The Jordanian Women’s Movement: A Historical Analysis Focusing on Legislative Change

Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Leicester

By

Abeer Bashier Dababneh
Department of Sociology
University of Leicester

2005
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List of Abbreviations

AWS Arab Women's Society
BPWF Business and Professional Women Forum
CBT Collective Behaviour Theory
DOS Department of Statistics
GFJW General Federation of Jordanian Women
HFWR The Human Forum for Women's Rights
JNCHR Jordanian National Centre for Human Rights
JNCW Jordanian National Committee for Women’s Affairs
JNFW Jordanian National Forum for Women
JSHR Jordanian Society for Human Rights
JWM Jordanian Women's Movement
JWU Jordanian Women’s Union
MOHE Ministry of Higher Education
MSD Ministry of Social Development
MST Mass Society Theory
NGOs Non-Governmental Organisations
NSMT New Social Movements Theory
POST Political Opportunity Structure Theory
QZID Queen Zain Al- Sharaf Institute for Development
RMT Resource Mobilization Theory
UN United Nations
UNDP United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations
UN-HABITAT United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF United Nations Children’s Fund
UNIFEM United Nations Development Fund for Women
Acknowledgment

First of all I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Ellen Annandale and Dr. Jane Pilcher whom I was privileged to work with as my supervisors. They spent long hours of their precious time providing me with their helpful ideas, detailed feedback and academic comments and patiently supported me through the ups and downs of this challenging but always interesting experience. To both of them, I am sincerely grateful.

I acknowledge the financial support by the University of Jordan, which awarded me a scholarship, without which conducting this research would not have been possible.

I would like to express my gratitude to those who provided me with data that were central in this research.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for their support. I am greatly indebted to the constant support, understanding and love that I received from my husband Feras Halaseh, my beloved daughter Rogina, my mother, my brothers and sisters during the past years.

*Above all, this thesis is dedicated to the soul of my father whom I miss everyday*
Thesis Abstract

Sociology has paid insufficient attention to third world women’s struggles and specially women’s movements. This thesis examines the role of the Jordanian women’s movement in the prolonged struggle towards equality and equity. It examines historically the obstacles that have hindered and the resources that have facilitated the movement’s efforts towards achieving women’s liberation. A case study of Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal Code, concerned with the so-called phenomenon of ‘honour killing’ highlights the influence of the Jordanian women’s movement on the legal reform process. The methodology used to achieve these objectives was face-to-face interviews with key informants and analysis of documentary resources.

My theoretical project is to contribute to the understanding of women’s agency. Gidden’s structuration theory with its focus on the dialectical relations between "agency and structure" provides the theoretical framework for the research. Furthermore, an examination of selected social movement theories, such as ‘resources mobilisation theory’ reveals the significance of resources on the emergence and efficacy of the movement. In addition, the theory of ‘political opportunity structure’ efficiently captures the role that third world states play in determining the chances of third world women’s movements.

The study identifies two main categories of obstacles facing the movement. The first is obstacles internal to patriarchy, subdivided as ‘structural obstacles’ and ‘attitudinal obstacles’. The second type of obstacles are those internal to the structure of the movement itself. Both external factors, such as UN resolutions, and internal factors, such as the particular history of Jordan were found to be crucial in determining the main historical characteristics of the movement’s history from its beginnings as a charitable nationalist movement, through to its revival stage when it began to adopt a more determined ‘feminist’ agenda. I will argue that women in Jordan posed a significant challenge to their most obvious target of disrupting dominant gender relations. In this respect, the role of religion, social traditions, tribalism, family, economy, and education are examined alongside perceptions of women’s reproductive role.
Chapter One

Introduction

Study Subject Matter

In this thesis I explore the historical role of the Jordanian Women's Movement (JWM) as a collective agent for social change. Through this case study, I look in detail at the case of Jordan, through which I discuss how it was possible for a movement of women to step outside the ongoing practices and discourses through which patriarchy is continuously reconstituted. Since several key areas of Jordanian legislation such as Criminal Law, Personal Status Law, Social Security Law, Civil Pension Law, Passports Law, and the Nationality Law, support the patriarchal social system by giving legal privileges to men, legislative change is a particular focus of the thesis.

Under such difficult and discriminatory legal, political and social conditions, it is logical to conceive of Jordanian women (and women in the Arab world in general) as an oppressed class. However, Jordanian women did not recognise their structural inferiority and exploitation by this patriarchal social and legislative system until the 1940s, when a number of educated middle and upper class women started to effect changes in the Jordanian women's situation. In order to explore this process, it is important to reflect sociologically on the question of the ability of individuals to change the social structure. Layder (1994: 4) suggests that:

"The action and structure distinction concentrates on the question of how creativity and constraint are related through social activity".

This quotation summarises the theme of this study, which is to explore and to answer the question of how social agents can affect change in the stable social structure around them. More particularly, the thesis asks: to what extent can we conceive JWM as an
active driving force of social transformation? It offers an examination of the many different actions that the movement has taken to challenge patriarchy, in order to reach an assessment of the structural transformative impact.

The thesis traces activities of the JWM since the 1940s and assesses the extent to which they were able to impact on women’s rights and change dominant discourses about women’s status. It identifies the factors, both national and international, that have facilitated or hindered the movement’s performance. Central to this, is the relation between the state and the JWM as, since the early 1980s, the state has developed institutional arrangements to improve the status of women and deal with women’s issues. This raises questions about the potential of these arrangements to act on behalf of the movement by helping to raise gender issues and provide access for feminist advocates into decisional arenas.

By the early 1940s, there were already several women’s organizations in Jordan. However, the major purpose of these organizations was to assist refugees, the poor, and people with disabilities. It was not until the mid 1950s that the first wave of the JWM arose after Ms. Besharat established the Arab Women’s Union. In addition to the traditional charitable role played by women’s organisations by this time, this Union brought the public's attention to the unequal treatment of women, and played an important role in raising women's awareness of their inferior political status. So, since 1954 an organized pattern of political women’s movement efforts has developed. The main aim of the movement has been to change the existing social system in a way that gives Jordanian women more social and political rights.

However, as will be discussed fully in chapter Four, the political history of the JWM in the 1950s and 1960s and the generally closed political structure in the country during this time (a ban on all political parties in Jordan after a coup attempt in 1957) influenced the reaction taken by the state concerning the political activities of women’s organisations. According to Atiyat (2003; Al- Naqshabandi, 2001; Al- Tal, 1985) the state limited the work of women’s organisations through the application of laws such as Martial law which was
imposed in response to the vulnerability of political parties to external influence and anti-
monarchical ideologies, which constituted a major blow to the participatory institutions. Women’s organisations were therefore forced to give up their political demands. On the other hand, the state formed several governmental and semi-governmental organisations aimed at facilitating women’s cause in Jordan, such as the General Federation for Jordanian Women (GFJW) which was established in 1981, the Jordanian National Committee for Women’s Affairs (JNCW) in 1992 and the Jordanian National Forum for Women (JNFW) in 1995.

The existence of these women’s organizations, which are not independent from the state, allows us to say that there are two main forms of feminism and/or feminist organizations that comprise the women’s movement in Jordan today. On the one hand, we have the state feminism, represented in the organizations and initiatives supported by the state—either government or Royal family member—such as the General Federation for Jordanian Women (GFJW) and the Jordanian National Committee for Women’s Affairs (JNCW). On the other hand, we have women’s independent initiatives, represented in the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU). This distinction between state and independent feminism within the JWM is based on the organization’s connection to the state. For Stetson and Mazur (1995: 1) state feminism refers to “activities of government structures that are formally charged with furthering women’s status and rights”.

Consequently, we can say that the state considerably shaped and formed the space in which the women’s movement operates in Jordan. All this has influenced many changes in the Jordanian women’s status and this raises the question of whether these are due to significant changes in the social structure, and if ‘yes’, then to the further questions of, to what extent we can attribute this to the collective lobbying of the JWM? A number of questions are posed, such as: what obstacles has the movement faced during its journey? What is the state’s stand towards women’s activism? What factors have influenced the state’s stand? In other words, what exactly was the women’s movement role in influencing the state to intervene and support the women’s cause in Jordan? And, what was the relative influence of United Nations (UN) international conventions and resolutions as they put
pressure on third world countries such as Jordan toward developing the status of human rights in general and women's rights especially? Did this international pressure affect the distribution of power in Jordanian society?

In order to establish the relative influence of the JWM as a collective agent in transforming the social context in which it exists, it is necessary to examine Jordanian social structure in relation to the development of the JWM. Also, a case study of one of the Jordanian laws i.e. penal code will help to highlight the women's status both in society and in law, how it was changed, why, by whom, and under what circumstances. More specifically, by studying the role of JWM in changing legislation dealing with Jordanian women, this study aims to achieve the following goals:

First: To examine the history of the JWM as a collective action agent in eliminating legal and social discrimination against Jordanian women, focusing on factors which have shaped its development as a social movement and which have affected its contribution to securing legislative and social equality for women.

Second: To explore both the obstacles which have hindered and the resources which have facilitated the JWM's efforts towards achieving their goal of women's emancipation.

Third: To explore and explain the factors behind Jordanian women's social inferiority in general and legal inferiority in particular. That is, to study the Jordanian social structure and its influence on women's status.

Achieving satisfactory answers to these research questions should assist in furthering the Jordanian feminist agenda, by inspiring women to follow in the footsteps of their forebears. Moreover, providing an extensive analysis of the actual obstacles facing women in their fight to help other women improve their lives should help social movement organizations to better develop and evaluate their strategies. This will
hopefully involve assisting movement organizations in setting appropriate goals, then trying to achieve them.

The JWM with its specific historical development, its interests, its ideologies, its struggle, its facilitators, resources and obstacles is a topic that has received limited research attention to date (as The National Department of Publications and Press, 1979; Al- Tal, 1985; Nafa’, 1990; Nafa’, 1992; Brand, 1998; Hammad, 1999; Al-Naqshabandi, 2001; and Al- Atiyat, 2003). Research has focused on various factors influencing Jordanian women’s status and issues. For instance, the main emphasis of research by Al-Tal (1985), Nafa’ (1990) and the National Department of Publications and Press (1979) was to offer a historical revision of the JWM life up to 1980s. The evaluation of the contribution of Jordanian women's organizations to sustainable development in the country was the focus of research by Hammad (1999). Nafa’ (1992) and Al- Naqshabandi’s (2001) studies were concerned specifically with Jordanian women’s political participation and political struggle. The JWM was covered in this body of research only as an introduction to their main concern, which was Jordanian women’s political participation. Neither of these studies (Nafa’, 1992; Naqshabandi, 2001) provides a theoretical framework for the explanation of the history, emergence and role of women’s movements in Jordan. On the other hand, Brand’s (1998) study of the JWM provides a more advanced analysis of the role of political linearization process on the Jordanian women’s cause.

Here it became apparent during the review of the literature that some of these studies, which are concerned to study the women’s movement, such as the National Department of Publications and Press study and Hammad’s study are largely descriptive without having a considered theoretical framework to explain or analyse the facts given. On the other hand, some such as Al- Tal’s and Nafa’s research are deeply couched in Marxist theory and pay no attention to the gender consideration of Marxism’s ability adequately to analyse women’s status. The failure of most of these studies to provide a comprehensive theoretical framework has inhibited them in bringing about a systematic analysis of the JWM as a social change movement. However, Atiyat (2003) differs from previous studies in being more systematic in her analysis of specific issues regarding the
women's movement in Jordan. In her study of the JWM, Atiyat concentrated on issues regarding the movement's organisation's activism, strategies, and discourses. Her research was conducted in one area of Jordan, namely Amman (the capital). However, in spite of Atiyat's attempt to provide a comprehensive analysis of the relation between women's movement organisations and women's status in Jordan, her analysis was limited by conceiving the movement within civil society theory, particularly in the framework of Cohen and Arato (1995). By using this theoretical approach, Atiyat conceives women's organisations in Jordan as a part of civil society institutions providing a range of different services to a particular group in the country, that is women, in order to detraditionalise the state and national institutions and thereby achieve the national development. In spite of the fact that national development could indeed be one goal of the women's movement, as is the case in any developing country, adopting this theoretical approach reduces the role played by JWM, and limits the ability to analyse the women's movement as a 'suffrage movement' that aims to transform the social structure as a whole.

This is what my thesis is concerned to do, and this is why the research was not limited to Amman, but covered Jordanian women's action since its early beginnings until recent days in different cities of the country, in a serious attempt to provide a comprehensive analysis of the role played by the women's movement in Jordan to empower women, and create the sought social and legal change.

Clarification of Key Terms

As this research is concerned to study the women's movement as a social movement, a reader might reasonably ask that the usage of certain basic terms should be clarified before we begin. Therefore, it becomes essential to clarify the basic terminologies used, such as social movement, women's movement, patriarchy and feminist.

A 'social movement' is defined by Gerlach and Hine (1970: xvi) as "a group of people with a purpose which will bring about change and whose influence is spreading in opposition to the established order in which it originated". Through this definition one
can identify the basic elements of a social movement. First, the subject, who is a collective agent represented by a ‘group of people’. Second, the goal, which is to create definite change in a social world that is no longer compatible with the interests of movement members. Third, this definition includes reference to a specific type of social movement, those that challenge the existing social order, and does not include movements which try to maintain and support the existing social order. Turner and Killian (1972: 245) give a more comprehensive definition of social movements by stating, a “social movement is a collectivity acting with some continuity to promote or resist a change in the society or group of which it is part”. Also, Diani (1992: 13) identifies a social movement as “a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity”. Both Storr (2002: 180) and Byrne (1997: 15) agree with Diani’s (1992) definition that social movements are not formally organized. Byrne (1997) argues that the existence of formal organizations is not a condition of the existence of a social movement, as the existence of formal organizations is a matter that depends on circumstances. Buechler (1993: 223) emphasises that formal organisation is not necessary for a movement to operate efficiently; it is rather its informal networks and organisations that are crucial.

So, when we speak about social movements we focus on forms of collective behaviour as a force for change. For this purpose, a “social movement” is defined in this thesis as a large number of people who come together as part of an organised effort to bring about social change. Networking is usually important to these groups in the achievement of their goals.

The criterion often used in identifying a women’s movement as a social movement is the specified commitment to diminishing gender subordination (Wieringa: 1995, Cited in Al-Atiyat: 2003: 10). Al-Atiyat (2003) criticizes this definition by arguing that it is ‘feminist oriented’. It leads to the exclusion of some conservative groups from being considered a part of the movement. However, and in accordance with Pilcher (1993), feminism does not mean the existence of just one feminist ideology or historical tradition.
If we want to understand feminism properly, Pilcher (1993: 4) argues that we need to keep in mind Abbott and Wallace’s (1990, cited in Pilcher, 1993: 4) view that: “the main difference between the different feminist ideologies lies in which factor(s) they emphasise as the basic cause(s) of women’s oppression. The common ground they share, and what makes them recognisable as feminism, is the centrality of gender in their analyses, in the recognition that differences between men and women are not innate and are, therefore, subject to change”.

According to Smith (1990:1), “feminism is both an ideology and a reform movement seeking to improve the status of women”. Randall (1986: 5) explains, “historically feminism means a wide and changing movement, seeking in various ways to raise women’s social status”. In this way, for the JWM to be discussed as a feminist movement we will need to examine the efficiency of applying this term within the Jordanian context both historically and ideologically. The research data show changeable historical phases and various ideologies adopted by the movement during its life (see Chapter Four). Nevertheless, if we define feminism as “a movement concerned with advancing the position of women through such means as achievement of political, legal, or economic rights equal to those granted men” (Offen: 1988:123), then the JWM would fall within the definition of a feminist movement regardless of the different historical phases it went through, or the different ideologies its various groups have adopted.

A second key concept in analysing the Jordanian social structure and women’s status within it, as well as explaining the nature of hindrances that influence the JWM’s struggle to eliminate women’s subordination, is ‘patriarchy’. Randall (1987: 20), argues, “‘male dominance’ refers to male power over women, as a whole and ‘patriarchy’ is reserved for forms of male power stemming from the authority of the father or male household head”. However, she (1987: 20) adds, “whatever term we use - male dominance, male supremacy or patriarchy – it stands for a far-reaching social subordination of women”. Walby (1990: 20) defines patriarchy as “a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women”. She defines the content of patriarchy by naming six patriarchal structures through which men dominate and exploit women. These are the
patriarchal mode of production in households, patriarchal relations in paid work, the patriarchal state, male violence, patriarchal relations in sexuality, and patriarchal relations in cultural institutions. So, for instance, Walby argues that the state has a systematic bias towards patriarchal interests in its policies and actions. One of the clearest examples is the limited historical tradition of women's participation in parliamentary politics. Another example of the patriarchal nature of the state is its lack of response to male violence against women. Men who rape, batter or molest women are rarely punished by the criminal justice system. Male violence against women is actually a patriarchal structure in itself, but I have linked it to the state because its lack of response almost justifies men's actions and promotes a perpetual cycle of violence. Moreover, Walby (1990) argues that there are two different basic forms of patriarchy which emerge in response to the tensions between capitalist economies and patriarchal household economies: private and public patriarchy. Private patriarchy as a form is distinguished by excluding women from economic and political power, while public patriarchy works by segregating women, for instance, the sex occupational segregation.

According to Pilcher and Whelehan (2004), in spite of the importance and the major role the concept of 'patriarchy' has played in feminist interpretations of gender relations and women's oppression, such interpretations have been criticised for a tendency towards historicism, reductionism, limited conceptualisation of gender relations, universalism and structuralism. Furthermore, these authors contest that even Walby (1990), who tried through her theory of patriarchy to overcome the these criticisms, has not succeeded in developing 'patriarchy' as an explanatory concept beyond giving a more detailed description of it.

As an answer to the critics, Walby (1990: 2) argues, “these criticisms are misplaced, relevant only to a few of the cruder early accounts. On the contrary, the concept and the theory of patriarchy is essential to capture the depth, pervasiveness and interconnectedness of different aspects of women’s subordination, and can be developed in such a way as to take account of the different forms of gender inequality over time, class and ethnic group”.

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The analysis and the use of patriarchy as an explanatory concept is most applicable to contemporary Arab societies and their recent histories and social structures, in particular Jordan. Following Walby, my argument in this particular study is that, in order to understand gender differences and inequalities we need to start with a theoretical tradition which places social relations of gender in a central position. In this particular case study the concept of patriarchy provides the major explanatory context through which we can conceptualise and understand gender inequalities within the Jordanian social structure. Patriarchy, which has been described as a relationship of dominance and subordination is a key analytical concept in this feminist social research.

**Settings: The Jordanian Social Structure**

Jordan is an Arab Middle East country, which shares borders with Syria to the north, Iraq to the east, Israel and the West Bank to the west, and Saudi Arabia to the south and east (for map of Jordan see APPENDIX A). An appreciation of the social structure of Jordanian society is vital to understanding and highlighting women's status within it. In the Arab world in general and Jordan in particular, the social structure can be divided into three main social groups: Bedouin, Village, and City social groups or structures. Analysing the social structure of these societies helps us to understand and analyse women's status in Jordan, which in its turn highlights the social environment in which the JWM fights for equality and women's empowerment. In examining these issues, I provide some background information on the conditions affecting women's life and status in the three different social structures in Jordan.

**The Bedouin Society**

Bedouin society is formed among individuals living in dry areas; so geographically, most of Jordan's Bedouin live in the Jordanian desert in mostly the eastern and some of the south part of the country. Most Bedouins are animal herders, so animal husbandry is their source of livelihood. The tribe is the fundamental social unit. The leadership in the tribe is to the 'Shaikh' who is usually the oldest male (Al-Naqshabandi, 2001).
Bedouin comprise about 7 percent of Jordan’s population (Intern: Eastern Mennonite University, 2004). Historically Bedouins have been nomadic, wandering the desert in search of water and food. However, today only a small minority of Bedouin can still be regarded as true travellers, since many have settled down. Regarding the reasons for the Bedouin settlement, a study by a team from the University of Jordan, highlights drought as a major factor that reduced the country's population of nomadic Bedouins from 220,000 in the 1950s, to a mere 60,000 today. Government has provided them with schooling for their children, medical care and a life that is much easier than the demanding life of the desert (Intern: Saudi Aramco World, 2004). Thus, Bedouin leave of nomadic life could be seen partially as the result of an official settlement policy regarding the urbanisation of its citizens. Alternatively, Bedouin settlement could be seen as a natural response to changing political and economic circumstances. According to Al-Tal (1985), there have been many changes historically in Bedouin society, a main reason for these changes was the institutionalisation of the Jordanian state, which caused changes in Bedouins’ life, who started to leave the desert, and began to live in villages, combining the two lifestyles of desert and village. Despite the fact that many basic characteristics have disappeared such as living in tents and being nomadic, other basic characteristics did not change, such as being a very generous people, their habits of revenge, and their traditions in dealing with women.

In order to have a clearer idea of how the Jordanian population has been distributed into rural and urban areas and the level of urbanisation in the country at key points in time, we can refer to official United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN- HABITAT) data (see table 1.1 & figure 1.1).
Table (1.1): Distribution of Jordanian population by Urban and Rural Area, 1982-2025  
(projected)

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population (000s)</td>
<td>3,833</td>
<td>4,259</td>
<td>6,330</td>
<td>7,371</td>
<td>8,458</td>
<td>9,579</td>
<td>10,735</td>
<td>11,894</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age 0-14 (%)</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65 + (%)</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban population (000s)</td>
<td>2,455</td>
<td>2,895</td>
<td>4,697</td>
<td>5,640</td>
<td>6,628</td>
<td>7,642</td>
<td>8,707</td>
<td>9,794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural population (000s)</td>
<td>1,378</td>
<td>1,364</td>
<td>1,634</td>
<td>1,731</td>
<td>1,830</td>
<td>1,936</td>
<td>2,028</td>
<td>2,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanization level (%)</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>82.3</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Women's status in Bedouin society can be seen in different ways. On the one hand, Al-Qsoos (1936, cited in Al-Naqshabandi, 2001) considers that they have occupied a high and special rank; tribal laws and customs provide that every member of the tribe should protect the tribe's women as they represent the honour of the tribe. On the other hand, Al-Abady (1986) considers that Bedouin women have occupied a low rank in their society, since for Bedouin the word 'woman' is related to ideas of 'cowardice', 'weakness', 'sexuality', and 'libido'. Women in Bedouin society are the means of continuing the progeny. Divorce will be a woman's punishment if she is barren, or even if she is not, and her fate is to give birth to females only (Al-Tal 1985). Al-Qsoos (1936, cited in Al-
Naqshabandi, 2001) argues that Bedouin women are both the sign of weakness and the sign of honour. Therefore, Bedouins believe that men should protect women because they are weak. On the other hand, death will be the Bedouin woman’s destiny if she tries to breach her responsibility of protecting her honour (Al-Tal, 1985).

Describing and analysing the status of women in Bedouin society indicates clearly the association between women and the concepts of cowardice and sex. Certainly some may see this as beneficial for women, as men are responsible for their protection, and they might believe that reproduction is a source of power for women. However, in my view, when women’s value is realised under specific concepts of biological reproduction, sex and honour, women cannot be seen as more than a subordinated group and second-class humans. At this point of discussion, such a viewpoint could be considered radical, or more specifically as that of a cultural-radical feminist who believes that sex and women’s biological nature are men’s access to domination. As explained by Tong (1998) cultural-radical feminists, see a link between sex, female subordination, porn, rape and abuse. Yet, I have to be clear that I do value women’s biological nature as a source of life, but I reject society’s use of this role as a subordination tool, and that is why I promote the stream of belief that, in order to dissolve patriarchy, society must be changed at its core.

Accordingly, one can say that despite the fact that some of Bedouin society’s characteristics have changed, the basic principles and rules that govern the relations between women and men in this society have not. It cannot be denied that in such a society women’s inferior and unequal status is due to male control over women’s bodies. Bedouin men are in charge of taking decisions regarding the number of children their wives should have. Furthermore, men have the right to leave or divorce their wives and get married to another if their fate is not to give birth to males. Also, they have the absolute right to punish women if their virginity is touched, even by rumours. Equally, if we look at economic status in the tribe, we can see that men are the powerful group, they own the resources of wealth (livestock), and women are wage-less shepherds. Only men provide the household with food and goods, whereas women are responsible for domestic work, which is seen as non-productive work. The status of women in this social structure
is a clear illustration of patriarchy as a system which oppresses women through its social, economic and political institutions.

The Village Society

Village people are those who live and work by farming lands and raising animals. Most village people originate from Bedouin roots. It is obviously for this reason that the village society is very much affected by the restricted Bedouin social heritage and traditions. According to Al-Naqshabandi (2001), village society is basically a male society, men are responsible for supporting their families and only men have the right to take the decisions. Although women work beside men in farming in addition to their work in animal husbandry, their work is considered as their duty and not as participation in the production process.

A woman’s situation in village life is again determined by her ability to give birth to males and her obedience to her husband and to his family. As in Bedouin society, a woman represents the honour of her family, and her destiny will be to be put to death at the hands of her relative males if she ‘plays with’ this principle.

A serious problem facing village society is emigration of village people to the city. A main reason for this is that only 30 percent of Jordan’s cultivated land base is irrigated and crop yields are low. So Jordan’s rural population does not press for access to land or to invest in farming because the attractive economic rates of return are found in the non-farm sector (Al-Tal, 1985).

Such facts give a clear sense that there is a serious problem facing not only the village society, but also Jordanian society as a whole. There is no doubting the main reasons for this phenomenon, as Abu- Jaber (1979) points out in his study of ‘Work Attitudes in the Village Society’. He found that most village people are uneducated, and they believe in superstitions. Also, the study points to poor levels of health and low levels of income related to weak economic infrastructure. Taken together these factors make the process of changing traditional attitudes in the village society particularly difficult.
It could be concluded that the influence of the Bedouin society has supported and encouraged the patriarchal nature of village society, and the weak economic and poor educational levels in this society, have made it harder to change traditional ways of thinking. Patriarchy as a social system, and women’s economic dependency are still the main factors that control their status in this society. There is no real difference between Village women and Bedouin women. In fact most Village women are originally Bedouins who continue their traditional role by carrying out a double ‘unpaid’ workload. But rather than being the wage-less shepherds, they became the wage-less farmers in Village society (in addition to carrying out domestic work in both cases). Furthermore, village women are ‘biologically’ dominated, as their role in the ‘reproduction’ process is still a main factor of male domination.

**The City Society**

More than 50 percent of the Jordanian population now lives in the capital city of Jordan, Amman where the institutions of power, authority, wealth, and education are concentrated. This has facilitated the emigration process from the village to the city. For example, according to the Jordanian Department of Statistics, the population in Amman, which is the largest city in Jordan, increased from a few thousand of people in 1920 to 1.752 million in 1997, and to 2.027 million in 2002 (Intern: DOS, 2004).

When we speak about Jordanian cities, it is important to note that power, wealth and education differ from one city to another. However, in general these aspects are more concentrated in the capital Amman, which has been affected by Palestinian emigration more than any part of Jordan. Other Jordanian cities have been more affected by the Bedouin’s and village’s restricted traditions and way of life than Amman.

However, it could be said that although there has been development in the economic and socio-cultural levels in city society, and women have better chances to be educated, and it is easier for them to find paid employment, the general characteristic of the Jordanian society as a patriarchal society is still highly relevant.
Jordan is one of the Arab countries where women have to work hard in order to change their status in a patriarchal social structure, where family, social traditions, the tribal social system, educational system, fundamental religious groups and interpretations, legislation and economic status are the substructures of this patriarchal structure, which force women into roles that lead to their exclusion from the public sphere. Patriarchal societies were not born patriarchal. Patriarchal structures were not born from a vacuum. Patriarchy is a consequence of harmonic relations between multiple institutions, such as religious interpretations, family, economy, education, social traditions and values, and the tribal social system in the case of Jordan (see Chapter Five).

**Thesis Structure**

The thesis is divided into eight main chapters. Chapter one is the introductory chapter. Chapter two discusses the theoretical framework which explains the relations between the women's movement as a 'collective action agent' and the surrounding social structure. Giddens' structuration theory, with the explanation it offers of essential concepts, such as resources, power, and domination was the general framework for this study. As well as a theoretical contribution to the sociology of women's agency, this chapter elaborates a number of important social theories of social movements, such as 'strain theories', 'resources mobilisation theory' (RMT), 'new social movements theory' (NSMT), and 'political opportunity structure theory' (POST). Both 'resources mobilisation' and 'political opportunity structure' were the approaches used, in combination with structuration theory in explaining the emergence of the JWM. My attempt to develop a feminist perspective in sociology through a combination of Giddens' structuration theory and other social movement theories, so that each may throw light on the other, allowed for the examination of several substantive theoretical issues, particularly the nature of power, resources, patriarchy, domination, state, democracy, and politics. I argue that these theories, can contribute in significant ways to sociological and feminist thinking regarding women's movements.

Chapter three deals with the study methodology and data collection techniques. This
chapter explains the adoption of a qualitative approach, and the issues of generalisability, validity and reliability. Also the data sources and data generating techniques, gaining access, the fieldwork setting, research sample selection, operationalisation and administration of interviews, pilot research, and data analysis techniques.

Chapter four discusses the historical development of the JWM, and analyses the main factors that affected its efforts to defend Jordanian women's rights. This chapter departs from existing studies concerning the historical development of JWM by exploring new issues that influenced the JWM development, such as the different historical stages and turning points in the movement's life, the movement's ideologies, resources and facilitators, strategies, and interests, and the relation between specific Arab women's movements and the JWM, especially on the issue of Arab women's legal rights and equality.

In chapter five, under the title of equal opportunities, Jordanian women's rights to education, employment and political participation are discussed. This discussion concentrates on issues concerning the JWM's role in achieving (or not) progress in the previously mentioned areas. At the same time, the discussion is enhanced by analysing any improvement (or lack of improvement) through the general frame of the relation between women and Jordanian social structure. In this context, issues regarding the role of family, reproduction, tribalism, religion, culture traditions, education, and economy are discussed.

Chapter six offers an analysis of the obstacles to the performance of the women's movement in Jordan. These obstacles are divided into two main groups: first, obstacles internal to patriarchy, subdivided into two categories, 'structural obstacles' and attitudinal obstacles'. The structural obstacles are institutional and consist of a patriarchal legislature, patriarchal governmental institutions, and patriarchal judicial system. Political obstacles are the second category of the structural obstacles. Political obstacles include external politics (occupation in particular), and internal politics including political parties, and the process of democratization. Attitudinal obstacles consist of the belief in the
westernization of the movement’s mentality, and the existence of antifeminist agents. This is related to fundamentalism and conservativism in dealing with gender issues. The second group of obstacles are those internal to the structure of the movement itself such as lack of funding, individualism and lack of coordination, lack of voluntary work sense, and insufficient grass rooting.

Chapter seven is a case study of Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal Code that deals with the phenomena of ‘honour killing’ in Jordan. The aim of this chapter is to take on a further step in analysing the role of JWM in the legal change in particular. This case study is chosen as a special example through which we will try to follow up the different themes of thesis.

The Conclusion chapter summarises the main research findings and their implications. Finally, an identification of further work that needs to be undertaken in the area of women’s movement is discussed.
Chapter Two

Theorising Social Movements

Introduction

Since humans are ‘skilled and knowledgeable’ (Layder 1994: 128), it is logical to believe in their creative capability and, as a consequence, to explore different social phenomena, such as social movements, through which people collaborate and pool resources in order to create change in the pre-existing social structure around them. However, adopting such an approach to social relations undoubtedly makes it essential to start the analysis of any social behaviour, and more particularly a collective one, by outlining the relations between two main concepts in sociological analysis. These are ‘agency’ and ‘structure’, which construct a critical duality in any social analysis.

After highlighting the above point it is essential to question the proposed definition of a social movement (see Chapter One); to ask what brings a social movement into existence (the origins of social movements), and to ask to what extent social movements can be seen as agents with the power to create change in society. In particular, and in relation to the question of this thesis, it is important to ask; to what extent can women’s suffrage and efforts to empower women be seen as a social movement with power to change women’s status within the social structure? In particular, how do Jordanian women as third world women who live under double (social and economic) oppression, construct and reorder their world? When, where, and why do they mobilize themselves and emerge as an agent of social change?
Accordingly, this chapter deals with the theoretical approach of the research, which concerns the JWM (as a social movement), and the role it plays in social transformation in general, and legislative change in particular. Since theories of social movements are closely connected with a general understanding of social structure, to analyse social movements separately in abstraction from the social structure would be to limit the analysis. This is not fruitful since it does not allow us to understand the nature of social movements, which is that they are embedded in, grow out of and develop in response to a need to change the existing social structure. For this reason all key theories of social movements are explained within an approach to the principles of social structure and the transformative role of agents within it.

Therefore, this chapter begins with a consideration of the dialectical relations between agency and structure. In doing so, Gidden’s structuration theory is the core element of the analysis, especially the idea of dialectic of control. The chapter then outlines theories concerning social movements, with a review of their uses and limitations beginning with what Marx and McAdam (1994: 78) call ‘Strain Theories’, which are: Mass Society Theory (MST) and the Collective Behaviour Theory (CBT), moving on to Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT), New Social Movements Theory (NSMT) and Political Opportunity Structure Theory (POST). In addition, the chapter sheds light on the main concepts associated with social movements, such as interest, resources and power.

The Agency-Structure Duality
In Understanding Social Theory, Layder (1994) explains that sociological dualisms such as “individual and society”, “agency and structure” and “macro-micro” are not problems inhibiting social understanding; on the contrary, they are instruments that complete each other to help us understand social life. For a considerable number of sociologists, such as Giddens (1979; 1984) and Layder
(1994) the issue of agency-structure pivots on the ways in which human beings both create and affect social life at the same time as they are influenced by the existing social arrangements. Giddens looks to "agency" as human "actions" or "activities", as the word action is concerned with the "socially active nature of human beings" and how people enter into different types of social relations with each other. This interaction between people is essential to build the social structure. On the other hand, social structure is a critical element in shaping peoples' relations. Hence, Layder states (1994: 4), "the action-structure distinction concentrates on the question of how creativity and constraint are related through social activity".

As the subject of my thesis is the creation of change in social structure by a specific agent, that is a 'social movement', and in particular the Jordanian women's social movement, it is essential to explore and understand the nature of the relations between the agents as collective actors and the social structure. To achieve this, Giddens' (1984) 'structuration theory' becomes the core element in this analysis. I begin my discussion with Giddens' conception of action (agency) and actor (agent), and their relation with social (structure). In identifying the concepts of "agency" and "structure", authors use different definitions of the two concepts and analyse the nature of the relations between them in rather different ways. For Layder (1994: 4-5), people are "agents" and the word "agency" deals with the "socially active nature of human beings". The concept of "structure" means "the conventional sense of social relationships which provide the social context or conditions under which people act". And the agency-structure duality implies "the way in which human beings both create social life at the same time as they are influenced and shaped by existing social arrangements".

For Giddens, the transformative capacity of the social actor is a core characteristic of action, and this assumption is central to his theory. The term "agency" refers to "a stream of actual or contemplated causal interventions of
corporeal beings in the ongoing process of events-in-the-world” (Giddens, 1979: 55). In this way, agency does not refer to separate actions that can play a role and interfere in the process of social production and reproduction. Rather, agency is a ‘flow’ of actions taken by the actor who interferes in the already shaped world around him or her. He or she interferes in order to create a change and to transform. At the same time, according to Giddens (1979: 56), we should always be aware that, “at any point in time, the agent could have acted otherwise”.

Giddens defines ‘structure’ as “rules and resources, organized as properties of social systems” (Giddens, 1979: 66). By adopting this definition, Giddens contrasts with conventional approaches such as structural functionalism (emerging from the work of Parsons, 1951), which sees structure as the institutional form of social life or interaction (macro level) (cited in Crossley, 2002: 40 and Layder, 1994: 138). For Giddens, social rules are “formula which enable us to go on in social situations even if we cannot explicitly state what the formulae are in any detail” (Layder, 1994:138). According to Craib (1992: 47) and to Layder (1994:138), resources, for Giddens are divided into two types: “allocative resources” which includes material resources such as ‘land, raw materials, and produced goods’; and “authoritative resources”, which refers to nonmaterial or moral things such as ‘status or hierarchical position’. These kinds of resources generate power for the actor and give him/her the capacity of ‘command’ over and domination of other people. Therefore, these resources are critical sources that shape humans’ transformative capability.

I agree with Giddens’ analysis of structure. Resources represent the energy that agencies depend on when they practise their role in acting in order to produce and reproduce societies. Resources are the fuel which agents need in order to move from the stage of ‘intentions’ to the stage of real action as resources produce ‘power’. There is a significant difference between ‘intentions’ and actual ‘human action’. A real human action implies power, because it means that
the agent is capable of transforming the world around him or her. According to Giddens (1993: 116-118), "the connection of 'action' to 'power' can be simply stated as; action intrinsically involves the application of 'means' to achieve outcomes brought about through the direct intervention of an actor in a course of events, 'intended action' being a sub-class of the actor's doing or refraining from doing".

Also, in his definition of 'power', Giddens states,

*Power* 'represents the *capacity of the agent to mobilize resources* to constitute those 'means'. In this most general sense, 'power' refers to the *transformation capacity* of human action... 'Power' in the sense of the transformative capacity of human agency is the capability of the actor to intervene in series of events so as to alter their course... 'Power' in the narrower, relational sense is a property of interaction, and may be defined as the capability to secure outcomes where the realization of these outcomes depends upon the agency of others. It is in this sense that some have power 'over' others: this is the power of *domination* (Giddens, 1993: 116-118).

One can see that Giddens emphasizes, on the one hand, that power plays a central part in social life and, on the other hand, that an adequate understanding of power depends on an adequate understanding of agency and structure. Following this, we can see that Giddens defines power from two aspects. In the broader aspect, power is a 'capacity'. Thus it is logically connected with agency. Conversely, and in the narrower aspect, power is a 'relational' phenomenon (Layder, 1994: 137). It expresses a relation of dependence between agents emphasising the fact that there are no completely 'powerless' agents. In addition, Giddens believes that to be a social agent is to be able to 'intervene' or get involved in and make a difference to the 'state of affairs' or course of events in the social world. Thus, power in the broader sense refers to this
transformative capacity of the social agent (Giddens, 1985: 7; 1984: 15; 1979: 88).

Two points are worth emphasising here: first, power is implicated in every action, so "the use of power characterizes not only specific types of action but all actions" (Giddens, 1984: 15-16). The second point concerns domination over other social agents. In one sense, as resources are unequally distributed in society they shape relations of dependence between social agents. Alternatively, the successful exercise of power depends upon the obedience of the dominated agent. This assumes that every social agent, including both exerciser and the dominated agent, could have done otherwise. This excludes any possibility of total determination whereby the dominated agent totally loses his/her autonomy. Therefore, there exists a "dialectic of control" (Giddens, 1984: 16).

Under the concept of the 'dialectic of control', Giddens (1984) emphasises that all kinds of human action suggest and involve power, and that power is the capability and ability of the human being to create a change and to transform the world around him/her. Resources determine the degree of power each human or group of people practise over others. However, we cannot say that people are divided into two groups, the totally powerful and the totally powerless. There are always some resources with the inferiors, through which they will try to change their circumstances. According to Layder (1994: 138), Giddens believes that the 'dialectic of control' takes place not only at the individual level, but also at the collective or group level. So, under this critical sociological concept (dialectic of control), and using key conceptual instruments such as 'resources', 'power', and 'domination' or 'control', one can start to think of social movements in general and women's movements in particular as agents or producers of social change. Highlighting this Blumer (1939, cited in Gusfield 1981: 318) states, "social movements are attempts to change existing social relationships, process or institutions".
Giddens (1979: 92) has summarised the nature of relations between resources, domination, and the transformative capacity of the social agent in the following Figure.

**Figure 2.1**

Relation between Resources, Domination and Agents' Transformative Capacity

![Diagram showing the relationship between Domination, Resources, and Transformative Capacity](image-url)


In diagram 2.1 one can see that resources are the central point in the game of social change. Resources are the generators of power needed by any actor to create change and to be capable of transforming the social structure. In the case of women, social inequalities based on gender imply unequal distributions of power and power resources. The issue of power and distribution of resources becomes relevant to the understanding of how women as subordinates become virtually excluded from certain fields of interaction. Economic dependence and, often lack of rights to property or access to finance, low levels of literacy, restricted access to resources and limited knowledge of legal rights have kept women in general, and Jordanian women in particular from participating in and contributing to social change. Their inability to do so derives from a lack of resources which any agent needs in order to generate the power that he/she needs in order to practise his/her role, perhaps or even his/her human right to transform, produce, and reproduce the social world.

For feminist theorists, such as Sapiro,
social and individual goods are very unevenly divided between the sexes. Women in almost all countries have less education than men, and where they achieve equivalent levels of education, segregation by field and therefore skills and market value remains. Women are less likely to be in the labour market. Men and women remain segregated in different sectors of labour market and in jobs of different status within the same sector. Wealth and credit are unevenly distributed. Men and women do not have the same access to physical and mental health, in large part because of socio-political factors (Sapiro, 1981: 704).

Also, Sapiro (1983: 172) and others have argued that, “women’s relegation to the domestic sphere and subordination in the workforce restricts the resources women need to be integrated into politics”.

However, being the powerful or the powerless does not necessarily mean clashing or contradicting with others (individuals or institutions), unless one feels that it is important to act in order to create a change in his/her social circumstances, and this will not happen until a ‘conflict of interests’ takes place. Giddens (1993: 118), states,

It is the concept of ‘interest’, rather than that of power as such, which relates directly to conflict and solidarity. If power and conflict frequently go together, it is not because the one logically implies the other, but because power is linked to the pursuance of interests, and people’s interests may fail to coincide. All I mean to say by this is that, while power is a feature of every form of human interaction, division of interest is not.

Typically, the more resources you have, the more powerful you are and consequently the more capable of effecting change you will be. The outcome of this formula will usually be ‘domination’, which in its turn will back your transformative capacity. However, we should not forget that (and according to
the dialectic of control) the powerless group is not completely hopeless; there are always some resources through which this group will try to weaken the power of the dominant group. In fact, I believe that common interests generate solidarity. Solidarity is a critical source that gives rise to power which in its turn provides agents with the capacity to change. Women brought together can offer each other support, validation and strength and a growing sense of personal awareness, in a way that is otherwise difficult to achieve. At this point in the discussion and regarding the aims of this thesis, the question about women and their interests as a group becomes essential. In order to explore issues relating to the representation of women's interests, it is necessary to define what is meant by 'interest'. Truman's (1951: 33) definition of an interest group as "any group that, on the basis of one or more shared attitudes, makes certain claims upon other groups in society", implies that interests are linked to identity formation and the interaction or interplay of social relations.

In the case of women, one can say that women are clearly identifiable as a group, but when it comes to other elements, such as ‘race’, ‘class’, ‘age’, and ‘ethnicity’ etcetera, it becomes hard to say that women have got a single group identity and, because of this it is hard, if not impossible, to say that women share exactly the same interests. But this does not mean that women have no clear interests to be represented.

Although Sapiro (1981: 705) recognizes divisions among women related to their different social, cultural and economic positions, she identifies as in the interest of all women; “the expansion of rights, liberties, and opportunities for women where these have been denied or inhibited in comparison with those of men”.

I believe that if we reject the existence of shared interests among women it becomes impossible to address the nature of discrimination against women. Moreover, it becomes impossible to explain the existence of a social phenomenon, such as the women's movement. This movement has a crucial
need to weaken the power of men as a dominant group, to give women a sense of their own power, and to improve women’s lives so that they are joined together as a force prepared to struggle together. However, having shared interests is necessary but not always sufficient to motivate action. It is important to identify, respect, and foster these interests if we want to create change and transform relations of male domination and female subordination. Tarrow (1998: 6) emphasises, “the most common denominator of social movements is thus ‘interest’, but interest is no more than an objective category imposed by the observer. It is participants’ recognition of their common interests that translates the potential for a movement into action”. Moreover, as Somerville (1997: 677) states, “social movements are assumed to be expressions of group interests which are generated by socio-economic or socio-cultural positions outside the political terrain on which they are fought out”.

There is no doubt, according to Giddens’ structuration theory, that the action of collective actors, as social movements, has an impact on society and may become the medium for social change. But saying so requires us to address the question of, ‘what brings movements into existence?’ We need to explain the conditions and the ways in which agents act collectively, and we need to investigate the methods they use to create social change.

At this point so-called ‘social movements’ theories need to be explored and then applied (if appropriate) to the social movement under study: the Jordanian women’s social movement. The study of social movement theories is important. Its significance lies in its utility for exploring two of the biggest questions in sociology in general, and Giddens’ structuration theory in particular. The first is the question of social change in general; the second concerns the specific relationship between social structure and social actors’ action. Social movements are located between macro-level social structures and micro-level actions and interactions and serve as a medium of structural change. This thesis will examine the ways different theorists and empirical analysts of social

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movements have addressed these larger questions. These are primarily examined through Giddens' structuration theory taking into consideration that resources, power and domination, which are key elements in Giddens' analysis of the agency-structure duality, are also crucial in the analysis provided by the different social movements theories (whether the resources concerned are economic political or even information and knowledge).

Social Movement Theories

The social science literature on social movements can be classified into four broad groupings: The first, traditional collective behaviour theories, dominated within U.S social science in the 1950s and 1960s and seek answers to questions about the emergence of social movements and individual participation in the psychologies of those involved (Smelser, 1962; Turner and Killian, 1972). These theories are what Marx and McAdam (1994: 78) call 'strain theories'. These include the mass society theory (MST) and collective behaviour theory (CBT). The second group, the new social movements theory (NSMT) is European in origin. The third, resources mobilization theory (RMT) stems from the US Sociology. The fourth, is the political opportunity structure theory (POST).

MST has its origins in the 19th century, in the “structure of feeling” (Williams, 1981) of the European bourgeois mind facing the revolutionary mass. The framework of this structure of feeling as originally used by Kornhauser (1960) concentrates on the accessibility of elites to non-elites and of non-elites to elites. Kornhauser called the society where elites and non-elites are inaccessible “communalistic”. He uses the term “pluralistic” to describe the society in which elites are accessible but masses are not. The “totalitarian” society is one in which the relation is in the opposite way i.e. where elites and non-elites are highly accessible to each other. Kornhauser describes what he calls “mass society”, as a society which he believes will easily collapse into totalitarianism.
because there will be a loss of distance between the governed and the governing. And this will push or encourage masses into political life, which will weaken rational government.

In their discussion of MST as one model to address the question of how and why social movements emerge, Marx and McAdam (1994:79-80) state that in the mass society formulation, “it is widespread social isolation that triggers collective action”, and they add, “the absence of strong integrative organizations weakens the social order and paves the way for social movement”. So under this theory, collective behaviour is caused by a social condition in which people feel isolated from one another and from their communities. Accordingly, these people are more likely to join movements of protest or discontent.

The second variant of strain theories is the CBT. Two of the main advocates of CBT have been Blumer (1951) and Smelser (1962). Blumer (1951:169) states, “the appearance of a new social order is equivalent to the emergence of new forms of collective behaviour”. According to Crossley (2002: 17-18), who has analysed Blumer’s theory of social movements, Blumer views the world as a world of collective behaviour, and in his analysis of the relation between social movements and collective behaviour he has drawn a three stages process. This process starts with “social unrest”, which in turn gives the opportunity for what he calls “elementary collective behaviour” to arise. This stage, which will cause a particular social order to be strained, may give the chance for “elementary collective groups” to develop, out of which movements calling for change may arise. According to CBT, social movements are ‘irrational’ behavioural responses to “structural strains” within the modernising process of differentiation and change.

In his theory of collective behaviour, Smelser (1962) uses a model of six stages, each stage being the precondition for the next. First is “structural conduciveness”, the general “background noise” of modernity, and the wheels
of change shifting the ground slowly from under everyone’s feet. Second is a “structural strain”, a particularly intense instance of disruption within the lives of people thrown up by social change. Third is “collective redefinition”, a contagion-like theory of how a group comes to experience a disruption as a grievance. The theory assumes the status quo is legitimate and so tends to view grievance formation as largely an irrational form of crowd psychology. It is at this point that orderly publics may give way to irrational crowds especially in the presence of the fourth step in the value added process; the existence of “precipitating factors”, real events that get taken up within the “collective redefinition” as evidence of the injustice of the situation and hence the legitimacy of their grievance. After all this Smelser introduces the role of organisation and formal communication. This fifth stage is only introduced as a precondition to the sixth, which is the “institutional response” of rational authorities to the collective behaviour.

Social movements have been seen as a kind of collective behaviour, by a considerable number of sociologists who describe collective behaviour as comprising the study of crowds, fads, disasters, panics and social movements. Turner and Killian (1972: 2-3) state, “the social movement is only one of the forms of human grouping that engages in what the sociologist calls collective behaviour. The crowds, fads, crazes, the public and the social movements are the subject matter of collective behaviour”.

Joseph Gusfield states,

characteristically the field of social movements has been seen as a phase of collective behaviour. The rationale behind this has stemmed from two considerations [...] The first is that movements are viewed as attempts to change existing social relationships, process or institutions. Consequently, they are differentiated from the normal, the status quo, the conventional in belief and action. Collective behaviour serves as a
term of differentiation, dividing such behaviour from 'social organizations', which attend to conventional, normalized thought and action. Secondly, social movements can be conceptualized as a facet of collective behaviour because they represent the action of collectivities - aggregates assuming shared goals and interests and acting in the name of group concerns. The ever-present natural history of social movements - from collective protest to social movement organizations to struggle for success to institutionalization is another form of this paradigm (1981:318-319).

So, according to CBT, social movements are organized forms of collective action. The development of social movements passes through a number of stages. Social unrest springs from an awareness of social inequality and personal discontent. These problems are seen as social problems needing collective action.

A question rises at this point of discussion: is social inequality and the unrest it causes enough to start a collective action and to keep it going? RMT proposed answers to these questions by arguing that a social movement cannot be sustained simply by discontent with existing structures. The social movement must manipulate discontent and efficiently manage it through the aggregation and distribution of resources (i.e. money and labour). For a social movement to succeed, there must be an adequate resource base (Somerville, 1997). This can come from participants directly or from 'sponsors', people or groups outside the social movement who may be sympathetic to the 'cause' (conscience supporters), share common goals with the social group, or have a vested interest in the social movement's success. The social movement must have organisers who can garner this resource support and organise the participants and their activities, utilising existing the social infrastructure to achieve the goals of the movement (Scott, 1990). So, following Giddens' structuration theory, resources play a major role in both the emergence and the development of any social movement, as
resources are the generators of power which any social movement needs to carry on their social transformation role. In other words, RMT focuses on the role of power and power struggles.

RMT is associated with the work of McCarthy and Zald (1973: 1214) who argue, "recent empirical work...has led us to doubt...the assumption of a close link between pre-existing discontent and generalized beliefs in the rise of social movement phenomena". However, Scott (1990: 110; Crossley, 2002: 77) explains that the origin of this theory was Olson's (1965) *The Logic of Collective Action*, in which Olson emphasized, through his economistic model, the importance of 'rational choice theory' in social analysis. Olson assumes that individuals make decisions to participate in collective action only when the value of 'selective incentives' that are dependent on participation is greater than the costs (the rational person is a free rider).

As so far explained, central to RMT is the notion that grievance in society is important, but not so important as suggested by the collective behaviour approach. The central principle of CBT is rejected by McCarthy and Zald (1973: 1215), who state: "we are willing to assume that there is always enough discontent in any society to supply grass roots support for a movement if the movement is efficiently organized and has at its disposal the power and resources of some established elite group". We can see that this theory arose as a response to traditional 'irrational' theories in the field of social movements; that is, theories which conceptualised social movements as emerging from strain in society. For the supporters of RMT, there is always enough discontent and strain in society to inspire or motivate collective action. Therefore we cannot rely on this element of social life to explain the growth or the emergence of a collective action. What counts in the view of Marx and McAdam (1994: 81-82), "is not the motivation to organize, but the organizational resources required to do so. The image invoked is of fertile, but barren, soil that lacks only the life-giving resources needed to produce a movement". So, the main question of this
approach is why some discriminations and dissatisfactions produce social movements and others do not. The answer provided to this approach is summarised in the availability and use of resources. RMT stresses the ways in which movements are shaped by and work within limits set by the resources (especially economic, political and communications resources) available to the group. In the case of Jordanian women (as will be explained in Chapter Four), resources either external or internal, material or non material were crucial in determining both the emergence and development of the JWM and their influence on the reproduction of the society. According to Roseneil (1995: 2), “women make use of the rules and resources of a particular society, and in so doing contribute to its reproduction”.

According to Somerville (1997: 677-678), the RM approach brought attention to three important aspects of social movement theorising: First, the much neglected organisational features of social movements, for example their infrastructural support, their capacity for mobilising resources such as money, time, knowledge, labour, technology, skill and prestige. So, the more the movement attracts supporters, develops communications and garners material resources, the more it is likely to gain political impact. Second, RMT made clear the influence of movements' relationships to other organisations and authorities in the field, both accepting and unsympathetic, on their choice of strategic and tactical political behaviour. Third, influenced by economic theory, RMT stressed the factor of ‘rational choice’, as individuals estimate the costs and benefits of participation in the movement.

Scott (1990) remarks that RMT plays an important role in highlighting the organisational aspects of social movements and the organizational skills of movement leaders in utilizing resources. Also, Somerville (1997: 678) believes that this approach has played an important role in “insisting that the credibility gap between general theories of social movements and the substantive evidence of collective behaviour is addressed. In particular, the detailed case studies for
which the approach is known illustrate the extreme difficulty of treating the participants of social movements as 'carriers' of interests independent of those constructed by the political activities of the movement itself’. Moreover, according to Storr (2002: 185), one of the key strengths of RMT “is its ability to explain the tendency of many social movements to be dominated by middle class people”, as middle class people tend to have greater access to resources. Actually, this merit of RMT provides an analytical insight into the middle-class character of a considerable number of social movements, including the women’s liberation movement in the West. So, for example, in feminist politics, Janes (2002) and Philips (1987) (both cited in Storr, 2002: 185) observe the frequently ‘conflicted status of class’ within the field of feminist politics. Also, Wood et al (2003: 23) state, “it was clear that the main body of the women’s liberation movement were middle-class women”.

However, RMT has been criticised for a range of reasons. For example, Storr (2002) believes that RMT is limited in its analytical techniques, as it concentrates on the economic element. Also the logical consequence of viewing social movements as a middle class phenomenon (whether true or not), led to the neglect of other important elements such as the goals and types of social change the movement required. Storr (2002: 186) also believes that RMT cannot explain the actions of social movements’ activists. She states “RMT cannot include the dimension of meaning in social movements”. Hence this approach limits the motivations of individuals to very fixed limits of rationality and ignores other aspects of motivation.

For some feminist authors, RMT is also a problematic basis for an analysis of feminist social movements in particular. Ferree (1992 cited in Charles, 2000: 49), for example, argues that “the centrality of rational choice theory to RMT constitutes a fundamental gender bias. Thus RMT sees potential participants in social movements as devoid of social characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, class or age. In effect this means that the rational actor, unencumbered by ties of
any sort and free of emotions demonstrates "universal attributes of human nature".

According to Charles (2000, 49) rational choice theory assumes that self-interest, with its problems of costs and benefits is the only motivation for action. Ferree (1992 cited in Charles, 2000: 49) argues that "people are motivated by all sorts of things apart from self-interest and that recognition of this is essential for a theory of social movements". According to Charles (2000: 49) Ferree (1992) believes that "human action is based on other types of rationality such as value rationality and the motivation for action is broader and more diverse than self interest". So, in accordance with Ferree's argument one can say that the value rational element of a woman's movement is the value of women's liberation as an end goal.

As a response to these limitations, a new strand of social movements theory which concentrates on the question of meaning came to existence: new social movements theory (NSMT). In what writers like Touraine (1974) have called 'post-industrial society', intellectuals, the new professionals and students replace the working class as the agents of revolutionary change, and new direct action resistance. That is, social movements replace the organisations of labour as the focus of the political action. Thus, new social movements arise not from relations of production and distribution but within the sphere of reproduction of the life world, hence issues of resource distribution are said to be irrelevant to them (Kriesi et al, 1995: xix). So, the structural location of new social movements is reflected in their social base, which is no longer the working class, but the new middle class, whose activism is explained by their relatively high levels of education and their access to information (Offe, 1985). In this way, new social movements are class based, but their base is middle class rather than working class.

NSMT sees social movements as 'struggles over information' (Storr (2002: 188). According to Touraine (1981) and to Melucci (1989), the spread of
information technology and knowledge in advanced capitalists societies is a major resource that promotes new social movements to challenge the dominant cultural codes and social world. Melucci (1989: 75) states, “new movements challenge and overturn the dominant codes upon which social relationships are founded. These symbolic challenges are methods of unmasking the dominant codes, a different way of perceiving and naming the world”. In this context Melucci (1989: 76-77) believes that this type of resource makes hidden power relations visible and consequently negotiable, which is a main challenge to the collective actor.

Scott (1990: 16-17) clarifies the main characteristics of new social movements when he explains that new social movements are “primarily social and cultural in nature and secondarily, if at all, political”. Second, new movements are “a part of civil society, they ‘bypass the state’ as challenging the state is not their direct concern”. Third, new social movement’s way or method of change is through achieving a ‘new life-style’ by challenging traditional values. So, political action is not the means of achieving their objectives.

NSMT has been criticised on several counts. First, Scott (1990; and Tarrow, 1998) wonder about what is new in new social movements. They argue that empirically new social movements differ significantly from each other and they are connected with the movements of the past. Theoretically, in her study of the women’s peace movement at Greenham in England, Roseneil (1995) argues that the approach of new social movements ignores what is specific in the women’s movement, for it disregards and excludes its critiques on patriarchy. She argues that the changes that are invoked are changes in capitalism, industrialism or modernity; there is no mention by any of the new social movement theorists of changes in gender relations and thus no means of explaining the emergence of feminist social movements. Roseneil (1995: 15) argues, “this approach is fundamentally flawed by its exclusive attention to changes in capitalism, and by its failure to analyse changes in patriarchal social relations.” Second, NSMT
claims that issues of distribution are of no concern to new social movements. This claim could be true for some social movements in advanced industrial societies in the developed world, but the case is different for women’s movements in the third world where a large number of populations are still suffering material shortage (Charles, 2000: 46). This means that the distribution of both material and non-material resources is crucial in determining the distribution of power within society.

Political opportunity structure theory (POST) is closely connected to RMT, but looks more broadly at the political context in which movements mobilize their resources. Kriesi et al. (1995: xiii-xiv) state, “the mobilization capacity of social movements is to a large extent determined by the country-specific political cleavage structures”. POST focuses less on the resources brought to bear by a movement and more on its interaction with the political system. Actions and attitudes of government are the most important indicators of success. The political opportunity approach to social movements perceives movements’ activity as very much affected by changes in the political opportunity structure. Two of the foundation stones in this approach were Eisinger (1973) and Tilly (1978, cited in Tarrow, 1998). Tarrow (1998: 4) defines social movements as “collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities”. From his definition of social movements, one can see that the theory of collective action is a core element in understanding the phenomenon of social movements. However, at the same time, Hardin (1982; 1995, cited in Tarrow: 1998: 3-4) influenced Tarrow’s approach to social movements by arguing that “collective action is not an abstract category that can stand outside of history and apart from politics….social movements have power because they challenge power holders”.

In his discussion of “contentious politics and social movements”, Tarrow (1998: 17-18) asks a question; “why do waves of movements emerge in some periods
and not in others?” As an answer to this question, he states; “to this dilemma political scientists and politically attuned sociologists proposed an answer: the variations in political structure and workings of the political process”. In his analysis of Tarrow’s (1998) work, Crossley (2002: 111) states, “the main stable factors in an opportunity structure involve the strength and centralization of the state, as well as the forms of repression it is able and prepared to use”. So, according to Tarrow (1998, cited in Crossley, 2002: 111), the level of repression used by the state against social movements varies, as the state might be more willing to use oppressive measures with right groups, as government and police “feel a greater force of legitimation behind them in relation to their efforts to control [them]”.

Similarly, Eisinger (1973: 12) states, “the manner in which individuals and groups in the political system behave, is not simply a function of the resources they command, but of the openings, weak spots, barriers, and resources of the political system itself’. ‘Governmental level of responsiveness’ is a critical notion for Eisinger (1973: 12), as he argues,

where the government is demonstrably responsive to citizen needs and demands, the structure of opportunities is relatively open. There exist chances for diverse groups to exercise influence through delegates on representative bodies and influence appears to elicit government action. Where formal or informal power appears to be concentrated and where government is not responsive, the opportunities for people to get what they want or need through political action are limited. The opportunity structure is relatively closed.

Lovenduski and Randall (1993: 15) state that, “the way in which a social movement becomes institutionalised will to a significant degree, depend on what opportunities or constraints are presented by the political system as a whole”. They illustrate this by suggesting that early 1980s British feminism was affected
by the changeable political structure. They (1993: 15) argue; “the political opportunity structure for feminism in Britain had altered. Perhaps the most important manifestation of this alteration was the fact that the Labour Party and the trade unions, in their hour of need, became much more receptive to feminist arguments”. Similarly, in her case study which covers the women’s movements in Chile. Baldez (2002: 206) argues, “women’s movements coalesce when the political system provides an opportunity - specifically, when realignment brings about new alliances among political elites. At that point, female political entrepreneurs can exercise considerable initiative, using women’s exclusion from political decision making to frame their claims in gender terms”.

In his argument about the relation between state and social movements, Goldstone (2003:12) states, “we usually think of social movements as seeking to influence states, but the reverse is also true- states often act to influence the reception of social movements. We typically think of states as responding to movements by repression or efforts to maintain state authority”. According to Tarrow (1998: 4), social movements have power because “they challenge power holders”. The JWM was not flying in the wind; it was part of a developing society. In other words, to understand any social movement, we must relate it to the changing political opportunity structures, which accompanied its life course. For instance, in the case of Jordan, as we have explained in chapter One and will be explained further in chapter Four, in the light of the POST not only the JWM aimed to influence the state, but the reverse was also true, the state acted to influence the reception of the JWM. This was through its constant intervention to control the Jordanian feminist agenda, which facilitated a kind of state feminism. The state intervention started in early 1980s to eliminate the independent women’s organisation and replacing it with a governmental organisation (the General Federation for Jordanian Women) under which all other women’s organisations were supposed to be registered as members.
Moreover, the origins of the JWM lie in the nationalist wave and particularly the anti-Israeli occupation movement of the late 1940s. This politically characterised emergence of the JWM expressed broad critiques of Jordanian society. Thus the JWM came into being partly as a response to the political opportunity provided by the general patriotic political atmosphere, and partly because of the availability of certain resources such as the support of other Arab women’s movements (the Egyptian movement in particular), and the existence of a number of young educated women who realised that the freedom of their freedom as women was no less fundamental than the freedom of their countries was. Moreover, a considerable number of these women, such as the head of the first women’s union in Jordan, were members of the socialist party which indirectly inspired the women’s movement at that time. Therefore, the 1940s and 1950s JWM cannot be seen or analysed independently of the political context in which it emerged.

After highlighting the major dimensions of the ‘political opportunity structure’ approach, it becomes essential to try to explore the relation between the JWM as a social movement and the state. This is clearly explained through the review of the historical development of the JWM in later chapter four, and the obstacles facing the movement in chapter six.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have tried to give a sufficient explanation of the relation of agency-structure in social life. I began by shedding light on Giddens’ ‘structuration theory’, and then moved on to cover the more specific question that deals with this particular research: how to theorise social movements in general and women’s movement in particular. Through reviewing these theories, starting with strain theories and ending with political opportunity structure
theory, I came to the conclusion that there is no single best approach within which to analyse the development of the JWM. The many approaches to the explanation of the phenomenon of social movements suggest that no one is able to explain everything. All of the approaches may be appropriate and useful in their local sphere, but they either stress specific types of social movements or put all attention on a single aspect of the phenomenon of social movements and to the neglect of others. Thus, each approach has its own merits and its own limitations.

Strain theory may have a point since, in some cases, movements can be unreasoned as angry responses to conditions of alienation; or they may, as mobilization theories argue, be functions of oppressed groups recognizing the injustice of their situation and coming to believe in their collective capacity to aggregate resources, and re-order things through organization and action. RMT emphasises the interaction between resource availability, the goal preferences of the movement and the entrepreneurial activities of the organisers in mobilising participants and supporters. NSMT rejected the traditional economics and industrial analysis which RMT is based on. NSMT stresses that a social movement theory, which does not take account of the fundamental changes taking place in society, or of the changes in the nature of social movements themselves, is missing a number of new social movement's analytical aspects.

Under the general framework of Gidden's structuration theory and with the centrality of resources and dialectical relations to his approach, I would argue that both RMT and POST make more sense than the strain theories or NSMT when applied to the JWM in particular and the developing world in general. This is because in this context issue of resources distribution and political context still play a crucial role in determining the power relations. This takes into account Roseneil's (1995: 31) argument that, "neither the collective behaviour nor the new social movements approaches address the processes of mobilization and movement formation, nor the construction of collective
identity. RMT, on the other hand, is exclusively concerned with analysing these processes”. Some might argue that the focus of each of these theories is different, as RMT concentrates on resources (especially economic), whereas POST concentrates on the openings, obstructions, and resources of the political system. However, through the review of the case of JWM in the following chapters, it will become clear that both theories (RMT and POST) support each other in explaining the emergence and the development of the JWM. Actually we cannot separate the importance of resources and facilitators to the movement from the political context in which the movement mobilized these resources.
Chapter Three

Research Methodology and Data Collection Techniques

Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology and describes the instruments and data collection procedures used in the study. The main aim of the chapter is to discuss the research process through which data on the role of JWM in empowering Jordanian women in general, and changing Jordanian women’s legal status in particular, were obtained. More specifically, the chapter consists of the following: the types of data sought; the adoption of a qualitative approach; the issues of generalisability, validity and reliability; data sources and data generating techniques; the data collection process, comprising in depth semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis; the process of gaining access; the research setting; research sample selection; piloting the research; researcher-researched power relations; data analysis; and some of the problems and ethical dilemmas encountered during the field research.

Study Problem and the Choice of Data Sought

Arab women in general have suffered from discrimination in different areas of life, such as the labour market, political participation, and legislation. For a long time, aspects of Jordanian legislation have consolidated the social view of women as a second-class group. Over the last ten years, important legislative changes have taken place in this respect. For example, as reported by the Ad-Dustour newspaper (January 29, 2003), the Jordanian Council of Ministers has accepted an amendment to the Jordanian Election Law in a way that ensures...
better political representation for women in the Jordanian Lower House (house of deputies), provided that this is time limited (i.e. for a limited number of the parliamentary sessions)\(^1\). According to this amendment, a ‘quota’ system will be introduced for parliamentary elections with six seats assigned to those women who receive the highest votes. According to the Jordan Times newspaper (January 5, 2003), the Secretary General of the Jordanian National Committee for Women’s Affairs (JNCW), Amal Sabbagh, welcomed this step and said: “experience has shown us that we need to break this psychological barrier. The only way to accomplish it is to have a quota for a limited period”. The Secretary General of the Jordanian National Forum for Women (JNFW), May Abul Samen, said:

"Social and cultural beliefs, in addition to the social upbringing that locates a woman's place in the home, and the lack of financial resources for female candidate's campaigns, have all contributed to the repeated failures of women to reach the Lower House”.

In this context, the question of what social forces have the power to end the second-class status of women, and share a common interest in the fight for women's emancipation is essential.

Consequently, the types of data sought through this research were those which shed light on the factors behind Jordanian women’s social inferiority and the historical role played by the JWM in creating positive changes in Jordanian women’s lives since the 1940s. Data were sought which enabled me to explore the extent to which changes have been associated with the international obligations on Jordan (as a developing country) to improve its populations’ social and legal status and the extent to which women have benefited from this.

\(^1\) The lower house, in conjunction with the senate house, initiates debates and votes on
By reviewing these study goals (outlined in detail in Chapter One), it is important to note that this exploratory research intends to examine the experiences, perceptions, interpretations, beliefs, and attitudes of different members of the JWM, and members of other organisations in relation to this movement, such as national human rights organizations, and UN agencies. Qualitative methodology was felt to be appropriate to this aim.

The Adoption of a Qualitative Approach

While it is true that a quantitative approach could be utilised for some purposes within this area for example to explore other aspects of the women’s movement, it is less appropriate for the specific research questions of the present study. This study seeks to explore the perspectives of key agents in the change process. A quantitative approach would have been unable to ascertain deeper underlying meanings and explanations (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Qualitative research allows the researcher to explore the depth of knowledge of a particular phenomenon. Moreover, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) assert that in contrast to qualitative studies, quantitative research emphasises the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, but not processes. This study investigation of the processes used by the agent (the JWM) in order to create the desired social change is an essential element. In addition, qualitative and quantitative designs contrast in their goals and methods (see APPENDIX D for a summary of the main characteristics of qualitative and quantitative research approaches).

For this research, the key concepts, which I am concerned with are ‘meaning’, ‘definitions’, and ‘changing processes’. Silverman (1997: 12) suggests a clear distinction between qualitative and quantitative approaches based on pragmatic issues. He claims, “if you want to discover how people intend to vote, then a
quantitative method, like a social survey, may seem the most appropriate choice. On the other hand, if you are concerned with exploring people’s wider perceptions or everyday behaviour, then qualitative methods may be favoured”.

According to Bryman (1988), one of the fundamental characteristics of qualitative research is its commitment to viewing events, actions, norms, and values, from the perspective of the people who are being studied. In this study, senior and junior members of Jordanian women’s organizations, parliamentary representatives, ministers, lawyers, political party members, human rights organisation members, and UN agency members’ perspectives on the JWM are a major source of data. A further characteristic of the qualitative method is the opportunity of obtaining descriptive data from the participants regarding the processes studied. One of the main purposes of this research is to obtain detailed descriptions of the historical emergence of the JWM (as a social movement) and its role in empowering women in Jordan. The reason for obtaining such descriptive detail is to provide a backdrop whereby events and situations can be viewed within a social context. Qualitative research involves a preference for contextualism in its commitment to understanding events, perspectives, behaviour, etc. in their context (Bryman, 1988).

In spite of the fact that qualitative approaches facilitate the collection of in-depth and critical views of research participants and provide rich and descriptive data, there are issues of reliability and validity which need to be explored. It is therefore essential to explain how these issues can be addressed in the study.

**Generalisability and Validity**

In all research methods, the concepts of generalisability (reliability) and validity represent the criteria through which the quality of the research is judged. In the current context, there is an ongoing debate about whether these criteria are appropriate when carrying out qualitative research on the social world.
When qualitative research is carried out in natural settings the issue of
generalisability comes to the surface. The issue of generalisability in terms of
qualitative research outcomes is indeed a matter of debate. The issue is whether
the outcomes of qualitative research can be applied to other people and/or to
other settings. It can be argued that research cannot always be generalisable, as
all research findings are dependent on the characteristics of their settings.
Ethnographic researchers have an in-depth view of their subject matter, and
because of this they can reach an unusually comprehensive understanding. This
understanding, it might be argued, is less widely generalisable than results based
on quantitative data. In this regard, as Hammersley (1992: 91) points out,
“generalisation from a study of a single case (or a small number of cases) to a
large population is a legitimate means of making ethnographic findings
generally relevant. Such generalisation does not necessarily require the use of
statistical sampling techniques; though these should, of course, be used where
appropriate”.

This research is exploratory; the generalisability of people’s views was not the
priority as much as covering and exploring the different aspects and dimensions
of a specific problem or phenomenon. Thus, this research aimed to identify and
contact specific kinds of people who had really lived and shared effectively in
creating or trying to create positive changes in Jordanian women’s status,
especially in the legal sector. Furthermore, this study does not claim to be
generalisable except in relation to the particular case study, which is the JWM.
So, generalisability beyond this case was not a matter of concern.

As for the issue of validity (or credibility), validity refers to the extent that an
empirical study indicates adequately or sufficiently reflects the real meaning of
the concept under consideration (Babbie, 2001). Whatever the approach adopted
by the researcher, the main goal is to demonstrate that the research was
conducted in a way which ensures that the subject of the enquiry was accurately
identified and discussed (Robson: 1993). In this research I was able to ensure
the highest validation levels through different methods. First, my experience as a member of Women's Studies Programme at the University of Jordan, and as a lawyer gave me confidence in my understanding of the culture within the research setting which helped me to invest my own personal identity in developing a non-hierarchical relation with the respondents. Moreover, this allowed me to obtain (as far as I am sure) full and sincere responses. Indeed, I claim a high level of validity for my findings because of, not despite, my own involvement in the JWM. As Davidson and Layder (1994: 118) point out, "the interview is a social encounter, and how the respondent answers questions will depend to some degree upon what the respondent and interviewer think and feel about each other".

Secondly, it is assumed that the use of different methods (data sources triangulation) of data collection would enhance validity (Robson, 1993). Social researchers generally want their indicators to be valid as well as reliable (Babbie, 2001). In order to increase the validity and reliability of the research, researchers collect different sources of data. The 'triangulation method' increases the validity of data. Testing the research instruments is another strategy that qualitative researchers use to avoid the criticism related to validity and reliability issues (Robson, 1993, Babbie, 2001). These considerations were taken into account in the research design of this study, and these are described in the following section.

Data Sources and Data Generating Techniques

In this study, in order to improve the quality of data and hence the validity, different data sources, plus multiple data collection methods were employed as a means of triangulation. This section describes both of these elements.
Triangulation in Qualitative Research

In order to reduce the probability of misinterpretation of data, qualitative researchers apply various procedures, known as ‘triangulation’. Denzin (1984) outlines four types of triangulation:

- **Data sources triangulation**: when the researcher looks for the data in different contexts and sources.

- **Investigator triangulation**: using several researchers to investigate the same phenomenon.

- **Theory triangulation**: when investigators with different viewpoints interpret the same results.

- **Methodological triangulation**: when several approaches to data collection are applied to generate confidence in the meaning of and interpretation of data.

Robson (1993) argues that triangulation in qualitative data provides a means of testing one source of information against other sources. He explains that if two sources give the same message about the data, then to some extent, they cross-validate each other. If there is dissimilarity, its investigation may help in explaining the phenomenon of interest. In brief, it improves the quality of data and in consequence the validity and accuracy of findings.

In this research, ‘data source triangulation’ and ‘methodological triangulation’ were employed. First, I was able to triangulate across views expressed by different participants (heads and junior members of Jordanian women’s organizations, parliamentary representatives, ministers, lawyers, political party members, human rights organizations members, and UN agency members).
Interviews were designed for this (data source triangulation). The reason for including these different people as a source of data in-depth interviews is to obtain rich data about the phenomena under study and to support the data to make it more valid and reliable by making comparisons between the views of the different participants. Secondly, by using document analysis and interview techniques methodological triangulation was achieved.

Data Resources
During the course of the fieldwork, the research data were collected from the following resources:

People: specifically, people’s experiences, accounts, interpretations, memories, opinions, understandings, thoughts, and ideas relating to the research goals and questions.

Through my field research, I interviewed 31 respondents. Of these, 28 were women in different positions. Some of them occupy senior positions, starting from her Royal Highness Princess Basma, and then a number of ministers, Upper and Lower Council members, heads of women’s unions, women’s forums, and UN agency members. The other women respondents were in less senior positions, such as members of the general corps, and the executive body of women’s organisations. In addition, three male respondents were interviewed, one the head of the Jordanian Society for Human Rights (JSHR), the other two, the Vice President of the Jordanian National Centre for Human Rights (JNCHR), and a lawyer in this Centre’s legal unit.

In most of the interviews a pre-prepared semi structured interview guide was followed, and in most cases, any interesting or unexpected issues that arose were raised in subsequent interviews with other respondents and as a result, interviews became more comprehensive as the fieldwork progressed. For example, concepts like ‘Constitution Court’, and ‘feminization of poverty’ were
interesting issues that arose during the course of interviewing some informants. Discussing such issues with the informants enriched the quality of the interviews.

In the course of the interviews, an attempt was made to ensure that information obtained addressed the research aims, but respondents were allowed to dwell on issues as they chose. I followed Burgess's (1982: 107) advice to “probe deeply, to uncover new clues, to open up new dimensions of a problem and to secure vivid, accurate inclusive accounts”. Consequently, the length of the interviews varied, ranging from one hour to three hours, with the majority over an hour in length. However, two of the 31 interviews, for different reasons explained later in this chapter, were less than an hour in length. Interviews with some of the key informants took place over several short sessions, because of time constraints and the schedules of the informants.

*Documentary Sources:* documents are one of the major data sources in this research, as they yielded information which could not be obtained otherwise. Documentary sources are used as a reference for both historical and contemporary events that I was not able to obtain by other means (Lofland & Lofland, 1984: 12). Maykut and Morehouse (1994) point out that these sources of data include such things as personal documents for example, diaries, letters, and autobiographies, and public documents such as written media, photographs, films, and video-tapes. In the present research, documentary sources include media products (newspaper archives in particular), the Jordanian equivalent of Hansard, State official documents, and private official documents. These collectively provide important comments, interpretations, and explanations of social development in Jordan in general and Jordanian women’s legal and social status in particular, and the role played by the JWM in creating positive changes in Jordanian women’s status are addressed. These documents were available through various organisations in Jordan, such as the Jordanian newspaper archives, NGOs dealing with women’s causes, the Jordanian Parliament
equivalent of Hansard, National Human Rights Organisations, UN agencies in Jordan, the governmental Department of Statistics, and the respondents themselves.

In order to assure validity and reliability as far as possible when sampling the newspaper archives, I took into consideration the importance of a systematic approach to sampling methods. Taking into consideration that there are a number of newspapers in Jordan and the large number of volumes each one has, I decided to choose the Ad-Dustour Newspaper, as this newspaper is the oldest official newspaper in the recent history of Jordan. The first volume of this newspaper was published in March 28th, 1967.

In order to get, as far as possible, a representative sample of the newspapers, a 'dual strategy' was used. First, sampling by dates. A systematic sample of reasonable intervals of the newspaper based on each volume was sampled. 5% of 13010 volumes, which amounted to almost 651 newspapers, were sampled by dates. The population was the newspapers’ volumes from March 28th 1967, up to 1990. After this year the newspaper began to collect all articles related to women’s issues in a specific file, which I was able to access. Second, sampling by key known events. A number of the newspaper articles were chosen depending on key known events/dates, such as the “women’s international day”, March 8, 2003. In addition, newspaper articles were also collected from women’s unions, as I found these to be a very important source of information, especially those dealing with the activities of the women’s movement in Jordan.

**Data Collecting Techniques: The Construction of Research Instruments**

After specifying the resources through which I was able to collect and generate data, the question of ‘how’ data were generated is necessary. The best way to address my research questions was by conducting in-depth qualitative field research in Jordan. This approach allowed for the emergence of the rich and comprehensive data that are necessary to address the research problem in its
breadth and depth. The interview was used as the primary source of data collection. Like other qualitative researchers, I would emphasise that, "it is not always possible to specify in advance what questions are appropriate or even important to any given social grouping before involvement with that group" (Hitchcock and Hughes: 1995: 159). Thus, in-depth, semi-structured interviews, characterized by a relatively informal style of conversation (as there was no structured list of questions, but rather a range of themes and issues) were conducted. For this reason, a semi-structured interview guide was designed for in-depth interviews. During the course of field research, I was able to conduct interviews with 31 informants (the selection of informants will be discussed in following section), who had worked individually or through organizations as an effective part of the JWM and with other people who represented National Human Rights organizations, and the international UN agencies in Jordan.

So, the research questions were addressed by generating data from those people, who were expected to have sufficient knowledge, experience and information to answer. Therefore, interviews as an "interaction between the interviewer and interview subject in which both participants create and construct narrative versions of the social world" (Miller and Glassner, 1997: 99) formed the most appropriate method to generate data.

It was anticipated that using a face-to-face interviewing method would result in a more in-depth understanding of the ideas and perceptions of the informants than any other way. Dunne (1995: 7) relates, "face-to-face interviewing is the most satisfying way of conducting an interview because your interviewee has set aside a specific amount of time to see you and because you have the opportunity to delve deeper into your subject and get more information than is usually the case in a telephone interview".

As mentioned above, ‘investigator triangulation’ is a means of triangulation that helps to improve data validity (Denzin, 1984). However, according to Bell
(1999: 139), "there is always the danger of bias creeping into interviews, largely because, as Selltiz et al. (1962: 583) point out, 'interviewers are human beings and not machines', and their manner may have an effect on the respondent. Where a team of interviewers is employed, serious bias may show up in data analysis, but if one researcher conducts a set of interviews, the bias may be consistent and therefore go unnoticed". In this study, and in order to minimize any possibility of bias, I conducted all of the research interviews myself. One of the advantages of semi-structured interviews lies in their ability to help minimise the bias of the interviewer and lead to easier analysis of data. The reason for this is, as in any qualitative research, "interviewers are far less controlling than survey interviewers, and the interview is a far more flexible and responsive tool" (Davidson and Layder, 1994: 122). Regarding semi structured interviews in particular, Hitchcock and Hughes (1995: 158) argue, "semi structured interviews are 'context independent' and free from influence of the interviewer so that a more objective view of the social world of the respondents emerges". This is why interviews provide high quality data. As a result, the semi-structured interview method, since it is likely to produce high quality data, which is due to greater flexibility and freedom, was chosen to draw out opinions from informants. Drever (1995: 2-3) asserts, "interviews give high-quality data...you can explain any ambiguities and correct any misunderstandings of your questions, and if you are not sure about the answer, you can probe for clarification. As a result, you can expect to get a complete set of high quality data, from all your interviewees, and covering all your questions".

During the course of fieldwork, and when interviewing members of the Women’s Federation in some cities outside Amman, such as Jerash in the North of Jordan and Karak in the South, a particularly useful unplanned data gathering technique transpired, through which I was able to get a great deal of information. It was a form of unarranged, 'focused groups' interviews. That is, when I met with the heads of these branches of the Federation in those cities, I found that respondents had invited a number of the branch members to attend
and share in the interview process. Consequently, I thanked them for their attendance and I explained the topic and the main goals of my research to them, and asked them to share and speak about each point we would discuss during the interview.

Two group interviews were conducted, the first was in Jerash (North of Jordan), and the second was in Karak (South of Jordan). As I was aware that these sessions were a one-time occurrence (as it would not have been easy to travel to these places again), it was critical that all members participated as much as possible. The sessions generated useful information and were tape-recorded, as it was not practical to count on memory.

Open-ended questions were used throughout the interviews (both one-to-one and focused groups interviews), as these types of questions allow for comprehensive and deep information to be collected. Stacey (1969: 79-80) states, “open-ended questions are considered a problem for analysis, considering the mass of different answers, but they are still the appropriate type of questions in any research which aims to explore and explain the experiences and interpretations of the research respondents”. On the other hand, I was prepared to clarify questions and to reduce any misunderstanding.

Gaining Access

While developing the research, I was aware of the inherent difficulties that would be incurred in negotiating access to interview people who could be considered as ‘unique’, given that they occupy very important and sensitive positions in Jordan.

During the course of the fieldwork, I noticed that even under normal circumstances, carrying out research on powerful groups is difficult, as Spencer (1982) points out after his study of bureaucratic elites at West Point. It was
necessary to negotiate access with the gatekeepers who are authorized by the respondents to express their will in providing people with access to interview them, and are therefore vital in terms of access (Argyris, 1969 cited in Punch, 1986: 22). Punch (1986: 22) states, "the determination of some watchdogs to protect their institution may, ironically, be almost inversely related to the willingness of members to accept research". I found that it was almost impossible to arrange meetings or appointments with ministers, members of higher and lower councils, heads of women's institutions, and human-rights institutions in Jordan, by telephoning the secretaries of those people, as in most cases, when I explained that I was a Ph. D student, the secretaries tried to procrastinate or even apologize to me. So, I realized that being defined as a student was not helpful in the matter of gaining access, as students may not be taken seriously.

The continual frustration with the process of gaining access began to feel insurmountable. However, attending the 'Arab Women's Political Participation Conference', which was convened in Amman between the 31st of May to the 2nd of June 2003 (during my field research period) helped me to overcome much of the problem. There I met most of the heads of these institutions personally, and had the chance to talk to them directly, explaining to them the importance of my research and the necessity for me to meet them. As a result of this, most of the people I spoke to provided me with their consent to be interviewed, and from there I started to work effectively.

In other cases, I contacted the respondents by telephone, either personally or through their secretaries and arranged for a meeting. Moreover, as I adopted a snowball sampling strategy, some of my initial respondents facilitated me in gaining access to other respondents, by contacting them and explaining to them my research topic and goals. For example, the General Secretary of the Jordanian National Forum for Women (JNFW) helped me to gain access to interview Nuha Alma'ыта, who is an ex head of the General Federation for
Jordanian Women (GFJW), and an ex member of the lower council in the Jordanian parliament.

Gaining access to documentary resources, and newspapers in particular, was no less frustrating than gaining access to the people themselves. First, there was insufficient cooperation from data gatekeepers, who believed that it is not possible to search more than 13000 newspapers. After a number of visits, trying to explain to the person in charge in the Ad-Dustour newspaper archive that the newspapers would be sampled, he agreed to work with me, under the condition of not working more than half an hour a day, as he believed that searching through the microfilm would affect our vision. Searching in the newspaper archive through the original paper files was impossible, since these files were not properly organized by volumes and dates. Also, copying from these files was not permitted. Disappointed, and knowing that this would be time and financially consuming, I accepted his offer. Luckily, one of the newspaper archive employees heard our conversation, and when I was leaving the newspaper building, followed me and offered his help by working with me for longer hours daily. Realising that my chances of securing better access through the main gatekeeper were bleak, and bearing in mind what Hoffman (1980, cited in Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983) points out, that access to influential elites can be obtained through personal contacts, I was encouraged to accept this employee's offer.

Research Setting

The fieldwork took place between the 1st of May 2003 and the end of October 2003. The research aims determined the location where I conducted the field research: It obviously had to be in Jordan, and in particular in Amman, the capital city of Jordan, where most of the women's movement organisations, human rights institutions, and UN agencies are located. However, as I was
interested in studying the influence of the women’s movement, not only in Amman but also in Jordan as a whole, I found it essential to interview people representing this movement in different geographical areas of Jordan. In order to identify respondents outside Amman, I referred to the two main unions of women in Jordan currently, the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW) and the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU). Through these Unions I was able to identify the locations of their branches outside Amman. Actually, these Unions have branches in almost every city in Jordan.

When we speak about the cities of Jordan we should keep in mind that the main city is Amman; other cities – especially in the South of Jordan such as Ma’an and Al Karak, and in the East such as Al Mafraq, are still cities which have more of a feeling of or atmosphere of Bedouin and village life, than city life. Therefore, I decided to conduct the field research in a number of the Jordanian cities such as Al karak in the South, Jerash in the North, Salt (Balqa) and Madaba in the centre, and Mafraq in the East (for the map of Jordan see APPENDIX A). Interviews were conducted with members of the General Federation for Jordanian Women (GFJW) branches in these cities. The reason for selecting these cities was primarily convenience, in terms of their proximal geographical location from my residential base (in Salt) during fieldwork. In this way I hoped to have covered the different attitudes in Jordanian society in general, and in the women’s movement in particular.

Research Sample Selection

In this section, the strategy for sample selection and the procedure of selecting participants for the interviews will be explained.
Study Population
As I define the JWM as ‘a movement for social change that includes women and men working through feminist and non-feminist organizations, who are interested in creating major changes in gender relations in the society through achieving women’s rights in every possible way’, my potential study population was individuals – males or females - who had been involved in the Jordanian women’s cause and their right to have a better legal system.

Study Sample
In the absence of a formal list of JWM members, there was no sampling frame from which I could select a representative sample. Moreover, as my aim through the field research was to meet and interview people with specific characteristics i.e. those who had a direct insight into the efforts undertaken in Jordanian society in order to create positive changes in women’s legislative, economic, and social status in Jordan, it was not necessary to obtain a random sample of respondents.

Thus, I chose, for example, to interview her Royal Highness Princess Basma, who is a member of the Royal Family that has strongly supported the Jordanian women’s cause. Also, heads of women’s organizations, such as the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), the General Federation for Jordanian Women (GFJW), the Jordanian National Committee for Women’s Affairs (JNCW), the Jordanian National Forum for Women (JNFW), The Human Forum for Women’s Rights (HFWR), and the Arab Women’s Society (AWS) were interviewed. At the same time, I met members holding less senior positions in these organizations. In addition, lawyers, parliamentary representatives, ministers, political party members, such as the Islamic Front party and the Communist party were interviewed in different cities of Jordan. As a matter of honour and respect, and following Ostrander’s (1995: 136) advice to “start at the top” I decided to start my interviews with the heads of the organizations in order to avoid any problems in gaining access later to meet with other people in lower ranks. As
one of my interests was in the relative role of the women's movement in leading to change in Jordanian women's situation compared to other factors such as the international lobby on different countries in general and the third world countries in particular to improve the human rights status. I also interviewed people involved in the international and local lobby/human rights development to see how their efforts, which were not necessarily directly on behalf of women may have benefited women in Jordan. I therefore interviewed members of UN organizations in Jordan, such as UNICEF and UNIFEM, and heads and members of national human rights institutions, namely the National Centre for Human Rights (NCHR) and the Jordanian Society for Human Rights. As one can see, a considerable number of elites were selected for interviews on the basis of their expertise in areas relevant to the research. As, expected, valuable information was indeed gained from these respondents because of the positions they held in the institutions described above. Those informants were capable of providing this study with an overall view of the women's movement in Jordan, and of their organisations' politics, history and future plans.

Consequently, and according to my research aims, two non-probability sampling methods were used. In this approach, according to Chein, (1976 cited in Burgess, 1982: 75) there is no way of estimating the probability that each element has of being included in the sample and no assurance that every element has some chance of being included. I was looking for people (women/men) with specific characteristics, i.e. people who have supported, worked in, and who have been really interested in the Jordanian women's cause in general and legal changes in particular. Using snowball sampling, I began by identifying a person who met the criteria for inclusion in my study, and who had special information by virtue of the position they occupied in the woman's movement or their organisations, and then asked them to recommend others who they knew who also meet the criteria. I started with approximately ten names as initial contacts: including heads of women's organisations, parliamentary women candidates, and UN agency members.
I was able to identify the names of my initial contacts by referring to the following:

1- Documentary resources

*The Guidance for the Civil Society Organizations in Jordan.* Through this guidance I was able to make a list of women’s institutions in Jordan such as the General Federation for Jordanian Women (GFJW), the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), the Jordan National Forum for Women (JNFW), the Business and Professional Women Forum (BPWF), the Humanitarian Forum for Women’s Rights (HFWR), and the Queen Zain Al-Sharaf Institute for Development.

Newspaper articles, especially those which concerned the 2003 Parliamentary elections in Jordan, were very useful. Through these articles, I was able to identify the names of women candidates running in these elections, taking into consideration that during these elections, the Quota for Women system was applied for the very first time in Jordan.

2- In addition to documentary and newspaper sources, I benefited from my previous position as a lawyer and a research and teaching assistant in the Women’s Studies Programme at the University of Jordan. This position gave me access to the names of people who worked for the UN human rights institutions in Jordan, interested in the women’s cause, such as UNIFEM, and UNICEF.

As one of the important aims was to interview people from different time periods/eras of the women’s movement who have experienced and shared in different historical stages of the JWM as patriotic, charitable and feminist form (see Chapter Four), purposive sampling was used. In this respect, my aim was to meet with people who had established or witnessed the women’s movement in Jordan since its early beginnings in the 1940s and 1950s. The only name I was aware of at the start of my research was Emily Besharat, who established the first women’s union in Jordan in the fifties and was the first female lawyer in
Jordan. Besharat is now in her Nineties, and is a very sick woman, who hardly speaks. However, I was fortunate to have been granted a meeting with Al-Besharat, who usually refuses to meet anybody. The way I managed to meet Al-Besharat was through contact with her niece, who was interested in my research subject. After I explained to her the significance of having the opportunity to meet with Al-Besharat, an appointment was arranged to meet at her home. During the meeting Al-Besharat allowed me to look through her photograph albums, in which she kept a large number of her pictures with important people such as, Queen Zain Al-Sharaf, the mother of King Hussain, and when she was opening an orphanage for children (especially refugees), in the 1950s. Al-Besharat provided me with a picture of herself, plus a copy of a notebook in which she collected together a number of thank-you letters that she had received from different people in the UN, on appreciation of her efforts at that time. The meeting was tape-recorded, and at the end of the meeting I asked her if she could remember any other names of people who shared in the beginnings of the establishment of the women’s movement in Jordan. She was able to give two names. Unfortunately, I was not able to meet either of them as they had both died.

Reviewing the Constitution of Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), which Besharat established in 1954, was another potential method of identifying more names in the purposive sample. However this Constitution was not available. According to the secretary of the Union it was lost with a considerable number of documents when the Union was dissolved in 1957, after King Hussein’s decision to prohibit all political parties and other organizations in Jordan (the King’s decision came as a response to the military coup, led by the opposition to his regime). Consequently, I decided the best way to identify more names was by asking the snowball sample interviewee if she/he could identify some of those names. Through this method of sampling I was able to identify three more people, whom I later interviewed.
Both snowball and purposive sampling are non-probability sampling methods, in which members are selected from the population in some non-random manner, which may affect the extent to which one can create a representative sample. However, there are times when this method is most appropriate, and the present research is one of them. As explained earlier, meeting people on a random basis and just because they were registered with women’s organisations would not have helped the aim of this research, and was unlikely to have give me access to the full range of factors and experiences of interest. On the contrary, I assumed that respondents selected this way could be just as representative as those selected using random sampling methods. I came to this assumption for two reasons. First, the qualitative nature of the problems I wanted to address through this research. Second, the reason for adopting non-random samples was due to their suitability in the Jordanian context. It is related to the membership effectiveness criteria in the association, since being a member of any of these organisations (feminist or non-feminist) does not mean being an effective one, as according to some people in charge of these organisations, there are a number of ineffective (inactive) registered members in these organisations. Subsequently, random sampling was not a suitable way to identify my research sample.

**Operationalisation and Conduct of Interviews**

This section explains the content of the interview (schedule and questions) as a main research instrument in this study, concentrating on the operationalisation of key issues.

As explained earlier, during the course of field research, I was able to conduct 31 interviews with 28 women and 3 men who represent different women’s, UN, and human rights institutions in Jordan (except one informant who considered herself to be an independent activist).
In this study, the semi-structured interviews were designed to explore the participants’ views regarding interpretations and views of Jordanian women’s social inferiority; the role of the JWM in empowering women; the extent to which creating positive changes in Jordanian women’s legal status might affect the status of women in the social structure as a whole; and the influence of international and human rights organisations on change for women. A copy of the interview schedule can be found in APPENDIX B.

Since this study aimed to cover several dimensions and aspects (as explained above), it was essential to use the interview schedule in different ways. In other words, in order to reach the relative role of the women’s movement and international influence, the interview schedule had to be developed and used in different ways, depending on the position informants occupied. The reason for this was to obtain more meaningful and valid data.

For example, when I had the honour of interviewing Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, who has played a key role in the process of empowering Jordanian women, I had to limit the scope of the study questions, concentrating on her personal role, and the role of the Hashemite family in backing the women’s cause and women’s movement in Jordan because of the limited time for the interview.

For all other informants, the interview schedule included a question through which respondents were asked to provide me with some background information concerning their ‘career history’. This question aimed to investigate the professional life of each respondent and their exact relation and status in the movement.

The interview schedule for respondents representing ‘women’s institutions’, either as heads or regular members, was fully addressed in a way that covered the study goals. So, after the background question, subsequent questions aimed
to explore the respondents’ views and interpretations regarding factors influencing women’s subordination. Next, informants were asked about issues dealing with the JWM role, as a ‘collective action movement’, in empowering Jordanian women in general and in the elimination of legal discrimination against Jordanian women in particular. Consequently, different questions were asked to address this issue (see APPENDIX B).

When UN agency members were interviewed, my concentration was directed towards issues dealing with projects adopted by these agencies in order to empower women in Jordan, their relation with the JWM, and the nature of support and subsidies they provide to the movement. The focus was almost the same when I interviewed human rights organization members.

All informants were always given the last chance to talk, as the interview was concluded with open-ended questions such as “Is there anything that you want to add, or comment on?”. The majority of informants spoke freely and often at length, as they seemed willing to share their views, thoughts, and concerns with the researcher.

In terms of the quality of interviews, it is thought that most of the informants gave a range of perspectives and covered a range of issues regarding the phenomena under study. Only one informant was not able to speak sufficiently on the issues covered in the interview schedule. For instance, when she was asked about her relationship with the JWM, she had to confess that she had no direct contact with the movement whatsoever. She was not able to look at the phenomena under study from a broad perspective and this limited the richness of data collected from her.
Pilot Research

"A pilot study is an abbreviated version of a research project in which the researcher practices or tests the procedures to be used in the subsequent full-scale project" (Dane, 1990: 43). Piloting the research questions is a principal way of improving the reliability and validity of the study. Therefore, in order to improve my research questions, I tested the prepared interview questions on five Jordanian students (most of whom were doing postgraduate degrees in law) at the University of Leicester and the University of Warwick. During these interviews, the interviewees were asked if they thought that any important questions were missing and if they would like to suggest any. As a result, some important modifications were made. Some questions were added, such as the question about different Jordanian social forces that have the power and the common interest in ending the second-class status of Jordanian women. I was concentrating on the role played by the women’s movement, but piloting the research allowed me to identify the importance of other organizations, such as political parties.

After the pilot, I evaluated the results with my supervisors, after which several adjustments were made. For example, other questions were added, such as the question dealing with the career history of the informants, and the questions dealing with the informants’ definitions of particular concepts, such as the concept of ‘feminism’, and ‘women’s movement’. Certain questions were rephrased, such as the question concerning the influence of ‘patriarchy’ in Jordanian society. I was advised to rephrase the concept ‘patriarchy’ since respondents did not easily understand it during pilot research. When interviewing male respondents, a question was added about their analyses of gender relations, or how they saw the relation between men and women in Jordanian society. After we were satisfied that the interview questions were well tested, I left the United Kingdom and travelled to Jordan, where the field research took place. There the English version of the interview guide was
translated into Arabic and was checked by a translator who is fluent in both languages, in order to be sure that there were no significant differences between the back-translated and the original text. In addition, and concerning the translation issue, I kept in mind Bulmer's (cited in Burgess, 1983: 7) cautions that, "it is not simply an operational matter or a technical matter involving the problem of exact translation. For example, if a question is translated from one language to another there is a problem of meaning that is dependent on the context in which the concepts might be used".

**Special Qualifications of the Researcher and Power Relationships**

Qualitative research on sensitive subjects requires a degree of empathy and mutual trust between the researcher and the respondent (Lee, 1993). In this context it should be noted that I am an Arabic-speaking woman, originating from Jordan. Consequently, I have the benefit of insight into traditional matters relating to women's status in the Arab World in general and in Jordan in particular. There was a high level of trust between the interviewees and myself as we shared a language and set of symbolic meanings associated with the Jordanian culture. This factor as well as our shared histories of involvement, allowed a number of informants to discuss issues, particularly internal obstacles, which they may not have done otherwise. My membership of the JWM also made it possible for me to interview many women whom an outsider would not have been able to access. Therefore, I was in a good position to meet, interpret and understand the comments and perspectives of respondents.

However, being of the same community as respondents may also have disadvantages. Firstly, as I am a Jordanian woman, living and sharing the same style of social and legal discrimination, it became essential that I asked questions in a natural manner without showing by words, inflections of expression, and personal thoughts about how respondents should answer. This
was an important issue that I was always mindful of during the interviews. Secondly, respondents might not see the need to give full answers to the questions asked, because they may identify me as an ‘insider’ assumed to know the answers already.

Furthermore, as in any other sociological research, power relationships between informants such as the researched and myself as a researcher were characterized by differences and inequalities of power. Rule number 14 of the Statement of Ethical Practice of the British Sociological Association (March 2002), and under the title of ‘Relationships with Research Participants’, provides that “because sociologists study the relatively powerless as well as those more powerful than themselves, research relationships are frequently characterized by disparity of power and status. Despite this, research relationships should be characterized, whenever possible, by trust and integrity”.

In fact, during the course of the field research, I experienced and examined different sites concerning the matter of power relationship. The first site was when I interviewed female informants living in Amman. The second was when I met female informants in the cities outside Amman. In interviewing people in Amman (and when they occupied senior or usual positions), I felt that there were no noticeable differences in the power relationship between myself as a researcher and most of them as researched. Maybe that was due to the ‘non-hierarchical’ relationship associated with common gender identity. Oakley (1981) and Finch (1984) believe that women share the same second-class status in a society subjugated by men, and sharing such subordinated status provides them with a shared identity, which in turn helps them as researchers and female interviewees to establish a real ‘rapport’ during the interviews, and as a consequence, better sociological data will be gathered. Finch (1984: 80) argues, “I would agree with Oakley that the only morally defensible way for a feminist to conduct research with women is through a non-hierarchical relationship in which she is prepared to invest some of her own identity”. Maybe women’s
general experience of gender subordination as suggested by Oakley and Finch, plus my position as a lawyer and as a member of the Women's Studies Programme, made the respondents deal with me as a part of the JWM myself. This characteristic helped me to build a good 'rapport' with most of the informants as it created a close link between our worlds. Most of the interviews were conducted in informants' offices on a friendly basis and the interviewee seemed to appreciate a sympathetic ear. However, in one of the interviews, which was conducted with a head of one the women's organizations it was extremely hard to develop a friendly and sisterly exchange of information of the kind described by Oakley (1981). When I went to conduct this interview, the informant was not willing to share in conversation, explaining that she was very busy, and in trying to help she provided me with a few pages in which she summarised the main goals of the institution she headed. In trying to establish a kind of rapport with this informant I explained to her how important it was to not only highlight the role of the institution she heads, but also her personal role in empowering Jordanian women, and that I would always be prepared to interview her at any other time (when ever she felt that she had free time). This informant accepted to be interviewed later on, and we managed to meet up for 45 minutes only. In fact, the interview was rushed, cold and even hostile. This unusual interview, plus the great effort that had to be made before I was granted access to meet most of the informants (see the previous section on gaining access), reminded me of the experience of interviewing 'political elites', as noted by a number of researchers in the area of elite studies such as Ball (1994: 113), who describes interviews with elites as "events of struggle, as a complex interplay of dominance/ resistance and chaos/ freedom". However, this one case would not change my general judgment on my experience of interviewing women elites, who, as Herzog (1995: 180), in her study of women in local political elites in Israel states, "my very presence in the research field gave the subjects a sense of importance. They were no longer a group of odd women....but serious and important enough to serve as the focus of academic
research. The participants of these meetings did not see me as an outsider, but as a partner for a common goal”.

Conversely, interviewing people in cities outside Amman was a completely different experience. First, gaining access to interview those respondents was much easier than it was in Amman; people were more cooperative and helpful. Furthermore, when I went to interview those informants, although it was supposed to be a one-to-one interview, as I have explained earlier, on arrival, I found that my informants had gathered a number of the other members of the Federation in order to share in the interview. Their way of acting made me consider Wise’s (1987, cited in Lee, 1993: 109), criticism of Oakley’s argument that, “even where gender differences are absent, imbalances of power can still exist between researcher and researched. This is so because power has a variety of social structural bases, for example in class relations, which may still operate even in the presence of a shared gender identity”. These informants’ actions implied to me that they felt that I was of a more powerful status than them. These interviews made me think of the wider social aspects, which might affect the formula of power within the interview, and which any researcher must identify. Aspects like cultural background, education and knowledge might have their influence on informants, especially as the respondents concerned knew about my status as a PhD student conducting the research under study in a western University. Drawing on her research experience in interviewing mothers, Jane Ribbens (1989:581, cited in Tang, 2002: 705) argues, “particular social characteristics, such as the interviewer’s educational and professional status...imply different cultural backgrounds as well as a different power relationship within the interview itself”.

Interviewing men was another new experience. Different feminist authors have different beliefs about interviewing. Through her experience of interviewing a large number of convicted rapists, Scully (1990, cited in Davidson and Layder, 1994: 146) argues, “differences in gender are not necessarily a barrier to
obtaining full and detailed information, even about topics of an extremely sensitive nature". In my case, and in spite of the fact that I was talking to people working within the field of human rights in Jordan, I was also aware that I was interviewing men in an extremely patriarchal and dominated society. Taking into consideration the importance of establishing a good rapport with interviewees, I introduced myself as researcher interested in studying ‘human rights’ issues in general (as in this study male informants were people working within the field of human rights), and women’s rights and status in particular. In addition, in asking questions, I tried to ensure my objectivity by changing the way of asking questions. For example, instead of asking male informants to tell me about their perspectives on the Jordanian society as a ‘patriarchal’ society, respondents were asked to analyse ‘gender relations’ in Jordanian society. However, and regardless of how much probing was done, two of the three interviews with male informants were relatively short (almost an hour each). Actually, I do not know if this was due to male informants not taking the issue of women’s rights seriously or because, as Oakley argues (1981: 39-40), “dominant groups generally do not like to be told about or even quietly reminded of the existence of inequality”.

Research Ethics

Ethical concerns are a major element in the design of any research, from identifying the reasons for conducting the research through to data generation and analysis. Following Mason’s (1996) advice, in examining the ethical and moral concerns in any research design, the researcher should ask herself a number of questions, such as, why am I conducting this research? In other words, what is the purpose of my research? Am I conducting it in order to advance the interests of a particular group through it? Do respondents have the complete freedom to accept or reject being interviewed? To what extent will I be able to give the interviewees enough control in order to ensure that their perspectives are represented fully and fairly? Am I going to have to conceal any
information from the respondents? Are there going to be any promises of anonymity or confidentiality? Am I going to tape record the interviews?

I can confirm that it is a main goal of my research to produce an important piece of academic work, intended to highlight important aspects of Jordanian women's social, legal, political and economic status, concentrating mostly on the role played by the JWM in the “empowerment of Jordanian women”. My focus is particularly on the legal sector, as national legislation is the direct way through which Jordanian women and Jordan as a state can achieve the sought after “gender equality” in a way that ensures a minimum implementation of women’s rights in terms of international human rights conventions dealing with women. So, this research does not simply aim to advance the interest of a particular group, rather it aims not only to explore, but also to give a social explanation for the phenomenon under study. So, besides the intellectual exercise, my research aims to represent my personal commitment to the empowerment of Jordanian women.

Nevertheless, during the course of field research, one of my major concerns was how to construct my identity in a way that would help me to achieve my research goals, bearing in mind the similarities and differences between the researched and myself as a researcher. I am fully aware that in spite of my status as a student, conducting my research in a Western university, the fact that I am a ‘third world woman’ researching a considerable number of women in the same position, locates me in the same secondary status as most of my research subjects. Of course, and as I expected, during the course of field research I was assigned a number of roles some of which might not have been helpful to the data collection. For example, I was identified as a lawyer and as a member of the Women's Studies Programme, and I noticed this motivated respondents not to give me full information and full answers to my questions, assuming that I already knew enough about legislation and women in Jordan. “As you know” was a phrase used often by a number of respondents, which signalled to me that
they were unconsciously assuming that I knew enough, which might have motivated them not to say more. Secondly, to be identified as a student, was not to my benefit, especially when I was trying to assure access as discussed above. However, being a student might also have helped, by encouraging respondents to talk freely and without hesitation, as informants usually do not see students as threatening people. Punch (1986: 24), believes that a young student may be perceived as non-threatening and even elicit a considerable measure of sympathy from respondents.

To be a young, female researcher may have been an advantage especially when interviewing males. Easterday, et al. (1982: 66), state that there might be a problem of not being taken seriously if you are a young female researcher, but conversely, this problem can work to one’s benefit, as this can facilitate entry into difficult or inaccessible settings (because the researcher might not be seen as a threat). Also, they add that if the researcher is not taken seriously, respondents might confide in her or let her hear things because they perceive her as powerless and non-threatening. Actually through my own research experience, being a young female was not a disadvantage, since it might have helped me in assuring better access to data under males’ domination (such as in the newspaper archives).

Finally, being a married woman was a double-edged sword. On the positive side, it protected me from being stereotyped, like many young single women (Golde, 1970 cited in Burgess, 1982). Actually, that was the case during the course of working in the newspaper archive until late hours, as according to Jordanian culture, a woman could be criticised for being alone with unknown men (even when working). For this reason, and as I had to work under such circumstances for late hours, and in order not to be stereotyped by other newspaper employees, my husband accompanied me through the course of collecting these documentary sources (newspaper articles). Alternatively, a negative issue comes from the fact that married women researchers, more than
married men researchers, are sometimes chastised for doing fieldwork and not being home taking care of their children (Myerhoff, 1978; Gupta, 1979 cited in Wolf, 1996: 1). Fortunately, I did not face this negative perception.

There were no obvious ethical problems in gaining the consent of the people forming the research sample, as they were asked directly (as arranging to meet them through their formal secretaries was almost impossible in most of the cases) if they agreed to be interviewed. Respondents had complete freedom in giving their consent, and they had the opportunity to withdraw their consent at any stage, as it is an important ethical obligation of the researcher to allow participants to decide to quit the project at any time (Dane, 1990: 48). I started each interview by providing the informant with a full background about myself, and my research goals. It was a fully overt description and summarization of the main ideas and issues I wanted to discuss with them. Also, no interviewee was forced to answer a question if he or she did not want to. Rule number 13 of the Statement of Ethical Practice of the British Sociological Association (March 2002), and under the title of 'Relationships with research participants', provides that "sociologists have a responsibility to ensure that the physical, social and psychological well-being of research participants is not adversely affected by the research. They should strive to protect the rights of those they study, their interests, sensitivities and privacy, while recognising the difficulty of balancing potentially conflicting interests". Also, rule number 3 of the American Sociological Association Code of Ethics, provides that "every person is entitled to the right of privacy and dignity of treatment. The sociologists must respect these rights". Galliher (1982: 152) interprets this rule by saying, "Rule 3 implies that one must never conduct research without voluntary subject cooperation".

Furthermore, Dane (1990: 40) has emphasized the importance of the 'informed consent' of the research participant defining it as "providing potential research participants with all of the information necessary to allow them to make a decision concerning their participation". This was my initial step when ever I
wanted to arrange for an interview, as I always concentrated on providing the participants with all needed and relevant information concerning the research and myself as a researcher, in order to be sure that they had the complete freedom to decide whether they wanted to participate or not.

Through this research, qualitative interviews are the central data generating method, and adopting this method helped me to guarantee a fairer and fuller representation of the interviewees’ perspectives, taking into consideration that a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions allowed me to ensure as far as possible that the respondents were given enough freedom to ask for clarifications and give information.

Moreover, some questions relating to the career history of each respondent were tackled, but no personal or private matters (i.e. related to a respondent’s personal life), which interviewees might not like to discuss, were asked. However, I had some doubts about certain respondents’ reaction toward questions relating to the influence of religion on women’s status, and to what extent, as an important ideology, they believe it has affected women’s social status, and Arab women in particular. Questions regarding issues like religion could be described as ‘sensitive’, because discussing this issue can cause threats to the informants involved. Lee (1993: 4) defines sensitive research as “research which potentially poses a substantial threat to those who are or have been involved in it”.

In spite of this, I believe that such questions are ethically justified if we take into consideration how important it is to highlight central aspects of the research. In fact, my suspicions disappeared when I found that most respondents were almost fully aware of the different aspects of the subject and the importance of highlighting such issues. I did not avoid any question with almost all of the informants. However, and in order not to be misunderstood, I had in some cases, and for ethical and political reasons, to clarify for the informants that I was speaking about ‘religion’ in general and not about Islam in particular. In
addition, when I interviewed respondents working in UN agencies, questions dealing with the history of the JWM were avoided, as they were not interested or specialized in this subject. Rather, our conversation was focused on the role the agency plays in order to empower Jordanian women.

Each respondent was asked for permission to allow me to take notes and tape-record the interview. Fortunately, all informants agreed to note-taking and tape recording while interviews were in progress. All of the interviews were tape-recorded and later transcribed by myself.

As a considerable number of research informants were people who occupied highly political positions, I felt that it was better not to make such promises of anonymity or confidentiality. In this I followed Bells' (1999: 45) advice when she states, "decide what you mean by anonymity and confidentiality: remember that if you are writing about 'the head of English' the person concerned is immediately recognizable". However, I had to make it clear to each respondent that anonymity and confidentiality were their right, and I was always ready to provide them with both anonymity and confidentiality if they said so. In fact, during the course of interviews, some respondents asked me to put some aspects of their interviews off the record, or they motioned to me in a way that indicated that they did not want specific aspects to be recorded. In these cases I was always ready to respect the wish of the respondent, by providing them with the confidentiality they wanted. In these cases, I recorded what they said by taking written notes. Punch (1986: 45) emphasises that "respondents should not suffer harm or embarrassment as a consequence of the research". Therefore, during the process of data presentation, anonymity of research respondents will be respected (even if not requested by the informants) wherever I feel that revealing such information may cause harm or embarrassment to the respondent.

Furthermore, during the stage of preparing for fieldwork, I considered the importance of providing research participants with drafts of their interviews, but
when I went to the field and started to discover how time consuming it was to gain and ensure access, I took the decision not to make any promises of providing the participants with drafts of their interviews. I was positively aware that it was going to be time and money consuming, which I was not able to afford, taking into consideration the limited time for the research.

Finally, when I contacted the research participants, I was very clear about the time the interview would take. Therefore, I explained for each respondent the different themes I would like to discuss with them, making clear that discussing these issues might need more than one hour, and that I would be ready to meet more than once with them if they agreed. So, I was clear about the conditions of the research (Bell: 1999).

Limitations of the Study

During the course of my field research I faced the following obstacles:

1- Access: As I have previously explained, as the subject of this research required me to conduct interviews with specific people who could be described as ‘unique’ within the context of their society (Royal family members, ministers, lower and upper council members, municipality members, heads of federations), gaining access in order to interview them was not easy. In addition, most of these respondents occupied important political positions, and they were usually very busy. This meant that what was intended to be one interview, in some cases, was conducted at two or three different times, which was time and money consuming.

2- In collecting documentary resources, the problem of access in addition to the bad quality of the type in the microfilm from which I collected the copies of the newspapers was a major problem, as a number of the collected articles tend to
be unclear. This was a problem, as I was not allowed to copy from the original files.

3- As will be explained in the next section, during the process of analysis no computer-assisted qualitative analysis programs were used. The reason for this was the unavailability of an Arabic version of programs such as NU.DIST, ATLAS. ti. This resulted in a more time consuming process of coding and analysis.

**Data Analysis**

In field research, the data collection and the data analysis processes cannot be separated, they go together (Burgess, 1982; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Accordingly, initial steps of data analysis occurred alongside the data collection process. Interview notes were used at the end of each day in order to write up the field data. In addition to the raw data, field research notes contained (in the margins of my notes) my thoughts, comments, and questions that emerged during the process of conducting the interview or after. For example, one of things I noted during my visit to the women’s unions and the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) in particular, was the existence of a large number of pictures and articles on the walls of the Union concerning the Palestinian and Iraqi crises, concentrating on women’s suffrage in these Arabic countries. Accordingly, I wrote some notes that reflected my first impressions about the existence of those pictures in a feminist union. Taking these notes led me to concentrate on asking questions about the nationalist and patriotic characteristic of the Women’s Union and to follow up this point in the subsequent interviews and other data sources. Also, interview notes were always a good reference that I depended on to evaluate the data collected, for example to identify any gaps and to follow up and cover new issues that might have occurred for the first time in an interview. For example, the influence of occupation on the JWM was a
new issue raised in one of the interviews, which I later followed up in other
interviews.

I prepared myself to deal with what is often referred to as ‘unstructured’ data. According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1995:208), ‘unstructured’ data are “data which are not already structured in terms of a finite set of analytic categories determined by the researcher, in the way that most survey research data are. Rather, they take the form of open-ended verbal descriptions in field notes, of transcriptions of audio-or video-recording, extracts of text from documents, etc”. Accordingly, once all data were collected and the data analysis began, I followed Hammersley and Atkinson (1995:209-212) and Fielding (2001: 235-236), by reading through the corpus of data and generating concepts to make initial sense of it. Preparing a preliminary conceptual framework, alongside data analysis process, enabled me to create descriptive codes for summarizing my data. I assigned symbols (numbers and letters) to the different codes and then I went through each interview line by line labeling them according to the appropriate code. For example, I identified all the statements referring to patriarchy, which is a major characteristic of the social structure in the Arab world, and then the different substructures of this characteristic, such as family, social values and traditions, tribal social system, economic status, religious interpretations and educational system. Each of these factors was assigned a number and a letter code, which was highlighted whenever it appeared in the interview notes. For example if patriarchy were assigned number (6), the other substructures of patriarchy, such as tribal social structure, social values and traditions, education and so on, would be identified as (6a, 6b, 6c, 6d...).

At the first stage of coding, the codes I developed were more likely to be what Strauss (1987) called ‘descriptive codes’, rather than theoretical analytical codes, but with time and with greater engagement with the analysis process, I moved from the descriptive level of coding to the level of generating analytical
categories. For instance, in the initial stage of my analysis of an interviewee’s declaration that “money is very important for our organization to work and to progress”; I wrote on the side of the interview page that the interviewee was expressing the importance and the need for a financial element. Subsequently, I started to think more deeply, trying to generate theoretical categories rather than descriptive ones. So, rather than referring to the ‘financial element’, I started to think of the concept of ‘Resources’ as a key concept to create a genuine theoretical category. Moreover, during the process of open coding, theoretical memos and those that reflected my interpretations were written. Writing these memos played an important role in helping me to generate analytical categories, to draw relations between the different analytical categories and in subsequently writing the research findings.

Main sources of ideas for generating categories were the data themselves. This is usually the case in any qualitative research. Commenting on generating categories from qualitative data, Dey (1993: 97) states, “it is assumed that the researcher cannot establish all (or perhaps any) of the important categorical distinctions at the outset of the research”. Another source for generating categories was the research questions, either initial or emergent. For instance, one of the main categories in this research concerns ‘patriarchal substructures’. The idea of this category derived from a number of the research questions in which I asked about gender relations in the Arab World. Moreover, large number of ideas for developing the analytical categories were derived from reflections on my own period of involvement and an engagement with the literature on social movements, women’s movements, and theory. For example, the analytical category that concerns the ‘historical turning points’ of the women’s movement was inspired by my previous reading of the literature about JWM. A major source of analytical categories was the theoretical base of the research, which provided a number of important analytical categories, such as the category of ‘resources’ and the subcategory of ‘facilitators’. These two
examples of analytical categories are derived from the 'resources mobilization theory', which is a fundamental theory in this research (see Chapter Two). Following Strauss (1987), during the process of coding data I kept several points in mind. First, the relation between each specific part of the data (word, line, or paragraph) and the phenomena under study. Second, the analytical category that I could generalize from that part of the data. Third, the relation between the specific part of the data and the theory. In Strauss' (1987: 30) words, "what part of the theory does this incident indicate?"

A concentrated analysis of each analytical category was conducted, trying to explore what relations I could find or establish between one main category and other categories and subcategories. According to Strauss (1987), this stage of axial coding is a very important aspect in the analysis procedure, as within the increasingly dense conceptualization, drawing linkages between our key categories help to form the sociological explanation of the phenomena under study. For instance, in this research, I was able to draw relations between a number of core analytical categories, which when linked together, helped me to explain the historical development of the JWM. For example, dealing with the historical development, I was able to draw a relation between the following key categories: the category of 'historical development stages', which included three main categories, 'political/nationalist', 'charitable', and 'feminist'. The second category related to the first is the 'historical turning points' categories, which includes a number of key dates with a number of historical incidents that had an influence on the history of the movement. Third is the 'resources' analytical category and fourth is the 'facilitators' category. Resources were divided into two types: 'financial' and 'moral', whereas 'facilitators' were divided into 'internal facilitators' and 'external' ones. Moreover, the analytical categories of 'class', 'movement's strategy', 'movement's ideology', and 'interests' were further core categories in explaining this aspect of the research.
After coding all of the interviews, I used ‘triangulation’, which is highly recommended by Hammersley & Atkinson (1995: 230-232) and others, and this was a very important process to validate the initial findings of the research. Firstly, respondent triangulation was undertaken. Data related to the same issue or phenomenon, given by different respondents, were compared against each other in order to note any patterns and differences. Secondly, technique triangulation was used. This included comparison and validation of data from interviews with those obtained from documents and the case study.

In analyzing the documents, I started by reading and summarizing the content of each document, drawing out the leading and the most important points pertinent to the research. In the final step of analysis, the points raised in the documents were used to validate points raised from another data sources. In this whole process, and as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), the meanings of the texts were my main concern. Moreover, Scott (1990) emphasises the importance of situating and understanding the meaning of the events in the document within their cultural context.

In the process of analysis, as I was concerned with retaining the meaning intended by respondents, data were kept in their original language, which is Arabic. Keeping data in Arabic, which is my native language, enabled me to deeply understand the meaning of the data and then analyse it without losing the spirit of the meaning, which could have happened if the data were translated to another language i.e. English. As Bassnet (1994, cited in Temple 1997) states, “translation creates the 'original' text rather than the original being the starting point”. However, as analysis was grounded in quotations from respondents, selected for their ability to add richness to the analysis of the phenomena under study, a considerable amount of data were translated into English for the thesis. Unfortunately, during the process of analysis no computer-assisted qualitative analysis programs could be used. The reason for this was the unavailability of an Arabic version of programs such as NUDIST, ATLAS. ti. This resulted in a
more time consuming process of coding and analysis, as computer programs can enhance the recording, storing, filing, indexing, coding and retrieving of data (Dey 1993: 57). Moreover, and as explained earlier in the chapter, during the process of data presentation, the real names of respondents are used, unless anonymity was required by the respondent or whenever I felt that revealing such information may cause harm or embarrassment to the respondent. In these circumstances, pseudonyms will not be used; rather the quotation will be referred to or prefaced with the phrase, “one of the respondents said”.

**Conclusion**

“...not a person who pauses while passing by, but a person who has come for a visit; not a person who knows everything, but a person who has come to learn; not a person who wants to be like them, but a person who wants to know what it is like to be them.”

The above quotation from Bogan and Biklen (1992: 79), precisely describes my role in the process of this study. Our methodology informs how we view and choose to investigate the social phenomenon under study and the social world we live in. Our choice of methodology is a political action, it shapes the research process, and it privileges specific ways of knowing, and knowledge is power. By carrying out this study, I aimed to contribute to third world sociological research and knowledge that seeks to understand the phenomena of ‘social movements’, and more particularly, the ‘women’s movement’ and its role in changing the women’s social, political, economic status in general, and legislation in particular.

Therefore, this chapter has portrayed the research process, how the research developed, my research experience and the different steps of the research process that I followed. It has described the type of data sought; the data collection method; the process of negotiating access; the research setting; the
sampling procedures; the data collection methods; data analysis and the ethical dilemmas encountered during the course of conducting the fieldwork research.

In the preceding chapters, we discussed the study objectives, questions, and theoretical framework that guided this thesis. As explained previously (see Chapter Two), a combination of Giddens’ structuration theory and selected social movement theories namely RMT and POST were employed as a lens to look at a set of facts concerning the phenomenon under study. This chapter has explained the practical procedures used in the field in order to gather those facts (data), which will be the concern of our analysis in the next chapters. Consequently, the next Chapter will discuss the historical development of the JWM.
Chapter Four

The Historical Development of the Jordanian Women’s Movement

Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the development of the JWM, analyzing the main factors that influenced its efforts to secure Jordanian women’s rights. Studies of the development of Arab women’s movements in general and within Jordan in particular (such as, Al- Tal 1985 & Al- Naqshabandi 2001) have focused on their general historical development, ignoring the importance of studying and analyzing key issues such as the different historical stages and turning points in the movement’s life, the movement’s ideology/ideologies, resources and facilitators, strategies, and interests. Moreover, where studies of the JWM have covered important aspects of the history of other Arab women’s movements, none have tried to analyze the relation between different Arab women’s movements and the JWM, especially on the issue of Arab women’s legal rights and equality. It is my argument that, if the early roots of the development of the JWM and its attitudes toward improving Jordanian women’s legal status are to be understood, it is essential to discuss and analyze the position and the influence of the other Arab women’s movements. Of particular importance is the case of Egypt which has one of the earliest and most developed Arab women’s movements and Palestine, because it shares borders with Jordan and was (as the West Bank) for a long time united with Jordan, and is an Arab country that still experiences Israeli occupation.
A General Historical Review

The Early Beginnings of the JWM (Before 1954)

The general historical conditions that have affected Jordan are very similar to those which have affected most of the Arab world, beginning with the Ottoman empire occupation, which ended by the early 1900s as a result of the empire’s defeat in the First World War, and continuing to the western occupation up to the middle of the twentieth century. In 1920 agreement was reached between Britain and France at ‘San Remo’ on how the former Arab territories of the defunct Ottoman Empire would be divided between them. Accordingly, Britain received the mandate over Palestine (until 1948), Jordan (until 1946) and Iraq (until 1932), while France gained control of Syria (until 1946), and Lebanon (until 1943). Also, Britain ruled in other Arab countries, such as Egypt (1914-1922) and Sudan (1898-1956), whereas the French ruled in Algeria (1830-1962), Morocco (1912-1956), and Tunisia (1883-1956). These shared conditions influenced social movements in the Arab world in general, and the women’s movement as a specific part of this. Most Arab women’s movements started as patriotic movements. Their main concern, through their struggle against the British and the French mandates, was to achieve the freedom of their counties and to help refugees.

Jordan was affected by the hard political, economical and social conditions that most of the Arab countries had suffered. By the end of the 1940s, many Palestinian refugees had emigrated to Jordan, at a time when the country was suffering scarcity of resources, transportation difficulties, lack of security and a low percentage of educated people. In these circumstances women were usually the most subordinated group. However, according to Abu-Roomy (1995) and Al-Naqshbandi (2001), in spite of these hard conditions, there was a type of JWM which had started as a nationalist and charitable movement among upper and middle class women,
particularly educated women, whose main interests were to ease the burden by providing refugees’ families with first aid, food and shelters.

Therefore, in spite of the circumstances, Jordanian women started to collaborate and to move. However, this embryonic movement was limited to a specific category or class of women, that is mostly middle class, educated and political women (i.e those interested in politics). Commenting on this characteristic of the early beginnings of the JWM, Nadia Shamrook, vice-president of the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU) said in interview,

“I should always stress the fact that women who started the women’s movement in Jordan were either highly educated women and/or politician women, especially if we take into our consideration the fact of the spread of the Communist and nationalist ideologies after the Second World War”.

(Interview with Nadia Shamrook, vice-president of the JWU)

The fact that the JWM started in the hands of mostly middle class, educated and political women goes along with resource mobilization theory (RMT) which highlights the tendency of many social movements to be dominated by the middle classes (Storr, 2002). Having middle and high-class founders and participants is a major resource to the movement as the higher the class the more resources members can generate, and the more resources they generate the more powerful they become (Giddens’ structuration theory, see Chapter Two).

Findings from interviews with major witnesses on the history of the JWM show that the occupation of the Arab world in general and of Jordan in particular, whether by the Islamic Ottoman Empire or Western countries, was believed by them to be a
major cause of women's social subordination in the Arab world. The head of the 'Arab Women Society' (AWS), Emily Nafa', stressed this idea by saying,

"Frankly, we in our society inherited women's inferiority from the stage of degeneration, through which women were the prisoners of homes. I mean the period of 'Ottoman rule'. This stage or phase influenced the mentality of people in a negative way and it still does, it still does (and I would underline this sentence). Actually, this mentality is still there in the Arab world and in Jordan accordingly".

(Interview with Emily Nafa', head of AWS)

Amneh Zu'bi, head of the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU) added,

"Occupation and conflicts, which the region suffered from, were a major reason to postpone women's struggle for their own cause and their own freedom. All this was reflected in empowering patriarchal domination, and it even augmented women's inferior regard for themselves".

(Interview with, Amneh Zu'bi, head of the JWU)

Alternatively, it could be argued that occupation and its hard consequences played a positive role as a motivator of Arab woman's movements in general and the Jordanian movement in particular. Occupation stimulated Jordanian women to pool their efforts and directed them toward a specific goal at that particular time in history in order to deal with what one can call the 'nationalist cause' of independence and freedom. Perhaps at this stage the JWM's main interest was not the women's cause, but rather nationalist and charitable types of work. However, the involvement of Jordanian women in nationalist struggles and the spread of the
spirit of liberalization opened the political opportunity structure (POST) to such a degree that enabled them to adopt the view that they have specific needs and demands which the movements must address if they are to combat all forms of oppression. During interview, Salwa Zayadeen, a founder and major witness of the history to the Jordanian and Palestinian women's movements, she stressed,

"As a result of the occupation and its resistance, Arab women's awareness of the concepts of repression, reasons of poverty, freedom, and women's rights has increased".

Moreover, in an article in the Ad-dustor Newspaper, Suhair Al-Tal (1985), a feminist activist confirmed that even in recent history whenever any other Arab country suffers, Jordanian women, motivated by their nationalist sense, have joined forces to back the people of that country. Al- Tal wrote,

"Harmonizing with their history, Jordanian women have stood together to back Iraqi people. Since the outbreak of the Gulf crisis, Jordan has started to undertake its humanitarian duties by taking in hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees, and in spite of the heavy political and economic obligations on Jordan, Jordanian women have offered all the help they could. (Ad- Dustour Newspaper, August 22, 1991. p.3)"

In this sense, it is true that occupation has had a negative influence on women's status in the Arab world in general and in Jordan particularly. However, in spite of the hard humanitarian, social, economic, and political consequences, occupation has played a crucial role as a political resource in encouraging Jordanian women to step out of their domestic sphere into the public domain, where they have begun to appreciate and practise 'collectivity' for perhaps the first time in their history. In
this context, Kumari Jayawardena (1982) emphasizes the importance of national struggle in Third World feminist movements’ history. In this sense, Jayawadena (1982: VI) writes that in the context of the Third World feminism, one of the feminist movement’s main goals (according to a seminar on feminist ideology held in Bangkok in 1979) is “the removal of all forms of inequity and oppression through the creation of a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally. This means the involvement of women in national liberation struggles”. So, one can say that occupation can be seen as a nonmaterial or “moral resource”, which enhances social movements in general and the women’s movement in particular in the Arab World.

Accordingly, in 1944, the first women’s association in Jordan was established under the name of the ‘Women’s Solidarity Society’. This association was established by a primary school head mistress, in the Al- Zahra’ school, and other female teachers. Princess ‘Mosbah’, King Talal’s mother, was its honorary president. The main aims of this association were limited to taking care of children and helping people who were in need. In 1945, Hoda Sharawi (an Egyptian activist) had visited Jordan and she met Prince Abdullah Bin Al Hussein, the prince of Jordan (the East Bank at that time). She asked him to establish a Jordanian Women’s Union in order to be a part of the Arab Women’s Federation. The Prince agreed and, as a result, the society of ‘Jordanian Women’s Federation’ was established in 1945. The honorary president of this association was also King Talal’s mother, whereas the working president was princess ‘Zain Al-Sharaf’, King Abdullah the Second’s grandmother. In addition to the previous goals, the 1945 federation had wider aims, such as being concerned with increasing women’s educational levels, improving children’s health and helping poor mothers (Department of Literature and Publishing, 1979:21).

1 For the purposes of this research, I mean by ‘nonmaterial or moral resource’ any events, figures (institutions, groups and individuals), socio- cultural and political factors, authority, skills, and information that might have spiritually (not directly financially) stimulated and motivated the JWM.
According to Al-Tal (1985), the first Ministry of Social Development (MSD) was established in Jordan in 1951, and was given the authority to supervise and organize voluntary work in Jordan. The NGOs registered with the MSD automatically became members of the ‘General Union of Voluntary Societies’. Between 1951-1979 there were more than 340 associations registered in the ‘General Union for Voluntary Societies’ established by the Ministry. A total of 32 of the associations were women’s associations (defined as those associations whose membership were solely women). Therefore, the criterion under which the ‘General Union for Voluntary Societies’ defined an association as a ‘women’s’ association was the nature of its membership rather than the specific goal of being ‘feminist’. The main characteristic of those associations was charitable: their main objective was to help and give financial subsidies to shelters for children and disabled people. Commenting on this stage of the JWM’s history, Salwa Zayadeen, a founder and major witness to the history of the Jordanian and Palestinian women’s movements who experienced the establishment of this Union, said

"By the end of the nineteen forties and the beginnings of the fifties Jordanian women did not have any feminist political interests. Women were still under the control of the tribal and social norms. The JWM was still an infant charitable movement".

(Interview with Salwa Zayadeen, a major witness of the history of the women’s movement)

As mentioned in Chapter Three, during the course of field research I was fortunate to have the opportunity to meet Emily Besharat, the founder of the first women’s union in Jordan in 1954. As evidence on the nature of the JWM’s interests at that time, I was able, through this interview, to get a copy of a booklet with the title, ‘The Jordan Orphanage - Amman 1955’. According to this document, this
The orphanage was established in 1951 by more than a hundred women in Amman to shelter Palestinian refugee orphans, save them from misery, and equip them with elementary education and vocational training. In this file, Miss Besharat collected a number of official pictures and letters concerning the orphanage. Pictures show Queen ‘Zain Al-Sharaf’ (King Hussein’s mother) inspecting one of the classes surrounded by some of the orphanage members. The letters were written by a number of official foreign institutions, such as the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, and the United States of America Operations Mission to Jordan. In those letters (dated in the year 1954) both agencies expressed their strong support for the work undertaken by Jordanian women in this institution, and encouraged any help that could be provided to them. At the same time, a certificate issued from the Jordanian Ministry of Social Affairs clarified that the Jordan orphanage was a charitable organization led by a number of women, seen to be among the best workers in the social field, and the Ministry offered financial assistance to help them.

From the above, one can draw a number of points: First, during this period women’s social work started to evolve a more organized pattern through its relationship with the MSD (under the supervision of the government), which as a powerful institution was supporting women’s social efforts by funding and encouraging others to fund this work. Yet, the established associations were fundamentally ‘women’s’ charitable associations and not overtly ‘feminist’. At this stage the JWM was not concerned with creating a major change in social relations between men and women in order to achieve equity and equality. Second, through reviewing the early history of the women’s movement in Jordan, one can see that elites played a major role, as an internal resource, in supporting and backing Jordanian women’s efforts to work as a collective agent. Having an elite member as a part of these women’s foundations during that early time in the history of Jordan.
as a state would certainly have given them more weight in a tribal society still unfamiliar with seeing women working in the public sphere. Furthermore, we can see that the establishment of the first women’s federation in Jordan was a consequence of an elite decision, involving Prince Abdullah Bin Al Hussein. This clearly indicates the importance of having a political mandate in order to establish the Union. When I asked Her Royal Highness Princess Basma about the historical role of the Royal Family’s political decisions in empowering women in Jordan, she answered.

“\textit{It is for sure that political decision was the first step in most of the changing for better cases, especially when there are sensitive issues that need brave and progressive enhancement, taking into consideration that the process of human rights development in any country is not a quick and easy mission. It is a task that needs time until people start to accept its consequences. So, a political decision always opens the door for the others to start to work}”.

Third, in addition to the internal facilitators, there were two main external facilitators of the JWM between 1944-1954. One was other Arab feminist activism such as the Egyptian ‘Sharawi’ who had an influence in the emergence in 1945, of the first women’s federation in Jordan. This example shows that studying the history of the JWM cannot be separated from the whole picture, which is an Arabic one. The second external facilitator was international (external) support, provided by UN agencies and other foreign facilitators, as suggested by the example of the Jordan Orphanage in Amman.

Thus, since its early beginnings the agency of the JWM was significantly associated with the state’s approval and participation (i.e. Royal Family members’
participation). According to the RMT, the existence of elites at the disposal of a social movement would help to establish power (see Chapter Two). All this was accompanied by external facilitators such as other Arab women's activism, UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, and the United States of America Operations Mission to Jordan.

The JWM After 1953
The promulgation of the new Jordanian constitution in 1951 (after officially announcing the unity of the East and West Banks) increased political freedoms and participation levels by guaranteeing the rights of Jordanian citizens to freedom of speech and press, association, academic freedom, political parties, freedom of religion and the right to elect parliamentary and municipal representatives. These factors, coupled with the active political Arab women's movement (especially in Egypt and Palestine, as will be discussed later), meant a number of Jordanian women felt the need to have an organized pattern of activity in order to improve the situation of Jordanian women. In 1954, about 100 educated and politically interested Jordanian women met in the capital Amman and decided to establish the 'Arab Women's Union'. Emily Besharat, a key organizer of the meeting, was given the Presidency of this union. During a review of the history of the JWM with one of the research informants, Salwa Zayadeen, a founder and major witness of the history of the Jordanian and Palestinian women's movements, stated

"By the beginning of the fifties, the Palestinian women's movement was very strong and revolutionary. Women did a lot to support the resistance against the Israeli occupation. Influenced by the Palestinian women's movement, and as you know at that time the western Bank was a part of Jordan, the roots of the real organized
political JWM was represented in the women's union, which was established by Emily Besharat in the year 1954 began”.

Moreover, Al Rashdan, who was a member of Jordanian Legislative Council and the senate house in the Jordanian parliament, as well as being a member in the women’s movement, stated

“The real beginning of a JWM was with the establishment of the Arab Women’s Union in the year 1954. Our main demand was to grant every woman the right to vote and to be elected. This demand was going too slow, as the social view of women at that time was not the best. After that we started to demand changes in legislation”.

(Interview with Al-Rashadan)

In 1955, and after a year of hard work and discussions, the Arab Women’s Union was able to achieve one of its most important political and legal aims, and that was to give the Jordanian woman the right to vote in the parliamentary elections if she had completed her primary level of education. However, this women’s union did not accept this limitation on women’s right to vote, since men had the right not only to vote, but also to run in elections even if they were illiterate. Therefore, the Union continued to work in order to achieve equality between men and women. In the same year (1955) they sent a petition to the Jordanian Prime Minister and to the President of the Representative’s Council, asking them to give the Jordanian woman her complete political rights. This petition was certified by thousands of women, using their fingerprints rather than their signatures. This was done in order to imitate those illiterate men who already had the right to vote and to be elected (Al-Tal, 1985).
This action taken by Jordanian women is clear evidence of the recognition of their shared identity as a subordinated group. At this point Jordanian women, regardless to differences in ‘race’, class, age and ethnicity recognized the existence of shared interests in the need to change their inferior status. Limiting the right to vote to educated women, in addition to not giving women the right to run in elections, confirms the extremely patriarchal nature of Jordanian society at the time and the Jordanian legislator as a representative of that society. Those restrictions ensured the inferior position of women as they would be unable to practise their rights unless they achieved specific conditions, whereas similar limitations had not been imposed on men. At this point women recognized the importance to act in order to create a change in their social circumstances as this was the first time they felt the existence of what Giddens (1993) describes as the ‘conflict of interests’.

Women continued to raise objections by sending letters to the government each time there was a cabinet reformation. Consequently, in February 1956, the Federation held a festival to celebrate the Jordanian government’s decision to review the electoral law\(^2\).

In March 1956, the Arab Women’s Union appealed to amend Jordanian Personal Status Law (Family Law) in order to repeal the right of polygamy. Furthermore, the Union wanted to change the Labour Law in a way that would secure better conditions for Jordanian women workers through protecting women’s right to work, ensuring equal pay for equal work, and maternity leave for working mothers. In June 1956, the Union appealed to give the Jordanian woman her right to vote and to run in parliamentary council elections and in election to city and town councils. Finally, the Union worked hard to eliminate illiteracy among women, which they

\(2\) Personal Interview with Ojinee Hadad and Emily Nafa’ in 2003.
believed a major step to raise women's awareness and to open new opportunities for them\(^3\).

According to Al-Naqshabandi (2001) and Abu-Roomy (1995), in 1956 when England, France and Israel attacked Egypt in response to the Egyptian decision to nationalize the Suez Canal, the Union asked the Jordanian government to start to train Jordanian women to use weapons and to be able to offer first aid services. Moreover, the Union organized demonstrations to support Algerian women against the French occupation.

The Arab Women's Union was dissolved in 1957 after King's Hussein's decision to prohibit all political parties and other organizations in Jordan. The King's decision came as a response to the military coup which had been led by those opposed to his regime\(^4\) (Department of Literature and Publishing, 1979).

During the course of my field research I was able to obtain more specific details concerning the dissolution of the Union. According to most research informants, the main reason behind the dissolution of the 1954 Women's Union was its political approach. The Union was influenced by Communist Party ideology, which was banned in Jordan at that time. During a personal interview, Emily Nafa', head of the 'Arab Women Association', stressed that

\(^3\) Personal interviews with Salwa Zyadeen, Emily Nafa' and Ojinee Hadad in 2003.

\(^4\) "The vulnerability of political parties to external influence and anti-monarchical ideologies including Nasserism, Ba'athism and Communism, constituted a major blow to the participatory institutions. Moreover, the devastated and frustrated refugee population became vulnerable to radical party ideology. This situation resulted in a temporary imposition of emergency laws and a ban on all political parties in Jordan after a coup attempt in 1957. Although Parliament was reconvened after 19 months of martial law, the ban on political parties remained in effect for more than three decades. The state of emergency was declared at the outset of the 1967 War and the martial law continued until 1989". (Available at: http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/aboutjordan/ph4.shtml, visited in 29/2/2004).
"We started to work at that early time heading towards Jordanian women's achievement of their political rights. For example, in the year 1952 and through the Al- Yaqada Women's Society, which was established by the Communist Party, we demanded the right of women to vote and to run in municipality elections. We did not achieve this goal until the year 1982. It took us 30 years (from 1952-1982) until this right was approved".

The above quotation indicates the association between the JWM as a social movement and the Communist Party, as a main facilitator for the movement in its early beginnings. The question here is to what extent one can say that the early JWM was an expansion of the Communist Party ideas and how these ideas were actually seen in the union's approach at the time? In other words, to what extent can we say that the early JWM was ideologically 'Marxist'? From reviewing issues regarding the union’s membership, the objectives of women’s suffrage at that stage and the response of the state, one can describe the ideology adopted by the Jordanian feminism at that early stage of the movement history as not only being Marxist feminist but containing socialist feminist ideology. This assumption can be justified by knowing that the main founders of the movement were important figures in the Communist Party (i.e Emily Besharat and Salwa Zayadeen). Through this Union these women's demands reflected their belief that not only patriarchy, but also the political and economic status of women are the reasons behind women’s oppression. They believed that women’s education is necessary to assist them in new opportunities for work, which would undoubtedly shape women’s thoughts and provide them with independence. By demanding women’s right to vote, women proved their absolute faith that the rights of a citizen were not exclusive to men. Such political ideology was a main reason for the Union being dissolved by the state in 1957.
The dissolution of the 1954 Jordanian Women’s Union is an illustration of Marx and McAdam’s (1994: 99) point that the state or authorities will generally go against a movement, if the state believes that this movement is threatening to the political regime. However, that does not mean that the state always acts in antagonism to social movements in general and women’s movements in particular. Under certain conditions the state can be a major facilitator of a social movement, as will be shown later on in this Chapter.

However, at this particular stage, the JWM started to transform from being solely a charitable movement to a more political and specifically feminist movement. It started to think of Jordanian woman’s right to share in the public life as an important part of the society, to stop the different forms of discrimination against them starting with their legal right to vote, and to respect their feelings by asking for a repeal of polygamy (Personal Status Law). However, they did not forget their nationalist goals to free their country; on the contrary, this role encouraged them to think about their own freedom and their own rights as human beings.

According to Al-Naqshabandi (2001) and Atiyat (2003), from 1957 until 1974 no women’s movement organizations existed in the country and there was almost no political activity of any kind to promote women’s rights. Democratic liberties were missing and political oppression was the dominating governmental policy. Clearly, as POST argues, the political situation in a country sets the possibilities and limits for the developments of social movements (Kriesi et al, 1995). Social movements can develop as long as the particular political situation supports and/or allows them to do so.

However, according to Salwa Zayadeen, a founder and a major witness to the history of the Jordanian and Palestinian women’s movements, this was not exactly
the case, as women continued to meet secretly through an unofficial society (not permitted by the government), called the ‘Defending Women’s Rights League’. This was not a new society, but was the new name given for the ‘Al- Yaqada Women’s Society’, which was a part of the Communist party in Palestine. Jordanian women tried hard to carry on their activities secretly, by at least maintaining meetings and motivating each other. However, as Zayadeen explained in interview, it was particularly difficult to carry on this work as no political activities at any level were allowed. Therefore, women decided to establish a non-political society that aimed to reduce illiteracy between women, called the ‘Illiteracy Elimination Society’. This society was of great benefit for the women’s movement at that time, as it was the only legal way through which activists could meet with women from different areas in the country without obstruction from the government. The government started to facilitate this Society by providing classrooms and teachers. According to Zayadeen, the reason the government was motivated to offer that help was UNESCO’s call, for women’s education5. Thus, even within this particularly closed political structure, Jordanian women benefited from support from external facilitators as represented in UNESCO’s call for women’s education. Moreover, according to Nafa’, head of the Arab Women’s Society and a witness on the movement’s history, at that time some women’s groups did manage to get approval to operate, such as the Arab Women’s Society in Jordan (jam‘iyyat al-nisa’ al-arabiyyat fi al-urdun) in 1970, which is still active today, but they stayed largely out of politics6.

According to Nafa’ (1992: 5), the 1967 Israeli-Palestinian war was another political occurrence that motivated Jordanians, including women, to share publicly in the nationalist political struggle. Women in their thousands demonstrated against the

5 Personal interview with Salwa Zayadeen in 2003.
6 Personal interview with Emily Nafa’ in 2003.
Israeli occupation. One of the biggest women’s demonstrations was organized against the Israeli military parade in Jerusalem.

In 1974, the 1954 Women’s Union was reestablished in Jordan under the name of the ‘Women’s Union in Jordan’. This event was combined with the amendment of the election law to start allowing women their right to run in parliamental elections. According to Al-Tal (1985), the main factor that helped to reestablish the association was the 1972 United Nations resolution number 3010, which declared 1975 as ‘Woman’s International Year’. During the Union’s life course more than 3000 Jordanian women joined (Al-Tal, 1985: 134). The Union was licensed by the Jordanian Home Ministry. Commenting on this part of the movement’s history, Emily Nafa’, head of the ‘Arab Women’s Society’ (AWS), stated,

“The right to vote and run in parliamentary elections was not given to women until the year 1974. In the year 1974, and on the eve of the women’s international year, and when the UN asked the different countries to provide it with reports about women’s status in each one, Jordan deemed or believed that it is not suitable and it might affect its reputation to report that women in Jordan were still not practising the right to vote and run in elections in the right way. Therefore, in the year 1974, the electoral law was reformed. According to this reform women were granted the right to vote and run in parliamentary elections freely”.

Here again we can see the key role played by the UN as an external facilitator to the reemergence of the JWM. This UN declaration was a major resource used by the women’s movement to restart its activities. The declaration had an influence on the state which had to change its strategies in dealing with the woman’s cause if it wanted to improve the country’s image at the international level.

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7 Personal interview with Emily Nafa’ in 2003.
The main objects of the 1974 Jordanian Women’s Union are clear in its constitution, and they are:

- Increasing the social, economic and educational levels of women;
- Helping women to practise complete rights as a citizen, worker and housewife; demanding the right to participate in discussions of Labor Law; the right to attend seminars and conferences to offer better presentations on women, whether in the field of education, labor, or political rights, and the adoption of international and Arab resolutions opposing discrimination against women;
- Strengthening the relationships of friendship and cooperation with the other Arabic and international feminist unions and associations;
- Supporting Arabic unity in the social, educational and economic fields, and sharing in building the Arab world (Al- Tal, 1985: 131 and 141-142).

In 1981, the Ministry of Social Affairs established a new governmental women’s organization in Jordan under the name of the ‘General Federation of Jordanian Women’ (GFJW). Unlike the Women’s Union, the General Federation (GFJW) was designed as an umbrella organization for all women’s organizations. Individual membership was allowed, but individuals with a background in oppositional politics were unlikely to be accepted as members. Therefore, in 1989 and 1990 the Federation’s internal structure came under scrutiny when Islamist women began registering as independent members at an alarming rate; soon thereafter a governmental investigation decreed that individual membership was not to be allowed in the Women’s General Federation and henceforth it would remain strictly an umbrella organization.
After the establishment of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), the 1974 Jordanian Women’s Union began to face resistance from the government such as disruption by both the Ministry of Social Development and the Home Office. The Ministry of the Home Office dissolved this Union in 1981. The reason given to justify the dissolution was that the Association was engaging in political activities that were not within its main objects. In response, the 1974 Union raised a case against the Home Office. During the course of the fieldwork I was able to obtain a copy of the Union’s legal declaration that was issued by the Union’s lawyer in their case against the Ministry of Home Office decision to dissolve the Union (see Appendix D). Through examining the facts raised in this document it is clear that the reasons behind dissolving the Union (from the Union’s point of view) were not any illegal political activities, rather it was governmental will to collapse the Union into a new governmental women’s organization, the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW) which was established in the same year. According to AL-Tal (1985), in 1983 the Union won its case against the government, and it was reestablished with the name of the ‘Jordanian Women’s Union’ (JWU).

The GFJW largely dominated the arena of women’s politics for the rest of the decade (1980s) and both the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) and the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW) viewed each other as competitors rather than as complementary movements. No real cooperation took place between them as each reflected different dimensions in women’s struggle. The Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) adopted an independent stance, whereas the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW) was state originated.

Accordingly, one can say that this attempt by the government to dissolve the 1974 Women’s Union was not above suspicion. It was a clear attempt to bring any

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8 Personal interview with, Amneh Zu’bi in 2003.
independent women's parties under the umbrella of government through a new comprehensive women's organization, the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW). This can not be seen as anything other than a first major step by government towards transforming Jordanian independent feminism into 'state feminism'. In a personal interview, Amneh Zu'bi, head of the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU) stressed,

"The minister of social development, tried to directly interfere in the Union's agenda and strategies in order to encompass it under the governmental umbrella. The minister tried to quibble and haggle with the heads of the Union at that time. Nevertheless, my colleagues refused the Minister's offers, as they believed that this union is a popular union with a popular body, which reflects the reality and the certainty of women's cause and this might not intersect with the governmental views. All this was the reason behind the dissolution of the union later on".

(Interview with, Amneh Zu'bi, head of the JWU)

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the JWM has made noticeable progress and become more effective in dealing with issues regarding women's rights in the different sectors: legislative, labor market, political participation, education (see Chapter Five). Various new issues started to be discussed by the movement such as the issue of violence against women (see Chapter Seven). This progress can be seen as a result of the existence of a better and more open political structure in the country (POST) and the existence of key external and internal occurrences that had facilitated the movement and its agenda. Progress can be attributed to the following factors. First, the 1989 governmental decision to repeal martial law which banned political parties and restricted the rights of citizens to assemble for political meetings and peaceful demonstrations. This step allowed for a better democratic
political atmosphere in the country as different political parties were allowed to practise their activities again. It came as a response to two events: King Hussein’s 1988 decision to cease administering the West Bank as part of Jordan, passing responsibility to the Palestinian Authority and the 1989 popular riot in Ma’an (South of Jordan) over price increases following a fall in oil revenues.

Second, in spite of the negative economic and social outcomes of the 1991 Gulf war on Iraq on the different Arab states, this occurrence might have had an indirect influence through promoting democracy and a political change in the Arab world in general, as political reforms became a matter of need rather than choice.

Third, in the year 1990-1991, and as a step towards the establishment of democratization and political reforms, King Hussein ordered the setting up of a Royal Commission and charged it with the task of drawing up a National Charter which would lay the foundations and define the methods of national public activity. This Charter represented a new popular constitution for the different sectors of Jordanian people. It emphasized the importance of improving women’s role in Jordan as a very essential part of the population and emphasized that no development could be achieved without them. Furthermore, by the beginning of the nineties the international community started to prepare for the Fourth World

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9 The Jordanian National Charter has provided that:

Chapter one, Article 8: “Jordanian men and women are equal under the law. There shall be no distinction between them in rights and obligations regardless of difference in race, language or religion. They shall exercise their constitutional rights and uphold the higher interest of the state and the national ethic in such a manner as to ensure that the material and spiritual resources of Jordanian society are freed and directed towards achieving the national objective of unity, progress and building a better future”.

Chapter five, Article 6: “Women are men’s partners and equals in contributing to the growth and development of Jordanian society. This requires an affirmation of women’s constitutional and legal right to equality, guidance, training and employment as a means of enabling them to play their proper role in the growth and development of society”.

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Conference on Women in Beijing, and that was an important motivator to Jordan to get more active in the field of women's rights. For example, by the beginning of 1992 a new women's organization under the name of the Jordanian National Committee for Women's Affairs (JNCW) was established in Jordan. Commenting on the reason behind the establishment of the Jordanian National Committee for Women's Affairs (JNCW), Dr Amal Sabbagh, Secretary General of the Jordanian National Committee for Women's Affairs (JNCW), stated:

"The Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995, was getting closer, and the United Nations was preparing for it for a quite long time, and there was a universal outlook toward the necessity of developing new national techniques, in each country, to deal with the women's cause. This could have been the major motivator for the Jordanian decision to establish the national committee".

(Interview with Dr Sabbagh, Secretary General of the JNCW)

The Jordanian National Committee for Women's Affairs (JNCW) was established by Prime Ministerial decision. It is a semi-governmental committee that acts as Jordan's authority on women's issues and activities in the public sector. The Committee works with NGOs and public institutions to evaluate and formulate policies and legislation to improve the legal, political, and economic status of women. The main goals of this Committee are: to endorse Jordanian women's issues and cause; to plan all the national strategies for the empowerment of women in Jordan; to coordinate between Jordanian public and private institutions and individuals involved with women's issues; and to review legislation related to women in order to abolish any discrimination against them (Ad-dustour Newspaper, September 24, 1996. P.3). According to the above newspaper article, the Prime Ministry of Jordan considered the Jordanian National Committee for
Women's Affairs (JNCW) as the competent authority for Jordan's public sector regarding women's issues and activities. It represents Jordan in any issue regarding Jordanian women's affairs, at national, regional, and international levels. HRH Princess Basma heads this Committee.

Moreover, the National Committee for Jordanian Women was established to be the national machinery to prepare periodic reports on Jordan's compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as the convention obliges states parties to submit to the Secretary-General a report on the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures that they have adopted to implement the convention within a year after its entry into force and then at least every four years thereafter or whenever the Committee on (CEDAW) so requests. These reports contain an analysis of gender gaps and inequalities.

There is no doubt that the Jordanian National Committee for Women's Affairs (JNCW) plays a major role in enhancing Jordanian women's status. However, being a semi governmental organization, under the presidency of a royal family member, it could also be seen as another push toward state feminism in the JWM context. As evidence on this analysis, Dana Malhas, vice-president of the UNIFEM in Jordan, stressed

"Regarding the implementation of CEDAW, every country is supposed to submit two reports to the CEDAW committee in New York. The aim of these reports is to explain the improvement in women's status after ratifying CEDAW. Jordan as well, is supposed to submit two reports; one is the main report, which is issued by the government or who represents it, and this report reflects the government's assessment of women's status and the efforts it under takes to enhance women's
rights. The second report is called the shadow report and this one is supposed to reflect the nongovernmental organizations' point of view, which could contradict with the governmental one. In Jordan only one report is being prepared through the National Committee for Jordanian Women, which is a governmental women’s organization. It is not that the government prohibits the nongovernmental organizations from issuing the shadow report, but the government makes them feel that she takes the responsibility to issue one report that represents them and the government through the National Committee”

(Interview with Dana Malhas, vice-president of UNIFEM-Amman)

According to Al-TaL (2001:10), as a result of Committee’s hard work the “National Strategy for Woman in Jordan” was prepared in 1993. This strategy indicates the main ideas on what Jordanian women need and how to help them to improve and to be an essential part of their society. The main areas of focus in this strategy are: women’s economic empowerment, legislation, and political participation. Commenting on this effort Al-Sabbagh, Secretary General of the Jordanian National Committee for Women’s Affairs (JNCW), said

“In the year 1993, we started our work in the Committee by drafting the National Strategy for Woman. This Strategy outline has emphasized the primary principles in the Jordanian National Charter, which provides that all Jordanians are equal before the law and that regardless of sex, race, language or religion, they are all equal in rights and obligations”.

(Interview with Dr Sabbagh, Secretary General of the JNCW)

Moreover, during the course of my field research, the JWM represented by the Jordanian National Committee for Women’s Affairs (JNCW) in cooperation with
the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU), and the Jordanian National Forum for Women (JNFW) initiated a new strategy concerning the amendment of discriminatory legislation regarding Jordanian women. This strategy is called the 'National Action Plan' (2003). This strategy was used as a new approach to endorse a national conversation with Parliament on women's legislation. I was able to get a copy of the first draft of this plan. According to this new plan, amending discriminatory legislation is a critical goal for the JWM. The Jordanian National Committee for Women's Affairs (JNCW) played a major role in coordinating the different Jordanian women's organizations in order to achieve this goal. In this plan, a number of 'face to face' meetings were arranged between representatives of the JWM, headed by HRH Princess Basma and the decision makers in Jordan, starting with the members of parliament in their cities. Also, as a part of this strategy, on the thirteenth of August 2003 Princess Basma met in her office with a number of the Islamic leaders in Jordan. The aim of these meetings was to start a new context of dialogue between the women's movement and those parties.

From reviewing the draft action plan I am able to draw out the following points: that here again elite is backing and supporting the efforts of the JWM; and that the new strategy followed by the movement reflects the existence of a new democratic atmosphere in Jordan. This national program was a starting point to a new democratic dialogue between the women's movement and the parliament, which used to be a major obstacle to change in discriminatory legislation concerning women in Jordan. In addition, we see the movement's awareness of the importance of working within and according to the advice of Islamic authorities, as this helps to establish an easily accepted dialogue in an Islamic culture. In conclusion, I can say that international events, elites, and political circumstances have in the past played, and continue to play, a major role in facilitating the JWM. However, this does not
preclude some or all of these factors concurrently being a hindrance at some stages. Thus in the National Action Plan document, the JWM was clear that the Jordanian parliament (as a decision maker), was a major obstacle to them. The movement wrote,

"The recent 2003 parliament had a critical duty, which is to review a number of temporary laws, among these laws were the reformed Personal Status Law, and the Penal Law. The parliament reviewed these laws in an exceptional session, in which they had taken a negative decision. The parliament decided to reject these laws, which disappointed the women's movement in Jordan, who had exerted intensive efforts and struggled for a long time to lobby the government in order to achieve those legal amendments. These amendments are a legitimate right for women and a fair response to the great accomplishments they achieved through the last decades (National Action Plan, 2003)".

Furthermore, the year 2002 saw active involvement of new elite figure, Queen Rania, in women's empowerment processes. In interview, Senate Layla Sharaf, who is an ex-minister and a member of the senate house stated,

"The royal family in Jordan has been involved in the issue of amending legislation, with some members urging officials to take action to address the problem. Since the early 2000s Queen Rania Al-Abdullah of Jordan has worked closely with Arab first ladies on the issues of the Arab women".

On November 2002, the second Arab Women's Summit opened in Jordan, hosted by Queen Rania of Jordan who took over the presidency from Egypt's first lady, Suzanne Mubarak. Having such cooperation between the JWM and the Egyptian women's movement suggests that studying the JWM would not be comprehensive
and complete if we did not consider the movement within the wider picture of other Arab women’s movements. For this reason, in the following pages I would like to discuss the relation between the JWM and two other Arab women’s movements: the Egyptian, and Palestinian.

The Influence of the Egyptian Women’s Movement on the JWM

The social and political circumstances of Egypt have facilitated one of the most active women’s movements in the Arabic world, which in turn has had an influence upon the JWM. According to Jayawardena (1982: 19) the active feminist movement in Egypt was mainly related to the efforts taken by successive rulers to modernize the country on all levels. Therefore, an important factor that affected the Egyptian women’s movement was Mohammad Ali’s rule between 1811-1841. His main concern was to develop his country. As a result, he sent a large number of students to study in France. The goal was to build a new generation of educated people who would share in building the new country, which he was determined to renew (Jayawardena, 1982; Al-Naqshabandi, 2001).

Among the people who benefited from Ali’s policies was Refa’a Al-Tahtawi (1801-1873). Tahtawi believed in the necessity of opening channels of contact between the cultures of West and the East. In 1834 he published his book, *Takhlees Al-Ibrees fi Talkhees Paris* (A Paris Profile). This was one a unique description of a modern European country available to the Middle Eastern Muslim reader. It was the first book in Arabic to deal with the position of women, and Al-Tahtawi was the first Arab thinker in modern history to advocate education for women and a change in their status. This book was written during the author’s stay in Paris and reflects his admiration for French women and for educated women in general. He realized that women possess intellectual abilities. In *al-Murshid al-Amren fe Tarbiat al-Banat*
wal-Banen or 'The honest guide for education of girls and boys', published in 1873, Al-Tahtawi expresses his astonishment at the respect accorded to women in France: no veils, no beatings, no insults, no limitations. On the equality of the sexes he stated that, women are equal to men, they each have a human body, the same needs and the same external and internal senses. The two sexes are almost identical in every aspect. He advocated building schools for girls and stressed that an educated woman has a happier family, rears polite well-behaved children and has better job opportunities if necessity demands. So, Al-Tahtawi believed in the Arab women’s cause and her right to equality with men. His statements may be considered as the first endorsements of the sexes mixing socially (Jayawardena, 1982; Al-Naqshabandi, 2001).

Like Al-Tahtawi under Mohamed Ali Pasha, Qasem Amen was ushered into a world of democracy. Amen was born in 1863 to a Turkish father and upper class Egyptian mother. He grew up in an atmosphere of patriarchal autocracy, in which he witnessed his mother’s subordination, and this promoted him to devote his life to the advocacy of women’s rights. Similar to Al-Tahtawi, Amen was educated in France, which inspired him to write his book, ‘Woman’s Liberation’ in 1899. In this book, Amen argues that women should be educated in order not to be treated as objects and possessions. He advocated freedom of the mind, freedom of the conscience and freedom of the feelings. Amen considered work a necessary prerequisite for women’s liberation and argued that denying women their first right to earn their own living, had led to the loss of their rights (Amen, 1899). Such writings helped to increase Arabic women’s awareness of their situation as prisoners of underdevelopment, and of social traditions, which left them as prisoners in their homes, and dominated by men in every area of life in the patriarchal family structure.
According to Jayawardena, 1982; and Al-Sabky 1986, cited in Al-Naqshabandi, 2001), it was in 1923 that the first Egyptian feminist organization was established under the name of the ‘Egyptian Women’s Union’, under the presidency of Hoda Sha’rawi. Moreover, Sha’rawi had published a newspaper under the title of ‘Al-Masriah’ (which means the Egyptian woman). The Egyptian Women’s Union demanded that Egyptian women should be given their right to vote and that a law to stop polygamy should be enacted. In addition, the Union had several political aims, such as asking for the liberation of Egypt and Sudan, and canceling all foreign military and economic privileges. In 1944, the ‘Arab Feminist Union’ was founded in Cairo. Hoda Sharawi was elected president. It could be considered that the establishment of the first Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) in 1945 (as discussed earlier) was due to Sharawi’s efforts.

The first confrontation between the Egyptian women’s movement, the Egyptian government and the official Islam (as a part of the state institutions), was during the review of the electoral law in 1953. In this year, the New Constitutional Issues Committee in the People’s Council refused to give woman her right to vote. Also, the ‘Azhar Committee’ (which is the highest religious teaching institution in Egypt), refused this right. The leader of ‘Al-Azhar’ said that Islam does not resist women’s legal and political rights. However, at the same time, the Islamic brothers held a conference in which they asked the government not to continue discussions about women’s political rights, saying that the woman’s right to vote is against Islamic religious teachings. In response, Egyptian women went out to the streets with their protest, where they occupied the Journalism Union and started a hunger strike for ten days on the 12th of March 1954. They ended their strike after the declaration by the governor of Cairo that Egyptian woman would be given her complete political rights. In 1956, Egyptian women were given the right to vote in parliamentary elections for the first time in the history of Egypt. In 1957,
parliamentary elections were held and the first women (Rawya Attia and Amina Shoukri) were elected to the Egyptian parliament (Badran, 1991; Al- Naqshabandi, 2001).

It is clear that the Egyptian women’s struggle in 1954 (in order to achieve their legal right to vote) had a great influence on the JWM. This moral resource encouraged the JWM to move to try to change the patriarchal social structure by demanding the basic political right for Jordanian women as citizens, which is the right to vote and run in parliamentary elections. For example, as I have so far explained, the previous events in Egypt encouraged about 100 Jordanian women to have a meeting in the same year in Amman, in which they decided to establish the Arab Women’s Union, through which Jordanian women were able to achieve their basic political rights. So, both the Jordanian and Egyptian women’s movements achieved a great goal by being able to achieve women’s right to vote.

In the 1970s, Egypt was under the rule of ‘Al-Sadat’. In 1979, inspired by the United Nations which had announced the years between 1975-1985 as the ‘Woman’s International Decade, ‘Al-Sadat’ announced two new laws that influenced Egyptian women’s rights. The first was reforms in Personal Status Law. These reforms were: a wife’s right: to ask for divorce if her husband married someone else without her agreement (in the context of polygamy); to be informed when her husband initiated divorce; to keep her children under her custody, until the age of 10 for boys and until the age of 12 for girls; to receive alimony during that time; and to stay in the marital house until she remarries, or her child custody ends.

According to Al-Naqshabandi (2001:65), the election law was the second law to be changed by Al-Sadat. This new law assigned 30 additional seats in the Egyptian
Parliament especially for women. Also 20 per cent of the village and domestic council seats were given to women under a ‘quota system’. Such amendments, especially those in Personal Status Law, enraged and angered fundamentalist Muslims. This event was one of the main reasons for the assassination of Al-Sadat in 1984, by one of the Egyptian fundamentalists.

Assassination is expected, especially when we discuss the issue of amending Personal Status Law, since this legislation is taken from the Islamic Sharia, which Muslims (especially conservatives) believe is undisputable. Al-Mernissi (1987:36), believes that the difficulty in the Arab world is not because of the religious system, which is similar to any other society. Its conservatism is due to the eternity of this system, and from considering it as the ideal and typical model, which makes it undisputable, whereas, in other societies such issues are more open to discussion.

In Jordan, another message was sent from the fundamentalist Muslims to women. This message insured again that discussing woman’s issues and rights, especially within Personal Status Law, is unacceptable. This occurred in 1989 when the ‘muftis’ (Arabic for Islamic leader and advisor) Mu’tasim Faris and Shaykh Abd al-Rahman ‘Ali Al-Kurdi brought an apostasy lawsuit against Toujan Al-Faisal, one of the female candidates in the 1989 Jordanian parliamentary elections (see Chapter Five). Faris and Al-Kurdi asked the court to consider Al-Faisal as incompetent; to repeal her marriage; separate her from her children and to protect anyone who would like to kill her. All of this occurred because the Rai’ Newspaper had published an article on the 21st of December 1989 in which she spoke about women’s role in Islam, discussing issues like the beating of women by their husbands, the Islamic rule which stipulates that two women witnesses equal one male witness in court and the issue of polygamy (Al-Naqshabandi, 2001:120). Both

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Al-Kurdi and Faris withdrew the case after the Amman shar’ia court ruled that the case was beyond its jurisdiction.

The Egyptian judicial system refused the reform of Egyptian Personal Status law. So in 1985, the ‘Highest Constitutional Court’ announced that the 1979 amendments in Personal Status law were unconstitutional because they were issued dependent on ‘Emergency Law’ and the Court believed that there was no emergency case at that time. The Egyptian Women’s Movement did not accept this judgment and protested against it. At the end of 1985, and as a settlement of conflict between the women’s movement and the fundamentalists, Hosny Mobarak (the Egyptian President after Al-Sadat) undertook a review of Personal Status law with the result that women no longer had the right to ask for divorce if their husband married without their acceptance, which satisfied the fundamentalists. On the other hand, the new law guaranteed a woman’s right to a proper house if the children were under her custody (Al-Naqshabandi, 2001:66).

It is clear that these changes took place at the end of the Woman’s International Decade, maybe because the Egyptian government wanted to reflect a civilized stand towards Egyptian women’s rights during this time.

So, in conclusion, it could be said that the Egyptian Women’s Movement was an active movement that struggled for change to give women more legal and political rights. At the same time conservatism, government, and patriarchal society provided the main obstacles to its work. In addition, this movement had a great influence on the JWM, beginning with increasing women’s awareness of their rights and hard life, then encouraging them to fight for a better life by providing a good example, and lastly, by helping in establishing the Jordanian Women’s Union in 1945.
The Influence of the Palestinian Women’s Movement on the JWM

In 1920, when the first major Palestinian demonstration against the British mandate in Palestine occurred, Palestinian women were in demand for armed struggle and began to participate in mass demonstrations. At this time, about 40,000 men and women marched in the streets of Jerusalem and Yafa (Al-Sadani, 1983:21).

According to Al-Wahedy (1985), it was in 1921 that the first Palestinian Women’s Union was established by the efforts of some politically activist women such as Amelia Al-Sakakeny and Zalyka Al-shahaby. This Union’s main concern was to organize demonstrations against the British mandate and to resist the Zionist occupation. In 1929, a women’s conference was held in Jerusalem. Palestinian women from the different cities of Palestine attended this conference. Resolutions were passed demanding the withdrawal of the ‘Balfour’ Declaration and the prohibition of Jewish immigration into Palestine. In 1936 a large number of Palestinian women demonstrated in Jerusalem against immigration.

The agenda of the early Arab women’s movement centered on political struggle. As proof of this, the Egyptian Women’s Union Conference, which met in Cairo in 1938 and hosted representatives from the different Arab countries, dealt not with feminist issues but with the immediate nationalist concerns of the Palestinian people. The political resolutions called for an end to Jewish immigration, an end to the transfer of Arab lands to Jews in Palestine and a rejection of any plan to divide Palestine (Lobban, 1980: 238).

The year 1948 saw a major blow to the Palestinian women’s movement. The quick exile of the Palestinians after Israeli occupation left the movement splintered
between women in the refugee camps and women who remained inside Palestine. Peasant women, middle class women, and elite women became refugees overnight.

As Jordan itself was under the British mandate until 1946, and since it shares borders with Palestine (still under Israeli occupation), Jordan was not far from what happened in Palestine. Many Palestinian refugees emigrated to Jordan at a time when the country was experiencing scarcity of resources, transportation difficulties, lack of security and a low percentage of educated people (Abu-Gazalih, 1993).

These circumstances increased the political awareness of the Jordanian people in general including women who, in spite of the social tribal traditions and norms (which did not accept the idea of women’s participation in public life), had started to play an important role in society through charitable work. Consequently, women’s charitable associations, such as ‘The Women’s Solidarity Society’, were established in Jordan by the mid forties. As noted, in 1948, and as a result of the Arab defeat in their battle against the Israeli occupation of Palestine, a lot of Palestinian refugees emigrated to Jordan. Consequently, Jordanian women’s efforts merged with the women refugees of Palestine in order to rescue and help the needy. So, for example, there was great cooperation between women from the ‘Christian Ladies Association’, a Palestinian Association, and the women of both the Solidarity Society and the Jordanian Women’s Union in order to build a hospital for refugees (Krais, 1993, 1-9).

According to Abu-Gazalih (1993), the disaster of 1948 in Palestine changed the demographic structure in the East Bank (Jordan). This, I believe was a main factor that made it essential to start to reorganize voluntary work in Jordan. As a result of this, the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) was established in 1951. According to Nafa’ (1990), the Ministry was given the authority to supervise and
organize voluntary work in Jordan. In contrast, political organizations were under the supervision of the Home Office.

The strong connection between the establishment of the JWM and Palestine can be established by reviewing the names of a number of important members of this association such as, Lama’ Al-Razaz, Salwa Al- Dajany, Fairooze SA’d and Fareda Ganma, all Palestinian women. In interview, Salwa Zayadeen, a founder and major witness to the history of the Jordanian and Palestinian women’s movements said,

“By the year 1951, municipal elections were held in Palestine. We took the opportunity and lobbied to achieve women’s right to participate in municipal elections. In Amman, people heard about our efforts through the media, and especially newspapers. So, we went to Amman, where we met the prime minister at that time (Sameer Al- Refa’i), and we demanded Jordanian women’s rights to participate in the municipal elections”.

(Interview with Salwa Zayadeen, a major witness of the history of women’s movement)

On the issue of Palestinian land and of women’s legal rights, it is clear that Palestinian women cannot demand immediate changes in their legal status because they are ‘stateless’. Their main focus is the end of Israeli occupation and the creation of a Palestinian state. The Palestinian case differs from other Arab countries, for example Egypt, for several reasons. First, Palestinian has had a longer period of struggle that has affected women’s rights. Second, Palestinian women are scattered across the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and other Arab countries. They face a double burden of struggle for independence of Palestine and for
survival. So, because of such circumstances, the Palestinian women's movement might be considered as a weak movement in their struggle for women's legal rights.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have analyzed the historical development of the JWM, concentrating on the different historical stages and turning points in the movement's life, the movement's ideology/ideologies, resources and facilitators, strategies, and interests. I have explored the relationship between the different Arab women's movements and the JWM, especially on the issue of Arab women's legal rights and equality.

Through the analysis of the historical development of the JWM, different aspects of the theoretical framework adopted in this research have proved to be relevant. First of all, in the light of resources mobilization theory (RMT) and as McCarthy and Zald, (1973) and Marx and McAdam (1994) argue, in any society there is always a degree of unhappiness and dissatisfaction. Yet dissatisfaction by itself is not enough to stimulate the discontented group to move. Discontent is insufficient to fuel the group to challenge the stable social order around them unless there are sufficient resources to generate enough power to affect a challenge. As we have seen, this was the case with the JWM since its early history. The discussion in the chapter has shown that without the existence of both internal and external facilitators and both the moral and financial support they provided to the women's movement, it would not have had the power to continue its mission to pursue equity and equal opportunities for Jordanian women. For example, at the international level, the United Nations' Decade for Women was a crucial facilitator, enhancing the debate around women's issues in the Arab world, as well as encouraging the formation or
reformation of women’s NGOs in the Arab region in general and in Jordan in particular. Moreover, the commitment of Jordan towards the implementation of a number of human rights and women’s rights international conventions, and the international financial support\(^\text{10}\) for any developing country to enhance the level of human rights in it played a major role in facilitating the will of empowering women in the country.

At the internal level, political opportunity structure theory (POST) draws our attention to a number of important factors, including the particular history of each country and its internal political circumstances in determining the different historical stages, strategies and interests of the JWM. A main factor has been occupation in general and the Israeli occupation especially. Occupation has influenced the nationalist discourse of Arab women’s movements in general and JWM in particular. In addition, it has had an influence on the nature of the movement’s interests and activities, which became more nationalist and political rather than charitable. As explained, occupation stimulated Jordanian women to pool their efforts and direct them toward a specific goal at that particular time in history, in order to deal with what one can call the ‘nationalist cause’ of independence and freedom. In the light of political opportunity structure theory (Tarrow, 1998; Kriesi et al, 1995; Eisinger,1973) the involvement of Jordanian women in nationalist struggles and the spread of the spirit of liberalization opened

\(^{10}\) According to Paragraph 300 of the Beijing Platform for Action, “Regional and international organizations, in particular development institutions, especially INSTRAW, UNIFEM and bilateral donors, should provide financial and advisory assistance to national machinery in order to increase its ability to gather information, develop networks and carry out its mandate, in addition to strengthening international mechanisms to promote the advancement of women through their respective mandates, in cooperation with Governments”.

the political opportunity structure to such a degree that they were enabled to promote the view that, while women share the basic goals of democracy, freedom, and equality with men, in addition they have specific demands which are represented in the elimination of all forms of oppression: foreign domination, class inequality, racism, legal discrimination and, importantly, patriarchy.

Moreover, and following RMT, the existence of elites at the disposal of the movement helped to establish power. First of all, the fact that the JWM started in the hands of mostly middle class, educated and political women (founders and participants) was a major resource, as according to RMT the higher the class the more resources members can generate (Storr, 2002), and according to Giddens’ structuration theory (Giddens, 1993; 1984) the more resources they generate the more powerful they become and the more powerful they become the more capable of challenging and transforming the already existing social structure they become. Second, the backing of power holders (elites), the royal family in particular was another crucial resource that stimulated the JWM since its early history.

The next Chapter, titled ‘equal opportunities’, will demonstrate the improvement in women’s status in Jordanian society concentrating on the role of the JWM in this process. That is, it will assess the movement’s ‘outcomes’ through the appraisal of what has improved in the socio-economic status of Jordanian women and where the most difficult obstacles to women’s progress remain. It therefore offers an analysis of the impact of the JWM as a social change agent in transforming women’s status within the patriarchal social structure of Jordanian society.
Chapter Five

Equal Opportunities

Introduction

Through the analysis of the historical development of the JWM some key questions arise. They are questions we must ask in order to fully assess where women stand in Jordan today and what the impact of the JWM has been on social structure and social policy in order to achieve better opportunities for women and eliminate social discrimination. These are questions that can best be answered by analyzing statistics and studying historical trends. Therefore, this Chapter presents a review and an appraisal of the advancement of women’s status in Jordanian society concentrating on the role of the JWM in this process. Critical areas of concern in this Chapter include access to education and to key economic structures such as paid employment and politics.

The educational, economic and political well being of women is often used as an indicator of the overall advancement of a society. The more educated, politically and economically active women are, the more powerful and independent they become. Women’s increasing participation in the workforce gives them access to an income of their own. Women’s increasing participation in education gives them access to knowledge and awareness. Women’s increasing participation in politics gives them access to the public sphere and hence the potential to play an important part in the decision making process. Participation in these terms is an important resource in shifting relations of power within households and society in general in women’s favour, and at the same time, according to RMT and Giddens’ structuration theory, these resources are vital to understanding the emergence of social movements.
Simultaneously, studying the impact of the JWM, as a social change agent on women's status within a specific social structure would not be complete if we did not try to analyze that structure and its characteristics. Consequently, the role of social traditions, tribalism, family, economy, and educational curriculum, plus women's reproductive role will be examined as substructures of patriarchy in order to achieve a broader understanding of how these elements affect the construction of gender roles and impact women's movement’s efforts and women's rights.

**Women and Education in Jordan**

The main reason for studying the educational status of Jordanian women and the role of the JWM comes from the assumption that the more educated women are the more they become aware of their rights and how to practise those rights. Also, the more educated women are the more they become able to recognize legal and cultural discrimination against them as humans and thereby able to fight to achieve their human rights of legal and social equality. Furthermore, education is one of the main factors promoting women's participation in the labour force.

**Women and Educational Status in Jordan**

By reviewing the development of educational achievements in Jordan since the establishment of the principality of West Jordan in 1921, it can be seen that there has been a major change in the numbers of males and females registering in schools. Through the years 1922-1923, there were only six female schools and nineteen male schools. The number of female students at the primary level of education was 318 compared to 2182 male students at the same educational level. This number increased in the year 1945-1946 to a total of 1956 female students compared to 7918 males (Al- Tal, 1985: 53).
The first indication of a formal positive change appeared in the 1952 Jordanian constitution in which the idea of the obligatory education for children was enacted. According to Billeh (1996:1-2 cited in El-Kharouf, 2000: 39), in 1954 the Royal Education Commission was formed and as a result of its work and recommendations, the 1955 Education Law passed through which a free and compulsory education for the children from the age of seven to twelve. In 1964, existing Educational Law was replaced with a new law that extended compulsory education for children to ages 6-15.

Also, in 1962 the first public university, the University of Jordan, was established, followed by the establishment of the University of Yarmouk in 1976 and University of Mu'tah in 1982. According to the Jordanian Department of Statistics (DOS 2000:109) the University system in Jordan has developed considerably since this time and now consists of twenty-two public and private Universities.

According to the 2000 Jordanian Human Development Report (issued by the United Nations. Inter: undp-jordan.org), Jordan has the highest female literacy rate and overall literacy rate of all Arab states. Literacy nearly doubled from 47% in 1960, to 87% in 1995 and to 89.7% in 2002. However, while the overall literacy rate has risen sharply, a substantial gender gap remains: two-thirds of all illiterate Jordanians are women (Inter: kinghussein.gov).

The number of educated Jordanian women has continued to increase and this can be attributed to the development of political circumstances (as explained before in Chapter Four) and the need to meet the market demands of the labour force. Also, the idea of obligatory education for children played a major role in increasing the number of people (both genders) joining school (El-Kharouf, 2000). In this way, Jordan has achieved a noticeable improvement in the field of education for both genders in general, and Jordanian women especially have
made important progress in their educational levels. According to the Ministry of Education (Inter: dos.gov), statistics indicate that the rates of participation in different levels of education have been approximately equal between the two genders since 1994/1995. However, there were some gaps in previous decades, so for example in 1979 the rates of participation in different levels of education favored males with about a 10% average difference (and 15% at the secondary level). These differences disappeared in latter years and started a trend to the benefit of females in 1988 and in 1994. This was clear at all levels of education except the kindergarten level where the percentage of male participation is still a bit higher than female (see figure 5.1).

**Figure (5.1): Joining Schools Rates by the Educational Year 1995**

![Graph showing participation rates by gender for secondary, basic education, and kindergarten levels.](image)

Source: Ministry of Education (Inter: dos.gov).
Another positive indicator in the educational process is the continually increasing percentage of people of both genders completing (i.e. graduating with certificates) different levels of education. The percentage of females who achieved the primary level of education or above increased from 41% for the year 1979 to 55% in 1987 and then to 73% in 1994. As for males, the percentage also increased from 62% in 1979 to 82% in 1994. Similarly, the percentage of females who completed their secondary level of education increased from almost 11% in 1979 to 20% in 1987 and 33% in 1994. Moreover, there was an increase from 3.7% in 1979 to 7.5% in 1987 and to 15.9 in 1994 in the percentage of females who achieved a higher degree beyond the secondary level (i.e. community college and university levels). These percentages increased for males from about 9% in 1979 to 20% in 1994 (Billeh, 1996: 7-8 cited in El- Kharouf, 2000). However, Figure (5.2) shows that the percentage of females obtaining graduate (University and Higher) degrees did not exceed 6.6% in 2000 (Inter: Dos.gov.jo).
So, in spite of these positive indicators showing a rise in the percentages of people completing different levels of education, we still see that the percentage of males completing each level of education is still higher than that of females.

These gender gaps can be analyzed by understanding the social structure of Jordan. In some areas of the country, Bedouin and rural areas especially, families’ traditional attitudes still place more importance on the education of sons while daughters are pushed towards early marriage. That is; maternity, the natural biological role of women, has traditionally been regarded as their major social role. In spite of the significant decrease in the fertility rate from 7.38 in 1955 to 4.11 in 2000 (for fertility rates in Jordan, see APPENDIX F.1), which
could be attributed to the increase of women's levels of education and accordingly their participation in the labor force, fertility levels in Jordan are still considered one of the highest in the Arab region. Emphasizing the role tribes and family play in the construction of a patriarchal society, Mai Abul Samen, Director of the National Forum for Jordanian Women (NFJW) said,

"I am sorry to say that yes, we are a patriarchal society, and that is a consequence of the inherited social traditions and values, especially in the tribal areas of Jordan. I think it is family, which usually gives holiness to boys and subordinates girls, and society passes these concepts from one generation to another. That is why I think it is the role of the educational system to try to reform these mistaken beliefs. Unfortunately, in our educational curriculum we concentrate on the idea that the woman's job is to rear children and cook whereas men's is to study and work outside the home". 

(Interview with Mai Abul Samen, Director of NFJW)

Research informants believed that, in spite of significant improvement, the Jordanian educational curriculum still contains core texts that confirm patriarchal ideologies in gender relations and gender roles. Suleiman Sweis, head of the Jordanian National Forum for Women (JSHR), stressed,

"I have conducted a study concerning the status of human rights in the school curriculum in Jordan. In two of the schoolbooks for the secondary level the idea of man's right to beat his wife because of her behaviour was clearly addressed. These ideas are being taught for seventeen and eighteen year old boys and girls. We are forming the youth culture and ideologies with these ideas, which those youngest would never forget. It will always be in their unconscious that men have the right to beat their wives, and after this we start to complain about the high levels of violence against women in our society. I wonder how we are
supposed to develop women's rights in our society with the existence of these texts”.

(Interview with Suleiman Sweis, head of JSHR)

These quotations shed light on an important fact, which is that patriarchal societies were not born patriarchal. They do not grow from a vacuum. Patriarchy is a consequence of harmonic relations between multiple institutions, such as religious interpretations, family, economy, education, social traditions and values and in the case of Jordan, the tribal social system.

**Illiteracy Rates**

While the overall literacy rate for both genders in Jordan has risen sharply, there is still a considerable gender gap in the illiteracy scale, as illiteracy rates for females of all ages are higher than those of males. However, data for the years 1979, 1987, 1994 and 1998 indicate a decrease in the gap in illiteracy rates between the two genders for the different age groups. Also, data show that females’ illiteracy rates are going down in larger percentages and more quickly than males’. Thus the illiteracy rate for females aged 15 and over has fallen from 48% in 1979 to 33% in 1987 and to 21% in 1994. It fell for males from 19.7% in 1979 to 12.8% in 1987 and to 9.9% in 1994. Statistics indicate that the female illiteracy rate dropped even further to 17.5% in 1998 (Employment, Unemployment Survey, 1998). According to El-Kharouf (2000: 38) there are significant differences in education and illiteracy levels by geographic location.
Figure (5.3): Illiteracy Rate for Jordanian Population Age 15& over by Region 1994

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amman</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balqa</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ajloun</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zarqa</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mafraq</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma'an</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we can see from figure 5.3, there are clear regional differences in illiteracy rates for the Jordanian population aged 15 and over. The lowest female illiteracy rate is in Amman at about 15% compared to 7.4% for males; whereas the highest females illiteracy rates are concentrated in Ma’an (in the south part of Jordan) at 39.1% compared to 19.6% for males, and in Mafraq (in the north of Jordan) with about a 36% female illiteracy rate compared to 19% for males. So it is clear that female illiteracy rates are always higher than males (about double) in the different regions. But hand these rates differ significantly from one region to another. So, in Amman (the capital) and Balqa (the nearest city to Amman), female illiteracy rates are the lowest in the country, whereas for Ma’an and Mafraq (which can be considered rural areas) they are the highest. These rates are not surprising; as explained above, in such rural areas women’s education is usually disapproved of and traditional attitudes still place more importance on the education of sons while daughters are pushed towards early marriage. Whereas in Amman (as any other capital city in the world), money, power, and industry have played a major role in improving social attitudes towards women’s education and this has improved women’s opportunity to be educated. Rehab Al-Qadomy, a Lawyer, human rights activist, a member of the legal committee in the NCJW, and a one of the founders of the legal consultancy office in the BPWF, said,

“*We cannot deny that our Jordanian society as a whole is a patriarchal tribal society. Some people believe that this characteristic has changed a bit. However, I think that those people speak about Jordan as if Jordan is Amman, and they forget the wider picture of the big and important cities outside Amman, where tribal values are the only ruler of gender relations. I think there should be a fairer distribution of facilities and services in the different areas of the country, which would help to improve not only women’s but also human status in the country*”.

(Interview with Al-Qadomy, Lawyer and women’s rights activists)
Thus, discrimination in girls' access to education persists in many areas owing to customary attitudes, early marriages and pregnancies, and lack of adequate accessible schooling facilities. In addition, girls in the rural agricultural areas in particular undertake heavy domestic work at a very early age. Girls and young women are expected to manage both educational and domestic responsibilities, often resulting in poor performance in school and early dropout from the educational system. This has long-lasting consequences for all aspects of women's lives.

Higher Education

According to El- Kharouf (2000, 47), higher education in Jordan refers essentially to education offered via the two-year Community Colleges, undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. As explained earlier, according to the Jordanian Department of Statistics (DOS 2000:109) the University system in Jordan has developed considerably and now consists of twenty-two public and private Universities. According to Majdoubeh (1996: 20 cited in El- Kharouf, 2000), in 1996-97 there were a total of 113,364 higher education enrolments (of which female students represented 47 percent). In addition to this, a large number of Jordanian students are enrolled in higher education institutions abroad, covering different Arab and foreign countries (see APPENDICES F.2 & F.3).

Figure 5.4 shows an increase in the number of females attending higher education. The percentage of women following the BA degree increased from 43% in 1979 to 50% in 1987 then declined a little to 48% in 1994 and stayed more or less the same for 1999/2000 (DOS, 2000: 105). These numbers could indicate a great improvement in Jordanian women's opportunities to achieve a high level of education and become approximately equal to men.
Figure (5.4): Percentages of Students Following the B.A Degree in Specific Years by Gender, 1979-1999


However, looking at the numbers of female students enrolled for higher education by programmes (subject), we can see from table 5.1 that the largest absolute number of female students are enrolled in the programmes of Humanities and Religion (12003 out of 17530) and Education Sciences and Teacher Training (9518 out of 13193). Whereas, programmes with the lowest women’s participation are: Engineering (2417 out of 11494), Law (1912 out of 5705), Commercial and Business Administration (6451 out of 20726) and Math and Computer Sciences (3607 out of 10506). Therefore, it seems that girls still concentrate on a severely restricted number of the higher education branches. Evidently women are often deprived of basic education in technical training (e.g. Engineering), Business and Economics, Science and Mathematics which could provide knowledge to improve their daily lives and enhance their employment
opportunities. Also, this reinforces traditional female and male roles that deny women opportunities for full and equal partnership in society (see table 5.1).

Table (5.1): Students Enrolled for B.A/B.Sc Degrees in the Jordanian Universities by Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Governmental Universities</th>
<th>Private Universities</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Sciences &amp; Teachers Training</td>
<td>12008</td>
<td>8567</td>
<td>1185</td>
<td>951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities &amp; Religion</td>
<td>13267</td>
<td>8862</td>
<td>4263</td>
<td>3141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social &amp; Behavioral Sciences</td>
<td>4819</td>
<td>2940</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>2948</td>
<td>1183</td>
<td>2757</td>
<td>729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>9145</td>
<td>2293</td>
<td>2349</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial &amp; Business Administration</td>
<td>7489</td>
<td>3005</td>
<td>13237</td>
<td>3446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass - Communication and Documentation</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>1094</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>2656</td>
<td>1602</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>1495</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>2475</td>
<td>1248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine &amp; Applied Arts</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>1774</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>5297</td>
<td>3516</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math &amp; Computer Sciences</td>
<td>4990</td>
<td>2218</td>
<td>5516</td>
<td>1389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Para-Medical Science</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture &amp; Town Planning</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**JWM and Women's Education**

By reading the early history of Jordanian women's educational status we can see (as explained earlier) that there was a good increase in the number of educated females between 1922 and 1946. The question now is how far we can attribute this increase to the early efforts of the JWM.

By reviewing the literature on the JWM (Abu-Roomy, 1995; Al-Tal, 1985) we can say that increasing women's educational levels in the country was a key objective in its early years. According to Abu-Roomy (1995) and Al-Tal (1985) the improvement of women's levels of education was mainly due to the great
efforts undertaken by a number of educated women (mostly upper and middle class women) who worked alone or through charitable associations such as the “Women’s Solidarity Society” (see Chapter Four) and the “Jordanian Women’s Union” (JWU) which were established in 1944 and 1945. These women worked as teachers at a time when the number of schools was very low. They did their best to spread educational motivation among women from different social classes in Jordan by arranging to meet them in their homes in order to explain the importance of education to them, and also by helping and encouraging female students to convince other females to join schools (as there were no universities in Jordan at that time). However, for both males and females, it was not until the early 1950s that a better educational system began to develop. Up to that time Jordan was still under the influence of British rule and there was no significant progress recorded in education as a whole.

By the beginning of the 1950s, and with the establishment of the first Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) in 1954 and the promulgation of the 1952 Jordanian Constitution which guarantees the rights of Jordanian citizens, including academic freedom, the efforts of different sectors have been directed towards providing equal educational opportunities and decreasing the illiteracy rate. The JWM, with the Ministry of Education’s support, has played a major role in reducing Jordanian female illiteracy rates. The elimination of illiteracy has been one of its most important goals. Moreover, the role played by the JWM 1954 Union in achieving Jordanian women’s legal right to vote in the parliamentary elections on condition of finishing their primary level of education increased the number of women who wanted to be educated (see Chapter Four).

By reviewing the constitution of the Women’s Union we can see that the “elimination of illiteracy among females, to improve Jordanian women’s educational and economic levels in order to prepare them to practise their rights as citizens” is the first article in the objectives section (Al- Tal, 1985).
Furthermore, research into the Union’s activities shows that in addition to its role in securing Jordanian women’s legal rights to run in parliamentary elections and amending Personal Status law, it established a large number of rehabilitation and illiteracy elimination centers which spread to different regions of the country. This Union was working to establish more illiteracy centers when the political decision to dissolve the different political parties and associations was declared by King Hussein Bin Talal in 1957 (Al-Tal, 1985: 127).

After the year 1957, and as no political activities, at any level, were allowed in the country (see Chapter Four) women’s illiteracy elimination classes were the only possible opportunity for the JWM to meet with women and educate them. The movement was aware that only through education they can develop women’s levels of awareness in general and politically in particular. In a personal interview, Salwa Zayadeen, a founder of the JWM, explained,

"After the year 1957 we decided to establish a non-political society that aimed to reduce illiteracy between women, it was called the 'Illiteracy Elimination Society'. This society was of a great benefit for the women's movement at that time, as it was the only legal way through which we could meet with women from different areas in the country”.

When the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) was established in 1974 it continued the goal of the previous Union to eliminate illiteracy among Jordanian women. This is clear from looking at Act (2) in its constitution. This Act deals with the objectives of the Union which clearly started with, “improving the educational, social and economic levels of Jordanian women”. Moreover, these Union activities (according to its Constitution) were divided between different committees, of which the main one was the Central Committee. The duty of this committee was to supervise work in the rehabilitation and illiteracy elimination
centers. Also, this Union continued to open such centers in which they used to provide (in addition to illiteracy elimination) vocational training and typing skills in Arabic and English. Furthermore, according to Al-Tal (1985) rarely a week passed without a seminar or a symposium that dealt with the female illiteracy problem.

Also, as I explained in Chapter Four, in 1951 the first Ministry of Social Development was established in Jordan. Between 1951-1979 there were 32 women’s associations registered with the “General Union for Charitable Associations” which had been established by the Ministry. According to the Al-Urdun Al- Jadid Research Centre (AUJRC 2000, 47), one of those 32 women’s associations was the ‘Women’s Society to Combat Illiteracy’, established in 1972. This association’s main and only goal was and still is to eliminate illiteracy among females in the poor areas such as refugee camps populated by Palestinians who lost their homes and means of livelihood as a result of the Jewish military actions against them since the 1948 Arab-Jewish war. Socio-economic conditions in the camps are generally poor with a high population density, cramped living conditions and inadequate basic infrastructure such as roads and sewers. The Women’s Society to combat Illiteracy also operates in poor rural areas where illiteracy is concentrated.

Between the years 1951-1979 the Association, with the co-operation of the Ministry of Education, opened more than 50 illiteracy centers in the different poor areas. The Association used to rent the illiteracy center, supervise the educational process and conduct surveys in order to determine areas that were still in need of centers. The Ministry of Education’s role was to open the normal governmental schools in the evenings and to provide these schools with skillful teachers to teach illiteracy classes.

We can see that, from its early beginnings the JWM recognized and placed emphasis on the importance of education in promoting gender equality and the
advancement of women. Eliminating illiteracy and raising the levels of women’s education was an important part of the movement’s social struggle against oppression and inequality for women. Through its struggle for women’s empowerment the JWM was aware of the need to provide opportunities to women to have access to education so that they could be better equipped to protect their rights. Better education for women means new resources. This new resource (i.e. education) is a co-product of government reforms and action by the JWM. All this can be conceived as an important element in the process of structuration which according to Giddens’ structuration theory and the RMT would help the movement to generate more power, which the movement needs to enhance its transformative capacity in a patriarchal social structure. Participation in these terms is an important resource in shifting relations of power within households and society in general in women’s favour.

Jordanian Women in the Labour Force

There is no doubt that Jordan depends a great deal on human labour as labour power is considered the main wealth and resource in the national economic development process. Also, it should be mentioned here that the lack of natural and financial resources is another factor that has made it essential to depend on human resources and to invest in developing rates of participation in the labour force.

Women’s labour force participation means the number of women who have joined the labour market in order to work in return for wages. This definition, according to the Jordanian Department of Statistics DOS (2000, 26), excludes people working in the agricultural sector (as this sector has a special nature where it is hard to limit or organize the working hours), armed forces, public security and civil defense. Although this means that such statistics will not reflect the exact status of women’s participation in the labour force in Jordan,
they are still the only official source that we can use in order to study labour market trends. However, according to the Al Rai Daily Newspaper (Sunday, February 02, 2003), the Jordanian council of ministers has recently decided, under a new regulation issued from Article 3 (d) of the 1996 Labor Law, to include people working in the agricultural sector within the rules of the Labor Law, while still refraining from interfering in the working hours issue. According to this amendment, the groups of agricultural workers who will be included in this new law are: “the agricultural engineers, veterinarians, the daily paid governmental and public institutions agricultural workers, the professional workers on the farming machines, and the professional workers in nurseries (arboretums), chicken co-ops and in raising cows and sheep”.

By this amendment to the definition of the work force (by including people working in the agricultural sector) one may think that a clearer picture of women’s participation will emerge as there are a large number of women who work in farming. However, if we take a deeper look at the real nature of the jobs that most women are involved in, that is in the agricultural sector as wage-less workers on the family farm, it could be argued that this amendment has not taken these women into consideration. Consequently, any further statistics collected on the new bases of identifying the labor force in Jordan will still not reflect the exact status of women’s participation.

According to Al-Naqshabandi (2000: 146), it was in late 1940s that Jordanian women entered the labour market in spite of opposition. This opposition was represented in the state by the banning of women’s employment in governmental administrations until 1947. No explanation can be given for this ban other than it was a reflection of the patriarchal ideology adopted by the state at that time. It was not even ‘gendered hierarchy’ state, as described by Franzway et al (1989 cited in Waylen: 1998: 8), or ‘nominally patriarchal’ as Savage and Witz (1993 cited in Waylen: 1998: 8) describe, as no women were employed even at the bottom level of the state.
By the beginning of 1950s most women who did not work in the agricultural sector worked in education as teachers or in the public sector. This was even more marked by the 1970s. Later on, and with the increase in women's educational levels, and with the increase of living costs, it became more acceptable for women to join the wider labour market (Al-Naqshabandi: 2000).

**Employment Rates of Women in Jordan**

In addition to the fact that much of women's work is not measured in official statistics, being unpaid, undervalued and taken for granted (domestic work), labour force participation among women has been significantly lower than men over years. Results of surveys (DOS) from 1982-2000 indicate that participation in the labour force in Jordan varies according to sex and region. The participation rate for women aged 15 years and over was 8 percent in 1982; increased to 11.9 percent in 1996; and then to 12.3 in the year 2000. This can be compared with the male participation rate which was 68 percent in 1982; increased a little to 68.6 in 1996; and then declined to 66.1 in the year 2000 (APPENDIX F.4 & figure 5.5). However, with the spread of education and industrialization, and the decreased number of children per woman, Jordanian society appears to have been able to loosen the grip of traditional values and customs and an increasing number of Jordanian women have been participating in economic activity.
Statistics show that, in spite of the increase in female participation in the labor market over the past two decades, this is still significantly lower than men. So, what obstacles do Jordanian women face in this area?

According to the findings of Shtaiwy (1993) and El-Kharouf (2000), the main obstacles women face in getting a job are first, discrimination between single and married women by managers. Managers prefer to hire single women rather than married, as they believe that single women have more time for their job because they have less responsibility at home and are more serious in their work, while married women always have excuses to have a break because of their mother’s role which disturbs work. Second, economic factors obstruct women gaining employment, since whilst the job market all over the world is becoming fragile, in the Arab world the situation is much worse. As so far explained, and addressed further in Chapter Six, lack of resources and the unstable political
status of the region have led to serious economic problems. Debt, poverty, and unemployment are fundamental ongoing economic problems in the country. This adds extra pressure to women's problems.

Before 1989, Jordan functioned with a mixed economic system in which both state and private sectors shared in economic investment. After 1990, Jordan developed an economic reform plan through which the state, as a result of its lack of finance and capacity, started to withdraw from economic investment leaving it to the private sector, the aims of which are to achieve the highest profit. In essence, Jordan has moved towards a capitalist system. Under this new system women have been the most harmed group of people as they are economically the weakest with low rates of employment and income. In a personal interview, Emily Nafa', head of Arab Women's Society (AWS), and a member of the Communist Party in Jordan, stressed,

"The recent economic system in Jordan is dragging the country to serve globalization and savage capitalism. The farmers left their lands and the state sold the main services to private investors. We are depending on foreign countries to secure our food. Under such an economic system we will remain in debt, and we will be forced to sell our natural wealth to pay debts. Under the name of privatization, Jordan has sold a large number of its sources of wealth, and this has increased levels of unemployment. Women are always the first victim of such circumstances, as at this point, unfortunately, religious fundamentalists meet with big capitalists and both called for returning women to home as a major solution for unemployment".

(Interview with Emily Nafa', head of AWS)

1 Personal interview with Ibtesam Atyiat, a member of the National Committee for Jordanian Women NCJW, and a researcher on the women's movement, 2003.
The majority of research informants believed that governmental economic reform plans, and the process of privatization in particular, were not in the right direction, as they have augmented the country's economic problems and women's problems in particular. However, according to a few research informants, heading towards capitalism is not a choice any more. Dr Al-Sabbagh, General Secretary of the National Committee for Jordanian Women's Affairs (NCJW), explained,

"The problem is not in the economic system, but rather in the economic status. Capitalism is not a choice any more. It is a fact that Jordan as any other country has to accept and adapt in the era of globalization. However, to avoid the harmful consequences of this system we should help women to be economically productive and independent. Otherwise, women will be one of the most harmed groups of people".

(Interview with Dr Sabbagh, the General Secretary of the NCJW)

Women would not manage to compete in this very tight market and hope for a fair share of limited job opportunities in a society that is still conservative and mainly male dominated.

In addition to the above factors, social and cultural attitudes are major obstacles to labor force participation. So, for example many women have to leave school early because their parents want them to pursue marriage and home responsibilities. The schools are far from the home and they may be a mixed (boys and girls) school. The lack of a part time jobs leaves no choice other than jobs with long working hours, which few women, especially married can do. Some women work only before getting married, and they leave their jobs because their husbands refuse to allow them to continue to work and/or because of conflicting demands at home. Moreover, the social assumption that women's only duty, once married, is to stay at home fully engaged in domestic work and
child rearing has generated little motivation amongst women to look for a job. Consequently whenever a work opportunity is available men are preferred.

**Unemployment among Women in Jordan**

Jordan is a country where higher unemployment rates are faced by women than by men. The figures in table 5.2 speak for themselves as they clearly show further gender differences in the field of labour force. According to the results of surveys conducted by the Department of Statistics (DOS) over the years 1993 to 2000, table 5.2 shows that in 1993, women’s unemployment rate was 36.6 percent; decreased to 29.4 in 1994; and to 20.7 percent in 1996. On the other hand, statistics show that males’ unemployment rates decreased from 16.6 percent in 1993 to 13.6 percent in 1994, and then to 10.7 percent 1996. In 1997, an increase in both female and male unemployment rates occurred as women’s unemployment rate increased to 28.5 percent and males to 11.7 percent. In 1999 another increase in the unemployment percentages occurred, to 30.9 percent for females and to 12.9 percent for males. In the year 2000 a decrease to 21.0 percent in females’ unemployment rate and to 12.3 in males’ unemployment rate took place.

A consideration of these figures can give us a clearer picture of Jordanian women’s status in the labour market and highlight the extent to which the gendered gap is still playing a major role in determining Jordanian women’s chances of becoming an economically effective part of their society. First, the statistics show that there is a big gap of about a 50% difference between male and female unemployment rates (and this gap is in the interest of males). Second, when there is an increase in the unemployment rates, it is females who suffer most (as in the years 1999 and 1997).
### Table 5.2: Unemployment Rates among Jordanian Labour Force 15+ Years of age by Sex from Selected Surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Name</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment, Unemployment and Income Survey 1993 (Second Round)</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment, Unemployment and Income Survey 1994</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment, Unemployment and Income Survey 1995</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment, Unemployment Survey 1996 (Second Round)</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment, Unemployment Survey 1997</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>14.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment, Unemployment Survey 1998 (Third Round)</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>10.3</td>
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<td>Employment, Unemployment Survey 1999 (Third Round)</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>15.6</td>
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<td>Employment, Unemployment Survey 2000 (first Round)</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment, Unemployment Survey 2000 (Second Round)</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment, Unemployment Survey 2000 (Third Round)</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment, Unemployment Survey 2000 (Fourth Round)</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment, Unemployment Survey 2000 (Average of Four Rounds)</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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2 According to the Department of Statistics the reference period for seeking a job was four weeks prior to the day of interview.
More recent data reported in the *Jordan Times Newspaper* (January 6, 2003), also shows Jordanian women to be less economically active. According to a study conducted by DOS on a sample of nearly 10,000 households and covering the last quarter of 2002; out of every 100 Jordanian women, only between 7-8 are economically active compared to 40 percent rate for men. Unemployment was higher among women at around 19 percent compared to 13.5 per cent among men.

This article also indicated that women’s employment is concentrated in the education sector at 44 percent, with 13 percent in the health sector and in the social work field. Whereas nearly 19.5 percent of men work in the trade sector and 17.5 per cent are employed in the public administration and defence sectors. Moreover, according to the findings of this study, 37 percent of the economically active women hold BA degrees compared to only 16 percent of economically active men. The author of the article, Rana Awwad, commented on these results by saying: “The study was conducted in a male-dominated society, men are traditionally considered to be the breadwinners for their families”. So, it is clear that the writer has referred to the ‘patriarchal’ social characteristic as an adequate explanation of Jordanian women’s poor participation and high unemployment rates.

According to this research respondents, women’s biological role in reproduction is not a disadvantage in employment. However, they do conceive that there could be a negative influence of this role on women’s ambitions to participate in the public sphere if no change in the traditional roles of men and women occurs. Layla Sharaf, ex- minister and a member of the senate council stated,

>“I think that women’s role in reproducing life is a privilege that distinguishes women, as women are the givers of life. However, the cultural pressure for..."
women to become wives and mothers still prevents many talented women from education or pursuing careers. Unless men start to be more cooperative with their wives in the domestic duties, women's chances to share in the public sphere will remain very limited”.

(Interview with Layla Sharaf, a member of the Senators’ Counsel)

Moreover, in a personal interview, Dr Waleed AL-Sadi (male respondent), Vice president of the JNCHR, explained.

“We can not say that women's natural biological role in reproducing life is a negative characteristic, this is natural law. But I think that the lack of fertility planning and the lack of awareness of how dangerous it is for women's health, the country's wealth, and women's chances for empowerment are the main obstacles facing women to be effective members in the society”.

These quotations suggest that there are two main hindrances to women's right to participate in the public sphere whether through education, labor force or politics. The first is the traditional distribution of gender roles between men and women. The second is the weakness of fertility planning, such as using contraception. Jumana Heresh (The Jordan Times Newspaper, December 23, 2002), reports that according to a 3-month comprehensive national survey released recently by the Department of Statistics (DOS), there has been a drop in the birth rate from an average of 7.4 children per mother in 1976 to 3.7 in 2002. With regard to family planning, the survey revealed that all Jordanian women know of at least one birth control method, with the most commonly used being the birth control pill and the diaphragm — considered to be ‘modern’ methods. It was also found that the number of women using birth control has increased from 53 per cent in 1997 to 56 percent in 2002. The number of women using modern contraception increased slightly from 38 per cent in 1997 to 39 percent
in 2002. During the same period, the number of women using traditional contraception rose from 15 to 17 per cent.

**Major Economic Activity**

As is obvious from table 5.3, discrimination between males and females by occupation in the labour market is also prevalent. There are social perceptions as to which types of employment are particularly suited to women and men. We have seen that women's major economic activities are concentrated in the Education, Health, and Social Work sectors, which goes with their traditional role in the domestic sphere as teaching and caring mothers. On the other hand, men occupy most of the jobs in Wholesale and Retail Trade and Repair of Motor Vehicles with 103789 employees in 1999 compared to 6436 female employees in the same year, followed by Manufacturing with 85067 male employees compared to 11088 female employees in the same year 1999. After these come the Public Administration and Compulsory Social Security with 61606 males employers compared to 7926 (see table 5.3).

In fact, the unequal distribution of jobs reflects nothing other than a discriminatory social belief adopted by the most important social unit, which is the family. The family unit has continued to raise the younger generations in the belief that different 'sexes' means necessarily different 'roles'. Women have to work in the home, and if they work outside this sphere it should be in jobs that suit and confirm their original role as mothers and wives. Actually, the extent to which gender identity is formed during childhood is critical. As a tribal unit, family in Jordan confirms traditional gender roles which involve the husband as the primary breadwinner and decision maker and the wife as the primary homemaker. In general, traditional gender roles involve males being in positions of authority, whether it is in an occupation or in a relationship. Samera Hasanen, a member of the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU), wondered,
"How can we change as long as we still order our daughters to serve their brothers? How can we change as long as our children see their mothers as housewives and fathers as dominators?"

(Interview with Samera Hasanen, a member of JWU)

Mary Hattar, director of Salt City branch of the GFJW, added,

"We have to work on the family as a whole, because if we convince all women in the family of the importance of change and there was still one man in the family, who is rejecting this change, all our efforts will be of no use. We live in a patriarchal tribal society, which does not accept change easily".

(Interview with Mary Hattar, head of the Salt branch of the GFJW)

Table 5.3: Paid and Unpaid Employees in the Public and Private Sectors by Major Economic Activity and Sex, 1998 and 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Economic Activity</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. Of Employees</td>
<td>No. Of Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining&amp; Quarrying</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>8938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>9109</td>
<td>67248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, Gas&amp; Water</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>12904</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Data for the years before 1999 were collected from establishments employing 5 persons or more, whereas, in 1999 from the establishments employing one person or more.
## Supplies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constructions</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>12372</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>19079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale &amp; Retail Trade and Repair of Motor Vehicles</td>
<td>1670</td>
<td>19812</td>
<td>6436</td>
<td>103789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels &amp; Restaurants</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>10111</td>
<td>684</td>
<td>20322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, Storage &amp; Communications</td>
<td>3439</td>
<td>25584</td>
<td>4938</td>
<td>31846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Intermediation</td>
<td>4565</td>
<td>11926</td>
<td>4662</td>
<td>12447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Estate, Renting &amp; Business Activities</td>
<td>1207</td>
<td>9487</td>
<td>3803</td>
<td>17662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration and Compulsory Social Security</td>
<td>7420</td>
<td>61825</td>
<td>7926</td>
<td>61606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>57902</td>
<td>54313</td>
<td>63672</td>
<td>58116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Social Work</td>
<td>14937</td>
<td>17921</td>
<td>18130</td>
<td>20746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Community, Social &amp; Personal Service Activities</td>
<td>809</td>
<td>5974</td>
<td>2836</td>
<td>11822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>10268</td>
<td>318415</td>
<td>125640</td>
<td>462490</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Wage Levels

From table 5.4 we can see average monthly wage and paid working hours per employee for October 1999. The figures indicate that there are serious gendered differences in the wages paid to men and women performing the same type of jobs. Females occupying Legislative, Senior Official and Management positions
are paid 360 Jordanian Dinar (JD which is the Official Currency of Jordan) for 220 monthly working hours. Whereas men occupying the same jobs were being paid about 600 JD for 234 monthly working hours. These figures indicate that although men had worked 12 hours more, there would still be a big gap in the wages paid to men and women. That is, if one working hour is supposed to be paid at about 1.6 JD (and the overtime working hour is double in the best cases), then a male employee is not supposed to earn more than 398.5 JD for the 234 working hours, which means that there is still a big gap in wages with about 200 JD between males and female doing the same job (e.g. as legislators). This gap in wages between males and females is upheld across the majority of jobs represented in table 5.4. This pattern is notably reversed in the field of Skilled Agricultural and Fishing workers where women earned more than men. However, the reason for this exception is undoubtedly the existence of only one single female worker in this field of work (of the sample) which is likely to have influenced the accuracy of results. In general, if these figures indicate anything, it is the low evaluation of women’s work in contrast to high evaluation of men doing the same job.

Table (5.4): Paid Employees in the Public and Private Sectors by Major Occupation Groups, Sex and Average Monthly Wage and Paid Working Hours Per Employee as in October, 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Occupation Groups</th>
<th>Female Average Monthly Wage Per Emp. (JD)</th>
<th>Male Average Monthly Wage Per Emp. (JD)</th>
<th>Total Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislators, Senior Officials</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>4178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>33342</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The JWM and Women in the Labour Force

According to the Jordanian Constitution, all Jordanians are equal before the law, have the right to assume public office and the right to work. The JWM played a major role in increasing women’s role in building the economic infrastructure of their country and improving their own standards of living in both direct and indirect ways. The indirect way was through the great efforts of the movement in order to improve Jordanian women’s levels of education, which will enable them to compete with men in the labor market. As explained before, Jordanian women have achieved noticeable progress in the field of education, and the assumption here is that the good education should increase Jordanian women’s opportunity to enter the labour market. Statistics indicate that the higher the level of education for women, the higher the participation rate in economic activity. Conversely, the lower the level of women’s education, the lower the participation in the labor market. So for example, in 1996, women graduates
holding a B.A or above had a participation rate of 66 percent, this compares to 46 percent for those holding a diploma, 6 percent for those having a secondary certificate, and 5 percent of those classed as illiterate (El-Kharouf, 2000: 68).

In addition, the movement worked directly through their continued efforts to reform labour law in the interests of women. For example, according to the Jordan Times Newspaper (September 25, 1995), in 1995 the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) initiated a campaign to pressure lawmakers to amend a series of discriminatory laws. The Labor Law was criticized by women on a number of levels: primarily the law lacked a clear article concerning the right of equality between men and women in wage and employment. Also, the Law forbade women and children to work in certain jobs—there were no comparable provisions for men—just as it ruled out certain work hours for both women and children (7 p.m. to 6 a.m.), in the absence of special circumstances. In the field of benefits, preceding the law’s amendment in 1996 (as will be explained later), women were entitled to three weeks of leave before and after childbirth. The three weeks before childbirth were at her discretion, but she was not allowed to work until three weeks after childbirth, and this time was taken at half pay. Any institution with more than thirty female employees was required to have a childcare room for children under age six, but the law gave women no nursing time.

Moreover, Jordanian women’s right in work is a main object in the constitution of other women’s organizations in Jordan. Therefore, the Business and Professional Women Forum (BPWF) was established in 1976 in Amman as one of the non-governmental organizations in Jordan (NGOs). This association undertakes the responsibility of improving Jordanian women’s status in the labour force, by supporting them financially and supplying them with the necessary legal consultancy through a legal consultative service office for women and an information and documentation center for women’s studies. Also, in 1950 the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) was established to
promote the situation of women culturally, economically and socially and to implement leadership-training programmes for women (it still do this). The Young Muslim Women’s Association (YMWA), which was set up in 1972 has founded the YMWA Centre for Special Education, a community college for women, a hostel and a workshop to provide employment for the disabled women (Inter:noor.gov.jo).

In 1992, the Jordanian National Committee for Women’s Affairs (JNCW) was established as the largest national policy-making body for women in the country. The Committee was established by a Prime Ministerial decision; it is a semi-governmental committee (state feminist organisation) that acts as Jordan’s authority on women's issues and activities in the public sector (see Chapter Four). Since its establishment, the main aim of the Jordanian National Committee for Women’s Affairs (JNCW) has been directed towards the empowerment of Jordanian women. Consequently, this Committee has submitted several proposed amendments for legislation in order to eliminate legal discrimination against women. To date, many amendments have indeed occurred for the benefit of women in the 1996 Jordanian Labour Law. The 1996 Jordanian Labor Law provided that:

a. According to article 27 (a) of this Law an employer may not dismiss or issue a warning of dismissal to a pregnant woman employee commencing from her sixth month of pregnancy and continuing through her maternity leave.

b. According to article 67, a female employee of a firm with ten or more employees shall be entitled to leave without pay for a maximum period of one year in order to devote herself to raising her children with the guarantee of returning to her job at the end of this period. However, she shall forfeit this right if she accepts paid employment in any other firm during said period.
c. Article 68 further provides that each of the two employed spouses shall be entitled to take leave without pay once, for a maximum period of two years, in order to accompany the other spouse if he/she takes a job in another province of the Kingdom or abroad.

d. Article 69 provides that women employees have the right to protection of health and safety in working conditions. The article provides that the Minister of Labour, in consultation with the competent authorities, shall determine those activities and the hours in which women are prohibited from working.

e. Article 70 of the Labour Law, provides that female salaried employees are entitled to a ten-week maternity leave with full pay, commencing before delivery, at least six weeks of which must be taken after giving birth.

f. Article 71 of the Labour Law provides that a female salaried employee is entitled, after her maternity leave, to one or more periods of paid absence not exceeding an hour per day to breastfeed her child up to one year after birth.

g. Article 72 provides that firms employing at least twenty married women must set up a suitable area in which a qualified childcare worker can look after female employees' children who are under four years of age, provided that there are at least ten such children.

According to Al- TaL, (2001:10), as a result of the hard work by this Committee, the “National Strategy for Woman in Jordan” was prepared in 1993. This strategy indicates the main ideas of what Jordanian women need and how to help
them to improve and become an essential part in their societies by improving their economic, educational and legal status.

Referring to the Jordan Times Newspaper (November 8, 1999), and under the title, “Economic Change Requires the Amendment of National Strategy for Women”, it was explained that Her Royal Highness Princess Basma made a lot of effort in order to secure the Jordanian government’s approval to allow the Jordanian National Committee for Women’s Affairs (JNCW) to upgrade the 1993 National Strategy for Women in order to promote the Jordanian women’s role in the society. These efforts undertaken by HRH Princes Basma to promote Jordanian women’s rights are a clear evidence of the important role of state feminism in Jordan today. This support provides the movement with a great power to move on towards achieving more rights and better status for women. This support provides the movement with the power required to face the different obstacles, even institutional ones such as a patriarchal government.

On the other hand, the JWM has been aware of the importance of empowering Jordanian women economically in the different areas of the country in general and in poor and rural areas in particular by establishing projects to provide women with small loans through which they can start their own projects. To illustrate the nature of projects Jordanian women’s organizations conduct or share in, I refer to the UN International Labour Organization (ILO) employment publications regarding projects conducted by Jordanian NGOs, in which the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW) is a local partner:

“Bee-Keeping Training Course: the GFJW gave the Charity Society of Sayyidat Halawa a loan to organize bee-keeping training courses for 15 women, in order to increase their income.

Goat-Raising Project: the GFJW gave the Women's Charity Organization of Wadi el-Urdun a loan to purchase a number of goats which were distributed to poor households in Wadi al-Urdun.
Knitting and Sewing Training Centre: The project was established by the Charity Society of the Arab Woman. Namely, a training centre was established to train women in knitting and sewing as a way to enable them to improve their household economy. Over 9 months, 17 women were trained. The course is run for 3 to 6 months.

Training in Household Knitting and Sewing Activities: The GFJW offered the Charity Society of Sayyidat Awsarah a number of sewing machines to help local women improve their status by training them in household knitting and sewing activities. 15 women were trained over a period of 9 months.

Processing Milk Derivatives: The GFJW supervised the implementation of the project run by the Women's Renaissance Society in Souf, Jerash. The aim was to create job opportunities for unemployed rural women by training them in the processing of milk derivatives such as cheese, labneh, jameed, and butter. The project created around 30 job opportunities.

Productive Kitchen Project (A GFJW Project). The GFJW started the project in 1986 as a small kitchen. The project evolved and became able to provide equipment and tools to poor women along with job opportunities after training them in the production and marketing of pastries and fast food” (Intern: International Labour Organization, 2004).

In conclusion we can say that in spite of the relatively low rates of women’s participation in the labour force, the JWM has encouraged women to participate and to be economically active. The JWM was fully aware that the more resources women gain and the more they become economically independent the better the chances for them to participate in the public sphere and decision making and which would help in building a more powerful women’s movement. But at the same time there are many of obstacles especially the ongoing poor economic situation in the region in general and in Jordan in particular. This is mainly due to the 1990-1991 Gulf war and then the 2003 invasion of Iraq (second Gulf War), which pushed a large number of refugees to Jordan. All
these circumstances left the region including Jordan in a worse economic position.

**Jordanian Women's Political Participation**

According to McCloskey (1968 cited in Lovenduski and Hills 1981: 3), political participation is defined as the 'activities by which members of a society share in the selection of rulers and, directly or indirectly, in the formation of public policy'. In fact, in the different United Nations Human Development reports, women's political participation is conceived as an important indicator of the human development status of a particular society. Specific standards are used to measure this participation, such as: the number of seats occupied by women in parliament, the percentage of women occupying senior civil service jobs, and number entering the political arena in the capacity of voting and running elections.

According to Jad (2000:29), most studies concerning Arab women's political participation have concentrated on the rates of women's participation in voting and nomination for parliamentary and local council elections. Jad (2000) explains that the rate of women's participation in Arab parliaments is 4%. This rate ranges between 0% as in most Gulf countries to 10.8%, as in Iraq. According to the World Bank, female representation in the Egyptian parliament was only 2.4 percent as of 2003 (Inter: irinnews.org). In order to understand these low rates of female participation we need to look back to explore their historical roots.

**The Roots of Jordanian Women's Political Participation**

Looking at the roots of Jordanian women's political participation requires us to have a wide understanding (rather than mere statistics) that takes into
consideration the early stages of women’s struggle for freedom from foreign occupation and later the freedom for themselves.

As so far explained (see Chapter Four), as the result of the strong relations between Jordan and Palestine, Jordanian women began their political participation as a part of the nationalist movement against the occupation beginning with the British mandate and ending with the Israeli occupation of Palestine (since 1940s). This was a major factor that increased the nationalist sense of all Arab women, especially Jordanians.

In 1954, influenced by both the active women’s movements in the Arab world (especially Egypt) and the increase of the political activities in Jordan (due to the liberalization period associated with the Israeli occupation of Palestine) and the more open political structure, women started to ask for their right to participate in political life. Consequently, in 1954 the “Arab Women’s Union” was established. This Union represented the dawn of Jordanian women’s ‘organized political’ work. This Union played the main role in gaining for Jordanian women their basic political right, which is the right to vote, in 1955. In 1957, the Union was dissolved, as it was considered a part of the political movement in the country and as such was no longer permissible.

Also, as explained earlier, the United Nations declaration of the year 1975 as ‘Women’s International Year’ was a central facilitator in propagating the Election law number 8 for the year 1974 in which Jordanian women were given the right not only to vote but also to be nominated for the parliamentary elections. In this way, 1974 was a new start for a better political and legal status for Jordanian women as they had the right to share in the public life in general and the legislative authority (parliament) especially. At this point we should note the importance of the existence of the UN as a major facilitator to improve women’s status in the country. As Jordan did not carry out parliamentary elections until 1989, Jordanian women had to wait about fifteen years to practise
their new right. According to Abu- Abla (1992: 2), Jordanian women shared in
the 1989 elections as 48% of the electors. As for the candidates, 12 out of 647
candidates were women and they were distributed across the different regions of
the country. Unfortunately, none of them were elected.

The 1989 election results reflect the nature of social attitudes toward women’s
political participation and giving them the chance to share in public life and the
decision making process. Women did not succeed in becoming members of the
legislative authority (the parliament) in spite of the legal protection of this right.
This is not unusual, especially under a patriarchal social system that is used to
subordinating women.

Even when women are allowed to practise their legal right to vote, most women
will not represent themselves, but rather the will of their husbands and fathers in
electing the tribe or the party candidate, who is usually male. Consequently, a
zero percent success rate as a result for women candidates is not uncommon. In
personal interview, Al-Rashdan, one of the women candidates in 1989,
highlighted the obstacles facing Jordanian women in their battle to gain the fruits
of practicing their legal right by being elected in the parliamentary elections, by
saying,

"Through my personal experience in running in parliamentary elections I could
say Jordanian women’s political participation faces a number of obstacles.
Firstly, social attitudes, which refuse the idea of women being involved in the
political sector. Secondly, the lack of women’s awareness of the importance of
their political participation in creating changes in the traditional division of
powers in the society. Thirdly, the perception that women candidates are
financially unqualified to conduct election campaigns. Fourthly, women’s
dependency and obedience to men in choosing their candidates. Fifthly, tribes’
and parties' candidates were men only. Lastly, women candidates' lack of experience as it was the first time they shared in such process 4.

In the 1993 parliamentary elections, 3 out of 550 candidates were women. In these elections, Toujan Faisal became the first Jordanian woman to enter the parliament. Her specific success came as a result of being elected by the Circassians, to whom she belongs, to the Circassian seat in parliament 5. Al-Faisal is considered a supporter for women’s causes and a liberal activist who conservative Muslims tried to denounce as an enemy to Islam by charging her with apostasy during the 1989 elections (see Chapter Four). According to the Jordan Times Newspaper (November 4, 1989), at the time, many women activists described the suit as an attempt to repress the JWM at a time when women were running in parliamentary elections for the first time in the country’s history. In response, a group of women and other political activists submitted a petition, with 700 signatures, to the King disapproving the charges against Faisal (Jordan Times Newspaper, November 4, 1989).

In the 1997 parliamentary elections 17 women were nominated, but none were elected. According to Hammad (1998: 22), the total number of votes that the 17 women candidates were able to achieve are 13086.00 votes, which equaled 1.6% of the gross number of electors’ votes in the 1997 elections. This is compared to 12 candidates in the 1989 elections who achieved 1.01% of the gross number of electors’ votes, and to 3 women candidates in the 1993 elections getting 0.5% of the gross number of the votes. Rehab Al-Qadomy, a lawyer, human rights activist, member of the legal committee in the General Committee for Jordanian


5 Circassians are a minority group from the Caucasus that was offered refuge in Jordan.
Women NCJW, and a founder of the legal consultancy office in the Business and Professional Women Forum (BPWF), said,

"In 1974, when seventeen Jordanian women practised their right to run in parliamentary elections, none of them won. This failure is due to the social structure, in which tribes prefer to vote for men, as they believe that men have better experience than women in the political process".

(Interview with Al-Qadomy, Lawyer and women's rights activist, BPWF)

Looking at the number of candidates and their achieved votes, we can see that there is no noticeable progress in women's participation in this sector. This situation is not unusual in a patriarchal society, because women being elected to parliament definitely symbolises changes in the political and social system in a way that will not serve the dominant group interests. Men as the dominant class know for certain that the more women enter parliament and occupy administrable positions, the more they become a powerful lobby to create changes in women's legal and social status, which clearly will not serve their own interests. Before the quota for women was introduced in February 2003, only two women had ever served in the Jordanian Lower House: Toujan Faisal, discussed above, and Nuha Maaytah, who won a seat through internal parliamentary elections in 2001.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Second Report (1998:18-19), concerning the enforcement of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women CEDAW (which had been ratified by Jordan in July 1992), has emphasized the important role played by the JWM in the empowerment of Jordanian women's political participation. Also, as this report was prepared in 1998 after the 1997 parliament elections, it included a brief description of the efforts of these feminist organizations in order to support female candidates in the 1997 parliamentary elections. The Jordanian National
Committee for Women’s Affairs (JNCW), the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) and the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW) held a practice session for women candidates and prepared many workshops that covered various topics such as the Jordanian election law and electoral process, Jordanian women and legislative authority, and women as voters and candidates. In addition, they founded a media unit in order to provide the candidates with the help they needed. At the same time, this Report indicated that the law of Charitable Associations number 33 for the year 1966 which limited the right of associations in political work is a major obstacle facing women’s associations in achieving their goals in empowering Jordanian women in the political sector, as they are registered as charities (see Chapter Four).

Although Jordanian women have not achieved positive results in parliamentary elections, some progress in Jordanian women’s participation in political life has been achieved in other areas. According to Nafa’ (1992: 7), in 1978 a number of Jordanian women were appointed to the ‘Consultative National Council’ in its different rounds. Also in the year 1979, a Jordanian female minister, In’am Mufti, was appointed as a minister of the Social Development Ministry, and in the year 1981 the Women’s Issues Administration was established within this ministry (Hijab, 1988: 99). In the year 1984, Layla Sharaf became the first female minister in the Middle East to hold an information ministry and in 1989 the same woman was appointed as a member of the Jordanian House of Lords (Hammad, 1998: 9).

In the year 1993, Rima Khalaf Hneidi, became the third woman to hold the position of minister in Jordan as the Minister of Trade and Industry between 1993-1995. In 1995-98 she was appointed as the Minister of Planning. In 1999-2000, Rima Khalaf Hneidi, was appointed as first woman Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning. Also, in the year 1995 Salwa Al Masri became the

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6 This council was equivalent to what is now known as parliament.
minister of the Social Development Ministry. In 2000-02 Taman al-Ghul became the Minister of Social Development. In 2002-03 Roweida Maaytah became the Minister of Post and Telecommunication, and in 2003 Minister of Social Development. In the same year three other women ministers were appointed. Alia Hattough-Bouran, as Minister of Tourism and Antiquities and Minister of Environment, Amal Farhan Minister of Municipal Affairs, and Asma Khader as Government Spokesperson and Minister without Portfolio. In 2004 Khader was assigned as Minister of Culture (Khader is a lawyer and human and women's rights activist. In 2004 Nadia Helmi Al- Saed was assigned as Minister of Telecommunications and Information Technology (Inter: guide2womenleaders).

Regarding Jordanian women's participation in the Municipal Council elections, Al-Naqshabandi (1997: 3) explains that there was no female participation in Municipal Councils until the year 1994. This participation came as a result of her Royal Highness Princess Basma’s initiative to appoint ninety-nine women to Municipal Councils in the different parts of the country through the years 1994-1995. In 1995 a municipal election took place, in which nineteen women were nominated. Ten of them won as heads of different municipalities and nine as members. Also, in the 1996 municipality elections, ten women were nominated and three of them were elected as municipal council members. In a personal interview, Mary Hattar, Director of the Salt branch of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW) and one of the ninety-nine women appointed by Princess Basma to the 1995 Municipal Council, stated,

“There is no doubt, that without the support of Princess Basma women would have not been able to participate effectively in the political sector, and I believe that the JWM is fully aware of her great influence in promoting the movement role in empowering Jordanian women”.

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From all this one can see that Jordanian women’s political participation whether as ministers, parliament members, or Municipal Councils depended mainly on political decisions or as explained in Chapter Four on ‘decisions from on high or upper’. In other words, elites’ support represented primarily by the Royal family’s stand towards the women’s cause was an important resource that helped to empower Jordanian women in the political sector. In fact, a large number of changes in Jordanian women’s status have been due to an elite decision. According to BBC News Online (last updated February, 2004) and under the title “Bringing Jordan’s women into the fold”, Dale Gavlak wrote, “Jordan is embarking on a radical reform process aimed at modernising the country's political system. One of the key reforms is getting Jordanian women more involved in public affairs. The country's monarch, King Abdullah, is behind the moves giving women a bigger and more active role in the political process. Late last year, he dissolved the upper house of parliament and appointed seven women - the highest number ever - to a new 55-member body. He also created a special quota system to ensure women would be elected to the lower chamber where they now number six out of 110 members. The king also appointed a female minister, Asma Khader, to serve as the government's spokesperson” (Inter: BBC News. co).

In fact, the legitimacy of the king’s actions stems from the Jordanian constitutional system which provides that Jordan is a constitutional monarchy with representative government and a parliamentary system. Jordan as one of the Arab states operating under a constitutional monarchy, the monarch retains considerable power. The monarch has power over almost every aspect of the state.

According to the Constitution of Jordan, which was ratified in 1952, the reigning monarch is the head of state, the chief executive and the commander-in-chief of the armed forces. The king exercises his executive authority through the prime minister and the Council of Ministers, or cabinet. The cabinet, meanwhile, is
responsible before the elected House of Deputies which, along with the House of Notables (Senate), constitutes the legislative branch of the government. If the House of Deputies votes against the prime minister, he and his entire cabinet must resign. The Lower House can also vote any individual minister out of office. The king also appoints all of the members of the Upper House of Parliament, known as the House of Senate. So, the Upper House of Parliament, or the Senate, is viewed as an extension of the king’s legislative powers because it is appointed by the king and enjoys his confidence. The number of senators cannot exceed one-half the number of elected representatives.

Moreover, the Constitution stipulates that the reigning monarch must approve laws before they can take effect, although his power of veto can be overridden by a two-thirds majority of both houses of Parliament. The king also authorizes the appointment and dismissal of judges, regional governors and the mayor of Amman, and he approves constitutional amendments, declares war and is commander-in-chief of the armed forces. As head of state, the king concludes and ratifies treaties and agreements, with the approval of the cabinet and Parliament. The king is also entitled to grant special pardons and amnesties.

Legislative powers are also shared by the king and Parliament. While senators are appointed by the King, deputies of the lower house are directly elected by universal suffrage. Article 34 of the Constitution entitles the king to dissolve either house of Parliament or to discharge any of its members. The normal parliamentary term is four years. The process of lawmaking centres on Parliament. Both houses of Parliament initiate debates and vote on legislation. Proposals are referred by the prime minister to the House of Deputies, where deputies can accept, amend or reject them. Each proposal is referred to a special committee in the Lower House for consideration. If the deputies accept the proposal, they refer it to the government to draft it in the form of a bill and submit it back to the House for approval. A bill approved by the House of Deputies is passed on by the House Speaker (an elected official) to the Senate for debate and a vote. If approved, the bill is then submitted to the king, who can
either grant consent by royal decree or return the bill unapproved with justification for his refusal. In this case, the bill is returned to the House of Deputies, where the review and voting process is repeated. Should both houses, meeting jointly, pass the bill by a two-thirds majority, it becomes an Act of Parliament, constitutionally overriding the monarch’s veto. Any bill rejected by the Senate is returned to the House of Deputies for amendment. Disagreement between the two houses is settled by a two-thirds majority vote in a joint session of Parliament. Article 95 of the Constitution also empowers both the Senate and the House of Deputies to submit legislation to the government in the form of a draft law.

So, by dominating these crucial authorities, the king becomes almost the absolute party where power really lies, and in the case of Jordan this power is considerably interested in empowering women as a major part of the society. According to the Jordan Times Newspaper (March 30, 2000) in a letter to Prime Minister Abdur-Ra'uf S. Rawabdeh, His Majesty King Abdullah wrote: “We realise that women, who make up half the society, are in need of measures to protect their rights and their free expression, so as to take up their role in political, social, economic and administrative life in Jordan.” The letter added: “There is a need to open the door wide to women and to remove all obstacles in their path to help them contribute to the building of a sound and integrated society”.

However, being the supreme power in the country does not abolish the existence of other parties that are not without power and can always express their own ideologies regarding the different policies in general and women’s empowerment in particular. The Jordan Times Newspaper (November 9, 1999) wrote, “King Abdullah recently declared his official support for amending Article 340 of Criminal law. His position was not popular with the Jordanian public. A survey conducted by The Jordan Times discovered that 62% of Jordanians oppose amending article 340. Most respondents claimed that it would lead to moral corruption”. “The 42-year old monarch may find himself facing an
uphill battle with Jordan's traditional stalwarts to create the kind of society he
wants to become an example to the rest of the Middle East” Dale Gavlak added
(Inter: BBC News. co).

As will be explained in Chapter Six, conservatives and Islamic Action Front
party which is the principal opposition group in the Jordanian parliament, have
their own stand regarding the women’s cause which sometimes can be seen as
an obstacle facing efforts undertaken to change in women’s social status in
general and legally especially.

Therefore, and taking into consideration the great influence of those parties in
the Jordanian parliament and because of the parliament's potential power, care
has been taken to ensure that regime supporters hold the majority in the lower
house. When the elections of 1989 resulted in the largest minority bloc in
Parliament held by the Islamist oppositionists with 34 out of 80 seats, the
election law was changed by royal decree while parliament was out of session in
order to make the system more favourable to traditional regime supporters. Each
voter was allowed only one vote in a multi-seat electoral district which tended to
favour tribal elements and well-connected candidates, usually supporters of the
regime which in his turn and by this way will be the main controller and the
power holder.

So, in conclusion one can say that in Jordan power ultimately lies in the
monarchy, but political parties are always a challenge to it. In fact, all this
facilitate the JWM as according to what we have indicated earlier in Chapter
Four, monarchy (elites) mainly the Royal Family members with being open
minded and responding to the international calls for women empowerment have
supported women’s cause. At this point we can conceive the state as an agent of
positive change. Indeed, that the existence of such resource as a major supporter
for women’s cause in Jordan has a great influence on the dynamics of power
within the society which in its turn would encourage the JWM to be more
challenging in its discourses (i.e. the issue of honour killing).
Statistical Indicators Concerning Jordanian Women’s Political Participation

Statistics indicate that there is a wide gap between women and men in holding high positions in the different authorities. According to the 2000 Jordanian Human Development Report, Jordanian women make up only 3.4% of senior governmental positions - less than that of their counterparts in Algeria, Syria, and Tunisia.

On the judicial power scale, until the end of 1998 the total number of female judges was 5 out of 406 judges, which represents 0.2% of the total number. As for the legislative power, women’s presence is limited to only three members in the House of Lords and one in the parliament. Also, women only represented 3% of the membership of successive governments since the year 1979. Moreover, in the year 1996 Jordanian women made up only 1.6% of senior administrational governmental positions and 11.2% of the senior administrational positions in the private sector (DOS, 1998: 37).

According to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Second Report about the enforcement of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1998:18-19), the percentage of Jordanian women’s participation in civil institutions (nongovernmental institutions dealing with politics and public life) is low. For example, participation in the associations registered with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) is 18.8% and it is between 25-30% in the different labour unions. Approximately the same percentage, 18.7%, is evident for women’s participation rate in the vocational unions. In the political parties, women do not represent more than 10% (on average) of the constituent members (see APPENDIX F. 5). From this, we can see that although a number of Jordanian women aimed to be effective agents in the public sphere since early 1950s, their actual levels of participation in the public sphere are still relatively low compared to men. This is a reflection
of men’s domination of this sphere and the patriarchal nature of the society which still does not believe in women’s capacity to challenge this particular field.

Conclusion

The main goal of this Chapter was to explore the impact of the JWM as a social change agent on women’s status within Jordan. By analyzing statistics and studying historical trends the intention was to assess where women stand in Jordan today and to explore the impact of the JWM on social structure and social policy and its role in improved opportunities for women. The discussion revealed that the JWM played a significant role since the early history of Jordan, in empowering Jordanian women educationally, economically and politically. The JWM was fully aware that the more resources that are available to women, the more educated they become and the more economically independent they are the better the chances are for them to participate in the public sphere and decision making which in turn helps to build more powerful women and a more powerful women’s movement. So for instance, reading the early history of Jordanian women’s educational status made clear that there has been a significant increase in the number of educated females, so much so that Jordan now has the highest female literacy rate (and overall literacy rate) of all Arab states. Literacy nearly doubled from 47% in 1960 to 89.7% in 2002. Although women’s participation in the labour force and in the political sector remains significantly lower than that of men, here too there have been significant gains for women.

Thus, comparatively speaking, statistics reveal that women’s progress has been more marked in the educational sector than it has in the labour force and political sector. Even though there has been relatively less progress in labour force and political participation, this does not mean that the JWM has been unconcerned with or inactive in these areas. In fact, the issue here deals more
with the nature of obstacles the movement faced in each case. In other words, for instance, with respect to women’s labour force participation, the movement faces the significant obstacle of the ongoing poor economic situation in the region in general and in Jordan in particular. This is mainly a result of the 1990-1991 Gulf war and the 2003 invasion of Iraq (second Gulf War), which pushed a large number of refugees into Jordan. These circumstances left the region including Jordan in a worse economic position, and the worse economic situation is the more obstacles to women’s labour force participation, that is because in a poor economy there are fewer jobs and these tend to go to men not women.

Political opportunity structure theory (POST) provides that the level of activity of any social movement depends on what opportunities or constraints are presented by the political system. To this I would add that we need to be concerned not only with the level, but also the nature of political activities (see Chapter Two). Here it has become clear that Jordanian women’s political participation has been very much determined by the country’s political status which has seen a lot of ups and downs (see Chapter Four). For instance, the 1957 decision to dissolve all political parties in Jordan, coupled with the enforcement of martial laws, which were applied in Jordan in 1967 had a negative influence on the level of human rights, and women’s rights in Jordan. These factors help to explain why we have seen better and clearer progress for Jordanian women in education rather than politics.

In addition, regardless of the level of progress achieved in each of the three different sectors, we need to bear in mind the major obstacle facing the movement’s efforts throughout its history, which is the patriarchal structure and mentality. This obstacle was and will always be the definitive explanation for the various forms of discrimination against women and will always be reflected in the limited access to and the existing gap between men and women whether in education, the labour force or political sphere.
In conclusion, we can see that Jordanian women have worked hard to be a part of public life and to share in making the decisions in their country. Yet there are and always have been major obstacles in their way represented by the patriarchal social structure where women are financially dependent on men, a patriarchal social structure that does not accept the idea of women sharing in the public life believing that their traditional and only place is their home which limits their chances to defend their rights. However, Jordanian women were aware of these limitations, and whenever the political structure was opened to discussion and they had enough resources and facilitators to move they did not hesitate. Consequently, the development they achieved in securing women better opportunities, no matter how small, is considered a significant achievement. Jordan is now considered one of the best Arab countries when it comes to the issue of women’s educational or political status over recent years.

In a personal interview, Amneh Zu’bi, head of the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), explained,

“Jordanian Women have subsequently increased their participation in local community, economic and social affairs; women’s incomes have risen; female school enrolment rates have increased and drop-out rates have declined. At all levels of society, we are making slow but steady progress”.

So, the JWM was keenly aware that empowering and changing women's status through literacy and income-generation training is the most significant factor in improving women’s status. Literacy gives women confidence to engage in economic activity and participate in community affairs: women who are educated are better advocates for their own needs and rights. The more empowered women are the more power they can generate, which in its turn would help the JWM as a social change agent to face obstacles which affect the movement performance and efforts to transform the existing social structure. Therefore, in the next Chapter these obstacles will be fully discussed.
SPECIAL NOTE

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Chapter Six

Obstacles Facing the Jordanian Women’s Movement

Introduction

The JWM deals with women’s problems at all levels. These can be grouped into legal and social discrimination, socio-cultural problems, and economic problems. Social change is one of the most difficult and slowest tasks any social change agent might try to achieve. The changes that the JWM tries to make to the social structure can be conceptualised in terms of a ‘dialectic of control’, which depicts the nature of the social relations between social actors and the social world around them (see Chapter Two). It is logical that any agent who wants to interfere with and change a stable structure is likely to face resistance. They are likely to face different individuals or groups whose ambitions and goals are served by the already existing social structure. On the other hand, there might be other individuals and social groups who believe in the importance of change, either because they themselves are suffering in the existing situation or because, as resource mobilisation theory (RMT) argues, they are sympathetic to the 'cause' (i.e. conscience supporters), share common goals with the social group, or have a vested interest in the social movement’s success (Somerville, 1997).

This chapter explores the dialectical relationship between social change agent, here represented by the JWM, and its opponents or the challenges it faces. I argue that, while the JWM has facilitators (see Chapter Four) that provide it with resources (material and non-material), it has also faced a number of obstacles that inherently affect its performance. Through my research, I was able to explore and shed light
on a considerable number of these obstacles (see diagram 6.1). Through the analysis I identify two main categories of obstacles. The first is obstacles internal to patriarchy, which I subdivide those into ‘structural obstacles’ and ‘attitudinal obstacles’ (it is worth noting here that this subdivision is analytically useful but in practice the two sets of obstacles are interrelated). The structural obstacles include institutional ones which consist of a patriarchal legislature, patriarchal governmental institutions and patriarchal judicial system. Political obstacles are the second category of structural obstacles. These include external politics (foreign occupation in particular), and internal politics including political parties, and the process of democratization. Attitudinal obstacles consist of the perceived westernization of the movement’s mentality and the existence of antifeminist agents. The latter relates to fundamentalism and conservatism in dealing with gender issues. The second type of obstacles relates to the women’s movement itself: the lack of funding, individualism and lack of coordination between women’s organizations, lack of voluntary work sense, and insufficient grass rooting were found to be obstacles internal to the structure of the movement.
Diagram 6.1
Obstacles Facing Jordanian Women's Movement

Obstacles Internal to Patriarchy

Structural
  - Institutional
    - Legislator
    - Governmental
      - Judicial
  - Political
    - External Politics (occupation)
      - Internal Politics
        - Political parties
        - Democratization

Attitudinal
  - Antifeminist Agents
  - Westernisation of W's M Mentality
    - Lack of Coordination & individuality
      - insufficient Grass Rooting

Lack of Finance

Obstacles Internal to Movement

- Political parties
- Democratization

Lack of Voluntary Work Sense
Obstacles Internal to Patriarchy

"The main characteristic that governs the relations in the Jordanian society is the patriarchal pyramidal feature, and this system does not only exist in the family, but also in the different sectors and on the various levels"

(Interview with Dr Sabbagh, the General Secretary of the NCJW)

Appreciation of the structure of Jordanian society helps us to understand and analyse women’s status in Jordan, which in its turn highlights the social environment in which the JWM fights for equality and women's empowerment. By examining women’s status within Jordanian social structure (see chapter one) I provided some background on the conditions affecting women's life and status in the three different social structures in Jordan.

Structural Obstacles

Patriarchal Institutional Authorities

Legislation constitutes one of the main obstacles facing women’s liberation efforts in the country. Women are still discriminated against in laws concerning the family, nationality, financial rights, and even their basic right as humans. Although the Jordanian constitution does not discriminate between men and women, other legislation, such as Penal Law, Personal Status Law, Nationality Law, and Pension Law are still unable to protect woman and to give her rights. This makes women the weakest link in the social structure resulting in an inability to participate independently in public life.

The question here is, who has the authority to change this state of affairs and why has this authority not been used to abolish the legal subordination of women?
Clearly the 'legislative authority' is the key obstacle, so we must ask: what constitutes the legislative authority in Jordan and who are its members? Jordanian legislative authority is simply a masculine authority as, from 1978 to 1984, only 7 women were appointed as members of the Constitutional Council. Three of these were appointed to the First Session (1978-1980) and four to the Second and Third Sessions (1980-1982 and 1982-1984).

Since the first parliamentary elections in Jordan in 1989, until 2003, the Jordanian parliament has seen only two instances of females gaining membership. The first was in 1993, when only one woman succeeded in being elected to the 80-member Lower House, and two women were appointed to the Senate. The second was when Nuha Maaytah won a seat through internal parliamentary elections in 2001 (see Chapter Two). In 2003, and as a result of the JWM lobby, supported by the UN demand for all the countries to assign at least 30 per cent of parliamentary seats to women, the government of Jordan established a quota for women’s participation in parliament allocating 6 out of 110 parliamentary seats to women. In view of this, we can say that the existence of discriminatory laws in Jordan is not surprising. It is the logical outcome of a patriarchal authority that would, without hesitation, refuse any proposal to create positive change in legislation concerning women. Referring to one of the Jordanian parliament Hansards (the fourth session 21/11/1999), in which parliament rejected a proposal to reform Article 340 of the Penal Law (regarding the phenomenon of honour killing, see Chapter Seven), a parliament member (a man), Mahmmod Al-Kharabshih, said,

"We all know that laws are a reflection of the social culture and traditions, and as we all recognize, we are a Muslim society. We have our own norms and social traditions which we would strictly conserve".

(Parliament Hansard data, 1999)
However, the existence of a majority of parliament members who are not interested in, or are even against, reform of discriminatory legislation against women does not preclude the existence of a minority of supporters for change. For instance, referring to the same parliamentary Hansard, Dr Nash`at Hamarneh, a member of the Jordanian parliament (a man), said,

"I believe that no society can develop and progress unless women of that society could achieve their complete rights equal to men. Jordanian women have achieved a lot of their rights. Yet, there are still many obstacles facing women’s liberation in Jordan. A main obstacle is the existence of Article 340, which I consider a sword, which hovers over the heads of women. A large number of innocent women were killed as a result of the existence of this article”.

(Parliament Hansard data, 1999)

Furthermore, it would be naive to imagine that even the presence of women in parliament can create fundamental change in a male dominated society; especially if we take into consideration that even women themselves can be influenced by the patriarchal, traditional and tribal culture in which they have been born and raised. This explains the stand of two out of six of the women parliamentary members who rejected the proposed amendment to Article 340 of the Penal law, and the proposed amendment to the Personal Status Law, to give women the right to “Khuloe”, which means the right of women to divorce their husbands in return for monetary compensation, when they were raised in the 2003 parliament. Commenting on this incident, the Ad-Dustour Newspaper under the title, ‘The Khuloe and the Honour Crimes Create a Fracture in the Women’s Quota inside the parliament’, stated

"Observers interested in the women’s cause and women’s movement in Jordan
counted on the united stand of women MPs, who reached the parliament through the women’s quota, towards women’s issues, needs, requirements. However, the different social and political backgrounds of women MPs controlled their decisions. This outlook difference among women MPs became deeper once the parliament raised the Personal Status Law ‘Khuloe’, and Article 340 of the Penal Law regarding honour crimes. The raising of these laws made clear the different attitudes of women MPs towards women’s issues. Women MPs were divided into two streams; one supports the proposed amendments to facilitate the creation of the civil society, and the other is against the amendments so as to conserve the existing social structure”.

(Ad-Dustour Newspaper, September 1, 2003. p.3)

Moreover, patriarchal parliaments can be a major obstacle facing both women’s movements and governments. This is the case when the parliament refuses or postpones the approval of international human rights conventions that are already approved and signed by the government. For example, in 1980, Jordan signed The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the convention was ratified in 1992 with reservations to Art. 9(2) in relation to the determination of a child’s nationality, Art. 15(4) relating to the right of women to choose their residence and domicile, and Art. 16, (1)(c), (d) & (g) which deals with equality in marriage and family relations (see Chapter Seven for details). However, until this moment, this convention cannot be considered a part of the Jordanian national law, as it has not been approved by the Jordanian parliament. Accordingly, the ability of the judiciary effectively to implement CEDAW may be hindered. This is because of the legal ruling that international treaties/instruments must be incorporated into domestic law through legislation before they can be of legal effect. The Jordanian parliament has not passed explicit legislation to
incorporate CEDAW into domestic law, which makes CEDAW of no legal effect in the Jordanian jurisdiction. These circumstances have a negative influence on the performance of the judicial system, which is not able to refer to these conventions, and instead has to judge in accordance with the existing discriminatory laws available to it.

Moreover, Jordan is one of the countries in which the judicial system still lacks a Constitutional Court. This means that there are no mechanisms for a judicial review over unconstitutional legislation to take place. The non-existence of a Constitutional Court also constrains judicial power in the abolition or amendment of any unconstitutional law, which means the already patriarchal legislator will not be obliged to enter into a constitutional discussion with the court or any other harmed party. Remarking on the need for a Constitutional Court, Suleiman Sweis, head of Jordanian Society for Human Rights (JSHR) stressed,

"There is no doubt that we are in great need of a constitutional court in Jordan. Primarily, the 1991 Jordanian National Charter has emphasized the importance of forming this court. Yet, no constitutional court is available, and the absence of such court is hampering us from reforming more than a quarter of our laws, which are in contradiction with the constitution".

(Interview with Suleiman Sweis, head of JSHR)

Amneh Zu’bi, head of the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), confirmed the previous point by saying,

"Constitutional Court is a major technique to achieve the comprehensive social and legal reform as it monitors laws and determines their constitutionality. The
existence of a Constitutional Court is very crucial, as for the time being, there are a large number of discriminatory laws, which are unconstitutional, but they are obligatory and they still rule the people’s relations. If we had a Constitutional Court, we could have appealed a number of the parliament’s decisions to repel laws regarding women’s rights, because the existing laws are unconstitutional, as they contradict with a constitutional principle, which provides that all Jordanians are equal against the law and equal in rights and obligations”.

(Interview with Amneh Zu’bi, head of JWU)

However, some of the research informants believe that having a Constitutional Court would not be a great benefit to the movement as long as the members of this system continue to reflect and adopt the patriarchal ideology in the course of their work. Representing this standpoint, Asma Khader, ex-president of the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), minister, and lawyer said

“The existence of a Constitutional Court would not be sufficient by itself because we do not know who will be in charge of it. In other words, if the judges who will be in charge of this court are traditionalists who adopt the common patriarchal ideology in this society then even the creation of a Constitutional Court would not help”

(Interview with Asma Khader, ex president of JWU)

As a part of the JWM’s efforts to achieve the formation of the Constitutional Court, and as a part of the Jordanian Women’s Union’s (JWU) preparations for the 2003 parliamentary elections, a conference was organised. The outcome of this conference was a working agenda signed by hundreds of women. One of their main demands was the establishment of the Constitutional Court. This agenda was
adopted by a number of the parliamentary election candidates, who promised to press on women's demands whether they won the elections or not.

In addition to the patriarchal legislative and judicial authorities, government and governmental institutions can also reflect the patriarchal social structure. In a personal interview, commenting on the government's stand on the women's cause, Dr Al- Sabbagh said,

"Regarding women's cause, the stand of governments, as a part of the decision makers, differs. Actually, it is an individualistic matter. For example, the amendment of article 340 of the Jordanian Penal Law (concerning the issue of honour killing) was supported by 'Al- Tarawnih' the Jordanian Prime minister, which indicates a highly sensitive sense of women's cause for some governments. However, some ministers were against the parliamentary quota for women system, saying, how shall we grant you the right of quota, if you, as a women's movement, are asking for equality between men and women, and the quota system is against the motto of equality?".

(Interview with Dr Shabbagh, General Secretary of JNCW)

Emphasizing the unstable stand of governments as power holders towards women's empowerment, Asma Khader, ex-president of the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU), minister, and lawyer explained

"In Jordan governments are major authority holders. Their stand towards the women's cause in Jordan differs from one government to another. Some of them are aware of the importance of empowering women and they are real supporters. However those are a very small minority. Some are supporting by words and
theoretically but not when it comes to practice, and some are against”.

(Interview with Asma Khader, ex president of the JWU, and a minister)

However, Emily Nafa’, head of the Arab Women’s Society (AWS), stressed the merely negative, uncooperative and unserious role of the government, saying

“National Committee for Jordanian Women’s legal commission has studied a number of laws concerning women, and conducted a number of reforms. These reformed laws were submitted to the prime minister. Unfortunately, most of these laws are still there kept in the drawers”.

(Interview with Emily Nafa’, head of AWS)

It seems that it is the lack of seriousness when dealing with women’s issues that matters. This lack of seriousness could be related to the conservative mentality of many of those in charge, who could theoretically support the movement, but when it comes to implementation their patriarchal conservativism takes over. In a personal interview, Amneh Zu’bi, head of the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) stressed,

“When I talk about conservativeness, I mean the conservative patriarchal mentality. This mentality is a part of not only a considerable part of the parliament, it also exists in some structural elements of the state such as the legislative council, and some governmental power holders, who, of course, get changed from time to time”.

(Interview with Amneh Zu’bi, head of JWU)
Actually, from reviewing the early history of the JWM (see Chapter Four), one can say that at a particular stage, state or government interference in the women’s movement’s structure and ideology was an unconstructive element in the development of the movement. For instance, the 1957 state decision to dissolve all political activities of which the JWM was considered a part (see Chapter Four). Moreover, this interference was represented in the 1981 Ministry of Home Office decision to dissolve the 1974 the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) and to establish the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW) as the comprehensive umbrella under which all women’s movement organisations were included (Al-Tal, 1985). In contrast with the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), which is registered with the Home Office, the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW) is registered with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). And, as explained in Chapter Four, all non-governmental organisations (NGOs) registered with the MSD automatically became members of the General Union of Voluntary Societies, which means that they became governed under the Law of Societies no. 33 for 1966. This law prohibits women’s organizations as a part of other voluntary associations from practising politics or political activities, and gives wide authority to the MSD and the Home Office to dissolving, prohibit and limit those organizations’ activities. So, governmental interference at that particular stage had a significant negative impact on the capabilities of the JWM.

As a result, and in the light of dialectic of control, one can say that it is rational that any agent who wants to interfere with and change a stable structure is likely to face resistance. They are likely to face different individuals or groups whose ambitions and goals are served by the already existing social structure. In the case of JWM the male dominant legislature, judicial system and government are largely patriarchal institutions which, in their decisions and actions represent the general patriarchal ideologies of the society. Therefore, it is plausible to perceive these institutions,
where women are rarely represented, as major obstacles facing the development of the JWM. However, the existence of supporters (especially international and elites) can play a significant role in lobbying patriarchal institutions, to provide wider chances for the less powerful agents to express themselves.

Political Obstacles

In this section I will discuss the political obstacles which hinder the efficiency of JWM’s activities. As explained earlier (see diagram 6.1), political obstacles can be divided into two main types. First, external political obstacles (see Chapter Four for a discussion concerning foreign occupation). Second, internal political obstacles including internal political circumstances, processes of democratization, and political parties’ stand on the JWM.

The political structure in Jordan has played a major role in supporting the cause of human rights in general, and this, in turn, affects women's rights. As explained in Chapter Four, the political environment in Jordan has experienced ups and downs, and this has influenced women’s rights and the performance of the women’s movement as a whole. For instance, the 1957 decision to dissolve all political parties in Jordan, coupled with the enforcement of martial laws, which were applied in Jordan in 1967 as a result of the anxious state of affairs resulting from the 1967 War and Jordan’s loss of the West Bank to Israel, had a negative influence on the level of democracy, human rights, and women’s rights in Jordan. Restrictions on political parties have led to a weakness in democratic participation and this in turn is an obstacle to increased female participation as according to political opportunity theory (POST), the working of the political process in any country is a crucial element in determining the efficiency of a social movement’s performance as the expected chances for success for a social movement supposed to increase if the
political opportunity structure is in favour of the goals and activities of a social movement (Tarrow, 1998; Kriesi et al, 1995).

As explained in Chapter Four, it was not until the late 1980s that a better and more open democratic political structure emerged in Jordan. This improvement to political and democratic life in the country came as a result of several factors. First, as a response to the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) ambition for independence, Jordan dissolved its union with the West Bank of Palestine in 1988. This step was a new start for democratisation in Jordan as martial law, which was declared in 1967 and remained in force until 1989, was subsequently frozen. All these changes enhanced the need for reform in Jordan’s political life. Consequently, in 1989, Jordan held its first parliamentary elections, in which women participated for the first time. In addition, in 1990 King Hussein embarked on a program of political liberalization, and the result was the formulation of the National Charter, which includes a framework for organized political activity in Jordan; guarantees the protection of human rights; and encourages improved rights for women. Describing the status of the women’s movement before the end of the 1980s, Asma Khader, who is an ex president of the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), a lawyer, and minister stated,

“In the 1960s-70s, martial laws were enforced. Women’s movement in Jordan was almost frozen. The Jordanian Women’s Union was very weak, until the year 1989, when a better democratic environment started to see light in Jordan. Since that time we worked hard to revive the union”.

(Interview with Asma Khader, Minister of State)
Regarding the status of human rights and democratisation in Jordan, let me say that the Jordanian human rights record has been enhanced since 1989. A process of democratization started in that year leading the way to new laws and regulations on freedom of expression, media and human rights. However, commenting on the level of democracy the country has achieved since 1989, and the role of government in enhancing the democratic process, Suleiman Sweis, head of the Jordanian Society for Human Rights (JSHR), said,

"I believe that we in Jordan still have partial freedom. Yes, we live in a country with an advanced constitution, we have parliament, political parties are authorized, we have a dirt-free judicial system, multiple newspapers that reflect the different streams in the country are available, human rights organisations have been established, and reforms of discriminatory legislation concerning women have been proposed. However, I still think that the formal policies towards human rights in general are vague. For instance, we still have limitations on the right of public gatherings, as in the Public Gathering Law; the government seems to have intended it to prevent political demonstrations. We need clearer policies in order to enhance the democratization process in the country".

(Interview with Suleiman Sweis, head of JSHR)

Likewise, Mary Hattar, director of the Salt city branch of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), emphasized,

"I think that people’s belief in the existence of real democracy is still weak. Yet, the generations who are leading the debate are the ones who lived under the martial
law, which was declared in 1967 and remained in force until 1989. So, fear is still there. People were used to fear authority and not to respect it”.

(Interview with Mary Hattar, head of the Salt branch of the GFJW)

Realising the importance of promoting democratic practices in the country and the influence of this on improving the status of women, the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) implemented the programme of ‘Jordan Children’s Parliament’. Amneh Zu’bi, head of the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), explained the influence of the lack of democracy on people’s mentality and the efforts of the Union to deal with this issue by saying,

“A crisis which all the region and not only Jordan suffers from is a crisis of democracy. It is the absence of real democracy. We do not blame the government only it is our responsibility too. The absence of democracy for a long period of time made us forget how to behave democratically with each other, we believe that democracy is a social behaviour, which we get trained to practise since our youth. That is why we decided to found a programme through which our youth can be trained in democratic behaviour, which in its turn would promote democratic practices in the community; it is the ‘Jordan Children’s Parliament’ project, which was established by the women’s union by the second half of the 1990s”.

(Interview with Amneh Zu’bi, head of JWU)

In 1992, Parliament formally legalized political parties, which in turn impacted on political awareness. However, regarding women’s political opportunities, political parties have continued to be a reflection of the tribal social system which concentrates on men as leaders and rarely considers women suitable to occupy such
positions. In a personal interview, Al-Rashdan stressed the negative role the political parties have played in Jordanian women’s empowerment. She said,

"Tribes and political parties are usually men’s social cells. For instance, in any parliamentary elections, men are the candidates of any tribe or political party. Tribes and political parties are usually the financial supporter of male candidates, which would not be the case if a woman wanted to nominate herself for the elections".

(Interview with, Al-Rashdan, ex senator, lawyer and feminist)

Moreover, according to a study conducted by the Jordanian news agency ‘Petra’ in 1999, political parties did not provide support for women to reach the Jordanian parliament. Commenting on the findings of this study, the Ad-dustour Newspaper states

"The answer to the question regarding the influence of political parties on Jordanian women’s political participation was disappointing. Opposing the common belief that political parties do support women’s political rights, 51% of the study sample answered that political parties do not support women’s political rights, 44% believed the opposite, and 5% did not answer the question".

(Ad-dustour Newspaper, November 7, 1999, P 6)

In 1999, and following the death of His Majesty King Hussein, King Abdullah II succeeded in ensuring a more open political environment in Jordan which led to the emergence of a variety of political parties. In 2003, parliamentary elections were held. Women shared in these elections, but this time, and under Election Law No.34 of 2001, an additional 6 parliamentary seats were assigned exclusively to them.
This amendment in the election law came as a response to the JWM’s lobby on the government for change.

In spite of the clear progress in the democratic atmosphere in the country, Jordan’s specific political circumstances had a negative influence on women’s status. For instance, Jordan is a transit point to different nationalities, as it was and it is still open to immigrants from different nationalities who migrate to the country as a result of severe political and humanitarian crises in their countries caused by war either in Palestine or in Iraq. These special conditions have influenced the government’s decision in denying the right of Jordanian women who are married to foreign men, to pass their citizenship to their husbands and children. Commenting on this issue, Rehab Al-Qadomy, a Lawyer, human rights activist, member of the legal committee in the General Committee for Jordanian Women (NCJW), and an founder of the legal consultancy office in the Business and Professional Women’s Forum (BPWF) said

“I believe that the general political atmosphere in the region and its bad influence on the political and economic status in Jordan has minimised the country’s capacity and the decision makers’ flexibility in answering our demands to grant the Jordanian women, who are married to foreign men, the right to pass their citizenship to their husbands and children. Of course, it is the general and political conditions, the Iraqi war and etc... that requires more time and more revision before gaining the approval to our demands”.

(Interview with Al-Qadomy, Lawyer and women’s rights activists, BPWF)

So, institutional and political circumstances have influenced both the emergence and the life of the JWM. However, the research data show that the movement does
not only suffer structural obstacles. Attitudinal obstacles were found to be the second type of obstacles internal to patriarchy that have hindered the movement's performance.

**Attitudinal Obstacles**

Through the analyse of research data, I was able to identify two major obstacles that hinder the progress of the JWM. These concern the attitudes or mentality of particular people or groups of people towards the women's movement in the country. These can be summarised as: the perceived western character of the movement's mentality and the existence of antifeminist agents (see diagram 6.1).

**The Perceived Western Mentality of the Movement**

A fundamental problem that faces the performance of the JWM is the belief that the movement is a reflection of western women's liberation movement ideologies, which are not acceptable at the popular level, and in particular to fundamentalist and conservative groups. This negative view of any foreign (Western or American) teachings or ideologies has its roots in the nature of the historical relations between Arabs in particular and Muslims in general and the West, which is a history of wars and occupation. In a personal interview, Merry Hatar, head of the Salt branch of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), explained,

"If we read political status map of the region, we would notice that we are used to relate our failure with the West. Yes, there are some, especially the conservatives, who believes that it is the West who wants to liberate women, and this belief has a negative influence on women, as there are always suspicions, raised by those groups, regarding the real intentions behind any Western ideologies or even aid"

(Interview with Mary Hattar, head of the Salt branch of the GFJW)
Furthermore, in a personal interview, Ibtesam Atiyat, a member of the National Committee for Jordanian Women’s Affairs (NCJW), and a researcher on the women’s movement, emphasized

“Gender ideology in Jordan has main elements, Islamists, tribes or conservatives. Those elements always make an association between people working on women’s cause, the public moralities, the social solidarity and the foreign aid. Usually they associate any feminist activity with these issues, and they usually accuse us of trying to destroy society by serving the foreign interest through our attempts to liberate women. We have been accused that we do not work on the priorities of the country as much as we work to serve the foreign agendas”.

So, the perception of the westernization of the movement’s mentality has an unconstructive influence on the JWM. This belief is not only a feeling within the women’s movement, it is a real accusation that fundamentalist and conservatives use to hinder or even demolish every achievement or even every effort by the movement to empower women. Referring to one of the Jordanian parliament Hansards (the fourth session 21/11/1999), in which parliament rejected reform of Article 340 of the Penal Law (see Chapter Seven), a parliament member, Mohammed Al-Kharabshih said in the name of more than 30 parliamentary members

“Our society is facing a severe attack by the winds of change and globalization, which started to take root in the ground of our society in the different sectors with no permission... it is not possible to apply any foreign law in this country”.

(Parliament Hansard data, 1999)
Usamah Malkawi, another member of the Jordanian parliament (a man), added,

"I cannot follow and accept the desires of some international societies and institutions in restructuring our society. I do recognize that these organizations support what some groups in Jordan call for. However, what is happening cannot be called reform in any way. What surprises me, is that women's rights and human rights organizations keep criticizing the existence of Article 340, and this means that those institutions have no lawyers who could realize that similar articles that exempt the offender of responsibility in particular cases do exist in a lot of American, European, and other Arabian laws ".

(Parliament Hansard data, 1999)

Stressing the same idea, Ausama Malkawi, a member of the Jordanian parliament said

"I can not go with the wishes of some women's societies and international institutions in their plan to restructure our society".

(Parliament Hansard data, 1999)

Cultural, religious, and political circumstances and differences have had their influence not only on the acceptance of the movement, but also on the definition of the concept of 'feminism' in the Arab world. These research informants, without exception, believed that 'feminism' in the Arabic context means only the drive for radical changes in Arab women's lives. Dr Al- Sabbagh, General Secretary of the National Committee for Jordanian Women's Affairs (NCJW), said
"Defining feminism in the Arabic context is not easy, as in the Arabic context feminism is related to the radical stream of thought in defining women's rights, which is wrong. And on the popular level, relating the concept of feminism with the western ideology of women's liberation made it even harder to accept it or to accept our case”.

(Interview with Dr Sabbagh, General Secretary of NCJW)

In a personal interview, Lamees Nasser, president of the Human Forum for Women's Rights (HFWR), said

"In Jordan if we use the word feminist you will see gloomy faces. People believe that if you are feminist then you are calling for women's sexual liberation. They always relate those two things together”.

Similarly, Mary Hattar, director of Salt city branch of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW) emphasized,

"I believe that the confrontation we face, especially with the religious fundamentalists is related to the use of the concept 'feminist'. They believe that this is a western concept that aims to encourage women's sexual freedom. They do not understand that feminism for us means liberating women politically and culturally”.

(Interview with Mary Hattar, head of the Salt branch of the GFJW)

In point of fact, I believe that fundamentalists and conservative attempts to emphasise the links between JWM ideologies and those of western liberation movements and foreign aid emerges from the fact that these groups are fully aware
of the importance of such resources in legitimating and supporting the efforts taken by the JWM to liberate women in Jordan. Therefore, and being aware of the negative influence that such claims may have on the efficiency and improvement of the movement, these groups promote these concerns.

The JWM is acutely aware of the negative affect such definitions of feminism can play. Consequently, the movement tries always to make it clear that as an Arab women’s movement they respect and are fully aware of cultural and religious particularities. All these circumstances have had a major influence on the movement’s ideology leading it to adopt a liberal feminist stream of discourse and to confirm the far distance between themselves and radicalism. In a personal interview, Amneh Zu’bi, head of the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), said,

“Companionship is our goal. Companionship in work, education and in decision-making. We think that we cannot discuss the Jordanian women’s cause independently of the general social, political and economic context. We cannot say that we want to import the western women’s experience, and that we want to reach the absolute equality or to exchange the roles. In other words, our objective is not to occupy men’s positions”.

(Interview with Amneh Zu’bi, head of the JWU)

Antifeminist Agents
Linguistically the concept ‘antifeminist’ means “one opposed to women or to feminism. 2); a person (usu. a man) who is hostile to sexual equality or to the advocacy of women’s rights” (Intern: Oxford English Dictionary). So, antifeminism means the opposition to any efforts that might advance gender equality. So, it is the defence of patriarchy and patriarchal values, it is the defence of conservative and
fundamental ideology, which could be adopted by any antisocial change agent, be they men or women. As explained above, religious fundamentalists and conservatives present an obvious opposition to any change towards women's emancipation. However, this obstacle increases when women themselves adopt patriarchal ideology and become themselves a part of the opposition climate. Asma Khder, ex president of the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU) Union, minister, and lawyer, said

"Some women are themselves against their cause. My explanation for this is that being a female in patriarchal societies is not an advantage. It is a characteristic that would minimise your status. Consequently, these women have no choice; they are completely influenced by the patriarchal approach of conceiving women, and that's why they would prefer to adopt this approach".

(Interview with Asma Khader, ex president of JWU)

In interview, Dr Al- Sabbagh, General Secretary of the National Committee for Jordanian Women's Affairs (NCJW), explained that,

"There are a number of women in Jordan who are against the reformation of laws discriminating against women. What inflates the problem is that women themselves are not aware of their subordination, and that's why they do not try to change. On the contrary, they consolidate that traditional picture of women. The reason for this stand of women was that women were brought up to revere this social system, which values men and subordinates women".

As so far explained, a clear example of the antifeminist stand towards the women's cause was the 2003 parliament women MPs' stand on the amendments of Article
340 of the Jordanian Penal Code, and the women’s “Khuloe” right in the Personal Status Law. Exploring the factors behind women MPs' stand on the amendment, Atiyat, a member of the National Committee for Jordanian Women’s Affairs (NCJW) and a researcher in the women’s movement, said

"The major problem of women MPs is that they adopt the male agenda. For instance, the Islamic Front woman MP adopts the agenda of her party, which is not encouraging for the women’s movement struggles. Others are reflecting the conservative tribal ideologies in dealing with women causes. We as a women’s movement expect them to be our voice in the parliament, which they entered through the women’s quota system which the movement struggled for long to gain."

(A personal interview with Atiyat, a member of JNCW)

So, in the light of Giddens dialectic of control there are sets of obstacles internal to patriarchy that have a negative influence on the performance of the women’s movement in Jordan. These obstacles can be divided into structural and attitudinal obstacles. The existence of these obstacles clarifies the patriarchal nature of the social structure in which the JWM as a social change agent has worked. However, obstacles facing the JWM are not only related to patriarchy, the JWM also faces problems internal to its structure, which will be discussed in the following section.

**Obstacles Internal to the Women’s Movement**

**Lack of Funding**

The first obstacle internal to the women’s movement structure is the economic status of the country and the lack of funding for the movement (see Diagram 6.1). Economically, Jordan suffers from insufficient stores of natural resources (water
and oil). However, the country benefited from the Gulf countries’ oil boom of the late 1970s and 1980s. In addition to the considerable aid that Jordan was receiving from the Gulf countries, a large number of Jordanians went to work in those countries which helped to improve the economic status in Jordan at that time. The Gulf wars of 1990 and 2003 caused serious economic problems for Jordan. First, aid from Gulf Arab states and workers’ allowances stopped. Second, a large number of Iraqi refugees entered the country. All these consequences of war created serious economic problems and put further pressure on Jordan’s limited resources. Poverty, unemployment, and debt became deep-seated economic problems in the country. The question which arises is: what does this mean for Jordanian women? Actually women felt the heaviest impact of both Gulf wars. First, when men left for the Gulf countries to work, women were expected to stay at home in order to raise their children, which left them financially dependent ((Al-Naqshabandi, 2001).

Women's financial dependence is a sufficient condition to prohibit them from participating in public life. Women lacked the resources that would enable them to participate sufficiently in any role outside the confines of their homes. Moreover, when Jordan’s economic status worsened as a result of the Gulf war, women were also the most harmed group since, if there was a chance for them to work, this chance became very limited following the return of large numbers of Jordanian men who were themselves looking for work, leaving women’s chances of getting a job very limited. All these economic difficulties left women with insufficient resources and time to be active in the public sphere. Commenting on this, in interview, Mai Abul Samen, head of the National Forum for Jordanian Women (NFJW), stated,

"On the economic scale, women are marginalized. They are considered as the weak bone in the economic life. Socially, women are usually deprived of their legal right of heritage, and this is a very dangerous phenomenon in the Jordanian society.

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Also, working women are usually being used by their husbands, fathers, or brothers who would take their salaries".

(Interview with Mai Abul Samen, head o f the NFJW)

Woman’s movement representatives regard lack of funds to be a major problem. Lack of funds, in its turn causes lack of capacity and effectiveness. Lack of financial support is a major obstacle which all research informants emphasized in terms of its negative influence on the women’s movement’s effectiveness and stability. Anas Al- Saket, head of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), stressed

“We as women’s organisations are very weak financially. Lack of finance is a major problem that limits our work and our ambition to empower Jordanian women. For instance, this problem is one of the reasons that restricted our proposals to back women nominated to the parliamentary elections this year (2003)”.

(Interview with Anas Al- Saket, head of the GFJW)

The President of the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), Amneh Zu’bi confirmed the previous point by saying,

“Through my work I have found that social change is a very hard and slow operation, and I believe that social change gets even harder and might also die with poverty. How can we change when our financial capacity is very restricted?”

(Interview with Amneh Zu’bi, head of the JWU)
Financial sources for almost all women’s organisations in Jordan include: the annual fees of the members; any unconditional contributions and donations from either local or international organisations; and money raised from any products and social activities. Membership fees are usually a nominal amount of money which each member has to pay on an annual basis. This means that a major source of funds for these organisations are donations provided to from international resources such as the fund provided by the different UN agencies in Jordan, and some foreign embassies and human rights organizations.

Ibtesam Atiyat, a member of the National Committee for Jordanian Women’s Affairs (JCJW), and a researcher on the women’s movement, explained

"There are a large number of women’s empowerment projects in the country that could have not seen the light without the foreign aid. Foreign aid did not only provide financial support but it also provided legitimacy to our activities. Foreign aid usually builds its agenda on the international agendas as CEDAW and Beijing, and this relation between the two agendas facilitates women’s movements organizations with legitimacy and finance to carry on their mission".

An important point worth drawing attention to is that to grant financial aid, sources of finance in general and from UN agencies in particular depend on the level of efficiency and creativity of the projects and proposals prepared by women’s organisations. This made me wonder about the degree of proficiency of women’s organisations in Jordan and the influence this might have on their financial difficulties. The research data show that foreign facilitators, UN agencies in particular, believe that incompetence is the main reason for the lack of finance in women’s organisations. In a personal interview, Dana Malhas, vice-president of the UNIFEM in Jordan, stressed,
“Lack of creativity is a main problem affecting the performance of women’s organisations in Jordan, and the amount of financial subsidies they get in accordance to that. We in the UNIFEM and in the other UN agencies in Jordan are very much concerned with setting up programmes for women’s organisations’ capacity building. These programmes are covering women’s organisations both in Amman, and the hardly qualified women in the rural areas”.

(Interview with Dana Malhas, vice-president of UNIFEM- Amman)

Furthermore, trying to further explain the nature of the relationships between foreign facilitators and women’s movement organizations in Jordan and the level of independence these organisations have in planning their programmes, research informants were asked about the procedures they would follow in order to be liable for the financial support offered by foreign facilitators. In a personal interview, Dana Malhas, vice-president of the UNIFEM in Jordan, explained,

“According to the UNIFEM rules, the agency should always work in association with a local partner, who would usually have our financial and technical support. Our choice of a local partner depends on the projects they would provide us with. First of all, we prepare a proposal concerning, for instance, the issue of violence against women, and we publish this proposal for all of the women’s organizations and non-governmental organizations in the Arab World. After receiving the different proposals concerning the issue under study, we choose one of them, the best and most creative, to be our partner and to be sponsored by us”.

(Interview with Dana Malhas, vice-president of UNIFEM- Amman)

Therefore, in order to gain subsidy women’s organizations need to propose an
attractive work agenda that serves the demands of the sponsors and not necessarily the priorities of the JWM. This emphasizes what the findings of other studies. For instance Hammad (1999) and Atiyat (2003) articulate that not all projects receive international interest and consequently financial support. International sponsors provide support upon specific agendas and conditions. In a personal interview, Maha Al-Hemsi, Women’s Program Director/ Woman’s and Child’s Empowerment Projects- UNICEF, said

"The basic condition that the UNICEF requires to provide any organization with either financial or technical aid is to present a project that serves our priorities. Actually it is not a matter of conditions rather it is a matter of priorities".

A key question regarding this particular point is who mobilizes whom? Is it a social movement mobilizing external resources or is it external resources mobilizing the movement? Actually, from the previous data, one can say that donors have their priorities, and those who serve these priorities will benefit from the donor’s support. Thus, if women’s movement organizations are interested in financial support it is clear that they need to prepare projects that facilitate the donor’s objectives.

Lack of Voluntary Work Sense

In a personal interview, General Secretary of the National Committee for Jordanian Women’s Affairs (NCJW), Dr Amal Sabbagh, stressed,

“All women’s organisations in Jordan are working hard to empower Jordanian women. Nevertheless, the main problem facing not only the women’s organisations but also all other voluntary work bodies in Jordan, is the non-existence of the culture of volunteering in its genuine meaning, and this is a major cause behind the
"weakness of the different social movements in the different sectors".

(Interview with Dr Sabbagh, the General Secretary of the NCJW)

These data show that the lack of voluntary work sense is a substantial obstacle to the performance of the women’s movement. The movement lacks volunteers who are willing to take on a lot of work for the sake of the cause. Trying to shed light on the movement’s membership size, Al-Atiyat (2003) has emphasized the problems of obtaining accurate information when estimating the membership size of women’s organizations in Jordan. She points out that most women’s organizations still keep names of members who have already given up their membership or are not attending or participating in the organisation’s projects and programmes. Moreover Al-Atiyat suffered from the lack of reliability in the names and addresses of the registered members. However, she estimated the existence of about 2600 valid memberships from about 8500 names provided by women’s movement organisations in Amman. Looking at these facts and figures could indicate the existence of a serious problem in the structure of the movement. Lack of participation in voluntary work could be one of the explanations of this weakness. However, the seriousness and effectiveness of the movement itself (see Chapter Seven), the lack of resources, and all other obstacles could provide a more comprehensive explanation.

Regarding the explanation of motivation for the low level of participation in the movement, Asma Khader, ex president of the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), minister, and lawyer said

“A major obstacle facing the women’s movement’s work is the weakness of humanitarian resources. The dependence on voluntary efforts from women, who
have the capacity and the belief in the cause, became very limited because people want to live and life expenses are very high. Young generations’ main cause now is to find a job and to live”.

(Interview with Asma Khader, ex president of JWU)

So, youth unemployment and the general obstacles facing them are major considerations in explaining the lack of motivation towards voluntary work (for more information on Jordanian women’s levels of employment see Chapter Five). Hence, as long as people need to provide for a decent living no other cause can become a priority. The more the political atmosphere is opened up the more people would become active as citizens which would encourage them to become involved through the voluntary and community sector. With hard economic, social, and political conditions, volunteerism will weaken. There are contradictory processes here – that a more open society will promote volunteerism, but hard economic conditions alongside this will dampen it.

A question emerges at this stage, which is; to what extent can we say that the JWM is a movement of individuals? In other words, to what extent should it be seen as an elite (leaders) movement? The answer to this question will be the theme of the next section.

Individualism and Coordination

In a personal interview, Suleiman Sweis, head of the Jordanian Society for Human Rights (JSHR), said

“The JWM was strong and political at a particular early historical stage. A specific political party was the motivator of the movement. Nowadays we have a number of
women who work hard and effectively, but these are individual efforts, and that's why the movement is sometimes described as the movement of capital or the movement of the cities or the movement of affluent women, who have time to attend symposiums, hold meetings, and to talk about politics. At the same time, the base is forgotten and no work is being done to improve it in order to have it as the foundation of the women's movement in the country".

(Interview with Suleiman Sweis, head of JSHR)

Mary Hattar, director of Salt city branch of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), emphasized

"The JWM needs to include new people and that will ease its mission in the transformation of society. It will not work, if we keep concentrating on the same specific names, who we already used for their strategies and knowledge, the movement needs to be more open".

(Interview with Mary Hattar, head of the Salt branch of the GFJW)

Therefore it seems that informants both outside the movement and inside believe that the JWM is suffering from being an individuals' movement represented in its leaders. That is, a movement of individuals who have the power (education or wealth) to take control and to be under the spotlight. Alongside this, the base is hardly seen as an effective actor. This finding emphasises the argument of research mobilisation theory (RMT), that any social movement must have organisers who can garner resource support and organise the participants and their activities, utilising existing social infrastructure to achieve the goals of the movement (Scott, 1990). I do not claim that it is not the leaders' responsibility to speak. But if we
want to see a strong, comprehensive and balanced movement, leaders should speak to motivate the sense of joining with others in the shared cause. They should motivate an active collective approach to addressing the cause. In fact, being an individuals’ movement represented in its leaders is a major obstacle facing the movement’s performance. The only explanation to the existence of such hindrance can be attributed to the lack of resources such as time and money and/or personally profit from being under the spotlight.

Furthermore, lack of coordination between different women’s organisations, was found to be another hindrance to the movement structure. In a personal interview, Dana Malhas, vice-president of the UNIFEM in Jordan, stressed

"For me personally, it would be hard to say that there is a strong women’s movement in Jordan especially if we take into consideration the lack of coordination between the organisations working for women causes. The relation between different women’s movement organisations is competition rather than solidarity and coordination. That is why I would say that we have multi- women’s movements in Jordan. Each organization is forming a movement by itself”.

(Interview with Dana Malhas, vice-president of UNIFEM- Amman)

Moreover, Amneh Zu’bi, head of the J Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), stressed

“We have to confess that our efforts are scattered. They are scattered between the parties of this movement. It is the lack of coordination. Lack of coordination is a challenge and obstacle, which the movement should face objectively and sensibly. The movement has to confront this challenge in a developing, patriarchal society”.

(Interview with Amneh Zu’bi, head of JWU)
Lack of coordination between different women's organisations is another factor that influences the strength and the level of lobby the movement could force in order to achieve its goals. The movement needs to direct the action of its organizations so that it can be focused toward achievement of the movement's goals. This lack of coordination can be attributed to historical reasons and found in the way in which the state interfered in the structure of the JWM in 1981. As explained fully earlier in Chapter Four, the UN calls, conferences and conventions concerning women's rights and empowerment, plus the political history of women's organizations in the 1950s, have influenced the state's stand towards the women's cause and women's organisations today. Commenting on the influence of such factors on the state's reaction towards women's cause, McBride Stetson and Mazur (1995: 4) argue, "pressure from domestic movements, together with monitoring by international agencies, has encouraged political leaders in many countries to establish and retain some sort of institutions to treat women's issues".

In fact, in response to these factors the Jordanian state set up several organizations which aimed at framing women's public work in Jordan, such as the General Federation for Jordanian women (GFJW) and the Jordanian National Committee for Women's Affairs (JNCW). These state organizations were established in order to serve as a general umbrella under which most women's organizations should be registered as members. Following Stetson and Mazur (1995) it is apparent that governments have given institutions such as these in Jordan the responsibility to achieve what Hernes (1987, cited in Stetson and Mazur 1995:10) calls 'feminism from above, or state feminism.

Indeed, there is no doubt that the influence of the state's interference in the women's cause, whether harmful or useful, is a negotiable issue depending on the cultural differences. Eisenstein (1990 cited in Stetson and Mazur 1995: 11) agrees
that the question of whether the state has helped or hurt women needs to be examined cross-culturally (as each country has its own political, economic and social conditions and circumstances). In the particular case of Jordan, plans to establish a general federation for women’s organizations was the first step whereby the state began to try to limit or even eliminate independent feminism in the JWM.

As explained in chapter Four, the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) received a letter from the Ministry of Interior dated October 26, 1981 in which it ordered its closure. JWM activists decided to fight the order. The high Court of Justice – due to bureaucratic conflicts during the period of martial law - ruled against the Ministry of Interior. Hence, the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) was considered operative again.

Later on (the beginning of the 1990s), other governmental or semi-governmental women’s organizations supervised by Princess Basma were established (for example, the Jordanian National Committee for Women’s Affairs (JNCW) and the Jordanian National Forum for Women (JNFW)). According to Atiyat (2003) the Princess’ supervision has facilitated the work of these organizations, as they are the only organizations recognized by the government to advocate the women’s cause in Jordan. This means that their access to finance is relatively open. On the other hand, the independent feminist Union, which is the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), receives no support from the state. Financially, the JWU is dependent on other resources. According to the head of the Union, the Union receives no help from the state but depends mostly on funds raised from self-planned projects and international aid.

Certainly, it is unfeasible to deny the significance of the role played by state feminist organisations in empowering Jordanian women and in defending their rights as such organisations do enjoy valuable access channels to powerful decision-
makers. Nevertheless, in the case of Jordan we can see that state interference through promoting state feminism and trying to eliminate independent feminism has had negative consequences. This effort to control and not to support the different parties in the movement helped to spread feelings of competition or even ‘envy’ between the two parts (independent and state), which in its turn caused a lack of cooperation between them. In personal interview, a senior member of the Jordanian women’s Union (JWU), stated

“We in the Jordanian Women’s Union are self sufficient. We are a popular grassroots organisation which never waited to receive governmental support. In contrast, the first thing to notice when you go to visit other women’s organisations is the existence of a number of the red sign cars (governmental cars) on their entrances, which are assigned to serve the people working there”.

Insufficient Grass Rooting
There is no doubt that the majority of rural women in developing countries continue to live in conditions of economic underdevelopment and social marginalization (see Chapter One). In this regard one can say that to be a successful mass women’s movement it is essential to be a grass roots movement, a movement that aims to empower women in all parts of the nation, and a movement that is representative of the women for whom it speaks. In this respect, HRH Princess Basma, stressed

“I believe that any successful development and women’s empowerment process should start from the base, and that’s why it was a major goal of the National Forum for Women, in the year 1995, to appoint a large number of women to municipal and rural councils throughout the country. This step helps mainly in changing woman’s image and the belief of her capacity in her society”.

(Interview with HRH Princess Basma)
Following the previous theme, the JWM deemed it essential to be a ‘grass roots’ movement by establishing branches of the main women’s unions in the different cities all over the country, which in their turn planned and organized the mobilization of women in these rural areas of the country. However, the nature of support and help to empower women in rural areas emerged from the local needs of those areas. Therefore, the women’s movement organisations concentrated on empowering rural women economically, by establishing projects to provide them with small loans through which to start their own small projects (like animal husbandry, netting, and dairy products production. Training programmes were developed to enable women to significantly enhance family income. Director of the Queen Zein Al-Sharaf Institute for Development (ZENID), Eman Nimri commented on resources, the nature of projects and on support provided to rural women by Jordanian women’s organisations:

“Financial resources limit women’s organisations’ capacity to improve the status of women in general and rural women in particular. Microcredit is one of the strongest strategies we can employ to assist women in rural areas to help themselves, and to help their families and reduce unemployment. Not only us, all women’s organizations have been active in promoting small-scale income-generating activities for rural women in particular. Those women can start with small sewing, stitching, and small-scale animal husbandry projects”.

(Interview with Eman Nimri, Director of ZENID)

Anas Al- Saket, head of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), stressed,

“We care about women all over the Kingdom in general and in rural areas in
particular, as we recognized that rural women have the chance to start projects through which they can help their families such as farming, animal husbandry, dairy products production, sewing. Their capability of conducting such projects enabled us to provide them with micro loans to start their projects”.

(Interview with Anas Al- Saket, head of the GFJW)

Furthermore, Nadia Shamrook, vice-president of the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU) said

“A major part of our work strategy is to reach women in the base and to deal with their needs. We seek women in the popular and poor areas, and we work with them through members of their community to make our discourse more acceptable for them and for the people in the area as a whole”.

Moreover, according to ILO publications, by 2001 the Federation had conducted 40 awareness and training in legal matters sessions of its own, and another 35 in collaboration with other organizations such as the Jordanian National Committee for Women’s Affairs (JNCW) (Intern: International Labour Organisation, 2004).

Therefore, according to the point of view of the informants in the central branches of the movement, the JWM is working effectively on the concerns and empowerment of rural women. However, the restriction of the majority of these projects to a standard set of courses such as sewing, stitching, tricot, kindergarten, and small animal husbandry projects, and a few awareness lectures, is related to two main factors: the local needs of the area itself; and the financial capacity of the movement central organizations, which in their turn are suffering from lack of finance as a major hindrance on their activities.
Contrary to what the majority of the central women’s movement branches informants believed, one of the other central branch informants, Emily Nafa’, head of the Arab Women’s Society (AWS), stated

“The women’s movement defaulted on reaching the roots of our society. This is because it defaulted on reaching all women from different social backgrounds and areas. Rural women still need to be educated both literally and legally, the thing which would encourage them to be part of the movement”.

(Interview with Emily Nafa’, head of AWS)

In accordance with what Emily Nafa’ explained, all of the informants in rural areas, without exception, expressed their dissatisfaction with the level of support and concern provided to them by their central branches in the capital. According to their self-descriptions, the activities of the majority of women’s movement central branches are very limited. Mary Hattar, director of Salt city branch (middle of the country) of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), emphasized

“Through my work, I have noticed that rural people’s acceptance of social change in women’s role is easier than city people, and the reason is that rural women have an independent productive personality. Rural women work in farms next to men, and this gives men the impression that women are full productive humans. In city society, men still fear that if women’s status improved they will start to compete with them and this would decrease their role and they will lose their jobs. However, women outside Amman still need more help and support by the women’s movement, which concentrate its activities in the capital and rarely involves rural women”.

(Interview with Mary Hattar, head of the Salt branch of the GFJW)
Ahlam Masanat, a member of the Karak branch (southern part of the country) of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), stressed,

"The main problem we face outside Amman is the lack of support. On the financial level we as branches are very poor. We do not have enough budget to practise our role in empowering women in our areas. All the work is centralised in the capital and other branches are almost forgotten. It would be pleasant if they invited us to attend and share in international and internal conferences. The majority of symposiums and lectures are being held in Amman. They should work on a national level".

Jalelah Al-Smadi, head of the Jerash branch (northern part of the country) of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), said,

"We receive symbolic financial support from our central branch, the reason could be the financial weakness of that branch. For example the central branch sponsored us with 1000 JD a year, which is not enough to pay the annual rent of the Jerash branch building".

(Interview with Jalelah Al-Smadi, head of the Jerash branch of the GFJW)

There is then an obvious inadequacy in the performance of the JWM in the rural areas in particular. This insufficiency hinders the local women’s organization’s ability to come up with effective and innovative projects that can fulfil the great ambitions that are reflected in the women’s movement agendas such as empowerment and social development. Being capable of supporting different women's groups in different areas of the country is an essential step for the movement to develop critical comprehensive social change and action agendas. It
could be said that lack of finance is the major problem facing the JWM as a whole. Nevertheless, in this respect, I would argue that social movements are mainly about mobilizing resources, and distributing these resources fairly and equitably is a major step in establishing a fully representative movement and in regenerating new resources.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the various types of factors which hinder or at least have slowed the advancement of the women’s movement towards achieving women’s rights and liberation. In this respect, and in the light of resources mobilisation theory (RMT), we have seen that while the JWM has facilitators (internal and external) that provide it with resources (see chapter Four), it is also facing a number of obstacles that fundamentally affect the performance of the movement. I have argued that these hindering factors are of two main types. I have described a set of obstacles internal to patriarchy, divided into structural and attitudinal obstacles. I have also studied a number of obstacles internal to the movement itself, and the influence of those limitations on the performance of the movement as a collective behaviour agent.

‘Conflict of interests’ between the powerful party wishing to keep its privileged status, and the less powerful who wants to use all the available resources to create change to its existing status gives us a clear explanation to the existence of obstacles and opponents (Giddens structuration theory). As the main objective of the women’s movement as a social change agent is to effect “collective challenge based on common purposes and social solidarities”, then it becomes logical to be in “sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities” (Tarrow, 1998: 4 see also the discussion of POST in chapter Two). As Hardin (1982; 1995, cited in
Tarrow: 1998: 3-4) argues, “social movements have power because they challenge power holders”.

In fact, the findings of this chapter have supported the assumption of political opportunity structure theory (POST) that the level of resistance and the will to change for any social movement is considerably determined by the country’s political status which, as we have seen in the case of Jordan, and due to factors like occupation, wars and opposition, was very unstable during the various historical stages in the development of the JWM. The political environment in Jordan has seen ups and downs and this has influenced women’s rights and the performance of the women’s movement as a whole and, according to POST, the chance for success for a social movement is likely to increase if the political opportunities structure is in favour of the goals and activities of that social movement. On the other hand, there exist institutional obstacles represented by the legislature, judicial system, and government which are largely patriarchal institutions. However, the existence of facilitators (especially international and upper political decisions) can play a significant role in lobbying these institutions in the interest of the movement.

Indeed, both types of obstacles - those obstacles internal to patriarchy and those internal to the movement itself - are serious impediments to the movement’s performance. However, the first type of obstacles are integral to the state’s specific political, economic, and institutional stand towards women and women’s rights, which makes it extremely hard for the movement with its limited resources to confront by itself. On the other hand, the JWM can confront the second type of obstacles, which are obstacles internal to the movement itself, such as lack of finance, incentive to participate in voluntary work, insufficient grass rooting and lack of coordination and networking between women’s movement organisations. It can do this, first by confessing the existence of these problems and, second, trying to become
a more comprehensive movement, one that works to build grassroots women's movements where they do not yet exist. Movement organizations have to be catalysts in creating spaces for poor and rural women to gather, mobilize, and organize. The second critical role the JWM has to play is to provide sufficient support to women's grassroots organizations, linking them together and helping transform them into an effective agent for change. Moreover, the movement needs to work on more creative projects which would help it to generate more resources which in its turn will generate power needed for achieving the required changes.

So, in the light of Giddens’ structuration theory (Giddens, 1979, 1984) and RMT McCarthy and Zald (1973) one can say that the existence of these obstacles allow us to speak of the women’s movement in Jordan through the concept of the ‘dialectic of control’ and ‘resources’. Giddens (1984) emphasises that, as long as there are agents with a minimum of power (resources determine the degree of power), there will always be some attempts to effect change, as power is the capability and ability of the human being to transform the world around him/her.

Through the general findings of this chapter we are now able to understand the factors which determine the relative efficiency of the women’s movement in Jordan. In the next Chapter, I will provide an analysis of a particular case study, through which I will try to highlight the movement’s agency in creating change to women’s social and legal status. The analysis of this case study, which deals with the existence of the phenomenon of honor killing in Jordan, seeks to be an illustration of the different obstacles faced by and facilitators supporting the JWM in its struggle for change.
Chapter Seven

A Case Study of Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal law
(The Phenomenon of Honour Killing)

“Rape, female genital mutilation, honour killing, infanticide, forced marriage, forced prostitution, forced sterilization, forced abortion, incest, sexual slavery, bride burning, forced virginity testing and domestic violence—what is the common link between these acts? They are forms of violence suffered by women, simply because they are women. These are acts of aggression that inflict... indignity and promote a... structure of male power"

(Gómez: 2004: 959)

Introduction

In this Chapter I analyse a specific case of patriarchal oppression, that of honour killing in Jordan, concentrating on the legal dilemma caused by the existence of Article 340 of the Jordanian penal law, which is one of the most important laws that discriminates against women. Yin (2003: 13) argues, “you would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions-believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study”. This particular case study was conducted to sharpen our understanding and highlight the influence of the JWM on the legal reform process. Therefore, this chapter will provide the details of how the women’s movement (in terms of particular organisations or people) has tried to initiate legal change, how they have responded to the failure/success of the government and the legal system to implement change, showing where the facilitators and barriers lie and how structure and action are linked.
The reason for my decision to concentrate on this part of Jordanian legislation is its connection with a vital right for women, this is not a financial or political right; it is the right of any human being to live safely; it is the right of life. Therefore, the main motivates for choosing Penal Law as a case study as opposed to any other law are: first, that Article 340 of this law threatens one of the basic and most fundamental human rights, women’s ‘right of life’, and in doing so the article is considered as a clear breach of different humanitarian laws and conventions. Second, many people in Jordan believe that this law is derived from the Islamic ‘Sharia’ and the ‘Sharia’ has allowed people (in particular males) to kill any female relative if her reputation is touched, even by gossip. Third, this article has been considered a main cause of the emergence of the phenomenon of “honour crimes” in Jordan, and according to Arnold (2001: 1347), Jordan has the highest rate of honour killings in the world. Fourthly, the JWM has undertaken noticeable efforts in order to amend this law.

So, this law was studied in order to explore and analyze the roots of the discriminatory legal Article, its association with social beliefs and attitudes toward women, and the extent to which the amendment has been effective in eliminating discrimination against women in Jordan. Interviews and documentary sources of data, collected from the different organizations and people in relation to the research problem, were an important source to facilitate the explanation of the case (see Chapter Three). Yin (2003) explains, data for case studies come largely from documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation and physical artefacts.
A General Overview

This case study deals with the most extreme type of violence against women in Jordan, namely honour killings, taking into consideration that legal articles regarding honour killing are found in the penal codes of the majority of Arab and Middle Eastern countries: Article 562 in Lebanon (abolished in February 1999), Article 340 in Jordan, Article 548 in Syria, Article 153 in Kuwait, Article 237 in Egypt, Article 309 in Iraq, Article 334 in the United Arab Emirates, Article 70 in Bahrain, Article 179 in Iran before 1979, Articles 418-424 in Morocco, and Article 252 in Oman, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, and especially after the first and second World Wars, there was significant change in social, economic and educational levels in the Arab world. For example, Jordan increased its investment in the social and economic life of the nation. This thesis has shown that despite rapid changes in the structure of Jordanian society over the last twenty years, it still experiences the legacy of norms, customs, and tribal values, which strongly influence the mentality of the majority of its people. The Arab tribal social norm of group responsibility for individual’s actions and behaviours, particularly those related to the group’s reputation and honour, has provoked one of the most dangerous negative social phenomena in Jordanian society: killing under the name of honour. This is a severe tradition - the murder of women for alleged sexual impropriety. According to Foyster (1999: 213), women were accustomed to the notion that if their sexual reputations were questioned then the reputation of males who govern them will also be affected and that is why man had a responsibility to “protect the innocence, modesty and chastity of his wife and daughter”. Accordingly, women are considered the property of men and men have the right to decide their fate if they harm men’s reputations. Woman’s right to life is conditional on her obeying social norms and traditions. Thus, the custom of murder for family honour persists as an
established norm in the wider Arab world in general and in Jordan in particular. Yet, this does not mean that this phenomenon has not appeared in other societies. According to Ruane (2000:1527), the crime of honour killing is global. A number of honour killing cases have been recognized in India, England, Turkey, and Brazil. However, in countries like Jordan and other Middle East and Arab societies, despite fundamental socioeconomic and political change, honour killings have reached significant proportions; so much so as to be recognised as a ‘phenomenon’.

In the Jordanian social structure women are specifically responsible for keeping the honour of the family, whereas men have the absolute right to annihilate and punish women if their virginity is touched, even by rumours, and even if they are a victim of rape or sexual harassment. A woman who is not a virgin on her wedding night is likely to be killed by her male relatives. In a society where the domination of men over women condones murder, *patriarchy* is the most suitable concept to at least describe, if not fully explain, the relationships or institutions where men dominate women (see Chapter One). According to Ruane (2000:1529), “the idea of honour killing stems mainly from patriarchal attitudes within a traditional setting of age-old customs and religious discourse that aims at the social control and subordination of women”.

So, in patriarchal structures (like in the Arab World), women are always considered the weakest link. Even legislation, which is supposed to be the mean to protect humans, discipline societies and enforce justice, is not doing its job in the case of women. Legislation which disadvantages people of a particular group unjustifiably, and just because that group is defined by sex constitutes one of the main obstacles facing women’s empowerment efforts in any country.
The Concept of Honour Killing

Honour killings take place when a male kills one of his female relatives and alleges he is protecting the honour of his family. Gonzalez (2001: 22) defines honour killings as, “an ancient practice in which a family member kills women—daughters, mothers, wives, sisters as a punishment for any sexual relationships outside marriage, or as punishment for the belief in the existence of an inappropriate relationship with another man that may bring shame to the family”. Similarly, Arnold (2001: 1343) explains, “murder is considered as honour killing when a person, typically a youthful male, kills a female relative because she has illegally engaged in illicit sexual activity, including instances where a woman has been raped”.

Obviously, there are various reasons behind honour killings such as: an inappropriate relationship with a man; pre-marital sex; marital infidelity; having a boyfriend; and sometimes, just because woman wants to choose her own style of life or asks for her own freedom. Ruane (2000: 1533) explains, “adulterous women are not the only targets of honour killers. Women who choose their marriage partners, object to male violence, or seek divorce are also seen as committing an act of outright defence which defile a man’s honour”.

Statistical Overview

There are different methods of executing honour killing and these differ from one country to another. In Jordan, honour killers usually shoot or stab the victim. According to Hadeedy and Jahshan (1998), 62% of honour killings in Jordan are by shooting, 13% by stabbing, 6.9% by strangling and the rest by other methods such as beating or burning. Honour killers are usually under age (in Jordan a juvenile is a person under the age of 18) in order to get benefit from the reduction in penalty. Ruane (2000: 1551) states that, “families often select a relative under the age…to carry out the killing, knowing that a juvenile...
defendant will serve a brief term in a detention centre and will be released without a criminal record.”

The estimated number of honour killings in Jordan cannot be accurately determined. The main reason for this is the under-reporting by victims of violence in general, and in cases of honour killings in particular. Also, according to Kevorkian (2003), in the 1966 Jordanian National Charter, ‘mukhtars’ (heads of tribes) were given the authority to issue death certificates without needing to prove the cause of death. This happens in cases where the village in which the death took place is isolated and does not have an attending physician. I believe that this authority given to the ‘mukhtar’ in the charter is very dangerous, as it is more likely that these crimes will take place in such tribal conservative areas, and in these cases this authority could be misused, which would certainly affect the already biased and uncertain statistics.

However, by reviewing the different available statistical sources I have been able to find the following figures, which shed light on the seriousness of the phenomenon of honour killings in Jordan, taking into consideration that most cases are never reported to the authority (police). The following statistics were provided by Rana Husseini who is a female crime reporter at the Jordan Times Newspaper.

(Table 7.1)
Honour Killings Rates in Jordan for the years 1986-1993

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total killings</th>
<th>Honour killings</th>
<th>Percentage% of Total Killings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Crime Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the same newspaper report Husseini provides a list of the crimes of honour committed in the Kingdom since the beginning of the year 1994 (until the date of report). These real stories of women affected by this law are proof of its danger. These crimes were:

Jan. 1- An unidentified divorced woman was killed by her brother in Zarqa with a sharp object for “suspicious behaviour”. The victim was struck several times on the head. She died instantly.

Feb. 5- A 21-year-old woman identified as J.J.H and her alleged lover were shot and killed by her brother, 25, for alleged adultery.

Feb. 8- A 35-year-old Zarqa woman, identified as S.I.A., was shot and killed by her uncle. The woman received eight bullet wounds.

Feb. 18 - Two sisters from Zarqa, Khawla, 33, and Amneh, 27, were shot and killed by their brother for “immoral behaviour”. Each woman was shot at least four times.

April 3- A 37-year-old divorced woman and mother of 14 children was shot and killed by her brother, 42, in Jerash because “someone told him that his sister was seeing a man”.

April 15- A 20-year-old divorced Zarqa woman was stabbed and killed by her brother for alleged adultery. The victim, Khawla A.K., received a 15-centimetre-deep wound to the neck and another to the chest.

May 7- A 15-year-old shepherd girl named Khawla was shot and killed by her brother, 25. The brother received an anonymous letter accusing his sister of
having an affair. Urged by his father without investigating the source of the letter or its contents, the young man killed his sister.

May 8 – A 23-year-old divorced Irbid woman named Aisha was stabbed to death by her brother. Aisha’s brother was told by relatives that his sister was having an affair with someone.

May 31- A 16-year-old woman named Kifaya from Jabal Hashemi Al Shamali had her throat slit by her brother, 32, because she was raped by a younger brother. The older brother was encouraged by relatives to “cleanse the family honour”.

Aug. 1- A 23-year-old woman in Ajloun received one bullet to the heart after being shot by her brother because she was raped by a stranger. Her brother felt he had to kill her to “cleanse the family’s honour”. After Fatima was killed, her family members claimed that she was mentally ill.

Aug. 8- A 25-year-old woman in Salt was killed by her husband for alleged adultery. Hamda received one bullet to the genitalia because her husband was told by friends that she was seeing another man.

Sept. 16- An 18-year-old physically handicapped girl was killed by her brother because she was pregnant from a man who had promised to marry her. Jazia was stabbed in the neck and several parts of her body and was shot several times by her brother.

Three additional “crimes of honour” were reported, but the Jordan Times was unable to obtain any information regarding the incidents and the victims.

Referring to the Amnesty International 2004 report Violence against Women and Discrimination, at least 15 women were reported to have been victims of family honour killings in Jordan in 2003 (Inter: Amnesty.org). According to the Human Rights Watch 2004 report on human rights in Jordan, four women were killed for reasons of family "honor" in 2004, as were 17 women in 2003, and 22
in 2002. Many more cases go unreported (Inter: hrw.org). According to the U.S. Department of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2003, which was released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor on February 25, 2004, in 2002, 21 cases of honour killings were reported in Jordan (Inter: state.gov). It should be noted that some figures do not match, and this is understandable if we consider the sensitivity of the crime, which makes it very hard to know the exact number. However, the numbers of crimes documented every year constitute almost a quarter of all homicides in Jordan (Inter: dhushara.com).

It is known that international human rights law condemns honour killings. However, the existence of Article 340 in the Jordanian Penal Code provides: "(1) who catches his wife, or one of his female relatives unlawfully committing (in the act of) adultery with another, and ...kills, wounds, or injures one or both of them, is exempt from penalty". Article 340 (2) states "who catches his wife, or one of his female descendants or sisters with another man in an unlawful bed, and he kills or wounds one or both of them, benefits from reduction of penalty" (Jordanian Penal Code), encourages more murders since murderers are exempted from the penalty and, in the worst cases, they receive light sentences and are released after spending few months in prison. Afshar (1998: 173) says, "it is hardly surprising that the law assumes that whatever the reason for the sexual encounter, men have morally and legally the right to kill both parties....The issue is not so much whether the woman is or is not guilty, but the defilement of the male's honour".

In addition, the thing which aggravated the problem is the fundamentalist and popular belief that committing honour killings, which Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal Code covers, is derived from the Islamic sharia. Wade

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1 Human Rights Watch is an independent, nongovernmental organization, supported by contributions from private individuals and foundations worldwide. It accepts no government funds.
(2000:21) claims that fundamental Islamic beliefs defend honour killings as a convenient method to protect the honour of their female relatives. However, despite those killers who justify their actions in reference to Islam and the Qur'an, the Islamic Sharia does not mention anything to promote honour crimes against women. Qur'an stipulates that in order to be charged with adultery, a person must be caught in the act by four reliable witnesses, which is hard to prove. Not only this, but also it punishes both men and women in the same way: that is stoning to death for those who are married and lashing for single people (Qur'an: Surat Al-Nour (Light), verse- 24) provides:

> [24:2] The adulteress and the adulterer you shall whip each of them a hundred lashes. Do not be swayed by pity from carrying out God's law, if you truly believe in God and the Last Day. And let a group of believers witness their penalty. [24:4] Those who accuse married women of adultery, then fail to produce four witnesses, you shall whip them eighty lashes, and do not accept any testimony from them; they are wicked.

Discussing the position of women in Islam is not my objective in the present thesis. However, as Islam is the official religion of Jordan, which has a majority population of Muslims, it is necessary to discuss its role in improving or hindering women's rights. The complicated link between women and Islam in the Middle East in general and in Jordan in particular, and whether religion reinforces female oppression or provides opportunities for women, or a combination of both, has become a subject of debate in this research. According to the majority of informants, many of the countries are treating women as second-class citizens, and some of these women have accepted this situation thinking that is what Islam advocates. For most research informants, both social traditions and masculine interpretations of the religious text are the only reason for women's repression under the name of religion. It is the various patriarchal interpretations of the Qu'ranic verses, the various sayings, which create a
gender-biased society where women suffer under the belief that these are religion instructions. In interview, Rehab Al-Qadomy, a lawyer, human rights activist, a member of the legal committee in the General Committee for Jordanian Women (NCJW), and an establisher of the legal consultancy office in the Business and Professional Women Forum (BPWF), said,

“Religion has never been in opposition to women or women’s rights. It is the social traditions and social norms. However, a lot of men are using the weapon of religion to protect their dominant and superior status. They relate things to religion, whereas it has no relation, and women’s lack of awareness helps men to do so. For instance, the issue of honour killings. Islam did not give any male the right to kill his female relative under the name of honour. In case of adultery, Islam punished both man and woman equally. However, what happens socially, is that under the name of Islam women are the only victims of these crimes”.

(Interview with Al-Qadomy, Lawyer and women’s rights activists, BPWF)

Ibtesam Atyiat, a member of the National Committee for Jordanian Women’s Affairs (NCJW), and a researcher on the women’s movement emphasized,

“In the social context we do not say ‘sin’ as much as we say ‘taboo’. We do not refer to religious rules as much as we refer to social traditions. Sometimes religion is being employed by people to back up mistaken social traditions. For instance, women’s right to divorce, the ‘khuloe’ right, is approved in the religious text. However, this right is still not accepted at the social level and the religious text is being used mistakenly to support these beliefs. So, the problem is in the male interpretation of the religious text, which for sure, would serve men’s interests. If there were a fair interpretation of the fair Qur’an, polygamy would have not been approved”.

(Interview with Ibtesam Atyiat, a member of NCJW and a researcher)
Furthermore, Amnīh Zu’bī, head of the Jordanian Women’s Union (JWU), stressed,

"Religion plays a critical role in determining women’s status in any society, especially if we take into consideration the negative and biased interpretations of the religious texts. There are a lot of social concepts that are proclaimed to be derived from religion, whereas they have no relation with it. The only beneficiaries of this situation are men. Islam did give woman the right to inheritance; however, socially most women do not take their share in heritage. This issue was related to Islam, whereas Islam has no relation with this proclamation. This is not Islamic law but rather a local tradition in some Islamic countries”.

(Interview with Amnīh Zu’bī, head of the JWU)

In a personal interview, Lamees Nasser, President of the Human Forum for Women’s Rights (HFWR), said,

"Islam has given a high status to women. I think the main problem was that the Qur’an verses were misunderstood and misinterpreted. For example, Islam did not prohibit women from being judges or from driving cars, however, some interpretations in some Islamic countries use Islam as a weapon to keep women at home and ban them from practising their rights as humans, which is against the Islamic rules”.

As can be seen, the majority of the research informants emphasized the innocence of religion as a text from being a motivator of patriarchy. However, the informants did not deny the strong relation between religious ideologies and interpretations adopted by men in general and fundamentalists in particular which legitimize and reproduce power inequalities. Mai Abul Samen, head of the NFJW, stated,
"Sorry to say, we understand religion in a retrograde way. If we look at religion, whether Islam or Christianity in the right way, we should recognise that religion equalizes between and confers honour upon humans, both men and women. So, no problem in the religion as a text, the problem is in the mistaken interpretations adopted by some fundamental groups".

(Interview with Mai Abul Samen, head of the NFJW)

However, regarding the influence of religious interpretations on the JWM’s effectiveness, a research respondent believed that religious heritage has negative impacts on the performance of the women’s movement, especially those efforts related to the explanation or the amendment of Article (340) of the Penal code, (associated with Sharia) or the Personal Status Law, which is derived from the Islamic Sharia. The respondent said,

"Once I was lecturing about the rules of marriage contract in the Personal Status Law. During the lecture, I explained to the audience that woman can put a condition in her marriage certificate that prohibits her husband from polygamy, and if he breaks this condition woman has the right to divorce. Some audiences accused me of lecturing against the Islamic rules and Sharia, and I had to prove to them that what I said was from the Personal Status Law and not my own interpretations. So, we have to be careful when discussing issues related to Sharia, as people are sensitive on this subject".

Consequently, it is not the religious text itself, rather the fundamentalism and the biased interpretations of the text. Biased interpretation of religious text was backed by patriarchal social traditions originating from tribal ideologies. That is, Islam does not endorse honour killings, nevertheless the majority of Islamic conservative leaders and political Islamic groups are promoting the existence of articles such Article 340 in the Jordanian Penal law, and they are against harsher punishments for honour crimes arguing that this would annihilate the society by
encouraging women to have illegal sexual relations, which would affect the morality of the society. Political Islamic groups are against any changes to the laws regarding honour killings, arguing that the abolition of Article 340 would legalise adultery. For instance, Mahmoud El-Kharabsheh, a Jordanian MP argues that more lenient punishments will violate religious rules and damage the fabric of Jordan's conservative society, as he believes that meddling with this law (Penal Code) might lead to widespread immorality within Jordanian society (Jordanian parliament Hansard data, 1999). The French Penal Code is the original source of the Jordanian Penal Code. The French Penal Code uses the words "ascendant, descendant," denoting that the wife, female ascendants, descendants, and sisters are all included under the law. The French Code, in conjunction with the aforementioned Ottoman Code, provide the basis for Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal Code's expansive legitimisation for males who kill a female relative allegedly involved in illicit sexual practices (Arnold, 2001). The existence of this act in one of the most important Jordanian Criminal laws is a clear reflection of the patriarchal social system in which women's oppression and men's domination over them reaches the extent of ending their life. Indeed this fact becomes stronger, when we appreciate that it has been proven to the courts that a large number of the victims were innocent, and suspicion was the only reason behind their murder (Ruane, 2000:1523). El-Sadawi (1997) points out that women in the Arab world represent the word "fitna" which means seductiveness and this is why men prefer to keep them at home so as not to 'spoil' society. The existence and the survival of this discriminatory legislation up to now in Jordanian Penal Law, reflects nothing more than the will of the dominant class (who are economically, politically and physically stronger), particularly if we take into consideration that women do not represent an effective part of the legislative authority in Jordan (see Chapter Six).

So, after all, we can see that the existence of discriminatory law like Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal law although being an obstacle but in the same time it is a
challenge that motivated the JWM to try to identify its opponents (i.e. fundamentalism and conservatism). Identifying the opponents in a major step towards identifying facilitator which in the light of Giddens structuration theory and RMT can provide the movement with the required resources in order to generate power, which in its turn would enhance the movement capability to challenge the existing structure and try to change. Therefore, in the next section we will explore the role played by the JWM to create the required change.

**JWM and Legislative Change**

Since its construction in 1992, the Legal Committee in the Jordanian National Committee for Women’s Affairs (JNCW) has reviewed several laws in Jordan. They have concentrated on Penal Law, Labour Law, Retirement Law, Social Security Law, Landlords and Tenants Law, Personal Status Law, Nationality Law, Passport Law, Civil Status Law, Income Tax Law, and the Civil Service Regulations. In a personal interview, Layla Sharaf, a member of the seniors’ council said,

"I believe that the establishment of the Jordanian National Committee for women in the year 1992 plus the early existence of different women’s organisations such as the women's unions, the Jordanian National Forum for Women, and the Jordan Forum for Business and Professional Woman (BPWF)... had a great influence on opening the doors to discuss the fact that we are adopting discriminatory legislation".

Since 1998, and as a part of the preparatory efforts for their campaign against honour crimes in 1999, JWM activists have lobbied for a safe shelter for victimised women, who usually stay under the administrative custody through which the government tries to protect threatened women (from their families). That is by detaining them in the ‘Jweideh Women’s Correctional and Rehabilitation Centre’ at the Jweideh Jail (a prison in the south of Amman).
Ruane affirms that fifty to sixty women are held in administrative custody every year and the reason is to protect them from their families, who make threats of death on the basis of protecting the honour of the family (Ruane, 2000: 1555). Therefore, recognising that jail can never be a shelter where victimised women, threatened with being killed by their families, can seek safety, the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU) initiated a crisis hotline and a small shelter for victimised women in 1998. In personal interview, Amneh Zu'bi, head of the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU), stressed,

"Regarding our efforts to face the problem of honour killings in Jordan and to help victimised women, who do not have a proper shelter, the Jordanian Women's Union has managed to establish a hot line for women who suffer, that was in the year 1998. Following the hot line, we have found a safe house to protect those victimised women. Moreover, we worked hard and we will continue our fight to abolish the legal discriminatory act in the Jordanian penal law, which is a major motivator for committing such crimes".

Asma Khader, ex head of the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU) and minister of state, said,

"We as a women's movement had a major role in shedding light and putting forward the issue of violence against women in Jordan, trying to demonstrate that violence is a form of torment and torture. We worked hard to encourage women to break the wall of silence by establishing the first hot line to advise victimized women. This effort was undertaken by the Jordanian Women's Union. Now we started to use the Internet in order to provide advice and there is a big response from women"

(Interview with Asma Khader)
In 1999, a group of female and male activists (from different women’s rights and human rights organisations) campaigned to eliminate the so-called crimes of honour, to help the victims, and to end the reduction in penalty for men who murder females in the name of preserving the honour of the family. The campaign was represented in a press conference held in Amman on 23 August 1999 (Jordan Times Newspaper, August 24, 1999; Jordan Times Newspaper, August 21, 1999). At this conference, and by inviting international and national press and media representatives, women’s activists did their best to utilise this opportunity in order to bring the attention of world and human rights institutions to this severe crime against women. Consequently, several newspaper reports (English and Arabic) and television programmes regarding this phenomenon were published. In the same year, through inviting people to vote over the Internet and through the large number of volunteers from the different women’s organisations, the campaign managed to collect 15,000 signatures from people demanding the cancellation of Article 340 and other laws that discriminate against women2.

So, the women activists believe that to enhance gender equality, amendments in Jordanian discriminatory legislation should take place. In this frame it might be worth mentioning that one feminist activist (Na’ela Al- Rashdan) who is a lawyer and was a member of the Jordanian Legislative Council in 1978, made the initial step through which light was shed on women’s rights in the Jordanian legislation. This effort was represented in the issuance of the first paper to handle the issue of Jordanian women’s rights in Pension Law, Labour Law and Personal Status Law. Commenting on this stage, in a personal interview, Al-Rashdan, who prepared this paper explained,

“I am a member in a number of women’s organisations, and during my partisanship in the Jordanian Legislative Council, I prepared the first paper to

2 Personal interview with Asma Khader, a main organiser of the campaign, 2003.
consider the issue of Jordanian women legal rights, this was in the year 1978. I prepared this paper for a conference that dealt with the issue of the women's cause and legal rights. This conference was held under the care of Prince El Hassan. The issuance of this paper was financially supported by the United States.

Moreover, the Royal Family itself has raised concerns about honour killings. The Royal Family's support has encouraged the women's movement in the country to speak out more strongly against honour killings. These efforts resulted in putting a draft law calling for the abolition of Article 340 in front of the Jordanian parliament, which unfortunately rejected the draft in the year 2001. The Islamic Action Front justified their rejection of abolishing Article 340 by stressing that the abolition of the Article meant destroying Islamic and social values, by depriving men of their humanity and not allowing them to get angry when they are surprised by their wives, daughters or sisters committing adultery.

In the year 2001, as a response to the failure of government and the legal system to implement change, and ten days after the parliamentary rejection of abolishing Article 340 of the Jordanian penal code, women's organisations in Jordan accompanied by human rights organisations organised a major protest. More than five thousand protesters flooded the streets of Amman. Commenting on the nature of networking between the JWM and human rights organisations in Jordan, in a personal interview, Dr Sulaiman Sweis (male respondent), head of the Jordanian Society for Human Rights (JSHR), stated,

"We as a human rights organisation are interested in human rights in general, and women's rights as a part of it. We do cooperate with and support the JWM. For, example, we celebrate the eighth of March every year as the women's

\[3\] Personal interview with Anas Al-Saket, head of the GFJW, 2003.
international day, by issuing letters through which we demonstrate the positive and negative points in the Jordanian women’s rights. We always issue recommendations that explain the necessity of empowering and developing the rights of women in Jordan. We worked hard with the women’s movement to amend Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal Law, and when the parliament rejected it we shared the movement in a demonstration and a strike in front in the Jordanian parliament, where we spread a petition regarding the necessity of amending discriminatory legislation against Jordanian women”

(Interview with Dr Sulaiman Sweis, head of JSHR)

Moreover, in interview with Anas Al- Saket, head of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), stressed,

“The JWM organised a public demonstration through which we stood in cooperation with human rights organisations to provide support for women threatened by various types of abuse in general and honour murders in particular”.

Prince Ali, King Abdullah’s brother, and Prince Gazi participated in the protest. On 31 of December 2001 and as a result of all the previous efforts, an amendment of Article 340 was ruled by the executive authority (government) as a temporary law4 (Inter: gendercide.org). This amendment gives women the right to kill their husbands (and not any other relatives) under the condition of catching them committing adultery at home. However, this amendment was again immediately rejected by the parliament as soon as it was held in the year 2003. Writing in a newspaper, Falak Jama’ni, a woman MP in the Jordanian parliament stressed,

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4 According to the Jordanian constitution the executive authority has the right to issue laws in the case of the parliament being not held. These laws stay temporary until the parliament is held again, as that is when the government must introduce them to the parliament which has the right to adopt or refuse them.
"What happened in the parliament is expected. It is men's fundamentalism against women’s rights. The Jordanian Penal Law and the Personal Status Law were not discussed properly. They voted on those laws suddenly and in haste without giving us the chance to fully discuss our points of view".

(Ad- Dustour Newspaper, August 6, 2003)

Under the title of “Conservatives and Moslems Reject the Penal and Personal Status Laws”, Maher Abu Tair, a male newspaper reporter, wrote,

“Moslem and conservative parties united yesterday. Their goal was to reject both laws, Penal and Personal status, which were introduced by the government.... The Jordanian parliament had a stormy atmosphere yesterday, which left a remarkable mark on the face of parliamentary life in Jordan. We cannot judge if it was a negative or positive one yet”.

(Ad- Dustour Newspaper, August 4, 2003)

In the same newspaper, and commenting on the same event, Samera Dasoqi and Samar Hadadeen, women reporters, wrote,

"JWM and human rights defenders and organisations are disappointed. The reason is the parliament’s rejection of the amendment of article 340 of the Jordanian Penal law, concerning honour crimes, and the Personal status law. They have considered the parliament decision as a stab at the heart of the JWM, in the heart of its achievements, achievements that the movement has longed for since the fifties. Feminist activists said that the parliament decision has returned women's suffrage back to the starting point".

(Ad- Dustour Newspaper, August 4, 2003)
These quotations give us a clear picture of the dynamics of power and how power relations are constructed. It is clear illustration of how the 'dialectic of control' is a key element in analysing the nature of relationships between agency and structure. As we have seen from the previous discussion, JWM as an agent of social change had different types of facilitators, both international and national. Those resources were important in facilitating the movement to lobby the government in order to achieve the required legislative change, which eventually took place. However, all these efforts proved futile when this agent was in contradiction with the powerful patriarchal legislator, tribal and social tradition, conservatism and religious fundamentalism. Nevertheless, this does not mean that this agent would surrender, since, as long as resources are available and the political democratic atmosphere is open, the agents of social change will carry on their battle for change.

However, regarding the efficacy of the amendment, I would argue that the amendment was weak for many reasons. First, it is unusual for a man to bring his girlfriend to his own home. Second, the amendment implies that it is legal for men to have illegal relationships outside the home. Finally, this is an Article which does not show any respect for the mentality or emotions of the wife, and government passed it to push the women’s movement into silence again and to stop their protest against honour killings.

The aim of protesting against Article 340 before its amendment was that it constitutes a discriminatory Article because it gives the right for a male relative to kill his female relative if he surprises her in an unlawful bed and it does not give the same right to a female in the same conditions. The female can benefit from Article 98 of the Jordanian Penal code which states, “He who commits a crime in a fit of fury caused by an unlawful and dangerous act on the part of the victim benefits from reduction in penalty”, if she kills in a fit of fury. The amendment of Article 340 is also discriminatory because it does not give the same right to both males and females. It gives the right to a male relative to kill
his female relative if he surprises her in an unlawful bed, anytime and anywhere. The amendment to Article 340 restricts women from having the same right as men.

The Jordanian Court of Cassation applies Article 98 to most honour killings cases. Arnold (2001) asserts that Article 98 allows a man to claim that loss of honour caused him to act in anger in cases of honour killings, which happened after a long period of planning and not under the fit of fury (premeditated killings). Rishmawi (1988) reveals, in examining a recent judgment of the Jordanian Court of Cassation, that Jordanian legislators treat the concept of honour killing by adopting the patriarchal concepts of the Bedouin: the honour of the family comes out of its women. Moreover, the patriarchal judicial system in Jordan has maximised the problem by widening the scope of the implementation of the legal articles. Arnold (2001: 1366) stresses, “honor killings in Jordan are significant because the Jordanian Court of Cassation has widened the scope of individuals and the types of behaviour it exonerates and for which it provides reduced prison sentences. For the last two decades, the Court of Cassation has greatly expanded the scope of Article 340 by applying Article 98 of Jordan's Penal Code to honor killings”.

Therefore the courts, as a part of a patriarchal society, do reflect its mentality (See Chapter Six). Courts do sympathize with honour killers and usually accept a killer’s excuses that he acted out of fury (Article 98 Penal Law). Here we can say that there is a misapplication of the "fit of fury" defence in honour crime cases. The problem is not only in the existence of Article 340 but also in article 98, which is being applied to almost all cases whereby a female is killed by her family in the name of honour.

Moreover, Jordan ratified the 'Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women' (CEDAW) in 1992 with reservations that were mostly based on the Islamic law (see Chapter Six). Jordan reserved on Article 9
(2) which states “parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children”. At the “Arab Women’s Summit”, which was held in Amman in November 2002, Her Majesty Queen Rania El-Abdullah asked to implement this in Jordanian Nationality law. Accordingly, this law was reformed in a way that gave the Council of Ministers the right to look and study each appeal (case) by itself. Jordan has reserved on Article 15 (4) which states “states parties shall accord to men and women the same rights with regard to the law relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile”. Third, Jordan has reservation on Article 16 (c, d, g) which states: “l.c. States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relation and in particular shall ensure, on bases of equality of men and women. d. The same rights and responsibilities as parties, in respective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children; in all cases that interest of the children shall be paramount.

g. The same personal rights as husband and wife, including the right to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation” (Alferdsson, 1995: 63-66).

Since Jordan has ratified CEDAW it has obligations to achieve and implement the convention in its national laws in order to achieve equality between both males and females. Therefore, discriminatory laws such as Article 340 of the Penal code should be abolished from the Jordanian legislation, because they deny women’s right to have equal protection with males, which is the main quest of CEDAW. Arnold (2001) contends that Article 16 (1) is appropriate to implement in honour killings cases since it refers to family matters, but as we have seen above, unfortunately Jordan has reversed this Article. Arnold (2001: 1386) argues, “by failing to provide the same legal rights to women who kill a male relative, Article 340 grants men a family right which is not available for women, and thereby violates CEDAW. The amendment as well violates CEDAW, because it does not give female the same right of killing her husband if she kills him any place, which constitute different circumstances”. In
interview, Asma Khader, ex-head of the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU), minister of state, and a lawyer, stressed,

"The status of Jordan on the subject of its implementation of the international human rights conventions is not perfect, but at the same time not bad compared to other Arab countries. The problem concerns the Jordanian reservations on specific Articles of CEDAW, especially the one regarding the rights of the family. These reservations have neither religious nor legal justifications. On the contrary, they are against the constitution, which provides for equality between men and women."

Human Rights activist (minister of state) Asma Kader, says: "changing legislations and Article 340 in particular is considered a symbolic positive change, but is not the article that courts are using in their verdicts. Legislators ignored a proposal suggested by the Royal Commission of Human Rights to raise the minimum punishment in Article 98 to at least five years for killers as a positive solution, as well as banning the victimised women's families from dropping charges against the perpetrators of such crimes" (The Jordan Times Newspaper, 22 December 2002: 3). However, courts still apply Article 98 of the Jordanian Penal code in sentencing killers to get benefit from the reduction of penalty even if those killers did not commit their crimes immediately upon witnessing their females' adultery.

Ahmad Mahadeen, head of the Jordanian Criminal Court notes that the court is aware that people sometimes use Article 340 in order to be set free from punishment. He maintains: "from a judicial point of view, the sentence for a man who committed an honour crime is based on his fit of fury, or the boiling of blood, when he discovers a sexual relationship between his female relative and another man. Before a reduced sentence is issued we take into account all the prevailing conditions such as catching the woman in the act, the surprise
element and the direct momentous reaction”(The Arab Daily, 27 September 1999: 4).

On the international level, UNIFEM regional office in Amman-Jordan, and in assisting in the effective implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), was aware of the importance of clarifying that no major contradiction exists between CEDAW and the Islamic Sharia. In a personal interview, Dana Malhas, vice-president of the UNIFEM in Jordan, stressed,

“Women’s human rights program is one of our programs through which we concentrate on increasing the level of society awareness, men and women, of the importance of CEDAW. As you know, a lot of people believe in the contradiction between this convention and the Islamic Sharia. We try to explain to them that such contradiction does not exist, and in case of contradiction, we refer to the religious scholars’ opinion in the issue. We prepared a comparative study about the relation between CEDAW and Islamic Sharia. This study was conducted by a woman who represents the Islamic stream in the women’s movement”.

(Interview with Dana Malhas, vice-president of UNIFEM- Amman)

In a personal interview, the researcher who prepared the study for the UNIFEM, Nawal Al- Fa’ori, Ex president of Madaba branch of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), a member of the National Committee for Jordanian Women, and a member of the Islamic party, said,

“In order to analyse the reasons for the Arab counties’ reservations on CEDAW, and with the cooperation of UNIFEM, I have conducted a study regarding the similarities and differences between CEDAW and the Islamic Sharia. It was found that there are a lot of similarities between CEDAW and the Islamic Sharia, if we understand Islam and interpret it in the right way”.

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So, in the light of the RMT, the existence of facilitators and resources (elites, UN conventions, human rights org) supported the movements drive towards changing discriminatory legislation. The existence of facilitators motivated the JWM to carry on their struggle for change. In fact, none of the changes that took place (regarding article 340) could ever happened without the existence of these facilitators especially the support provided by the royal family. In this context, one can say that ‘state feminism’ has a positive influence in enhancing women’s legal rights and reforming discriminatory legislation.

**Conclusion**

Through this case study, one can say that honour killing is one of the most terrifying forms of violence against women. Honour killings are rooted in women's powerlessness compared to men and the patriarchal institution in which they live. Honour killings parallel women's powerlessness in unequal access to employment and education. Honour killings are a reflection of the existence of a set of social, legal, economic, radical religious beliefs and cultural values that extend men’s power and control, and further their privilege and domination. Foyster (1999: 8-9) argues, “the existence of such phenomena can inform us of the dynamics of power relations in a specific society....by paying due emphasis to the importance of sexual reputation to women, however, men are too conveniently categorised as ‘other’ and their reputations are denied sexual component. In part, this stems from the literal reading of the double sexual standard in which only women were culpable for sexual shame”.

As JWM is a movement for social change, the changes in the social structure that the movement tries to make can be conceptualised in terms of Giddens ‘dialectic of control’, which gives a sufficient explanation to the nature of the social relations between social action and the social structure (see Chapter Two).
This chapter is an application of the dialectical relationship between a social change agent (represented here by the JWM) and its opponents or the challenges it faces. In this chapter I argue that, while the JWM has facilitators (see Chapter Four) that provide it with resources (material and non-material), it is also facing a number of obstacles that inherently affect the performance of the movement. In fact, it is logical that any agent who wants to interfere with and change a stable structure is likely to face resistance. They are likely to face different individuals or groups whose ambitions and goals are served by the already existing social structure.

In the Arab world and through the last few decades there might have been serious developments in the political and economic structures. However, the main characteristic that dominates Arab women’s social status which is patriarchy has hardly seen a serious development, and the existence of the phenomenon of honour killing ensures this interpretation. The existence of such phenomenon is a logical reflection for the power inequalities between women and men. In the light of this phenomenon, women are seen as men’s properties and the only explanation for this superior position of men is their privileged access to resources (i.e. politics, market and education, see Chapter Five) which entitled them to control the less powerful group (women). We argued that the existence of this phenomenon is a reflection to traditions, tribal social system and biased religious interpretations, however, the existence of these elements is a reflection of the powerful party will, as logically, the stronger is the one who decide the rules of the game.

Discriminatory legislation is another reflection of this patriarchal formula, and the existence of law articles (such as Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal Code) that gives the right to the powerful group to not only ‘dominate’ but also to ‘eliminate’ the less powerful group is the extreme limit to any type of control. When the level of women’s honour killings crimes documented every year constitute almost a quarter of all homicides in a country, and when a female get
killed in response for being raped, here, and at this point, we can say that women became victims of two offenders, the killer first and the patriarchal society second.

The dilemma augments when the legal system in any country legitimate such crimes by sending the offender free. Actually, a deep look to the authority legitimising such laws takes us back to chapter Six where we wondered about the structure of the authority which approves or disapproves laws. We found and under the title of structural obstacles that legislative authority is simply a masculine authority as, from 1978 up to date a very limited number of women were appointed to be members of it. On the other hand, and under the title of attitudinal obstacles we saw that not only conservatives and islamists are anti-feminist but also some women MPs who adopted the patriarchal ideology (see chapter Six).

However, according to Giddens structuration theory, there are no completely powerless agents. Giddens believes that to be a social agent is to be able to 'intervene' or get involved in and make a difference to the 'state of affairs' or course of events in the social world. Thus, power in the broader sense refers to this transformative capacity of the social agent (Giddens, 1985: 7; 1984: 15; 1979: 88). Therefore, and according to the POST, the beginning of the democratization phase in Jordan opened the political structure for social movement and women's movement in particular to challenge the existing limitations. JWM started to talk in issues that used to be considered as 'taboo', and in the light of the RMT, the existence of facilitators and resources (elites, UN conventions, human rights org) supported them, to pursue change in the legal system. According to the RMT there might be individuals and social groups who believe in the importance of change, either because they themselves are suffering in the existing situation or because, as RMT argues, they are sympathetic to the 'cause' (conscience supporters), share common goals with the social group, or have a vested interest in the social movement's success.
Chapter Eight

Concluding Discussion

Introduction

Throughout this thesis I have sought to contribute to the study of social movements in general and women’s movements in particular, by providing new insight into the historical role of the JWM in the empowerment of women in Jordan, about which very little is known. Theory and research in this area have generally concentrated on Western societies. This thesis is an attempt to apply particular theories in the field of social movements to a somewhat different socio-cultural environment; in this case the woman’s movement in the Middle Eastern developing society of Jordan.

In this qualitative study, conducted in different cities of Jordan, data were collected from various sources. I interviewed a total of 31 respondents. Of these, 28 were women in different positions within the social movement, and three were male respondents working within the field of human rights. Documentary sources formed another major data resource for the research. As so far explained in Chapter Three, documentary resources, including media products (newspaper archives in particular), the Jordanian equivalent of Hansard, State official documents, and private official documents were a main source of data upon which important commentary interpretations regarding this research objectives are addressed. Both interviewee responses and documentary resources provided the data upon which my analysis of the history of the JWM as a collective action agent in eliminating legal and social discrimination against Jordanian women has been built. My analysis has explored both the obstacles which have
hindered, and the resources which have facilitated the efforts of the JWM towards achieving its goal of women’s liberation, and also the factors behind Jordanian women’s social and legal inferiority.

In this chapter, I will begin by summarising the main findings of the thesis. This will be further developed by drawing conclusions regarding the main competing explanatory approaches which have influenced the analysis of social movements in general and women’s social movement in the Jordanian context in particular. In this study, I drew on Giddens’ structuration theory in combination with elements of both resources mobilisation theory (RMT) and political opportunity structure theory (POST) to build a theoretical model to study the emergence and the performance conditions of the JWM.

Finally, in this chapter I will provide an evaluation of the JWM’s role in empowering women in Jordan in the light of the presented evidence. Hopefully will be of use to the JWM and policy makers in enhancing women’s station within the Jordanian social structure.

The JWM: Historical Trends

A review of the historical development of the JWM was a central goal of this thesis. Through providing a comprehensive analysis of the different historical phases in the movement’s life, I was able to draw a picture of the political structure in Jordan and its influence on the movement’s life and development, the main resources that facilitated its emergence, the obstacles facing its performance, and the extent to which the movement was an active social change agent.

As explained in Chapter Four, the first known women’s activist in Jordan was acknowledged in the 1940s. At this stage the JWM was recognised as a part of
social and charitable work organisations motivated by the general political atmosphere in the Arab world in general, particularly Jordan. This stage in the life of the women’s movement was related to the establishment of the Women’s Solidarity Society, which was founded in 1944 and in the following year, the Society of the Jordanian Women’s Federation. Both organisations were headed by an elite figure such as a Royal Family member. The main concern of both organisations was to help poor and needy refugees to improve health care for women and children and to eliminate illiteracy. At this early stage, no real political or feminist agenda was evident. The JWM at that time was not concerned with creating major change in the social relations between men and women, as the focus on the national struggle (caused by foreign occupation) meant that many other women’s concerns such as gender and legal equality were not addressed.

Regarding this early stage of the movement’s life in the 1940s, and as an answer to Tarrow’s (1998: 17-18) question (which political opportunity structure theory addresses); “why do waves of movements emerge in some periods and not in others?”, one can say that the atmosphere of liberalisation in Jordan at that time opened the political structure to a first attempt by women to challenge the traditional norms and values by taking the decision to step outside their traditional domestic atmosphere. In taking such a brave step, this weak agent needed motivation and power and, as was discussed in Chapter Two, according to Giddens’ structuration theory (Giddens, 1993; 1984) and resources mobilisation theory (RMT) (McCarthy and Zald, 1973), resources are required to generate this power. At this early stage, in addition to the resources of the political system, elites played a major role in supporting and backing Jordanian women’s efforts. Having an elite member as a part of women’s movement’s foundations during this early period in the history of Jordan as a state would certainly have facilitated the JWM.
Moreover, the fact that the JWM started in the hands of mostly middle class, educated, political women and was represented by elites, supports the RMT argument that many social movements tend to be dominated by middle class people Storr (2002: 185). This is because the higher the class, the more resources members can generate and, as explained in Chapter Four, for a social movement to succeed there must be a sufficient resource base which could be provided by participants directly and/or sponsors.

In addition to the internal facilitators (e.g. elites) this thesis has highlighted the importance of external facilitators of the JWM between 1944-1954. A key external facilitator was other Arab feminist activism, for example, the Egyptian ‘Sharawi’ who had an influence on the emergence of the first Women’s Federation in Jordan, in 1945.

One clear, positive development owing to political liberalization was indeed the emergence of the 1954 Jordanian Women’s Federation which tended toward a more explicitly feminist agenda. The establishment of the Arab Women’s Federation in 1954, in a period of liberalization, marked a qualitative change in the type of women’s organization found in Jordan. Stimulated by the active political Arab women’s movement (especially in Egypt and Palestine), plus the promulgation of the new Jordanian constitution in 1951 (after officially announcing the unity of the East and West Banks), which increased political freedoms and citizenship rights, a number of Jordanian middle and upper class educated women decided to establish a new organisation that aimed to improve the situation of Jordanian women politically and legally.

However, as POST suggests (Kriesi et al, 1995; Eisinger, 1973), the activity of the JWM was very much affected by changes in the country’s political opportunity structure. And the political opportunity structure in 1957 had a clear negative influence on the JWM’s evolution. As described in Chapter Four, the 1954 Arab Women’s Federation was dissolved in 1957 after King’s Hussein’s
decision to prohibit all political parties and activities in Jordan, as a response to the military coup which been led by opposition to his regime. The dissolution of the 1954 Women’s Federation is clear evidence that it was by then a political movement that aimed to achieve political goals, the very object which shaped the nature and the level of repression used by the state at that time.

This closure in the political structure led to hesitation or reluctance to raise women’s issues. From 1957 until 1974 no women’s movement organizations existed and there was almost no real political activity of any kind in the country. At that time, Jordanian women concentrated their efforts on issues like illiteracy elimination because this was the only activity they were allowed to conduct, and because they believed in the importance of women’s education in raising their level of awareness of their rights as women and as citizens.

The first sign of impending change came in 1974 when the request of the women’s movement (represented in the Jordanian Women’s Union at that time) to be reactivated was answered by the state. This decision came against the backdrop of preparations for the UN Decade for Women, scheduled to begin in 1975. This thesis has pointed to the significance of these external facilitators as a major resource that had a crucial influence in re-establishing, funding and planning for women’s empowerment in the developing world in general and Jordan in particular. In addition to aiding the re-establishment of the JWM, the UN 1975 declaration of the Women’s Decade helped to open a new path through the Jordanian political structure. This path was represented in the state’s new strategy towards dealing with the JWM. The reason behind this new approach can be attributed to the state’s goal to be or to appear as, one of the cooperative and developing countries that would like its women to be represented at the international level. This would improve the county’s status in human rights development reports which, in its turn, would increase the state’s entitlement to international aid.
All of these factors influenced the efficacy of the JWM which, since the beginning of the democratic reform era in the country (end of 1980s to the beginning of the 1990s), has made noticeable progress and become more effective in dealing with issues regarding women's rights in the different sectors: legislative, labour market, political participation and education. By the beginning of the 1990s, various new issues began to be discussed by the movement such as violence against women and particularly honour killing. The phenomenon of honour killing was the particular case study chosen for analysis in Chapter Seven of the thesis in order to sharpen our understanding and highlight the influence of the JWM on the legal reform process in Jordan. Through this case study I aimed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the set of social, legal, economic, radical religious beliefs and cultural values that have dominated the relation between the social agent and social structure.

This progress in women's rights in the different sectors could be seen as a result of different factors. First, the 1989 political decision to enhance the level of liberation and democracy in the country, which came as a response to the popular riot in Ma'an (South of Jordan) over price increases following a fall in oil revenues in the same year. This decision was reflected in the governmental decision to repeal martial law, which banned political parties, and restricted the rights of citizens to assemble for political meetings and peaceful demonstrations. Second, the 1991 Gulf war on Iraq had an indirect influence by promoting democracy and a political change in the Arab world in general. Third, the issuance of the 1991 Jordanian National Charter which emphasized the importance of improving women's role in Jordan. Fourth, the preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing, was an important motivator for Jordan to become more active in the field of women's rights. All this supports the POST argument that the structure of opportunities is reasonably open when the state is aware and receptive to its people's needs, and when chances for diverse groups to exercise pressure to pass on their demands are increased (Eisinger, 1973).
All these factors facilitated the establishment of an improved feminist agenda and the development of more women's movement organisations. For example, by the beginning of the year 1992 a new women's organization under the name of the Jordanian National Committee for Women Affairs (JNCW) was established.

However, this research has found that, by the beginning of this liberal era the state had adopted a new strategy in dealing with what can be described as the independent women's movement. This new strategy aimed to contain the movement under its umbrella and to push it towards state feminism. As evidence for this claim, the thesis explained the procedures through which the state tried to demolish any independent feminist activity in 1981. This was first, by deciding to dissolve the 1974 Jordanian Women's Union and replacing it with a new governmental women's federation. Second, the state attempt to control was evident when the Jordanian National Committee for Women's Affairs (JNCW) was established through Prime Ministerial decision, as a semi-governmental commission to be the national machinery to prepare periodic reports on Jordan's compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and to work as a coordinator between the different women's movement organisations in the country.

**Resources and Obstacles: Dialectic of Control**

The thesis has pointed out that, while the JWM as a social change agent has facilitators that have provided it with resources; it is also facing a number of obstacles that affect its performance. This finding can be interpreted through Giddens' (1984) dialectical of control between a social agent represented here by the JWM and the social structure in which it seeks change. In the context of the dialectic of control we can understand that there are no 'completely powerful or powerless'. There are always at least some resources with the weak faction
which will undoubtedly support him/ her to resist inferiority and subordination. Thus between the weak and strong there is always a dialectical relationship. That is, a relationship between facilitators and obstacles. Facilitators are the origin of resources which the inferior social agent can use to generate enough power to enforce change in his/her circumstances. Whereas, obstacles are the hindrances that stand in the way of the change sought by the social agent.

As explained earlier, there is no question that the JWM has been able to take great advantage of political openings (i.e. in 1954, 1974 and the 1990s up to the present). There were multiple facilitators which supported the development of the movement. Those facilitators or factors can be divided into two main categories, external and internal. At the international level, the United Nations’ Decade for Women played a critical role, enhancing the debate around women’s issues in Jordan. Moreover, the commitment of Jordan towards the implementation of a number of human rights and women’s rights international conventions, and the international financial support for any developing country to enhance the level of human rights in it, played a major role in facilitating the will of empowering women in the country. Furthermore, the study findings point to the important relationship between other Arab women’s movements and the JWM. Both the Palestinian and Egyptian women’s movement were a major resource in the emergence and development of JWM organisations and discourses.

The analysis reveals that there was a relationship between the extent of state interest in the women’s cause, which in fact can be explained by external sponsors, and the concern for women’s empowerment from foreign aid agencies. Sponsors’ financial grants often have special targets: potential recipients must show some appearance of interest if they hope to continue to receive financing. On the national level, political decisions (especially the King’s as the main power holder in a monarchical system) and the leadership of major women’s movements, specifically by elites, was a main resource that
helped the JWM to gain credibility, build confidence and construct a strong public opinion base to support lobbying efforts.

In fact, several developments which were registered in women's favour can be attributed to Royal effort. For instance, during the Arab Women's Summit held in Amman during November 2002, the Jordanian Queen (Rania Al Abdullah) announced significant reforms on the laws concerning nationality. According to these reforms with the Council of Ministers announcing, Jordanian women have the right to grant Jordanian nationality to the children of Jordanian mothers married to non-Jordanian foreign nationals. Moreover, on December 14, 2001, King Abdullah II approved an amendment to the law granting Jordanian women the right to divorce their husbands (as long as they abandon any claims for financial compensation). In addition, he approved a new election law, which gives a special quota for women in parliament. These empowerment reforms are considered the most significant in Jordanian women's history and are believed to prepare the ground for an active female involvement in the Jordanian political scene (Inter: BBC. News).

On the other hand, the research data revealed that there are two main categories of obstacles facing the JWM (see diagram 6.1 in Chapter Six). The first is obstacles internal to patriarchy, which I have divided into two main subcategories, structural obstacles and attitudinal obstacles. The structural obstacles are the following: institutional (this consists of a patriarchal legislature), patriarchal governmental institutions, and the patriarchal judicial system. Political obstacles are the second level of structural obstacles. Political obstacles include external politics (foreign occupation in particular), and internal politics including political parties, and the process of democratization. Attitudinal obstacles consist of a belief in the westernization of the movement's mentality, and the existence of antifeminist agents. This is related to fundamentalism and conservatism in dealing with gender issues. The second category of obstacles is related to the women's movement itself: lack of funding,
individualism and lack of coordination between women’s organizations, lack of voluntary work sense, and insufficient grass rooting were all found to be obstacles internal to the structure of the movement.

Evaluation

The JWM has in the past and is still intensifying its efforts to bridge gender differences and advance the status of women. Achieving equality of rights, eliminating violence and discrimination, and promoting women’s full participation in politics, education and labour force are priority objectives for the movement.

Great efforts are being undertaken to amend and abolish laws that back all forms of discrimination against women. The JWM is lobbying to amend discriminatory legislation in general, and particularly Penal law, Citizenship law, Family law (Personal Status Law), Electorate law, and Labour law. It has launched legal campaigns to raise women’s awareness of their legal rights and to encourage them to raise these rights. It has effectively utilized state initiatives to improve the status of women in Jordan, and recognised that the state can play an important role in promoting gender equality. The JWM deemed it essential to be a ‘grass roots’ movement by establishing branches of the main women’s unions in the different cities all over the country, which in their turn started to work with women in these rural areas of the country. It initiated a wide range of vocational training and micro-loans for projects aiming to assist women (especially in poor and rural areas) to become economically independent. Leadership training programs are another effort by the movement to raise women’s political participation and decision-making.
Consequently, Jordanian society is gradually and increasingly changing. It is moving towards a higher degree of women’s involvement in different aspects of social life by providing opportunities for higher education and the socio-political and economic participation of women.

However, according to the research findings, many challenges remain. Existing traditions, tribalism, family, economy, and the educational curriculum, plus women’s reproductive role, as substructures of patriarchy inhibit women from improving their levels of participation on the different levels. There seems still to be a need to provide some reassurance in terms of cultural relationships so that women’s education, political participation and employment are not seen as deviance from the realisation and fulfilment of housewifery and motherhood for women. Women in the Arab world are still predominantly secondary to men even though in many Arab countries they have equal citizen’s rights. Although the indicators show considerable improvements in women’s educational levels and health conditions, these changes have not been fully translated into economic and public participation.

In the Arab world family occupies a position of central importance and constitutes the most influential channel for transmitting social and religious values. The relations within the family are generally hierarchal and patriarchal. Certainly, patriarchy contradicts participation of women at all levels, as it does not permit them to make decisions that fit their needs and interests. Within this frame the Arab woman comes to learn her roles as a housewife and child carer. From her early years, a girl within the Arab family learns that her role is within the boundaries of the ‘private life’, while a boy explores his role within the ‘public’ sphere. Girls are expected to behave in a particular manner that honours their family, obeys their male relatives, and respects social norms. Although there are an increasing number of girls enrolled in educational systems, they are not necessarily encouraged to pursue a career, which in its turn means that women would have fewer opportunities to develop their access to resources,
thereby decreasing their capability to compete in the political arena. In addition, the extended family (tribe) also plays a key role in political participation as within the current structure of patriarchal family formation, women have little chance to gain the clan/tribe’s approval for running for public office.

Moreover, social values and traditions are passed on to generations through different means. While family and tribe are major social cells in which patriarchal values are generated, other institutions such as the educational system have an equally active role in shaping patriarchal social values and norms. Furthermore, women tend to participate in educational and economic sectors that are closely connected to their reproductive roles. Indeed this enhances the traditional gender roles.

This division of labour and secondary status is further enhanced within the educational system. In addition to the teaching methods that continue to endorse different behaviours for girls and boys, the school curricula continue to portray women in their reproductive role. Men on the other hand, are represented as leaders, breadwinners and rational decision makers.

Women are ‘biologically’ dominated in Jordan, as their role in the ‘reproduction’ process is still a key factor for male domination. Participation in politics requires time, money and skills. Unfortunately the gendered structure of Arab society deprives women of this. Women tend to spend more time in activities related to their ascribed reproductive roles than in discussing politics.

In essence, one can say that the patriarchal social structure is the context within which gender discrimination and stereotyping limit the full empowerment and participation of women. Nonetheless, the JWM lobbies to establish a fair and democratic system in which women are no longer subordinated. Obviously, lack of finance, incentive to participate in voluntary work, insufficient grass rooting and lack of coordination and networking between women’s movement
organisations are major barriers facing the efficiency of JWM. Therefore, the JWM, in order to be a comprehensive movement, should work to build grassroots women's movements where they do not yet exist. They have to be catalysts in creating spaces for poor and rural women to gather, mobilise, and organise. The second critical role the JWM has to play is to provide sufficient support to women's grassroots organizations, linking them together and helping transform them into a movement. Moreover, as control over resources has a key influence on the capabilities of women's movement to enhance and empower women in Jordan, the JWM should work more effectively to establish better relations with both government and UN agencies. This will increase the adoption of gender sensitive policies and better funds for training and empowerment programmes. However, it is critically important that they (government and UN) do not impose agendas, but instead provide information, analysis, alternative viewpoints, and support. In addition, there is an urgent need to strengthen coordination efforts among different women's movement organisations. True coordination will only exist if the different forces in the JWM decide to pass over any previous conflicts and work together to achieve their shared goal, which is the empowerment of Jordanian women.

**Directions for Future Research**

This thesis has shown that in spite of all the obstructions the JWM has been an effective social agent that was able to enhance Jordanian women's station as a part of third world countries. It is hoped that this research on the JWM will form the basis of future research in third world women's movements and that the use of RMT and POST within the general framework of Giddens’ structuration theory, will be taken into account in the conception of more inclusive theories of social movements in third world.
Appendix (A)

‘MAP OF JORDAN’
Appendix (B)

'Semi-Structured Interviews Questions'

Semi-Structured Interviews  
(Interviews Guide)

A. Background information

Each respondent was asked to give a brief about his career history. This question aimed to investigate the professional life of each respondent and their exact relation and status in the movement. Moreover, this question helped to examine the existence of a social networking of research participants (the extent to which there might be an interaction between the women's movement and other human rights organizations in Jordan).

B. Questions to explore and explain the factors behind Jordanian women's social inferiority in general and legally in particular

1. To what extent do you think that Jordanian society is a patriarchal society? Why?

2. In your personal point of view, what are the factors that affect women’s status in Jordan? In what way?  
(I kept in mind that each of the following points should be covered):
3. To what extent do you see discriminatory legislation in Jordan as a ‘cause’ that helped to form and ensure the inferior status of women in Jordan?

4. To what extent do you see these legislations as the ‘consequence’ of the social inferior status of women?

C. Questions to explore the role of the Jordanian women’s movement, as a ‘collective action movement’, in the elimination of legal discrimination against Jordanian Women. In other words, to what extent this movement can be considered as an effective “collective action” that has the power to lobby the Jordanian government in order to create positive changes in Jordanian women’s legal status

1. What social forces in Jordan have the power and the common interest to end the second-class status of Jordanian women?
2. What is the ‘Jordanian Women’s Movement’, and how would you define it?

3. When and how was the Jordanian women’s movement started and why?

4. What factors, conditions and stages did this movement go through?
(I will keep in my mind the importance of covering the early stages of the Jordanian women’s movement life (patriotic, caring, and charitable).

5. How do you define the concept ‘feminist’? And to what extent do you consider the recent Jordanian women’s movement as a ‘feminist’ one?

6. What has been the movement’s contribution in creating changes and empowering Jordanian women?

7. How do you explain the contradiction in the high contribution of Jordanian women in the field of education, and on the other hand the low contribution of women in the other fields such as political participation and the labour market?

8. To what extent can we say that the Jordanian women’s movement is a ‘revolutionary’ movement, and to what extent can we say it is a ‘reformative’ one?

9. To what extent was this movement been able to create changes in the social structure of Jordan?
D. Questions to explore the influence of the international lobby on Jordan as a developing country to empower and develop the human rights status in general and for women in particular

1. What role has been played by the Jordanian women's movement in order to create changes in discriminatory legislations?

2. Do you think that international human rights organizations in Jordan have played a role in empowering Jordanian women? How?

3. To what extent have changes in discriminatory legislations in Jordan been due to efforts of the women's movement and to what extent due to international lobby on the different countries in general and the developing countries in particular to improve human rights status (pressure on the Jordanian state)?

4. Does Jordan receive any subsidies from the international human rights organisations in order to improve the standards of human rights in Jordan?

5. To what extent do you think that the Jordanian women's movement has benefited from international efforts to improve women's status all over the world in general and in Jordan in particular?

6. Jordan has ratified a number of international conventions concerning women's rights; such as CEDAW in the year 1993. Where and how do you rank Jordan in the field of the fulfilment of its obligations?
E. Questions to explore the extent to which creating positive changes in Jordanian women’s legal status might affect the status of women in the social structure as a whole

1. How do you view the issue of changing discriminatory legislation against women in Jordan? In other words, do you think changing these legislations will directly be combined with changes in the social attitudes towards women in society? (Here I will ask about the Jordanian Panel Law and in particular the phenomenon of honour crimes, and I will ask about the Election Law and in particular the new quota system for women).

2. To what extent could you consider legislation as an ‘ideology’ that affects social attitudes toward the women’s cause?

3. What obstacles has the Jordanian women’s movement faced in its efforts to change legislation? And what do you think about its future?

4. Are you satisfied with the results of the work done by the movement up to now?

Note: By the end of each interview, informants’ contributions were appreciated, and they were asked if they had any further comments or questions on the issue under study.
Appendix (C)

'TABLE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Name of Participant</th>
<th>Position of Participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Royal Highness Princess Basma</td>
<td>Head of a number of women’s movement organisations in Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Senator Layla Sharaf</td>
<td>Member of the Senate House in the Jordanian parliament, one of the first female ministers in Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Senator Na’ela Al-Rashdan</td>
<td>An ex member of the ‘National Consultative Council’, an ex member of the Senate House in the Jordanian parliament, a lawyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Asma Khader</td>
<td>Ex president of the Jordanian Women’s Union, a lawyer, and a senior in a number of women’s institutions in Jordan (Coordinator of Sisterhood Is Global Institute/Jordan), appointed as a minister (after the course of field research)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Emily Besharat</td>
<td>The founder of the first Jordanian Women’s Union (1954)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Salwa Zayadeen</td>
<td>A major figure in the Jordanian women’s movement as one of the founders, and a major witness on the movement history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Emily Nafa’</td>
<td>Head of Arab Women’s Society, A well known woman activist in Jordan, a witness on the movement history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ojinee Hadad</td>
<td>A member of the Jordanian Women’s Union who witnessed the early history of the Jordanian Women’s Movement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Anas Al-Saket</td>
<td>Executive Director of the General Federation of Jordanian Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Amneh Zu’bi</td>
<td>President of the Jordanian Women’s Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mai Abul Samen</td>
<td>Secretary General of the Jordan National Forum for women and a member of the Jordanian Senate House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Amal Al-Sabbagh</td>
<td>The General Secretary of the National Committee for Jordanian Women’s Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Noha Al-Ma’yta</td>
<td>An ex president of the General Federation ofJordanian Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name and Position</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Jordanian Women, an ex member in the Jordanian Parliament, and a candidate in the 2003 parliamentary elections in Jordan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The Director of the Human Forum for Women’s Rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Director of the Queen Zein Al-Sharaf Institute for Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Vice- president of the Jordanian Women’s Union</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Lawyer, human rights activist, a member of the legal committee in the General Committee for Jordanian Women NCJW, and an establisher of the legal consultancy office in the Business and Professional Women’s forum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>The Vice- president of regional office for UNIFEM in Jordan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>The Women’s Program Director/ Woman’s and Child’s Empowerment Projects- UNICEF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Feminist researcher, who is interested in the Jordanian women’s cause, a member of the Islamic party, ex president of Madaba branch of the General Federation of Jordanian Women, a member of the National Committee for Jordanian Women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Director of the Balqa (Salt) branch of the General Federation of Jordanian Women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>President and members of the Jerash branch of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (interviewed as a group)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>President and members of the Karak branch of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (interviewed as a group)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Head of the Mafraq branch of the General Federation of Jordanian Women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>A member of the Karak branch of the General Federation of Jordanian Women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>A member of the National Committee for Jordanian Women’s Affairs, and a researcher in the women’s movement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>A member of the Jordanian Women’s Union</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Writer interested in the women’s cause</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Vice President of the Jordanian National Centre for Human Rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Head of the Jordanian Society for Human Rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>A lawyer in the Jordanian National Centre for Human Rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix (D)

'Some characteristics of Qualitative and Quantitative research approaches (adapted from Bogdan and Biklen, 1992: 50-52)'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Qualitative</th>
<th>Quantitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Terms/ Phrases</strong></td>
<td>Ethnographic, fieldwork, soft data, symbolic interaction, inner perspective, naturalistic, descriptive</td>
<td>Experimental, hard data, outer perspective, empirical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key concepts</strong></td>
<td>Meaning, common sense understanding, bracketing, definition of situation, everyday life, understanding, process, negotiated order, for all practical purposes</td>
<td>Variable, operationalised, reliability, hypothesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theoretical affiliation</strong></td>
<td>Symbolic interaction, ethnomethodology, phenomenology</td>
<td>Structural functionalism, realism, positivism, behavioralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goals</strong></td>
<td>Develop sensitising concepts, describe multiple realities</td>
<td>Theory testing, establish the facts, statistical description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design</strong></td>
<td>Evolving, hunch as to how you might proceed</td>
<td>Structured, predetermined, formal, specific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data</strong></td>
<td>Descriptive, personal, documents, field- notes, photographs</td>
<td>Quantitative, quantifiable coding, counts, measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sample</strong></td>
<td>Small, non-representative</td>
<td>Large, stratified, control groups, precise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Techniques or Methods</strong></td>
<td>Open-ended interviewing,</td>
<td>Experiments, survey research,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instruments and Tools</strong></td>
<td>Reviewing various documents and artefacts, observation</td>
<td>Structured interviewing, structured observation, data sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data Analysis</strong></td>
<td>Tape recorder, transcriber, the researcher is often the only instrument</td>
<td>Inventories, questionnaires, indexes, computers, scales, test scores.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problems in using the approach</strong></td>
<td>Ongoing, models, themes, concepts (constant comparative method), inductive</td>
<td>Deductive, occurs at conclusion of data collection, statistical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time consuming, data reduction difficult, reliability, procedures not standardised, difficult studying large population</td>
<td>Controlling other variables, reification, obtrusiveness, validity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix (E)

‘The Jordanian Women’s Union Legal Declaration (in Arabic)’
BEST COPY NOTE

THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE STUCK IN SUCH A MANNER THAT FILMING IS IMPEDED
لدى محكمة العدل العليا الموقرة

المقدمات:

1- دمد معاً يعتمد على الاتحاد النسائي في الأردن ونهوضة من الاتحاد واستقلاله وضمنه التخصصية.

2- طيلة أبو شراً يعتمد على مجالة بسبب الاتحاد النسائي في الأردن وضمنه التخصصية.

3- على حكم المباحث يعتمد على زعامة فرع الاتحاد النسائي في الكرك وضمنه التخصصية.

4- فاطمة حيناء أبو سالم يعتمد على زعامة فرع الاتحاد النسائي النسائي في الأردن وضمنه التخصصية.

5- جوزي غمار يعتمد على زعامة فرع الاتحاد النسائي في الزرقاء وضمنه التخصصية.

6- هيئة كرادة يعتمد على زعامة فرع الاتحاد النسائي في مادبا وضمنه التخصصية.

 وكلهم المهنئون: ابراهم بكر وهما التل وتارق النابلسي / مسان.

السند: سه... زعامة الداخلية.

النار المطعون فيه والطلب الغاء: قرار زعامة الداخلية بحل الاتحاد النسائي في الأردن.

موجز الرسالة:

1- تأسس الاتحاد النسائي في الأردن في أواخر سنة / 1974 في مدينة مسان.
2- عمل الاتحاد منذ تأسيسه يجود ونشاط.
3- تفعيل نطاق الحضري والفرع.
4- تزايد عدد العضوات في نوصل العدد إلى حوالي ثلاثة آلاف خمسونات عضوة، واصبح

لم تغري: ابراهم والزرا، والسلط، ودما والكرك، والغبية.
4- بتاريخ 19/1/1981 فقد عين وزيرة التنمية والتخطيط الاجتماعي اجتماعاً نسائياً حضره
بتدور معها طرائق القيادة الإدارية للاتحاد والجمعيات النسائية في المملكة بالإضافة
إلى عدد آخر من النساء حيث أطلق الوزيرة من تأسيس الاتحاد النسائي الوطني
الأردنى، الذي يجب أن يستوجب كل المؤسسات والفعاليات النسائية في الأردن من خلال
الانتماء والتدريب عليه.

بعد الإعلان عن تأسيس الاتحاد النسائي الوطني الأردني بدأ الاتحاد النسائي في
الاردن يواجه المشاكل:

1- طلبت وزارة التنمية الى المستديمة الأولى حل الاتحاد وتحويل كل فرع من فروعه
إلى جمعية. بعد ذلك تقدم كل جمعية طلباً للانضمام الى الاتحاد النسائي الوطني
الأردنى، ووجه رفض هذا الطلب اتخذت وزارة التنمية تتعلق بفورت الاتجاهات
النسائية في الأردن مباشرة لتحويل هذه الفروع إلى جمعيات في النهار الفروع الأعضاء
وهي تلتزم بذلك اتحادها.

2- بعد ذلك وجه المستديمة في المستديمة الأولى التكتل رقم
1981/2/20 بتاريخ 26/3/1981 يشير فيها الى أن الهيئة تتبع الى
حل الاتحاد بعد شهر من تاريخ كتابة المذكر.

3- بتاريخ 19/1/1981 أجريت الجلسة الإدارية للاتحاد وربما تزوه معاً
المستديمة فيه حيث جرى بدء موضع الاتحاد واعرف المستديمة فيه في هذا الاجتماع
تم تقدير لنشاط الاتحاد وإمكانياته، والجنة الإدارية على تغيير اسم الاتحاد
الرابطة النسائية في الأردن لنكي لا يجري التعبير عن امّ الاتحاد مختصراً
على الاتحاد النسائي الوطني الأردني الذي أطلقت وزارة التنمية من تأسيسه.
1- أن القرار الطمعي في خلاف أحكام المادة (11) من قانون الجمعيات والهيئات الاجتماعية.

أسباب الطلب القانونية:

1- أن القرار الطعن فيه خالف أحكام المادة (11) من قانون الجمعيات والهيئات الاجتماعية.

الظروف:

أ- لا يوجد مناسبة لل認め من حيث الجمعيات والهيئات الاجتماعية.
ب- لا يوجد مناسبة لل認め من حيث الجمعيات والهيئات الاجتماعية.
ج- لا يوجد مناسبة الفصل بين الجمعيات والهيئات الاجتماعية.
د- لا يوجد مناسبة للأحكام الفصلية بين الجمعيات والهيئات الاجتماعية.
هـ- لا يوجد مناسبة بين الجمعيات والهيئات الاجتماعية.

المادة المذكورة:
1- أن القرار خالف للقانون بعد رصد الضرر والمكتب.
2- أن القرار مرفوع بجبوبة استخدام السلطة.
3- أن القرار مرفوع بجبوبة استخدام السلطة.

ج. 1/2/12
الطلب:

طلبت السيد بـ... (الإسم) تعيين جلسة لصعوبات الدعوى والتفاوض. 

القرار الذي صدر للسيدة بـ... (الإسم) ضد السيد... (الإسم) لأسباب كثيرة التي تتمثل دون الخلاف.

قرار الحل والتحقيق الحكم بإلغاء القرار المؤقت وال thuế القرار المعترف به مع الرسوم والغرامات والнемذجة المذكورة.

رجل المستندات.

التوقيع: ابراهيم بكر

المحكمة: (الإسم)
Appendix (F.1)

Total Fertility Rates in Jordan 1955-2000

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<tr>
<td>Total fertility rate (Average number of children)</td>
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<td>7.38</td>
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<td>8.00</td>
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Appendix (F.2)


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<th>Percent Change</th>
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<td>1996/1997</td>
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<td>1998/1999</td>
<td>21.4.8</td>
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</tr>
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## Appendix (F. 3)

Jordanian Students Enrolled in Higher Education Institutions Abroad
by Country and Degree, 1999/2000

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<td>140</td>
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<td>2984</td>
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<td>237</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>464</td>
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<td>125</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>230</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>967</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1922</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>627</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3628</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4574</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>1.461</td>
<td>1.739</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>18.738</td>
<td>381</td>
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</table>

### Activity Rates for Jordanian Population by Sex from Selected Surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Name</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Employment and Unemployment and Income Survey 1993 (first Round)</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>42.4</td>
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<td>11.6</td>
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<td>12.3</td>
<td>70.1</td>
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<td>11.9</td>
<td>68.6</td>
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<td>13.9</td>
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<td>12.2</td>
<td>66.6</td>
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<td>Employment and Unemployment Survey 2000 (Average of Four Rounds)</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>39.4</td>
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</table>

Source: Department of Statistics (2000, 43)
Appendix (F.5)
The Percentages of Females Participation in the Jordanian Political Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Party Name</th>
<th>Number of Constituent Body Members</th>
<th>Number of Constituent Female Members</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Jordanian National Gathering</td>
<td>167</td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Popular Unity</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jordanian Covenant</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Islamic Work Front</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Future</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Democratic Liberal</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jordanian Communist</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jordanian Arab Socialist</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Democratic People of Jordan</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liberal and Justice Party</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jordanian Democratic Socialist</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Consciousness Party</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Democratic People's Unity</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Freedom</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Islamic Democratic Arabic Movement</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>13.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Liberal Arabic Revival</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>%</td>
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</table>

Appendix (F.5)

The Percentages of Females Participation in the Jordanian Political Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Party Name</th>
<th>Number of Constituent Body Members</th>
<th>Number of Constituent Female Members</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Jordanian National Gathering</td>
<td>167</td>
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<td>17.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Popular Unity</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jordanian Covenant</td>
<td>205</td>
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<td>1.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Islamic Work Front</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.68%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Future</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Democratic Liberal</td>
<td>96</td>
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<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jordanian Communist</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jordanian Arab Socialist</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Democratic People of Jordan</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liberal and Justice Party</td>
<td>175</td>
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<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Jordanian Democratic Socialist</td>
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<td>1.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Consciousness Party</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>98</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Freedom</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
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<td>The Islamic Democratic Arabic Movement</td>
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<td>13.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Liberal Arabic Revival</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>%</td>
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