

The Sociolinguistics of Urban Personal Names in Jordan and Naming Differences between Urban and Bedouin Communities

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Abstract

This study is a sociolinguistic analysis of feminine personal names over three generations (grandmothers, mothers, and daughters) in an urban community in Jordan. It aims at pointing out the sociolinguistics of the names and differences in naming over time. Based on the findings of a previous work by the researchers, this study also aims at revealing the differences, if any, in naming conventions between Bedouin tribes and urban communities. For this reason, the researchers carried out an in-depth analysis of 300 students' names in Amman, the capital alongside their mothers and grandmothers' names. Findings indicated that though the majority of the urban names among the three categories differed in form and sound, their implications were roughly similar. While transparent discrepancies across the two communities are reported at the level of the elderly age (grandmothers) and middle-aged (mothers) categories, striking similarities were noticed at the level of the children's categories (daughters).

Keywords: Onomastics, Anthroponomy, Toponymy, Nomenclature, Naming conventions.

1. Introduction

Apart from acting as means of communication, personal names can be perceived as labels by which an individual human being is recognized and distinguished from others. From this perspective, Agyekum (2006, 211) argued, "naming can be considered as a universal cultural practice; every human society in the world gives names to its newborns as tags majorly as a means of identification". Personal names can also perform further functions. These include telling people's cultural, societal, ideological, and religious backgrounds, mirroring the namer(s) hopes and the surrounding factors and situations in which the child was born (Machaba 2004, 107). Likewise, a name can indicate the country of origin. Some female Yemeni names can identify them as such in the Arab culture context, as referred to in Busaba (2013, 11). Examples include /amatarrahi:m/ 'the slave of the Merciful' and /amatassala:m/ 'the slave of peace.'

In addition to personal names, more categories of names have been explored in a wide range of cultures and languages. Exploring surnames, for example, was the aim of many studies (Hussein 1997;

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Fakuade et al. 2013; Tahat 2014, among others). Similarly, nicknames have been the subject of extensive investigation in different cultures and languages (Haggan 2008; Koehn 2015, to mention only a few).

The contributions of some humanities, such as psychopathology and psychology, to onomastics have also been looked into (e.g., Lawson 1984). Many studies have confirmed the relationship between first names and the development of identity and self-perception (Seeman 1980; Dion 1983; Pina-Cabral and Lourenço 1994; Machaba 2004; Fitzpatrick 2012; Fakuade et al. 2013; Rahman 2013, among others).

The effect of name-valence, in the sense of being appealing or unappealing on judging the physical beauty of the named person and the way people feel toward and respond to others, has also been investigated in several studies (Hensley and Spencer 1985; Mehrabian and Piercy 1993; Zwebner et al. 2017, to mention only a few). Much literature has also revealed a relationship between people's initials and their longevity (e.g., Christenfeld et al. 1999; Pinzur and Smith 2009; Abel and Kruger 2007).

The influence of a personal name on its holder suggests that personal names are not only markers to identify a person and set him/her apart from others or a practice to reflect the culture of certain communities. They should be viewed as tools that play a central role in forming individual's personality. In Arab countries, where Islam is the main religion, parents must choose pleasant names for their babies and refrain from the unpleasant names, which interfere with the Islamic precepts. The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "The most beloved names to Allah are Abd-Allaah and Abd al-Rahmaan" (Narrated by Muslim in his Saheeh 1398). The importance of naming holds true for other cultures and languages. Significant work on Western naming traditions has been devoted to the importance of giving beautiful names to newborns and avoiding derogatory names (Levine and Willis 1993; Mehrabian and Piercy 1993; Pinzur and Smith 2009, to mention only a few).

1.1 Onomastics

The terms *onomastics*, *anthroponomastics/anthroponomy*, *toponymastics/ toponymy*, *anthroponym*, *toponym*, and other relevant terms are very beneficial in the discussion and understanding of the motif of this study. Onomastics is interested in studying proper nouns and divides into two branches, specifically *anthroponomy*, the study of names of human beings, and *toponymy*, the study of place names (Vamitela 1999; Al-Zumor 2009; Mandende 2009; Agyekum 2006; Bramwell, 2012; Mutanda 2016; Bush et al. 2018; among others). An additional term which is commonly used in literature to mean a naming system is *nomenclature* (Beeston 1971; Notzon and Nesom 2005; Hedden 2007). Other types of names were also mentioned in many studies. For example, Bright (2003) reported *ethnonyms* as expressions referring to nationalities and *glottonyms* as signifying languages. Coates (2005), (as cited in Fakuade et al. 2013) also refers to other subfields operating under the umbrella of onomastics. These include *zoonymy* (proper names of animals), *astronymy* (names of stars), *cosmonymy* (names of the zones and parts of universe), *theonymy* (names of gods), etc. Therefore, onomastics can convincingly be defined as the study of names of all types, but most common are the names of places (toponyms) and people (anthroponyms), where the term *toponymy* refers to the study of places, and *anthroponomy* refers to the study of personal names.

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1.2 Problem of the Study

Many researchers in a large number of languages have looked into personal names. However, a review of the relevant literature shows that there is a need for studies investigating personal names across successive generations and in the same genealogical chain (the individual's immediate family). In like manner, little attention has been paid to comparing the naming cultures among socially different communities. Then, the present study attempted to fill this gap by investigating personal naming in urban communities in Jordan throughout three generations, and comparing naming conventions among urban and Bedouin communities.

1.3 Aim of the Study

The study seeks to pointing out, first, the sociolinguistic significance of the names and the differences in naming system among different generations of the same community (intra-linguistic comparison), and, second, the differences in naming practices between socially different communities (inter-linguistic comparison). In summary, the study aims at answering the following main questions:

- (1) To what degree have the sociolinguistic significations of personal names within urban groups changed over time?
- (2) To what degree have communities abandoned traditional names in favor of stylish ones, and why?
- (3) To what extent is the process of naming different between urban and Bedouin communities?

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study, based on the notion of the Variationist Theory, investigates personal names across three successive generations and revealed considerable variations and innovations in naming overtime. Therefore, it can safely be argued that the study is a new addition to the field of Onomastics by extending the notion of this theory to cover the naming process over generation. The study is also significant because it emphasizes the influence of names on their bearers, indicating that giving disliked names will have negative consequences on the named persons.

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the theory which holds that there is a solid link between language and social values and culture. This discipline which was founded by William Labov, a well-known American linguist in the field of sociolinguistics is known as *variationist sociolinguistics*. It maintains that the underlying structure of language varies in accordance with external variables such as nationality, community membership, social class, age, gender and so on (Botha 2011, 2). In this regard, Labov (1972, 3) stressed that we cannot explain the progress of a language change independent of the social life of the community in which it takes place.

Language, in this view, is used as an instrument to reflect the social change and the cultural contact experienced by a particular society. Naming, which constitutes a distinct part of language, is seen as a unique linguistic act, closely related to events in people's lives. There is also a general agreement

between linguists that personal names represent a part of any language. They constitute a special group within the vocabulary of a language and follow most morphological, phonological, syntactic, orthographic, or semantic rules (Abdul 2014; Agyekum 2006).

2.2 Literature Review

Personal names have been addressed from different angles. These include the typology and etymology of names (i.e., the sources from which names are derived), their meanings, their functions, their structure, their psychological effect, naming systems (nomenclature) and many more aspects. This section attempted to provide a chronological account of what previous studies have revealed about the sociolinguistics and the psychology of personal names.

2.2.1 Studies on Typology and Etymology of Personal Names

Names in general and their classification were the subject of an early study (Mill, 1843). Based on their significance, Mill classified names into five divisions. First, persons and remarkable places have individual names while others do not. Accordingly, names can be divided into singular and universal. Names also can indicate a thing while others indicate an attribute. On that account, names can be divided into concrete and abstract. His third division includes connotative and non-connotative names. A name is connotative if it signifies a subject and expresses a quality but non-connotative if it only denotes a subject without implying anything about its characteristics. The fourth division of names is into positive and negative. The term "man" is positive whereas "not-man" is negative. The fifth division of names is into relative and non-relative. Non-relative names are sometimes called absolute names while relative names are always given in pairs (e.g., father, son; cause, effect).

In his description of the typology of Arabic and Muslim personal names, Hawana (1977) subdivided personal names into two divisions: religious and nonreligious names. Religious names can be divided into two types: those relating to the attributes and names of God and those relating to the names of the Prophet Muhammad and known Islamic figures. Nonreligious names are those pertaining to nature and the values of society. According to the study, Christian Arabs living in Muslim dominated countries tend to use Arabic names that are chosen for their descriptive meanings (e.g., /wali:d/: 'the new born,' /nabi:l/: 'noble', /maha/: wild cow) whereas those living in Arab countries where Christians are not a minority, Western-influenced names such as George, William, Georgette, and Christine are widespread.

One of the main studies on the types of personal names in Jordan is Abd-el- Jawaad (1986). He studied personal names of students at Yarmuk University. Results showed that the majority of the names were derived from verbal roots and follow different morphological patterns. They reflect the political, social, and economic conditions in which the baby was born, the positive sociocultural values of society (beauty, generosity, glory, etc.). They also refer to the time the baby was born or the natural environment (e.g., plants, birds, or flowers) and they may have religious significance. Analyzing male and female naming patterns, according to the study, revealed remarkable differences between them. Male names tend to express praiseworthy attributes (e.g., generosity, courage) and masculine qualities. Female names, in contrast, are more likely to express feminine qualities (e.g., beauty, kindness, softness).

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Similarly, the aim of showing the typology and the sociocultural implications of feminine personal names in the Yemeni context was the focus of Busaba (2013). The female names were classified into three categories: Yemeni-exclusive names, names shared with Arab countries, and foreign names. Yemeni-exclusive names, for the researcher, are those used by Yemeni females only. Examples include names such as /muhamidah/, which is closely related to the father's name Mohammad, and names which have a unique formula made up of a combination of /amat/ 'feminine slave' with one of the divine attributes of God or other nouns. The names /amatarrahi:m/: 'the slave of the Merciful' and /amatassala:m/ 'the slave of peace' are cases in point.

Religion was also validated to be one of the primary factors behind the name choice in Jordan by Darwish and Bader (2014). They investigated the impact of religion on some types of speech acts in Jordanian Arabic including naming practices. The study argued that there are certain non-linguistic (e.g., dress codes, manifestations of feasts and holidays, furniture, or ornaments) and linguistic clues (e.g., naming practices, greetings, farewells, taking oaths) of which Jordanians make use in order to identify the religious affiliation of others.

A more recent study on personal names and that on which the current study reported on for the purpose of comparison is the one by Aljbour and Al-Abed Al-Haq (2019). The study sociolinguistically investigated feminine personal names over time among a Bedouin community in Jordan represented by the Bani Sakhar. Results indicated that personal names among the Bani Sakhar tribe have witnessed a dramatic change in respect of their implications and the motives behind them. For example, it is found that 69% of the grandmothers' names are Bedouin- specific names motivated by the way of living of the Bani Sakhar people in contrast to 9% and only 2% of the mothers and daughters' names.

2.2.2 *Studies on the Psychology of Personal Names*

In this section, some of the studies conducted within the field of the social science, and in particular, the first impressions of personal names, effects of name attractiveness and name peculiarity will be reviewed.

The influence of the first name on the physical attractiveness of the named person is investigated by a number of studies. In this regard, Garwood, et al. (1980) asked around 200 college students to vote for "a beauty queen" from among six equally attractive photographs of women. Half the photographs were paired with desirable first names and half were paired with undesirable first names. Results reflected a significant effect of attractive names on physical attraction.

Similarly, Erwin (1993) examined the impact of first names on ratings of physical attractiveness. In this research, a number of British undergraduate students were asked to judge the physical attractiveness of male and female full face pictures paired with attractive names, unattractive names, or without any name indicated. Results showed that the effect of names was highly significant for the female pictures but nonsignificant for the male pictures.

Other studies have also focused on the investigation of how name valence, in the sense of being attractive or unattractive, affects the way people feel toward and respond to others. For example,

Greitemeyer and Kunz (2013) examined whether the acceptance of friendship requests by users of Facebook was influenced by name “desirability” and physical attractiveness. Results indicated that both name valence and physical attractiveness of individuals do influence friendship acceptance, and name valence can be recompensed by physical attractiveness and the other way around.

However, in opposition to much of the research literature, which indicates that having an unusual name has a detrimental effects on the bearer, other studies have been found to suggest a more positive view. Zweigenhaft (1977), for example, examined what he hypothesized, which was that under certain conditions this would not be the case. He studied 2,000 first names selected from the Social Register, a semi-annual publication in the United States that registers the members of high society. It is found that 77% of the unusual names in the sample were listed in Who’s Who, which is a book that indexes “the best known men and women of distinguished accomplishment”. This finding supported the hypothesis that having an unusual first name in certain settings does not have a hurtful effect and might even have a beneficial one.

2.2.3 Studies on the Semantics of Personal Names

A number of studies using the semantic differential scale has investigated the semantics associated with names. In their report “Semantic Differential Scaling,” Rosenberg and Navarro (2018) explained that this technique is a research instrument used to measure the semantics or the connotative meaning of objects, events, and concepts. It uses a set of bipolar adjectives (e.g., good/bad, strong/weak, positive/passive) on which research participants rate an object, event, or a concept by asking them to select an appropriate position on a scale. They added that Osgood and other scholars proposed this method in the early 1950s. As stated by Osgood, this technique, can measure concepts or ideas on three aspects of meaning: evaluation (good or bad), potency (strong or weak), and activity (positive or passive). Thus, for scholars concerned with people’s attitudes, of which evaluation is a primary element, using this methodology is a key measurement tool. As for the semantics associated with names, names are rated by respondents against these three bipolar dimensions: evaluative (good or bad), potency (strong or weak), and activity (active or passive).

Previous contributions in the area of first names of men and women and nicknames and short names of men have been made within this technique. In his article entitled “Semantic Differential Analysis of Men's First Names,” Lawson (1971) has (1) emphasized the presence of stereotypes, (2) indicated a general agreement in ratings by men and women, and (3) shown a degree of relationship between frequency of occurrence of a name and its rating.

Lawson’s (1974) investigation of women’s names also indicated the existence of stereotypes for women's names. All names were evaluated closer to strong than weak, to good than bad, to active than passive. The stereotypes of men and women were significantly correlated on the evaluative dimension but not on the others. Frequency of a name was not found to be correlated with attractiveness.

In another study conducted within this technique in the Jordanian local, Lawson et al. (1986) addressed the question whether bilingual English-Arabic Jordanians communicate with the same meaning in both languages. Two hundred undergraduate students at Yarmouk University in Jordan divided equally

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between males and females were asked to rate 32 concepts under four conditions of test-retest: Arabic-Arabic, Arabic-English, English-Arabic, and English-English. The study revealed that the test-retest reliability was high; the results in one language correlated highly with the results in a second language; and that there are sex differences in most concepts.

The reviewed literature in so far indicated that special attention was devoted to the classification of names and the naming patterns that exist in different cultures and languages. The literature has also confirmed that a connection holds between a person's name and personality characteristics. Some researchers also focused on the link between a person's given first name and the development identity, but few discussed the changes and evolutions that have emerged in the different naming systems.

The present study is sociolinguistic in nature. However, it is distinguished from other studies in that it investigated the different implications of personal names within three generations belonging to the same immediate or nuclear family (grandmothers, mothers, and daughters). A comparison in naming patterns was also made between the urban community on the one hand and the Bedouin community on the other.

3. Methodology

3.1 Data Sources

The full names of female school students from the fifth and sixth grades of the academic year 2018/2019 in the urban community were collected from the Directorate of Education to which the urban community belongs. This obtained the first names of female students. The names of their mothers and grandmothers were obtained from the Directorate of Education, school records, and Directorate of Civil Status. The following subsections will provide a summary of the data sources employed in this study.

3.1.1 Directorate of Education

Name lists of the two above mentioned grades were obtained from the Directorate of Education of Amman/Kasbah Brigade, which includes many localities in the capital city of Amman. This directorate encompasses a total of 83,007 students of all classes distributed among 144 schools: 50 for males and 94 for females. However, the names of female students of the fifth and sixth classes were collected from 10 elementary schools in different areas affiliating to the aforementioned directorate. The number of the collected names totals up to 1,714.

3.1.2 School Registers and Directorate of Civil Status

Gaining access to the mothers' names through the directorate of education was quite impractical whereas accessing the grandmothers' names was completely out of the question as they are irrelevant to schools registers and accordingly unavailable. Due to these emerging challenges, a new plan had to be devised. This plan entailed collecting the names of the mothers from schools registers and consequently the grandmothers' names from the Directorate of Civil Status which took two months to prepare the grandmothers' names.

3.1.3 Structured Interviews

A structured interview was conducted to gather information from the parents about the reasons behind giving certain names to their children and whether they are aware of the significance of the names. Six secondary male schoolteachers in this community were also selected to help in this regard. The researcher presented them with the sample of names and asked them to provide their comments on the sociolinguistic implication of the uncommon names.

3.2 Sample of the Study

Three hundred full names were selected from the 1,714 names by drawing 30 names from each of the 10 female schools. Alongside the mothers and grandmothers' names, the number of the sample totals up to 900 names.

3.3 Data Analysis

The names were categorized into three groups: grandmothers, mothers, and daughters. Each category was examined separately and the findings were discussed for each category before making a comparison between these three categories. Afterwards, a comparison was made between the findings of the current study concerning the urban community and the findings of the previous study concerning the Bedouin community.

4. Findings and Discussions

This section looked at the findings pertaining to female names within an urban community, and the differences in naming practices between the names in this community over generations. These included the grandmothers, mothers, and daughters' names.

4.1 Grandmothers' Names

Analyzing grandmothers' names revealed that the vast majority of the grandmothers' names were not found in the daughters' names. Out of the 300 names of the grandmothers, 102(34%) names were shared with the mothers' names, but only 17(8.5%) names were shared with their granddaughters. Eight of the 17 names carry religious significance. Examples included:

- /maryam/ the Prophet Jesus' mother
- /fa:t̪mah/ the daughter of Prophet Muhammad
- /khadi:jah/ the wife of Prophet Muhammad
- /ʕa:yshah/ the wife of Prophet Muhammad
- /ʔasma:ʔ/ the daughter of Abu-Bakr, one of the companions of Prophet Muhammad and the first Caliph of Islam.

The remaining 9 names express other connotations. These included:

- /ikra:m/ 'generosity'
- /muna/ 'aspirations'
- /wafa:ʔ/ 'trustfulness'
- /ʔamal/ 'hope'

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None of the remaining 283 names of the grandmothers were found in the daughters names even though they expressed almost similar meanings and connotations. For example. The names /si^ˤda/ 'happiness' and /fed^ˤda/ 'the highly valued metal of silver,' which were common in the grandmothers' category, were not found in the daughters' names as they were perceived as rural or, in other terms, old-fashioned or traditional names. Instead, the names /farah/ 'happiness' and /lujayn/ 'silver' in the daughters' names can respectively express these meanings. Another observation worth noting was that the suffix /ah/, the typical Arabic feminine name ending which signifies a name as traditional, marked 148 names (49.3%) in the grandmothers' category (e.g., /rushdyah/ 'virtuous woman,' /fathyah/ 'knowledgeable,' and /husnyah/ 'pretty woman') as opposed to 68 and 31 in the mothers and daughters' names, respectively. In general, grandmothers' names can be grouped into different types according to the factors inspiring them. These types were discussed in the sub-sections below.

4.1.1 Names derived from sociocultural values of society

Analysis revealed that almost 50% of the grandmothers' names reflected the constructive values of the Jordanian society (e.g., virtue, courtesy and tenderness, peace, justice, success, purity, devotion, generosity, triumph, glory, beauty, and happiness). Examples of such names included:

- /sa:l^hah/ 'virtuous'
- /la^ˤi:fah, ra^hmah, 'ita:f/ 'courtesy and tenderness'
- /wafa:ʔ/ 'trustfulness'
- /fakhreyah; ma:jdah; 'izeyah; 'azi:zah; waji:hah/: They all imply 'pride; glory; honor'.
- /kari:mah; ikra:m/ 'generous; generosity'
- /hasnah; wa^d hah; sa^ba:h; zahwah/ 'beautiful'
- /far^hah, si^ˤdah, su^ˤa:d, mes^ˤadah, hana:ʔ, ibtisa:m/ 'happiness'
- /nas^rah; inti^sa:r/ 'triumph'

4.1.2 Names of religious background

The influence of religion was clearly seen in the grandmothers' names. Fifty names (16.6%) were recognized as having religious impact, as opposed to 39(13%) and 52(17.3%) religious names in the mothers and the daughters' categories, respectively. In addition to the traditional religious names, i.e., /fa:t^hmah/ 'the daughter of Prophet Muhammad', /'a:yshah/ 'the wife of the Prophet Muhammad', /ʔa:mnah/ 'the mother of Prophet Muhammad', /maryam/ 'the Prophet Jesus' mother', other religious names appeared in this category. These involved, among others:

- /ha:jar/ 'the wife of the Islamic prophet /ibra:hi:m/ 'Abraham' and the mother of /isma:'i:l/ 'Ishmael'
- /kawthar/ 'abundance', which is a river in Paradise, which Allah gave to Prophet Muhammad

The most frequent name among the religious names was /fa:t^hmah/which occurred 10 times, followed by /'a:yshah/, /hali:mah/ 'the foster-mother and wet nurse of the Prophet Muhammad', /maryam/, and /a:mnah/ with 9, 8, 7, and 6 instances, respectively.

4.1.3 Names derived from the natural environment

These involved names of animals of positive meanings, plants, flowers, jewelry, etc. Examples included:

- /khawlah/ ‘deer’
- /zahrah/ ‘flower’
- /feddah/ ‘the metal of silver’
- /nada/ ‘dew’

4.1.4 Social and political events

Few names were identified as expressing social and political events among the grandmothers’ names. Two of them are derived from ‘war’ (/h̄arbeyah/) and ‘invasion’ (/gha:zeyah/) while another three are derived from ‘victory’ (/naṣrah/ 2 times and /intiṣa:r/ once). No foreign names were noticed in this category.

4.2 Mothers’ Names

Analysis revealed that mothers shared 102(34%) names with the grandmothers but only 30 names (10%) with the daughters. Though the majority of the names among the three categories differed in form and sound, the reasons and backgrounds influencing their choice were roughly similar. For example, names such as /farḥah/, and /mesʿadah/, which existed in the grandmothers’ category and denote ‘happiness’ were not found in the mothers or the daughters’ categories. Alternatively, the name /suʿ a:d/ among the mothers and /farah/ among the daughters which both express ‘happiness’ served as a more modern replacement. Like grandmothers’ names, mothers’ names were generally classified into three major groups. These included names driven by the social values of society, names of religious signification and names derived from the natural environment. Having said that, mothers’ names were found to reflect almost the same implications carried by the grandmothers and daughters’ names. In the following subsections, a discussion of these types is presented.

4.2.1 Names driven by the positive social values of society

Names of this type constituted the largest part of this category. A diverse body of positive social values were expressed by these names like virtuousness, beauty, tenderness, hospitality, success, loyalty, and sacrifice. Examples of these names involved:

- /shari:fah/ ‘righteous; virtuous’
- /fayezah/ ‘success’
- /jami:lah/ ‘beauty’
- /h̄an:an/ ‘tenderness’
- /karam/ ‘hospitality’
- /wala:ʔ/ ‘loyalty’
- /fida:ʔ/ ‘sacrifice’

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4.2.2 Names of religious signification

As mentioned in subsection 4.1.2, religion influenced the choice of 39 names (13%) of the mothers' as opposed to 50 (16.6%) of the grandmothers' names. The most frequent religious name in the mothers' category was /i:ma:n/ 'belief' with 10 instances followed by the name /ʔasma:ʔ/ with 4 instances. The most frequent religious names in the grandmothers' category, i.e., /ʕa:yshah/, /ħali:mah/, /maryam/, and /a:mnah/ which recorded 9, 8, 7, and 6 instances, respectively, witnessed a significant drop in number in the mothers' category. The number of the religious names which appeared for the first time in the mothers' category (e.g., /duʕa:ʔ/ 'prayer,' /sujud/ 'prostration before God done by Muslims during prayers', and /marwah/ 'one of two small hills (Safa and Marwa) located in Mecca in Saudi Arabia where Muslims travel back and forth between them seven times, during the ritual pilgrimages of Hajj and Umrah') was insufficient to compensate for this drop. This explained why the number of the religious names in the mothers' category was smaller than it was in the grandmothers' names contrary to what was expected. As the traditional religious names continue to shrink over time, more and more new religious names entered the daughters' category. Such names include:

- /ri:ta:l/ 'recitation or modulation (of the Qur'an)
- /isla:m/ 'Islam religion'
- /sidra/ 'a holy tree at the seventh heaven (according to Islam)

Again, this provided an explanation as to how the religious names in the daughters' category outnumbered their equivalents in the grandmothers and mothers' categories.

4.2.3 Names derived from the natural environment

These involved names of favorite animals, plants, flowers, names of jewels, etc. Examples included:

- /rasha/, /ri:m/ 'deer'
- /jiwa:hir/ 'jewels'
- /rand/ 'type of trees with a pleasant scent'
- /ghadi:r/ 'pool of rainwater'

4.2.4 Foreign names

Unlike grandmothers' names, where no foreign names were noticed, five names of foreign origins were reported in the mothers' names. These were /ali:n/ of Irish origin meaning 'good-looking,' /ulfat/ Turkish name derived from the Arabic word /ulfah/ meaning 'affinity; intimacy,' /na:nsy/ a Hebrew-origin name meaning 'quick-moving; energetic,' /di:na/ of Hebrew origin where Dina was Jacob's daughter in the Bible, and /ka:tya/ short for /katri:n/ a Greek name meaning 'pure.' As expected, the daughters' category included more foreign names than did the mothers' category. This will be discussed in the next subsection assigned for the daughters' names.

The most frequent name in the mothers' category in its entirety turned out to be /i:ma:n/ which occurred 10 times, followed by /ħana:n/ which showed up 6 times. This is to say that names of religious significance proved to be the most recurrent names in the grandmothers (/fatmah/, 10 times), and mothers (/i:ma:n/, 10 times).

4.3 Daughters' Names

Urban daughters' names can generally be classified into the following different types:

4.3.1 Names relating to religious backgrounds

Analysis revealed that 52(17.3%) names of this category reflect religious impact. They primarily followed Islamic figures, events, and actions. Examples included:

- /sa:rah/ 'the wife of the Islamic prophet Abraham and the mother of the prophet Isaac'
- - /tasni:m/ 'a spring in paradise'
- /isla:m/ 'Islam religion'
- /isra:ʔ/ 'the night of Prophet Muhammad's ascension to the seven heavens'

The most frequent religious name was /sa:rah/ with 9 instances followed by /tasni:m/ and /sidra/ with 5 instances each.

4.3.2 Names relating to nature

Many names were derived from names of jewels and precious stones (e.g., /rima:s/ 'the glitter of diamond' and /lujayn/ 'silver'). Other names were given as the names of flowers (e.g., /wuru:d/ 'roses', /ya:smi:n/ 'jasmine', and /sawsan/ 'iris'). One name is identified to follow a favorite animal names, which was /maha/ 'wild cow'.

4.3.3 Names relating to social values

Like names of the grandmothers and mothers, the vast majority of the names in this category reflected the positive social values of society. In addition to many of the names that appeared in the older categories, new names of such connotation arose. These involved, among others:

- /wajd/ 'passion,'
- /ḥani:n/ 'eagerness,'
- /wiʔa:m/ 'peace; rapport.'

4.3.4 Foreign names

It was found that 11 names in this category came from other languages and cultures. Some of these borrowed names have many possible origins and meanings. These included, among others, /ra:ma/ of Indian origin meaning 'green land,' /su:za:n/ of Persian origin meaning 'lotus,' /na:di:n/ the French form of the name Nadia, which is a diminutive of the Russian Nadezhda (Надежда) which means 'hope,' and /linda/ of Spanish origin meaning 'decent girl.'

Furthermore, two names in this category were found to reflect spatial implications (i.e., names of places, cities, or countries). Names of such a quality were missing from the other categories. These two names were /ya:fa/: Jaffa, and /bi:sa:n/: Bisan, Palestinian cities (cf. Busaba 2013 where one can find names, as described by the author, indicating emotive associations among Yemeni females names such as /libna:n/ 'Lebanon,' /maʕet/ 'Egypt,' /li:biya/ 'Libya,' /quds/ 'Jerusalem,' /falasti:n/ 'Palestine,' and /ʔasiya/ 'Asia'). The most frequent name in the daughters' category as a whole was /rima:s/ 'the glitter of diamond' with 10 instances, followed by /sa:rah/ and /ḥala/ 'beauty' which registered 9 instances each.

5. Comparison

This section attempted to carry out a comparison between the finding of this study concerning personal naming in urban communities and findings of a previous study conducted by the researchers on feminine personal names among Bedouin communities (Aljbour and Al-Abed Al-Haq 2019).

In relation to Bedouin names, it was found that the vast majority of the 300 grandmothers' names (69 %) were Bedouin-specific names. These names were traditional names that delineated the lifestyle of people as desert dwellers at the time. It is uncommon to use such names outside Bedouin communities or even within the same communities at the current time. The names in this category were mainly derived from emergent social events, the weather conditions, the difficulties people face in their pursuit of securing a livelihood, and desert preferable animals. In contrast, only one name of such significance was noticed among the urban grandmothers' names, which was /^ʕushbah/ 'herb; weed.' This name, along with the name /^ʕi:dah/ which is derived from the Arabic word *Eid*, a Muslim festival, were the only two names in the urban grandmothers' category that were judged as Bedouin names.

It was also noticed that religious names differed in their popularity between the two communities. Unlike the grandmothers' names in the Bedouin community, where only 9(.03%) names were identified as following names of religious Islamic women figures, the influence of religion was clearly seen in the grandmothers' names of the urban community where fifty names (16.6%) of the 300 names were recognized as having religious impact. In addition to the religious names that appeared in the Bedouin grandmothers, i.e., /fa:t̤mah/ 'the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad', /^ʕa:yshah/ 'the wife of the Prophet Muhammad', /ʔa:mnah/ 'the mother of the Prophet Muhammad', /maryam/ 'the Prophet Jesus' mother', other religious names, as mentioned earlier, which cannot be found in the Bedouin community appeared in the urban grandmothers' category.

Additionally, it was obvious that the process of name-giving among the elderly age (grandmothers) categories in Bedouin communities was influenced by a number of motivations that were significantly different from the factors involved in the choices of names among that in the urban communities. The typology (types or classification of names), therefore, was different between the two communities.

One more difference was that the names in the urban grandmothers' category reflected almost the same implications expressed by the mothers and the daughters' categories in this community. This, as explained above was not the case in the Bedouin community, where a considerable difference in the connotations of the names was noticed over time.

It is also worth mentioning here that the vast majority of the Bedouin grandmothers' names (278 names [92.6%]) ended in the suffix /ah/ which is typically a feminine ending marking a name as a traditional (e.g., /naufah/ 'a woman of perfect beauty,' /khshayfah/ diminutive form of 'deer,' and /ʔ^ʕlayah/ 'highness; glory'), but its presence underwent considerable decline over generations. In the same community such names dropped to 107 names (35.6%) in the mothers category and again to 38 (12.6%) in the daughters category. For comparison, this suffix marked 148 names (49.3%) in the urban grandmothers' category (e.g., /rushdyah/ 'virtuous woman,' /fat̤yah/ 'knowledgeable,' and /^husnyah/ 'pretty woman') as opposed to 68 and 31 in the mothers and daughters' names, respectively.

As for the mothers' names in both communities, while the urban category included no single Bedouin-exclusive name, the Bedouin category included 28 Bedouin-specific names (9%). Names relating to favored social values of society made up the largest percentage (52%) of the names in both communities, followed by the names of religious background which register 42 instances (14%) and 39 instances (13%) in the Bedouin and urban communities, respectively. The most frequent name in the urban mothers' category in its entirety turned out to be the religious name /i:ma:n/ which occurred 10 times. Interestingly, this was almost the case in the Bedouin mothers' names where the religious name /fa:ṭmah/ was reported as the most frequent name with 12 instances. This is to say that names of religious significance proved to be the most recurrent names in the urban grandmothers (/fa:ṭmah/, 10 times), the urban mothers (/i:ma:n/, 10 times), and Bedouin mothers (/fa:ṭmah/, 12 times).

With the exception of the motives behind the Bedouin-specific names, the motives behind the mothers' names in both communities were found to reflect almost the same implications. These included the social values of society; names of religious signification and names derived from the natural environment. One final point was pertinent to the phenomenon of foreign names among the mothers' names in both communities. As noticed in the analysis of the urban mothers' names, eleven names were found of foreign origins. By way of comparison, no single foreign name was found in the Bedouin mothers' category.

As far as the daughters' names are concerned, analysis revealed that the most striking observation was the close similarity between urban daughters' names on the one hand and Bedouin daughters' names on the other. Except for 6 names (2%) which were considered Bedouin-exclusive names in the Bedouin daughters' category, the names among the two communities were almost identical. In addition to the same typological classifications including the foreign-origin names, the two categories shared (96%) of the same names. Further the most frequent name in both categories happened to be the same name, specifically /rima:s/'the glitter of diamond'. The two names, which occupy the second most frequent name position in the urban daughters (i.e., /sa:rah/ and /ħala/), occupied also the third and the fourth most frequent name positions in the Bedouin daughters, respectively.

6. Conclusions

The findings of the study revealed that naming has different social backgrounds and cultural motives. These reasons differed from one generation to another and from one community to another. In the following paragraphs, the conclusions of the key findings of this inspection were outlined with reference to the research question raised in the aim of the study section.

In connection to the amount of the change in the sociolinguistic implications of feminine personal names among urban communities over generations (the first research question), findings indicated that the sociolinguistic implications and backgrounds of the names among these different categories were roughly similar. They revolve around either the religious or the societal values dimensions. The most frequent names in each of these generations turned out to have the same motives. The only difference was the existence of a few foreign names in the mothers and daughters' categories opposed to none in the grandmothers' category. This was not the case regarding the Bedouin names where a remarkable

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difference between the implications of the names across generations was revealed. It can be argued that the study found solid evidence to suggest that the change in the lifestyle of the people does influence the process of name-giving among their communities. However, the change in the way of living of the urban community over the past few decades was not as significant as it was in the Bedouin community.

With respect to the second research question which seeks an answer to what degree have communities abandoned traditional names in favor of stylish ones, it was found that even though the three urban categories reflected almost the same implications as mentioned above, the majority of the names in one category differed in sound and form from those in the other category. For example, the grandmothers' category shared only 17 names with the daughters' category. Mothers' names, on the other hand, share 102 names (34%) with the grandmothers but only 30 names (10%) with the daughters. Further, the suffix /ah/, the typical Arabic feminine name ending, varied markedly in its presence over the three generations. Similarly, religious names were evidently noticed among the three generations. However, traditional religious names tended to diminish over generations in behalf of modern religious names. The names among the daughters' category represented the modern trend in naming patterns as they were judged as more stylish, attractive, and more pleasant sounding than those in the older categories. Unlike urban communities, Bedouin communities varied considerably in terms of their implications and the factors motivating them over generations. It was revealed amongst other things that there had been a trend that started with traditional old-fashioned peculiar names and ended up with modern stylish names.

As for the difference in naming patterns across the two communities which is the subject of the third research question, transparent discrepancies across the two communities were reported at the level of the elderly age (grandmothers) and middle-aged (mothers) categories. However, striking similarities were noticed at the level of the children's categories (daughters). This astonishing match between the two categories implied that the urban and Bedouin communities, nowadays, experience almost the same lifestyle which has had a direct impact on naming among communities. The recent evolution of technology, which plays a role in all aspects of people's lives, seemed to have fulfilled a major part in making it possible nowadays for different communities in Jordan to lead similar lives.

7. Recommendations

The area of this study was restricted to examining the sociolinguistic implications of the personal names. This suggests that it is just an opening move in anthroponomastics among communities in Jordan, specifically, Bedouin ones, and there is still much work left to be done in this scope. Further research into other types of anthroponyms such as nicknames and the sources from which they derive should also be conducted. Still further, other parts of the nomenclature or the naming system adopted by Bedouin community such as what is known locally as *nakhwah*, which is close in meaning to a "nickname", and used in times of hardship and adversity to mobilize people and evoke enthusiasm amongst them or in times of victory over enemies to express pride. It is expressed by a combination of either /ahl/ 'people of', /ra:ʕi/ 'fellow of', /akhu/ 'brother of', and a name of a natural object (e.g., weapon, land) or an animal (e.g., horse, camel), etc. in a genitive construction. This also needs to be thoroughly investigated.

As stated before, investigating personal names can provide valuable information about the people involved; their lifestyle and culture. In view of this, personal names are of concern not only to scholars but also to different countries and organizations. They can indicate important personal information about the named person such as the country of origin, the order and place of birth, the bodily traits, and the tribal or group affiliation. This communicates a suggestion to security agencies to devote a particular attention to personal names.

المضامين اللغوية الاجتماعية للأسماء الشخصية في المجتمع المدني في الأردن والاختلافات في التسمية بين المجتمعات البدوية والمجتمعات المدنية

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الملخص

تناولت هذه الدراسة الأسماء الشخصية للإناث المستخدمة خلال ثلاثة أجيال متتالية في المجتمع المدني الأردني بهدف كشف المضامين اللغوية الاجتماعية لهذه الأسماء، والتغير في تقاليد التسمية في المجتمع الواحد عبر الأجيال، وترمي الدراسة أيضاً بناء على دراسة سابقة أجراها الباحثان حول الأسماء في المجتمعات البدوية إلى إظهار الاختلافات في معايير التسمية المتبعة في المجتمعات البدوية من جهة، والمجتمعات المدنية من جهة أخرى. وقام الباحثان وفق نظرية التنوع اللغوي الاجتماعي "Variationist Sociolinguistics" بتحليل معمق لعينة من (300) اسم من أسماء طلبة المدارس في قسبة عمان علاوة على أسماء الأمهات والجندات. وخلصت الدراسة إلى عدد من النتائج أبرزها أنه وبالرغم من أن الأسماء المدنية المستخدمة خلال الثلاثة أجيال في معظمها تختلف في الشكل والصوت إلا أنها تتشابه في مضامينها ودوافعها. كما توصلت الدراسة إلى وجود اختلافات ملموسة بين المجتمعين البدوي والمدني على مستوى أسماء فئتي الكبار(الجندات)، ومتوسطي العمر(الأمهات)، بعكس ما لوحظ على مستوى فئة صغار السن(البنات)، إذ برزت أوجه تشابه مثيرة للاهتمام بين المجتمعين. الكلمات المفتاحية: علم أسماء الأعلام، دراسة الأسماء الشخصية، دراسة أسماء الأماكن، نظام التسمية، تقاليد التسمية.

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Appendix 1

Phonetic Symbols

The following phonetic system shows the transliteration of the Arabic terms reported in this study

Arabic alphabet	Symbol	Example	Meaning	Description
ء	ʔ	ʔamal	hope	voiced glottal stop
ب	B	ba:b	door	voiced bilabial stop
ت	T	ti:n	figs	voiceless alveolar stop
ث	Th	thaʕlab	fox	voiceless inter-dental fricative
ج	J	jamal	camel	voiced post-alveolar affricate
ح	H	ħub	love	voiceless pharyngeal fricative
خ	Kh	khubz	bread	voiceless uvular fricative
د	D	dars	lesson	voiced alveolar stop
ذ	Dh	dhahab	gold	voiced dental fricative
ر	R	rasama	draw v.	voiced alveolar approximant
ز	Z	zayt	oil	voiced alveolar fricative
س	S	sama:ʔ	sky	voiceless alveolar fricative
ش	Sh	shams	sun	voiceless alveopalatal fricative
ص	Ṣ	ṣayf	summer	voiceless velarized alveolar fricative
ض	Ḍ	ḍayf	guest	voiced velarized alveolar stop
ط	Ṭ	ṭi:n	mud	voiceless velarized dento-alveolar stop
ظ	TH	THuhr	noon	voiced velarized alveolar fricative
ع	ʕ	ʕabd	slave	voiced pharyngeal fricative
غ	Gh	gharb	west	voiced uvular fricative
ف	F	fan	art	voiceless labiodental fricative
ق	Q	qalam	pencil	voiced uvular stop
ك	K	kalb	dog	voiceless velar stop
ل	L	la:ʔ	no	voiced alveolar lateral
م	M	madrasah	school	voiced bilabial nasal stop
ن	N	najm	star	voiced alveolar nasal stop
ه	H	hawa:ʔ	air	voiceless glottal fricative
و	W	ward	rose	voiced labio-velar glide
ي	Y	yawm	day	voiced palatal glide
(فتحة)	A	kataba	he wrote	short low front unrounded
(ضمّة)	U	kutub	books	short high back rounded
(كسرة)	I	sin	tooth	short high back unrounded
مد طويل / اى	a:	ka:tib	writer	long low front unrounded
ضمّة طويلة و	u:	fu:l	beans	long high back rounded
كسرة طويلة ي	i:	fi:l	elephant	long high front unrounded
شدة	CC	ʕamma:n	Amman	geminate consonant
Diphthongs	Aw	mawt	death	
(أصوات علة مركبة)	Ay	bayt	house	

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Appendix 2

Structured Interview (Name-Givers)

- 1) What is your name?-----
- 2) Where are you from?-----
- 3) How many kids do you have?-----
- 4) What are their names?

Name	gender

- 5) Who chose the names?.....
- 6) What are the reasons behind giving such names?.....
- 7) What do the names mean?.....