women's access to khulu was limited by modifications to the civil Jordanian Law of Personal Status' khulu-related provisions in 2010. The draft of the Personal Status Law that was passed in 2010 states that at 'the Sharia court, women need to submit "valid" reasons … and provide witnesses. The reasons that are considered to provide a "valid" justification for divorce in the Jordanian Law of Personal Status include 'conflict, strife, injury, illness, or insolvency' (Euromed Gender Equality Programme, 2009-2010: 13). In case of wife abuse as a reason, the testimony of the wife only is not enough (CEDAW, 2011). The main issue this law introduces is its restricting the activation of khulu to the wife's provision of 'valid' reasons to justify this form of marriage annulment. Its definition of the term 'valid', associated with the provision of witnesses other than the wife, can be critiqued as reinforcing women's submission to certain forms of spousal abuse, especially sexual abuse, since this might not be verifiable by witnesses due to its private nature.

Sexually abused women, like two of the women who took part in my research for instance, although legally protected from wife abuse in theory, cannot claim the right to terminate their marital relationships due to their inability to provide witnesses for the abusive events they are subjected to. In an attempt to justify this

oppressive law, the Jordanian legislator argued that the changes in the provisions

of article 126 of the draft law of the civil Jordanian Law of Personal Status (2010)

were intended to protect a woman who considers initiating marriage annulment

from exposing herself to potential financial burdens arising from having to pay

her husband back the dowry he gave her. This might be difficult, especially if the

woman in question had limited, or no access to, financial resources.

The draft law of the Jordanian Personal Status Law proposed in 2010 was

approved in 2011. The 2011 Personal Status Law gave women the right to use

khulu 'only during the phase of a written marriage contract that did not translate

into marriage yet' (CEDAW, 2011: 13-14). The provisions of the 2011 Personal

Status Law give the husband full control over marriage annulment, forcing abused

women to yield to their husbands' demands. However, even if the husband agrees

to divorce his wife, she might risk having to deal with her inability to cover the

expenses of hiring a lawyer, her inability to claim custody for her children after

the marriage annulment procedures are finalized, and her inability to provide for

her children even if she is appointed their legal custodian. After having discussed

the possibility of abused women initiating marriage dissolution in Jordan, the

following subsection will discuss forms of marriage dissolution that are initiated

by men, options that abused women like 18 of my research participants who have

consummated their marriages had to experience.

6.5 Marriage Dissolution in Islam and the Negative Effects of Men's Solely Having the Right to Initiate Marriage Annulment

In Islam, marriage dissolution or *talaq* takes place in accordance with specific measures, distinguishing it from the non-Muslim conceptualizations of marriage annulment (see Introduction). Eighteen of the women I interviewed, that is the vast majority, were divorced by their husbands. Because of this considerable number and because the twelve women I interviewed who consulted lawyers for assistance were concerned with divorce-related issues, I focus my investigation of these women's experiences on their divorce-related accounts in the light of the Jordanian Law of Personal Status. One of the five women I interviewed who said that she had consulted religious figures for assistance on her marital issues, for example, described how she had consulted sheikhs in order to help her escape the dire situation that her husband's monopoly of his right to dissolve their marriage had put her in. Her husband divorced her verbally more than once, yet he refused to admit that he had done so and document the divorce in court. The husband's unwillingness to document the divorce in court was problematic because although he had religiously divorced his wife, legally she was still considered a married woman. As a result, she was not able to claim her marital rights as a divorcée and was pressured to live with her ex-husband as though they were still married. This is religiously unacceptable. However, these Sheikhs' views were personal opinions that had no legal power to help this woman end her abusive relationship. She continued: 'He did that because he did not want to pay me the "mu'akhar" money. He even had sex with me once after divorcing me. I did not want to have

sex. He forced me. May God forgive me. It is a grave sin'. Since this woman was

not allowed to initiate marriage dissolution through 'khulu', due to the recent

changes in the provisions of the Jordanian Law of Personal Status, she was

exposed to wife abuse exercised in the form of spousal control. She was denied

the right to maintain personal control over her body and treated as though she was

an object designed to satisfy the pleasure of her abuser. In the eyes of the

Jordanian Personal Status Laws she was fulfilling her marital duties just like any

other married woman is expected to do. The Jordanian legislator is blind to

marital rape. That is, marital rape is legally not considered to be a form of

violence against wives (UNHCR, 2014 b). And since the woman did not have any

document to prove that her husband had divorced her, she was expected to accept

the marital rape she experienced.

In *Women of Jordan: Islam, Labor and the Law*, Sonbol (2003) investigates the

legal bias Jordanian women are exposed to, attributing it to the implementation of

'urf'. Sonbol defines 'urf' as referring to traditions. She argues that the recurrence

of certain traditions in the everyday lives of Jordanians gives these traditions the

enforcing power of 'al ilzam al-adabi' or moral obligation (Sonbol, 2003: 117).

Such traditions are articulated in people's behaviours and utterances, Sonbol

explains. They ultimately become accepted by the majority of people and

continue to be strongly reinforced as though they are of religious origin. Haj-

Yahia (2002) argues that the

>   patriarchal nature of Arab society, however, is far too complex to be
>   attributed solely to religion. In Jordanian society, as in most other Arab
>   societies, social and cultural conditions deriving from Islamic thought and

tradition contribute toward chauvinist delineation of gender roles. Thus, women are viewed as a source of evil, anarchy (*fitna*), and trickery or deception (*kaid*) (Haj-Yahia, 2002: 283-284).

These traditions have affected the lives of people over successive generations, not only on the social but also on the legal level.

As for the women I interviewed and the women whose legal marriage dissolution records I got hold of through contacting lawyers at the legal firm, I classified these women into two groups as far as their ability to exercise their right to terminate their abusive marriage was concerned. The first group was able to choose between initiating marriage annulment through khulu or agreeing to go through normal divorce procedures since their marriage annulment took place before 2010 (i.e. when women were allowed to use khulu in Jordan), whereas the second group of women were forced to wait for their husbands' approval to divorce them. The second group of women could not initiate marriage annulment for two reasons: some did not wish to or could not afford to return their dowry to their husbands which would have been compulsory had they chosen to resort to khulu, while others could not use khulu simply because they decided to abandon their violent spouses in 2010 or afterwards.

Only one woman out of the 18 I interviewed for my research actually said that she was able to choose khulu and eventually did in her attempt to leave her violent husband. The woman said: 'I filed for a Khulu. I gave up on all my rights in order to have my marriage annulled' (Najwa, 37 years old). This woman had been

subjected to physical abuse. She said that her husband had a health issue and that unless he took his medication, he would become aggressive. She added that he lacked the ability to 'focus' which made him incapable of controlling his temper. And since her husband's inability to control his temper would lead him to beat her with 'any tool' he could reach, her life was in great danger. As for the remaining 17 women I interviewed, these women did not specify whether they had to deal with marriage annulment issues as a result of their husband's abusive behaviour before or after 2010. That is, they did not actually say they were aware of the legal opportunities they had to end their abusive marriages when they were asked about their knowledge of these legal opportunities during the interviews.

Regardless of abused women's ability to resort to khulu or not, one direct result of women not using khulu is that they risk their continuing exposure to wife abuse. One of the women I interviewed at the Jordanian Women's Union, for example, described how her husband's violent behaviour towards her began before she got married and how it escalated. Her husband used to degrade and humiliate her from their engagement period on. And yet, she agreed to marry him. She tolerated his abusive behaviour for some time after they got married, but his violence worsened. He even tried to force her into having an abortion. Eventually, the woman became incapable of tolerating the constant abuse. But her husband refused to divorce her and became violent not only towards her but also towards their child:

> He did not support me financially for one year out of our five-year marriage. He also decided that we live at his parents' without my knowledge. In addition, he tried to divorce me provided that I give up all

my marital rights that are documented in our marriage contract such as my alimony and the financial support I must be paid for the custody of our daughter. When he knew about my pregnancy, he tried to force me into having an abortion, and he was outraged even more because the baby was a girl and not a boy. After I had delivered the child, he kicked me out of the house. He said he would send me away to my parents when I was still in hospital, and he did not take any responsibility for the child's birth. The most hurtful sentence he said was: 'I will just keep you stuck like that. You will neither be my wife nor my divorcée' (Noor, 20 years old).

This abusive man was aware of the fact that his wife was unable to terminate the marriage herself. He therefore pressured his wife to succumb to his demands if she wanted him to divorce her, including his attempt to deprive her of her financial rights should a divorce take place. His being the sole provider of financial support for this woman had allowed him to exercise absolute control over her. Eventually, she had no other option but to do whatever it took to be free. So, she gave up all her marital rights in order to protect herself and her child.

Another research participant said: 'I left the house many times after each time he upset me. He refused to divorce me. Last time I went back to him, I had filed a financial support lawsuit against him' (Aya, 23 years old). This woman's husband responded to her attempts to end their abusive relationship by ignoring her. The woman was also forced to accept her husband's polygamous second marriage. These kinds of hindrances and obstacles that Jordanian abused women encounter are not taken into consideration by the measures of western NGOs that claim to be concerned with the wellbeing of women worldwide regardless of their racial or cultural background. Abused Muslim women, including my research participants for example, experience double alienation (Ghadbian, 1994) when acting in

219

accordance with the supposedly egalitarian provisions of the Jordanian Law of

Personal Status and CEDAW. This is because such provisions which were

originally inspired by the views of western feminists (Al-Moussa, 2009) do not

take the particularity of the prevailing Islamic values and limitations that restrict

Muslim women's emancipation into account. In the following subsection, I will

discuss the national and international laws related to discrimination against

women in Jordan.

6.6 The National and International Laws Related to Discrimination against Women

The role of national and international institutions and organizations specialized in

combating discrimination and wife abuse is discussed in this section. On the

national level, gaps in Jordanian laws prevent them from protecting women's

rights and ensuring gender equality. Abu Hassan (2005) explains these gaps

arguing that in Jordan, there are no laws that particularly define or criminalize

wife abuse, and that 'there are no enforcement mechanisms to ensure the

implementation of laws to promote and protect gender equality. The actual

implementation of Jordan's anti-discriminatory laws and making amendments to

the bias that is found in the content of some legal provisions implemented in the

country is often influenced by factors such as a lack of training of police and court

officials, patriarchal cultural norms and customs, and male domination of the

public sphere' (Abu Hassan, 2005: n.p.). Even after the introduction of the

Protrction from Domestic Violence Law in 2008, official bodies, such as the

Jordanian National Committee for Women (JNCW), remain lenient towards the

implementation of counter-wife abuse and anti-discriminatory laws against

women in Jordan (Husseini, 2010). With regard to the role of international

organizations in monitoring the implementation of anti-discriminatory laws, the

International Rescue Committee (IRC), for instance, states:

> Around the world, the International Rescue Committee helps survivors
> heal and works with communities and institutions to break the cycle of
> violence. As first-responders in emergencies, the IRC works hands-on to
> deliver urgent care and referrals for victims of assault. In longstanding
> crises, we provide safe spaces for women to come together for support and
> to build skills at our women's centres. In the aftermath of war, the IRC
> addresses the root causes of violence against women by helping them gain
> greater economic independence and play a more meaningful role in
> decision-making. Working at the grassroots level, the IRC helps women to
> make themselves heard in speaking about their experiences. We work with
> partners to help influence men and boys and to change the attitudes that
> foster violence against women. We also advocate with government
> officials to advance laws preventing violence against women, and enforce
> policies ensuring survivors' access to care and legal justice (The
> International Rescue Committee, 2012: n.p.).

Four of the most important issues on which the liberation of abused women relies

constitute the main targets of the committee: i) the possibility of escaping violent

settings; ii) abolishing cultural values of gender-based bias against women; iii)

cultivating women's skills and encouraging them to become economically

productive members of the society; iv) and most importantly, collaborating with

official entities in order to ensure that the plans centred on the protection of

women are carried out effectively. Hypothetically, such goals sound promising. In

real life, however, the probability of achieving them is questionable, especially in

countries such as Jordan. Hindrances obstructing the effective implementation of

these aims are mainly associated with a lack of coordination between the state and

non-governmental organizations (The United Nations, 2006). A study presented

by The United Nations (2006) acknowledged the importance of collaboration

between these two parties and highlighted the factors that impede the protection

of abused wives on the governmental level as follows: 'Inconsistent efforts and

inadequate resources indicating a lack of political will', lack 'of a comprehensive

and integrated approach', lack of 'funding', the inability to 'end impunity', the

'intersection of multiple forms of discrimination' (The United Nations, 2006:

xvii), and the scarcity of information needed to assess the actions carried out in

order to assist abused women (The United Nations, 2006: 101). Other reasons

might be national organizations' and institutions' lack of influence when

attempting to put international anti-discriminatory laws and regulations into

effect.

At first glance, the obstacles that cripple the progress of international

organizations towards liberating women worldwide, including my research

participants, might seem of an entirely local nature. In other words, one might

argue that laws reinforcing the subordination of women such as the Jordanian

Law of Personal Status, for example, have been passed by official bodies at

national level in Jordan over which international organizations such as CEDAW,

UNIFEM and The International Rescue Committee have no control. However,

since Jordan officially became one of the numerous countries that agreed to act in

accordance with the laws and regulations of CEDAW in 1980 (Naffa, Dabbas,

Jabiri et al., 2007), Jordan becomes legally bound to carry out the provisions of

CEDAW. This means that making legal changes at national level in accordance with international laws becomes mandatory. In the light of the current leniency on the part of international organizations as far as monitoring the implementation of their provisions on the elimination of violence against women is concerned, Jordanian women are cast into the category of 'other'. This process of 'othering' or marginalization of women has constituted the focal point of post-colonial and postmodern research (Malik, 2010; Gunjate and Shivaji, 2012). In the following subsection, I will discuss my research participants' experiences when they sought the assistance of lawyers, and the extent to which the lawyers they consulted were able to help these women in the light of wife abuse-related laws and the recommendations of CEDAW. This aspect of wife abuse in Jordan will be investigated through the lens of post-colonial feminism. The reason behind my choice of post-colonial feminism is that it 'challenges Western academia by showing that it has tended to treat Third World women as other, denying their subjectivity and imagination' (Gunjate and Shivaji, 2012: 284). Malik (2010) argues:

> Western feminists are attacked for assuming that the path they took in their struggles ought to be replicated by other women across the world and for neglecting the fact that these women, who have different histories, different circumstances, and differently structured desires may choose to define their future in different ways and through different frameworks. Within the context of this debate, the increasing presence and participation of women in Islamic organizations and the emerging phenomenon of 'Islamic feminism' is seen as an encouraging sign by post-colonial feminists but is seen with suspicion and sometimes outright horror by secular feminists who often try to explain away the phenomena by using concepts such as 'false consciousness'. There is considerable resistance against accepting them as partners in the debate and struggles to determine women's rights and their future. (Malik, 2010: n.p.)

Malik's critique of western feminisms helps to expose how the recommendations of international organizations such as CEDAW have been based on biased views of feminists who are not aware of the culturally specific forms of discrimination that women in certain countries such as Jordan experience.

Amongst the most renowned Jordanian sociologists who have investigated the issue of double marginalization of women is Susan Darraj. In 'Understanding the Other Sister: The Case of Arab Feminism', Darraj (2002) critiques the 'big sister' position of western feminists: 'Often, Arab Women's Voices are excluded from discussions concerning their own lives, and they are to be "informed" about feminism, as if it is an ideology exclusive to American women alone' (Darraj, 2002: n.p.). Arab feminist critics such as Golley (2004) have also addressed the double marginalization of non-western women. In 'Is Feminism Relevant to Arab Women?', Golley argues that 'for most Westerners, even today, the phrase "Arab woman" conjures up heavily veiled, secluded women, whose lives consist of little more than their homes, their children and the other females in the "harem" or immediate kinship circle' (Golley, 2004: 522). Arab women are thus constantly viewed as occupying the position of the othered 'other' who lacks power to speak, take action for herself and is in need of the assistance from her western female saviours (i.e. western feminists). The mission of such biased western feminists is to speak for abused Arab women rather than to empower the latter and allow them to speak for themselves. Darraj (2002) attributes the marginalization and silencing of Arab women, including women in Jordan, by western feminists to some

western feminists' and Arab Muslim women's lack of understanding of each

other. Quoting Dawn Chatty and Annika Rabo, Darraj explains:

> Middle Eastern women's groups are not . . . nearly as well documented as
> in the rest of the world . . . There is . . . a great deal of antagonism between
> the Middle East and the West where the latter sees men from the Middle
> East as suppressing and secluding their women, and where the Middle
> Easterner underlines the immorality of women in the West. This conflict is
> one reason why women in the Middle East do not get international
> attention when organized in groups (Darraj, 2002: n.p.).

Marginalizing women of non-western ethnicities is the result of cultural ignorance

about the 'other'.

6.7 Abused Women in Jordan, Lawyers, Jordanian Wife Abuse-Related Laws and the Recommendations of CEDAW

During my first visit to one legal firm in Amman, I asked the three lawyers I

talked to about the ways in which abused women get to know about and contact

lawyers specialized in dealing with wife abuse. One of the lawyers told me that

abused women usually find legal support at NGOs specialized in the assistance of

wife abuse victims, and that they initially find such NGOs with the assistance of

staff members at the Public Security Directorate or family members and friends.

Whether they are advised by the Public Security Directorate or personal

connections, abused women approach lawyers as clients seeking legal assistance.

What makes wife abuse-related conflicts different from other forms of dispute

that might arise between individuals, they said, is that the Jordanian Law of

Personal Status that is mainly referred to in order to solve wife abuse conflicts has

been modified, due to the efforts of international organizations such as CEDAW, in order to handle wife abuse-related conflicts as gender-based issues, highlighting the importance of reinforcing gender equality in the public sphere.

However, despite the fact that the efforts of international organizations such as CEDAW have led to a slight improvement of the status of abused women in Jordan that was marked by the introduction of the Domestic Violence Law in 2008, many wife abuse-related laws in Jordan continue to reinforce bias against women. One aspect of legal bias Jordanian women encounter, as stated in the literature on wife abuse, is exercised in the deactivation of the civil khulu law, giving men only the right to end marriage contracts (Husseini, 2010). A second aspect of legal bias against abused women lies in the civil custody laws (The Jordanian Law of Personal Status, 2010). The amount of custody payments abused divorced women receive are usually insufficient to maintain them and their children (UNESCO, 2012). No changes have been made to the custody laws in order to increase these amounts. One of the lawyers I spoke to at the legal firm I visited stated: 'As lawyers, we do not have the power to change custody and marriage annulment laws'. However, he pointed out that lawyers can help abused women in two ways. First, if an abusive man refuses to divorce his wife upon her request, lawyers representing his wife legally might contact him and reach a certain settlement with him according to which he will divorce his wife, such as offering a certain amount of money in compensation for the husband for example. Secondly, if an abused divorced woman is given inadequate financial support from her ex-husband after she has been appointed the legal custodian of their

children, lawyers might ask her to provide evidence of any undeclared source or sources of income her ex-husband has in order to help her increase the custody payments she is receiving from him.

The efforts of lawyers to help abused women in Jordan are constantly crippled by issues related to governmental leniency. Governmental leniency in the enforcement of preventive measures against wife abuse in civil laws appears, for instance, in the abuser's receiving a minimal sentence of three months to one year rather than being imprisoned for a longer period of time if the man's suspicion regarding the victim's chastity has resulted in his assault. The United Nations report (2006), in contrast to CEDAW, addresses the issue of state leniency in Jordan as an important aspect of wife abuse that serves to increase the latter's recurrence.

The needs of abused women will not be met unless these laws and regulations are adjusted to respond to the particularity of abused Jordanian women's needs, and their enforcement is ensured by follow-up schemes that are initiated and carried out by national and international organizations and institutions specialized in combating wife abuse. These needs include guaranteeing the provision of not only governmental financial support but also housing for abused women once they decide to leave their violent husbands so that these women are able to keep the custody of their children if they are unemployed, have nowhere to stay and have no access to financial resources.

In accordance with the Jordanian Law of Personal Status 2011 and the provisions of international organizations specializing in dealing with wife abuse issues, the voices of abused women in Jordan are silenced and the particularity of their needs is overlooked. Thus, in order to enable such women to reclaim their rights to violence-free lives, a comprehensive set of laws must be legislated. These laws must not only facilitate the termination of abusive marital relationships through divorce for instance, but also provide women with financial support and equal custody rights on the level with men's so that they are less hesitant to abandon their dysfunctional marriages. Yet, such legal efforts to emancipate abused women will be futile unless there is collaboration between legal bodies, governmental institutions and NGOs in order to protect such women. The following chapter will conclude my thesis, highlighting the research significance, the research limitations and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This thesis has explored the reported experiences of a small number of Jordanian wives who have suffered wife abuse in order to show the complexity of these women's status in the Jordanian cultural and legal system. For this I drew on original empirical data in the form of interviews with abused women and material that was hard to access around court cases. The theoretical context according to which the wife abuse experiences of my research participants were investigated involved resource theory and Arab Islamic Feminism. The fourth, fifth and sixth chapters of my thesis addressed my main research question: What do Jordanian women who took part in this research and have been victims of wife abuse say about their experiences? In order to address this question, taking into consideration the cultural and legal aspects of my interviewees' wife abuse experiences, four secondary research questions were proposed and addressed. Chapter Four focused on answering the sub-question 'What is the nature of the forms of wife abuse that my participating women experienced?', whereas Chapter Five focused on answering the sub-question 'In what ways did the participating women's families assist them to put an end to their wife abuse experiences?', and Chapter Six focused on answering the sub-questions 'What are the nature of and limitations to the assistance that the participating women received from the Muslim Clerics whom they consulted to put an end to their wife abuse experiences?', and 'What are the nature of and limitations to the assistance that the participating women received from the Lawyers whom they consulted to put

an end to their wife abuse experiences?' In the following section, the significance

of the research findings arrived at in this research will be highlighted.

7.1 Significance of the Research Findings

In Chapter Four, I addressed the secondary research question 'What is the nature

of the forms of wife abuse that my participating women experienced?'. I was

concerned with exploring my research participants' experiences in relation to the

forms of wife abuse that they reported, in addition to the factors that affect the

emergence of these forms of wife abuse. I concluded that the forms of wife abuse

that my research participants experienced ranged from physical and verbal wife

abuse to emotional and financial wife abuse. Physical wife abuse was the most

reported by my research participants. Physical wife abuse, as reported by 15 of

the women who participated in my research, might include forms of violence such

as beating, choking and forcing a woman to have sex with her abuser. The second

most commonly reported form of wife abuse was verbal abuse. Eleven of the

women who participated in my research reported that they experienced different

forms of verbal abuse ranging from insults (6 women), verbal quarrels (1 woman),

name-calling (2 women), rebuking (1 woman) and verbal threats (1 woman).

Emotional abuse was the third most commonly reported form of wife abuse (7

women). The women who reported emotional abuse stated that their husbands

either neglected them (4 women), or did not take their opinions into consideration

when the husbands made important decisions related to the family (2 women). As

for the least reported form, it was financial abuse (6 women).This form of

violence was reported by the women who participated in my research in different manners such as forcing a wife to sell her jewellery (1 woman), failing to provide a wife with financial support (3 women), denying the wife financial rights such as dowry related expenses (1 woman), and controlling a wife's inheritance money (1 woman). These forms of wife abuse have been addressed by previous research on wife abuse in western countries (Dobash and Dobash, 1992) and in non-western countries such as Jordan including a study conducted by The United Nations Population (2008) and another study conducted by Haddad, Shotar, Younger et al. (2011).

However, I also addressed particular forms of wife abuse that are more commonly practiced in the Jordanian socio-cultural structure, namely forced marriages, in-law-related wife abuse, nushuz-related wife abuse and polygamy-related wife abuse. Four of the women who participated in my research had forced marriages. These are distinct from arranged marriages, as they involve a lack of consent on the part of the women who are married off in arranged marriages with these women's consent. These women pointed out that their parents did not take their opinions into consideration with regard to their approval of the men who wanted to marry them. In other words, these women experienced a form of coercion against which they were not able to rebel because of the prevailing cultural values in Jordan that necessitate women's obedience to their parents and particularly their fathers. Yet, the majority of the women who took part in my research (i.e. 13 women who had traditional marriages and 3 women who had relationship-based marriages) were not coerced into accepting their future husbands' marriage

proposals. That is, the majority of my interviewees reported that their families favoured modern values supporting women's taking part in choosing their future husbands.

With regard to in-law related wife abuse, this form of wife abuse has rarely been investigated in previous research on wife abuse in Jordan. Yet, my conducting semi-structured interviews that were based on key questions, a rarely[45] employed research method in Jordan, enabled me to expand the focal points of my research and to investigate this particular form of wife abuse in more detail. Interviews are rarely conducted in research related to wife abuse in Jordan because victims are hard to reach and because interviewing is regarded as intruding upon the personal sphere.

Based on my research participants' reported experiences of in-law related wife abuse, this was identified as any form of control or violence that is perpetrated by in-laws or husbands who are encouraged to be abusive towards their wives by the husbands' parents. When the in-laws are incapable of abusing the wife, her children might be abused to upset her indirectly. My research participants reported that in-law related wife abuse could be perpetrated not only if a woman lives in the same accommodation as her in-laws or even close to the in-laws' place of residence, but also if she lives in a separate residence from that of the in-laws. My contribution to research on wife abuse in Jordan at large and particularly

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[45] Most of the research on wife abuse in Jordan is conducted by distributing questionnaires, co-ordinating focus groups or using pre-conducted studies and research papers (e.g. Oweis, Gharaibeh and Alhourani, 2009; Haddad, Shotar, Younger et al., 2011).

to the research on in-law-related wife abuse in Jordan lies in the fact that upon interviewing women who were exposed to in-law related wife abuse, it became clear that this form of violence might take place even before the spouses actually sign the marriage contract (i.e. during the engagement period), although pre-marital in-law abuse is not commonly reported, and that its severity is of an escalating nature. This means that in-law-related wife abuse might begin by giving the targeted woman negative verbal comments and escalate to extreme forms of violence such as controlling the amount of food that the husband is allowed to buy for his wife in order to feed their child or children.

A third particularity I focused on in my investigation of wife abuse in Chapter Four was exploring the specific forms of legally enforced discrimination that my research participants were exposed to when seeking to reclaim their rights. In the light of the national and international laws and regulations related to wife abuse in Jordan, three of my research participants risked experiencing a particular form of post-separation violence. I referred to this as 'nushuz-based violence'. By this I mean that abused women were legally labelled as 'nashizat' due to their departure from their marital homes without the permission of their husbands after their husbands were abusive or their refusal to return to their marital homes after their abusive husbands had kicked them out. As a result, these women lost their right to financial support from their husbands (Al-Rawashdeh, 2012). The only legally acceptable reason that would have justified these women's departure from their marital homes without risking their exposure to 'nushuz-based violence' was for

233

their husbands to confess that their violent behaviour towards their wives threatened the latter's safety.

As stated above, three court records I analyzed while conducting my research highlighted this particular form of post-separation abuse which has not been addressed in the literature on wife abuse in Jordan to date. In this thesis, one of my contributions to understanding wife abuse in Jordan is having investigated my research participants' reported experiences in relation to this particular form of wife abuse.

A fourth particularity associated with wife abuse that I addressed in Chapter Four was related to polygamous marriages. Six of the women who participated in my research reported that they had experienced polygamy-related abuse. These six women identified with the feminist stance that labels polygamous marriages unacceptable and considered polygamy as a factor that increased their exposure to abuse. The forms of abuse resulting from polygamous marriages that were identified by these women were financial abuse, exercised in the husband's lack of equal financial provision for his wives, and emotional abuse, exercised in the husband's ignoring the needs of his first wife and paying more attention to the fulfilment of the needs of his second wife.

A fifth particularity associated with wife abuse that I addressed in Chapter Five, as reported by my research participants, was related to the support that these abused women received from their families in order to make their husbands stop

their abusive behaviour or put an end to their marriage. Chapter Five thus focused on answering the secondary research question 'In what ways did the participating women's families assist them to put an end to their wife abuse experiences?'. I explored the gendered socio-cultural values that shape the position of these women in relation to their male counterparts in the private sphere in modern Jordan. I highlighted my research participants' responses to and rejection of wife abuse based on the accounts of the women I interviewed. The twenty who participated in my research overtly expressed their strong rejection of wife abuse. Hence, they sought the assistance of institutions specialized in dealing with wife abuse such as the Jordanian Women's Union and the Ministry of Social Development. But these women might well be in the minority, since they actually broke free from their marriages which may well not be the case for the majority of abused Jordanian women.

Some of my research participants adopted modern views that reject wife abuse, and clashed with their parents' or other family members' traditional cultural acceptance of such abuse. For instance, while seventeen women who participated in my research reported that their parents, uncles, brothers or sons had supported them to leave their abusive marriages, three women stated that their parents had offered them no support at all and left them to struggle with their abusive husbands on their own. The familial support my research participants received ranged from guidance to consult institutions and organizations specialized in dealing with wife abuse for assistance, to offering emotional sympathy and financial support. In opposition to the views of Kawar (2000) and Al Kharouf and

Weir (2008) who argue that Jordanian society has not changed in terms of its acceptance of wife abuse, the considerable number of my research participants who received family support in order to end their violent marital relationships indicates that these women found modern Jordanian patriarchal socio-cultural values to be no longer entirely static and that the gendered socio-cultural hierarchy in Jordan is gradually being considered unacceptable. Yet, the fact that three of my research participants did not receive any kind of family support suggests that the acceptability of male domination has not entirely come to an end and that the efforts of the Jordanian women's movement that are directed towards the combating of male domination must continue steadily and forcefully.

The sixth particularity about wife abuse in Jordan that I addressed in Chapter Six based on my research participants' experiences was the issue of Muslim clerics' role in relation to Islamic values and wife abuse. This particular aspect of wife abuse was addressed when I responded to my third secondary question 'What are the nature of and limitations to the assistance that the participating women received from the Muslim Clerics whom they consulted to put an end to their wife abuse experiences?'. It was important for me to investigate this aspect of wife abuse in Jordan because it has not been addressed before. Based on the accounts of the research participants who consulted Muslim clerics, I filled this gap in the literature on wife abuse in Jordan by exploring the role clerics played in assisting my research participants. My research participants' consulting religious clerics in order to end their violent marital relationships did not guarantee that their abusive husbands would abide by the teachings of Islam that prohibit wife abuse (Scott,

2009; Kabbani and Ziad, 2011). In other words, I found that the predominant patriarchal cultural values that support the need to maintain women in a subordinate position continue to have a greater effect on the lives of the abused Jordanian women who took part in my research than the counter-violence Islamic values that some Muslim clerics call for in Muslim countries such as Jordan. I also realized, based on my research participants' reported experiences, that Muslim clerics do not have the authority to impose counter-violence Islamic values on abusive men in Jordan, and that their role in combating wife abuse is limited to the provision of moral and spiritual support to abused women.

Yet, Muslim clerics' inability to impose counter-violence Islamic values on abusive men is not the only reason why only five women who participated in my research consulted Muslim clerics for assistance on their abusive marriages. As indicated by one of my research participants, for example, the religious man she knew, her father-in-law, did not enforce the counter-violence religious values that he was supposedly fully aware of as a preacher at the mosque. Another research participant said that her husband was supposed to be a religious man who held Islamic values dear. But he persisted in being abusive towards her. As for the third woman who did not consult a Muslim cleric for assistance on her marital life, she said that she simply did not think of consulting religious clerics because her parents handled everything related to her marriage dissolution. In other words, she had no say as to whether she wanted to consult a Muslim cleric or not because all the actions related to her dissolving her marital relationship were entirely carried out by her parents.

The cultural values that support wife abuse and women's subordination to men were therefore of greater influence on my research participants than religious values. The greater influence of the cultural values that support wife abuse and women's subordination to men is reflected in the fact that in conservative Muslim countries such as Jordan, these values can yield changes in the state's originally Islam-based legal provisions, as in the case of the adjustments made to the Jordanian Law of Personal Status 2011. I addressed this aspect of wife abuse in Jordan in Chapter Six when I responded to my fourth secondary research question that states 'What are the nature of and limitations to the assistance that the participating women received from the Lawyers whom they consulted to put an end to their wife abuse experiences?'. This is because the forms of assistance that twelve of my participants received from lawyers were mainly reliant on the patriarchal, culture-based, amended Jordanian Law of Personal Status 2011. The significant impact of patriarchal cultural values on wife abuse-related laws in Jordan, in turn, justifies the decisions of my research participants who reported that they did not seek the assistance of Muslim clerics because they did not think such a step would be an effective measure in ending the abuse they were exposed to, as consulting such figures does not guarantee that the victims receive the assistance they need. In the following subsection, the limitations of this research will be addressed.

7.2 Research Limitations

The public debate about intimate partner violence against women including wife abuse in the Arab World, as was the case in the west before the 1970s, is governed by people's fear of shame (Haj-Yahia, 2002). In Jordan, the public exposure of the husband's aggressive behaviour is considered taboo because familial issues are viewed as private family matters and should therefore be kept within the family (The United Nations Population Fund, 2008; Ouis, 2009; Haddad, Shotar, Younger et al., 2011). The cultural sensitivity towards the revelation of wife abuse in Jordan made it difficult for me as a researcher to get the abused women who participated in my research to provide extensive accounts about their experiences. Most of the women I interviewed found it difficult to open up to me about their wife abuse experiences. Therefore, these women gave me brief rather than extensive accounts of some examples of the abuse they had gone through. In order to overcome the issue of cultural sensitivity towards the revelation of wife abuse in Jordan, I gave my research participants examples of abuse stories from newspapers at times to encourage them to open up to me about their own experiences. I had to be careful not to overpressure my interviewees. I struggled with the cultural sensitivity towards the revelation of wife abuse experiences the most when I interviewed the women who had experienced marital rape. They would not provide details of the actual rape process and by looking at their facial expressions I could see that they felt guilty and shame-ridden. I also dealt with a sample of women that was not representative of the whole population of abused women in Jordan with all its diversities, which limited the possibility of

generalizing from my data. Different groups of women in class terms, for example, might have yielded different insights. Finally, I did not deal with a great diversity of women as I did not talk with women from rural areas who might have had different stories to tell.

7.3 Suggestions for Further Research

Research on the various forms of wife abuse in the Arab world at large and in Jordan in particular is limited (Usta et al., 2012: 214). Since my research is centred on the investigation of wife abuse in Jordan, I would like to stress that a particular reason that is associated with the limited research on wife abuse in the country is the difficulty of accessing abused women even if they have decided to break their silence, consulted professional organizations and institutions in order to end their violent marriages, and actually left their marital residences.

Therefore, it is of great importance for researchers concerned with the investigation of wife abuse in Jordan, and particularly from a feminist perspective, to address the issue of gaining access to wife abuse victims. Secondly, the experiences of rural abused women in Jordan need more exploration. Thirdly, due to the great impact of laws on experiencing and reporting wife abuse in Jordan, more research should be conducted to investigate wife abuse-related laws (e.g. custody laws and child-visitation-related laws) and to suggest ways to improve such laws in Jordan. Finally, issues related to the cultural acceptance of remarriage that women encounter in the aftermath of

having experienced wife abuse in Jordan have not been investigated in the

available research on wife abuse. Addressing these aspects of wife abuse research

in Jordan will provide a thorough understanding of this phenomenon and thus

help to find effective ways to resolve wife abuse issues in the country.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Articles from the Jordanian Law of Personal Status

Article (1): This law shall be formally referred to as the Jordanian Law for Protection from Domestic Violence (2008).

Article (2): If not overtly stated to refer to a different meaning, each of the following terms and phrases, wherever used throughout this law, shall refer to a fixed definition as explained below:

The Ministry: The Ministry of Social Development.

The Minister: The Minister of Social Development.

The court: The specialized court assigned to rule in the case of abuse.

The members of the family: The individuals who reside in the marital home who are determined under Article (3) the Jordanian Law for Protection from Domestic Violence (2008).

The marital home: The place of residence in which the members of the family live together.

The victim: According to the provisions of this law the victim is the person on whom the marital violence is inflicted.

The secured place of residence: It is the place the location and facilities of which are approved of by the Minister of Social Development in which the security of the victim is ensured.

The official court representatives: official members of staff working in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development who are appointed by the Minister of Social Development in coalition with the officers from the Family Protection Department at the National Security Directorate.

The Family Protection Department: It is a department specialized in issues related to family protection and located at the National Security Directorate.

The security office: The security office working in affiliation with the Jordan Police Department wherever the former is located.

Family conciliation committees: Any committee that is comprised, in accordance to the provisions of the Jordanian Law for Protection from Domestic Violence (2008),of individuals whose aim is to reconcile the conflicting spouses upon the occurrence of marital dispute.

Article (3): Throughout the provisions of this law, the term 'members of the family' refers to:

A. The husband and wife who are the individuals whose marriage has been documented in an acceptable marriage contract according to the laws of Shari'a, their sons and daughters, and their grandchildren.

B. The sons and daughters of any of the spouses from another marriage that is acceptable according to the laws of Shari'a.

C. The father and mother of any of the spouses.

D. The siblings of any of the spouses.

E. The child of less than eighteen years old who is under the custody of an adopting family.

242

Article (4):

A. In addition to the Jordanian Penal Code and any other legislation that is related to domestic violence, the provisions of the Jordanian Law for Protection from Domestic Violence (2008) are applied in cases of family violence.

B. Any of the procedures or information related to family violence cases that are presented before an official body specialized in resolving family violence disputes, including courts, are handled with top secrecy.

C. On the event of family violence, and in order to effectively address the case of family violence in question, the court may take into consideration the content of any reports that have been prepared and handed in by official bodies, either consulted or are still working on that particular case; in order to find appropriate solutions.

Article (5): Any offence perpetrated by one member of the family towards another, except for the offences handled by the criminal court, is considered to be an act of family violence.

Article (6):

A. 1. 'Family reconciliation committees' are formulated upon the passage of a formal decree signed by the Minister of Social Development, in association with the Family Protection Directorate. The decree must state the number of the committee members and assign one of them as Head of the Committee.

2. Members of a 'family reconciliation committee' are required resolve family disputes. Members of a 'family reconciliation committee' are entitled to seek the assistance of any formal body or local community member specialized in family dispute resolution.

B. The Minister may authorize the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Social Development, any of the managers of the departments of the Ministry of Social Development, or the managers of the departments to carry out the duty listed in clause (1-A) of Article (6). The entity chosen for purposes of authorization must be specified in writing.

Article (7): The priority to transfer an individual, in order to carry out the measures that protect his or her well-being that are stated in the Jordanian Law for Protection from Domestic Violence (2008), is given to the 'family reconciliation committee' whose main concern is to maintain the interests of the family.

Article (8):

A. The providers of medical, social or educational services, whether belonging to the public or private sector, must inform the official bodies specialized in dealing with domestic violence upon the former's identifying or witnessing the traces of family violence.

B. Upon their knowledge of any family violence case, the official representatives working on the resolution of domestic violence cases must take into account the required measures in order to guarantee the protection of the aggrieved individual(s).

Article (9): A judicial officer from the Public Security Directorate must be present at the location where acts of family violence are taking place. The judicial officer's presence is considered a necessity in the following cases:

A. Once a present or probable case of family violence is reported.

B. Once a breach of a family protection order, issued in accordance with the provisions of the Jordanian Law for Protection from Domestic Violence (2008), has been reported.

Article (10): Unless legal procedures necessitate the revelation of the identity of an individual who has reported a case of family violence, the official representatives working on a case of family violence are required to maintain the secrecy of the name and identity of the individual who has reported the case of family violence.

Article (11): In order to guarantee the safety of an aggrieved individual or any other family member who is affected by a case of family violence, the manager or head of the Family Protection Department may carry out any of the following actions:

A. To have the perpetrator of family violence sign a warrant that guarantees he does and will not inflict any harm onto the aggrieved or any other member of the family.

B. In case that the aggrieved individual or any members of the family affected by domestic violence are exposed to potential harm, any of the following protective actions may be carried out:

1. If there is no other way to ensure the security of the aggrieved or other family members, the perpetrator of family violence is prevented from entering the family home for a period of time that does not exceed (48) hours.

2. If the protective measures in clause (1) explained above could not be carried out, the perpetrator of family violence shall be kept at the Family Protection Directorate or any of its affiliated departments until the aggrieved or other family members are secured.

Article (12):

A. In collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development, the manager of the Family Protection Directorate or the heads of the family protection departments throughout the cities of Jordan are authorized to transfer the aggrieved and the perpetrator of family violence to a family conciliation committee upon the agreement of the aggrieved and the perpetrator in an initial attempt to resolve the family dispute and before the case of family dispute is referred to the family court.

B. If the disputing parties were not able to reach a mutual agreement regarding the source of conflict according to the provisions of clause (12.A) stated above, then the family violence case is referred to the family court. However, if the conflicting parties reach a mutual agreement to settle their disputes, the court terminates its pursuit of the family violence perpetrator.

Article (13) of the Jordanian Law for Protection from Domestic Violence (2008) postulates that:

A. Once the necessity to protect the aggrieved and other members of the family is supported by evidence; the court shall decree a protection order. The protection order thereby holds the perpetrator legally obligated to carry out one of the following actions:

1. To avoid harassing the victim or any member of the family, or instigating other individuals to harass the victim or any member of the family.

2. To avoid approaching the alternative place of residence that has been agreed upon in the court's protective order in which the victim is to stay, whether that place of residence is a protective shelter or any other secured accommodation.

3. The perpetrator is prohibited from inflicting damage onto any of the victim's personal property or the property of the other family members.

4. To enable the victim or any authorized delegate on her behalf to enter the marital home in order to reclaim her personal belongings in the presence of an official court representative. After her re-possession of her belongings, the victim or her delegate must sign up a receipt in confirmation of this action.

B. The disputing parties are not entitled to spend the money that is assigned by the court for the maintenance of the family.

Article 14:

A. The protection order, as ruled by the court, is decreed for a period of time that does not exceed a month. The protection period is liable to extension for a period that is no more than six months. The extension is applicable in the following cases:

1. If the original protection order was violated by the perpetrator.

2. If evidence was provided to the court that affirms the necessity to extend the protection of either the victim or any other members of the family whose names have been documented in the protection order.

C. The disputing parties are entitled to request the adjustment or cancellation of the protection order in the case that any developments in the situation upon which the protection order was originally sentenced by the court should arise.

D. The court might decree orders following the protection order if the need arises in order to carry out the protection order effectively and guarantee the safety of the disputing parties' family members.

Article (15):

The court may hold the perpetrator of family violence under arrest for a period of time that does not exceed a week in order to protect the aggrieved or other family members in any of the following cases:

A. If evidence is provided to the court proving that the precautionary court protection order or the court protection order that has been passed upon actual domestic assault will not suffice in terms of protecting the aggrieved individual or any of the other family members who are affected by the acts of domestic violence.

B. If the perpetrator of domestic violence did not abide intentionally by the provisions of the precautionary court protection order or the court protection order that has been passed upon actual domestic assault.

Article (16):
A. If any of the provisions of the precautionary court protection order have been intentionally violated by the perpetrator of family violence, the perpetrator of family violence is to receive punishment by the court in the following ways:

1. To pay the financial penalty of no more than one hundred Jordanian Dinars, to be held under arrest and serve an imprisonment sentence that does not exceed a month, or to pay the financial penalty stated above and be held under arrest and serve an imprisonment sentence that does not exceed a month simultaneously.

2. To pay the financial penalty of no more than two hundred Jordanian Dinars, to be held under arrest and serve an imprisonment sentence that does not exceed three months, or to pay the financial penalty stated above and be held under arrest and serve an imprisonment sentence that does not exceed three months simultaneously if the perpetrator's violation of the court protection order was accompanied by the exercise of violence against any of the individuals on whom the court protection order applies.

B. If the court protection order has been violated by the perpetrator of family violence more than twice, the perpetrator shall be held under arrest and serve an imprisonment sentence that is not less than three days time and not more than six months.

Article (17):

The court shall take into consideration any demand of compensation that is filed by the aggrieved or any other individuals who are affected by the perpetrated acts of family violence. The court shall also take into consideration the following facts:
A. The financial status of each of the conflicting parties, and the extent to which imposing a financial fine on the perpetrator could damage the financial status of the family on the whole.
B. The expenses that must be paid in order to carry out the protection order.

Article (18):
Upon the agreement of both the conflicting parties, the court may affirm the following actions that are to be carried out either as alternative measures to the protection order or as reinforcing measures to the protection order:

A. To transfer both the aggrieved individual and the perpetrator to a family reconciliation committee.

B. To transfer one or both the conflicting spouses and the rest of the affected family members to family supervision sessions or psychological and social rehabilitation sessions.

Article (19):

The Jordanian Cabinet shall issue the required measures in order to carry out the provisions of the Jordanian Law for Protection from Domestic Violence (2008).

Article (20): The Minister shall issue the required provisions and instructions in order to carry out the Jordanian Law for Protection from Domestic Violence (2010). [Translated by the author from the National Information System, 2010: n.p.]

Appendix 2: Timetable of Research Activities

Time	Activity
April 2012	1. Arrived in Jordan on 30 April 2012
May 2012	1. Visited the Jordanian National Commission for Women on 2 May 2012 and called the National Commission for Family Affairs. 2. Contacted the general manager of the Jordanian Women's Union for the first time on 7 May 2012. 3. Spoke to the psychologist at the Jordanian Women's Union on 7 May 2012. 4. Visited the Ministry of Social Development for the first time and spoke to the manager of the Social Defence Department on 8 May 2012 at 8 AM. 5. Decided to contact legal agencies for further insight into the legal procedures according to which the amount of custody payments are estimated. On 12 May 2012, got in touch with a legal firm. 6. On 13 May 2012, I sent the executive director of the legal firm an e-mail introducing myself and asking for assistance in accessing domestic violence records.
June 2012	On 2, June. 2012: Visited a legal firm that deals with wife abuse issues for the first time. On 6, June. 2012: Contacted that firm for the second time for assistance regarding custody issues. I was also given five copies of domestic violence complaints.
September 2012	1. Arrived in Jordan for my second field trip on 2 September 2012. 2. From 8-13 September 2012, I stayed at the Jordanian Women's Union from 9 AM to 5 PM. 3. On 8 September 2012, I was able to interview three domestic violence survivors. 4. On 15 September, I conducted four face-to-face interviews with domestic violence survivors who came to the union for parental visits. 5. From 16-19 September 2012, I went to the Jordanian Women's Union, but there were no parental visits on those days. 6. On 20 September 2012, mothers did not accompany their children during parental visits on that day. The children at the Jordanian Women's Union were accompanied by their grandparents. 7. On 22 September 2012, I interviewed five domestic violence survivors. 8. On 29 September 2012, I interviewed three domestic violence survivors. 9. On 6 October 2012, I interviewed one domestic violence survivor and distributed two questionnaires onto the women who were not able to participate in my interviews face-to-face.
October 2012	1. On 11 October 2012, I conducted one interview at the Ministry of Social Development. 2. On 18 October 2012, I conducted the second interview at the Ministry of Social Development.

Appendix 3: Interview Questions

1. Background Questions

1. 1. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself? How many kids do you have? What is your educational level (Elementary school, High school, University)?

1. 2. How did you first get to meet your husband? Was it an 'arranged' marriage in the traditional sense or was it that you two were in a relationship before deciding to get married?

1. 3. How did you feel about the idea?

A-(If arranged) Did your parents take your opinion into consideration?

B- How did you manage to talk to your parents about your relationship?

2. Main Interview Questions

2. 1. When did you first feel that your husband was being aggressive?

2. 2. Can you tell me more about the details of this one precise incident?
2. 3. When you felt he was aggressive, was it just because you were physically injured or did   when he was verbally offensive and emotionally abusive count to you as ill treatment as well?

2. 4. How did your family react when you told them about what you felt was abusive behavior? Did they think it was OK for a man to hit his wife? Did they try to justify his behavior in any way?

3. Consulting Religious Figures

3. 1. Have you consulted any religious institutions or personnel for support and assistance on your marriage?

3. 2. Could you describe to me what happened on a certain occasion for example when you contacted religious entities for help?

4. Consulting Lawyers

4. 1. Have you considered marriage annulment (divorce)?

4. 2. Could you relate what happened when you first contacted a lawyer for assistance?

4. 3. Did the lawyer ask you to provide a forensic medical report?

Appendix 4: A Story about Wife Abuse in Jordan that Was Used to Encourage the Women to Participate in the Interviews

For years, this woman has endured in silence the beating and dehumanization that were perpetrated by her husband. She suffered from psychological and physical pain and no one noticed that she was hurting. No one was there to help her. She endured this violent situation until she nearly got killed by her husband who brutally beat her, leaving her scarred both physically and psychologically. Despite this life-threatening situation, she did not dare to voice any accusations against her husband while she was hospitalized in the aftermath of her husband's attack. She did not dare to complain about her husband's attack because her husband had threatened her that he will seek vengeance if she did, and also because he threatened her natal family of the consequences if they let her stay in their home after being discharged from the hospital. Indeed, her natal family kicked her out when she came to their place of residence after having been discharged from the hospital. She became homeless. This situation is similar to the situation of many women whose husbands and natal families have refused to support them. Such women are stuck between two bitter choices: They can either stay with their physically and psychologically abusive husbands or end up homeless. Who is there to help? (Alkhatatbeh, 2005: n.p.).

Appendix 5: Respondents' Demographic Details.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Alia	JWU	35	3	second upper elementary year at school	T	P	when he started staying out late (time not indicated)	Yes	No
Aya	JWU	23	1	high school	T	I+F+P	Not indicated	No	Yes
Dina	JWU	20	1	-	T	V+P	two or three months later	No	Yes
Duaa	JWU	25	1	B.A. in business administration	T	V+E	one month later	No	Yes
Eman	JWU	-	1	Illiterate	T	1-P+V/ 2-F	from the beginning of their marriage	No	Yes
Ghazal	JWU	33	4	Shari'a diploma and English languade courses	T	V+E+P	from the beginning of their marriage	Yes	No
Hala	JWU	26	3	B.A. in business administration	T	V+P	while arranging for the wedding	No	Yes
Horet Sham	JWU	36	0	college graduate	T	V+P	half an hour later	No	Yes
Lamya	JWU	-	2	high school	R	I+P	one week after the marriage	Yes	Yes
Maryam	JWU	35	4	pharmaceutical assistant diploma	T	E (quick-tempered)+I	from the beginning of their marriage	No	No
Maysa	JWU	35	3	high school	T	V+E	a year later	No	No
Miran	JWU	32	1	diploma in childrearing	T	P+E+F	two or three months later	No	Yes
Najwa	JWU	37	2	-	T	P	six months later	No	No
Noor	JWU	20	1	high school	T	V+F	since their engagement	No	Yes
Raghad	MSD	34	5	completed the first high school year	R	V+P	After his addiction (time not indicated)	Yes	No
Reema	JWU	35	3	high school	T	E	from the beginning of their marriage	No	No
Silvia	JWU	-	2	-	R	V+E+P	3 years later	Christian	Yes
Suha	MSD	42	2	completed the first high school year	T	V+ E+F+P	After her car accident (time not indicated)	Yes	Yes
Um Hawra	JWU	37	6	high school	T/T	1-F /2-P+F	nine months later	No	No
Usayma	JWU	25	1	third upper elementary grade	T	P	one week after the marriage	No	Yes

Represents the respondents' demographic information, the types of violence they were exposed to, the beginning of the abuse to which they were exposed, and whether they received clerical and legal assistance. Column 1 shows the place where the interviews were conducted or the place where the questionnaires were filled out. (1) JWU refers to the Jordanian Women's Union and MSD refers to The Ministry of Social Development. Column (2) shows respondents' age, whereas column (3) represents the number of children each respondent has. As for column (4), it highlights the educational level of the respondents. Column (5) shows the kind of marriage each respondent had where R means the respondent's having had a relationship-based marriage and T shows the respondent's having had a traditional marriage, column (6) shows the type of violence each respondent was exposed to. Violence types was categorised as follows (V (verbal)/P (physical)/F (financial)/E (emotional)/S (sexual)/I (intellectual)). column (7) shows when the abuse started. The last two columns (i.e. (8) and (9)) represent religious consultancy and legal assistance, respectively.

Appendix 6: Respondents' Marriage Arrangements

Name	Type	
Alia	T (Forced)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged. 2. They are closely related: "My sister's husband is his brother." 3. Her opinion was not taken into consideration: "I was forced to say 'yes' because my brothers are all physically incapable of supporting me. I do not have anybody else to support me."
Aya	T (Opinion Taken)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged. However, in this case he had proposed to her parents. She had not even seen him before he had talked to her parents. 2. Her parents took her opinion into consideration and she approved.
Dina	T (Opinion Taken)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged. 2. Her parents took her opinion into consideration. 3. She was happy.
Duaa	T(Opinion Taken)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged through his mother. 2. Her parents took her opinion into consideration, but she had never met him before. 3. She extended the engagement period so that she would get to know him and his parents better.
Eman	T(Opinion Taken)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged. 2. She did not know him beforehand. 3. She was from Egypt and he was originally from Palestine, but lived in Jordan.
Ghazal	T (Opinion Taken)	Her parents took her opinion into consideration, but she had neither known him before, nor had she been made aware of what marriage really is.
Hala	T (Opinion Taken)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged through both their parents. 2. She had never seen him before they got married. 3. Her parents had taken her opinion into consideration before going through with the marriage. She accepted the idea of marrying that man in order to escape getting married to another.
Horet Sham	T (Opinion Taken)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged. 2. She was happy about the marriage. 3. Her parents took her opinion into consideration, but she did not know him beforehand. 4. She met her husband through her sister-in-law's friend whom she knew: "I was told about the groom by my sister-in-law."
Lamya	R (Opinion Taken)	1. The marriage was not traditionally arranged. She did not tell her parents about him before he proposed to her in marriage. 2. Her parents took her opinion into consideration.
Maryam	T (Opinion Taken)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged. She got married in order to get rid of her parents' control.
Maysa	T (Forced)	1. Her parents did not take her opinion into consideration. 2. The marriage was traditionally arranged. 3. She was his cousin.
Miran	T (Opinion Taken)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged through the spouse's parents. 2. The spouses did not know each other or even communicate before the marriage took place. 3. The victim refused his proposal of marriage at the beginning because he had been married before. However, she changed her mind based on how much his parents had praised him morally. 4. The engagement period did not last for long. It lasted 28 days only. 5. Her parents took her opinion into consideration.
Najwa	T (Opinion Taken)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged through the wife's parents. 2. Her parents took her opinion into consideration, but she was young (only 19) and had never met him.

Noor	T (Forced)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged. She was told about him by her parents, but there was no prior relationship. 2. Her parents did not take her opinion into consideration. They just told her about him.
Raghad	R (Opinion Taken)	1. The marriage was not traditionally arranged. He was her colleague at work and he proposed to her brothers eventually.
Reema	T (Opinion Taken)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged. 2. Her parents took her opinion into consideration.
Silvia	R (Opinion Taken)	1. The victim had a relationship with her husband before she married him. 2. She felt positive about the relationship.
Suha	T (Opinion Taken)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged. 2. She did not know him before and he proposed to her parents instead of proposing to her. 3. Her parents took her opinion into consideration.
Um Hawra	T (Forced/ Not Forced)	1. The marriage was traditionally arranged. 2. Her father did not take her opinion into consideration on her first marriage: "I came back from work one day and I found that he had agreed my marriage to some man and I did not even know about this." Yet, he did consider her opinion on her second marriage.
Usayma	T (Opinion Taken)	Her parents took her opinion into consideration. She refused at the beginning and then her parents convinced her to marry.

T: Indicates a traditional marriage.

R: Indicates a relationship-based marriage.

Appendix 7: In-law Intervention

Name	Yes	No
Alia		√
Aya		√
Dina		√
Duaa	√	
Eman		√
Ghazal	√	
Hala	√	
Horet Sham		√
Lamya	√	
Maryam		√
Maysa		√
Miran	√	
Najwa		√
Noor		√
Reema	√	
Silvia		√
Suha		√
Um Hawra		√
Usayma		√
Raghad		√

Appendix 8: Onset of Abuse

Name	Early Onset of the Abuse	Onset of Abuse (after 12 Months)	Onset of Abuse Not Recalled
Alia			The first incident that counted for her as a form of abuse was when he started saying bad things about her family (i.e. verbal abuse).
Aya			Onset not indicated.
Dina	She first realized her husband was abusive after 2 or 3 months.		
Duaa	'I felt he was quick-tempered one month after we got married.'		
Eman	'The abuse began one week after I got married, and I tolerated his ill-treatment for 5 years hoping that his behavior would improve.'		
Ghazal	'Right from the beginning of our marriage.'		
Hala	The ill-treatment began before they got married: 'He and his parents used to nag about the wedding ceremony.'		
Horet Sham	'Right after the first half an hour of my arrival at our home. He was verbally abusive.'		
Lamya	'He beat me because of his mother one week after our marriage.' 'However, our disagreements began two months after our engagement. They were about the dowry and there was about to be a divorce.'		
Maryam	'I felt he was aggressive right from the beginning of our marriage.'		
Maysa	'A year later. It was because of his second marriage.'		
Miran	'Two or three months afterwards, it was the beginning of Ramadan, he beat me because he wanted me to sell my golden bracelets, necklaces, earrings and rings and give him the money.'		
Najwa	'Six months after I got married.'		
Noor	'Ever since our engagement, his only wish was to degrade me and humiliate me.'		
Raghad			She could not remember whether the abuse occurred early in their marital life or not.
Reema	'He was neither tight-fisted nor did he beat me. The reason behind the issues that we had was his parents' intervention… His parents intervened ever since we got married and our life was uncomfortable'.		
Silvia		'Three years into the marriage.'	
Suha			(No indication of whether the detection of abusive behavior was

			early or not.)
Um Hawra	Nine months after she got married.		
Usayma	'One week after our marriage was the first time for me to feel that he was being aggressive.' She then continues saying: 'I used to live with his parents. One day he started hitting me pretending to be joking. That kind of jokes was intolerable for me. But then he started hitting me for real and his parents were right there. Our conflicts began ever since that day.'		

Appendix 9: The Participants' Main Source of Marital Conflict

Name	
Alia	He was having an extramarital affair.
Aya	Not taking her opinions into consideration, locking her up and financial abuse.
Dina	Verbal abuse.
Duaa	Parental intervention: 'We live right next door in the same building. His character is influenced by his parents' opinions rather than being shaped by his own thoughts.'
Eman	Degrading her (e.g. forcing her to beg)
Ghazal	Neglecting her and the family and having extramarital affairs.
Hala	The main issue was that his parents used to intervene: 'I did not know that he was his mama's boy.'
Horet Sham	She told me after the interview that the reason behind her husband's abusive behavior was that he could not sleep with her. She said: "He could not approach me as a wife. He could not have sex with me. He was not 'man' enough. He tried to pierce my hymen with his finger and when I refused, he beat me."
Lamya	Parental intervention (She lived with her in-laws).
Maryam	His being quick-tempered.
Maysa	Husband's second marriage.
Miran	Their issues were mainly because of money (1): "I sold one of my golden possessions so that he could pay off his debts, but he kept sinking more and more into debt. I once threw the money we were fighting over on the floor and told him: 'If all you want is money, then here's your money.' He then apologized so that no one would know about the incident." (2) 'He once wanted to kick me out of the house for three months after having sworn by the name of God that he will divorce me if I stay at home. He wanted to leave me at my parents' house for three months, but my brother arrived at an agreement with him, one that entails that I stay there for a week. The entire household had disappeared when I came back including my wedding tape, the tape recording of my departure from my parents' home before the wedding, my wedding ring and a bracelet that I had. They were not there.'
Najwa	Not taking his medication: 'He has health conditions that require a certain medication to be taken, and not taking the medication results in abusive behavior. He beats me a lot using any tool at hand'.
Noor	Financial control: The main issue was that she gives up on her financial marital rights, including the 'alimony' money and the 'custody' wages. (She lived with her in-laws).
Raghad	He had a psychiatric health condition that required him to take some medication, and when he became addicted to his medication he became aggressive.
Reema	Parental intervention
Silvia	Not indicated.
Suha	Her inheritance money.
Um Hawra	Money: 'My first husband did not beat me. He was only tight-fisted.'

Appendix 10: Parental Support

Name	Yes	No
Alia		√
Aya	√	
Dina	√	
Duaa	√	
Eman	√	
Ghazal	√	
Hala	√	
Horet Sham	√	
Lamya	√	
Maryam	√	
Maysa	√	
Miran	√	
Najwa	√	
Noor	√	
Raghad	√	
Reema	√	
Silvia	√	
Suha	√	
Um Hawra		√
Usayma	√	

Appendix 11: Clerical Assistance

Name	Yes	No
Alia	√	
Aya		√
Dina		√
Duaa		√
Eman		√
Ghazal	√	
Hala		√
Horet Sham		√
Lamya	√	
Maryam		√
Maysa		√
Miran		√
Najwa		√
Noor		√
Raghad	√	
Reema		√
Silvia		√
Suha	√	
Um Hawra		√
Usayma		√

Appendix 12: Lawyers'Assistance

Name	Yes	No
Alia		√
Aya	√	
Dina	√	
Duaa	√	
Eman	√	
Ghazal		√
Hala	√	
Horet Sham	√	
Lamya	√	
Maryam		√
Maysa		√
Miran	√	
Najwa		√
Noor	√	
Raghad		√
Reema		√
Silvia	√	
Suha	√	
Um Hawra		√
Usayma	√	

Appendix 13: The Protection from Domestic Violence Law (2008)

The Protection from Domestic Violence Law (2008) states:

Article 1
This law shall be called Family Protection Law for the year 2008 and shall enter into effect as of the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Article 2
The following terms shall have the following meanings unless the context indicates otherwise:

The Ministry
The Ministry of Social Development

The Minister
The Minister of Social Development

Court
The competent court

Family members
Persons mentioned under article 3 of this law and who live at the family household

Household
The house where family members live together

The injured
The person who is subjected to domestic violence according to the provisions of this law

A safe place
Any place that is safe for the injured person and that is approved by the minister

Officers in charge
The ministry staff assigned by the minister, in addition to the officers and personnel of the family protection department

Family Protection Department
The department established within the Public Security Directorate and who is in charge of protecting family

Police Station
Police stations wherever they are located

Family Reconciliation Committees
A committee for family reconciliation

Article 3

For purposes of this law family members mean,

1. A wife and husband under a legitimate marriage contract, their children, and grand children;
2. Step children, spouse's children from another legitimate marriage;
3. A spouse's parent;
4. Siblings of any of the spouses;
5. A child, under the age of 18 in the custody of a foster family.

Article 4
1. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Penal Code or any other relevant legislation, the provisions of this law apply to domestic violence cases;
2. All procedures and information related to domestic violence heard by any relevant body including courts are dealt with the utmost confidentiality;
3. The court may take into consideration the reports related to domestic violence that are submitted to it by formal competent bodies.

Article 5
Crimes against natural persons are considered domestic violence, except for crimes falling under the jurisdiction of the Criminal Court.

Article 6
1. Committees under the title of Family Reconciliation Committees are formed upon the Minister's decision and in coordination with the Family Protection Department, the Minister's decision shall determine the number of committee members and it shall nominate one of them as a chair.
2. Family Reconciliation Committees exert efforts to arrive at reconciliation between family members; it may use the expertise of any relevant entity and from the local community in order to bring about reconciliation.
3. The Minister may delegate the power assigned to them under this article item 1 clause a) to the Ministry Secretary General, or any of the directorates heads at the Ministry, or at centers, provinces or governorates, providing that such delegation is specific and in writing.

Article 7
Preference shall be given to referrals to Family Reconciliation Committees prior to taking any of the protective measure stipulated in this law, providing that the best interests of the family is taken into consideration.

Article 8
1. Providers of health care, social and education services from both public and private sector shall inform competent authorities once they learn about the incidence of domestic violence or see traces or marks they feel associated with domestic violence.

2. Officers in charge shall take appropriate procedures to safeguard the safety of the injured person of the family members once they learn about the incidence of domestic violence.

Article 9
Law enforcement agencies including PSD officers shall go to the place where domestic violence allegedly happened in the following cases,

1. Upon receiving a report that there currently is a situation of domestic violence or that it is about to happen;
2. Upon receiving a report that an effective restraining order issued under the provisions of this law has been violated.

Article 10
Officers in charge shall be under the liability of guaranteeing the protection of the reporter and not disclosing their name or identity unless judicial procedures require otherwise.

Article 11
The director of the Family Protection Department or the head of the Family Protection Section may take any of the measures below as a precautionary measure to ensure the safety of the injured and any family member:

1. Taking a promissory note from the respondent pledging not to assault the injured or any of the family members.
2. In cases where the injured or any of the family members is at risk, the following measure may be taken:
1- Not allowing the respondent to enter the family household for no more than 48 hours if there were no other measures to safeguard the safety of the injured and other family members;

2- Placing the respondent at the custody of the Family Protection Department or any of its sections for a period of no more than 24 hours with a view to ensuring the safety of the injured or any family member if the measure under item 1 was not possible.

Article 12
1. The director of the Family Protection Department, or the heads of family protection divisions at governorates may, before referring the case to court, refer the injured and the respondent to family reconciliation committees at the preliminary stage if both parties accept.
2. If two parties do not arrive at an agreement according to the provisions of clause a) under this article, the case is referred to court; if both parties eventually reach an agreement, the prosecution of the respondent is terminated.

Article 13

1. If the court deems the protection of the injured and family members necessary, it shall compel the respondent to do any of the following:

1- Not to assault the injured or any of the family members or incite that;

2- Not to come to vicinity of the new abode, be it a safe place, a shelter or any other place mentioned under the restraining order;

3- Not to damage the personal belongings of the injured or any of the family members;

4- Enabling the injured or whoever he/she assigns to access the family household with the presence of an assigned officer to collect the belongings of the injured and hand it to them upon a report of receipt.

2. Claim parties shall not dispose of the funds allocated for the living of the family.

Article 14
1. A renewable restraining order for no more than one month shall be issued by court under the provisions of this article;
2. In any of the cases below, the restraining order may be renewed, providing that the period of protection does not exceed six months:
1- If the order is violated by the respondent;

2- If the court is convinced that it is necessary to protect the injured person or any of the family members.

3. The court shall issue decisions following the restraining order to guarantee the enforcement of the latter and to safeguard the safety of family members.

Article 15
The court may detain the respondent for no more than a week in any of the following cases:

1. If the court is convinced that the precautionary protection measure, or the restraining order are not sufficient to protect the injured or any of the family members needing protection;
2. If the respondent does not respect, intentionally, the restraining order or the precautionary protective order.

Article 16
1. If the restraining order or any of its terms was intentionally violated by the respondent, the court applies the following penalties:
1- A fine of no more than one hundred JDs, an imprisonment for no more than a month, or both;

2- A fine of no more than two hundred JDs, an imprisonment for no more than three months, or both if the violation was associated with violence used against any of those protected under the order.

2. If the restraining order is repeatedly violated for more than two times, the respondent shall be punished by an imprisonment of no less than 3 days and no more than six months and with a fine of no more than 200 JDs.

Article 17
The court hears the compensation claim upon the request of the injured or any party representing them, providing that the following are taken into consideration:

1. The financial situation of the disputing parties and the extent to which paying the compensation might harm the family;
2. The expenses incurred due to implementing precautionary and protective measures.

Article 18
In case the disputing parties reach an agreement, the court may take the measures below as an alternative to the restraining order or in addition thereto:

1. Referring both the injured and the respondent to the domestic reconciliation committees;
2. Referring one or both of the claim parties and the family members to domestic counseling sessions or psychological and social rehabilitation.

Article 19
The Council of Ministers shall issue the regulations needed for the enforcement of the provisions of this law.

Article 20
The Minister shall issue the instructions needed for the enforcement of the provisions of this law.

Article 21
The Prime-Minister and the Ministers are vested with the duty for enforcing the provisions of this law. (Corpus of Laws, 2012 a)

Glossary of Arabic Terms

Term	Definition
Darar	this term refers to 'the inability or unwillingness of the husband to consummate the marriage on account of life imprisonment, mutilation or sentence of death . . . Not only that; if the man becomes unable to fulfill his marital obligation, such as providing shelter and maintenance, the woman may be entitled to "Khula"' (Engineer, 2004: 164).
Fiqh	Fiqh, according to van Wichelen, refers to 'the codification of principles of conduct drawn by religious scholars from the Qur'an, from Traditions, from an analogy of those two sources, and from the consensus of legalists' (van Wichelen, 2006: 5).
Khulu	is a measure that 'allows for women to file for divorce without providing any justification, but return money or jewellery given to them by their husbands before the wedding and forsake any right to alimony' (CEDAW, 2011: 6).
Mu'akhar	Sonbol (2005) defines the mu'akhar as a portion of the dowry that could be paid after the consummation of the marriage.
Musawah or 'equality' in Arabic	is a global movement for equality and justice in the Muslim family. It was launched in February 2009 at a Global Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia attended by over 250 women and men from some 50 countries from around the globe. Musawah is pluralistic and inclusive, bringing together NGOs, activists, scholars, legal practitioners, policy makers and grassroots women and men from around the world' (Musawah, 2014: n.p.).
Nushuz	Zantout (2006) defines nushuz in Islam as follows: 'Nushūz, in its linguistic sense, was linked by early scholars, jurists and interpreters of the Qur'ān to the idea of rising (irtifā'), i.e., something that rises from the earth reaching a position higher than the ground level it was assigned. In the realm of marriage, a nāshiz wife is one who refuses her husband sexual enjoyment... A wife's unwillingness to maintain the nikāḥ and fulfill the duties required by that contract renders her guilty of nushūz and obliges her to offer compensation if she wishes to terminate the nikāḥ' (Zantout, 2006:10-11). Marriage, according to Yusuf (2005), or (nikah) in Islam 'is the union of a man and a woman. It is a religious responsibility to be undertaken by those who are ready to live according to rules guiding the institution' (Yusuf, 2005: 3).
Shabka	According to Wiktorowicz and Farouki (2000: 688) 'the groom must furnish gold for the bride to provide her with financial insurance, a practice known as shabka'.
Talaq	is the act of 'setting free' in the Arabic language, which in Islam stands for the annulment of the marriage contract as confirmed in the plain declaration: 'I hereby divorce you!' or indirectly, by saying, 'I hereby consider you unlawful to me!' (Abu Aisha, 2003: n.p.)
Ulema	Doumato (2010) defines the term ulema as 'religious scholars' (Doumato, 2010: 1).
Wasta	refers to the 'use of informal channels (mostly based on kinship ties) to obtain any kind of service, such as avoiding a fine, speeding-up an administrative process, getting a job or a better grade at university' (Ronsin, 2010: 1)

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