SOCIAL PRACTICES OF PERSONAL NAMING AMONG PARENTS IN RURAL AND URBAN SOCIETIES IN IRBID, JORDAN: A SOCIO-ONOMASTICS AND MORPHOLOGICAL STUDY

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UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

2022

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by

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**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

August 2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, all praises and thanks are due to the Almighty Allah for all His blessings for giving me the willingness and strength to finish my Ph.D research. I thank Him for giving me knowledge, ability, and opportunity to undertake this research study and to complete it satisfactorily. Without His blessings, this achievement would not have been possible.

I am deeply indebted to many people who helped me in the long journey of this research. I would like to express my sincere appreciation and thanks to my supervisor, Professor Dr. Salasiah Che Lah for her invaluable guidance and constructive feedback in doing research and academic writing. Without her constructive comments and suggestions, this research would never have been possible.

Special appreciation and thanks go to my friends in Universiti Sains Malaysia for their support and encouragement. I would like to thank my friends in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Jordan for their help whenever I needed them. My special thanks also go parents in the rural and urban regions in Irbid who were very cooperative during data collection. I highly appreciate their help, support, and hospitality.

Finally, I express the most wholehearted gratitude to my family members who provided me with constant encouragement throughout my PhD study. I thank them for supporting me spiritually throughout my life. I thank my wife for her continuous encouragement and support. Her words of encouragement have been a source of strength. Special thanks go to my daughters for their patience and smiles.

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AMALAN SOSIAL PEMBERIAN NAMA DALAM KALANGAN MASYARAKAT LUAR BANDAR DAN BANDAR DI IRBID, JORDAN: SATU KAJIAN SOSIO-ONOMASTIK DAN MORFOLOGI

ABSTRAK

Kekurangan kajian tentang amalan pemberian nama di Jordan mendorong kajian ini mengenal pasti amalan pemberian nama dalam kalangan masyarakat luar bandar dan bandar di Irbid, Jordan dari segi amalan sosial, faktor yang mempengaruhi amalan sosial, dan corak morfologi. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kaedah campuran iaitu bentuknya adalah reka bentuk penerangan berurutan dengan dua fasa: kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Sampel kajian ini melibatkan seramai 384 ibu bapa yang dipilih secara rawak dari kawasan bandar dan luar bandar di Irbid. Dalam fasa kuantitatif, data dikumpul menggunakan soal selidik adaptasi yang mengandungi tiga bahagian: Bahagian A (pemboleh ubah demografi dengan 5 item), Bahagian B (amalan sosial pemberian nama dengan 16 item), dan Bahagian C (faktor yang mempengaruhi amalan sosial pemberian nama). Dalam fasa kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui temu bual separa berstruktur yang dibina dan direka berdasarkan hasil soal selidik untuk memberikan huraian dan penerangan hasil yang diperoleh daripada fasa kuantitatif. Sebuah korpus nama peribadi dikumpulkan melalui satu item dalam soal selidik di Bahagian A dengan meminta ibu bapa untuk memberikan nama anak-anak mereka. Tindak balas ibu bapa bagi item di Bahagian B dan C dalam soal selidik dianalisis menggunakan perisian *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS, versi 23). Secara khusus, statistik deskriptif (min, sisihan piawai, kekerapan, dan peratusan) dan statistik inferens menggunakan ujian Kruskal-Wallis digunakan bagi melaporkan

amalan sosial pemberian nama dan faktor yang mempengaruhi amalan-amalan ini. Data yang diperoleh melalui temu bual dianalisis secara tematik melalui pengekodan menggunakan skema pengekodan berdasarkan objektif kajian dan hasil analisis item di Bahagian B dan C dalam soal selidik. Analisis data menunjukkan bahawa amalan sosial utama dalam pemberian nama di kawasan luar bandar dan bandar di Irbid menggunakan lebih dari satu nama, penentuan masa yang sesuai untuk menamakan anak, upacara meraikan kelahiran anak, kepentingan dalam mengenali nama dari budaya lain dan makna negatif nama, keutamaan dalam menamakan anak berdasarkan kelas sosial, pengetahuan tentang makna nama seseorang dan penerimaan pertolongan daripada orang lain dalam memilih nama. Tambahan lagi, kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa faktor utama yang mempengaruhi amalan sosial pemberian nama di Irbid adalah kekerapan nama tersebut digunakan dalam masyarakat, kecenderungan untuk menggunakan nama-nama selebriti filem, televisyen dan muzik, nama orang yang terkenal dalam masyarakat, latar belakang budaya pemberi nama, dan keturunan nama-nama terpilih. Analisis morfologi pemberian nama menunjukkan bahawa pemberian nama di Jordan menggunakan dua pendekatan morfologi utama: terbitan dan infleksi. Setiap pendekatan mempunyai set nama yang diklasifikasikan di bawah corak morfologi tertentu. Oleh itu, kajian ini telah menyumbang kepada amalan pemberian nama dalam budaya Arab dengan mendedahkan masalah yang berkaitan dengan faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi pemberian nama dan struktur morfologi utama nama. Kajian ini diharap berguna untuk penyelidikan pada masa hadapan.

SOCIAL PRACTICES OF PERSONAL NAMING AMONG PARENTS IN RURAL AND URBAN SOCIETIES IN IRBID, JORDAN: A SOCIO-ONOMASTICS AND MORPHOLOGICAL STUDY

ABSTRACT

Taking into account the scarcity of research on the practices of personal naming in Jordan, this study examined personal names in rural and urban regions in Irbid, Jordan, in terms of social practices, factors affecting the social practices, and morphological patterns. The research approach of this study is mixed-methods in which the design is explanatory sequential design with two phases: quantitative and qualitative. The sample of this study is 384 parents who were randomly selected from urban and rural regions in Irbid. In the quantitative phase, data were collected using an adapted questionnaire which consists of three parts: Part A (demographic variables with 5 items), Part B (the social practices of personal naming with 16 items), and Part C (factors affecting the social practices of personal naming). In the qualitative phase, qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews which were constructed and designed based on the results of the questionnaire to provide elaboration and explanation for the results obtained from the quantitative phase. A corpus of personal names was collected through one item in Part A of the questionnaire by asking parents to provide names of their children. Parents' responses to items in Parts B and C in the questionnaire were analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, version 23). Specifically, descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentages) and inferential statistics, using Kruskal-Wallis test, were used to report the social practices of personal naming and factors affecting

these practices. Data obtained from the interviewees were analysed thematically through coding them using a coding scheme that was established based on the research objectives of the study and results of the analysis of items in Parts B and C in the questionnaire. The analysis of data revealed that the major social practices of personal naming in rural and urban regions in Irbid are: using more than one name, decision of the time to name a child, ceremony to celebrate the child birth, importance of familiarity with names from the other cultures and negative meaning of some names, preferences in naming a child based on social classes, knowledge of the meaning of one's name, and acceptance of help from others in choosing a name. Further, the study showed that the major factors affecting the social practices of personal naming in Irbid are frequency of names in society, the predilection for the names of film, TV, and music celebrities, the selection of famous names in the society, the cultural background of the name giver, and the sonority of selected names. The morphological analysis of personal names showed that personal names in Jordan follow two main morphological approaches: derivational and inflectional. Each approach has a set of personal names that are classified under a specific morphological pattern. Thus, this study has contributed to the practice of personal naming in the Arab culture through uncovering issues related to the factors affecting the personal naming and major morphological structures of personal names. The researcher recommends that future studies may consider factors such as level of education, gender, and socioeconomic status of name givers in examining how these factors can influence the social practices of personal naming in Jordan and other Arab countries.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Chapter Introduction

This introductory chapter starts with background to the study, a section that provides a general summary of the field and concern of the current study. The statement of the problem, the research objectives, and significance of the study are also presented in this chapter. The important key terms used in this study are also defined in this chapter. To the end of this chapter, a description of the number of chapters and their content is given.

1.2   Background to the Study

Communication is a social activity that is carried out through many ways including language which is the most important means of communication. Language is also used for social interaction and for establishing connection and rapport between speakers (Coulmas, 2013). Language is used by human beings to understand complex systems, and it is also the power that allows human beings to conduct linguistic behaviour (Pinker, 2003). The socialists present language as a system of words and signs used in communication (Swann, 2019). Considering this view of language, researchers are encouraged and motivated to study language in its sociolinguistic contexts where there are various factors affecting language use. In any society, there are various conventions for using language. Personal names are among these conventions and they are used in all cultures as a system of identification, although this system may differ from one culture to another (Akinnaso, 1980; Ikotun, 2010). "A name is a label which is used by people for the recognition, acknowledgement and recall of one another" (Sabet & Zhang, 2020, p. 1). Names are primarily regarded as

symbols that are used by people to identify themselves or others (Nyström, 2016). Although the traditional assumption regarding personal names is that they lack meanings, cannot be connected to any linguistic class, and are closer to pronouns and determiners; in the current view of names, it is believed that personal names are nouns that are authentic words in a language d szzdfgh jmk,/., 876 and the factors affecting these practices. Further, it has been shown that the Arabic naming system does not resemble the English system as the Arabic system has its own regulations and conventions (Notzon & Nesom, 2005).

In every society, there are a wide range of practices of personal naming. For example, members in any society interact with each other using personal names, family names, and sometimes their nicknames (Ansu-Kyeremeh, 2000). These social practices reflect the critical need for naming persons and objects in societies, regardless of the differences in the naming systems, which can reflect the variations among naming systems due to various factor. Factors can include religious considerations, new orientation of individual choice that is opposite to traditional one, preference to names of famous figures such as TV and movie stars, and social status of name givers (Notzon & Nesom, 2005). Alford (1987) pointed out that members of every society use common names to connect with each other. This feature marks the universality of this sociocultural principle and the social practices of personal naming. In all cultures and languages, names are used to make life easy. By using names, people can speak about individuals, certain people, certain places, specific objects, or subjects without the need to describe them with too many words (Ainiala, Saarelma, & Sjöblom, 2018). In this way, using names can make life simple, especially in identifying persons, objects, and other things. All societies worldwide assign names to

their members albeit the way personal names are given and the variations in these practices.

In fact, names have a great influence on people's lives, where specific factors and deep cultural circumstances are important factors in this social process (Patel, 2017). For example, some researchers have concluded that African names in the United States are targets of irony due to the belief that everything attached to African names is considered as bad, evil, source of misfortune, and even stigmatized a person. For example, Sheppard (2012) reported that African names are still to be problematic, adding that names such as *Lakisha*, *La Quisha*, *Jameel,* and *Shaquanda* in America are still often stigmatized and associated with low socio-economic status. Hence, what any given name is able to bear and address is much wider than a simple recognition of names and their meanings.

Indeed, the social practices of naming are a clear product of society and they differ from one place to another (Bramwell, 2012). Further, personal names could be a very useful and comprehensive source for identifying a bearer's social background, beliefs, language, and identity (Mbarachi & Igwenyi, 2018; Mensah & Mekamgoum, 2017). Naming itself is a significant aspect of life as it reflects people's cultural identity and can indicate people's sociocultural assumptions, attitudes, beliefs and their views of the world (Mensah & Mekamgoum, 2017).

The field that is concerned about the social practices of naming is onomastics, the branch of linguistics that investigates names, essentially place names and personal names. The study of personal names is known as anthroponomics, a field which constitutes the most significant part of proper names which are investigated in the field

of onomastics (Nguyen, 2010). Matthews (2007) proposed a good definition of onomastics as the study of personal names and names of places. As the linguistic variations of human beliefs and thoughts place a great and significant demand for language creativity, language can be analysed in terms of linguistic perspectives such as morphological analysis (Rubanza, 2000). All these arguments support the fact that there are words which can be used to denote a name. In this conjuncture, the first level of linguistic structure serves as the direct or first meaning, while the other level is concerned with the connotative meaning of personal names which is of a great significance in the theory of onomastics as it helps researchers to explore issues such as the reasons of naming, name giver's attitudes, and the motivation of naming.

Moreover, studies in onomastics do not neglect the linguistic character of personal names as part of the language used by people of a community. Personal names are universal elements in terms of their linguistics features (Bramwell, 2016). Onomastics has been established in the mid of the twentieth century as an independent discipline of linguistics with a profound relation to social and cultural sciences (Ainiala & Östman, 2017; Blanár, 2009). In the theory of onomastics, linguistic analysis can only affect the study of personal names in constructing and understanding these names in order to provide a comprehensive sense of what a personal name is. In this connection, the morphological analysis of personal names, the linguistic part, enhanced researchers' understanding of these names' structure in terms of peoples' linguistic knowledge which include derivation, inflectional rules, and preferred affixes used. Morphological and cultural aspects may be combined to arrive at this complete picture about the names of a given society (Anindo, 2016).

One of the main focus of the current study is the morphological analysis of personal names, and this was carried out in line with the view that personal names are not distinctive from other linguistic words at the initial level of word formation and morphology (Aronoff & Fudeman, 2011; Spencer, 2011). Such views refer to the general study of morphology that is operationalized in this research. However, the entire analysis and discussion of morphological analysis were based on the item and process theory and the use of derivational and inflectional processes for the classification of personal names patterns. These authors stated that the structure of words is a result of morphological operations on the word's root. Taking this into account, they considered root as a morpheme and affixation, such as derivation and inflectional processes, as rules applied to the root.

In this study, the focus on morphological analysis of personal names can be justified taking into account that researchers have argued that personal names are analysed on the basis that they stem from other parts of speech such as nouns, adjectives, and verbs (e.g., Imoh, 2021; Muchnik, 2017). Further, the morphological analysis of personal names was motivated by the fact that personal names are not independent from a language in which they are used; rather, language emerges from the society that uses this language for the need to communicate through symbols and words, including personal names (Fromkin, Rodman, & Hyams, 2018).

Further, the study of personal names in sociolinguistic can encompass their formation and structure. Regarding this, Van Langendonck (1982) was the one who firstly proposed combining both sociolinguistics and onomastics into socio-onomastics. The main principle of socio-onomastic studies comes from the belief that personal names are part of the society and culture in which they are used and hence

cannot be separated from it (Bramwell, 2012, 2016). Socio-onomasticians use methods inherited from sociolinguistics to understanding naming practices. Studying the naming systems in both urban and rural societies can produce interesting findings as this phenomenon has not been addressed adequately in previous studies. According to Bramwell (2012) comparison in studying naming practice can help have rounded views on cultural differences and linguistic variations on how these names are used in a particular society. For example, in urban society, mixing with people from different backgrounds can tell name givers new practices and perceptions when selecting a name for their children. Therefore, we can mostly see names that has no Arabic root in urban areas which means that they have been influenced by other name givers from other cultures. On the other hand, rural society is triable based structure which implies that it is less likely that rural name givers contact or mix with different cultural backgrounds. Based on the reviewed literature, it has been frequently recommended to carry out a comparsion study between rural and urban society such as (Alzumor, 2009, Labov, 1994).

The study of personal naming practices from the socio-onomastic perspectives was inspired by Alford (1987) who examined naming practices in sixty varied cultures. Yet, he did not address urban or modern industrial societies in the analysis of names. Thus, the current study aims at dealing with both rural and urban societies to investigate the relationship between the characteristics of these societies on the bestowing of personal names in order to find out, for example, if rural name givers have varied perceptions on how these names should be given and used rather than that of urban name givers, so that we come up with a new approach for geographical influence on social practices of personal naming. The Northern part of Jordan is the Irbid province which is known for its combination of rural and urban societies more

than other provinces in Jordan. Walker and Firestone (2009) stated that Northern Jordan is considered as the largest province that has both urban cities as well as villages in the Kingdom. Previously, the personal naming practices have been studied by addressing personal names in Jordan with no intrinsic investigation in one particular area such as (Abd-el-Jawad, 1986, Al- Qawasmi and Al-Haq (2016) which is expected to unveil more valuable and precise facts on personal naming activities such as what might appear between rural and urban societies. In order to do so, the researcher has explored the place where diversity in sociocultural components is mostly established (Firestone 2009). Moreover, analysing the data from both rural and urban societies would by nature of comparison process provides more precise knowledge on how parents think, choose, and affect the process of naming in addition to the differences in age between younger and elder generations in both societies. Furthermore, habits, traditions, thoughts, beliefs, lifestyle, nature of family relationships, and sensation to close context are points of differences between people in the villages and those in cities.

Ainiala et al. (2018) explained that the focus of socio-onomastic research is on both the linguistic and socio-cultural context of names. Bugheșiu (2013) manifested that the significance of studying personal naming practices from a socio-onomastics framework goes beyond the name bearer identity to more intrinsic facts about the name's context and the circumstances related to that in a particular society. The aforementioned revision contends the need to study personal naming practices in a society where it is practiced. The former review of socio-onomastic explanations asserts the need to investigate the process of naming practice in a society where these names are given and used (Alford, 1987; Bramwell, 2012; Van Langendonck, 1982).

The practices of personal naming exist in all societies to reflect their social and cultural norms and changes occurred over generations (Mateos, Longley, & O'Sullivan, 2011). Under the investigation of personal names, researchers should understand that the practice of naming differs from one place to another and from one society or culture to another (Van Langendonck, 1982). It should be noted that the linguistic ability of people is varied from one society to another. For example, some expressions and proverbs related to the notion above become familiar in the Jordanian society such as when a person is in a prestigious position; people of his area would say something like *Ɂismuhu Saraʕalam* which means his name becomes very famous. On the other hand, when a person behaves inappropriately with others, people would say *danasa Ɂsmuhu* which means he dishonoured his name. Personal naming in Jordan carries embedded cultural patterns such as naming the first child after his grandparents particularly grandfather to maintain the family names. The knowledge of words in the language, how these words are assigned meaning, the extra information on their meaning, and how they have been morphologically structured are all elements in the linguistic competence of people who speak this particular language (Anindo, 2016). It is readily understood by Jordanians when an individual introduces his/herself to others by mentioning a full name. Hearers would express their liking for the name and say something like *Ɂftaχer bj ħamel Ɂsm ʒaddak* which means be proud and honoured by carrying your grandfather's name. This renewable act of naming a newborn after his grandfather involves the interest of the family to maintain strong ties between individuals and to reflect the solidarity of the family in the society. Thus, the relationship between the name and the bearer is mutual in the sense that the name's status of, for instance, being a well-known depends on its bearer who has been given the name; that is, the name's reputation.

Besides, the importance of a personal name is not always attributed to the name holder but also to the name giver. Earlier in Jordan, the responsibility of giving personal names was the parents' own decisions and their choice is prominently affected by social, linguistic, and cultural insights (Abd-el-Jawad, 1986). The practice of personal naming in Jordan has also been officially highlighted in some particular issues such as in the case of giving names for children of unknown parents. It has been literally stipulated in Jordanian Constitution in Article No. 19/B from the Civil Status Law No. 9/2001 as "selection of a suitable name for the children of unknown descent". According to the lawyer Taqreed Jaber, a member of the Women Affairs Standing Committee, those children must be given a different Jordanian family name in order to avoid confusions in the family line. The aforementioned example of personal naming interest can mainly show two streams. The first is the religious affairs that would appear in issues like inheritance; thus, personal naming in this context would clearly convey the significance of religious matters in the process of assigning a name. Besides that, the second stream is the structure of Jordanian families as a clan-based society, which also means that an individual without a family name would commonly generate a feeling of being stranger and might, in the long term, cause problems in marriage, education, and labour.

Jordan is a country where religious beliefs are highly regarded, and religion plays an important role in the selection of names (Patai, 2015). The majority of Jordanians are Muslims, where they adopt Muslim practices in their daily life which, absolutely, influence their choices of names for their children (Nabolsi & Carson, 2011). The study of onomastics of Jordanian personal names is needed to further understand pattern and trend that influence Jordanians in the naming process. In the Islamic traditions, personal names occupy a notable position which stems from the

direct addressing of all prophets in the Holy Qur'an with their personal names and not their titles nor nicknames (Abd-el-Jawad, 1986; Rosenhouse, 2002).

Therefore, in a general overview of Jordanian personal names, most religious names could be named after prophets and messengers such as Moses *(Mussa)* and Josef *Yousef*. Further, names that are in the form of compound patterns including the word *Abed* (which means servant) and one of God's names such as in *Abed Elrazzaq* the servant of the All-Provider. However, issues related to how these names are selected, and parent's part in the selection of names and their views and thoughts in this process have not been investigated. Thus, this current study addresses such questions of these naming practices and mainly examine other tendencies in personal naming by investigating parents' perceptions of the naming practices.

1.3   Statement of the Problem

Generally, studies on Jordanian personal names have focused on two issues which are the literal meaning and classification of personal names. Thus, there is a lack of thorough, broad, and eclectic studies on personal names and naming practices in Jordan. In other words, there is a need for studies that focus on personal names and their morphological structures. Further, previous studies have not examined factors that may influence social practices of naming and morphological patterns of personal names in Jordan anthroponyms. In addition to these gaps, previous studies on personal naming in the Jordanian context have not examined the differences in the social practices of personal naming in rural and urban societies in Jordan.

Few studies have addressed the social practices of personal names in the Jordanian context from a sociolinguistic perspective. Some of these studies are Abd-el-Jawad (1986), Salih and Bader (1999), and Aljbour and Al-Abed Al-Haq (2019). It

is important to note that Abd-el-Jawad (1986) addressed personal naming practices in the whole country, which is quite difficult to clarify a precise naming practice system and could not yield patterns of personal names in the country. In another study, Salih and Bader (1999) investigated the ethnic and religious implications of Christian personal names, demonstrating a link between those names and the name-givers' desire for creating social intimacy with Muslims and demonstrating loyalty to Jordan. Salih and Bader (1999) recommended a comprehensive analysis including the new generation names to record diachronic changes in terms of both social-cultural and linguistic aspects of Jordanian names.

The methodological weaknesses in Abd-el-Jawad (1986) were addressed by Aljbour and Al-Abed Al-Haq (2019) who targeted Beni Sakhr, a tribe in the Jordanian central desert, to examine feminine personal names from the sociolinguistic perspective. Specifically, they examined the implications of feminine names, and the differences in naming practices in three generations (grandmothers, mothers, and daughters). They found the existence of variations among the three generations in terms of the motivation for the selection of names. However, their study did not target factors affecting the social practices of personal naming.

Furthermore, some studies of names in Jordan have focussed on the socio-political roots of street names, decoding the political overtones carried by those labels, social factors involved in the process, and the commemorative honouring of certain figures and events (e.g., Ihsayyan, 2014). Other studies have examined brand names from a psycholinguistic perspective, in which the influence of the name's promotion on people's lifestyle, their associations with these names, and the linguistic characteristics affecting their decisions was explored (e.g., Sider, 2014). While other previous studies in Jordan have focused on place names in Jordanian towns from

morphological/lexical aspects (e.g., Albzoor, 2016), some other studies have examined names of Jordanian towns in terms of semantic and sociolinguistic perspective (e.g., Al-Okaily, 2005).

Studies in the Arab context including the Jordanian one have not precisely focused on the structure of names (e.g., Abd-el-Jawad, 1986; Al-Zumor, 2009). These studies have concluded that many factors can influence naming in Jordon and have urged further studies on personal naming from the perspective of anthroponyms and morphology. For example, Al-Zumor (2009) suggested that future research can focus on "how personal names in the rural areas differ from personal names in the urban areas" (p. 26). Thus, it can be observed that little attention has been given to the morphology and function of these names (Al-Quran & Al-Azzam, 2014). Additionally, it can be clearly argued that the areas of social practices of personal naming and factors affecting these practices and the analysis of morphological structures of names deserve researchers' interests.

Therefore, it can be understood that researchers in the Jordanian context have not given proper attention to the morphological analysis of personal names. Thus, pioneering inquiries into Jordanian naming practices centred on classifying names, tracing their etymology, and unearthing the events and attributes referred or alluded to in those names (Abd-el-Jawad, 1986; Al-Abadi, 2006; Al-Rawabdeh, 2010).

To sum up, the current study address three major issues which are targeted by the five research questions. The first issue is the social practices of personal naming. The second issue is the factors that influence parents' social practices of personal naming. The third issue is the morphological analysis of personal names. There are some reasons for addressing these issues. First, very limited research has been allocated to the social practices of personal naming and factors affecting these

practices in the context of Arab countries, including Jordan. Additionally, studies in sociolinguistics have not paid careful attention to the morphological analysis of Arabic personal names. Further, investigated the social practices of personal naming and morphological rules in the Jordanian context. Further, this study examined the differences in naming practices between the younger and the elder generations and in both rural and urban societies by addressing two age groups.

1.4   Research Objectives

Based on the gaps in previous research, as explained above, the current study addresses the following five research objectives:

1. To investigate the social practices of personal naming among parents in the province of Irbid, Jordan.

2. To examine if perceptions of the social practices of personal naming differ across four group of parents (young rural, young urban, old rural, and old urban parents) in the province of Irbid, Jordan.

3. To identify factors that affect the social practices of personal naming among parents in the province of Irbid, Jordan.

4. To examine if factors affecting personal naming differ across four groups of parents (young rural, young urban, old rural, and old urban parents) in the province of Irbid, Jordan.

5. To analyse the morphological patterns that emerged during the process of the Jordanian' personal names formation in the rural and urban areas in the province of Irbid, Jordan.

1.5   Research Questions

This study is an attempt to answer the following questions. Each of these questions is designed to include and tackle the main objectives of this study as follow:

1. What are the social practices of personal naming among parents in Irbid, Jordan?

2. Do the social practices of personal naming differ across four groups of parents (young rural, young urban, old rural, and old urban parents) in Irbid, Jordan?

3. What are the factors that affect the social practices of personal naming among parents in Irbid, Jordan?

4. Are there differences in factors affecting the social practices of personal naming across four groups of parents (young rural, young urban, old rural, and old urban parents) in Irbid, Jordan?

5. What are the morphological patterns that emerged during the process of the Jordanian' personal names formation in the rural and urban areas in Irbid, Jordan?

As listed above, the current study addresses five research questions concerning personal naming in the Jordanian context. Research Questions One and Two focus on the social practices of personal naming in both rural and urban areas in the province of Irbid. In answering Research Question One, the overall perceptions of the social practices of personal naming are reported through the analysis of data which were collected using a questionnaire. This is followed by reporting the social practices of personal naming as perceived by each group of respondents separately (young rural parents, young urban parents, old rural parents, and old urban parents). In answering Research Question Two, the report focuses on the differences of perceptions of the social practices of personal naming among all four groups of respondents. This was investigated using inferential statistics. Factors influencing the social practices of

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personal naming are addressed through Research Questions Three and Four. In answering Research Question Three, parents' overall perceptions of factors influencing the personal naming are reported. This is followed by reporting factors influencing personal naming as perceived by each group of respondents separately (young rural parents, young urban parents, old rural parents, and old urban parents). In answering Research Question Four, the report focuses on differences of perceptions of factors influencing personal naming among all groups of respondents. This was investigated using inferential statistics. The fifth research question is concerned about the morphological patterns of personal names in the Jordanian context. Further details concerning how data for each research question were collected and analysed are given in Chapter Three.

1.6   Significance of the Study

Given the fact that there has been little research on personal naming in the Arab world, the findings of the current study are surely significant and have contributions to the fields of sociolinguistics and onomastics. The current study has successfully addressed the issue of the social practices of personal naming in rural and urban regions in Irbid. This was proven in this study because various social practices of personal naming in these regions have been uncovered and reported. Moreover, the results concerning the social practices of personal naming and factors affecting these practices in Jordan have uncovered interesting insights that are connected to parents' beliefs and cultural values they have regarding giving names to their children.

Additionally, the findings of the current study are also surely significant because they have clearly shown that there are some factors that affect the social practices of personal naming in the urban and rural regions in Irbid. Taking these

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findings into account, it can be claimed that the findings of the current study has uncovered some important knowledge about Jordanians' social practices of personal naming that is highly affected by society and some other factors related to beliefs peoples in this region have. This would contribute to the entire framework of theoretical onomastics because this field is still at the stage of development (Blanar, 2009). In addition, research on personal names is considered as a wide microscope from which one can have a profound look into the language and culture of any society. Names are also seen as an access key for more precise details on people's sociocultural circumstances. Personal names are sociolinguistically performed into two directions: the first one is to identify individuals within the same society, and the second is to infuse an internal expectation on bearers' personality (Alford, 1993; Algeo, 1992)

One of the main purposes of this study is to analyse personal names that are commonly used in rural and urban societies from morphological perspectives. Another significant of this study is that it addresses the gap in previous studies that is related to the comparison of the social practices of personal naming and the factors affecting these practices. By understanding these social practices, findings could highlight the cultural and social differences in these social practices among parents in two different societies. The findings of this linguistic analysis are deemed to be important because the morphological analysis of personal names can contribute to linguistic understanding of these names in terms of their internal structured. Additionally, this type of linguistic analysis has been praised by several scholar. For example, linguistic data can offer an initial level of explanation through which other disciplines begin.

Concerning the focus on the morphological analysis of personal names relying on the item-and-process theory of morphology, the current study is the first to tackle

this issue in the Jordanian context. Hence, the results reported on this issue can provide insightful ideas and knowledge on the morphological aspects of the Jordanian personal names. Furthermore, the results of this morphological analysis can help in identifying personal names' linguistic patterns and classification. In this connection, the current study assuredly can offer useful data to other researchers who have interest in the analysis of personal names in terms of linguistics analysis. Not only will researchers find the findings useful but also the general public and linguists. This is because linguists can also have advantages of increasing their knowledge of the personal names' classification and their internal structure.

Moreover, this study derives its significance from its possible contribution to the study of sociolinguistics in two ways. Linguistically, this study attempts to reveal morphological patterns of Jordanian personal names by analysing the name's root and affixes to highlight some unique operations in which these names are formed, and to set out the linguistic rules of Jordanian naming practices in the northern part of Jordan. From the perspective of sociolinguistic, this study seeks to hold a comparative analysis between urban and rural societies in northern Jordanian Irbid province; thus, the present study might be so helpful for new comparative studies on personal naming in Arab societies in particular and foreign ones as well.

Additionally, Blanár (2009) emphasizes that using multi-approach analysis in studying different aspects of onomastics would support significant knowledge and practical assumption to formulate the main principles of naming practice. Although many previous studies have made use of qualitative research methods, the current study employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches in a mixed method design. Moreover, literature on naming practices, as discussed in Chapter Two,

showed that there is an interest in naming practices in general in Jordan, but few studies have been done on personal names.

Finally, the practices of naming may be studied by different researchers as a part of society's necessary documentation. Like data collected by the Public Statistic Bureau in any country. This will not result in the manifestation of the sociolinguistic analysis regarding the formation of these names; simply because it is no more than a governmental procedure for specific purposes, not research ones. On the other hand, this kind of information could be seen as an advantage for onomastic researchers on personal names. The findings of the study can be used by future researchers to establish an organized system of data collection which includes personal names in addition to the distribution of these names over all parts of the country.

1.7   Limitations of the Study

This current research, similar to other research on naming practices, has some limitations. For example, this study has focused on only two regions in Irbid. It was very difficult for the researcher to cover more regions because this study focused on only the province of Irbid. Thus, taking into account the obvious cultural differences between the rural and urban places, generalizations of the findings to the entire Jordan should be done with cautions.

This research is only limited to the socio-onomastic factors involved in the naming process, with addition to the morphological analysis of personal names in terms of item-and-process theory. Therefore, it did not cover other linguistic disciplines such as the syntactic analysis of personal names or their phonological changes. These issues were not considered in this study.

Apart from that, other factors such as the level of education for the name givers, gender, and financial status were not examined in this study. As these factors might have a significant role in the study of the personal naming practices of a particular society, further studies may consider them in their designs. These factors were not addressed here in this study since the main objectives of the study is to present the profound analysis regarding personal naming practices based on the theory of onomastics and item-and-process theory of morphology. In addition, the current study did not examine the effect of ethnicity on the naming practices.

Another limitation is related to the religion of the population of the study. In this study only Muslim communities in rural and urban societies were targeted. Thus, the generalization of this study pertaining to naming practices should be done with cautions based on features of other a society in Jordan. For example, Christians in Jordan make up 5% of the population. Future studies may consider Christian personal names and study personal naming practices among Christian community.

Despite these limitations, this study has produced significant findings and it is believed to be a steppingstone in guiding future research on the pattern and influenced of variables studied related to onomastics and morphological practices in Jordan.

1.8   Definitions of Key Terms

This section provides the definitions of the most important key terms. These definitions are given here to make the major concepts clearer and to reflect how the researcher conceptualises these terms. The terms are defined in this section and they are organized alphabetically.

1.8.1 Morphological Pattern

It is a term used to cover the rules, processes that constitute the different forms of a morpheme. This includes processes such as affixation (Bye & Svenonius, 2011). Item-and-process theory is a morphological theory that relies on the word 'process' in the analysis of the word's structure. It deals with affixation as morphological rules/operations rather than morphemes stored in the lexicon. In this study, personal names were initially categorised based on their roots because Arabic is considered as a root skeleton-structure (El Zarka, 2005; McCarthy, 1981; Spencer, 1994). Then, these names were analysed based on the morphological operations stemmed from the item-and-process theory. These operations are applied to the roots to form a new word. In other words, the new word is a result of certain rules combined with the roots. This process allows the determining of morphological patterns in a language.

1.8.2 Name Giver

Name givers, here refer to parents or those who have the responsibility of giving a personal name to their children (Mandende, 2009). Respondents of this study are Jordanian parents from the province of Irbid whose ages range between 25-59 and from both rural and urban societies in Irbid. Therefore, the term 'name giver' contextualised in this study to refer to those parents identified earlier. People who can play the role of naming differ from one society to another and no obvious distinction can be made between those who may or may not fulfil this role. Most often mothers and fathers would participate equally in selecting a name for their children (Koopman, 1989). Elders also have been popular in different cultures to play the role in naming as an indication of appreciation of their position and respectful place in the family and in the tribe as a whole (Suzman, 1994).

1.8.3 Naming Practice

Naming practice is considered as one of the most important aspects of onomastics. It aims to differentiate individuals from each other, but it is also primarily interested in cultural, social, and psychological aspects (Nguyen, 2010). In sociolinguistics, it is treated as a social entity that is used to indicate the reciprocal relationship between language and communication as a fundamental part of societies and could not be isolated from it (Swann, 2019). Naming practice is understood as having a deep overview of the language and people' practices because it reflects their ideology, philosophy, and culture. Thus, it would be far from being random (Mabuza, 2009).

1.8.4 Culture

This term, as used in sociolinguistic research, bears another meaning which is different from the common definition of culture as literature or kind of art. It rather refers to people daily practices that are accompanied by their thoughts, ideology, principles, emotions, and values. This means that the cultural elements will be distinguished from one place to another. Therefore, culture is part of what people perform and how they behave in connection with the society's norms, and it would entail the significance of investigating such valuable sources of knowledge about both people and society (Swann et al, 2004).

1.8.5 Rural Area

Rural area is known to be more conservative in its traditions, social ties, norms, and conceptions due to the assimilation in almost all aspects of life between the members who live in the same place. Such assimilation's aspects include agriculture as main job and interest and financial status. According to Firestone (2009) Northern

Jordan is considered as the biggest place in term of rural and urban areas and Irbid is the biggest province in the North part of Jordan that have these places. Studying personal naming with socio-onomastic perspective in a rural not urban or multilingualism society would present more concepts and views on language contact in a more transparent society (Siemund et al, 2013).

1.8.6 Old Rural Parent

In this study, old rural parent is a term that is used to refer to parents as a name giver in the rural areas in the province of Irbid and whose ages are 55-59 years.

1.8.7 Old Urban Parent

Old urban parent is a term used in this study to refer to parents as a name giver in the urban areas in the province of Irbid and whose ages are 55 years and above.

1.8.8 Personal Name

First name or given name refers in general to the name that a child receives upon his/her date of birth. Personal names are indeed more than a simple word used to address others, rather it is the result of a sequence interpretations for the surrounding social circumstances (Sabet & Zhang, 2020).

1.8.9 Social Practices of Personal Naming

According to Holtz (2014), "social practices refer to everyday practices and the way these are typically and habitually performed in (much of) a society" (p. 17). In this study, the term social practice of personal naming refers to all the activities that people in the urban and rural regions in Irbid carry out in their societies to name their children. In other words, it refers to the complex of rituals that are related to values

and principles members of the societies in urban and rural regions in Irbid adopt in the process of naming their children.

1.8.10 Socio-onomastics

It is the combination of onomastics and sociolinguistics study which can be called socio-onomastics. The term *socio-onomastics* (or rather *Sozioonomastik* in German) was first used by Hans Walther in 1971 in *Namenforschung heute*. He defined the two main missions of socio-onomastics to be the following: (a) the study of the social origin and use of different variants of proper names within various situations and contexts, (b) taking into account the name-giver, name-bearer and name-user (Walther 1971: 45). While Alam and Bramwell (2014) studied personal names using a sociolinguistic approach in a scientific based-strategy, with the idea that personal names are part of the society in which they are created. Socio-onomastics researchers emphasize the need for societal and cultural contexts as they cannot be perceived separately and explain that the focus of socio-onomastic research is on both the linguistic and socio-cultural context of these names usage (Saarelma, Ainiala, & Sjöblom, 2012). Moreover, the significance of studying personal naming practices in the framework of socio-onomastics exceeds the identification means of the bearer to the associative meanings of the name given, its context, and landscape where the name is active (Bugheşiu, 2013). Hence, socio-onomastics can be defined as the sociolinguistic study of name that examines the use and variety of name through a method that demonstrated the social, cultural, and situational condition in name usage (Bugheşiu, 2013). In this study, the social practices of personal naming and factors affecting these social practices were examined in terms of these aspects (i.e., social, cultural, and situational aspects).

1.8.11 Urban Area

Urban is a term used in this study in terms of geographical aspect to refer to a place that witnesses an obvious increase in population and density over time. It is also distinguished by some distinctive features. For example, in urban areas, dwellers can have easy access to services such as education, job opportunities, and public facilities (Pateman, 2011). From a sociolinguistic perspective, urban areas are a place of continuous migration from all parts of the society particularly from villages; this would lead to a clear shift in a different aspect of life through which social and cultural practices are essential. Thus, urban areas provide a perfect context to the coincidence of language and different cultural verities (Siemund, Gogolin, Schulz, & Davydova, 2013). Naming practice would greatly be influenced by this multicultural environment as it basically and essentially emerged from this type of contact between individuals in this context.

1.8.12 Young Rural Parent

Young rural parent is a term used in this study to refer to parents as a name giver in the rural areas in the province of Irbid and whose ages are between 25-29 years and above.

1.8.13 Young Urban Parent

Young urban parent is a term used in this study to refer to parents as a name giver in the urban areas in the province of Irbid and whose ages are between 25-29 years and above.

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided important background to the study. The statement of the problem, research objectives, and research questions of the study are also dealt