

PARENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE PRACTICE OF PERSONAL NAMING: A MIXED METHOD COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN URBAN AND RURAL SOCIETIES IN NORTHERN JORDAN

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ABSTRACT

This study outlines the results of an explanatory sequential mixed method survey which is carried out to identify differences in parents' attitudes toward the selection of their children personal names. The study investigates parents' attitudes in terms of the factors influencing their choice of a name according to Senif's (2006) and Bramwell's (2012) works. The study sample consists of 384 respondents stratified according to two-age groups and place of residence as rural and urban areas in the northern Jordanian Irbid province. A questionnaire and semi-structured interview are used for data collection. Data obtained from the questionnaire are firstly analysed to get initial view and to help constructing the second qualitative instrument in line with the study design. Findings show that young parents of the first age-group are varied in term of religious impact on naming and the inclination to a more fashionable personal names. Urban parents express a favour to media figures on the expense of religious personal names, while rural counterpart emphasises their attachment to personal names stemmed from religious background against the names of public media figures. However, elder parents of the second age-group show different factors influencing their choice which are mainly concentrated on popular names of their surrounding area, the existence of a story that tells about the name's given, and the impact of peoples' cultural background. At this group, urban parents demonstrate more positive and constant attitudes to these factors than that expressed by their rural parents. It is quite obvious that young urban parents are shifting to recent names' trends which are totally opposite to rural parents who still connected to theological beliefs in naming practice. For the elder parents the domain of variation has taken a profound focus on cultural issues which is normally corresponding to interest at this age-stage.

Keywords: Socio-onomastics, Culture, Personal names, parents' attitudes, urban and rural societies.

INTRODUCTION

Onomastics is classified as a discipline in the linguistics field of study, and has a profound relation with social and cultural researches (Ainiala et al., 2018). Onomastics is highly significant to this study as "the objective of onomastics is to clarify name formation and the use of names as a part of language and language use" (kiviniemi, 1979 as cited in Ainiala et al, 2012, p. 53). Names are connected to culture as they come from the interaction between people and language community. Thus, sociocultural factors are necessary to understand everything implied in these names; how, why, when, where and who gives the name. The theory of onomastics highlights the essentials to analyze the names structure and context in regard to the name's giver as someone who does not only give the name but uses it as well. This theory was developed by (Dokulil, 1962) and further in the years (1964, 1968, 1997). It focuses on the

notion of naming process, which is inspired by human practice and socio-cultural factors in a speech community. The act of naming is extracted from the interrelation between people's language and the society context (Dokulil, 1962). Moreover, he divided the practice of naming based on 'Action' which is the process of giving names by members of society; parents in particular are the main source where reasons of naming could be realized. Based on the mutual relationship between extra-linguistic, socio-cultural factors, and a speech community, the new given or coined name will be easily understood by the members of this society due to the natural expectation of the name's meaning by the stored knowledge in the speakers' glossary (Štekauer, 2005).

In the cognitive onomasiological theory, naming practice is emerged simultaneously with particular need for naming in a speech community (Štekauer, 2005). In this regard, he emphasizes the significance of speech community role in the practice of naming to its members based on a mutual relationship between the extra-linguistic factors such as age, gender, religion, identity, belief, tradition, culture, place of residence, among other factors and the surrounding of the speech community. The latter is practically considered as the vital context to the act of naming. Accordingly, understanding the language and the extra-linguistic components in a given society takes the position of core focus to researchers in order to understand the system of naming practice for this particular society. Factors influencing the choice could explain the precise way a name's giver has chosen the name for their children and hence uncovering the deep semantic structure of this name (Ainiala et al., 2018). Deep semantic structure here refers to the circumstances a name has been given and things related that might not be understood with no clarification from the name's giver.

The first who call for the combination of onomastics and sociolinguistics and used the term socio-onomastics as title of his work was (Langendonck, 1982). The main principle of socio-onomastic studies come 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). Therefore, naming from other cultures would significantly highlight the cultural contact and its influence on name givers attitudes in the process of selecting a personal name. Likewise, studying urban and rural societies might have its significance at the comparison level in the naming system as the combination of both societies clarify the level of cultural impact in this process of naming. 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 (Bughesiu, 2013). The former review of socio-onomastic explanations asserts the need to investigate the process of naming practice in the society where these names are given and used (Langendonck, 1982; Alford, 1988; Blamar, 2009; Bramwell, 2012; Ainiala et al., 2018; Bughesiu, 2013).

Given the significance of identifying parents' attitudes in personal naming practice, this paper reports a study which had been conducted to investigate Jordanian parents' attitudes to name their children. Besides the importance of parents' attitudes, the lack of literature pertaining to personal naming in Jordan and in the Arab world on factors influencing the name's choice of a child and the influence of cultural contact on name's givers have been another motive to carry out this study. More specifically, pioneering inquiries into Jordanian naming practices centered on classifying names, tracing their etymology, and unearthing the events and attributes referred or alluded to in those names (Al-Rawabdeh, 2010; Al-Abadi, 2006; Abd-el-Jawad, 1986). There were only few studies on personal names with little interest in the onomastic significance of analysing those names. Moreover, the classification of personal names and the religious and ethnic analysis were the main interest in personal naming in Jordan. Although this is also

significant, but the profound and in-depth analysis of name's giver as they are in act of naming is much more important to be studied. This current study will investigate name's givers attitudes in both societies rural and urban because only through comparison one can see what is distinctive and what is common (Brown, 2000).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Names are the first linguistic act that is performed and used by grandparents, fathers, or mothers for their newly born child (Mutunda, 2001). This parental influence is described as "active 'doing' process of naming" where a view on parents' attitudes should be investigated (Edwards & Caballero, 2008, p. 43). They also introduced the concept of individualization in the naming process which summarizes a new parental orientation to abandon traditional and religious names and geared toward an independent choice of personal names that are not culturally connected to particular old practices. Our contemporary life imposed more social self-responsibility on individuals themselves rather than following traditional tracks designed by their ancestors (Edwards & Caballero 2008). Therefore, parental shifting in naming practice is noted to be more likely to follow individualistic approach.

There are two main naming approaches in line with Edward and Caballero: **I-Identity** which represents individualistic approach of personal naming as a prevalent system of identification where individual taste is preferable. And **We-Identity** which means that identification system of naming connects individuals to traditional practices based on ancestors, religious, and kin-ship names (Finch, 2008.) Parents purposively name their sons and daughters to attain specific goals in their lives; thus, personal naming is a parental choice which expresses their expectations of their children's future characteristics (Mabuza, 2009). In his paper, Mabuza argued that personal names chosen by parents have nothing to do with their personality; that is, one might find that a specific name is shared by a number of people, but they behave in quite different manner. In other words, although some individuals have the same name and meaning, one of them might act well in his life while the other is found to be in a terrible situation. Accordingly, it is not necessary that those who share the same name will have the same personality. In most cases children are given names according to their parents' preferences not to their ancestors' names; one of the interviewees stresses to give her child a new name that represents his uniqueness among others, and refused to name her child after their relatives (Bramwell, 2012).

There could be a variety of factors that play significant role in choosing a name for a child. These names are exposed to change which accompanied changing in reasons for naming as this can be shown within a period of time more specifically in decades (Senif, 2006). As long as naming is a cultural practice, it is critical to observe and study these names as they are exposure to evolve (Senif, 2006). This is true because the process of naming is evolutionary in nature never revolutionary; so this change in names and factors of naming cannot come suddenly as cultural practice is concerned. However, a discussion of eleven factors influencing Shona personal naming practice has been carried out and in accordance to the respondent age which shows various preference to certain personal names (Makond, 2010). Moreover, gender showed different desires to unique men and women names in a socialization process. There were some prominent factors in naming such as religious considerations, profession of the name's giver, political, social and certain popular events as explained by (Makondo, 2010). Similarly, these factors influencing name's giver choice are varied not only from one place to another but narrowly within subgroups in the community (Liberson & Bell, 1992). This

motivated the current study to find gaps between urbans and rural in the population under investigation. A number of prominent factors and more questions on factors influencing the selection of a personal names could be posed (Liberson & Bell, 1992) in where this study is also aiming to achieve the differences in personal naming by addressing ten items related to religious orientation, researching the denotative and connotative characteristic of a name, naming criteria for male and female choice, preference of sonorous names, stories behind the name, popularity of a name in the place of residence, and responsibility of naming.

Parents' culture is responsible for making children personality rather than the meaning loaded in this name. Indeed, parents' social context and their past experience are apparently seen to influence children's personality (Skhosana, 2005). The individuals who carry similar first name in Zulu community have completely opposite behavior and personality. This is being attributed to the differences in culture and place of residence for those individuals (Mabuza, 2009). Meitei personal names are proven to be a basic part of the Meitei language and culture; these names could not be understood in isolation from the sociocultural factors of the Meitei people (Russell, 2007). Moreover, these names are fully meaningful and reflective of the philosophy and ideology of the Meitei. Personal naming practice is of a great importance for parents who primarily play this duty. They have many intentions on name's giving such as immortalizing of distinctive figures, characterizing of children attributes, and recording people's prominent experiences. The task of name's giving in south Africa was mainly responsible by elders in the family, but this role was changed later to be outside the family members especially after the contact with western people and their culture (Mandende, 2009).

Factors influencing the name and changes happen to the name later in life bear many justifications and happens in many ways, for instance, when name holders tend to use their personal names on social media using a language rather than their native one, suppose English language, it probably carries the meaning that they are exposed to a social phenomenon or at least some social factors surrounding their context. This could also be attributed to the influence of globalisation, particularly among youths who are potentially more exposed to technology and demonstrate a strong desire to identify themselves with it. Therefore, young parents' taste of a name may differ from that of elder parents according to many circumstances and desires by both. The status of shifting from the first language to another by members of the society has in many cases corresponded to social factors such as religious and ethnic values. On the other hand, it could be claimed that the necessity of names in every nation as they are the evidence of a particular history of any society. They might be given in a very distinguished event to save it as a memorable occasion. Therefore, the study of personal names should never be neglected by any society for it conveys the culture and history for both their society and the world around them (Naji & David, 2003).

Factors influencing the choice of a name in the Arab world could be of different aspects; political, genealogical, etymological and so. However, one prominent aspect in which Arabic naming practice in Iraq might be different from other Arab countries in some aspects pertaining to cultural variations, naming preferences in rural areas in comparison with modernized places, and strongly on religious orientations (Rasul, 2014). Iraqi personal names could give a great deal of knowledge on people religious affiliations as Sunni or Shiite, two largest Islamic groups. Moreover, this particular implication, religious one, existing in the naming practice of Iraqi names has largely emerged after the fallen of the latest Iraqi leader regime. This even has increased the Iraqis desires to distinguish personal names as political indications. In other words, Iraqis find it sufficient and expressive to convey their religious and political trends through personal naming practice between Sunni and Shiite as Iraqi leader was belonging to Sunni

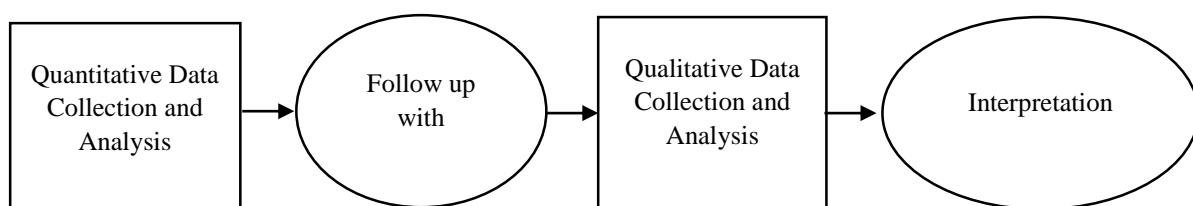
Islamic group. Another sociocultural interest is that of Yemeni personal names. Almost every Yemeni personal name carries meanings that convey the social practice and traditions of Yemenis and how it does affect their decisions of selection personal name to their children (Al-Zumor, 2009). Two main factors of name's giving practice in Yemen were identified; local one derived from modest aspects of agriculture and events a name giver is familiar with in his environment. The second is the external factor which expresses the names of other places, countries, and foreign names as well which comes from mixing with other cultures (Al-Zumor, 2009). It can be concluded from the above mentioned review the following points:

- i. All the aforementioned studies confirmed the significance of studying personal names in terms of culture and name's givers orientations in order to understand the practice of personal naming which differs from one place and culture to another.
- ii. These studies would consequently manifest the ways in which such important context in naming practice are studies; therefore, it will be a source to the current study to investigate respondents attitudes in the northern province of Jordan particularly in the urban and rural societies.
- iii. Other studies have been beneficial in the methods used to conduct the research and this study would be distinctive in its adoption to the mixed methods approach particularly explanatory sequential design in order to arrive at a comprehensive analysis on the topic pf personal names. In addition, these studies help adapting research instruments and clarify how personal names could be an implication and source to knowledge acquired from the culture and language users as well.
- iv. As shown above pertaining the study of personal naming in Jordan, The foregoing survey of the literature reveals the paucity of comprehensive and current research of the area in question. There were only few studies on personal names with little interest in the onomastic factors. Therefore, this research would help to understand the precise issues regarding personal naming of northern Jordanian province in both rural an urban contexts.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research will adopt the quan → QUAL integrated method, particularly, the sequential mixed method design. The rationale behind choosing this design lies in the fact that the quantitative data give a general view of the phenomenon in question. Respectively, qualitative data collection sequentially as a next phase is helpful in refining, purifying and explaining the general view, thus, a more comprehensive picture of how personal naming practice works in terms of the variables, identified earlier will be offered along with deeper analysis and elaboration to the quantitative results as shown below in figure 1 (Denscombe, 2009 & Creswell, 2012). The adoption of both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study is known as “mixed method design” (Creswell, 2012).

Figure 1: The Explanatory Sequential Design (Creswell 2012)



As can be seen in table 1 that the population of the study is considered big, so it would be difficult to study all individuals. To such degree, stratified random sampling techniques were chosen due to different reasons; because of the large number of the population and the goals of the study, the division of the population into strata is required to ensure that the crucial parts intended to be studied are appropriately there in the overall. Based on (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) if the population size is 120,000, the sample size would be 382 -384. However, the difference in number between both is only (2); thus, to make sure that the respondents will be not less than 382, the researcher will take the highest sample size which is 384. Now, to determine the number of participants from each age group to society urban or rural a proportionate stratification will be used. This will be done by using the ratio of the number of each age group to the total population and then multiple the number of sample size as in the proportionate stratification sample technique. Moreover, because the goal of this study is to compare parents' attitudes a focus on two distant age groups was carried out due to the following justifications (1) this "would allow for both a rounded view of the naming system and a comparison between generations" (Bramwell, 2012, p. 66); (2) the notion of studying two distant age groups as this would support and indicate changes of people attitudes (Rossi, 1965); hence, almost three decades distance between the two groups seem to be sufficient to cultural changes to take place, and it will be clear and convenient where to show gap between two generations. In addition, because the goal is to focus on factors influencing name's givers choice from distant ages and in different cultures pertaining to a place of residence as rural and urban, it would be detectable over a period of twenty to thirty years. (3) Investigating linguistic aspects of a society can better be understood over distant age groups, generations (Labov, 1994).

Table 1: Estimated Population of the Kingdom by Governorate - Irbid, Urban and Rural at the End of 2015 (The up to date publication of the statistic department).

Age Group	Urban	Percentage%	Rural	Percentage%
25-29	26,000	74%	67,000	79%
55-59	9000	26%%	18,000	21%
	35,000		85,000	
Total	120,000			

RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this section the data are divided into two subgroups related to factors influencing the choice of a name. In presenting the results of each variable, the data obtained from the questionnaire and the interview are used. Moreover, quantitative data are firstly analyzed and implemented to the construction of the qualitative data secondly. Point of integration according to the explanatory sequential mixed design is presented before the start of qualitative data analysis. \

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviation for Items due to Category Age (25 – 29), Rural, Urban for The First Construct (factors influencing the choice of a name).

NO	ITEMS	RESIDENCE	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION	LEVEL
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1	I consider the theological overtones of a personal name before selecting it for a child.	Rural	4.19	0.96	High
		Urban	1.97	0.98	Low
2	I use the same naming criteria for both the genders.	Rural	3.98	1.05	High
		Urban	4.16	0.89	High
3	I prefer the selection of names famous in my locality.	Rural	3.22	1.24	Moderate
		Urban	3.41	0.97	Moderate
4	I have a predilection for the names of film, TV, and music celebrities.	Rural	2.02	1.16	Low
		Urban	4.18	0.93	High
5	Only parents should have the right to choose their children's personal names.	Rural	2.92	1.39	Moderate
		Urban	3.11	1.04	Moderate
6	I prefer the names that sound sonorous.	Rural	4.11	0.91	High
		Urban	4.39	0.54	High
7	I research the denotative meaning and the connotative character of a name before selecting it.	Rural	4.20	0.93	High
		Urban	4.36	0.65	High
8	There is a story behind the selection of the name.	Rural	3.69	1.06	High
		Urban	3.98	0.95	High
9	It would be okay if someone else helped me in choosing a name for my children.	Rural	3.17	1.24	Moderate
		Urban	3.33	1.25	Moderate
10	Names usually reveal something about the cultural background of the name giver.	Rural	3.48	1.34	Moderate
		Urban	3.57	1.26	Moderate
Overall		Rural	3.50	0.52	Moderate
		Urban	3.65	0.47	Moderate

Table 2 explains the mean values and standard deviation for construct 1 factors influencing the choice of a name ranging from 2.02 to 4.20 rural, and from 1.97 to 4.39 urban. The 25-29 rural parents showed positive tendency to religious orientations when giving a personal name for their children with a high mean value of 4.19 and standard deviation of 0.96, while urban parents showed negative tendency with a low mean value of 1.97 and standard deviation of 0.98. This finding explains that urban parents are shifting from religious considerations when giving a name and moved to the preference for the names of film, TV, and music stars where urban parents showed a positive tendency with a high mean value of 4.18 and standard deviation 0.93. However, this was not the case for rural parents where they showed negative attitudes to naming after film or TV stars with a low mean value of 2.02 and standard deviation of 1.16. For items 2, 3 and 5 to 10, both rural and urban parents showed similar high and moderate attitudes with mean values ranging from 2.92 to 4.36 and standard deviation ranging from 0.54 to 1.34.

Table 3: Means and standard Deviation for Items Due to Category Age (55 – 59), Rural, Urban for First Construct (Factors influencing the choice of a name)

NO	ITEMS	RESIDENCE	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION	LEVEL
1	I consider the theological overtones of a personal name before selecting it for a child.	Rural	4.21	0.90	High
		Urban	3.97	1.12	High
2	I use the same naming criteria for both the genders.	Rural	3.90	0.90	High
		Urban	4.19	0.95	High
3	I prefer the selection of names famous in my locality.	Rural	3.62	0.98	Moderate
		Urban	3.76	1.16	High
4	I have a predilection for the names of film, TV, and music celebrities.	Rural	2.83	1.37	Moderate
		Urban	3.43	1.56	Moderate
5	Only parents should have the right to choose their children's personal names.	Rural	3.45	1.15	Moderate
		Urban	3.81	1.26	Moderate
6	I prefer the names that sound sonorous.	Rural	3.69	1.07	Moderate
		Urban	3.95	1.13	High
7	I research the denotative meaning and the connotative character of a name before selecting it.	Rural	4.03	0.94	High
		Urban	4.22	1.01	High
8	There is a story behind the selection of the name.	Rural	3.31	1.42	Moderate
		Urban	4.17	0.98	High
9	It would be okay if someone else helped me in choosing a name for my children.	Rural	2.90	1.18	Moderate
		Urban	3.50	1.38	Moderate
10	Names usually reveal something about the cultural background of the name giver.	Rural	3.45	1.40	Moderate
		Urban	3.81	1.26	High
Overall		Rural	3.54	0.53	Moderate
		Urban	3.88	0.78	High

For the same construct, factors influencing the choice of a name, table 3 explains the mean values and standard deviation for the second age group 55 to 59 ranging from 2.8 to 4.21 rural, and from 3.43 to 4.22 urban. Urban parents of this age group showed positive tendency for naming after people famous in their locality with a high mean value of 3.76 and standard deviation of 1.16. However, rural parents still maintain positive tendency to the same item but with moderate agreement to names popular in their locality with a mean value of 3.62 and standard deviation of 0.98. For item 6, urban parents showed positive tendency to sonorous names with a high mean value of 3.95 and standard deviation of 1.13, similarly rural parents showed positive tendency to sonorous names but with a moderate mean value of 3.69 and standard deviation of 1.13. Urban parents showed high tendency to popular names but still highly interested in the name pronunciation as sounding utterance. For item 8 and 10 they showed positive tendency to the existence of a story behind the selection of one's personal name as they likewise highly agreed that there existed a connection between the story and the name's givers cultural background revealed by this story with high mean values of 4.17, 3.81 and standard deviation of 0.98 and 1.26, respectively. Correspondingly, rural parents are positively agreed with urban parents regarding item 8 and 10 but with a moderate mean value of 3.31 and 3.45, respectively. Nevertheless, both urban and rural parents showed similar attitudes to items 1, 2,4,5,7, and 9 for factors influencing the choice of a name.

DISCUSSION

In line with the study objective which is to identify differences between younger and elder parents' attitudes in the practice of personal naming, the discussion will have two main sections; the first is 25-29 rural vs 25-29 urban parents, the second is 55-59 rural vs 55-59 urban parents.

i) Factors Influencing The Choice of A Name Due to 25-29 Parents' Age-Group

The study was conducted to investigate variations in attitudes toward the practice of personal naming between the two rural and urban parents as they are mainly responsible for this socio-onomastic practice. Quantitative findings showed that the main two factors differed between the rural and the urban parents emerged from the religious orientation firstly and the predilection for TV, film, and music stars secondly. In the qualitative phase, respondents of two societies showed similar attitudes to the quantitative results in that rural parents are positively agreed on religious consideration (e.g. conservative society, preference of these names over other all names, religious beliefs that these names are positively influencing their children personality). Whereas, urban parents expressed negative attitudes to religious consideration. (e.g. seeking modernization in personal names, desire to keep up with new social trends of naming among new generation). Actually, this finding showed amazing result given by the study participants due to the fact that in Muslim society religious affiliations and beliefs are assumed to be highly influential on people's motivation and reasoning toward naming their children (Al-Qawasmi & Al-Haq, 2016).

However, this kind of findings has been noticed by (Gornley, 1996) in Christian religion exactly in England. He points out that old English biblical names that are belonging to the church were no longer preferred by puritans. Puritans give names to their children in a way that is unlike means followed by English speaking settlers. This may in turn give hints to the less influence a religion plays in name givers decisions when choosing a name for their children. Likewise, the declination of biblical personal names in the United States reflects a regression in puritans' religious orientation (Watkins & London, 1994). For the second main difference of predilection for TV, film, and music stars, urban parents expressed positive attitudes to name their children after media figures such as singers and actors (e.g current strong media influence on people's social life), whereas rural parents showed negative attitudes to the same point (e.g they do not consider those stars or media figures as an exemplary modal to their children, negative psychological influence of these names on their children particularly at school age). This finding showed an obvious shifting from religious orientation to a preference of media stars in the urban parents' attitudes. Conversely, rural parents as called themselves conservative society maintained religious priority in the practice of naming and isolated themselves from naming after media figures by showing negative attitudes to that matter. Different personal names used in the past would not fulfill the same cultural and social functions as that of today. This is ascribed to cultural change over periods of time and mostly shown in more open society of different people's cultural background (Cabral, 2008). This comes in line with this finding of urban vs rural parents attitudes by inclination of urban parents to other factors influencing their choice than that of religious consideration.

ii) Factors Influencing The Choice of A Name Due to 55-59 Parents' Age-Group

Quantitative findings of 55-59 urban parents showed their positive attitudes to the selection of names famous in their locality, the story that lie behind the name's bestowing, and the cultural

background revealed by these names with high mean values 3.76, 4.17, and 3.81 respectively. This finding is in line with the qualitative results where urban parents are strongly connecting common names to their social life style; they see common names as a social fusion marker and an important social key of identification. Secondly, urban parents believe that there is a story or even that lie behind the selection of one's children personal name and their also must existed a goal for that such as fulfilling a promise for someone or the immortalization of an event happened to one of the parents and want to remember all their life. Thirdly, cultural backgrounds stands as one's unique identity especially among people from diverse cultures. It is also showed a cultural practice to naming after ancestors which in turn revive not only their names but their history as well.

On the other hand, rural parents showed moderate attitudes to the three above-mentioned factors namely (common or famous names, existing of story behind naming, and cultural background). They emphasized the significance of common names but simultaneously confined that to names of their ancestors and expressed their proudness to be called by their ancestors' names especially for the eldest son. For stories behind naming, respondents have told some stories related to the names of their children but they also do not believe that it is a must when choosing a personal name. Finally, for cultural background, some parents believe it is indispensable naming their children out of their culture to the extent they resist any foreign impact that may result in changing their views about cultural backgrounds. Conversely, some other parents do not consider naming children out of their culture as an indication of disloyalty or less affiliation to their culture but rather they ate seeking distinguished name patterns from others around them. The present findings are consistent with (Lombard, 2011) who emphasized the significance of knowing the stories behind people's names because the knowledge acquired from those stories make people aware of the history behind the personal name and in turn provide them of a sense where they come from. In addition, personal names can have so many things and facts to tell about the people and the societies as a whole; naming practice carries an indication concerning the named person and the name's giver in their society. Thus, the various practices in which people are named provide implications for the social construction as persons (Cabral, 2008). Moreover, common names were the best choice for parents especially as an indication of cultural assimilation with a new society as in the immigrants' cases and even for dwellers in their own culture (Becker, 2009). In addition, parents' choice of personal names to their children in the case of British names had been mainly influenced by the popularity of royal names as aimed to show love for the royal family members (Crystal, 2003).

CONCLUSION

The main interest of investigating personal names in the Arab world has been aimed at classification, religious and ethnicity, etymology, and genealogy. In Jordan, few studies on personal naming practice have been investigated and mainly relied on the analysis of names collected from some resources such as department of civil bureau and statistics. The current study aimed at investigating parents' attitudes toward the practice of personal naming as being responsible for this process on the one hand; it also has considered two societies of urban and rural areas to highlight cultural variation between two different social contexts to fill the gap between generations on the other hand. Moreover, the study has utilized a mixed method approach in the analysis of personal naming practice which is expected to open the floor for more systematic analysis of personal names. 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 (Blanár, 2009; Eckert, 2000; Saville- Troike, 2008).

To sum up, the results showed that parents as name givers have been influenced by their surrounding socio-cultural factors including religious orientation, trend of modernization, and cultural background. Young names' givers in urban society are more inclined to modern names such as names of movie and music stars, while rural parents of the same age group are more attached to religious affiliation as being a conservative society. On the other hand, elder names' givers concentrated on cultural and anecdotal knowledge these names are capable to convey. The difference between urban and rural names' givers at this age group ranged between moderate for rural and high for urban parents. The following points could be concluded:

- i. Personal naming practice is strongly connected to the cultural and social beliefs of the society where these names are given and used.
- ii. Inclination to modern names of non-Arab origins which came through media and social networks may lead to the reluctance of Arabic names in future particularly for new generations.
- iii. Personal names are a shortcut micro window to know the history of names' giver, their ancestors, events and stories stemmed from their culture.
- iv. Rural societies are more determined to maintain names within a social network they belong to which is varied from urban societies where they have shifted to a preference of unique and modern names.

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