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The Intersectionality of Class and Gender

Women's Economic Activities in East and
West Amman

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Abstract

This research is based on a comparative study between East and West Amman women in terms of economic activity. Amman is a patriarchal society and this research explains the prevalent patriarchal structures that influence women's economic activities and experiences and how these patriarchal structures operate differently depending on class. This research adopts an intersectional approach to gender and class to provide us with a more comprehensive understanding of women's experiences in relation to economic activity. The study sheds light on the fact that class in Jordan is very much related to place of residence, and the differences between East and West Amman are very influential in determining women's experiences. It is meant to explore the views and attitudes towards women's economic activities, and the different views between East and West Amman, and between men and women. Moreover, this research explores the factors that influence women's economic activities and how these factors are different amongst women themselves. This research also identifies the strategies adopted by women to deal with patriarchy- resistance, negotiation and accommodation-and how those strategies differ depending on class. The data for this research was collected through interviews with 18 women, nine from East and nine from West Amman, economically active and inactive. The research also made use of 164 questionnaires completed by both men and women from East and West Amman. The questionnaire aimed to provide us with data showing class differences between East and West Amman, and was also used to provide us with the attitudes and views towards women's and men's economic activities.

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Introduction

This PhD thesis focuses on women's economic activity in Jordan, and is based on a comparison between women from East Amman and West Amman. The idea for this research developed over time, starting as a comparison of economic activities of Palestinian camp female refugees and Palestinian non-camp female refugees in Amman. The initial idea of the research was triggered during my undergraduate years in Jordan. I wanted to research Palestinian refugees in Jordan because I always felt that they are a forgotten community and we rarely hear about them in newspapers, on TV, and in the media. Additionally, during my four year stay in Amman, the capital of Jordan, for my undergraduate degree, I learned about differences between people and noticed how these differences become increasingly apparent during my daily interactions and observations. For example, I could see differences between peoples' lifestyles, behaviours and the way they dress.

I wanted to compare camp and non-camp based Palestinian refugees, because I noticed that there are differences between women in East and West Amman, and most of the camps are located in East Amman. It was obvious that the refugee issue still exists as a large number of Palestinians still live in refugee camps, where the living conditions are extremely bad. Palestinian refugees are marginalised in the media, and the experiences of women are often obscured. I also wanted to draw attention to women's differential experiences, based on certain factors such as class, education, marital status, and age, which affect their involvement in economic activities. Unfortunately, I did not succeed in studying the refugee community due to the fact that the state of Jordan does not allow any research on the Palestinian refugees living in camps to be carried out; how this became evident will be explained more fully in chapter three. For this reason the focus of the research changed from camp and non-camp based women refugees' economic activities, to women from East and West Amman's economic activities, and the differences between these. During my studies in Jordan, I noticed differences between people

from East and West Amman through my interactions with them. People from East Amman are more conservative than people in the west of the city. For example, the majority of women in East Amman wore the headscarf. When I drove in East Amman, I noticed that I was the only woman driving a car in that part of the city. Moreover, I noticed that people's economic situation in West Amman is better than in East Amman - people earn more money in West Amman and therefore their quality of life is better than that of people from the east side. The streets in West Amman are cleaner, and the houses more modern. This class division was also obvious between students at the University of Jordan. Through making acquaintances with people from my own and other Departments I started to notice that each Department is labelled according to students' life-style, clothing, or car model. For example, students of education, social sciences, Islamic law and humanities were labelled as 'low class', conservative, and 'backward'. On the other hand, people from the Business School, the Faculty of Arts and Design and Departments of Engineering and Medicine were labelled as 'high class', 'open', and 'immoral'. Moreover, the university campus was divided into 'squares', where people used to socialise in the breaks between lectures. The squares were mostly full of students with latest mobile models, wearing brand names, and designer clothing. However, the rest of the students used to spend their time either in their Departments or sitting on benches between Faculties and in squares. Students of humanities, social sciences and education mainly came from rural areas, East Amman, and refugee camps. Students studying other subjects came from wealthy families living in West Amman, or from other countries. This division between East and West triggered my curiosity to further investigate these differences. I went on to drive around the city of Amman trying to explore and learn more about the diversity of the city. As Khalifa and Krzysiek (2008: Para 2-3) write:

'In West Amman you may feel like you are in a glass palace. Fancy cars, villas with green gardens and swimming pools exist behind the inaccessible walls: everything is clean, calm,

perfect and untouchable. Populated mainly by managers, diplomats and private entrepreneurs, this part of the city represents the highest class of Jordanian society. A few kilometres east from of this kingdom of splendour, you enter a different world. Contrary to the Western side, in East Amman you can touch and feel almost everything. Poverty and misery, people on the street, children playing football. Here everything affects you, especially a smell. You can change a car, you can dress differently... Living in the West of Amman is a privilege' (Khalifa and Krzysiek, 2008: Para 2-3).

The focus of this research is women's economic activity in Amman; it explores why women seek work, or other income generating activities, and why upper and upper middle class urban women have more choices than lower middle class and working class urban women (Moghadam, 1993, El-Solh, 2003). Little has been done on women's economic activities in Jordan; this research is important because it fills a gap and develops our understanding of the factors affecting women's economic activities. It also looks at the different experiences of women from the East side of Amman and its West side. Furthermore, it examines the different economic activities that women engage in depending on their class, and considers other factors such as marital status, age and education. This research engages with the way in which social, cultural, economic divisions and place of residence within one city, like Amman, can determine a woman's life course. It also explores how patriarchal structures intersect with those of class, and the impact of this intersection on different women's experiences. This research investigates men's and women's attitudes and perspectives towards women's economic activities. It is important because it discusses how class divisions and class as a system have large effects on women's lives. By class divisions, I not only mean differences in terms of financial position, but also cultural class with respect to life styles, educational attainment, economic activities, and social status. Both aspects of class, economic and cultural, are under-researched in the Middle East, and culture is often taken to explain

women's experiences. However, culture is influenced by class, and the cultural aspect of class is very important to explain women's different experiences.

The contribution of this research also relates to the fact that although women in the Middle East might to some extent experience similar patriarchal gender structures, those structures intersect with class making women's experiences different. In addition, it also explores the way that cultural and patriarchal gender ideologies strongly affect the lives of women. This approach offers the chance to examine patriarchy, particularly focusing on its impact on the economic activities of women from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Therefore, unlike most research on women in the Middle East, I explore the differences between women in an attempt to avoid generalisations. Therefore, I do not look at women as a homogenous group, which helps us to understand the reasons for women's differential experiences. Each Middle Eastern country constitutes a unique case, and women in the Middle East, though sharing similar experiences of gender bias, are not a homogenous group. Therefore, one cannot view women, even those coming from the same country, as having the same experiences. Furthermore, it is important to explore the different experiences lived by women who share the same culture but at the same time do not share the same socio-economic situation, due to other variables such as ethnicity, gender and class (Moghadam, 1993).

There have been numerous discussions on globalisation and economic reform in the Middle East in terms of their effects on women's status. Those same arguments discuss patriarchy and its influence on women, but they fail to discuss and link factors - such as culture, class, patriarchy, and gender - that lead women to have differential positions (El-Solh, 2003, Moghadam, 1993, El-Kogali, 2002, Miles-Doan, 1992). Moreover, those same scholars conclude that there are differences between women and they are not a homogenous group, but they mostly fail to explain the reason behind such differences. Islamic feminists, on the other hand, always say that women are disadvantaged because of widespread misinterpretation

of Islamic verses and *hadith*¹, tending to discuss Middle Eastern women's subordination (Sonbol, 2003). Furthermore, such studies tend to mention that women coming from different socioeconomic backgrounds have different life experiences, but this Islamic feminist paradigm does not explain why or how these differences have been created in the first place. Unfortunately, many Islamic feminists studying the Middle East fail to notice the existence of people with other religions in the region, such as Christians and Baha'is. Islamic feminists, such as Leila Ahmad, Riffat Hassan, Fatima Mernissi, and Ziba Mir-Hosseini 'see modern liberal and egalitarian gender reformation of Islam as a requirement for the success of a broader societal and political reform' (Tohidi, 2003: 140). The focus of this approach on Islam, however, overlooks cultural and class based subordination of women.

Literature on women's economic activity in the Middle East does not explain why some women have been able to work, while others have not. Moreover, those studies fail to understand the differences in terms of economic activity between women of different classes, and that women from the same class also have different experiences. The unanswered question remains: why do women from different classes have differential experiences, if they allegedly share the same 'Arab' culture, and if they are from the beginning subject to the same patriarchal rules? The literature shows that there is space for research that explains the heterogeneity amongst women in the Middle East. There is a lack of research on women and work in the Middle East, and most studies on women and work do not adopt an intersectional approach to understanding women's experiences in relation to work. Therefore, my research is designed to adopt an intersectional approach that not only takes into consideration differences between women's experiences, but also accounts for differences between women's agency, and views women as constructors of their reality. This research will attempt to answer the following questions:

¹ The word *hadith* stands for documented sayings of the prophet.

- How do class and gender intersect to influence women's economic activities and life experiences?
- What are men's and women's views of women's economic activity? What factors influence these views?
- What factors affect women's economic activity and are these different for women in East and West Amman?
- What economic activities are women in East and West Amman involved in? How do these differ?

Thesis Organisation

This thesis is divided into seven main chapters. The first chapter of this thesis deals with the research context. It provides a historical background on the establishment of the state of Jordan after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, and traces political changes in Jordan. The chapter explains how Amman, the capital of Jordan, expanded because of the influx of Palestinian refugees following the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. This chapter also shows how the presence of Palestinians affected Jordan's stability, and provides a brief history of the 1970 civil war between the Palestinians and the state of Jordan. It demonstrates that the Palestinian presence influenced the economy in Jordan, in particular because most Palestinian refugees were highly educated, and many of them worked in the Gulf oil producing countries and sent remittances to their families in Jordan. It also explains how Jordan's dependence on remittances led to a recession, as a result of a decline in the demand for labour in oil producing countries following the Gulf war. This chapter also discusses women's labour force participation in Jordan, in relation to the country's economy. It demonstrates that during the oil boom women were encouraged to work outside their homes in Jordan because men were working abroad, while following the recession and the return of the workers previously working in the Gulf they were discouraged from this.

The second chapter positions this research within the existing literature on women's economic activity in the Middle East. It reviews the literature explaining women's position in the Middle East from both a macro-sociological and a micro-sociological approach. It demonstrates that scholars attempt to explain women's position from above and focus their analysis on the role of Islam and state in women's lives. It also includes discussions on the gender dimensions of globalisation, and shows that, from a micro-sociological approach, previous discussions focus on the Arab family unit. In this second chapter, I argue that women are agents and not passive victims of patriarchy, and that taking this approach is suitable because patriarchy as a social construct can be undermined, challenged, resisted, bargained with and accommodated to by women. It also discusses how the intersectional approach to women's economic activities provides a more comprehensive picture and explanation of women's situation. I argue that there are social categories, other than gender, which influence women's economic activities and life experiences, such as class, age, and 'race'. Since this thesis adopts an intersectional approach of class and gender to understand women's different experiences, the last section explains that my approach to class is informed by cultural and economic factors.

The third chapter discusses how the focus of the research changed due to the political sensitivity of the initial research topic, and shows how the research questions also changed accordingly. It explains how the initial research was political in nature, how in a police state, such as Jordan, conducting this type of research is complicated. The chapter looks at my positionality in the field, and discusses ethical and power issues presented during fieldwork with research participants, with the state of Jordan and during the analysis of the material collected in the field. In this chapter, I explain access points and sampling techniques used in this research, and discuss the use of interviews and questionnaires as tools to collect data with which

to answer my research questions. In addition to this, I discuss the data analysis process and the limitations of this research.

Chapter four is based on data collected from the questionnaires and interviews, focusing on attitudes and views towards men's and women's work. It shows that people view men's economic activity as more important than women's, and explains the reasons behind these views and attitudes. It sheds light on the way in which patriarchal structures influence these views, and how these views are classed and gendered. It also highlights the factors which make it hard for women to engage in income generating activities, and explains how the roles assigned to both genders influence women's involvement in income generating activities. The chapter also shows that there are differences between women from East and West Amman experiences, in relation to barriers to their economic activity. It also sheds light on the intersectionality of gender and class, which influences what is considered to be 'suitable' economic activity and what is not. Furthermore, it demonstrates that in some cases women's economic activities become important and necessary as a result of factors such as financial need, economic aspects of class, and marital status. Finally, it shows that what makes women's economic activities important differs between East and West Amman.

Chapter five talks about women's experiences in terms of education and marriage, also considering the relevance of social control. This chapter suggests that women's economic activity and/or inactivity is influenced by educational attainments, marriage, and social control over women's lives. It shows that educational attainments between women in East and West Amman differ because of cultural and economic class. It illustrates that gender plays a major role in determining women's access to higher education, especially for women from East Amman. It also explains that education influences women's economic activities, as women with higher education are more likely to be employed full-time or engaged in regular economic activities.

Chapter five also demonstrates that marriage is a priority for East and West Amman women; however, the expectations for the timing of marriage differ between women from opposite sides of the city. The second section on marriage reviews the different approaches to marriage, and explains the conduct of forced and arranged marriages, showing that the approach to marriage is different in East and West Amman. Furthermore, this chapter sheds light on the changes in women's lives after marriage, how their role becomes different, and shows how class is a major determinant of the marriage experience itself. In addition to education and marriage, women are placed under social control, which also influences their economic activities. The final section focuses on patriarchal gender ideologies present which make it hard for women to engage in income generating activities, and which influence their freedom of movement and their decisions. Finally, the chapter explains that women's agency plays a major role in shaping their life experiences in relation to marriage, education and social control, and that their agency differs according to class.

Chapter six explores the different economic activities engaged in by women from East and West Amman, and explores the factors that make some women economically active, and others not. It demonstrates that household income is a major determinant of women's economic activities. This shows household income, situation of the head of the household, and number of members in the household determines whether a woman needs or wants to work or not. This chapter also discusses how some working women believe that their economic activities, particularly their financial contribution to their household, provide them with more power; however, the chapter also reveals that what women see as power is in fact space to negotiate structures of patriarchy. The final section of this chapter is dedicated to giving a voice to women's hopes and dreams. It shows that the hopes and dreams of women differ depending on their cultural and economic class, as well as their marital status. This clearly demonstrates that women's experiences, hopes

and dreams are different, and also sheds light on the impact of class and gender structures on women's lives.

The final chapter discusses and reflects on the preceding chapters of the thesis. It explains that the research questions were answered through the use of an intersectional approach to class and gender, as well as helping us to better understand women's different experiences, and the way in which social categories such as class, gender, marital status and sexuality intersect to create different life experiences for women. Finally, the chapter discusses the contribution of this research, and considers avenues for further research that could complement the findings presented within this thesis.

Chapter One: Contextualisation

Introduction

With my observation of the differences between camp refugees living in East Amman, and non-camp refugees living in West Amman, my interest grew and I wanted to understand why both communities are so different. With the realisation that I cannot legally conduct research on Palestinian refugees in Jordan, the focus of this study shifted from the refugee community to the obvious geographical, socioeconomic and cultural divisions within Amman, the capital of Jordan. For that reason, this chapter traces the development and changes which have taken place in Jordan from the beginning of the country's establishment until today. Tracing the history of Jordan provides us with broader knowledge about the socioeconomic situation of Amman, and how the city itself expanded and became divided. As Jordan has been through many socioeconomic and political changes, some of which were intensified by the flow of Palestinian refugees into the country, it is important to explain those changes. In particular, the Jordanian economy was affected by the influx of refugees, the oil boom (1970s) and the recession phase (1980s). Those changes not only influenced the Jordanian economy, but also influenced women's position in the labour force and their access to employment opportunities and economic activities. For example, during the oil boom - a time when many Jordanian men were working in the Gulf region - women were encouraged to work outside the home, while later after the economic recession they were discouraged from seeking employment outside the household.

As this research is based on a comparative study of women's economic activities in East and West Amman it is crucially important to show women's position in the labour force and their economic participation. Due to the lack of separate statistical data on East and West Amman this chapter provides a comparison between men and women's labour force participation, and the

distribution of industries in Jordan generally and in Amman specifically. This comparison will show how women are underrepresented in the labour force and are excluded from certain occupations and industries.

Generally, women's participation in the labour force in the Arab region is low, as it averages 21 percent compared with around 40 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa (El-Solh, 2003). 'Although labour force participation of women has been rising, the increase is not as fast as one would expect... In fact the participation rate for MENA² women is the lowest for any region' (Wahba, 2003: 26). El-Kogali (2002) has argued that women are three times more likely to be unemployed than men in the Arab Middle East. Thus, women usually stay unemployed for longer than men. Jordan, generally, has the lowest rates of women's labour force participation compared to other Arab countries. Although Jordan has been a regional pioneer by engaging in economic liberalisation, which has led to economic growth and an expansion of its financial market (Awamleh, 2002, Sonbol, 2003), the country's rate of female economic participation is less than 12 percent (Guégnard et al., 2005).

To be able to understand labour force participation and the economic activities of Jordanian women it is important to look at Jordan's economic development and the stages it went through in this. Therefore, an understanding of Jordan's economy, economic development and economic liberalisation, in addition to its political changes, will contextualise the research in terms of the cultural and economic class divisions that exist within Amman, and which lead to women having different experiences of economic activity. Moreover, this chapter also shows that class not only affects peoples' experiences in relation to economic activity but also that gender plays a detrimental role in shaping women's experiences.

² The Middle East and North Africa

1.1 Jordan: Amman Expansion

After the fall of the Ottoman Empire by the end of the First World War in 1918, the British Mandate of Palestine was established as stipulated in the Sykes-Picot agreement³ (see Figure 1.1 for map). The British Mandate of Palestine included Palestine, which now constitutes Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in addition to Transjordan, which is now the Hashemite⁴ Kingdom of Jordan. So, both Palestine and Transjordan were under British mandate of Palestine, which included the east and the west sides of the Jordan River. However, Transjordan was under the nominal rule of King Abdullah I, who remained the ruling Emir from 1921-1946; and the territories were supervised by the British, in terms of foreign affairs and finance. In 1921 Abdullah I chose Amman, located in the North West side of the country, to be the centre of the Emirate of Transjordan's political activities. At that time, Jordan had three groups of inhabitants: nomadic Bedouins, villagers and people who were living in urban areas in Jordan, including pre-war Palestinian merchants. It has been estimated that in the 1920s the population of Jordan did not total more than 400,000 (Salibi, 1998). At the same time, Amman's inhabitants were estimated to number around 30,000. Amman's first inhabitants were the Circassians, who migrated to Jordan in the 1870s and resided in Amman. However, this structure has changed after the influx of Palestinian refugees.

In 1946, Abdullah I established the Kingdom of Transjordan and proclaimed himself as the King of Transjordan until 1949. Following the 1948 Arab-Israeli war in the former area of Palestine Amman became the capital of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, when King Abdullah I also became king of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and Jordan attained full-independence from the British. Amman at that time

³ The Sykes-Picot Agreement took place secretly in 1916 between France, Great Britain and Russia. The agreement was based on controlling and dividing the Arab states between them, after the expected fall of the Ottoman Empire.

⁴ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan derives its name from the Hashemite family, the rulers of the kingdom who originate from the Hejaz region, in Saudi Arabia.

was considered a small city as it was not highly populated. However, it started to grow when Palestinian refugees began to arrive and concentrate in Amman. The 1948 Arab-Israeli war, known as *AlNakba* in Arabic (meaning 'The Disaster'), forced approximately 750,000 Palestinian individuals to leave their houses, land and property and find refuge in other countries, or other areas in former Palestine (Abu Murad, 2004, Khalidi, 2005, UNHCR, 2000). Ever since then, these Palestinian refugees have been struggling to attain their right to return, as political compromises and Israel's prevention of their return have so far deprived them from having their demands realised (Akram, 2002, UNHCR, 2000, Ehrlich, 2004). Those 750,000 individuals have been hosted by neighbouring countries, such as Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Egypt, as well as neighbouring areas in Palestine itself, like the West Bank and Gaza strip (Khawaja, 2003).



Figure 1.1: Map of the Sykes-Picot agreement

The United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees [UNRWA], established in 1949 by the UN General Assembly, has been the sole relief

and human development agency providing Palestinian refugees with basic necessities such as education, healthcare, social services and emergency aid in the neighbouring Gaza Strip, West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab republic. The UNRWA's first response to Palestinian refugee flows was to provide them with temporary tents, which due to their prolonged diaspora later had to be replaced with more permanent shelters that eventually become permanent refugee camps. However, the flow of Palestinian refugees did not stop in 1948 - on the contrary, more refugees subsequently fled to neighbouring countries, as around 300,000 Palestinians were displaced in 1967 because of the Arab-Israeli war (Shiblak, 1996).

The number of Palestinian refugees increased from 914,000 in 1950 to 3.8 million refugees in 2001, and according to the UNRWA exceeded 4.3 million in 2006 (UNRWA, 2003, UNRWA, 2006). Jordan⁵ has the largest number of UNRWA registered Palestinian refugees; it contained 1,930,703 registered refugees in June 2008, equalling 42% of the total registered Palestinian refugees. As I have previously mentioned, the UNRWA originally provided Palestinian refugees with shelters, which later became permanent refugee camps. In Jordan there are 10 refugee camps, in: Talbieh, Zarqa, Marka, Souf, Jarash, Jabal Al-Hussein, Baqaa', Amman new camp "Al-Wihdat", Husn Martyr Azmi Al-Mufti, and Irbid (see Figure 1.2 for a map of refugee camps in Jordan). The largest Palestinian refugee camps are located in Amman.

⁵ Jordan's population in 2010 was estimated at 6,407,085

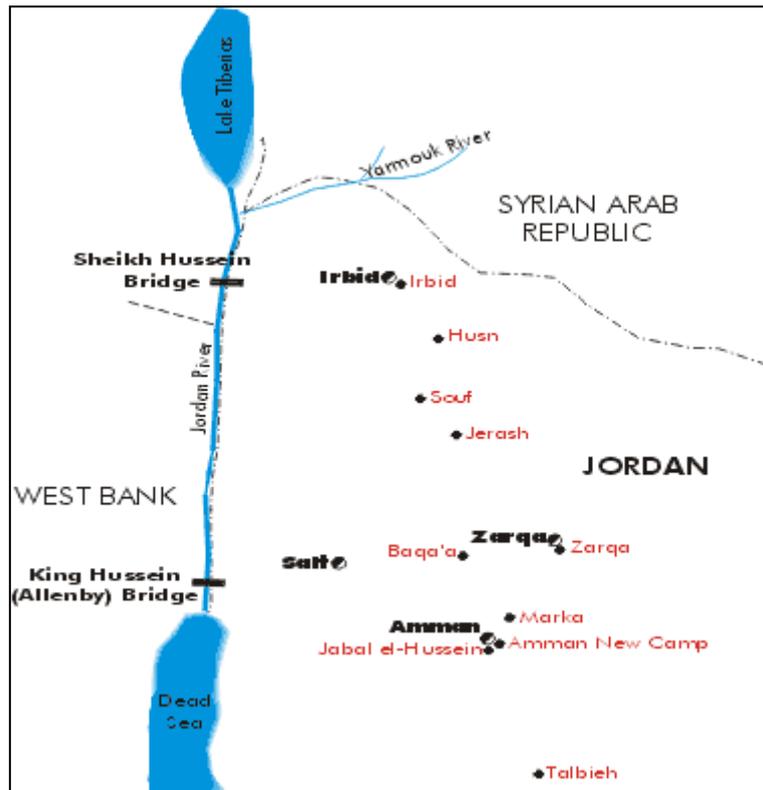


Figure (1.2) Map of Refugee Camps in Jordan

Following this, in 1991 a third wave of mass movement to Jordan occurred following the Gulf War. Enormous numbers of Palestinians, and Jordanians, who worked in the Gulf returned to Jordan, and were mostly forced into refugee camps. Additionally, the first Gulf War also carried a wave of Iraqi refugees into Jordan. Most recently, after 2003, following the so called war of liberation in Iraq, Iraqis started fleeing to neighbouring countries; Jordan hosts a large number of Iraqis, some of whom are registered as refugees while others are illegal immigrants without official residence permits. Some estimate the number of registered Iraqis as being 500,000, while others say that there are now around one million Iraqis in Jordan (Fafu, 2007). Aside from the refugee flows which have increased Amman's population, South Asian domestic workers and Egyptians also come in large numbers to Jordan annually. So, one may say that since the establishment of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and until today, Amman has expanded continually.

1.2 Jordan and the Palestinians: Relations and Tensions

Amman is now the largest city in Jordan, containing the highest proportion of Jordan's population. There are 2,216,000 nationals in Amman; 1,139,400 men and 1,076,600 women (DOS, 2008)⁶. Many of those nationals are Jordanians of Palestinian origin, as all of the refugees in Jordan were granted citizenship. UNRWA figures say that there are 1,930,703 registered Palestinian refugees in Jordan, although the majority of Palestinian refugees live in Amman. This means that around 87 percent of Amman's population are registered refugees, not including those who gave up their refugee status, and who are unregistered. Furthermore, Amman contains a large proportion of Iraqi refugees who fled Iraq in the first Gulf War in 1991 and after the 'War of Liberation' in 2003.

During the British Mandate of Palestine, Palestine and Transjordan were both governed by Britain, and Transjordan constituted 76 percent of the total land (see Figure 1.3 for a map of the British Mandate of Palestine and Transjordan). Under the British Mandate of Palestine many Jewish refugees sought refuge on the land of Palestine, leading to tensions between Arab and the Jewish people in the region as the Jewish refugees started claiming homeland on Palestinian land. Following those claims the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution, which recommended the termination of the British mandate and the division of the country into two states: one Arab and one Jewish. Therefore, on May 14 1948, the state of Israel announced its establishment, one day prior to the end of the British Mandate (see Figure 1.4 for a map showing the partitioning of Palestine). Subsequently, King Abdullah I annexed what is known now as the West Bank and East Jerusalem to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, including all Palestinians living in the West Bank and Transjordanians.

⁶ Department of statistics

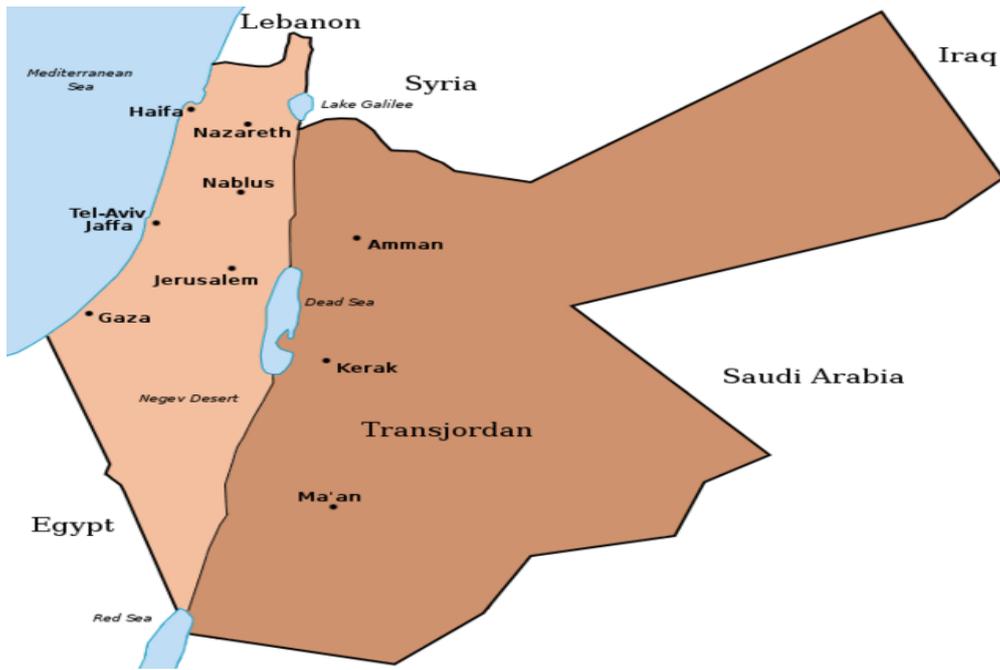


Figure 1.3: British Mandate of Palestine and Transjordan (1920-1948)



Figure 1.4: UN Partition Plan (1947)

The annexation came as a reaction to the establishment of a General Palestine Government, as King Abdullah I wanted to create one entity which included the West and the East Banks of the Jordan river, as one Jordanian country and nation. In

1950, 'the Jordanian Prime Minister declared... that "on the occasion of the lifting of barriers between the East and the West Banks of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, there is no longer a reason to consider the country [al-bilad] located in the West Bank a foreign country... the two countries located in said two Banks are considered one unity...'" (Massad, 2001: 230). Consequently, the word Palestine was erased from a postal ordinance and replaced with the West Bank (See Figure 1.5 and Figure 1.6 for Annexation Maps which demonstrate the loss of Palestinian land after the establishment of the state of Israel).



Figure 1.5: Map demonstrating the annexation of the West Bank to Jordan (1950)

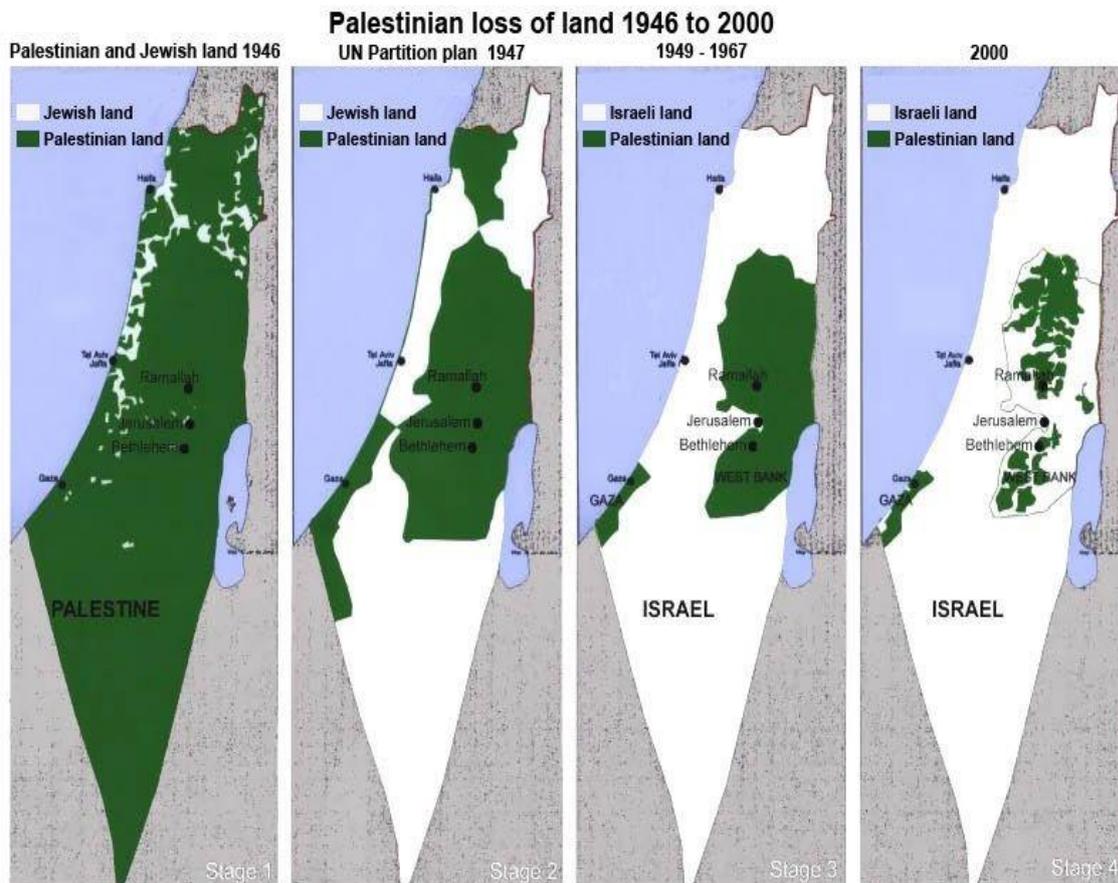


Figure 1.6: Palestinian Loss of Land (1946-2000)

The annexation changed the demography of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan drastically, as 360,000 refugees fled to central Palestine, renamed as the West Bank, and 110,000 fled to the East Bank. The original population of central Palestine and Transjordan had been estimated at 425,000, and 375,000 respectively. Jordan had expanded in a very short time, after the annexation, to a country with 1,270,000 people - an increase of 300 percent of its original population.

As King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, in July 1951 Abdullah visited the West Bank with his grandson Hussein, as part of his regular visits. Their visit started first with Ramallah, then Nablus, and they dedicated part of their visit to Friday prayer in the Al-Aqsa Mosque in the Old City of Jerusalem. On Friday July 20 1951, during his visit to Al-Aqsa Mosque, Abdullah I was shot in the head (Satloff,

1994), by a young Palestinian called Mustafa Ashshu, who was also shot immediately by a sergeant of the royal guards (Massad, 2001).

Immediately following the death of Abdullah I, the Jordanian army in the West Bank started shooting at people randomly in the Old City of Jerusalem, killing almost 20 and wounding 100 others (Massad, 2001, Satloff, 1994). The offensive then continued as the army started beating people and destroying their properties in Jerusalem. Many Palestinians were taken for investigations and incarcerated, and other offensives were carried out in refugee camps in Jordan where three refugees were killed (Massad, 2001).

Succeeding his father, Talal bin Abdullah became the second King of Jordan. Although his reign did not last long, Talal created a liberal constitution for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and made the government and the ministers responsible to the Jordanian parliament. In 1952, King Talal was sent off to a sanatorium and prevented from carrying on his work. However, at that time it was unclear whether he was sent for medical purposes, or because he was not a British ally (Halliday, 2000).

After King Talal's reign, his son King Hussein became the third ruler of the kingdom, at the age of 16, and he remained so until his death in 1999. Hussein's era was marked with several tensions with the Palestinians, particularly after the annexation. During that period of time, and after Abdullah I was killed by a Palestinian, some Palestinians demanded that the Jordanian government start treating the East Bank and West Bank equally in terms of development policies. For example, some merchants in the West Bank in the 1950s complained of not being able to obtain import licences, while 'two-thirds of the import licenses were given to East bank residents' (Massad, 2001: 235).

Eventually, the Jordanian government invested the entire development fund in the East Bank, which was donated to Jordan by Britain and Arab countries. For

example, it was used to develop transportation, agriculture and industry in the East Bank, while the West Bank was ignored. Jordan was subsequently accused of implementing a regionalist policy, which entailed developing the East Bank in all aspects and placing obstacles and difficulties in the development process of the West Bank. Consequently, many inhabitants of the West Bank either migrated to the East Bank or the Gulf Arab States. Tourism was the only aspect that developed in the West Bank. Plascov states that, 'development of the East Bank was carried out mainly by Palestinians, who, having little option, but put their knowledge, skill, and talents at the disposal of the regime. Amman, the Kingdom's backward capital, was to become a flourishing town thus shifting the centre of economic gravity' (Plascov, 1981: 37).

Jordan lost control over the West Bank and East Jerusalem after their invasion in the 1967 Arab Israeli six-day war, and they became part of Israel (Khalil, 2007). In March 1968, in coordination with the Jordanian army, Palestinian guerrillas (known as *fedayeen*, meaning sacrificers) stationed in a small Jordanian town called *Al-Karamah* on the East Bank that had also become an Israeli target, fought a battle with the Israelis and forced them to withdraw. The Israeli military forces remained undefeated, but severe damages were caused on both sides. The fight became known as the *Al-Karamah* battle, and both the guerrillas and the army considered themselves victorious. At that time, Palestinian guerrillas were becoming more popular and many Palestinians in Jordan wanted to join them.

The increasing popularity of guerrillas in Jordan not only constituted a threat to 'the Jordanian state's authority, and sovereignty, or to the throne itself, but also to the state's claim to represent Palestinian Jordanians' (Massad, 2001: 240). For his part, King Hussein wanted to protect the sovereignty of his state, to remain in control of the kingdom, and remain the sole representative of Palestinians. Tensions were rising between Palestinians and Jordanians, and a civil war between the PLO [Palestinian Liberation Organisation], as representative of the guerrillas with the

fedayeen, against the army of the Kingdom supporting the monarch occurred in September 1970. The war caused massive demolition in Jordan, and around 3500 casualties from both sides were reported, mostly Palestinians. As part of the aftermath of the 1970 war, named Black September, the PLO and Palestinian fighters were expelled to Lebanon.

In 1974, Jordan was forced by Arab states to recognise the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. However, Hussein viewed the PLO's representation with scepticism, as he viewed giving the PLO the right to represent the Palestinians would entail acknowledging their sovereignty and power to represent most of the population of the East Bank (Massad, 2001). Following several talks and negotiations with the PLO, on July 31 1988 King Hussein announced the severance of administrative and legal ties with the West Bank, leaving 'Palestinians' as mainly those living in the West Bank with no legal status, and 'Jordanians' as those living on the East Bank, including Jordanians of Palestinian origin and refugees. In other words, after this announcement Palestinians living in the West Bank were no longer represented by Jordan and did not have the same legal status as Palestinians living in the East Bank (Jordan) (Chapin Metz, 1989) (see Figure 1.6 for a map of Palestinian Loss of Land (1946-2000)). However, Jordan had already received Palestinian refugees, who were granted Jordanian citizenship. Those refugees impacted on the Jordanian economy and also influenced the socioeconomic situation in Amman, where they were concentrated. The following section explains how the presence of literate Palestinian refugees in Jordan influenced the whole economy, as they came to constitute the majority of the country's human resources.

1.3 Jordan's Economy: The Amman Division

Jordan is a country with very few natural resources. Therefore, for many decades Jordan's economy depended on foreign aid and human resources. The presence of post-war Palestinians in Jordan led to socioeconomic, cultural, and political changes, particularly as most of these Palestinians were highly educated and literate (Chapin Metz, 1989). Massad (2001: 234) says that most Palestinians were 'more urban, more educated, and more experienced in political participation and they had more exposure to the mass media; newspapers and radio' than the original inhabitants of Transjordan. Palestinian merchants and workers had brought with them their expertise, skills, capital and knowledge, in addition to their political experience. They became integrated into Transjordanian society, and the social, cultural, political and economic aspects of Palestinians became predominant in the East Bank. For example, the educational gap between Transjordanians and Palestinians in the East Bank narrowed due to interaction with educated Palestinians.

Post-war Palestinians, as mentioned above, resided in refugee camps which were mainly located in Amman. However, 'those with connections, education, and/or skills settled in good jobs in urban areas' (Miles-Doan, 1992: 27), while 'the more conservative, unskilled, illiterate segment of the refugees' stayed in the camps (Plascov, 1989: 16). This implies that a large number of Palestinian refugees left the camps and moved to live elsewhere. More specifically, refugees originating from urban areas in the West Bank chose to leave the camps and live in other areas in Amman; while peasants and villagers stayed in and around the camps. Amman was a small city, however, and with some Palestinians choosing to leave the camps the city expanded geographically, as they started building houses in suburban areas which were not previously inhabited. Prior to refugee migration, and since the creation of the Kingdom, Jordan has relied substantially on external aid and assistance.

External aid and assistance began with British subsidies as Transjordan lacked local economy and natural resources. British aid was the sole external assistance for the Kingdom until 1949. However, following the first Arab Israeli War and the independence of Jordan, the Hashemite Kingdom then began depending on new donors, USA and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). Knowles (2005: 27) states, 'UNRWA was a lifeline for Jordan: it provided shelter, food, educational facilities and monetary support for one third of the Kingdom's residents'. Jordan has also been granted aid from Arab states, in addition to UNRWA and USA. In the early 1970s, Jordan experienced economic decline following the 1967 Arab Israeli and civil wars, in addition to changes in donors' priorities. At that time, unemployment rates were increasing.

However, oil prices increased, and oil exporting countries needed a skilled labour force. Hundreds of thousands of Jordanian young males, mostly of Palestinian origin, left Jordan to work in neighbouring Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Jordanian migration to labour importing countries placed Jordan as one of the highest labour exporting countries in the region. However, this left Jordan with a labour shortage, and the remaining labour force was mainly employed in the public sector (Abu Hamdan, 2006). Moreover, with time, the labour force inside the country diminished, and the period between 1973 and the early 1980s was marked with labour shortages in the country, which can be linked to the low participation of women in the labour force and to the fact that 40 percent of the population were below working age. For that reason, Jordan became both a labour exporting and importing country.

As a result Arabs and non-Arabs came to Jordan to work mainly in services, agriculture and construction. In 1985, estimates showed 149,000 Jordanian labourers abroad - 28.4% of the whole labour force in Jordan (Wilson, 1991). In the same year, the total number of Jordanians working abroad was estimated at 339,000. Remittance income from Jordanians working abroad caused economic and demographic

distortions in the country. Jordanian workers abroad usually sent remittances back to their families in Jordan to invest their money in properties. As a result, this, in addition to rural to urban migration, led to the urbanisation of some Jordanian cities such as Amman, Zarqa and Irbid. Most rural migrants, however, lived in poor areas in Amman.

‘By the mid- 1970s the metropolitan region [Amman] was clearly divided into two socioeconomically and geographically distinct parts: west Amman and its suburbs, characterised by upper income neighbourhoods, open space and good infrastructure; and east Amman... characterised by middle and lower income neighbourhoods, overcrowded living conditions and poor infrastructure’ (Razzaz, 1993: 11).

On the basis of survey results, Miles-Doan (1992) emphasises the distinctions between the two areas in Amman. She further argues that there is a wide gap within the Palestinian community, with those living in the camps in East Amman being the poorest and least educated.

In the mid 1980s Jordan went through economic recession, caused by the decline in the demand for labour in oil producing countries and therefore a decrease in remittances, a decrease in international aid from the Arab-states, and ‘a sudden [currency] devaluation leading to severe inflationary pressures’ (Miles-Doan, 2002: 3). In the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf war, many Jordanian workers were expelled from the Gulf countries and returned to Jordan. The total number of returnees was around 300,000, which affected the Jordanian economy disproportionately and increased unemployment (Kanaan and Kardoosh, 2002). Jordan not only received returnees, but also Palestinians who were living in the Gulf countries, Palestinians from the West Bank who had stayed for a long period of time waiting for Israel to allow their return, and 30,000 Iraqi refugees fleeing from Iraq (Swaidan and Nica, 2002).

The Jordanian returnees, most of whom were of Palestinian origin, in addition to the Iraqi refugees, constituted many challenges to Jordan as unemployment rates increased and the government had to provide work opportunities for the highly skilled and educated returnees. Moreover, the returnees and new refugees placed significant pressure on natural resources and public utilities in Jordan. All of those factors increased poverty rates amongst the population (Swaidan and Nica, 2002). Jordan had to seek the IMF and the World Bank's support for its economic reform, in order to stabilise its economy. In addition to IMF and World Bank loans, Jordan started privatization programs in 1996, under the reign of King Hussein (Kandah, 2004). In recent years, King Abdullah II, the current king of Jordan, has worked on speeding up the economic liberalisation and privatisation of state assets, which had been praised by the World Bank and the IMF. However, this so-called economic 'reform' had various consequences:

'The implementation of wide-ranging reforms and an exceptionally high level of financial assistance helped the growth performance in the post-1999 period. Real GDP grew at a fairly respectable 5.4% between 2000–2004. The social impact of reform is harder to gauge due to data problems... unemployment, which declined from 19.2% in 1992 to 13.7% in 2000, had risen again to 15.3% in 2003... No-one knows exactly how many Jordanians are poor today, where they live, or what their demographic characteristics are, recognizing the fact that poverty is on the increase in Jordan, and that, like unemployment, it could be anywhere between 15–30%' (Harrigan et al., 2006: 272).

The economic 'reform' Jordan was obliged to undertake made the existing societal distinctions more obvious; it helped the educated and the highly skilled, and put more burdens on the poor and the disadvantaged. Amman represents an example of class differences as it is divided into West and East. It has been said about Amman,

'A correlate of this history of rapid growth has been the marked social divide that has come to characterise the residential quarters of present-day Amman. Contemporary guides to Jordan comment directly on the marked social cleavages that characterise the urban space of the city of Amman. ... This picture of 'two Ammans' broadly depicts the concentration of relatively wealthy socio-economic groups to the west and, to a lesser extent, the north of the city' (Potter et al., 2009: 84-5).

Those differences, however, are not only economic, as it has been noted that the Eastern side is generally characterised as more conservative. As economic reform caused disparities within the city it also influenced women. Due to increasing poverty many women entered the labour force, although unfortunately unemployment rates are still high in Jordan and especially amongst women. Although unemployment is generally high in Jordan, when compared to men women have lower labour force participation rates and are more likely to be unemployed, as discussed in the following section.

1.4 Women's Labour Force Participation in Jordan

Along with affecting the socioeconomic structure of Jordan, economic liberalisation also influenced women's participation in the labour force. The privatisation of the public sector as part of Jordan's economic reform left some women unemployed, because the public sector is,

'The favoured choice of new female entrants into the labour market because of the benefits it offers, such as secure employment, favourable working hours, attractive retirement, and social security benefits and high social status... Women are concentrated in activities that are traditionally associated with their gender roles particularly social and personal services and education' (Guégnard et al., 2005: 9).

Yet, women's position in the labour market has always been more precarious than that of men, and the labour market in Jordan has been changing since the 1970s. The labour force has been in transition according to the social, political and economic situation in Jordan, and overall participation in the labour force has increased. This increase in labour force participation has also been accompanied by an increase in women's labour force participation. For example, in 1979 women constituted 7.7 percent of the labour force in Jordan, but rates gradually evolved to 14 percent in 1997 (Gimenez and Conde-Ruiz, 2005). Before the labour shortage in Jordan in the late 1970s and early 1980s, labour legislation restricted women's employment. However, this later changed, as being the 'reserve army of labour' (Layne, 1981: 22) employment opportunities for women increased, and the former labour legislation became of less significance. The majority of women who started working at that time were employed in public administration as well as communication, education, clerical and administrative, textile production, and finance sectors (Layne, 1981).

However, the government's encouragement of women's work outside the household did not last for long as, in light of the increasing labour force participation and the decreasing labour force demand of the Gulf countries, the government

started to discourage women's seeking work outside the household through the media and announcements by governmental officials (Hijab, 1988, Miles-Doan, 2002). In 1985, Prime Minister Zaid al-Rifai stated that 'working women, who paid half or more of their salary to foreign maids who sent the currency abroad, should stop working' (Chapin Metz, 1989: Para 5). Consequently, the increasing labour force participation amongst women and lack of employment opportunities, in addition to governmental attitudes towards women's employment, made women more prone to unemployment than their male counterparts. Kawar (1996) explains that in 1991 traditional female sectors witnessed a decline in the number of women working in health, education, governmental and administrative jobs. She further elaborates that women were not going into new sectors either (Kawar, 1996).

According to Sonbol (2003) 90% of Jordanian women get married by the average age of 24.7 years, and women's participation in the labour force is estimated not to exceed 16 percent (ibid.). It has been concluded that there are a small number of women in the labour force, because of certain cultural constraints which play a major role in women's lives in Jordan and the Arab Middle East (Wahba, 2003).

The overall labour force participation for men and women in Jordan is estimated at 26 percent for people above the age of 15, a low figure. Low labour force participation in Jordan is considered to be a result of 'the population's age structure, the large number of students, low female participation in the labour market and the early retirement age in the public sector' (Guégnard et al., 2005: 7). In addition to those factors, people working informally and in the hidden economy are not accounted for in labour force statistics, although they constitute a big part of the private sector.

Industrial groups in Jordan include the following according to recent figures published by the Jordanian Department of Statistics [DOS]: agriculture, hunting and forestry, mining and quarrying, manufacturing, electricity, gas and water supply,

construction, wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants, transport, storage and communications, financial intermediation, real estate, renting and business activities, public administration, education, health and social work, other community activities, private households with employed persons, and extra-territorial organisations and bodies.

The sample of gender distribution in industrial groups in the Department of Statistics figures is constituted of 8373 women, and 43,730 men, and percentages are calculated separately and are based on the total 8373 employed women. Therefore, one must reiterate that if the percentage of employed women is higher than that of men, this does not mean that women number more than men. For example, 38.2 percent of employed women work in the education industry, in comparison to 6.7 percent of men. Also, health and social work include 14.8 percent of employed women, and 3.1 percent of employed men. However, public administration and defence includes 22 percent of employed men, and 7.8 percent of employed women. The industry of transport, storage, and communications employs 2.7 percent of employed women, but 10.8 percent of employed men. Wholesale and retail trade and constructions employ 18.4 of employed men, and 6.4 percent of employed women (see Table 1.1 Industries by Gender).

Table (1.1) Gender Distribution of Industries (Public and Private Sectors) in Jordan (Department of Statistics, 2009)				
Industry	Men		Women	
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Agriculture, Hunting and forestry	1300	2.9%	155	1.9%
Mining and quarrying	451	1%	7	0.1%
Manufacturing	4867	11.1%	661	8%
Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	651	1.5%	47	0.6%
Construction	3395	7.8%	113	1.3%
Wholesale and Retail Trade, and Repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles, and personal and household goods	7985	18.4%	538	6.4%
Hotels and Restaurants	1065	2.4%	28	0.3%
Transport, Storage, and communication	4709	10.8%	224	2.7%
Financial intermediation	665	1.5%	299	3.6%
Real Estate, renting and business activities	1854	4.2%	472	5.6%
Public administration and defence compulsory social security	9599	22%	654	7.8%
Education	2928	6.7%	3198	38.2%
Health and Social work	1372	3.1%	1240	14.8%
Other Community, Social and Personal Services Activities	2695	6.1%	508	6%
Private Households with Employed Persons	74	0.2%	188	2.2%
Extraterritorial Organisations and Bodies	120	0.3%	41	0.5%
Total	43730	100%	8373	100%

In 2008 the Department of Statistics provided the number of employed people in industries in Amman specifically. The total figure was 916,407 employees in the public and the private sector, with women constituting 22.9 percent of the whole number of employed people in Amman. This shows gender disparities, and Table (1.2) demonstrates the gender distribution by industries in Amman according to the Department of Statistics. This data shows us the gender disparities in terms of economic activities.

Table (1.2) Gender Distribution of Industries (Public and Private Sectors) in Amman (Department of Statistics, 2008)				
Industry	Men		Women	
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Agriculture, Hunting and forestry	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mining and quarrying	7904	1.1%	187	0.08%
Manufacturing	140566	20%	31211	15%
Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	12774	1.8%	1068	0.5%
Construction	45818	7.8%	1098	0.5%
Wholesale and Retail Trade, and Repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles, and personal and household goods	185138	25.1%	16047	7.6%
Hotels and Restaurants	35632	5%	1746	0.8%
Transport, Storage, and communication	28158	4%	4176	2%
Financial intermediation	17099	2.4%	7815	3.7%
Real Estate, renting and business activities	36719	5.2%	8589	4%
Public administration and defence compulsory social security	79916	11%	16683	8%
Education	70181	10%	89402	42.32%
Health and Social work	27251	4%	26238	12.5%
Other Community, Social and Personal Services Activities	18562	2.6%	6429	3%
Private Households with Employed Persons	NA	NA	NA	NA
Extraterritorial Organisations and Bodies	NA	NA	NA	NA
Total	705718	100%	210689	100%

Socio-cultural factors play an influential role in determining the suitable jobs according to gender, age and social status (Fafo, 2007). Those factors are essential to explain the prevalence of men over women in the labour force, at percentages of 66 percent and 16 percent respectively. Moreover, one must keep in mind that unpaid work, informal labour, and casual forms of work are not considered part of labour force activities. Therefore, women remain underrepresented in labour force participation rates, because many women engage in such activities. Women's labour force participation and economic activities are influenced by several factors. Economic reform policies and the shrinking of the public sector, which is more

hospitable to women, in addition to cultural factors, influence women's position in the labour force and their ability to access employment. Despite the increasing number of women entering the labour force, women are still in a disadvantaged position in the labour market in Jordan.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the context of the research and the history of Jordan, which is relevant to understand the socio-economic and political context of this research. It has discussed in detail the impact of Palestinian refugee flows on the economy and the demography of the country. It has also shown how the economic situation in Jordan influences women's participation in the labour force. As this research deals with the intersections of class and gender that influence women's economic activities, it was important to explain how class is apparent in Amman and how such class divisions were created. Due to demographic, socio-political and economic changes in Jordan, Amman, the capital of Jordan, became divided into two distinct areas, not only geographically but also socioeconomically. East Amman suffers from overcrowding, poverty, and bad infrastructure, while West Amman, on the other hand, is characterised by modern buildings, affluence, and good infrastructure. However, the differences between the two parts of the city are not only economic, as there are noticeable cultural differences between both sides.

As this research focuses on a comparison between women's economic activities in East and West Amman, it is important to highlight that women's labour force participation in Jordan is the lowest amongst Middle Eastern countries, and is very low compared to men in Jordan. This shows gender differences in terms of women's labour force participation, and that women are underrepresented in labour force statistics. There is a high proportion of women in skilled professional sectors, such as education and health and social work, which are seen as 'middle class' professions, as shown by the statistical data provided. Yet this could indicate that poorer women are more likely to be in the informal sector, and for that reason they are underrepresented in some industries, which shows that there are also class differences between women.

Class and gender are important for the study of women's economic activities, because they create different experiences for women. The class division between East and West Amman means that women experience differences between themselves, and also that gender makes women's experiences different from those of men. Moreover, gender operates differently according to class; for example, people in East Amman are viewed as more conservative than people in West Amman. This is because class differences are not only economic, but also cultural. Furthermore, class differences between people influence gender relations in various ways.

Amman provides a particularly interesting case study because of the obvious class divisions within the city, which enables us to examine how gender intersects with cultural and economic class to shape women's experiences in relation to economic activities. Women's low labour force participation in the Middle East has been given special attention by scholars, and there are various approaches to the study of women's economic activities and labour force participation. The next chapter reviews the literature on women's labour force participation, and shows the importance of the use of an intersectional approach to understand women's economic activities and different experiences. It also shows that women in the Middle East face patriarchy, and that this system of oppression operates differently depending on class, age, marital status, etc. It also argues that the intersectional approach can explain women's low labour force participation, and the type of economic activities available to them.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter discusses literature on Middle Eastern women which focuses on women's access to economic activities and their position in relation to work, labour force participation and formal and informal employment. Each Middle Eastern country constitutes a unique case (Kandiyoti, 1991) and women in the Middle East are not a homogenous group. Therefore, a generalisation of the status of Middle Eastern women's economic activity does not seem valid, as there are differences within its female population, and those differences are based on class, ethnicity, education, age, marital status and socio-economic background (Moghadam, 1993).

In light of these differences this research is adopting an intersectional approach to understanding women's economic activities in Amman, the capital of Jordan. The intersectional approach is useful because it attempts to explain the different experiences of women, and how social categories such as, class, gender and marital status intersect; it is used in this research to develop an understanding of women's economic activities. This chapter reviews the literature on patriarchy, neopatriarchy, gender contract and globalisation and considers why these analytical approaches are not sufficient to understand women's experiences and economic activities in Amman. In this chapter, I argue that social categories such as gender and economic and cultural class intersect and influence women's economic activities differentially. This argument is based on the idea that although Jordanian society is patriarchal, patriarchy operates differently according to class. Moreover, women can gain relative power through bargaining with patriarchy and resisting its structures, which also means that patriarchy and gender relations are not static but subject to change.

It has to be said that Jordan, as with most states in the MENA region, is a Muslim country, and is regarded as a patriarchal conservative state (Moghadam,

1993). The state in the Middle East has been described as neopatriarchal (Sharabi, 1988): 'in the neopatriarchal state, unlike liberal or social democratic societies, religion is bound to power and state authority; moreover, the family, rather than the individual, constitutes the universal building block of the community. The neopatriarchal state and the patriarchal family reflect and reinforce each other' (Moghadam, 1993: 11). However, I suggest that in certain cases patriarchal family structures can be challenged through globalisation, in different ways. Some women, for example, because of globalisation are forced to seek work outside the household due to financial need, while others are granted more opportunities in terms of education and employment. It must be noted, though, that this challenge to patriarchy differs across ages, classes, and marital status. At the same time, the neopatriarchal state is challenged by globalisation. Thus, when states in the Middle East are forced to privatise state assets, the neopatriarchal state is gradually losing its power over resources.

One must not forget that the state of Jordan derives its legal framework from Islamic Sharia laws, as well as civil codes, which influence women's public life participation. The Jordanian legal framework has contradictory aspects in relation to women's rights. For example, the parts derived from civil codes grant equal rights to all citizens, while those derived from Islamic Sharia privilege men over women (Kandiyoti, 1991). The inconsistency and contradictions in laws relating to women 'affect the social status of women as well as their control over their livelihood' (Afshar, 1987b: 3). However, this is also challenged by the emergence of international instruments made relevant through globalisation, which seek to improve women's position and lives and challenge the neopatriarchal state structure. In addition to state policies and legal frameworks, gender disparities are also caused by household inequalities, ascribed gender roles, and the sexual division of labour and patriarchy at the level of the family. However, families are not homogenous and this affects the operation of patriarchy. Patriarchal family practices

and structures can be challenged by women through resisting, penetrating, or accommodating patriarchal power.

There have been various approaches to the study of women in the Middle East, and I have divided these into two main approaches: macro and micro sociological levels. The following sections present those approaches, criticise their lack of understanding of women's different experiences, and show that an intersectional approach is well suited for this study. The use of intersectionality as an approach recognises the differences between women, and is very useful for our understanding of gender relations; it acknowledges that women are not always victims of patriarchal structures because they can bargain, resist and negotiate those structures. As Burgess-Proctor (2006) puts it,

'The intersectional approach recognizes that race, class, gender, sexuality, and other locations of inequality are dynamic, historically grounded, socially constructed power relationships that simultaneously operate at both the micro-structural and macro-structural levels... the development of this intersectional approach to studying gender may be viewed as a natural progression of feminist thought' (Burgess-Proctor, 2006: 37).

2.1 Women, Work and Economic Activity 'from above'

The study of women's economic activities 'from above' or on the macro level includes looking at the role of the state, its implementation of economic policies and of certain sets of laws, such as the personal status law which is derived from *Sharia* law, and involves laws concerning marriage, divorce and child custody (El-Azhary Sonbol, 2003). It also includes studying the role of economic reforms and structural adjustments in determining women's access to different types of income generating activities, and also the engagement and disengagement of women in economic activities. However, the problem with this type of approach is that it does not acknowledge that women have different experiences.

This section discusses some of the analytical frameworks that attempt to explain women's low labour force participation, high unemployment rates and engagement in different kinds of economic activities. These analytical frameworks attempt to provide explanations through scrutiny of women's position within the state and the global economy. Many scholars have started their analysis by looking at state laws and their effects on women's access to economic activities. Others, on the other hand, attempt to explain women's position in the labour force through explaining the gender dimension of globalisation and its effect on women's economic activities, in the formal and the informal sectors.

The following subsection discusses scholars' attempts to explain women's position through arguing that state laws, especially those related to marriage, child custody, and divorce, greatly influence women's social status and ability to lead independent lives. This section shows that some of these laws are patriarchal and many of them are derived from Islamic *Sharia* law, which is viewed as patriarchal and as privileging men. Some literature also focuses on the fact that state policies are designed to ensure social reproduction and the preservation of the traditional family unit. The problem with this literature, as highlighted below, is that it tends to view

women as victims of patriarchy who have no power over their lives, and to see them as a homogenous group.

The second subsection reviews literature on the gender dimensions of globalisation, and how it affects women's work and economic activities. It shows how structural adjustment policies and economic reforms in the Middle East influence gender relations and have varying impacts on different groups of women, and in comparison to men. This discussion is important because it enables us to understand that globalisation does not have the same impact on women as it does on men, and that it influences women differently according to class.

2.1.1 Women and the State

Amawi (2000) provides an extensive explanation of the laws concerning women in Jordan and the way in which these laws can be crucial in their lives and their involvement in public life. Studying these laws and their application shows us how they reinforce patriarchal structures and make it difficult for women to lead independent lives. Amawi also argues that women in Jordan have 'diminished' citizenship and that they do not enjoy the full citizenship rights that are enjoyed by men (Amawi, 2000: 159). An example she gives is that labour legislation states that all citizens have the right to work regardless of ethnicity, language and religion, but does not state that there will be no discrimination based on sex. Amawi (2000) and El-Azhary Sonbol (2003) refer to the issue of male guardianship over women in Jordanian law. For example, a woman cannot get married without the permission of a male guardian, who is either a father or a brother. Additionally, women cannot seek jobs without the approval of their male guardians (El-Azhary Sonbol, 2003, Amawi, 2000). Amawi states:

'The only justification for the discriminatory laws, either in text or in practice, is the desire to maintain the status quo of the patriarchal structure within the family and, by extension, within the state... the patriarchal structure that gives supremacy to the male head of the family and the tribe at the expense of women' (Amawi, 2000: 183).

However, Amawi (2000) does not acknowledge that women face different experiences under the same rules and laws, and that there are other factors that shape women's experiences. Moreover, the application of these laws in the Middle East differs according to class, 'race', and age. For example, in the Arab world there exists the concept of *Wasta*, which refers to the use of connections, relatives and/or people in power in order to achieve things. Based on a study in Lebanon, Tlaiss and Kauser (2010) argue that *Wasta* overrides gender when it comes to career progression and work. Although I agree to some extent with their argument, this only applies to

people from 'elite' backgrounds and who have connections. In this context, an understanding of the intersection of gender and class can explain how the laws and rules of guardianship do not limit the options in the same ways for all women.

El-Azhary Sonbol (2003) elaborates on the role of laws of guardianship in shaping gender relations. She argues that patriarchal structures are reproduced and gender relations are constructed through the school curriculum, state television and other forms of media, which

'create gender difference and outline particular functions for women that help keep them in a position of dependency and obedience to father, brother, family, and clan' (El-Azhary Sonbol, 2003: 119).

The state in Saudi Arabia also plays a major, and maybe more determinant role in making it difficult for women to work (Abdella Doumato, 2001). Although many women in Saudi Arabia receive education, the law restricts their work after graduation because they need to find sex-segregated workplaces, they are not allowed to live alone, and they are not allowed to drive. Abdella Doumato (2001) also mentions that the state interferes in determining the suitability of jobs for women, and for this reason she considers the state to be the main guardian of women.

Hijab (2003), a journalist who writes extensively on women and work in the Arab world, provides an explanation for the situation of Arab women in the work force by reviewing the socio-cultural factors that are enforced and reinforced by Arab states and their policies. In other words, she argues that Arab states attempt to emphasise the definition of 'Arab-Islamic identity' by reinforcing the importance of the family in Arab-Islamic Societies (ibid.). Many Arab states view the family as the core unit of their society, with the preservation of this core unit being the responsibility of women domestically, as women are seen as preservers and transmitters of Arab-Islamic culture (Hijab, 2003, Amawi, 2000). Hijab (2003) cites a

paragraph from the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia⁷ (ESCWA) report presented to the United Nations in 1985, which emphasises the centrality of the family unit in the preservation of Arab-Islamic culture. The report states that women may choose public or private roles; however, it also states that women should prioritise and,

‘devote their time to family and home affairs, and hence ensure the continuity of generations, the cultivation of values, and the transmittal of knowledge and expertise from one generation to another’ (Hijab, 2003: 44).

This reflects a tendency among all member states of the ESCWA to attempt to preserve women’s domestic roles within the family, as part of their cultural identity. Similarly, in 1942, the Beveridge Report was issued in Britain, which ‘saw the family as the basic social unit, with a man as worker and woman as mother and wife’ (Misra, 1998: 385). Such emphasis on the family unit and the male-breadwinner model reinforces women’s confinement to the private sphere and discourages their involvement in the labour market, rendering them dependent on their male-counterparts. However, this approach is insufficient to explain women’s low labour force participation, because it portrays women as passive victims of patriarchal structures. Many women choose to become mothers; this choice is related to a great extent to the idea that when women have sons they gain more social power, and this can be seen a way of bargaining with those patriarchal structures (Kandiyoti, 1988).

In her study on Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria, Charrad (2003) places great importance on the role legislation plays in shaping gender relations within the family. Guenena and Wassef (1999) argue that personal status laws, which deal with marriage, shape gender and power hierarchies within the family unit (Guenena and Wassef, 1999). They, amongst others, emphasise that these laws make it harder for women to make independent decisions in relation to their economic activities, and

⁷ Member states of this commission are Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Syria, United Arab Emirates and Sudan.

they place the family at the centre of their lives⁸ (Guenena and Wassef, 1999, Hijab, 2003, El-Azhary Sonbol, 2003, Amawi, 2000, Abdella Doumato, 2001, Charrad, 2003).

Moreover, this does not only seem to be the struggle of Arab Muslim states. Yuval-Davis (1989) argues that in spite of Israel's obvious policies to include women in the public sphere, the nationalist ideologies of the state itself view women as mainly mothers and see their engagement in the military labour market, for example, as temporary until they become mothers (Yuval-Davis, 1989). The emphasis on the centrality of the family and motherhood in women's lives reflects a tendency amongst the states themselves to safeguard women's biological role in reproduction in order to ensure that reproduction of the nation. Yuval-Davis (1997) states that 'as the biological 'producers' of children/people, women are also, therefore, 'bearers of the collective' within these boundaries' (Yuval-Davis, 1997: 26). Control over women's sexuality and reproductive role, in addition to giving priority to their domestic role, is a way of ensuring national and cultural reproduction of communities (Yuval-Davis, 1998, Charles and Hintjens, 1998, Kandiyoti, 1991). Arab states place high importance on the family unit and women's role within it, because the family unit is seen as the basic foundation of society and of Arab-Islamic culture. Consequently such a view has prompted many states to ensure that their identity is preserved and is unwavering in the face of modernisation (Kandiyoti, 1991).

Aspects of modernisation, or westernisation as it is seen by Arab countries, have been rejected by Arab states due to their view that modernisation breaks down the basis of Arab-Islamic societies, which are based on the family, a particular form of gender relations and women's ascribed roles. Many Muslim countries, including Jordan, have ratified the UN Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women [CEDAW] with reservations on Articles 9.2, 16 (1-c-d-g) and 15.4, which relate to nationality, marriage and family relations, and freedom of movement that contradict their personal status laws. Women in Jordan,

⁸ Organisation of the family unit will be discussed in the next section.

for example, are not allowed to pass their nationality onto their children. Nowadays, many women are working through international non-governmental organisations to change these laws. This shows that resistance to patriarchal state policies is present amongst some women; therefore, one must acknowledge that women exert efforts in the face of patriarchy at a state level.

Some scholars also attempt to explain women's position by referring to Islam and the application of patriarchal Islamic laws in the Arab Middle East. As with the application of personal status law, this approach is also insufficient to explain women's experiences because there are other religious groups in Jordan, and at the same time not all Muslim women share the same experiences. In addition, the application of Islamic laws derived from Sharia is different from one country to the other.

2.1.2 Women and Islam

Some laws in some Arab-Muslim countries have been preserved to respond to fundamentalist demands for 'the containment of 'trespassing women'... some oppositional movements have been advocating a 'just' Islamic order, invoking notions of authentic Muslim womanhood as part of a broader critique of westernisation and consumerism' (Kandiyoti, 1995: 24-5). Personal status laws, applied in Arab Islamic countries 'claim legitimacy from Islam' (Charles and Hintjens, 1998: 9). In Arab countries, most of the personal status laws pertaining to marriage, inheritance, divorce, family and child custody, are based on Sharia law. Since these laws are linked to Islam, many scholars attempt to explain women's subordination through Islam. For example, Gruenbaum (2001) argues that the Islamist Sudanese state, because of its desire to impose an 'authentic culture'⁹ of Islam, attempted to shape different aspect of women's lives such as their access to employment (Gruenbaum, 2001: 125). Sudan's implementation of Sharia law represents an obvious attempt to enforce Islamic doctrines; however, other countries such as Jordan impose Sharia law only in the personal status laws (El-Azhary Sonbol, 2003).

Feminist writings on women and Islam vary, as feminists take different standpoints to explain women's subordination. For example, Engineer (2008) attempts to defend Islam from the accusations of its role in marginalising women in public life. She bases her argument on the claim that most usages and interpretations of the Qur'an are influenced by social norms, rather than being based on objective interpretation of the Qur'an (Engineer, 2008). She gives the example of a verse in the Qur'an which states that men are '*Qawwamun*' over women, which had been translated into rulers or masters making women the ruled. However, Engineer (2008:

⁹ One example of this is imposing a dress code on all women, according to Islamic laws, and as a suppression of Sudanese traditions. Many women felt that this imposition was a way to displace them from their workplaces, as they were obliged to follow the imposed dress codes, because otherwise they would be fired or placed under arrest.

54) argues that such an interpretation is taken out of context, because the word in its original context means that men are 'maintainers or managers of family affairs'. Despite Engineer's defence of Islam and the Qur'an such an interpretation suggests that men are not women's rulers. However, this view of men as maintainers or managers of family affairs still relegates women to a subordinate role and ignores the amount of work women do in their households in maintaining and managing family affairs. Furthermore, her defence also implies the generalisation that households are always headed by men, which is not always the case.

Mernissi, who writes extensively on women and work, takes the opportunity in her book *The Veil and the Male Elite* to explain women's subordination through what is thought of as the prophet's sayings rather than the Qur'an. She adds that many of those who transmitted the alleged sayings of the prophet used them for their own benefits, and they were mostly men (Mernissi, 1991). As defenders of the Qur'an, those scholars accept that the Islamic tradition has become 'a tradition of misogyny' (Mernissi, 1991: 49) through historical processes (Mernissi, 1996). Mernissi and Engineer are amongst those who accept that the interpretations of Islamic texts nowadays do not reflect 'the prophet's splendid days' for women (Mernissi, 1996: 87). Despite the fact that many Arab Middle Eastern countries define their law as originating from Islam, many Islamic feminists disagree. Helie-Lucas (1994) also states that people, including women, in Islamic societies believe that traditions are 'part and parcel of being a Muslim and ... are Islamic' (Helie-Lucas, 1994: 395). Ahmed (1992), for example, explains that traditions and social practices influence Islam and its interpretations, and that it is the literature around Islam which enforces the subordination of women, rather than the religion itself.

Others have, in contrast, attempted to downplay the role of Islam in the subordination of women, and have instead viewed the Islamisation of states as a form of liberation. Poya (1999) follows the evolution of feminist theorisation on women and work in Iran. She explains that following the revolution in 1979, and

during processes of state Islamisation, feminists were divided into secular and Muslim feminists. She gives examples of Muslim feminists such as Rahnavard, Hashemi and Etezadi Tabatabai, who viewed the Islamisation of the state as a way to liberate women. She states that they argue that,

‘Islam is the only socio-economic and socio-political system which does not exploit and marginalise women, because it assigns the sphere of home to women without confining women to the home. In this context they argued that under both capitalist and communist systems women are exploited as cheap workers, oppressed as sex objects and robbed of their identity of femininity’ (Poya, 1999: 6).

Other feminists in Iran believed that the Islamisation of the state would result in women’s marginalisation from the economic, political and social spheres, because the Qur’anic interpretations of Iranian Muslim scholars would contribute to hierarchical gender relations inside and outside the household. Thus, giving men the responsibility of breadwinning and being head of the household would lead to the marginalisation of women in the public sphere (Moghadam, 1988, Afshar, 1987a). This also reinforces a sexual division of labour, which confines women to the private sphere and assigns men to the public sphere (Moghadam, 2005).

Afshar (1993) argues that Islam constitutes only one factor that influences women’s position in Muslim societies, and that Islam is not the only reason for women’s subordination. She explains that governments do not apply Islam in the same way in the Arab Muslim world, rather each country has its own set of laws, and these laws change (Afshar, 1993). For example, in the 1990s women in Iran were able to impose a reform on laws relating to family, education and employment, despite the Islamisation of the state. She therefore suggests a move away from theorising Islam or its interpretations to explain women’s position in the Arab Muslim Middle East. Papps (1993), based on a study of attitudes towards women’s work in four Middle Eastern countries, found that ‘Islam does not appear to be an important independent contributor to the economic conservatism of older Kuwaiti

women' (Papps, 1993: 96). Sanad and Tessler (1988) also argue that although Islam shapes certain attitudes towards women's employment, it is not the only independent factor which influences women. They further argue that education and age affect peoples' attitudes towards women's participation in the labour force. I agree that it is not only Islam that influences attitudes towards women's economic activities, and that there are other aspects to this that an intersectional approach would help to unpack. This is especially important because that there are non-Muslim minorities in the Middle East and also because Islamists are being challenged by feminists, women's movements and men (Norton et al., 1997).

On a macro-sociological level, the patriarchal/neopatriarchal state, its laws, and Islam as enshrined in personal laws greatly influence women's position, both in relation to economic activity and other aspects of women's lives. Personal status laws, deriving their legitimacy from Islam, make it hard for women to be socioeconomically independent and the emphasis on the importance and centrality of the family unit also reemphasises women's domestic roles. However, the neopatriarchal nature of the state in the Middle East is being challenged, and undermined, by women's movements and certain aspects of globalisation, both of which limit state control and undermine state authorities. For example, in 1979 'elite' women in Egypt working through non-governmental organisations were able to revise the personal status law, showing that,

'Despite legal, bureaucratic, cultural and economic constraints, local forms of resistance and the politics of everyday life persist' (Norton et al., 1997: 157).

It is important to recognise that women organising collectively can have an impact on state policies, and that globalisation also has an effect on patriarchal structures and processes and can be empowering and disempowering for women; this is discussed in the following subsection.

2.1.3 Gender Dimensions of Globalisation

Studying the impact of state policies and Islam on women's economic activities and/or women's labour force participation does not sufficiently explain women's different experiences; furthermore it portrays women as passive victims of state imposed patriarchal structures. The impact of globalisation on women's economic activities challenges what Sharabi (1988) calls the neopatriarchy of the Arab states. Sharabi (1988) uses neopatriarchy as the word to describe the current status of the Arab world. He argues that processes of modernisation and the rhetoric of authenticity together create neopatriarchy in the Arab world at the level of the state, which is itself neopatriarchal, and the family unit. Moghadam (1995) also describes states in the Middle East as 'torn' between those 'imperatives' of patriarchy and modernisation. Al-Ali (2000) makes it clear by saying,

'Caught between the pursuit of modernisation, attempts at liberalisation, a pervasive national rhetoric of 'authenticity' and ongoing imperialist encroachments, women are often the focus of conflicting and ambiguous interests' (Al-Ali, 2000: 1).

As more women coming from different socioeconomic backgrounds are seeking work and employment in the Middle East, whether due to economic need or for the pursuit of self-development, those women are often caught in the middle between the state's tendency to maintain women's traditional domestic and family roles, and the consequences of modernisation, structural adjustment and economic development. It appears that the family unit represents the main part of Arab-Islamic identity for the state, and the responsibility of preserving that rests on the shoulders of women. Moghadam (1995), however, also argues that studies of women and employment in the Arab region should take gender, class, state, economic development, development strategies and the world system into account. Despite the fact that many states in the Middle East enforce policies that marginalise women's public roles, Arab states are also, as Moghadam puts it, 'torn between the imperatives of national development and the desire to preserve the traditional

family unit, including the family attachment of women' (Moghadam, 1995: 12). Moghadam (1995) notes that Jordan has been amongst the countries hesitant to encourage female labour force participation, and has tended to encourage women's domesticity. She argues that the maintenance of a patriarchal family relieves the state from the burden of providing welfare to its citizens, as the family unit provides its members with welfare (Moghadam, 2003a). However, recently there have been signs of change in Jordan and, despite the fact that the state of Jordan applies laws that negatively affect women's involvement in the public sphere such as the personal status law, women's employment has been particularly encouraged by female members of the royal family, and non-governmental royal organisations, through the launch of women's economic empowerment projects (Majcher-Teleon and Ben Slimene, 2009). Moreover, some NGOs provide small loan assistance for women to help them establish small businesses.

Moghadam's suggestion that economic development, economic strategies and the world system should be taken into account when studying women and work means particular attention needs to be paid to globalisation and processes of market liberalisation, and their impact on women and work (Moghadam, 1995). Afshar and Barrientos (1999) call this type of analysis an analysis of women and globalisation and attempt to develop an analysis of women in relation to work from the globalisation perspective (Afshar and Barrientos, 1999).

Moghadam (1999:367) defines globalisation as 'a complex economic, political, cultural and geographic process in which the mobility of capital, organisations, ideas, discourses, and peoples has taken on an increasingly global or transnational form'. She further elaborates that this process is not 'gender neutral: In the current global environment of open economies, new trade regimes and competitive export industries, restructuring relies heavily on female labour, both waged and unwaged, in formal sectors and in the home, in manufacturing and in public and private services' (Moghadam, 1998: 12). During the 1980s some Arab Middle Eastern

countries - including Jordan, Egypt and Tunisia - were hit by recession leading some of them to apply structural adjustment and development policies regulated by the World Bank and the IMF in order to improve their economies. However, this step towards improving the economy had varying effects on women's productive and reproductive roles, and impacted women differently to men. The reason behind the varying effects of structural adjustment and economic development policies is that their application has been gender-blind and male biased. As Elson (1992) puts it,

'Male bias stems from a failure to take into account the asymmetry of gender relations; the fact that women as a gender are socially subordinated to men as a gender through both social structures and individual practices' (Elson, 1992: 47).

The globalisation perspective perhaps downplays the role of the state in relation to women's work, as it suggests 'an apparent diminution of the state' (Afshar and Barrientos, 1999: 1). Einhorn (1995) describes the process of globalisation by stating,

'The construction of a global market economy according to the currently neo-liberal paradigm is characterised by a dual process of marketization and the withdrawal or contraction of the state sector. The market is posited as the sole and sufficient regulator of economic and social development' (Einhorn, 1995: 2).

This suggests that the state and its application of laws do not always explain women's economic activities and/or labour force participation, because economic activities are becoming largely affected by marketisation. However, many suggest that globalisation has a multi-dimensional impact on women; it has both empowering and disempowering effects (Afshar, 1998, Ward, 1990). With respect to the empowering aspect of globalisation, more and more women are seeking income generating activities formally and informally; nonetheless, this does not necessarily lead to an improvement in women's situation, and women are affected differently by globalisation. By globalisation, here, we refer to the neo-liberal paradigm of a free

market and economic liberalisation, and the liquidation of state assets through privatisation. Therefore, we are referring to economic globalisation, which has caused an increase in poverty and income disparities (Bahramitash, 2005). Poverty leads many women to seek work outside their homes, or to engage in income generating activities to enable them to provide for themselves and their families. It has been argued that globalisation has given women space in the global economy but this has been done by placing them under bad conditions and giving them low wages (Cagatay and Erturk, 2004, Moghadam, 1999, Abdella Doumato and Posusney, 2003, Mukherjee, 2004, Pilger, 2002, Carr and Chen, 2004). This process of integrating women into the labour force had been termed by Standing (1989) as 'the feminisation of labour' (Standing, 1989). This feminisation of labour challenges the patriarchal structure of the family unit, because the male breadwinner paradigm is not static as women are increasingly contributing financially to their households. Following recession and economic reforms in the Middle East patriarchy was challenged, as 'the male breadwinner model was no longer guaranteed, unemployment has grown, wages have deteriorated... poverty has worsened, and female headed households are increasing, and more and more women are seeking jobs out of economic need' (Moghadam, 1998: 10).

Moghadam (1998) writes about economic reform in the Middle East, referring to economic globalisation and its impact on women. Along with others, she argues that economic globalisation has influenced women differently (Abdella Doumato and Posusney, 2003, Afshar, 1993, Afshar and Barrientos, 1999, Bahramitash, 2005, Cagatay and Erturk, 2004, Carr and Chen, 2004, Einhorn, 1995, Khoury and Moghadam, 1995, Moghadam, 1998, Ward, 1990). Bahramitash (2005), for example, argues that economic globalisation made the rich richer, and the poor poorer, and that economic globalisation did not create classes; rather it widened the gap between the classes. This gap has also widened between women themselves, as many of them started leading different lifestyles, and while it provided the opportunity for some to

prosper, it denied that to others. For example, Hatem (2003) explained that economic globalisation in Egypt benefited upper middle class women and limited the opportunities for lower middle class and working class women (Hatem, 2003). Khoury and Moghadam (1995) state,

‘In Third World countries where social disparities are great, upper and upper middle class urban women can exercise a greater number of choices (certainly vis-à-vis lower middle class, working class urban poor or peasant women) and thus become much more ‘emancipated’’ (Khoury and Moghadam, 1995: 11).

Tucker (1985) argues that the class system existed before economic globalisation and liberalisation, and that the impact of economic globalisation on women has been different because of the existence of a pre-industrial caste society. She based her arguments on materialist historical analyses of nineteenth century Egypt (Tucker, 1985). She describes that upper middle class women were allowed ownership of properties and lands while peasant women were deprived of that right, where ownership was exclusively held by their male relatives, or partners. Although the history of the emergence of a class system in the Middle East is ambiguous, some theorisations explain that class emerged through economic globalisation (Kandiyoti, 1996). Regardless of the origin of class, more women started to seek work outside the household - some due to economic pressure and increased poverty levels, while others sought employment outside the household for self-development (Moghadam, 1998).

Additionally, in the Middle East the public sector was the most welcoming to women, especially because of the provision of maternity and child care benefits (Guégnard et al., 2005). However, structural adjustments and privatisation of certain parts of the public sector led to high unemployment rates amongst women and men. This has a negative influence on poor families and unemployed women because it is traditionally women’s role to manage the family. This consequently leads a lot of

working class women to engage in informal economic activities, and leads men to seek employment in the private sector. Moreover, the unfriendliness of the private sector towards women led to the increased housewife-ization of many women, particularly educated middle-class women (Moghadam, 1998).

The informal sector is described as badly paid and requiring long hours of work; it also marginalises women from engaging in political life because it greatly depends on household production. As Hopkins (1991, cited in El-Mikawy, 1999:79) states: 'the informal sector represents a marginal class of people who are subordinated to the domination of international capitalism...who are exploited in the sense of being paid substandard wages... or no wages at all.... and therefore concretize the industrial reserve army'. Women's engagement in informal economic activities reinforces the invisibility of women's work, as most of those activities take place unofficially and on an irregular basis. However, I argue that women's economic activity in the informal sector is essential for their lives and the lives of their family members, and it also contributes to the formal economy of the state. At the same time women's economic activities can provide them with relative power in their households, making them not always passive victims of economic globalisation. Despite its importance, and as men are assigned the role of breadwinners, women's paid work is not taken into account because of its unseen importance in the overall economy of the state and in households (Bahramitash, 2005). An important aspect of women's productive and reproductive roles that has been invisible and unrecognised is their unpaid work in the household (Elson, 1999, Waring, 2003).

Furthermore, women's work outside the household has been closely linked to her work inside the household, because women are expected to do jobs which are related to their 'nature'. For this reason women's work does not receive great recognition, and in many cases remains invisible (Bhavnani et al., 2003). Moghadam (2003) argues that economic globalisation 'devolves upon women to provide both

productive and reproductive labour, often with inadequate or no remuneration and with few social rewards' (Moghadam, 2003b: 75). Moghadam's statement does not leave room for us to acknowledge that economic globalisation has different effects on women depending on class and age, for example. Moreover, Moghadam's argument implies that although the male-breadwinner model is challenged, patriarchy is not changing, and that women are always victims of patriarchal structures. Furthermore, she fails to highlight the importance of women's work even if it is invisible.

Official statistics severely underestimate the extent of women's economic activity. Thus, the proportion of women in the labour force in seven Arab countries has been estimated as under 10 percent (Hijab, 2003). Thus women's economic activity is invisible. Hijab (2003) points out that in India women's labour force participation was estimated as low as 13 percent; however, after some modifications in the definition of work by the ILO, 88 percent of women were found to be working and economically active, as the following quote demonstrates:

'The small proportion of women in the labour force in official statistics does not mean that few Arab women work, or even that few earn money. Third World statistics rarely reflect the real number of economically active men and women... Official statistics tend to define work as labour for wages. This excludes some working men and most working women from the figures, although the work of an urban housewife in the Third World usually involves a long day of hard physical labour' (Hijab, 1988: 72-3).

El-Azhary Sonbol (2003) argues that Arab women's work is 'invisible,' because women do what they are expected to do. She explains that women's work is largely linked to their families and households, and for this reason women are discriminated against 'in the economic, political and legal structures' (El-Azhary Sonbol, 2003: 100). These types of discrimination may explain why women are invisible in labour force statistics, by ignoring their informal economic activities,

which are different to men's, but at the same time very important for their lives, their families and the formal sector of the economy. Women's domestic labour and household production are crucial for 'the functioning of the economic system' (Beneria and Sen, 1997: 48) and are also important for the welfare and livelihoods of their families, particularly in a context where it became harder to maintain a male-breadwinner model due to economic need. It is also important to recognise that many women work and engage in economic activities, even when financial need does not exist. Therefore, it is very problematic to generalise that all women work due to financial need, and even those who work for reasons other than financial need, such as self-development, can be seen as resisting patriarchy and challenging the male-breadwinner paradigm. This suggests that an intersectional approach would help us to understand the differential ways in which globalisation affects women's economic activities. Furthermore, in addition to economic globalisation and patriarchal state laws there are other factors that influence women's economic activities, and their effects differ according to class, age, and marital status.

This section has reviewed the literature that deals with women and work on a macro-sociological level. It has shown that patriarchal state policies and Islamic laws influence women's economic activities in the Middle East. The literature suggests that the tendency of state managers to preserve the family unit, and to confine women to their domestic roles, affects women adversely and places them in positions where it becomes hard for them to make independent decisions regarding their work and lead independent lives. However, I argue that patriarchal state policies and laws can always be challenged by women and men, and the desire of state managers to preserve traditional gender roles is challenged by the effects of globalisation and the economic needs emerging from it. Due to structural adjustments and economic reforms in the Arab Middle East in the 1980s many women sought outside the household due to economic need or self-development. Furthermore, due to the shrinking public sector many women sought income in the

informal sector. As economic globalisation has made the poor poorer and the rich richer, women from different classes are seeking economic activities for different reasons. Therefore, in order to understand women's different experiences one must take into account the intersections of gender and class, in addition to other variables such as age, education and marital status.

Moreover, the state, religion and economic globalisation are not the only factors that influence women's economic activities. Moghadam (1998) suggests that an understanding of women in relation to work in the Middle East should take several factors into consideration: the state and its laws, economic reform or economic globalisation, physical infrastructure and patriarchal gender ideologies. The next section discusses patriarchy at the micro-level, or patriarchy at the level of the family and the household, and the way in which it affects women's economic activities. It argues that although patriarchy exists on the level of the family unit it operates differently according to class, that the family unit in the Middle East is changing, and that class affects the form of families in the Middle East. It also argues that women are not always passive victims of patriarchy as they bargain, negotiate and resist it.

2.2 Women, Work, and Economic Activity 'from Below'

Research at the micro level focuses on the study of women 'from below', i.e. the study of the family as a core unit in Arab societies and intra-household relations. Moreover, it involves exploring the effects of culture and tradition as well as the influence of patriarchy on women's engagement in income generating activities. It also investigates how marriage, as part of the Arab social structure, influences the kind of economic activities available to and/or 'suitable' for women. The problem with much of this research is that it regards the family unit as a static social structure, which cannot be challenged or changed. It also fails to recognise the difference between family structures across classes. As previously mentioned, states in the Middle East view the family unit as the basis of society and state policies support this family form, giving special emphasis on men as heads of households and breadwinners, and women as child bearers and caregivers. Kandiyoti (1988), for example, explains patriarchy as the control of senior men over women and younger men, saying that this control 'is bound up in the incorporation and control of the family by the state' (Kandiyoti, 1988: 278). Moghadam (1998) called this system of women's oppression 'the patriarchal gender contract', and she states that it means,

'Women would marry young that households would be headed by men, and that men would have jobs and would provide for their families. In such a context, families invested more in the educational attainment of males than females, a practice that resulted in the rather large gender gaps that exist in literacy and mean years of schooling in the region' (Moghadam, 1998: 10).

However, the specific form of patriarchy Moghadam refers to does not always explain women's position. Women have different experiences because the structure of male-headed families and women marrying young is not a universal experience in the Middle East, and women are increasingly receiving education.

El-Azhary Sonbol (2003), attempts to explain women's position in relation to work through exploring state laws and social discourses. By social discourses she refers to what is taken for granted or expected from women. She states that discourses stipulate that,

'A woman's place is at home, that her primary loyalty is to her family, that she has to obey her father and her husband, and that is up to the latter to agree that she can take a job' (El-Azhary Sonbol, 2003: 100).

Afshar (1985) argues that the family unit is the place where women's subordination is clearly seen. She adds that 'mothers, daughters, sisters, and wives are subject to the intense operation of... the moral economy of kinship which controls women and their work' (Afshar, 1985: xiv). However, we cannot generalise that the family unit operates similarly in every case, as in the Middle East there are 'diverse family patterns... that tend to be reproduced' (Joseph and Slyomovics, 2001: 8).

Despite the recurring debate on the influence of the state on women's employment, labour force participation and income generating activities, the family unit and household relations remain integral to the study of women's work. For example, in Cuba the state issued what is called the Family Code Law, under which women and men are supposed to have equal status and responsibilities in and outside the household. However, scholars have noted that regardless of this legislation women continued to do most of the household work, in addition to having to work outside the household because of economic pressure and need (Toro-Morn et al., 2002).

In her study on women's employment and unemployment in Jordan, Miles (2002) reports that a large proportion of her unemployed sample mentioned that familial opposition was the reason behind their economic inactivity (Miles, 2002). She mentioned that fathers, brothers, and husbands' disapproval seemed to hinder those women's economic activities. It is therefore important to review the literature

on power relations inside the households of Arab families, as they are likely to influence women's economic activities.

It has been argued that Arab societies are collectivistic in nature (Joseph and Slyomovics, 2001, Hopkins and Ibrahim, 2006). Collectivistic societies are generally characterised by people being defined in terms of group membership, and giving priority to group goals, needs and values, rather than personal or individual ones (Mortazavi et al., 2009). The behaviour of the individual in that sense is reflective of the collective, and the wellbeing of the family is seen as the guarantee for the wellbeing of the individual (Newman, 1999). For that reason, in collectivistic societies shame and honour of women are seen as a reflection of the whole group. In the Arab world for example, the misconduct of a woman is seen as the misconduct of her father/brother/or husband, and under that banner honour crimes take place (Barakat, 1993). Shukri (1996) states,

'Women in Jordan bear a special responsibility for family honour (*ird*)... as long as a woman conforms to certain standards of modest feminine conduct her family's status is maintained or even improved, whereas unwomanly conduct is a blot not just on her personal reputation but on the reputation of the whole family' (Shukri, 1996: 2).

Joseph (1993) describes familial relations in the Arab world in relation to patriarchal connectivity. She defines connectivity as,

'The relationships in which a person's boundaries are relatively fluid so that persons feel a part of significant others... I use connectivity to mean an activity or intention, not a state of being' (Joseph, 1993: 467).

She also defines patriarchy in relation to 'cultural constructs and structural relations that privilege the initiative of males and elders in directing the lives of others' (Joseph, 1999: 12). She contends that connectivity in that sense supports patriarchal structures in patriarchal societies. Discussions of the family unit in the Arab Muslim Middle East range from viewing the family as an egalitarian unit, in which all

members have their needs met, to viewing the family as the basic authoritarian unit of women's oppression. Moreover, while some argue that the family unit gives men rather than women and children power inside the household, others have noted that women use the family to increase their power and bargain with patriarchal rules (Hatem, 1999).

I argue that the family unit in the Middle East is in continuous change, as a result of urbanisation, modernisation, economic development, and access, particularly women's access, to education (Sharabi, 1988, Barakat, 1993, Hopkins, 2003). Some argue that the extended family was the main form of social organisation before modernisation, and that the nuclear family has since replaced it (Barakat, 1993, Sharabi, 1988, Stack, 2003). However, the extended family still exists in the Middle East, in spite of the changes in the family unit, as a form of social organisation. It is important to understand household gender relations by looking at the family as an 'institution and social setting' (Hopkins, 2003: 1). This institution, or social setting, does not have a unitary form and differs according to class, place of residence, the strength of kinship ties, and race. Furthermore, 'the family constitutes the dominant social institution through which persons and groups inherit their religious, class and cultural affiliations. It also provides security and support in times of individual and societal stress' (Barakat, 1993: 98).

The importance of the family unit is partly due to the lack of a welfare state in the Middle East and Third World countries, which makes the family the primary source of economic and social security (Joseph and Slyomovics, 2001, Joseph, 1993). On the Arab family, Barakat (1993), based on his own 'scholarly analysis' on an 'Arab perspective,' explaining that as the basic unit for social organisation the Arab family represents the self denial of its members for the sake of preserving the unit. He argues that in the Arab world the father is given the role of the provider, the mother is the homemaker and children's roles change from being dependents to becoming supporters of their parents in old age (Barakat, 1993). His analysis only

shows that the family is based on the concept of prioritising the family's wellbeing over the individual and that familial relations are based on 'sacrifice', and 'love'. For example, for Barakat, in the Arab family the mother's happiness is generally linked to the wellbeing and prosperity of her children, and for that reason mother's self-denial and efforts towards the wellbeing of her children are seen as forms of sacrifice and love, which bring her happiness. Using his words, 'the very concept of family in Arabic (*'aila or usra*) reflects such mutual commitments and relationships of interdependence and reciprocity' (Barakat, 1993: 98). It must be said that Barakat's portrayal of the Arab family dismisses the existence of any patriarchal oppression within the family unit. Although he says that there are patriarchal structures within the Arab family unit, he does not problematise these, instead claiming that Arab families are based on reciprocity and with the needs of each member met. His argument also denies the existence of personal interests within the family unit. For example, Agarwal (1997) says,

'Households/families... are recognisably constituted of multiple actors, with varying (often conflicting) preferences and interests, and differential abilities to pursue and realise those interests. They are arenas of (albeit not the sole determinants of) consumption, production and investment, within which both labour and resource allocation decisions are made. And evidence from many regions reveals persistent gender inequalities in the distribution of household resources and tasks' (Agarwal, 1997: 3).

This points to another aspect of patriarchy in the Arab world - the unequal distribution of resources and tasks in the household, which is not the focus of this research. There is some evidence to support Barakat's view. Thus in her study of a camp in Lebanon, Joseph noticed that men and women tended to prioritise families over themselves as individuals, and men and women alike accepted their responsibilities towards their families by accepting the patriarchal and age-based hierarchal relations within the community. The reproduction of this particular hierarchy led many women of the camp to view their sons as their 'ultimate security'

(Joseph, 1993: 473). Sharabi (1988) notes over-dependency on the family by male children, who expect their mothers and sisters, and later wives, to serve their needs inside the household (Sharabi, 1988).

Since it is not sufficient to theorise patriarchy as the same in all cultures, and in different contexts, some scholars attempt to find definitions for patriarchy specifically tailored for the Arab World. Kandiyoti (1988) called patriarchy in the Middle East and North Africa 'classical patriarchy', meaning a system of hierarchies which enforces the superiority of men and seniors, including women, over junior women and men (Joseph, 1993, 1996 Kandiyoti, 1988). Women, moreover, contribute to the reproduction of patriarchy as a system. Kandiyoti explains how women witness power shifts after bearing a male heir, and how in old age they get the chance to control their sons, daughters-in-law, and other young women. She calls this 'bargaining with patriarchy' rather than patriarchal oppression or patriarchal control, and she does not limit the practice of oppression to men. It has been said about Palestinian women,

'It is not the nuclear family but the patrilineal family complex of classic patriarchy that provides the cultural framework for internalising and reproducing female subordination... the female life cycle is crucial in shaping gender identity. Power is acquired through seniority and by bearing male heirs' (Haj, 1992: 763).

These arguments show that patriarchy operates in certain forms of family, such as the extended or the nuclear family. However, the intersectional approach to understanding women's experiences shows that patriarchy influences women even within the same family differently according to age; the treatment of a daughter is different from the treatment of a wife or a mother. Moreover, patriarchy operates differently in families of different class backgrounds. For example, patriarchy can influence women with higher education differently when compared to women without higher education. It is, therefore, important not to view patriarchy as non-

changing or static, because women can bargain with patriarchy, and because it does not influence all women in the same way.

Patriarchy, however, is defined in different ways. Ebert (1988) for example defines patriarchy as the 'organisation and division of all practices and signification in culture in terms of gender and the privileging of one gender over the other, giving males control over female sexuality, fertility, and labour' (Ebert, 1988:19). Hartmann (1981), on the other hand, defines patriarchy as men's control over women's work inside and outside the household, and argues that as a system based on a division of labour, it benefits men (Hartmann, 1981). Hartmann adopts a Marxist feminist standpoint towards the family as a 'locus of struggle,' where production and distribution take place, and conflict is created. This sort of materialist analysis tends to look at gender relations in terms of production and reproduction within and outside the household, where capitalism and patriarchy intersect to affect the form of gender relations (Hartmann, 1981). Phizacklea (1988) follows Hartmann's and Cockburn's (1985) definition of patriarchy from a materialist perspective (Phizacklea, 1988). Cockburn uses Hartmann's definition of patriarchy as,

'A set of social relations which has a material base and in which there are hierarchal relations between men and solidarity among them, which enables them in turn to dominate women. The material base of patriarchy is men's control over women's labour power. That control is maintained by excluding women from access to necessary economically productive resources and by restricting women's sexuality' (Cockburn 1985) cited in Phizacklea (1988: 17-18).

This view has been shared by others, who explain that inequalities between the sexes are due to economic dependency and men's control of women's labour, and because 'money matters because it is a route to the accumulation of wealth and power' (Joeke, 1987: 20). If power derives from money then clearly women will not have the same share of power as men in the households, and intra-household relations will depend greatly on the relations between men's and women's earnings.

Others claim that even when women start earning, there are gender ideologies that support their subordination and their status as unequal to men (Kabeer, 1997). In her study on Sikh women in Britain, Bhachu (1988) argues that women's access to money improves their situation within the household and gives them the chance to do as they please with their earnings (Bhachu, 1988). Others have added that women's income generating activities give them power over decision-making inside the household when they contribute financially to it (Allen and Wolkowitz, 1987). However, Kabeer (1997) explains that although many scholars have found that cash and earning give women relative power in the household, others have considered gendered ideologies of men's and women's roles resilient, and patriarchal ideologies have prevailed (Kabeer, 1997). Vogler (2005) proposes that money plays a significant role in shaping intra-household relations, and that it has a great influence on the allocation of power between household members (Vogler, 2005). However, intra-household power relations are also greatly influenced by the traditional assigned gender roles; some studies show that although women have been increasingly entering the labour force, their chores and duties inside the households remain the same (Glenn, 1985, Charles, 1993).

According to Nickie Charles: 'patriarchy is notoriously difficult to define but it is usually taken to mean the dominance of all men over all women or the dominance of older men over women and younger men' (Charles, 1993: 88). In this research, patriarchy is used to mean a system of male domination, and I suggest that it is legitimised through structures that hold symbolic meanings attached to genders. Those symbolic meanings are socially constructed, and are learnt and reproduced. The reproduction of symbolic meanings leads to the reproduction of patriarchal structures which reinforce male domination over women and younger men. This approach overcomes the limitations of the materialist perspective in defining patriarchy, as the materialist analysis does not explain the persistence of male

domination and gender ideologies, even when women engage in income generating activities and earn money.

Shami and Taminian (2006) for example explore the ways the gender division of labour works in Amman, Jordan, within the family. They explore the roles of the father, the mother, and their children in production within their household. They say the male authority 'determines the general contours of the life of the household: the income, the place of residence, the relationships with other heads of households within the kinship group' (Shami and Taminian, 2006: 185). In another study, Shami and Taminian (1990) describe the sexual division of labour in agriculture, in terms of production outside the household, where women used to work seasonally in waged family farming. They argue that despite the fact that working patterns in agriculture have changed and women earned wages on their family farms, men were the decision makers, and the owners of the products and the land. They gave an example of how one man said 'the women are mine, therefore the tomato is mine' (Shami and Taminian, 1990: 27). This shows how men believed that they 'own' women, the same way they own properties.

Joseph (2006) writes about emotional relations within households, which are based on love and power. Joseph refers to brother-sister relations as based on love and romanticisation leading brothers to offer 'protection' to their sisters. For example, this love relationship may lead to control over women's sexuality, by using the excuse of protection. However, Joseph, at the same time, reminds us that a study of such relations should not only take love into consideration, but should also include an analysis of the power relations within familial contexts which are justified by cultural practices (Joseph, 2006).

Moreover, the symbolic relations between men and women, according to Connell (2002), are based on the meanings attached to gender. For example, in Arab societies the act of crying is often associated with women, therefore, when a man

cries people often say 'you act like a woman, because men do not cry'. This does not mean that he biologically changed to become a woman; rather the meanings of such a description 'call into play a tremendous system of understandings, implications, overtones, and allusions that have accumulated through our cultural history' (Connell, 2002: 65). Baxter (2007) says the same about the ideologies of honour and shame in Palestinian culture. She indicates that honour and shame are part of an ideology, in that they are imagined but have symbolic meanings and practical consequences in the lives of men and women (Baxter, 2007). As Joseph (2006) states, women in the Arab World are generally viewed as part of their families' honour and their sexual misconduct brings shame to the whole clan. Baxter states,

'Honour ideology, specifically as it relates to sexuality, is a hegemonic discourse as, in ideal terms, it establishes, reinforces, and idealizes males (and, to some degree, older women) as authorities. Men are guides and protectors who, as part of their commitments, punish, if they see fit and this, too, is seen as natural and obvious. Women as the "weaker sex" need such attendance while men—strong, sensible, and reasoned—must provide it' (Baxter, 2007: 764).

Symbolic meanings, such as honour, are embedded within patriarchy as a system of oppression. Those symbolic meanings are socially constructed, and can be challenged and changed. However, symbolic meanings of patriarchy often portray men as stronger than women, who are weak and in need of men's protection.

Many aspects of women's subordination in the Middle East are based on patriarchal social cultural ideologies to which both men and women are subjected. These ideologies privilege men and give them more power than women, and both men and women play a role in reproducing them. For example, the work of Joseph (2006) discusses the power that brothers practise over their sisters in the Arab world. She notes during fieldwork that 'parents taught daughters that loving their brothers included serving them and taught brothers that loving their sisters included some control over them' (Joseph, 2006: 243-4). This patriarchal ideology was usually

transmitted through parents, and in some cases the community as a whole, making men realise that they have some sort of control over their sisters, a situation which derives its legitimacy from symbolic meanings. Another example comes from Shami and Taminian (1990), who note that men had power over women in agriculture because of their belief that they 'own' their women, and also because they have power to control their labour. However, that belief is also based on learnt transmitted gender ideologies. What those studies generally lack is an understanding of how gender ideologies do not influence all women in the same way, because they intersect with other social categories such as class, and also because women in many cases reject, resist, bargain, and negotiate patriarchy.

It is very important to recognise women's agency, and at the same time recognise that women's agency itself depends on many factors. Eduards (1994) states,

'Human ability to initiate change and transcend the given is differently trained and exercised in various socio-political contexts. Some people get better training than others in bringing something about, due to class, race, sex, location, and other factors. Women's agency, for example, is much less used and applied than men's' (Eduards, 1994: 181-2).

Droeber (2003) conducted a study on young middle class women in Jordan in which she argues that young middle class women reshape, reformulate and renegotiate certain ideologies in patriarchal societies, and are contributors to social change. Moghadam (2003a) also built her related argument in her book *Modernising Women*, based on the contention that 'middle-class women are consciously and unconsciously major agents of social change in the region, at the vanguard of movements for modernity, democratisation, and citizenship' (Moghadam, 2003a: xxi).

In spite of these scholars' acknowledgement of Middle Eastern women's agency, this agency appears to be exclusively a middle class one, marginalising the agency of working class women or women coming from poorer backgrounds. Therefore, one must look at women's agency because it exists regardless of class, although class influences the extent of women's agency and the way it operates. The intersectionality approach helps not only in understanding women's different experiences, but also in understanding how women's agency operates depending on class, age, marital status, etc., because 'all human beings, by nature, have agency, the capacity to initiate change, to commit oneself to a certain transformative course of action' (Eduards, 1994: 181). However, agency differs across classes, and for this reason the different operations of women's agency can be understood through adopting an intersectional approach that takes into account the differences between women.

2.3 The Intersectionality of Class and Gender

Amman, the capital of Jordan, represents an interesting case of class differentiation and heterogeneity, as class is determined by area of residence (Miles-Doan, 1992). Using a Marxian approach, Miles-Doan (1992) concludes that this class system means that people living in squatter areas, regardless of gender, are considered to be of the working class and are seen as the 'reserve army' for labour demand. El-Solh (2003) has argued that class in the Arab region overrides gender in determining women's participation in the labour force. However, she says little about how class affects women's labour force participation through an understanding of how it influences the everyday lives of women. Moreover, it is inaccurate to say that any form of stratification overrides the other, because women live different experiences and are not a homogenous group; this means that looking at the intersectionality of different inequalities would provide us with a better picture of women's position. Social inequalities based on gender, class and race intersect and create differential experiences between people. There has not been enough work done that examines how those social inequalities intersect to shape people's experiences. For that reason it is very important to incorporate the intersectionality of these categories in the study of women and work. Al-Ali and Pratt (2009) state,

'Women's oppression and struggles are constituted by a wide array of structural inequalities linked to gender, race, class, sexual orientation, as well as nationality... categories such as 'gender', 'sexuality', 'class', 'ethnicity', 'nationality' are always constructed, reproduced and resisted through intersections with one another' (Al-Ali and Pratt, 2009: 6).

Therefore, it is important to understand that the intersections of those categories create women's unique life experiences. However, intersectionality does not only mean including race and class in the study of gender, or including gender in racial

studies; rather it emphasises that such categories are not independent and they contribute to the reproduction and resistance of one another.

Collins (2000) discusses gender, class and race as 'interlocking social institutions' or intersecting oppressions (Collins, 2000: 277). While speaking about black women in the US, she adds that women 'are positioned with situations of domination that are characterised by intersecting oppressions, yet their angle of vision on domination will vary greatly' (Collins, 2000: 232). Browne and Misra (2003), in their study of the intersection of race and gender in the labour market, argue that race and gender intersect 'under certain conditions,' and they also add that intersectionality is a useful theory for research on labour market and economic inequality (Browne and Misra, 2003). Glenn (2000) argues that

'A racialised gender analysis would contribute to the study of heterogeneity within categories by examining differences in gender within various communities... Class, ethnicity, generation, and other axes of difference interact to shape heterogeneous gender' (Glenn, 2000: 31).

Anthias (2005) argues that intersectionality is the best approach to the study of social inequalities, as it places people within multi-dimensional positions in social space, meaning that it allows for the study of how social actors are placed within multiple forms of social inequality, which might contradict or reinforce each other (Anthias, 2005). Ngan-Ling Chow (1996) states,

'Race, class and gender are inseparable determinants of inequalities. Functioning interdependently, these determinants form interlocking patterns that serve as bases for developing multiple systems of domination that affect access to power and privileges, influence social relationships, construct meanings and shape people's everyday experience' (Ngan-Ling Chow, 1996: xix).

However, it has been argued that intersectionality does not mean an additive model, which is based on the study of each social category independently, i.e. saying the women of colour for example face 'multiple jeopardy'. In other words, when we

say that women of colour suffer because of gender, in addition to their 'colour', we are saying that they share the same gender experiences with other women, and the same racism with other men; this is problematic. Acker (2006 a) states

'An additive model of gender, race, and class... assumes an internal coherence or commonality of experience within each category. An additive model fails to recognise that gender relations differ within different race and class situations' (Acker, 2006a: 36).

Acker (2006b) studies the intersection of gender, class and race in work organisations in the United States. She criticises the focus of certain studies on only one social category, such as gender, class or race, rather than studying the process through which these categories interweave, reproduce, and resist each other (Acker, 2006b). For example, poverty amongst women in the Middle East forces some of them to pursue work outside the household; however, this contradicts the 'traditional domestic roles' of women. In such cases, gender roles are influenced by other factors, such as economic need, and this prompts us to look at women as placed in multi-dimensional positions. The non-additive model that Acker suggests, and I use, is based on the idea that women's experiences are shaped by various forms of inequalities, and to understand those experiences we cannot study each social category on its own, and then add them together. Yuval Davis (2006) also argues that essentialising categories of social inequality such as 'womanhood' or 'blackness' 'render invisible the experiences of the more marginal members of that specific social category and construct an homogenised 'right way' to be its member' (Yuval-Davis, 2006: 195).

Based on that, I argue that patriarchy and gender relations do not provide a whole picture of women's oppression, as there are other factors that influence women's lives such as class, race, nationality and sexual orientation (Bograd, 2005). Therefore, it is inadequate to explain women's experiences with reference to one social category only such as gender (McCall, 2005). Skeggs (1997), in her study of

white working class women in England, explores what it means to be both a 'woman' and 'working class'. She uses Bourdieu's approach to class, seeing it in terms of both economic and cultural capital, and uses it to clarify the intersections between class and gender. Although she does not explicitly state that her work is focused on the intersectionality of class and gender, she provides a useful account of the way in which working class white women struggle for respectability far more than middle class women (Skeggs, 1997).

Moghadam (1995), in her study of women and work in the Middle East, analyses class in relation to work using a Marxian approach. She adds that women's positions are different because of class, and that upper middle class women benefit more from development and economic globalisation, and for that reason this group of women is more likely to be 'emancipated' (Moghadam, 1995: 11). Farsoun (2006) states that it is difficult to study class in the Middle East, because of the region's complexity. In his study of class, Farsoun (2006) argues that the best approach to class is to study its formation in terms of major developmental and structural economic changes (Farsoun, 2006).

More research is needed on class and gender in the Middle East. Whereas some have concluded that class exists in the Middle East (El-Solh, 2003, Miles-Doan, 1992, Farsoun, 2006, Moghadam, 1995), it is still unclear how the class system influences women's lives. The way through which class operates alongside gender needs more attention, especially that when studying Palestinians in Jordan studies do not highlight the class differences between them. This research looks at class in terms of cultural class as well as economic class, as it is important to study the way the cultural dimensions of class operate to shape the lives of women. Class is important in the study of women's economic activities because class and ethnicity, and not only gender, can play major roles in terms of determining women's economic activities and life chances.

It is important to acknowledge ethnicity as an important aspect of intersectionality, as it also provides a basis of inequality. However, this thesis focuses on the intersections of class and gender, because class is relatively neglected in studies of women in the Middle East, the main question of this research asks how class and gender intersect and influence women's economic activities and life experiences, and class divisions are very apparent in Amman. In spite of the importance of ethnicity as a form of inequality in the study of women, I designed my sample to include participants coming from the same Arab ethnic group, Jordanians of Palestinian origins, and Transjordanians. Ethnicity was not included in this research empirically, because Palestinians are not considered an ethnic group in Jordan, because, like Transjordanians, they are Arabs, and are not included in the ethnic quota law. On the other hand, I consider legal status in this case, instead of ethnicity, as all Palestinians in Jordan have Jordanian citizenship; some of them still have refugee status. I also look at class, because there are class divisions between Palestinians themselves in Jordan and the differences between the Palestinians in Jordan has often been neglected. In other words, many of the studies on the status of Palestinians in Jordan portray Palestinians as a homogenous group, despite class differences between Palestinians themselves.

As established in chapter one, there are a large number of Palestinian refugees living in Jordan and amongst my sample there were women refugees whose legal status was different from other non-refugee Palestinian interviewees and Transjordanians, but that does not mean that they were ethnically different. Including refugee women within the sample had been because Palestinian refugees mainly reside in East Amman, and I chose them as part of the East Amman interview sample.

Class divisions 'find expression in terms of power, income, wealth, responsibility, 'life chances', style and quality of life, and everything else that makes up the texture of existence' (Miliband, 1989: 25). Class, however, should not only be

measured by categorising people according to occupations, wealth or income (Crompton, 2008). Studying class should also take into account 'understanding the mechanisms that produce class inequalities' (Savage et al., 2005: 31). It is very important to note, moreover, that inequalities based on class are not 'natural' or inherent; they are the result of human actions, and are constructed (Crompton, 2008). Furthermore, looking at class in terms of economic capital is not enough, because it does not explain the 'role of culture (of practices and taste) in the structuring of class' (Savage et al., 2005: 40). Langston (1995) also defines class through culture by saying that,

'Class is your understanding of the world and where you fit in; it's composed of ideas, behaviour, attitudes, values, and language; class is how you think, feel, act, dress, talk, move, walk; class is what stores you shop at, restaurants you eat in; class is the schools you attend, the education you attain; class is the very jobs you will work at throughout your adult life' (Langston, 1995: 101-2).

Skeggs (2005) suggests that there should be a turn from economic class analysis to cultural, as well as economic, class analysis, but she does not ignore the economic aspects of class. She says,

'Class is defined as a cultural property (something that is owned by the person as an attitude or attribute) and... this is read back into practices, so that people learn not only what they are worth symbolically (socially and economically), but also how their cultural practices come to have (or not) a worth and value for others' (Skeggs, 2005: 48-9).

In their book, *Renewing Class Analysis*, Crompton et al. (2000) suggest that the analysis of class and stratification should not only take into account material inequalities, but should also include social inequalities based on cultural differences such as life styles and consumption behaviours. In the concluding chapter they suggest that for the study of class,

‘Exploring the embeddedness of the economic in the cultural and vice versa may be a useful way forward... the economic and the cultural are implicated in the production of class and other inequalities... the economic should be brought back into class analysis, although not the economic in a narrow sense but as a set of practices that are imbued with cultural meanings and experiences’ (Devine and Savage, 2000: 194-6).

I argue that patriarchy is a structure of gender relations which ascribes men and women specific roles. It also entails male domination over younger men and women in different aspects of life- socially, politically, economically and sexually. This structure is based on symbolic meanings attached to both genders i.e. what it means to be a ‘man’ and what it means to be a ‘woman’. The patriarchal structures identified in this thesis include the male breadwinner/female carer model and controlling female sexuality, because family’s honour is reflected in women’s behaviours. Men have to perform certain roles such as providing financially for the household, whereas women have to be carers, which confines their work to the private sphere. Moreover, women are often seen as ‘weak’ and that they cannot protect themselves and in need of protection by their male relatives and this consequently restricts women’s social mobility. Nonetheless, patriarchy as a structure of gender relations does not operate in the same way because it intersects with class, and consequently women have different experiences. Women negotiate with patriarchy differently according to their class and social status, women might challenge, resist and/or accommodate to patriarchal structures.

On the other hand, class is a structure of inequality where it can be measured economically and culturally/socially. I argue that class should not only be measured economically but also socially. The economic aspect of class can be measured by educational attainment, occupation, household income, individual income and place of residence. The social aspect of class, on the other hand, includes people’s attitudes, lifestyles, behaviours, honour, prestige and religious affiliation.

Economic and cultural class are important aspects and should be both taken into consideration because they influence one another. People's economic class can influence people's cultural class and vice versa. For example, someone with high educational attainment has more employment opportunities and as a result will have a different social status as opposed to someone with less educational attainment. Social status is a very important determinant of people's class because social status determines people's culture, which includes their way of life. For example, in this research I explore class differences between two different socioeconomic areas in Amman. Class is determined according to place of residence in Amman, as people in Amman have different economic background and social status depending on their place of residence. For example, people in the West side are viewed as 'high class', 'immoral', 'open minded' and also very well off. On the other hand, people from the East side are viewed as 'low class' 'backwards', 'very conservative', and poor. Therefore, I have used East and West Amman to describe two different class backgrounds –economic and social/cultural.

In the case of the Middle East Women do not have a separate class from their families. For example, women are not individualised in the sense that they cannot lead independent lives; they follow their families' class because societies in the Middle East are collectivistic and also because of patriarchal structures. A woman might have a different economic class from her other members in the family, for example she might have obtained higher education. However, because of her family's attitudes and lifestyle, she can still be subjected to patriarchal attitudes, which might limit her opportunities. In other words, patriarchal gender attitudes reflected in cultural attitudes and in some cases practices may influence women's experiences.

I have used western concepts such as class, patriarchy and agency and applied them in a Middle Eastern context through conducting an original research exploring the intersections of class and gender and its influence on women's

experiences in relation to economic activities. I had to borrow western concepts because the Middle Eastern conceptualisation on these concepts is not rich enough and also there is a lack of literature about patriarchy and class. There is relevant Middle Eastern literature on women's agency and bargaining with patriarchy, however, this literature does not recognise that women's agency is different depending on women's class. In other words, these studies either confine women's agency to either working class or middle class women. Moreover, Middle Eastern literature discusses the concept of patriarchy but does not explore that patriarchy operates differently depending on class.

This research focuses on the intersection of the economic and cultural aspects of class with gender relations, to understand women's different experiences in terms of economic activities. It also highlights how patriarchy operates differently across classes, and by looking at class I am attempting to overcome the generalisation that women sharing the same ethnicity or origin share the same experiences.

Conclusion

Literature on women's economic activities in the Middle East focuses on explaining women's subordination through the concept of patriarchy from micro and macro sociological levels. The state, through its application of certain laws, whether derived from Sharia law or not, influences women's involvement in economic activities, and it also encourages women's domesticity, placing great importance on their role within the family. However, state patriarchy, or patriarchy operating on the macro level, is often challenged through economic globalisation, which pushes many women to seek work formally and informally, and consequently may lead to undermine patriarchy. On the other hand, this literature does not acknowledge women's agency in creating social change and portrays women as victims of patriarchal state policies. It also does not recognise the differences between women, and does not explain women's different experiences under the same state structures. The intersectional approach to understanding women's different experiences fills in the gaps within the literature, and suggests a move away from general statements about all women in Jordan being affected in the same way by state policies, or patriarchal control.

The existence of patriarchy on the micro-level is also discussed in literature on Middle Eastern women, as familial roles are influential in determining women's engagement in income generating activities. This approach suggests that due to the collectivistic nature of Arab families it is hard for women to make decisions independently about different aspects of their lives, such as seeking work outside the household. This approach, however, also fails to recognise women's agency in challenging familial control, that patriarchy operates differently according to different social cultural and economic factors, and that families are different. This research suggests that patriarchy as a system of oppression exists and is supported by symbolic meanings given to gender, and as those meanings are constructed they can be negotiated, challenged and changed.

Although some studies recognise women's agency in creating social change, they do not recognise that agency exists on all levels of society, and they confine it to middle class women. This marginalises poorer women's agency and their resistance to, bargaining, and negotiations with patriarchy. Therefore, this intersectional approach suggests looking at how women's agency operates differently, and how women from different socioeconomic backgrounds act as agents; however, women's agency is often affected by class, age, and marital status. Since this research looks at the intersections of class and gender, this chapter offers a brief discussion of how I conceptualise class. It has suggested that a comprehensive understanding of class can be provided through understanding of both the economic and cultural aspects of class, rather than favouring one aspect over the other.

This research explores women's different experiences in relation to economic activity, and the factors that influence their economic activity/inactivity. It is undertaken from a feminist perspective and employs feminist methods, which acknowledge women as producers of knowledge. The next chapter explains the use of feminist methodologies, the methodological approach to this research, and the centrality of understanding women's experience and agency in feminist research. It discusses how the data collection methods were chosen to suit the research questions and the overall aims of the research, and describes difficulties and ethical issues in the field, in addition to how my position as a female researcher interviewing women in the Middle East affected the research process.

Chapter Three: Methodologies

Introduction

In the previous chapter I discussed the literature around women's situation in the Middle East, and developed the overall theoretical framework for this research. In what follows I use an intersectional approach to explore how patriarchy operates differently depending on class, thereby affecting women's experiences and their engagement in economic activity. I chose to explore the impact of class and gender on women's economic activities in order to overcome generalisations that portray women as sharing the same homogeneous ethnicity, and because class is overlooked in studies on women in the Middle East. Within this intersectional approach, I took into consideration women's agency as producers of knowledge and active agents in shaping their lives and realities. The intersectional approach of this research also looks at how intersections of gender and class influence women's agency. In other words, it takes into account that women's agency differs according to several factors, such as age, marital status, educational attainment, etc. This research takes a feminist approach in order to explore women's different economic activities, drawing on women's own experiences and views to investigate the factors influencing their economic activity.

This chapter reflects on my positionality in the field, my 'insider/outsider' status, and how my position influenced the research process. It sheds light on power and ethical issues which arose in the field, in addition to the ethical considerations I had to review during the writing up process, as I wanted to avoid exploiting the information provided by the research participants and distorting their 'truth'. It explains the difficulties I faced in the field, and how the original design of the research was changed due to political reasons. It discusses how I had to change the initial focus of the research from women Palestinian refugees to women in Amman, and also discusses the political nature of conducting independent research in Jordan,

particularly if it involves the Palestinians. The limitations of the research are also discussed.

This chapter shows how the methods used in this research were designed to answer the research questions, and how they succeeded in providing the data needed. I have combined qualitative and quantitative research methods, and this combination helped in validating the research findings. The findings of this research are based on 18 interviews conducted with women between the ages of 20 and 40, and 164 questionnaires distributed to men and women. The design of the questionnaire and the interviews aimed to answer the following research questions,

- How do class and gender intersect to influence women's economic activities and life experiences?
- What are men's and women's views of women's economic activity? What factors influence these views?
- What factors affect women's economic activity and are these different for women in East and West Amman?
- What economic activities are women in East and West Amman involved in? How do these differ?

3.1 Changing the Focus

My initial focus of study was Palestinian Women Refugees in Amman and their economic activity. I wanted to undertake a comparative study of camp and non-camp refugee women in Amman and the effect of class and gender on their economic (in)activity. Amman is geographically divided into west and east (see chapter one), and refugee camps are located in the impoverished East Amman part; the West side of the city is affluent. The difference

‘is not only about a topographical division within Amman itself... In East Amman you can touch and feel almost everything. Poverty and misery, people on the street, children playing football. Here everything affects you. Especially a smell. You can change a car, you can dress differently. But the smell of stinky water dribbling on the streets in Palestinian camp remains’ (Khalifa and Krzysiek, 2008: Para 4).

I left the UK and headed to Amman in early July 2007 and once I had found a place to stay, I started contacting people regarding access. I had already chosen the camp I wanted to access prior to my arrival in Amman and I had also determined my sample in terms of the number of women I wanted to interview, and the number of questionnaires to be distributed to both men and women. I had chosen *Alwehdat* refugee camp because it is the second largest refugee camp in Jordan and it is located in the East side of Amman.

In August 2007, I went to the UNRWA¹⁰ offices in *Alwehdat* refugee camp in Amman, Jordan. After waiting for almost half an hour for someone to see me, I was able to talk to one of the male managers working there. I explained that I was seeking the UNRWA’s help in accessing the community as I wanted to conduct research on women refugees in *Alwehdat* camp. Moreover, I told him that the fieldwork will entail interviewing people from UNRWA to learn more about their

¹⁰ The United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East; it provides assistance to 4.5 million registered Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and the Occupied Territories of Palestine

work. I felt a bit anxious; however, the feeling of excitement overwhelmed me. The manager informed me that they helped a lot of researchers and journalists to access the camp. He also added that I first had to get permission and that the UNRWA would not be able to help unless I got permission, saying that the secretary would inform me about the whole procedure. At that time, I was still excited and enthusiastic about going to the camp and starting my fieldwork. The secretary took me to her office and then started explaining that I needed to go to the Department of Palestinian Affairs as this department would help me deliver my request to the appropriate authorities and in this case the intelligence apparatus. However, researching Palestinian refugees in Jordan obviously is not an easy task to undertake, particularly when the research is being conducted independently.

Sitting in the secretary's office and listening to her explaining this to me, I could notice curiosity in her eyes, to know more about me and my research; however, her questions about my personal life overshadowed her questions about the research. She also said that this is an official procedure and must be done. She then told me not to worry as she would call one of her friends who works with the intelligence services and who might help. At that moment, I started questioning and asking myself why she would want to call someone from the intelligence services to ask for help. I did not say anything and she then asked me to go immediately, if possible, to the Department of Palestinian Affairs and get going with the paper work. Before leaving the office, the secretary gave me a woman's name to see in the Department and she said that she would call this woman and let her know that I was going to see her. She also gave me her phone number and said to call her if I needed any help. At that moment I still did not have any doubts about being able to get access, I just thought that it was another formal bureaucratic procedure.

I took off and headed straight to the Department, when I reached the place a male employee gave me directions to the women's office. When I entered the office which consisted of four desks, no one was there. After almost 15 minutes of waiting,

an approachable woman came and apologised for being late. She was very nice and helpful. She explained that I needed to write a formal letter explaining my research and that the Department would send it to the intelligence apparatus. She asked me to write the letter immediately and attach a copy of my passport to the letter, and so I did. Afterwards, she said that I need to go downstairs and give the required papers to someone who is in charge of sending the *Mu'amallat*¹¹. While I was writing the letter, she said that she hoped I would get their approval. I was a bit sceptical of what she said, and asked her if many people do research on camp Palestinian refugees, she said yes and she pointed to huge piles of papers on a shelf in her office. She then gave me the Department's number and her office extension, and asked me to call in one week to ask about my *Mu'amaleh*. I left her office heading to the other employee who would send my papers. During this week, while I was anticipating the approval, I finalised my interview questions and the questionnaires to commence my field work.

In August 2008 on a Thursday, I received the rejection without knowing the reasons. At that moment I started thinking about the options that I had. I had already written my proposal and plan for the research; I felt distressed and anxious, and I was concerned that my research was undoable. I also tried *wasta*¹² through my extended family in Amman to get this permission or at least to give me some reasons on why my research was rejected. My *wasta* was not influential enough to get me the permission; however, I was told that my research was rejected because the issue of Palestinian refugees is very sensitive and extremely political, and therefore the Jordanian government bans research being done on Palestinians in Jordan. I have also been told that speaking about Palestinian refugees in Jordan is a red line. After thorough thinking I decided to re-write my proposal. So instead of researching

¹¹ Official Document

¹² *Wasta* is an Arabic word which means using one's connections or influence to get things done. For example, this could be used to get a job promotion, skip bureaucratic procedures and even not pay fines. *Wasta* in the Arab World takes place in the public and private sector.

Palestinian refugee women, I changed it to women living in Amman, including Transjordanians and Palestinians. My research changed from comparing camp and non-camp refugee women, to a comparison of the economic activities of women living in West and East Amman. The research questions had to change, as the research had originally been based on the following research questions,

- What are the factors which influence female Palestinian camp and non-camp refugees' economic activity in Jordan?
- What are the differences between female camp refugees and female non-camp refugees in terms of economic activity? How can I explain the different economic activities amongst female camp and non-camp Palestinian refugees?
- What do female and male Palestinian refugees think about female Palestinian refugees' work?

I changed the research questions to explore the same issues mentioned in the previous research questions, but for a different population (see page 82 for new research questions). This change also influenced my hopes and aims for the research, as I was hoping to remind the world that the problem of Palestinian refugees still exists, and to draw attention to the problem of Palestinian refugees in general and female Palestinian refugees specifically. However, the other focus of my research, the intersections of class and gender, did not change. Furthermore, one of the initial focuses was on women's economic activities, and that also did not change. My disappointment due to the rejection was mainly because instead of focusing on class and gender within the Palestinian refugee population, I had to focus the research on the intersections of class and gender amongst Arab women living in Amman.

I felt frustrated; I felt that I was being silenced, and naïve to believe that I could formalise my access to the refugee community through formal procedures. It occurred to me that in a 'neopatriarchal' state such as Jordan, one cannot simply

conduct political research. I felt like a prisoner in Jordan, restricted and scared. This reminded me of what Sharabi (1988) says about Arabic states,

‘The most advanced and functional aspect of the neopatriarchal state (in both conservative and “progressive” regimes) is its internal security apparatus, the *mukhabarat*. A two state system prevails in all neopatriarchal regimes, a military-bureaucratic structure alongside a secret police structure and the latter dominates everyday life, serving as the ultimate regulator of civil and political existence. Thus in social practice ordinary citizens not only are arbitrarily deprived of some of their basic rights but are the virtual prisoners of the state’ (Sharabi, 1988: 7).

This also made me feel that I had a precarious status in Jordan, especially since I was planning to carry out research on Palestinians, and also because I am a Palestinian myself. The government policy to ban the production of any research or any material on Palestinian refugees apparently aims to conceal the reality lived by camp-based Palestinian refugees in particular. I heard stories about journalists trying to enter the camps, and camp police confiscating their equipment when they are caught.

I changed my research focus to avoid crossing political redlines, primarily because I did not want to risk the whole research, and also because after receiving a formal disapproval carrying on with the initial study would have jeopardised my presence in Jordan. Moreover, since I am a Palestinian, I need residence permit in Amman, despite the fact that I have temporary Jordanian passport. So I had to visit governmental departments, and I was even asked to attend an interview in the intelligence apparatus headquarters because I asked for a residence permit. During that interview, I was asked about the reason behind my stay in Jordan. They also kept a record of the interview, and mentioned that they opened a file for me there, filled with details about my life, and my research. Therefore, initially I thought to myself that the best way to carry on with the research would be to change the sample, and to shift the focus from women Palestinian refugees to Jordanian women (of Palestinian and Jordanian origin) in general, so I proceeded on that basis. One

month before leaving the field, I met a Palestinian man through work who offered to help me in accessing the camps covertly. The young man, who was a Palestinian activist, took me to *Alwehdat* refugee camp in East Amman, and arranged for me to interview three women from the camp. I conducted the three interviews in one day in the Jordanian Women's Union, a local organisation in the camp.

At the camp entrance there is a police station and I was scared and shocked at seeing it. The young man whispered, 'do not pay attention to them, ignore them and act normally'. We walked into the camp, and I noticed police patrols spread in the camp alleyways. He again told me to keep going. We kept on walking until we arrived at the organisation, and the woman who was waiting for us there asked if anyone had noticed us. The camp was very crowded, while walking there I felt that everyone was looking at us. We seemed like 'outsiders'. All women in the streets were wearing the headscarf; I probably felt that I was an outsider because I was not wearing one and people, men and women, were staring, although I made sure to wear baggy clothes. The camp was full of market stalls between the residences, alleyways were very dirty and children were barefoot in the streets; it was chaotic!

Some of the alleyways we passed through and by were very narrow, and could only fit one person at a time. It seemed that there was not enough space between the houses. The houses looked old and with no ventilation. Some houses did not have windows, while others had broken windows. Extreme poverty was obvious. The organisation was not located in a central area; it was between residences. The building was very old, and dark. There were a few desks inside, and only the secretary was there, along with women interviewees. I must mention here that by interviewing Palestinian camp refugee women I might have placed some danger on them and myself because research on Palestinian refugees is banned in Jordan. The moment the secretary asked if anyone had noticed us going into the camp, I realised that I might be endangering the interviewees. However, it is hard to predict what consequences this could have had on them, as for me I knew that I was

endangering myself. If the police had stopped, I would have been interrogated at least. That is why during my interviews with them I did not feel safe, as Jordanian police roam in the neighbourhood streets of the camp, and so I just wanted the interviews to finish.

It must be noted that entering the camp provided me with more insight and understanding, and highlighted the fact that the situation in the camps is worse than the situation in other areas in East Amman. I even felt that there are differences between East Amman and the camps which are located in East Amman. The story of this research shows how hard it is to conduct research in a police state like Jordan. In addition to the difficulties arising from the political sensitivity of the original topic, as well as being a Palestinian in Jordan - keeping in mind the tensions between the Palestinians and the state of Jordan - there are also other issues that came out from the fact that I am a Middle Eastern woman researcher in the field. The following section will explain my position as an Arab female researcher in Jordan.

3.2 In the Field: Self, Power, Ethics

The field, where the research took place, is a familiar one, since I lived in it for four years during my undergraduate degree. Thus, 'situating myself' in the physical sense was not a hard task to accomplish; I already lived there before, I had family in Amman, I know the streets and the places, and I also have an awareness of the culture. I was familiar with the place but Amman has become more crowded with Iraqi Refugees after the 'War of Liberation' in Iraq in 2003, and the prices of commodities such as properties, food and petrol have increased. So Amman now consists of Jordanians, Palestinian and Iraqi refugees and immigrant workers from Egypt, Philippines, Indonesia and Sri-Lanka, in addition to British, Japanese, and Americans working in multi-national corporations and international NGOs. I noticed changes in faces and infrastructure, in terms of new roads, bridges, and restaurants since I left in 2005.

I arrived in the field in July 2007 and lived in it for almost 18 months. At the same time as I was collecting data for my research I was working full-time in an NGO, which provided Iraqi refugees with assistance. I made a great number of friends; I was engaging in their lives and at the same time observing them while myself being a full participant. Language is one of the most important means of communication, and since Arabic is my mother tongue; it made things easier in the field (McCall, 2006). Moreover, that I lived in Amman for four years during my undergraduate degree and my prolonged fieldwork stay helped me in understanding, exploring people's world and learning more about it, while at the same time being part of it. It gave me the chance to meet people from East and West Amman. I could see how people made sense of their lives, constructed their realities and made choices, and due to my interactions with people the assumption I had before I went that gender and class intersect became clearer to me.

Moreover, locating and positioning the researcher's 'self' in the field in terms of power hierarchy, class, gender, ethnicity and citizenship, in addition to discussing

personal issues and accounts of the researcher are important aspects of the research process 'to produce less distorted accounts of the social world' (Hertz, 1997: viii). Reinharz (1997) argues that the

'Self is the key fieldwork tool...we both *bring* the self to the field and *create* the self in the field. The self we create *in the field* is a product of the norms of the social setting and the ways in which the "research subjects" interact with the selves the researcher brings to the field' (Reinharz, 1997: 3).

As mentioned above I lived in Amman before doing fieldwork for different reasons, but now I became aware of a 'different self' when I went to fieldwork for the reason of conducting research. I agree with Reinharz, I brought to the field different selves depending on the social settings; these I call 'situated selves'. For example, when I used to go to the East side of Amman to interview women I was very cautious of my clothes i.e. I wore baggy clothes and long sleeved t-shirts when I wanted to interview women in East Amman because the community is more conservative and women are required to dress 'modestly' and not draw attention to their bodies and their sexuality. On the other hand, I used to wear my usual clothes which were jeans and short sleeved t-shirts, and I did not have to worry about my appearance when interviewing women from the West side as I felt that I was more an insider in this side of Amman, as I culturally have more things in common with women from the west side. For example, when I used to drive in West Amman, I was not the only woman driving, or the only woman not wearing the headscarf. As Pat Caplan states,

'There are... a number of factors which determine the kinds of data we collect and our interpretation of them. One of the most important of these is our positionality—*who are we to them? Who are they to us?* Such questions have to be considered...in terms of such factors as our gender, age, life experience, as well as our race and nationality' (Pat Caplan cited in Reinharz 1997:4)

I saw myself in the field as an outsider and insider because I am an Arab woman speaking Arabic, I have an extended family in Jordan and I already lived there before. I was an outsider because I am not a Jordanian citizen and I was in Jordan temporarily. Although I speak Arabic, my dialect is different, so Jordanians would know that I am from the occupied territories of Palestine. My insider status was both 'empowering and restricting' (Bolak, 1997). It was empowering, because I was familiar with the culture and I could speak the language. On the other hand, it was restricting because people, men and women, always felt the need to 'protect' me, because I was a single woman living away from my family. However, my professional and PhD status privileged me, as for them I was more than a *bint* (girl). I was a *bint gadaa'* (strong girl). Due to the fact that I was young, living alone, doing a PhD and working, I was perceived as strong. I have realised that my gender was 'negotiated rather than a given status during the research process' (Bolak, 1997: 104). In other words, my gender identity was not fixed and it intersected with my educational attainment and professional status. For example, women living alone in Jordan are frowned upon, they might be looked at as immoral; however, the fact that I was doing a PhD challenged the stereotypical views of women living alone. This also facilitated my research process because I was more respected although women who live alone are presumably not respected. I also felt that my insider status was at certain times disadvantageous because as insiders we sometimes take things for granted. For example, during interviews I constantly asked the interviewees to expand more on their answers, because although I understood what they were saying I did not want to take things for granted, and was attempting to overcome my own assumptions.

Being a female in the field made things easier for me because interviewees did not have a problem inviting me to their place to conduct the interview. It also made things easier as women talked without hesitation and I was told by them that they felt comfortable. As Butler (2001) states, the 'women to women interview has special

characteristics which give rise to the 'easy flow' of information, and subsequently more detailed and comprehensive data' (Butler, 2001: 103). What made things easy was not only the fact that I am a woman, but also I am what Collins (1986) calls an 'outsider within' i.e. not a Jordanian citizen, I am a Palestinian. For example, since I am doing a comparison between east and west Amman and I have asked them about their views on each side, they answered without hesitation, because I was neither from East or West Amman.

However, since the research process involves interaction between the researcher and the researched, several issues emerge. This research is feminist research, and one aspect of feminist work is an attempt to understand how and why people do what they do, and how people construct their realities. Feminist researchers and the researched have different constructed realities and therefore, we as feminist should avoid imposing what we see as 'right' on the research participants. Thus feminists reject the idea that the researcher becomes the expert in people's lives. I believe that researchers are in no position to claim their 'knowledge' is the absolute truth about people's lives, because the participants actively construct, (re)produce and negotiate their realities and experiences. Therefore, the researched are 'also avid students of human relations; they too have their social theories and conduct investigations' (Gouldner 1970 cited in Roseneil, 1993: 180).

Some feminists argue that research process and/or research on women should not be formalised, it should be more of an interactive process where the researcher's and the researched 'intuition, emotions and feeling... in combination with our (the researchers) capacities for analysing and interpreting our observations ... might produce a kind of scholarship that encompasses the complexity of reality better than the usual fragmented approach to knowledge' (Klein, 1983: 95). For that reason, during the interviews for example, I used to share my own experiences with the interviewees as a way to reduce the hierarchal power relations existing between me (the researcher) and them (the participants). Feminist scholars have introduced the

notion 'intersubjectivity' in the feminist methodology, where the researcher and the researched interact throughout the research process and also when the researcher talks about her own experience with the researched. Intersubjectivity reduces hierarchal power relations between the 'object' and the 'subject' (Westkott, 1979). Despite my attempts to create this intersubjectivity between me and the participants, I still felt that a hierarchal power relation existed between me and them. This type of hierarchy was based on the fact that I have more degrees. All of my interviewees except for one did not have MA degrees. I felt that all of them, except the MA degree holder, were looking up to me and trying to justify and explain why they did not carry on further with their studies. I always felt that I was in control of the interviews, in spite of my attempts to eliminate the hierarchal power relations. Moreover, education is much appreciated and very important in Jordan, a large number of people are pursuing higher education and people with higher educational attainments are considered of high status. During the interviews, they also used to praise me for being able to go on with my studies, and say that they wished their children would be like me in terms of education. However, I noticed differences in the attitude of women interviewees from East and West Amman. For example, on the East side women were more likely to talk more about themselves and their personal lives and their suffering, hoping that their word may be heard through me. Many of them used to ask me if they could do anything to help, or by the end of interviews they would ask me for my opinion and for any advice. One interviewee said, 'Please deliver to the people how we are living. Tell them!'. Women from East Amman always made me feel that I had power, not in terms of directing the interviews, but in relation to being able to give them a voice. I found it really hard to keep the interviews with East Amman women focused on the interview schedule. I also found it complicated when I had to explain that I am an independent researcher, and not working for official organisations that may provide them with help and support.

As for women from the West side of Amman, the attitude towards the interview was different. It appeared to me that they found it hard to talk about their personal experiences directly like women in East Amman. West Amman women were more focused in terms of answering the questions, without diverting from the subject. I did not have a problem with them in terms of directing the interview process, and they were not expecting anything from me as a researcher. They seemed more in control in terms of the answers they provided, and at the beginning they did not get into much personal detail. But as the interview progressed they started feeling more relaxed, and talked more about their experiences.

Women's experiences are an integral part of feminist studies, because personal experiences have to great extent political implications (Stanley and Wise, 1983b, Stanley and Wise, 1983a, Stanley and Wise, 1990, Stanley and Wise, 1993, Klein, 1983). Feminists argue that research should be conducted for the interests of the exploited and oppressed rather than for the interest of the researcher, and therefore, the oppressed and the exploited would become the subject of the research rather than the object. By that I am saying that feminist research should deal with the research participants as constructors of knowledge, because they are not passive 'objects' under study. They, rather, engage in the research process. Further, this can be done through understanding the experiences of women and giving them voice without distorting the 'reality' they construct and talk about. This is one of the major ethical issues of feminist research, and which also relates to one of the main aims of this research, which is

'to advocate a stance that extols the virtues of a commitment to women, and exposing the conditions of their disadvantage in a male-dominated society ... to change the situation of women, as well as to heighten our understanding of the disadvantages from which they suffer' (Bryman, 2004: 517).

Moreover, experience is a core issue for feminists because feminism is a social, political and personal movement, which takes women's experience into account and

also brings out the political implications of women's (personal) everyday experiences (Skeggs, 1997, Roberts, 1981). This highlights the feminist slogan 'the personal is the political'. As Mackinnon (1997) explains it,

'the personal as political is not a simile, nor a metaphor, and not an analogy ... it means that women's distinctive experience as women occurs within that sphere that has been socially lived as the personal - private, emotional, interiorized, particular individuated, intimate - so that what it is *to know the politics* of women's situation is to know women's personal lives ... to say that the personal is political means that gender as a division of power is discoverable and verifiable through women's intimate experience of sexual objectification, which is definitive of and synonymous with women's lives as gender female. Thus, to feminism, the personal is epistemologically the political, and its epistemology is its politics' (MacKinnon, 1997: 73-4).

Therefore, throughout the analysis and the writing up process, I made sure to show the importance of women's personal experiences and to give them voices by focusing on their own construction of the social world. It is also important to acknowledge the existence of women's agency as agents and not only objects in the social world - agents who resist, negotiate, accommodate and protest forms of patriarchal oppression (McNay, 2000, MacLeod, 1992, Kandiyoti, 1988, Norton et al., 1997). Moreover, I intend to feedback the research findings to the research participants, because this is an important component of feminist methodologies. Feeding back to the research participants is a moral obligation since the participants engage actively in the research process and also without the participants I would not have been able to conduct this research.

On the other hand, I, also, thought about ethical considerations in the fieldwork. As mentioned previously in this chapter, I interviewed Palestinian camp refugees and this might have endangered myself and the participants and which is considered of a high risk especially in a police state like Jordan. I was aware of the

danger placed on me, especially as research on Palestinian refugees is banned in Jordan. Conducting such research might have jeopardised my status in Jordan; the government could have deported me especially after receiving an official rejection from the intelligence. However, I felt the importance of interviewing these women to get a better and a thorough picture of their situation especially that the living conditions of refugee camps in East Amman are extremely bad. Nonetheless, their participation in the research was consensual and I fully explained the aims and objectives of my research to refugee women interviewees.

Moreover, I made sure that all research participants were well-informed about the research, its aims and objectives. I also assured the confidentiality of the data they provide, and substituted their names with pseudonyms, to respect their privacy. I provided the questionnaires participants and the interviewees with consent papers to be signed, which also provided the details of the research, my name, the university I am affiliated to, and stipulated that their information would be dealt with in confidentiality (See Appendices A and B for Consent Papers). The following section will discuss how the methodology used for this research is suitable to answer the research questions, the reasons behind the choice of methods, the access points, and the sampling techniques. It will discuss how the methods used were chosen to fit the theoretical framework of the research.

3.3 Research Methodology

‘Methodology is itself theory. It is a theory of methods which informs a range of issues from who to study, how to study, which institutional practices to adopt (such as interpretative practices), how to write and which knowledge to use’ (Skeggs, 1997: 17).

Harding (1987) argues that there are no specific methods for feminist research; feminist researchers use the same methods used by ‘traditional androcentric researchers’. However, what makes feminist research different from any other form of research is the way ‘they carry out these methods of evidence gathering’ (Harding, 1987: 2). Harding (1987) makes a very useful distinction between method, methodology and epistemology. Methods are the techniques or tools for gathering data, such as interviews. Epistemology is the theory of knowledge and relates to questions such as ‘what can be ‘known’?’ and ‘who can be the ‘knower’?’. In Maynard’s words, epistemology ‘is concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate’ (Maynard, 1994: 10). Methodology is theory of how to carry out research and how to analyse the results. These three components of the research process are very much interlinked. For example as Sprague (2005) explains it

‘one can pose questions, collect evidence, and analyze the data in different ways. Each methodology is founded on either explicit or, more often, unexamined assumptions about what knowledge is and how knowledge is best accomplished; together these assumptions constitute a particular epistemology. That is, a methodology works out the implications of a specific epistemology of how to implement a method’ (Sprague, 2005: 4).

This research is a comparative study between women living in East and West Amman, and is accordingly based on the assumption that there are differences in women’s experiences.

Stanley and Wise (1990) argue that women share the same 'experience of oppression'; however this does not place women in a unitary position because even these experiences of oppression are different from one woman to another. They state that 'the experience of 'women' is ontologically fractured and complex because we do not all share one single unseamed material reality' (Stanley and Wise, 1990: 22). Skeggs (1997: 28) argues that through experience we can understand women's positions within society; but it should not be looked at as the 'foundation for knowledge,' rather it should be looked at as a subjective construction of knowledge. She further argues that experience contributes to the construction and 'production of subjectivity, to the production of raced, classed, sexed and gendered 'woman'' (Skeggs, 1997: 38). Bois (1983) also argues that feminist social science agendas should 'address women's lives and experience in their own terms, to create theory grounded in the actual experience and language of women' (Bois, 1983: 108). Feminists acknowledge that women are not a unitary group, and women do not have the same experiences in life. I believe that feminist research should not only take gender as a social category, which explains why certain women are placed in inferior positions in relation to men, but should also take into account other social categories, such as class, race and ethnicity, which explain social and power relations and, importantly, differences between women in societies. Structures of gender and 'patriarchy are not independent of other forms of power—racism, class and heterosexism—which are not reducible to each other ... and must be accountable to the forms of oppression and interests which divide women as well as those which women share' (Weedon, 1997: 11). Moreover, feminists have concluded that there has to be more than one approach to conducting research on women. Feminist theory stems from the idea that the 'personal is the political', which means that personal experiences in women's life have important political implications. The personal life of women should not be taken for granted and should be conceptualised to be able to understand women's situations thoroughly (Hughes, 2002), as previously explained.

This research is feminist because it looks at women's different experiences in terms of economic activities. It is also feminist because it is based on the assumption that women face patriarchal oppression. However this oppression does not influence women in the same way, because of the intersections of class and gender. Furthermore, one cannot ignore other bases of inequality that intersect with other social categories, such as ethnicity and age, although this research focuses specifically on the intersections of class and gender. It also acknowledges that women are agents; in other words, it does not portray women as passive victims. Instead, it shows that women construct their realities and make choices through negotiating, protesting, bargaining, or resisting. This research also takes into account that women are producers and constructors of knowledge. To be able to answer the research questions, and at the same time to be able to place women as sources of knowledge, I carried out 18 interviews with women from East and West Amman, and I distributed 164 questionnaires to identify peoples' attitudes towards women's economic activities and to identify the class differences between East and West Amman. The following subsections discuss sampling techniques, access points and the methods chosen, and the reasons behind the choice of methods.

3.3.1 Access Points and Sampling

After I turned my focus from studying women Palestinian Refugees to Jordanian women living in Amman, I did not face any access problems. I contacted two local non-governmental organisations¹³ which work on women's empowerment and provide women with training such as computer and embroidery courses. These organisations helped me get into contact with women in the East side; some of whom are economically active and others are not. I contacted the directors of those organisations and asked them if they can put me in contact with women from East Amman, economically active and inactive.

Additionally, my job in an International NGO, CARE International, helped in meeting women and men from East and West Amman and gave me the chance to interview women and to distribute questionnaires. I talked to the Country Director of CARE International-Jordan, explained my research, and informed her that I might need to interview my colleagues and distribute questionnaires on them for my research. She was very welcoming, and encouraged me to do so. After obtaining the Director's consent, I asked my colleagues if they would be interested in participating in the research. Additionally, during working hours I distributed the questionnaires, and I used the office, after working hours, to interview one of the participants there. Through work I also made acquaintances, since I worked there for 18 months. Those acquaintances facilitated my access to West Amman women interviewees, and helped me in distributing the questionnaire to a larger number of potential participants. I have piloted the interview schedule with one interviewee and the questionnaires with five participants to check if the questions are clear and easy to understand. Piloting the interview schedule and the questionnaire assisted me in

¹³ The first local NGO is called the Family Development Association; it is a development non-profit Jordanian Association. It is focused on improving the situations of poor families in Jordan and enhancing women's status through making them contribute towards improving their families' financial situation by offering them training courses. The second local NGO is the Jordanian Woman Union; it provides Palestinian refugee women and Jordanian women with social and legal advice. It also offers shelter to women experiencing domestic violence and offers them training courses.

terms of seeing if the questions are acceptable by the participants and also if they engage easily with the questions. Luckily, the participants told me that they found the questions interesting and that they have enjoyed answering them

I also went to an exhibition where women from different age groups, married and single, from the East and the West sides, had the chance to display their products and sell them. Most of their work was craftwork. When I first distributed the questionnaires, I received great feedback on them. One woman said, 'I am very glad to see this kind of research, the questions in the questionnaires stress on things that I suffer from on a daily basis'. She also added that, 'my husband lets me work, however under his shadow'. Another woman expressed her enthusiasm towards the research and the questionnaires. As she stated, 'my husband does not mind me doing this work although under his supervision'. She also added, 'he gives me the money to do it but he also gives directions'. When I asked another woman to fill the questionnaire she said, 'women will never be able to have their rights'. I spent almost eight hours in the exhibition as I wanted women to complete the questionnaire and return them to me on the same day. Almost 60 women were present at the exhibition to present their products, and I was able to collect 44 completed questionnaires.

I used the snowballing technique for the sampling of this research. I aimed to distribute the questionnaire to women and men over the age of 18 from East and West Amman, who were both economically active and inactive. The total number of completed questionnaires from all access points was 164. Throughout the thesis, I will use the abbreviation (EA) to refer to East Amman, and (WA) to refer to West Amman, when referring to interviewees to distinguish their place of residence. As for the interviews, I aimed to interview economically active and inactive women from East and West Amman, between the ages of 20 and 40. I conducted 18 interviews; nine women from each side of the city (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2). However, one of the limitations of this research was the sampling, as seven out of the nine

women I interviewed from East Amman were above the age of 33, while on the West side most women were below 30. Three of West Amman women interviewees have one child, while the majority of East Amman interviewees have children, and this shows a difference in the level of responsibilities they have. This implies that women interviewees from East Amman have more responsibilities than those from West Amman, because they have more children. There is an age gap between East and West Amman women interviewees. The implications of these differences between these two groups became clearer during data analysis, and that will be discussed in the concluding chapter. I have used opportunistic sampling because the lack of prior studies about women and class in Jordan and the absence of statistical data about West and East Amman specifically meant that it was impossible to create a sampling frame indicating the proportions of different groups of women in the population as the basis of my selection of a sample. Hence it is recognised that this is an exploratory study in which the participants are not necessarily representative.

Table (3.1) East Amman Interview Sample

Respondent	Place of Residence	Age	Individual Income	Household Income	Economic Activity	Education	Marital Status	No. of Rooms in the Household	No. of Members in the Household
Rana	East Amman	23	530	500	Social worker	BA Degree	Single	3 bedrooms, living and a dining room	4
Nadira	East Amman	40	275	700	Secretary	College Diploma	Divorced	1 Bedroom, living and a dining room	4
Nadia	East Amman	36	Irregular income	Depends on Charity	Sometimes as a cleaner and sometimes sells makeup in the streets	High School Certificate	Separated	1 bedroom, a basement	4
Amani	East Amman	39	Irregular income	202 from Ministry of Social Development	Sometimes works as a cleaner	Secondary	Married	Two bedrooms, and one living room	10
Fatima	East Amman/ Refugee camp	38	--	300	Housewife	High school certificate	Married	Two bedrooms, and one living	12

								room	
Liana	East Amman/ Refugee camp	39	Irregular income	160	Work from home in making food	College diploma	Married	Two bedrooms	8
Abeer	East Amman/ Refugee Camp	33	370	370	Cleaner	Preparatory school	Married	One bedroom, and a living room	8
Dina	East Amman/ Refugee Camp	35	140	450	Secretary	College Diploma	Married	4 bedrooms, one living room	11
Salha	East Amman	27	--	1000	Economically inactive	College Diploma	Single	Two bedrooms, and a living room	3

As shown in Table 3.1. Rana (23) is the only East Amman women interviewee with an undergraduate degree. She is a single woman, who works as a social worker. Salha (27) has a college diploma; she is single and economically inactive. Salha has the highest household income amongst East Amman women interviewees. Nadira (40) is a divorced working mother of one, who has a college diploma and works as a secretary. Dina (35) is also a working mother of five, she has a college diploma and works as a secretary. Liana (39) is a married working mother of six, has a college diploma, and is engaged in irregular income generating activities; she sells homemade food products. Abeer (33) is a married working mother of six, who stopped education at preparatory school and works as a cleaner in a private company. Fatima (38) is married mother of eight, with high school certificates. Fatima is the only East Amman married interviewee who is not engaged in any

income generating activities. Amani (39) is a married mother of eight, who stopped education at secondary school, she sometimes works as a cleaner, and her economic activity is irregular. Nadia (36) is a separated mother of three, she works sometimes as a cleaner and sometimes she sells make up on the streets and she has a high school certificate.

Table (3.2) West Amman Interview Sample									
Respondent	Place of Residence	Age	Individual Income	Household Income	Economic Activity	Education	Marital Status	No. of Rooms in the Household	No. of Members in the Household
Reema	West Amman	28	-	1500	Housewife	Dropped out of University	Married	4 bedrooms, living room, dining room, and guests room	3 including a maid
Alia	West Amman	25	0	2000	Housewife	BA Degree	Married	3 bedrooms, dining room, living room and a maid's room	4 including a maid
Nur	West Amman	27	500	1000	Office Manager	BA Degree	Married	3 bedrooms, living room and dining	3

								room	
Dana	West Amman	30	Not specified, a minimum of 1000	Does not know	Business Owner	BA Degree	Divorced	4 bedrooms, living, dining, and lounge	5 including a maid
Diala	West Amman	28	--	Does not know	Student	MA Degree	Single	8 bedrooms, 2 rooms for house workers, several dining and living rooms	6 including two workers
Samar	West Amman	25	--	2500	Housewife	BA Degree	Married	4 bedrooms, guest room, living room, dining room and maid's room	3 including maid
Rawan	West Amman	22	330	Cannot be specified	Student/Saleslady	BA Degree	Single	3 bedrooms, living room, and dining room	6

Mai	West Amman	22	-	Cannot be specified	Unemployed	BA Degree	Single	3 bedrooms, living room, dining room	3
Haya	West Amman	26	700	2000	Social worker and part-time saleslady	BA Degree	Single	2 bedrooms, dining, guest room, and living room	6

As demonstrated in Table 3.2, I interviewed nine women from West Amman; eight of them had a minimum of undergraduate degree, and only Reema (28) dropped out from her university degree course. Reema is married with no children, and economically inactive. Alia (25) is a married mother of one; she has an undergraduate degree and is economically inactive. Nur (27) is a married working mother of one, who has an undergraduate degree and works as an office manager. Samar (25) is a married woman with no children; she has an undergraduate degree, and is economically inactive. Dana (30) is a divorced working mother of one; she has an undergraduate degree and is a business owner. Diala (28) is a single woman who was an MA student at the time of the interview, and is economically inactive. Rawan (22) is a single student and saleslady, who was working towards her undergraduate degree. Mai (22) is a single unemployed fresh graduate, who was looking for a job at the time of the interview. Haya (26) is a single working woman, who has an undergraduate degree and works as a social worker, and works part-time in sales.

The interviewees from East Amman had more children than those from West Amman, and there are differences in their educational attainment. Only one from

East Amman had an undergraduate degree, while only one from West Amman did not have an undergraduate degree. On the other hand, none of the economically active interviewees from West Amman was engaged in informal economic activities, while three women from the East Amman sample were engaged in irregular income generating activities. There were also differences relating to the household income of the sample, as West Amman women interviewees had higher household incomes than East Amman women interviewees. This reflects class differences, which are also evident in the questionnaire sample.

The questionnaire sample included 46 women from East Amman, 46 women from West Amman, 34 men from West Amman and 38 men from East Amman. According to the questionnaire sample, the average household in East Amman contains 5.3 members, and an average number of four rooms. In West Amman the average household contains 4.8 members, and the average number of rooms is almost six. The average household income in East Amman is 799 JOD per month, and the average household income in West Amman is 1700 JOD. This information reflects the class differences between the sample from East and West Amman.

Questionnaire data show that women in West Amman were more likely to have university degrees than women in East Amman. As for men, those from West Amman were also more likely to have university degrees than those from East Amman. This signifies class differences between both sides of the city. There were also gender differences in terms of educational attainments, as women from both sides of the city were more likely to have university degrees than their male counterparts (see Table 3.3).

Table (3.3) Questionnaire Sample Description by Educational Attainment				
West Amman Questionnaire sample by Educational Attainment= 80				
	Women= 46		Men= 34	
Educational Attainments	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Elementary/ Primary/ Preparatory School	0	0	2	5.9%
High School Certificate	4	8.7%	6	17.6%
Vocational Training	0	0	0	0
College diploma	5	10.9%	4	11.8%
Undergraduate degree	29	63%	19	55.9%
Postgraduate Degree	8	17.4%	3	8.8%
Total	46	100%	34	100%
East Amman Questionnaire sample by Educational Attainment= 84				
	Women= 46		Men= 38	
Educational Attainments	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Elementary/ Primary/ Preparatory School	8	17.4%	1	2.6%
High School Certificate	10	21.7%	13	34.2%
Vocational Training	0	0	2	5.3%
College diploma	7	15.2%	8	21.1%
Undergraduate degree	19	41.4%	13	34.2%
Postgraduate Degree	2	4.3%	1	2.6%
Total	46	100%	38	100%

Moreover, women were more likely to be unemployed than men in East and West Amman. However, West Amman women were more likely to be economically active - 67.4 percent were economically active, compared to 50 percent of East Amman women respondents (see Table 3.4).

Table (3.4) Questionnaire Sample Description by Employment Status				
West Amman Questionnaire sample by Employment Status= 80				
	Women= 46		Men= 34	
Employment Status	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Unemployed	11	24%	2	5.9%
Student	4	8.6%	2	5.9%
Independent Worker	6	13%	5	14.7%
Private Sector Employee	24	52.2%	23	67.6%
Public Sector Employee	1	2.2%	2	5.9%
Total	46	100%	34	100%
East Amman Questionnaire sample by Employment Status= 84				
	Women= 46		Men= 38	
Employment Status	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Unemployed	19	41.4%	1	2.6%
Student	4	8.6%	0	0
Independent Worker	2	4.3%	4	10.5%
Private Sector Employee	21	45.7%	30	79%
Public Sector Employee	0	0	3	7.9%
Total	46	100%	38	100%
Table (3.5) Questionnaire Sample Description by Marital Status				
West Amman Questionnaire sample by Marital Status= 80				
	Women= 46		Men= 34	
Marital Status	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Single	20	43.4%	25	73.5%
Married	23	50%	9	26.5%
Divorced	2	4.4%	0	0
Widower	1	2.2%	0	0
Total	46	100%	34	100%
East Amman Questionnaire sample by Marital Status= 84				
	Women= 46		Men= 38	
Marital Status	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Single	19	41.3%	15	39.5%
Married	24	52.2%	21	55.3%
Divorced	2	4.4%	2	5.2%
Widower	1	2.1%	0	0
Total	46	100%	38	100%

3.3.2 Combining Methods

In order to answer my research questions I combined both qualitative and quantitative methods, using semi-structured interviews and quantitative self-completion questionnaires. Many feminists have argued that quantitative research methods are masculine and qualitative methods are feminine (Stanley and Wise, 1993), and some argue further that quantitative research represses women's voices (Meis, 1993). It is considered to be a way of 'silencing women's own voices' (Maynard, 1998: 18) whereas feminist research is meant to 'alleviate the conditions of oppression' (Skeggs, 2001: 249). However, the combination of both types of method, qualitative and quantitative, does not necessarily mean that research is incompatible with feminism (Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991, Maynard, 1998). Combining both types of method can be very useful because the findings of one method can validate the other. As I previously mentioned, there is not one exclusive method for feminist research - what matters most is whether the methods used answer the research questions, and the way the methods are being carried out. For example, it has been argued that quantitative methods are used in 'artificial settings' where the researcher does not interact with the respondents; in contrast, qualitative methods tend to be used in a 'naturalist settings' where both parties interact (Hammersley, 1996). One should not generalise because for example questionnaires are quantitative methods, but the usage of this method depends on the researcher. It can be used in an interactive setting where the respondents have inquiries about the questionnaires and in return the researcher answers them.

Combining two research methods is called *triangulation* or multi-strategy research. The use of multi-strategy methods is employed to reach a balance between two methods i.e. both methods have strengths and weaknesses, and therefore using both will help the researcher achieve balance (Axinn and Pearce, 2006). Hammersley (1996) argues that employing a multi strategy approach is possible and feasible for three reasons: firstly both qualitative and quantitative methods complement one

another in order to fit together certain aspects of the study. Secondly, a multi strategy approach is used so one method can support the other one. Finally, it is used for one research method to support the other method's findings.

This could provide more accurate data and could provide more insight into the area of investigation (Stechler et al., 1992). For example, since I am studying class and comparing between East and West Amman, the questionnaire provided me with the demographic data that made the comparison more feasible. Demographic data such as income, place of residence, household composition, occupation and educational attainments were used as proxies of class. At the same time, the interviews provided more in-depth information about women's life experiences and complemented the data provided in the questionnaires. Moreover, since I am looking at women's economic activities and the attitudes towards them, the questionnaire helped me in exploring these areas.

Also, because I am interested in learning about the obstacles women face in terms of economic activities, the questionnaire helped me in understanding the relationships between the variables, and the interviews validated this data qualitatively. For example, the questionnaire showed that married women are less likely to be economically active, and some interviewees mentioned that they quit their jobs after marriage. On the one hand, the interviews clarified the intersections of class and gender relations in defining women's life experiences in terms of economic activities and education. On the other hand, the questionnaires showed how attitudes towards women's economic activities are classed and gendered. In other words the questionnaires showed that those attitudes differ according to class and gender and that people from different classes and genders do not share the same attitudes. However, questionnaire data is suggestive of differences in terms of class, and I would not have been able to show these differences without the questionnaire data because there is no provision of statistical data about East and West Amman and I could not run statistical tests. The following section discusses the methods

used in more detail, and provides more information about the interview and questionnaire structures.

3.3.3 Interviews

‘Interviewing is rather like marriage: everybody knows what it is, an awful lot of people do it, and yet behind each closed door there is a world of secrets’ (Oakley, 1981: 31).

Interviews are like conversations with a specific structure and purpose, and ‘through conversations we get to know people, get to learn about their experiences, feelings, and hopes and the world they live in’ (Kvale, 1996: 5). Interviews are carried out to learn more about people’s or individual’s experiences. Interviewing also helps the researcher to dig deep into people’s unobserved and unnoticeable areas, such as memories, personal issues, feelings, views and intentions (Patton, 2002).

This technique helps us understand the social world in people’s own language, words and meanings, and also helps us understand how people make sense of and construct their own realities (De Vault and McCoy, 2006, Reinharz, 1992). Interviews are also a give and take data collection technique. In other words, it allows both the interviewees and the interviewer to talk about their own experiences and stories. Moreover, during the interview the researcher can also pick up on things which are of high importance, such as body language and gestures. Thus the interviews can be a very important tool to tell us about the research participant and their life experiences (Reinharz, 1992).

In my study I used semi-structured open-ended interviews with women; I chose this kind of interviewing technique because I wanted to collect data about their life experiences through asking them specific questions. I had a written guide

with me during the interviews which highlighted the issues I wanted to discuss with my interviewees. This guide helped me in not forgetting a question because the interviews did not have a sequence and each time the interview was carried out differently. This form of interviewing is not rigid or stiff - on the contrary, it is very flexible. It allows room for probing and asking complementary questions, and it is focused on asking questions about certain themes in the interviewees' lives. Therefore, semi structured interviews are 'neither standardised nor nondirective' (Kvale, 1996: 34).

Semi-structured interviews with 18 women were conducted as part of the research. The interviewees were women between the ages of 20 and 40 living in East Amman and West Amman. This method was used to explore how women talked about the factors affecting their economic activity and to find out about their income generating activities. Additionally, this method also helped in finding out whether there are differences between women living in the West and the East of Amman, and thus in understanding the different burdens that they face in terms of employment, labour force participation and economic activity (see Appendix C for Interview Schedule).

I interviewed women in private, and in different places, depending on their wish to choose the place. Some interviews took place in the interviewees' houses, others in my residence and at the premises of non-governmental organisations which helped with putting me in contact with the women. All the interviews were recorded in Arabic and at a later stage transcribed and then translated into English. My fluency and understanding of the Arabic language allowed me to translate the meaning of the words used by interviewees. I also tried to convey the same meanings of the interviews. The length of the interview ranged from a minimum of an hour to three hours. The first interview was a pilot because I wanted to 'test' the schedule, which turned out to be successful because the interviewee seemed to understand the questions easily. Establishing 'rapport' was not difficult because I

noticed that all my interviewees enjoyed talking about their experiences and personal things in their lives. Moreover, at the beginning of each interview I introduced myself and talked about and explained my research. Some women told me that they did not want to talk about religion and I did not ask why because I did not want them to feel uncomfortable, reassuring them that my questions did not include anything about religion. My interviewees found the interview an enjoyable experience because it gave them the chance to talk about their life and experiences where they do not usually do so (Butler, 2001).

I chose to interview women only because my research questions focus on the different experiences lived by women from different classes in terms of their economic (in)activities. I am also interested in identifying how patriarchy, gender and class influence women's economic activities. The reason why I did not interview men is because I want to give voice to women's experiences. On the other hand, men and women from East and West Amman were included in the questionnaire sample, because I wanted to explore men's and women's views and attitudes towards women's economic activities, and show how these attitudes can be different across classes, and genders.

3.3.4 Self-Completion Questionnaire

Self completion questionnaire is a quantitative data collection method. In recent years survey research has become more acceptable by feminists because

‘it can help identify differences among groups and changes over time ... statistics comparing men and women have been used to document inequality and highlight areas where change is needed ... [and] statistics are used not only to document differences between the sexes, but also to demonstrate similarities and differences among women’ (Reinharz, 1992: 81).

I was sometimes present during the completion of the questionnaires whilst other times I just gave friends questionnaires to distribute to their family members and their friends.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section collected demographic information about the respondent, such as age, marital status, place of residence, income, description of the household, as proxies of class. Part one of the second section was to be answered by economically active respondents only, because it contains questions about their current job. Part two of the second section was for respondents who are economically inactive. The third section was about East and West Amman. The last section dealt with views and attitudes towards women’s economic activity and the differences between East and West Amman in terms of cultural and religious practices. This method enabled me to identify how women’s economic activity, including employment and work, education and also status are perceived by both men and women, and produced differences in the answers based on gender and class (see Appendix D for Questionnaire).

3.3.5 Data Analysis

The translated transcripts of the interviews were entered into NVivo (a qualitative data analysis software package). Afterwards I created two folders, calling the first one 'East Amman interviewees' and the second one 'West Amman interviewees'. I then started creating nodes based on the themes related to my research questions, because although I used semi structured interviews I ended up with a lot of data. For example, one of the themes concerned the views of women towards women's economic activity, another theme included factors influencing women's economic and/or inactivity. I assigned nodes to the parts of the interviews which were relevant to the interview questions. Those parts of the interviews were linked together through the nodes, which retrieve all the data that relate to the themes identified. I have found that NVivo is useful in terms of organising my interviewees' life stories into themes; however, I struggled slightly when analysing my data because entering my data into nodes led to the removal of the themes from their context.

I used thematic analysis to unpack the stories provided by my interviewees. Since I used thematic analysis I had to analyse the data in its context and to interlink the accounts. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) have argued that narrative in interviews includes the connections of events and experiences in the interviewees' lives. Using thematic analysis allowed me to explore those narratives, and at the same time identify the themes that are relevant to my research questions. Although the interviews produced massive amounts of narratives, the procedure of analysis was based on thematic analysis of those narratives. Thematic analysis is based on 'an emphasis on what is said rather on how it is said' (Bryman, 2004: 412).

As for self-completion questionnaires, the analysis of this quantitative data was confined to simple and straightforward analysis. For the analysis of quantitative data I used SPSS, which generated frequency and contingency tables, and which

allowed me to explore the relations between various variables. The use of crosstabs, which is a type of quantitative data analysis, helps in exploring the relationship between more than two variables, and the starting point had been exploring the relationship between respondents' place of residence, gender, and attitudes towards women's economic activity. At later stages of the analysis, I started exploring the relationship between attitudes and education, education and income, and so on. This approach is useful because 'Many important concepts in the social sciences draw distinctions between different categories of people (e.g. gender categories, social class) ... a contingency table is one which cross-classifies the different values of an independent variable with those of a dependent variable' (Buckingham and Saunders, 2004: 202). SPSS is very useful in generating the tables, percentages and numbers. Quantitative data has been used in this research to support the data derived from the interviews, and to explore the differences in views, life style, and material resources between respondents from East and West Amman, and also to investigate class and gender differences. In that way, I found that the combination of methods did not silence women's voices; it rather made them louder.

Conclusion

This research is about women and for women; it is an exploration of women's different life experiences. It is feminist research that is based on the intersectionality of class and gender and its effect on women's economic activities. It acknowledges that participants actively engage in the research process because they talk about the subjective constructs of their experience, thus they contribute to the production of the research and the knowledge it provides. This research is also based on the idea that women are agents, and not passive victims, and that they negotiate, resist and protest patriarchal control. Women's agency differs depending on class, gender, age, marital status and educational attainments. Therefore, the intersectional approach recognises the different experiences between women and also that women negotiate with patriarchy differently.

The research methods were designed to explore differences between women as well as similarities, thereby reflecting my intersectional approach in order to answer the research questions, while also recognising women's agency as producers of knowledge and as constructors of their reality. The methods used for this research are linked to the overall framework of the thesis. Combining semi-structured interviews and questionnaires helped me in answering the research questions. Semi-structured interviews were carried out to enable me to hear women's accounts and experiences in relation to economic activities, and also to see the differences between women in East and West Amman. Self completion questionnaires were also distributed to look at women's and men's attitudes with regard to women's economic activities and education. Demographic questions asked in both the questionnaires and the interviews enabled me to explore class differences, and both methods helped me identify proxies of class, and how they intersect with gender to influence women's economic activities. Each method was used to validate the other; the interviews findings validated the questionnaires and vice versa.

The researcher's position in the field influences the research process and research design, because researchers as well are constructors of knowledge, and have their own input in the research. Therefore, reflexivity is an important part of the research process. For example, being an 'outsider within' was empowering and restricting at the same time. It was empowering because I do not belong to either the West or the East side of Amman, thus interviewees felt more comfortable expressing themselves to me. The fact that I am a woman and I speak Arabic made it easier for me to communicate with them. However, coming from the Middle East and having lived in Jordan prior to my fieldwork gave me an insider status in the field. Moreover, the fact that I am doing a PhD and that I am independent placed me in a position of power. Although I am doing a feminist research, a hierarchal relationship between me and the interviewees was not eliminated because some of them looked up to me.

It has also been important to recognise the limitations of the research. There is a gap between the age ranges between East and West Amman women interviewees, as the majority of East Amman interviewees were older than West Amman interviewees and the levels of responsibility they had were different. For example, most East Amman interviewees have a minimum of five children, while for West Amman women they had a maximum of one child. I shall return to this question in my concluding chapter.

Every chapter aims to answer one research question. As one of the research questions concerns the attitudes and views of men and women from East and West Amman towards women's economic activities, the following chapter discusses those attitudes in details. It also sheds light on the differences in views held by people from East and West Amman. The chapter draws from data provided by the questionnaire, which is validated by interview data.

Chapter Four: Attitudes and Views of Women and Men towards Women's Economic Activities

Introduction

This chapter attempts to answer the research questions relating to men's and women's attitudes and views towards women's economic activities: what are men's and women's views of women's economic activity? What factors influence these views? It is important to look at views and attitudes towards women's economic activities, because they reflect cultural values and gender ideologies. The dominant cultural values in Jordan are patriarchal; however, views and attitudes differ according to gender and class, as this chapter shows. Patriarchal structures are dominant in Amman; yet those structures can be resisted, negotiated, accommodated, and/or challenged and this means that patriarchal structures are not static.

This chapter shows that views and attitudes towards women's economic activities are patriarchal and have an effect on women's economic activity. It also explains how those views and attitudes differ between East and West Amman respondents, and between men and women. The questionnaire was designed to explore views and attitudes towards women's and men's economic activity, in order to provide a basis for comparison between West and East Amman women, and between men and women. Research evidence shows that although in general women's work is not seen to be as important as men's work, people's views and attitudes towards women's work shift according to circumstances and environment; they are not static - rather they are negotiated and in transition depending on different factors such as women's marital status and their own and their families' financial situation. The interviewees talked about the meanings of patriarchal gender ideology and how it affected them in their daily lives. The interviews provided a

more nuanced picture of negotiations with and challenges to patriarchy, and showed the differences between East and West Amman.

Those differences reflect the existence of different cultures within one society. In other words, people in Amman have different attitudes towards women's economic activities. Various scholars have argued that Arab culture is patriarchal (Barakat, 1985; Barakat, 1993; Segal et al., 1990), as discussed in the literature review. However, patriarchy can be challenged, and patriarchal structures carry with them symbolic meanings of gender relations that can also be challenged and resisted. Joseph (1996) calls the sexual division of labour in Arab society, with the man being the head of the household and the breadwinner and the woman being responsible for reproduction and household chores, 'economic patriarchy'. Moghadam (2004) calls this sexual division of the labour the 'patriarchal gender contract', which restricts women's role to the household, which is headed by a man who provides financially for his family. The male-breadwinner model, which can be challenged and undermined by factors such as globalisation, is associated with patriarchal symbolic meanings of gender relations. Gender ideologies are often based on expectations directed at both women and men, which determine the precise gender roles of men and women (Spence and Helmreich, 1972; Conway and Vartanian, 2000; Antilla, 2002). Although views and attitudes towards women's economic activities are influenced by normative assumptions relating to the male-breadwinner model, this does not necessarily mean that they always influence on women's experiences, or that they can always 'foretell behaviours' (Mensch et al., 2003: 9).

Whereas cultural values and traditions are factors influencing women's access to work, employment, and economic activity (Heilman, 1997, Schreiber, 1998), their influence varies with class, marital status, age and educational attainment. Therefore, the intersectional approach to understanding women's economic activities can explain the different experiences amongst women, and can also explore the different attitudes held by amongst both men and women situated in East and

West Amman. Moreover, as cultural and traditional values may influence women's access to economic activities, it is also important to acknowledge women's agency and that this agency differs across classes.

Questionnaire respondents were asked to state to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement 'culture and traditions limit women's engagement in income generating activities'. The majority of women respondents agreed that culture interferes with women's income generating activities; however, data showed that East Amman women were more likely to agree with that statement than West Amman women and men, and East Amman men (see Table 4.1). On the other hand, East Amman men were more likely to agree with the statement than West Amman men and women. This indicates that there are gender and class differences between respondents. This was reflected in the interviews, as East Amman women interviewees believed that traditional values affect them, while West Amman women interviewees did not see traditional values as markedly influential in their lives. For example, Nur (27, married, 1 child, office manager, ft employment, WA) answered the interview question 'do you believe that culture and traditions can influence women's engagement in economic activity?', by saying,

'You see nowadays people are civilised, they do not stand in women's way anymore, unless it is a bad job... My husband's grandfather for example believes that it is shameful for women to work, because women should stay at home and raise the kids. But I always disagree, I give myself as an example, I am a working mother, and I manage to do both' (Nur, 27, married, 1 child, office manager, ft employment, WA).

Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA) answered the same question by saying,

'Of course culture and traditions restrict women's work. I spent six months trying to convince my father to allow me to work. But he used to believe that work outside the house is not

necessary for women. You know, I am very stubborn, and I am the only one amongst my sisters who managed to work. But he always thought that women's work is against tradition, and that women should stay at home' (Nadira, 40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA).

These two quotes from the interviews show that there are differences in the experiences of Nadira and Nur - Nur was able to work immediately, while Nadira spent six months convincing her father. Nadira felt that culture and tradition restricted her work for a while, while Nur was not restricted and for that reason did not see culture and tradition as influential in her life. Yet both of them show a form of resistance against patriarchal views; Nur resists by giving herself as an example of a successful working mother, and Nadira resists by insisting and being stubborn in the face of these views.

Table (4.1) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Culture and traditions limit women's engagement income generating activities'

	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	5	13.2%	9	19.6%	1	2.9%	6	13%	21	12.8%
Agree	16	42.1%	21	45.7%	10	29.4%	15	32.6%	62	37.8%
Neither agree or disagree	10	26.3%	9	19.6%	11	32.4%	16	34.8%	46	28%
Disagree	5	13.2%	5	10.9%	10	29.4%	5	10.9%	25	15.2%
Strongly Disagree	2	5.3%	2	4.3%	2	5.9%	4	8.7%	10	6.1%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

When asked to comment on the statement 'culture and traditions limit men's engagement in income generating activities', the majority disagreed (see Table 4.2). A comparison between Tables (4.1) and (4.2) shows that there are differences in the

views held about men and women. This also shows that respondents realise that cultural values influence men's economic activity differently to women's. So, what are the attitudes towards women's economic activities? To what extent are cultural values influential in women's lives and to what extent are they gendered and classed?

Table (4.2) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Culture and traditions limit men's engagement in income generating activities'										
	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	3	7.9%	4	8.7%	0	0%	2	4.3%	9	5.5%
Agree	9	23.7%	5	10.9%	4	11.8%	5	10.9%	23	14%
Neither agree or disagree	9	23.7%	8	17.4%	5	14.7%	9	19.6%	31	18.9%
Disagree	12	31.6%	19	41.3%	19	55.9%	14	30.4%	64	39%
Strongly Disagree	5	13.2%	10	21.7%	6	17.6%	16	34.8%	37	22.6%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

4.1 Women's Work vs. Men's Work

The views and attitudes displayed towards women's economic activities reflect patriarchal values, and differ depending on gender and class, especially the extent to which women resist patriarchy. In order to understand how symbolic meanings of gender influence attitudes towards women's economic activity, this section looks at how women's and men's work are perceived. By 'work' I mean any economic activity which generates income, taking place either outside the household or inside the household, such as producing homemade products to sell. Interview and questionnaire data showed class and gender differences in terms of attitudes towards women's economic activities. Interviews revealed that the main structure which makes women's economic activity less important than men's is the male-breadwinner model of the family, which places men as the economic providers for their households, and women as the reproducers and those responsible for household chores. Before exploring this further and before highlighting the fact that patriarchal views are not always influential in women's lives and do not necessarily reflect practice, I will present the questionnaire data, which show that people do not see women's work as being as important as that of men; this provides a general idea about the views of men and women towards women's and men's economic activity. It is important to note that throughout the chapter I discuss two categories of answers, 'agree' and 'strongly agree' together, and 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' together, but the response rates for these answers are given separately in the tables provided.

Responses to the survey questions revealed differences in the views held by respondents from East and West Amman, as well as gender variations. The questionnaire findings are indicative as the number of respondents was relatively small. Respondents were asked to state to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement 'women's work outside the household is important', and there were gender and class variations in the attitudes displayed. East Amman men showed

most disagreement (52.6 percent), followed by West Amman men (35.2 percent), East Amman women (32.6 percent), and finally West Amman women (10.9 percent) (see Table 4.3). Women were therefore more likely to agree that women’s work outside the household is important, and especially West Amman women as 55.7 percent of them agreed that women’s work outside the household is important. For East Amman women the number of those who disagreed was identical to the number of women who agreed (32.6 percent).

Table (4.3) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: ‘Women’s work outside the household is important’

	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	3	7.9%	9	19.6%	1	2.9%	7	12.2%	20	12.2%
Agree	3	7.9%	6	13%	12	35.3%	20	43.5%	41	25%
Neither agree or disagree	12	31.6%	16	34.8%	9	26.5%	14	30.4%	51	31%
Disagree	10	26.3%	10	21.7%	6	17.6%	5	10.9%	31	19.9%
Strongly Disagree	10	26.3%	5	10.9%	6	17.6%	0	0%	21	12.8%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

The variations in terms of responses indicate that there are differences in people’s views about women’s work, both in terms of gender and geographical location; these differences are elaborated through interview data in later sections. However, regarding the statement ‘men’s work outside the household is important’, respondents from both sides of Amman, and genders seemed to express their agreement more. The majority of men from East and West Amman agreed (97.6 percent) and none of them disagreed. The majority of women from both sides also agreed with the statement (92.4 percent) (see Table 4.4). There were no class differentiations between the answers of West and East Amman respondents; the

majority agreed that men’s work outside the household is very important. This shows that men’s work is largely seen as more important than women’s work; although there were gender and class differences in the responses to the statement ‘women’s work outside the household is important’, the statement ‘men’s work outside the household is important’ did not receive much disagreement. This shows that the prioritisation of men’s work is prevalent in both East and West Amman, and that women also see men’s work as important.

Table (4.4) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: ‘Men’s work outside the household is important’

	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	30	78.9%	32	69.6%	23	67.6%	31	67.4%	116	70.7%
Agree	6	15.8%	10	21.7%	11	32.4%	12	26.1%	39	23.8%
Neither agree or disagree	2	5.3%	1	2.2%	0	0%	3	6.5%	6	3.7%
Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0	3	6.5%	0	0%	0	0%	3	1.8%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

Moreover, respondents were asked to state to what extent they agree or disagree with the statements ‘women’s work is secondary’, and ‘men’s work is secondary’. Men were more likely to agree that women’s work is secondary (51.4 percent), and disagree that men’s work is secondary (86.1 percent) (see Tables 4.5 and 4.6). Data show there are differences in the views of East and West Amman women, as more East Amman women (41.3 percent) than West Amman women (34.8 percent) agreed with the statement ‘women’s work is secondary’. There was also a difference between West Amman men and women as 55.9 percent of West Amman

men, compared with 34.8 percent of West Amman women agreed with the statement that 'women's work outside the household is secondary'. Regarding the notion that men's work is secondary, the majority of men and women from both sides of Amman disagreed – a total of 87.2 percent. There were no significant class differences, with 86.9 percent of East Amman women, 92.2 percent of West Amman women, 81.6 percent of East Amman men and 91.2 percent of West Amman men disagreeing with the statement that 'men's work outside the household is secondary'.

Table (4.5) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Women's work outside the household is secondary'										
	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	5	13.2%	6	13%	5	14.7%	5	10.9%	21	12.8%
Agree	13	34.2%	13	28.3%	14	41.2%	11	23.9%	51	31.1%
Neither agree or disagree	10	26.3%	17	37%	11	32.4%	9	19.6%	47	28.7%
Disagree	8	21%	7	15.2%	3	8.8%	15	23.6%	33	20.1%
Strongly Disagree	2	5.3%	3	6.5%	1	2.9%	6	13%	12	7.3%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

Table (4.6) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Men's work outside the household is secondary'

	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	4	10.5%	1	2.2%	1	2.9%	0	0%	6	3.7%
Agree	1	2.6%	1	2.2%	0	0%	2	4.3%	4	2.4%
Neither agree or disagree	2	5.3%	4	8.7%	2	5.9%	3	6.5%	11	6.7%
Disagree	12	31.6%	13	28.2%	8	23.5%	12	26.2%	45	27.4%
Strongly Disagree	19	50%	27	58.7%	23	67.7%	29	63%	98	59.8%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

When asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statement 'women should be given more opportunities in terms of accessing employment', the majority of men from East and West Amman disagreed. Moreover, there were gender differences in the responses of those from East and West Amman. Most of the men from East Amman disagreed (76.3 percent), while only half of women disagreed (50 percent). In West Amman the gender difference was greater, 76.5 percent of men disagreed, while 32.6 percent of women disagreed. In addition to gender differences, these data show that there are differences between the responses of women from East and West Amman.

Table (4.7) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Women should be given more opportunities in terms of accessing employment'										
	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	1	2.6%	4	8.7%	1	2.9%	3	6.5%	9	5.5%
Agree	2	5.3%	2	4.3%	0	0%	9	19.6%	13	7.9%
Neither agree or disagree	6	15.8%	17	37%	7	20.6%	19	41.3%	49	29.9%
Disagree	12	31.6%	16	34.8%	21	61.8%	13	28.3%	62	37.8%
Strongly Disagree	17	44.7%	7	15.2%	5	14.7%	2	4.3%	31	18.9%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

Regarding the statement that 'men should be given more opportunities in terms of accessing employment', the data show that there are gender and class differences in terms of attitudes (see Table 4.8). The majority of men from both sides agreed that men should have more opportunities in terms of accessing employment - in East Amman 89.5 percent of men agreed with this statement, as did 85.3 percent of West Amman men. There were also gender differences, as fewer women agreed with the statement: 69.6 percent of East Amman women and 58.7 percent of West Amman women. This also shows that there are class differences, with East Amman women being more likely to support men having more opportunities to access employment.

Table (4.8) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Men should be given more opportunities in terms of accessing employment'

	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	22	57.9%	19	41.3%	15	44.1%	14	30.4%	70	42.7%
Agree	12	31.6%	13	28.3%	14	41.2%	13	28.3%	52	31.7%
Neither agree or disagree	3	7.9%	10	21.7%	2	5.9%	13	28.3%	28	17.1%
Disagree	1	2.6%	4	8.7%	1	2.9%	4	8.7%	10	6.1%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	0	0%	2	5.9%	2	4.3%	4	2.4%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

The data reflects the widespread assumption of work not being as central to women's lives as it is to men's (Kaufman and Fetters, 1980). The above data also show us that respondents tended to view men's work as more important than women's. Interviews provided explanations for those views, as interviewees explained why men's work is seen as more important than women's and talked about their own views and attitudes, as well as those of their family members. The interviews also revealed these views to be patriarchal but at the same time able to be challenged and not necessarily existing in practice. The interviews also drew attention to the male-breadwinner model in certain cases undermining women's economic activities, while in other cases it was able to be challenged by women's economic activities. In other words, some women accommodated themselves to the patriarchal structure of the male-breadwinner model; while others negotiated, challenged and resisted it.

4.1.1 Men: Heads of Households, Breadwinners

‘Money is everything in our lives, you know? So, the man has to be in control of financial resources. He has to sweat in order to provide for his house, because he is the man... I prefer a man who is feared at his house—forceful and powerful. I want my children to respect their father, and not look him in the eye when talking. He has to be controlling, very controlling. His orders should not be said twice’ (Samar, 25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

This quote from an interview shows us that Samar’s attitude conforms to patriarchal household structures in which men are expected to be the breadwinners. This patriarchal household structure assigns men a particular gender role and consequently gives them power. Samar is married and is not looking for a job, because it is her husband’s role to financially provide for the household, as she explained. Men in East and West Amman are expected to fulfil certain social roles, which are assigned to them because of their gender. They are expected to be the breadwinners, heads of their households and guardians as well as providers for ‘their’ women—wives, sisters, mothers, and daughters (Mostafa, 2003). The male breadwinner model is predominant in Jordan. This role places men in a powerful position inside their households. For example, when asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement that ‘women are expected to be heads of households’, there were gender and class differences in the responses given (see Table 4.9). The majority of East Amman men respondents (81.6 percent) disagreed with the statement, followed by West Amman men (59.8 percent), East Amman women (56.6 percent), and West Amman women (41.4 percent). The majority of respondents agreed with the statement ‘men are expected to be heads of households’ (73.2 percent), but again there are apparent class differences as East Amman respondents were most likely to agree (see Table 4.10). The greatest proportion of those agreeing were male respondents from East Amman - 81.5 percent - followed by those from West Amman, of whom 70.6 percent agreed. Class differences were also reflected in the responses given by women, as 78.2 percent of East Amman women agreed,

compared with 63.1 percent of their counterparts from West Amman. This not only shows that men are expected to be heads of their households, but also that women expect the household to be headed by men.

Table (4.9) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Women are expected to be heads of households'

	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numb ers	Percenta ges								
Stron gly Agree	1	2.6%	4	8.7%	1	2.9%	6	13%	12	7.3%
Agree	0	0%	7	15.1%	4	11.8%	10	21.7%	21	12.8%
Neith er agree or disagr ee	6	15.8%	9	19.6%	8	23.5%	11	23.9%	34	20.7%
Disag ree	14	36.8%	17	37%	11	32.4%	13	28.4%	55	33.6%
Stron gly Disag ree	17	44.8%	9	19.6%	10	27.4%	6	13%	42	25.6%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

Table (4.10) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Men are expected to be heads of households'

	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numb ers	Percenta ges								
Stron gly Agree	23	60.5%	24	52.2%	10	29.4%	11	23.9%	68	41.5%
Agree	8	21%	12	26%	14	41.2%	18	39.2%	52	31.7%
Neith er agree or disagr ee	2	5.3%	5	10.9%	5	14.7%	6	13%	18	11%
Disag ree	3	7.9%	4	8.7%	1	2.9%	7	15.2%	15	9.1%
Stron gly Disag ree	2	5.3%	1	2.2%	4	11.8%	4	8.7%	11	6.7%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

These attitudes reflect the patriarchal nature of the society; respondents see men's work as more important than women's work, they expect men to be heads of households, and they think that men should have more opportunities to access employment. Men, as household heads, are responsible for providing the financial resources for household members. For this reason, men's work is seen as more important than women's. Therefore, despite the fact that many respondents agreed that women's work is important, it did not seem as important as men's work. Despite the fact that there were class and gender differences in the responses, there was a consensus that men were expected to be financially responsible for their household, in both East and West Amman. For example, Diala said,

'We [herself and her siblings] have all been taught the importance of responsibility and discipline since we were kids. I think my brothers had it a little harder, in that my parents, especially my dad, stressed that men need to ensure a kind of financial stability in life... because they have to be financially responsible' (Diala, 28, single, student, economically inactive, WA).

She further explained that because her brothers were taught that they would be responsible for financially supporting their families in the future they were treated differently, and they were pressured to work more. The patriarchal societal expectations that men are supposed and expected to be financially responsible for their households holds with it symbolic meanings for men which are deeply rooted in concepts of men's masculinity, and part of this construct of masculinity is that men should be able to provide for their families. For example, Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA), who contributes to her household and is responsible for her son's expenses, said,

'I live with my mother [65 years old], brother [38 years old] and son [13 years old]; they all depend on me not only financially. For example, when something is broken in the house, I either manage to fix it myself or I make sure that I bring someone to fix it. I feel sometimes that I am the man of the household. They

cannot do anything without me' (Nadira, 40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA).

By saying that she feels that she is the 'man of the household', Nadira does not mean that she has actually become a man, rather she is bringing in meanings which are attached to men, by explaining that she is taking on the role normally performed by men. The example Nadira gives shows us that the meanings attached to genders are not static, and can be changed through women's involvement in income generating activities.

Patriarchal cultural attitudes towards women's work were also evident in the interviews. For example, many female interviewees stated that their fathers, husbands, and even brothers, in many cases, opposed their work, because if women work, they, men, would appear not to meet societal expectations, which involve them providing for their families. Abeer said,

'When I got married, he [her husband] prevented me from working. He said that I had to leave my job. He does not like a girl who works. He said, "It is not allowed, I do not like a girl who works". That is what he said. I did not discuss it with him, he said that he would pay for all my expenses and that he would be able to get me anything. In my family, it is the same; they cannot disagree with him. After marriage, a girl does not work. For my family, the husband becomes responsible for his wife and children' (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

Abeer's case is only one example which shows us that there are assigned gender roles for men and women. Those assigned roles, which are based on the man being the head of the household and the provider, are part of the symbolic gender structures that explain why women's work is not seen as being as important as men's. Assigning men the role of provider and head of households gives men power over 'their' wives, sisters and daughters, because through this role men become responsible for the material resources in the household. In Abeer's case in particular her husband's position as a provider and owner of material resources gave him

power inside the household, and at the same time allowed him to fulfil the cultural expectations pinned on him as a 'man'.

Men's role as provider and breadwinner gives them privileges and power inside their household. As Samar mentioned, the man has to be in control of the financial resources to attain respect from his family members. She emphasised that he has to provide for his home because he is the man—who has to be 'forceful and powerful.' And, a man, who cannot provide for his household seems to be losing his masculine attributes. This is because the word 'man' has come to hold meanings and symbols that are related to providing, power, forcefulness and heads of households. Therefore, a man who does not live up to these meanings and the expectations based on those meanings is looked on as 'weak'. Nadira, (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA), whose father was against her seeking employment, stated;

'The Easterners reject their daughters' engagement in income generating activities because they believe that this would mean that they cannot afford them. They think that if a girl is employed, it means that her father is not able to afford her living expenses' (Nadira, 40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA).

Nadira also mentioned that her brothers prevented her from working, and offered her 60 JOD¹⁴ as a monthly allowance for her and her son after her divorce. She said that it is due to tradition that men are shamed if they cannot support their sisters, and her brothers did not want her ex-husband's family to look at them as if they could not support her and her son. She said 'It is really shameful'. Rana, (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) also explained that men generally do not allow their wives to work, because they do not want society to perceive them as unable to provide for the household. This also shows how symbolic gender structures influence men's perception of women's work, and vice versa. The great importance given to men's work as part of what is expected from them contributes to women's

¹⁴ JOD refers to Jordanian Dinar, which is equivalent to 0.88 GBP (February, 2011)

work being seen as less important. Rana added that even if men are living in poverty they do not let their wives work, particularly if their wives never worked before marriage, because this would suggest that their wives are working because they are in financial need. She said,

'Men do not want society to view them as weak and unable to afford their household. They would look as if they are disabled in front of the society, and not manly enough to be married and have kids. A real life example is my brother, who lives in dire conditions. When his wife wanted to work, he refused, for the same reason' (Rana, 23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA).

It must be noted here that, in spite of those expectations, Abeer, Nadira and Rana are working women and they all contribute to their households, showing that attitudes are not always translated into actions, and that patriarchal attitudes can be resisted by women.

Another example provided by an interviewee from West Amman is her ex-husband. Dana (30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA) said that her ex-husband at one point was out of employment, and that she had to be responsible for the household expenses. She mentioned an incident that took place between her husband and his brother-in-law, saying,

'His brother-in-law started saying: "Did you seriously make her pay the household expenses? How about you? Where is your masculinity...?". I remember how he used to hide his inability to pay. When we used to go out with his mother, when she used to invite us for lunch on a Friday or something, she used to give him the money from below the table to let him pay because he is the man, although in fact she was paying' (Dana, 30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA).

Dana's quote shows that social expectations of men are both symbolic and material. In other words, whereas men are expected to provide as part of Arab traditions, their image as 'men' also depends on their material resources and their ability to provide. At the same time, this control over material resources allows men

to enjoy the privileges they get for being household heads. For example, some interviewees referred to the control men attain over their wives and junior members of the household, as a result of controlling the financial resources. The attitudes towards women's and men's work are based on symbolic and material structures of gender relations that intersect to form patriarchal cultural ideologies. Moreover, the intersection of those structures gives men power in the household. In other words, when a man is responsible for financial resources, he gains power. For example, Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) spoke about her sister, who is married and whose husband did not allow her work. She said,

'My sister keeps saying that her husband controls her, and restricts her movement. And, he blames her for the misbehaviour of any of her five children. If she is working she would be stronger with him, but he puts her down because he is responsible for the expenses' (Rana, 23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA).

It became clear throughout the interviews that some interviewees accommodated patriarchy, by not viewing the male-breadwinner model as oppressive, and seeing men's control over their household as a suitable exchange for the efforts they exert outside the household to provide for their families. One interviewee clarified this by saying,

'He [her husband] gets me anything I need; he calculates how much I need. And, in exchange, I am responsible for the cooking, cleaning the house, buying groceries, taking care of our daughter and of him of course... this is his responsibility, to bring in the money, and I am responsible for taking care of the household' (Alia, 25, married, 1 child, economically inactive, WA).

Alia does not see the patriarchal assigned roles of being a housewife, who takes care of her husband and children, as oppressive; she believes that by being a housewife she is gaining rewards and some sort of financial security. Her example shows how she is accommodating herself to patriarchy. Another interviewee, who is in full-time employment, mentioned that she does all the housework, also mentioning that she

does not let her husband help. She mentioned that she leaves the heavy cleaning duties to her only day-off. She said, 'he is the man, he is not supposed to help with household chores, and I do not like to exhaust him' (Nur, 27, married, 1 child, office manager, ft employment, WA). Financially, Nur and her husband contribute equally to the household, as they earn the same monthly amount of money, which means that both of them are in control of the financial material resources of the household, as she explained in the interview. However, her attitude towards not letting him help with household chores is related to the fact that symbolic meanings associated with being a man do not include men participating in household chores. I have already established that patriarchal cultural values place great importance on men's work because of their assigned roles as providers for their households. It is also clear that women's assigned roles relate to household chores and reproduction. These assigned roles lead to the societal deprioritisation of women's engagement in income generating activities by both men and women, which also influences attitudes towards women's economic activities.

4.1.2 Deprioritising Women's Involvement in Income Generating Activities

'Since 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 groomed for marriage, by assuming home chores that boys are exempted from' (Darwazeh, 2002: Para 4).

Patriarchal social constructs prevalent in society, such as the male-breadwinner/female-carer model, make women and men deprioritise women's economic activities, because women are not expected to provide financially for their households (Abdalla, 1996, Mostafa, 2003). Gender roles, assigned by those social constructs, are important factors that associate women with private and men with public spheres. Some women seem reluctant to engage in income generating activities, as it is not seen as part of their role to contribute financially to household expenses, while other women who want to engage in income generating activities are prevented from doing so by patriarchal cultural values. Some women are satisfied with their assigned domestic roles, while others resist and negotiate patriarchal power. Some of these women succeed and others do not, depending on certain variables such as educational attainment, class, and age.

Views and attitudes towards men's and women's roles give us an idea about gender expectations. Questionnaire data showed that the majority of men and women, from East and West Amman alike, see women's role inside the household as more important than men's (see Table 4.11). Regarding the statement that 'women's role inside the household is more important than men's', the majority agreed (66.5 percent), with no significant gender or class differences. Regarding the statement 'men's role inside the household is more important than women's', only a minority of respondents agreed (7.4 percent of the total respondents), with no significant gender or class differences (see Table 4.12). The response rates show that there are no differences between respondents from East and West Amman, and gender does not have an influence on those views either. Those attitudes reflect a general view that

women's responsibility is confined to the household. This shows that women's and men's assigned roles are reproduced across class and gender, and this is reflected in the interviews and the attitudes identified in the questionnaire. However, the reproduction of this patriarchal structure does not necessarily mean that it is static, because it can be challenged and undermined in some cases.

Table (4.11) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Women's role in the household is more important than men's'										
	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	19	50%	17	37%	14	41.2%	19	41.3%	69	42.1%
Agree	7	18.4%	12	26.1%	10	29.4%	11	23.9%	40	24.4%
Neither agree or disagree	6	15.8%	8	17.4%	8	23.5%	8	17.4%	30	18.3%
Disagree	5	13.2%	5	10.9%	2	5.9%	7	15.2%	19	11.5%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.6%	4	8.6%	0	0%	1	2.2%	6	3.7%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

Table (4.12) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Men's role in the household is more important than women's'

	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	1	2.6%	4	8.7%	0	0%	1	2.2%	6	3.7%
Agree	1	2.6%	1	2.2%	3	8.8%	1	2.2%	6	3.7%
Neither agree or disagree	18	47.4%	16	34.8%	15	44.2%	18	39.1%	67	40.9%
Disagree	12	31.6%	17	37%	13	38.2%	24	52.2%	66	40.2%
Strongly Disagree	6	15.8%	8	17.3%	3	8.8%	2	4.3%	19	11.6%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

For example, when a woman tries to engage in income generating activities - or in other words, when a woman attempts to resist the patriarchal structure which assigns her the role of a housewife – her husband can refuse or reject this effort, under the claim that a woman cannot manage her time due to the heavy responsibilities she has inside the household. In some cases, disapproval of women's engagement in income generating activities can be effective, such as in the case of Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA), who mentioned that she, along with a few female neighbours, started selling handmade embroidery from home. She said,

'I did not do that work for long, only for a couple of months. The man I have [her husband] was not satisfied with it [with a laugh]. He said, "do you want to become blind for a few pennies..." It is exhausting and it takes a lot of time, but it never affected my housework. I used to do it in my free time. I wanted to go on, because I do not go out, and I do not do anything except the household chores. I thought about it as a way of entertainment. He rejected it, and prevented it, and at that time I simply stopped. This kind of work requires someone

who is totally dedicated to it. But my husband said that women have other responsibilities; household chores, children, their husbands, and the responsibility of the whole house' (Fatima, 38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA).

Despite the fact that Fatima believes that she can manage her time between making embroidery, and her household chores, her husband's views were different, and he had the power to stop her engaging in economic activity. For him, making a few pennies is not worth it, even though she wanted to do it for herself. In this case, Fatima's resistance was curbed by her husband's patriarchal power. Women who are engaged in income generating activities are viewed by their husbands as not being able to accomplish their domestic duties, such as in the case of Fatima, which is an example of failed resistance to patriarchy. Interviews also showed that there are other ways through which women deal with patriarchy, such as bargaining with it.

An example of this was given by another interviewee from East Amman, who mentioned that her husband would not mind if she works from home, under the condition that it does not influence her role inside the house. Her example shows that her negotiation with patriarchal power succeeded to a limited extent, as it was conditioned by her fulfilment of her role inside the household. The same interviewee mentioned that she used to work in a nursery, due to financial need. In this case financial need undermined patriarchal structures; however, this did not last for long because after having four children she had to stop working (Liana, 39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA) because the priority in her life shifted to taking care of the household and children at a certain point of time. This shows that the way women's priorities are set differs according to circumstances. Fatima and Liana, both from East Amman, attempted to resist patriarchy, although their husband's patriarchal power influenced their economic activities differently - one was prevented from working meaning her resistance failed, while the other worked under these conditions by negotiating patriarchal structures. On the other hand, there are other examples where women themselves accommodate and accept

patriarchal structures and even express satisfaction with their assigned roles. For example, Alia from West Amman stated,

'Because men work, and are responsible for household expenses, it is important that they come to a comfortable place. They need to find their wives at home, lunch prepared and children clean. My husband does not want me to work, because he wants me to take care of him and of our daughter. He said, "If you work, who would then take care of us?"' (Alia, 25, married, 1 child, economically inactive, WA).

The aforementioned examples demonstrate different ways through which women resist, negotiate and accept patriarchy.

It became clear throughout the interviews that women are the ones to quit their income generating activities after marriage or pregnancy, because their roles are strictly linked to the household. Many interviewees, single and married, mentioned examples of women quitting work because they could not manage working in and outside the household at the same time. For example, Samar gave her mother as an example of a woman who chose to quit work because she could not manage working outside and inside the house. Samar said,

'My mother retired at a young age, when we were young... it was her decision... she used to work as a teacher, and she had specific working hours. But she felt that she needed to spend more time at home. Work outside and inside exhausted her. It was too much on her, too much on her physical capabilities. Her house became her priority, so she had to quit. My father was exceptionally delighted, when she made that decision. He said that this way she will start focusing her efforts on the house, rather than dividing the effort between her work, and household responsibilities. He said that she would have more time to take care of him and us. She could not manage before' (Samar, 25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

Questionnaire respondents were also asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statement that 'women's economic activity negatively affects their family life', and the responses showed gender and class differences (see Table

4.13). Men from both sides were more likely to agree that women’s economic activity negatively affects their family life, with 50 percent of East Amman and 41.1 percent of West Amman men agreeing. The class difference in views was more apparent in men’s responses, with 39.2 percent of East Amman women and 34.8 percent of West Amman women agreeing. However, when asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statement that ‘men’s economic activity negatively affects their family life’, the majority from both sides and genders disagreed (see Table 4.14).

Table (4.13) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: ‘Women’s economic activity negatively affects their family life’										
	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	6	15.8%	6	13%	6	17.6%	3	6.5%	21	12.8%
Agree	13	34.2%	12	26.2%	8	23.5%	13	28.3%	46	28%
Neither agree or disagree	13	34.2%	14	30.4%	14	41.3%	12	26.1%	53	32.4%
Disagree	6	15.8%	10	21.7%	3	8.8%	11	23.9%	30	18.3%
Strongly Disagree	0	0	4	8.7%	3	8.8%	7	15.2%	14	8.5%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

Table (4.14) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Men's economic activity negatively affects their family life'

	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	1	2.6%	2	4.3%	2	5.9%	2	4.3%	7	4.3%
Agree	2	5.3%	7	15.3%	5	14.7%	5	10.9%	19	11.6%
Neither agree or disagree	10	26.3%	8	17.4%	6	17.6%	11	32.9%	35	21.3%
Disagree	18	47.4%	15	32.6%	12	35.3%	16	34.8%	61	37.2%
Strongly Disagree	7	18.4%	14	30.4%	9	26.5%	12	26.1%	42	25.6%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

These data show that East Amman respondents, men and women, were more likely to believe that women's economic activity negatively affects their family life. The data also show that respondents think that men's economic activity does not influence men's family lives as much as women's economic activity. This can be linked to men's role in the family as providers, views which also came out in the interviews. In other words, people believe that women's economic activities affect family life, particularly after marriage, as they detract from their ability to prioritise their family life and household work. Respondents believe that women's highest priorities should be caring for their husbands and children, and of course other responsibilities that relate to the household, such as cleaning, feeding and grocery shopping. Moreover, since the household is women's main responsibility, it is perceived that it could affect their economic activity, more than men. Questionnaire respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement that 'women's family life negatively affects their economic activity'. The majority of respondents (55.5 percent) from both sides and genders agreed with the statement,

and there were no significant gender and class differences (see Table 4.15). Regarding the statement that 'men's family life negatively affects their economic activity', although the majority (53 percent) of respondents disagreed, there were gender and class differences (see Table 4.16). Amongst East Amman respondents fewer men than women agreed - 18.4 percent and 30.4 percent respectively. Meanwhile, amongst West Amman respondents fewer women than men agreed - 8.7 percent and 17.6 percent agreed respectively. Women in East Amman were most likely to believe that men's family life negatively affects their economic activity. Men in East and West Amman appeared to have similar views, but women's responses were different.

Table (4.15) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Women's family life negatively affects their economic activity'										
	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	5	13.2%	3	6.5%	4	11.8%	7	15.2%	19	11.6%
Agree	19	50%	21	45.7%	14	41.2%	18	39.1%	72	43.9%
Neither agree or disagree	9	23.6%	15	32.6%	11	32.3%	12	26.1%	47	28.6%
Disagree	5	13.2%	5	10.9%	3	8.8%	5	10.9%	18	11%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	2	4.3%	2	5.9%	4	8.7%	8	4.9%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

Table (4.16) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Men's family life negatively affects their economic activity'										
	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	1	2.6%	4	8.7%	1	2.9%	1	2.2%	7	4.3%
Agree	6	15.8%	10	21.7%	5	14.7%	3	6.5%	24	14.6%
Neither agree or disagree	10	26.3%	11	23.9%	14	41.2%	11	23.9%	46	28%
Disagree	17	44.7%	17	37%	8	23.5%	20	43.5%	62	37.8%
Strongly Disagree	4	10.6%	4	8.7%	6	17.7%	11	23.9%	25	15.2%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

Interviews provided examples of how family life negatively affects women's economic activities. Haya (26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA) said that her father and mother work in the education sector, and both previously gave private tutoring after their normal working hours. However, her mother felt that the resultant workload became too much for her, with full-time work and full-time household responsibilities, and decided to give up private tutoring, while her father did not. This example illustrates that household responsibilities, in some cases, hinder women's economic activities, as Haya's mother was not able to go on with private tutoring due to the heavy duties in the household. Haya explained,

'My mother manages by cooking at night for the next day, and she wakes up very early in the morning to clean the house and then leaves to work. When she comes back home, she warms up the food for us, and for my father' (Haya, 26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA).

This quote shows that women are responsible for all the household chores, and shows that family life negatively affects women's economic activities, unlike men

who do not have the same assigned responsibilities in relation to the household. The interviews showed that attitudes towards the relationship between women's economic activity and family life sometimes depend on women's marital status. For example, for married women - whether from East or West Amman - the pressure to prioritise family life was more significant. For single women from West Amman family life did not seem to influence their engagement or disengagement in income generating activities. On the other hand, single women from East Amman seemed to face different burdens in terms of engaging in income generating activities, and even in terms of accessing education. For example, Salha said,

'When I finished my college diploma, I thought I might be able to work in a nursery. But my father has this rule, women are not created to work outside the house. Women's role is in the household, having children, and taking care of the household. He also does not like sending his daughters to universities, because they are mixed' (Salha, 27, single, economically inactive, EA).

This shows that there are differences in terms of culture and the structures at play between East and West Amman, as no interviewee from West Amman faced a problem accessing education, or working after graduation and before marriage. It is worth noting that marriage seems to be a priority in women's lives, whether in the East or the West side of Amman. All respondents expressed that their families, and in some cases themselves, view marriage as more important for a woman than economic activity. However the attitudes towards prioritising marriage over education differed between East and West Amman, as explained in the next chapter.

Most West Amman single women interviewees had the option to work after completing higher education, which was seen as a main priority. In East Amman the situation was different, as many explained that a woman is not given the choice, rather she is expected to get married. All West Amman single interviewees mentioned that their families did not mind their involvement in an income

generating activity. However, they added that they constantly face an ‘invisible pressure to get married’. For example Dana said,

‘I felt that there is ‘invisible pressure,’ which obliges you to get married, after graduation and work, time comes for you to get married. The pressure came from my father. He never said it directly, but each time someone got married he used to say: “it is your turn now.” However, he would never force me; that is why I call it invisible pressure. By default you are expected to get married after graduating and finding a job’ (Dana, 30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA).

Haya (26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA) said that seeking employment, after she completed her education, was her decision. However, she added that both of her parents keep telling her that she has to get married, and seek stability through marriage in her life. She stated,

‘They keep nagging me. They keep saying that I have to get married particularly since I do not have brothers to take care of me if anything happens to them... they believe that through marriage, a man will support me. They would never force me, but there will always be indirect pressure’ (Haya, 26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA).

In contrast, the families of interviewees in East Amman seem to have different views in regard to single women’s economic activity. Many of them reject women’s work, because they see marriage as more important than work, and sometimes more important than education. Around 80.4 percent of West Amman women questionnaire respondents received higher education compared with 45.7 percent of East Amman women respondents. This shows that in my sample women from West Amman are more likely to receive higher education than women from East Amman.

Views towards education differed between people living in East and people living in West Amman. Although questionnaire data shows that education is generally seen as important for both men and women (see Tables 4.17 and 4.18), interviews showed that attitudes towards education are not always put into practice.

For people in the West, higher education is a must and all interviewees except for one obtained university degrees, whereas in the East, although it is valued, whether or not someone goes to university depends on the resources available and other socioeconomic factors, which are explored in chapter five. Indeed only one interviewee from the East had a university degree. Interviewees from both West and East Amman thought that higher education was important, for instance the families of Haya (26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA) and Alia (25, married, 1 child, economically inactive, WA) did not allow them to get married before finishing higher education. For example, Liana said,

‘I support women’s education, as much as I support men’s education. And, I would love my daughters to get education like my sons. But, God’s willing, if we have the resources, I would definitely support it... Education is more important for women than employment’ (Liana, 39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA) had a different view, as she believes that education until high school is important, but after that marriage becomes more important than higher education. The majority of men and women agreed with the statement that ‘women’s education is vital’, and there were no class or gender differences as 95.2 percent of all respondents agreed (see Tables 4.17 and 4.18). As for the statement that ‘men’s education is vital’, 93.3 percent of respondents agreed. Interview data showed that women’s education is seen as important in certain cases, especially for West Amman women, because it would aid them after marriage in fulfilling their roles inside the household and for the upbringing of the children. One interviewee from West Amman said,

‘Education is very important for women. I think that illiterate women cannot follow up their children’s homework. There is a difference between children raised by educated mothers and uneducated mothers. Uneducated women cannot do what educated women can do for their children, who raise them better’ (Samar, 25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

Table (4.17) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Women's education is vital'

	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	23	60.5%	35	76.2%	22	64.7%	37	80.4%	117	71.4%
Agree	13	34.2%	7	15.2%	12	35.3%	7	15.2%	39	23.8%
Neither agree or disagree	2	5.3%	2	4.3%	0	0%	1	2.2%	5	3%
Disagree	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2.2%	1	0.6%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	2	4.3%	0	0%	0	0%	2	1.2%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

Table (4.18) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Men's education is vital'

	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	30	78.9%	35	76.1%	25	73.5%	39	84.8%	129	78.7%
Agree	6	15.8%	5	10.9%	7	20.6%	6	13%	24	14.6%
Neither agree or disagree	2	5.3%	4	8.7%	2	5.9%	1	2.2%	9	5.5%
Disagree	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	2	4.3%	0	0%	0	0%	2	1.2%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

It became evident from the interviews and the questionnaires that there are patriarchal views and attitudes that influence women's engagement in income generating activities and contribute to it not being seen as important as that of men's. Data showed that there are class and gender differences in terms of the attitudes; they also differ in East and West Amman, and these differences seem to indicate cultural differences which can be linked to class. However, views and attitudes towards women and their economic activities are not always reflected in practice, as they can be challenged and negotiated. In addition to the patriarchal structures that assign gender roles to men and women, there are other factors that influence women's economic activities, and these make it hard for women to become economically active. The next section explores these factors and shows how they are resisted and/or accommodated.

4.2 Women's Economic Activities: Conditioned Choices

Attitudes towards women's economic activities in East and West Amman are similar in that they can be characterised as patriarchal; however there are important differences. Both class and gender play major roles in determining attitudes towards women's involvement in income generating activities. In both East and West Amman, women are expected socially to become wives and mothers who prioritise their children and their household chores; however, there are other factors that influence their experiences, such as the expected timing of their marriages, and access to education. It has to be said that attitudes towards women's economic activities are not necessarily reflected in practice, but they give us a general idea about the cultural values prevalent in the society. Practices can sometimes be incongruent with the attitudes due to specific circumstances, and this creates different experiences for women. Moreover, men do not face the same attitudes as women in terms of engaging in income generating activities, because the man's assigned role is to provide financially for his family.

In addition to the fact that people, generally, deprioritise women's economic activity, there are several factors that make women's engagement in income generating activities hard. Previously, I mentioned Liana (39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA), whose husband allowed her to work under the condition that she fulfils her household duties, and that her work does not interfere in her assigned 'primary' role. Liana is an example of women whose engagement in income generating activities is conditional, and this limits her options of what is doable and suitable as an activity. On the other hand, some of the attitudes towards women's economic activities are determined by the suitability of the job. Many interviewees expressed that their families objected to specific types of economic activities because they are not suitable for women. The following subsections explain how having to balance work and household responsibilities makes it hard for

women to be economically active, and how some women's choices are limited according to what is seen as 'suitable for a woman'.

4.2.1 Balancing Work and the Household

One of the major conditions placed on women, especially married women, when seeking economic activities, is that they have to balance their time between their work and household chores. This does not only restrict women's access to economic activities, but also limits their options and choices. In the answers to the question to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement that 'women cannot manage their time between economic activity and household and familial responsibilities', there were class and gender differences between respondents. The majority -55.3 percent- of East Amman men agreed, compared to 32.4 percent of West Amman men. As for women, 32.6 percent of East Amman women and 15.2 percent of West Amman women agreed. This shows gender and class differences in the responses to this statement. East Amman men were the most likely to agree with the statement, and West Amman women were least likely to agree; however the responses of West Amman men and East Amman women were almost exactly the same.

Table (4.19) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Women cannot manage their time between economic activity and household and familial responsibilities'										
	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	8	21.1%	4	8.7%	6	17.7%	2	4.3%	20	12.2%
Agree	13	34.2%	11	23.9%	5	14.7%	5	10.9%	34	20.7%
Neither agree or disagree	8	21.1%	8	17.4%	14	41.2%	17	37%	47	28.7%
Disagree	8	21.1%	18	39.1%	8	23.5%	13	28.3%	47	28.7%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.5%	5	10.9%	1	2.9%	9	19.6%	16	9.8%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

Data show that patriarchal cultural values are much stronger in East Amman, which can reflect cultural class difference. However, patriarchal values still exist in West Amman, though differently. Although these patriarchal cultural values can influence women's economic activities, especially taking into account men's power within the household, some women manage to negotiate those values by meeting certain conditions that are placed on them. For example, married interviewees mentioned that their engagement in income generating activities is conditioned by their ability to balance between their work and the household chores. If that condition is met, some women are allowed by their husbands to engage in economic activity, if not then their priority should be the household. Dina (35, married, 5 children, secretary, ft employment, EA) mentioned that her husband does not mind her job because her daughters can stay with her in the office after school. She said that they go home at the same time, so he has no problem. Abeer stated,

'My job starts at 7:30 and I leave at 2:30. I agreed with the organisation on that instead of coming at 8 and leaving at 4, because of my children. My children are young and no one stays at home with them; I leave them alone. When they have day shifts, they come home at 11:30, so they stay alone at home while I am at work. I worry about them. I could not start working before because I had young children, I could not leave them. No one would stay at home with them, and my husband would not allow it' (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

Working hours are apparently important for women to engage in income generating activities; arranging suitable working hours is an important condition they have to meet, in order to be able to work. It had been emphasised, by married interviewees and by single interviewees about the experiences of their mothers or relatives, that attitudes towards women's work depend largely on their ability to balance between their work and the household. It became obvious that although patriarchal power is evident in East and West Amman, women's experiences differed. Often the dire financial situation of many East Amman women

interviewees makes them resist and negotiate with patriarchal power, sometimes managing to challenge it by becoming economically active, even though this is still limited and conditioned by the need to fulfil their household duties.

In contrast, there is a tendency amongst West Amman married non-working interviewees to accommodate themselves to patriarchy rather than resist or challenge it. Reema (28, married, no children, economically inactive, WA), Alia (25, married, 1 child, economically inactive, WA), and Samar (25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA) said that they would only engage in income generating activities if they can determine the working hours of their work, enabling them to balance between their domestic responsibilities and work. However, neither of them wants to become economically active because they do not see a financial need for it, particularly since their husbands are providing for them. For example, Reema said,

'I cannot stand routine; waking up on a specific time, and coming home on a specific time... I also said to myself, if I work how I would be able to cook for my husband, and to balance between both responsibilities. I do not like the man to come home and not to find his wife waiting for him at home... he told me several times that I prefer to find my wife at home, when I come from work' (Reema, 28, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

Reema, Samar, and Alia have maids at home; but they still believe it would be hard to be employed and balance between their household chores and work, and the fact that their financial situation is good and they do not need to generate income is another reason they do not seek work.

For example, the mother of Haya, one of the West Amman interviewees, was encouraged by her husband to work as a teacher, because he viewed it as the most appropriate job in terms of working hours. For Haya's father, teaching is the most suitable job for a woman, who is also responsible for the household chores, because it has certain working hours that would not exceed the hours her children would spend in school. So, she comes home at 2 p.m. and sometimes before, and the rest of

her day is dedicated to her household duties. This leads us to the idea that there are jobs that are seen as suitable for women and jobs that are not, according to the interviewees and their families. So, what other factors, other than working hours, make a job suitable and what make it unsuitable?

4.2.2 It has to be Suitable!

There are several reasons that make it difficult for women to engage in economic activities, including the views of their families, husbands, and, in many cases, their own. 'Mingling' was one of the main themes that became apparent throughout the interviews. Mingling means mixing with the opposite sex and also with people from other backgrounds. However, the term 'mingling' had both different and similar connotations in East and West Amman. Negative views towards mingling make women's engagement in income generating activities hard, and sometimes unsuitable. The dangers of mingling, additionally, limited women's choices in terms of accessing economic activities. The fact that the term 'mingling' has several connotations in East and West Amman shows that there are cultural class differences between the two sides of the city. The term mingling in East Amman means mixing with the other sex, i.e., in this case, with men. In West Amman it means mixing with men but also with people from different class backgrounds.

Many East Amman interviewees mentioned that their families opposed them working in environments that include the mixing of the sexes. However, East Amman women clarified that their brothers and male relatives are not prevented from mingling with women, and are not judged if they do so. The prohibition of mixing between the sexes is linked to controlling women's sexuality to preserve the family honour, as families' honour is linked to women's behaviour. Therefore, mingling is not problematic for men as it is for women. On the other hand, some interviewees explained that their families disapprove of mingling as a way to 'protect' women from physical danger. Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA) mentioned that she spent four years looking for a job that is suitable and satisfactory for her family. Another participant, Abeer, said,

'Anything mixed is prohibited according to my father. My brothers did not face that problem. He only did not want his

daughters to mix with guys. They were able to do anything they want' (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, full employment, EA).

The rejection of mingling between the sexes meant that if a woman wanted to seek a job the workplace should not include men, in closed spaces, or small offices. This made it hard for many to find a job that suits their families' views. Another example, from East Amman, was Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA), who mentioned that her 19 year old daughter wanted to work as a data entry clerk in a private company with 150 male employees and one female secretary, but this was rejected by her male relatives. She stated that they denied her working in that company because she would be dealing with men all the time, and so they thought that this job was unsuitable for her as it would involve mingling with men. Nonetheless, Amani did not listen to her relatives and supported her daughter's work, resisting these patriarchal values. It is worth mentioning that Amani's financial situation is very bad, and her daughter's work would help in improving their situation.

For people from the West of Amman, mingling means mixing with people from different backgrounds, or in their words 'low class people', and also in some cases it means mixing with men from different backgrounds. Mingling with men in a work environment did not seem to be a problem unless the nature of the work is seen as 'low status', such as in sales, which is not seen as suitable for women. Some interviewees and their families found 'unsuitable' jobs where they have to mingle with different kinds of people. This was only one reason that made it hard for them to find acceptable sort of economic activities. For example, Reema said,

'I worked once in a private company, for two months, but I could not stand it anymore. I could not stand the environment... you know how low class people; they were low class. I could not deal with them; it was very hard for me to deal with them. They are the kind of people who come to work wearing slippers... and, they only had a position in sales, and I did not like dealing with people outdoors either. And, my

family do not encourage these kinds of jobs. They do not want me to be a saleslady. It is not suitable for a girl!' (Reema, 28, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

Samar (25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA) mentioned that her husband does not like her to mingle with people from different backgrounds, because he sees dealing with 'low class' people as degrading for a woman. Haya (26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA) also mentioned that her mother, when she first started working at a humanitarian organisation, did not like the fact that she dealt with different kinds of people through working with refugees, and disadvantaged groups. She also mentioned that both of her parents encouraged her to become a teacher, to enable her to balance work and her domestic responsibilities in the future, and because it is a suitable job for a woman, in which she would not have to deal with 'low class' people. Yet, Haya challenged her parents' wishes and worked for a humanitarian organisation.

The nature of the job itself has a lot to do with whether it is seen as appropriate or inappropriate for women, as women are viewed as not able to do certain types of economic activity. For example, Nur (27, married, 1 child, office manager, ft employment, WA) said that men can do any kind of job, but a girl has to be educated to get a suitable job. She said that working in a gas station or as a driver is not suitable for a woman, because it is not safe and she might be exposed to dangerous situations and because women should be involved in economic activities that are of a 'high status'; this did not apply to a man. Several interviewees from West Amman mentioned that some kinds of jobs are not 'prestigious' enough, and for this reason they are seen as unsuitable.

Moreover, several interviewees from both the East and West of Amman said that their families' views towards mingling, whether between the sexes or classes, are negative because they want their female relatives' 'safety and protection'. For example, for West Amman women working with refugees, disadvantaged groups

and people from other classes is not considered appropriate, as it might place them in physical danger, because those groups come from different 'backgrounds' and cultures, and they are viewed as 'uncivilised'. On the other hand, working with men is not considered appropriate for East Amman women. In Arab culture women's 'safety and protection' is to a large extent the responsibility of their male guardians. Women's safety and protection has a lot to do with women's sexuality and its control. Ensuring women's 'safety and protection' entails protecting them from any physical danger and preserving their family honour. For that reason many fathers, husbands or brothers would disallow women's work. This not only makes it hard for women to find a job which is satisfactory to their male guardians, but also makes it hard for some to even continue their education. Moreover, the issue of women's safety and protection provides male guardians with a justification for restricting women's movement outside the household.

In East Amman the issue of women's safety takes a different form to in West Amman. Many interviewees mentioned that it is dangerous for women to move outside without male companions. One interviewee described her neighbourhood as the 'alley of death'. She added, 'It is even dangerous for boys to walk in the street alone, imagine how dangerous it is for a girl!' (Amani, 39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA). Another interviewee uttered the same concerns over women's movement, however she added,

'I do not feel safe sending my daughter alone, and her brother cannot accompany her all the time, because he is busy. You know the situation these days... if a woman is not strong, she will get lost morally. I'd rather a girl stays home, and doesn't to go out' (Fatima, 38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA).

It became apparent during my fieldwork and observations that there are certain areas in East Amman that are seen as more dangerous for women than others, such as Palestinian refugee camps and the areas around them. Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan have the highest poverty and unemployment levels amongst other areas in

Jordan. Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA), Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA), and Liana (39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA), who are Palestinian camp refugees, mentioned during the interviews that they do not feel safe leaving the house after six o'clock unless they are with a male guardian. Therefore, they feel that they need to protect their daughters from dangerous situations - for instance Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA) mentioned the increase in drug addicts in the camps. On the other hand, Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA), and Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA), live in an area called al-Nuzha, which is located near the al-Hussein Palestinian refugee camp in East Amman, and have the same fears and feel that those areas are not safe for women and even men.

The living conditions of refugees within the camps are significantly different from those who live outside the camps. It is also important to note that poverty and dire living conditions are concentrated in those camps (Khawaja, 2003). It is generally thought by the UNRWA and other scholars that those living in or near camps are generally the poorest of the Jordanian population (Coate, 1953, Khawaja, 2003, Sirhan, 1975, Hanssen-Bauer and Jacobsen, 2002). Statistics further show that there are dramatic differences between the living conditions of camp refugees and non-camp refugees and non-refugees in Jordan (Arenberg, 1997). Moreover, labour force participation is low among camp refugees as they suffer from underemployment and unemployment which cause poverty as well as also being faced with serious and constant financial crises (Arenberg, 1997). In addition, Palestinian camp refugee women's participation in the labour force is lower than their male-counterparts. In their study, Khawaja and Tilteneš (2002: 42) found that, 'The overall labour force participation rate was low at 41% for both men and women. This is mainly due to a very low female participation of 13%; the corresponding rate for males is 69%'.

Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) and Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA) mentioned that the best work opportunities are located in West Amman, which makes it really hard for them to travel to their workplaces due to the distance involved. Rana mentioned that she has to take three buses from where she lives, from different bus stations, in order to go to work. The issue of distance for East Amman women seemed to prevent some of them from working, as travelling to distant destinations was deemed not safe. Therefore, linking distance to safety and protection had been to a large extent the predominant view of East Amman people. Another example is Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA), whose sister worked as a housecleaner in West Amman. She mentioned that her husband approved her work under the condition that she comes home before 2 p.m. because of the distance. Abeer, on the other hand, said that her father allowed her to work in a tailoring centre because of its suitability. She stated,

'My father allowed this job, because it was close to our area. It was in al-Hussein refugee camp. He knew all the people in the street where I worked, and he was able to reach for me at any time. This is why he let me. There were men in that work, but my father and brothers did not mind because I was covered, and they knew the details of my job, when I start and when I finish, who I see...'
(Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

The concept of safety in East Amman, especially in refugee camps, is linked with the sexual reputation of women, and to potential physical danger. West Amman women do not seem to face the same notions of safety and protection, as many of them are able to travel in their own cars. In other words, as explained earlier, some women expressed genuine fears about the situation in the camps, making it hard for them to move freely and thus influencing their economic activities. Therefore, women's economic activity is not only influenced by class, but also in the case of refugee camp women by their camp situation, as poverty is more prevalent there than in the rest of East Amman. This shows that there are divisions

and differences between women on the East side of the city, meaning that the intersectionality of class, camp situation and gender influence women's choice of economic activities, as well as their freedom of movement.

There are factors that limit women's choices in terms of engaging in income generating activities and that determine the suitability of the job, such as the working hours, and balancing work and household chores, in addition to concepts of 'safety and protection'. Views were based on patriarchal cultural values that reject mingling, for several reasons. The prohibition of mingling as mixing between men and women is linked to controlling women's sexuality in order to preserve family honour. It is also linked to wanting to avoid women being placed in physical danger. Views were also based on physical aspects, such as distance, that are turned against women's economic activity rather than men's. The intersectionality of class, gender, sexuality and camp situation manifested itself in the interviews. Several examples showed us that distance is seen as a problem for women in the East of Amman, particularly those living in and around camps, while it is not a problem for East Amman men or for West Amman women because of their better financial situation. In spite of its low-precedence, women's work seems to be important in certain cases, which leads us to the question 'when is women's work important?'

4.3 Women's Work: Necessity and Accessory

Women's work does not have the same importance for everyone, and women's experiences differ according to the surrounding circumstances and environments. Peoples' views and attitudes towards women's work apparently shift according to circumstances; they are not static, rather they are negotiated and in transition depending on women's and their families' financial situation. Moreover, the reasoning behind the importance of women's economic activity plays a major role in determining whether a woman should be economically active or not. The interviews showed differences in the views and attitudes of women from the East and the West, and also, of course, the views of their families towards when women's work becomes necessary and important.

Almost all interviewees from East and West Amman, even those who do not want to work, interestingly, when asked about their personal views, expressed that they support women's work, and that women's work is very important. But when asked why it is important the views varied between the East and the West. West Amman interviewees viewed work as important, but not necessary. In other words, because most of them live in good financial situations they saw generating income as advantageous in terms of personal skills, and not for survival needs. East Amman interviewees, on the other hand, believed that generating income is important because of their financial needs, and because they saw it as empowering for women. Although patriarchal structures marginalise women's economic activities, many interviewees stressed its importance in the lives of women and their families. This can be seen as undermining to patriarchy. Although the questionnaires revealed that generally women's economic activity is not seen as important as men's economic activity, the interviews showed that economic activity is sometimes very important in some women's lives. There were cases where women's economic activity was as important for survival as men's.

4.3.1 Necessity: East vs. West

Financial need and necessity play a major role in making women's work essential. Despite the views that restrict women's economic activities, many women become economically active due to financial need and also being without a male provider, or when the male head of the household cannot adequately provide. Meeting all the conditions - balancing housework and economic activity, working hours, being able to find a 'suitable' job, and overcoming the issue of distance - makes women's work acceptable in certain cases, while in other cases women do not necessarily have to satisfy the conditions because financial need takes precedence. The motives for work for East Amman women depended mainly on financial need, and in most cases this happens when the male is not able to fulfil his expected role as a provider for the household. East Amman economically active women interviewees viewed their work as essential for their lives and the lives of their family members because of their financial need. For example, Amani said,

'I value work, I value my work. It is not only important for me, but for my family as well. I do not want my children to become beggars. I believe that work is very important in women's lives, like in my case. I had to work because my husband became disabled' (Amani, 39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

Nadia also said,

'When I was married my husband did not want me to work. But, now I need to work because I have three kids, for whom I have become the sole provider' (Nadia, 36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA) also views her work as essential, as she not only has to provide for her son, but also contribute to her family's household expenses. These three cases show us that when there is no male provider a woman's role has to shift to head the household, and they provide for its expenses. Women's work becomes particularly important when women's male

guardians are unable to meet their financial responsibilities. For example, Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA) mentioned that due to financial need, her mother supports her work, and Nadira also views it as very important. This shows that women serve as a 'reserve army' who provide for their households when they lack male providers (Mostafa, 2003).

Women's work also becomes a necessity when there is a male provider who cannot adequately meet the financial needs of his household. Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) and Dina (35, married, 5 children, secretary, ft employment, EA) are two examples of such cases. They mentioned that their work is very significant in their families' lives because they cannot survive without the money they provide to the household, and their families viewed their work as important because they contribute to their household. This only happens in instances where the husband/brother/father is physically unable to provide for their families. Nadira explained that she has to work because her brothers have other responsibilities towards their wives and children.

Married West Amman interviewees and their families viewed necessity differently. For them, economic activity does not often seem an essential aspect of their lives, except in particular cases. For example, many of these women and their husbands viewed their work as insignificant or unimportant because 'there is no need.' They said that their husbands can afford to give them luxurious lives, where everything they need is present; they therefore thought that there was no need for their economic activity. However, some women in West Amman reflected that their work is essential for them personally, because it gives them the opportunities to buy whatever they desire. They mentioned that they can survive without their work but they would not be able to afford certain accessories in their lives without it, such as going out for leisure, or going to the hairdresser as often as they want. Nur (27, married, 1 child, office manager, ft employment, WA) mentioned that after she delivered her child her husband told her that if she wished she could quit her job and stay at

home. She did not leave her job because the financial load would fall on her husband alone. Nur not leaving her work is a form of negotiation with patriarchal structures which limit women's work, especially as they would be able to manage financially without her work.

For single West Amman women interviewees living with their parents, necessity was also viewed differently. Single West Amman interviewees mentioned that they view their work as essential for themselves and for self development, not for their families, as will be explained in the next section. No single working interviewee from West Amman contributes to the household. They said that they are not expected to contribute, and that their families do not need their contributions. For example, Haya said,

'I am one of those who feel shy to ask for allowance from my father. I cannot ask him to give me money to do some shopping today. If he gave me the money, I would feel that I am restricted by the amount he gives me. I like to do my manicures and pedicures weekly, I cannot keep asking my father for money for that. My job made me depend on myself' (Haya, 26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA).

Rawan (22, single, student, pt employment in sales, WA) mentioned that she wanted to work to be able to afford to pay for herself, to be able to buy herself the accessories she desires, and to depend on herself. Single women living with their parents are not expected to contribute financially to parental households. These women continue to work because it is convenient for them, not because they need to financially. Moreover, these women are also not expected to contribute financially when they get married because their husbands will provide them with financial security. In addition to materialistic aspects of their lives, almost all interviewees also referred to other not essential, but additional aspects that relate to women's economic activity, such as positive skills and status that women attain through engaging in 'suitable' income generating activities.

4.3.2 Additional Advantages

Certain suitable types of women's engagement in income generating activities are considered very important for women's self-development, in terms of personality and skills; this view was evident amongst both economically active and inactive interviewees. Most working interviewees, when asked about their views, reflected on their personal experience. To a large extent, reference to the skills gained through work emphasises that a woman's work is of high importance, but not more important than her other responsibilities. The importance placed on women's work was mentioned in the context of work having a great influence on women's personality. Moreover, work is viewed, mostly by the interviewees who were working, as a way to gain control over their lives. For example, as one interviewee said,

'At least, I will be able to afford a car, bring things to the household; I will contribute to the household. I will not feel that my husband is in control of everything. There is a proverb that says: if you feed the mouth, the eye becomes shy. It means if you contribute financially, you will have a sort of control' (Rana, 23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA).

The views on how a woman gains control over her life by working differed between East and West of Amman. East Amman working interviewees viewed work as a way through which they can attain some sort of freedom of movement. For example, Nadira said,

'I have become independent to a certain extent. If I was not engaged in income generating activities, I would not dare to do the things I am doing now; they would still have been controlling me' (Nadira, 40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA).

However, West Amman women did not feel that it makes such a difference in terms of freedom of movement. West Amman working women viewed women's work as

important, as it gives women control over their own personal expenses. Haya said that,

'I cannot say that it gives women freedom of movement, I did not feel that anything has changed in my life in those terms. I can say that I gained control over my spending' (Haya, 26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA).

Dana (30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA), Rawan (22, single, student, pt employment in sales, WA), Nur (27, married, 1 child, office manager, ft employment, WA), and Diala (28, single, student, economically inactive, WA) all mentioned that women's work gives women control over their spending and as they called it 'financial independence', rather than control over their lives and freedom of movement.

On the other hand, all interviewees from East and West Amman, married and single, economically active or inactive, mentioned that work leaves an impact on a woman's personality. Many mentioned that it strengthens her personality, enhances her communication and interpersonal skills, introduces her to the outside world, and increases her awareness. Working women felt their work left an impact on their personalities. Economically inactive women mentioned the same things, but they emphasised that work should not collide with their main domestic responsibilities, although they said that it is important for women's personalities. For example, Samar who is economically inactive said,

'Work builds on your interpersonal and communication skills; it makes a difference. There is a big difference between a housewife and a working woman. Working women are introduced to the real world. It gives you the opportunity to deal with different kinds of people. It is a good feeling when you earn your own money. I would work, if I had a job that is tailored according to my other responsibilities. But, I cannot now' (Samar, 25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

Reema (28, married, no children, economically inactive, WA) also mentioned the same value of women's work; however, she added 'I would work if I had to, but there is no need now'. So, West Amman married women realise that women's work is important, but

they would only seek work if they had to, as a result of their other responsibilities. However, the case is different for unmarried West Amman women.

All West Amman interviewees, married and not married, are encouraged by their parents to work before marriage. Families in West Amman seem to encourage women working before marriage, as they see it as a way of developing their personalities and believe that it enables them to become more experienced in life. However, that encouragement is conditional on the job's suitability, West Amman women are encouraged and even pushed to work after graduating from universities. For example, Mai, who is a fresh graduate, said,

'My father wants me to work; he encourages me to apply to banks. He encourages me because he wants me to learn how people deal with each other' (Mai, 22, single, fresh graduate, unemployed, WA).

Dana (30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA) also said that she wanted to work to 'develop herself and build a career'. She also mentioned that both of her parents encouraged her and wanted her to work, saying,

'My father used to look for jobs for me. When I worked at the school, he got upset because he wanted me to have a better job in the medical field' (Dana, 30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA).

In East Amman, working women viewed work as very important, in the first instance because of necessity. However, they also mentioned the additional skills a woman may gain when she becomes economically active. For example, Abeer said,

'I believe that work is important and beneficial for women, because it alleviates women's suffering. It makes you stronger, because you feel responsible for a thing. It strengthens women's personalities. I would encourage my daughters to work, if they were like you. I would want them to work if they were educated, this would not be wrong. I would encourage them. But, I would not like them to work, like me, as cleaners' (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

This quote shows us that although economic activity is important, the nature of the work is also important. In other words, if Abeer was not financially in need, she would not choose to work as a cleaner in a private company. For that reason, she said that she prefers her daughters to be educated and able to get better jobs.

East Amman women view work as very important, in cases when there is a lack of a male provider or if the male provider is inadequately providing for his household. Therefore, many women from the East side seek economic activity to contribute to the household. As for West Amman women, they viewed their work as important for self development and to be able to afford their personal expenses and needs. For them their economic activity is not essential for the survival of their families, as they are not expected to contribute to the household.

This section has shown that class and gender intersect to create different reasons for women to engage in economic activities. Poverty and financial need enables women to challenge patriarchal control. Women's economic activities become important and necessary in certain circumstances. However, the nature of the necessity is different for East and West Amman women. Working women interviewees viewed their work as very important because of other advantages they gained through their economic activities. For example, many working women talked about the skills they gained through employment and work, others talked about economic independence, and some mentioned that it gave them relative freedom of movement.

Conclusion

The views and attitudes towards women's economic activity are shaped by patriarchal structures, which reinforce the male-breadwinner model and assign women domestic roles. Based on this model, men's economic activity is seen as more important than women's. Patriarchal structures hold symbolic meanings that influence what it means to be a 'man' and a 'woman', and imply that men should take the responsibility for providing financially for their families. Being the breadwinners of their households, men control the material resources of their households, which in return place them in positions of power, materially and symbolically. However, this male-breadwinner model can be undermined and challenged depending on the intersection of class and gender. For example, some East Amman women interviewees resisted patriarchal structures and broke the male-breadwinner model by becoming economically active because they are financially in need. While West Amman single interviewees resisted, challenged and negotiated patriarchal structures by working outside the households because they are seeking self-development, most West Amman married interviewees accommodated themselves to patriarchy by choosing to fulfil their assigned roles as housewives and carers. The resistance of patriarchal structures and becoming economically active provided many women with relative freedom and power in their households.

The views and attitudes towards women's economic activities reflect patriarchal cultural values. However, those values do not necessarily reflect practices, because women resist, challenge and negotiate them, and at the same time they operate differently across classes. There are also gender and class differences in attitudes and views, which suggests that patriarchy takes a different form depending on material circumstances and that within classes women tend to be less traditional than men when it comes to views of women's economic activity. In addition, there are cultural differences between East and West Amman which imply that women

have different experiences in relation to their economic activities. Suitability and appropriateness of economic activity also influence how women's economic activity is perceived, and this is different between East and West Amman.

Suitability of work also depends to a great extent on class and place of residence. 'Safety and protection' has often been used as determinants of the suitability of a job. Distance and mingling are important aspects of women's safety when seeking economic activities outside the household. Safety in this sense is used to mean protection from physical danger and to control women's sexuality to preserve the family honour. Distance in relation to safety was a significant issue for women interviewees living in East Amman, while it was not an issue for West Amman interviewees because of the provision of cars. The concept of mingling is used differently by East and West Amman interviewees, as in East Amman the term is used to describe mixing with the sexes, while in West Amman it means mixing the sexes and with people from different class backgrounds. The difference between how East and West Amman interviewees used the concept of mingling emphasises this cultural difference.

Although women share general patriarchal cultural values in relation to economic activities, West Amman interviewees can choose not to engage in income generating activities which they do not see as 'prestigious' and also suitable, because they do not 'have' to work due to financial need. On the other hand, due to financial need East Amman interviewees would engage in income generating activities that are viewed of 'low status' and not suitable. This shows that the intersections of class, gender and sexuality create different experiences for women in relation to their economic activities.

Moreover, women use different strategies in relation to patriarchy by challenging, negotiating with, or accommodating patriarchy. The controls faced by women are different in East and West Amman, or in other words, the form taken by

patriarchy and its effects differ. In East Amman, interviewees seem to challenge patriarchy much more than women in West Amman, firstly because the views and attitudes in East Amman are much more traditional and secondly due to material circumstances and financial need. As for women in West Amman, they were less likely to challenge patriarchy, as they are generally allowed more freedom due to the less traditional views in West Amman, and they were not financial in need in contrast with East Amman women. Therefore, women's agency differs across classes, and also takes different forms that include resistance, negotiation and accommodation.

Whereas this chapter looked at the views and attitudes towards women's economic activities and showed how in East Amman views are more patriarchal than in West Amman, the following chapter discusses how class and gender intersect and shape the different experiences of my interviewees. It shows how patriarchy operates differently across classes, and how this influences the experiences of women in relation to access to education, economic activities, and marriage. It also reflects on how education, marriage experience, and social control influence women's access to economic activities.

Chapter Five: Women's Experiences

Introduction

Education, marriage, and social control are factors that influence women's economic activities. Social control affects patterns of marriage and education, as well as access to economic activities. Social control by men and women within families is evident in access to education and marriage; however, marriage and access to education are also affected by other factors such as poverty, wealth, place of residence, and/or available means of transportation. In order to understand the effects of marriage, education and social control on women's economic activities, it is important to explore them thoroughly. For instance, it is generally agreed that education influences women's economic activities and that it is important for employment opportunities, yet exploring why and how women's access to education differs can provide us with a more comprehensive understanding of women's different experiences, and an understanding of the reasons that make it hard for some women to access education. Therefore, this chapter looks at those factors, as factors influencing economic activities, and as experiences on their own, that are also shaped by the intersection of class and gender.

Patriarchy influences women; however, exploring women's experiences thoroughly helps us identify how women differently negotiate, resist and/or accommodate patriarchal structures, depending on class. This chapter also shows us how access to education, for example, can be empowering to women by giving them more power to resist patriarchal structures. Marriage also plays an important role in determining women's economic status, and the marriage experience itself can be different for women from East and West Amman. Therefore, looking at the marriage experience can explain why some married women engage in economic activities, and why others do not. The first section of this chapter looks at how education as an experience differs and how educational attainment influences women's economic

activities. The second section explores the marriage experience, and its influence on determining women's economic activities. The final section of this chapter shows that in spite of the fact that women have different experiences, they still face similar social control built on patriarchal gender ideologies that is different in degree but not in nature. The chapter shows how gender ideologies are often negotiated, and/or resisted according to class, age, marital status and economic activity.

This chapter will answer the research question: what factors affect women's economic activity and are they different for women in East and West Amman? It will look at the different factors that influence women's economic activities, which create different experiences for women. The fact that women have different experiences is explored fully in this chapter, as it explores the different operations of patriarchy, due to class differences. Several factors such as educational attainment, access to financial resources and even access to transportation also appear to influence women's life experiences in general, and with regard to their engagement in income generating activities in particular. Those factors are interconnected. Some of those factors may be considered economic, and others are social. Also, as another example, there are certain patriarchal gender ideologies that influence women's access to education, and those are different in East and West Amman. The intersectional approach to class and gender aids us in understanding why factors such as educational attainment and marriage influence women's economic activities differently. The intersectional approach also helps us in exploring how patriarchy operates and is experienced differently by different women.

5.1 Education

In recent years, Jordan had the highest female education rates amongst 'lower-middle income countries' (The World Bank, 2005). The same World Bank report also mentions that by 1999 women's educational enrolment in Jordan was equal to, or even higher, than their male counterparts. However, this sort of data does not reflect the different experiences of women in terms of accessing education, and it does not provide their completion rates. Questionnaire data showed that women from West Amman were more likely to have university degrees, undergraduate and postgraduate degrees; 80.4 percent of West Amman women had university degrees compared with 45.6 percent of women respondents from East Amman. As for male respondents, 64.7 percent and 36.8 percent of West and East Amman respondents respectively had university degrees; women were therefore more likely to have degrees than their male counterparts. However, the data shows that there is a big difference between the numbers of East and West Amman women in terms of educational attainment (see questionnaire sample description table 3.3). Additionally, no woman from West Amman ended at elementary or primary education, while 17.4 percent of East Amman women respondents ended their education at that level. Moreover, around 21.7 percent of East Amman women respondents only received high school certificates, compared to 8.7 percent of West Amman women. As for college degrees, 15.2 percent and 10.9 percent of East and West Amman women respondents respectively received a college diploma.

As well as there being a gender gap in educational attainment, there is also a huge gap between East and West Amman respondents, women and men, as well as between women themselves. The difference between women is also reflected in the interview sample. All West Amman women interviewees had university degrees except for one, who had gone to university, but chosen to drop out. In East Amman only one woman had a university degree, while three had college diplomas. The difference between East and West Amman women signifies class differences in

terms of accessing education. Because education increases women's employment opportunities and access to economic activities, and can also determine the kinds of economic activities in which women engage, it is important to show how women's experiences in terms of access to education differ.

This leads us to ask how class differences influence women's access to education, and to investigate how patriarchy operates differently according to class. This section clarifies that not all women face the same experiences in terms of accessing education, and it also identifies the factors which make some of them able to pursue higher education while others are unable to. Furthermore, this section discusses how educational attainment can be influential on women's life experiences. It brings out the differences between women who were able to pursue higher education, and those who were not.

5.1.1 Accessing Education

Although a majority of questionnaire respondents agreed that women's education is very important (see Table 4.17, and the discussion in chapter four), a large proportion - 54.4 percent - of East Amman women questionnaire respondents and interviewees did not have undergraduate university degrees. This compares with 91.3 percent of West Amman women questionnaire respondents, who had a minimum of a college diploma. The interviews provided in-depth explanations for the varied positions of West and East Amman women, in terms of being able to access education in the first place.

Interview data revealed that the experiences of East Amman women are markedly different from the experiences of West Amman women with regard to education opportunities. East Amman women expressed great difficulties, which rendered many of them unable to carry on with education after the preparatory stage in school. The problems they faced were related to patriarchal cultural values and financial difficulties, which made their education inconvenient. East Amman women also mentioned the location of schools and educational institutions, marriage and financial troubles as barriers that made them unable to pursue studies. In a UNIFEM report it was mentioned that school dropouts documented for women who married between the ages of 15 and 24 were justified by marriage, the distant location of the school, inability to pay for school expenses, lack of income and frequent school failure (United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), 2003). Although this was evident in interviews with East Amman women, West Amman women did not seem to face such problems in terms of accessing education.

One of the main issues that came up as a barrier in the face of East Amman women's education is the issue of distance. At a certain age, after finishing preparatory schools, many pupils have to change schools in order to attain secondary education. Several interviewees in East Amman mentioned that most secondary schools are located far away from where they live. East Amman

interviewees mentioned that they had to end their education because secondary schools were too far away from their place of residence. For example, Abeer, who works as a cleaner in an office, explained that she could not pursue her studies, saying,

‘After the tenth grade, I was accepted in a school, which was far away from home. It was in a different area, I would have had to take two buses to get there. But, the second bus was provided by school. The problem is that my father did not let me, because he worries about girls. He worries a lot about girls, very much. He said, “I would not let you go to a distant school, if you want to go to school; it has to be in the area”’ (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

Abeer also talked about the experience of her younger sister, who was able to obtain a high school certificate, but was not allowed to pursue her studies any further because universities and colleges were a long way away from where they lived. Abeer’s experience reflects two issues that faced her in terms of accessing education - distance and the fact that she is a woman. Her experience shows that because of her gender her father did not allow her to travel long distances to pursue education. Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA), who is a housewife, also mentioned that she is reluctant to let her daughter continue with her education because she has to move to another school, which is located in a different area, to finish the secondary stage.

Household members in the East, especially those living in Palestinian refugee camps, are apparently reluctant about sending their daughters to schools that are located far away from home, or for which they need to use public transportation. Whereas the location of school is a determining factor for women in East Amman, it is not for men. Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA) said that her father allowed her brothers to go to schools and colleges and choose whatever they want in terms of education. She said,

'He wanted them to get skills to work. He used to encourage them... He did not care about girls' education. If a girl knew how to read and write that would be enough for her' (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

Preventing women from pursuing education, because of distance, was brought up by participants in the interviews in relation to safety, while this did not seem the issue for their male siblings, or even sons. As explained in the previous chapter, the Palestinian camp situation is drastically different from other places in East Amman. Many women camp refugees interviewees dropped out of school because secondary schools are located outside the camp. Furthermore, this shows that camp refugees do not have proper access to education, which is due to the bad infrastructure inside the camps evident in the lack of nearby schools and the limited transport system. Moreover, emphasising that women have to be protected is largely related to the dominant patriarchal structure, which carries with it symbolic meanings attached to genders. In other words, women are seen as 'weak' and in need of protection, unlike their male counterparts, which also means that women's sexuality has to be controlled in order to preserve family honour. Whereas this structure is prevalent in East and West Amman, its influence on women camp refugees is intensified because the camp environment is dangerous. Dina (35, married, 5 children, secretary, ft employment, EA) and Liana (39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA) live in a Palestinian refugee camp, although before marriage they both used to live with their families in non-camp areas in East Amman. They were both able to obtain college diplomas before marriage and moving into the camps.

On the other hand, Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA), who had lived all her life in the camp, said that she would not let her daughters go to university, because universities and colleges are located far from where they reside, meaning that her daughter would have to travel long distances and use public transport. The issue of distance and public transport appeared to be more of a problem for some East Amman women but not for men. This is due to the

patriarchal structure which results in the view that women need protection. Fatima for example said,

'Sheltering a girl is a blessing from God... It is ok if a girl attains a high school certificate, just to be aware of things. I do not like girls going out' (Fatima, 38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA).

Sheltering, *Sutra* in Arabic, means protection accompanied with covering or veiling. The usage of the term is always in reference to women's protection from sexual activity, and from dangers surrounding them. Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA) said that with the spread of drugs and pills nowadays in their area she worried a lot about her daughters' 'safety'. The concept of *Sutra* entails that women's sexuality should be preserved and controlled because women's premarital sexual activity, or women's premarital relation outside wedlock, are shameful for their families and themselves. Therefore, 'maintaining honour is central not only for the girl herself; it extends to other family members and to the community' (Ajrouch, 2004: 383). Family honour depends on women preserving their virginity before marriage and chastity after marriage. Thus, 'protecting' women is multifaceted, as it is related to preserving honour, protection from actual physical danger because of the concept of women's 'weakness', and controlling women by men as a way of preserving family honour. Men's control over women's behaviour is linked to the fact that men are expected to show 'constant vigilance and willingness to defend honour' (Peteet, 2002: 321). Therefore, preventing women from travelling long distances is a way to keep them and their sexuality under surveillance, and to prevent a loss of honour. Amani, for example, told the story of her brother in law, who did not let his daughter go to school because he did not want her to fall into the trap of a man who would take advantage of her. She said,

'His daughter is really good at school. He thinks that his daughter does not have a personality strong enough to handle men hitting on her. He wanted her *Sutra*. He wanted her to stay at home. She has one brother, who would get away with doing

anything. He is a man; he can do whatever he likes. *Sutra* is for women' (Amani, 39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

This story shows how Amani's brother in law, through controlling his daughter and preventing her from going to school, is watching over and defending 'his' honour.

In addition to distant schools, frequent school failure was also one of the main reasons why many women do not go on with their education. For example, Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) was the only one of her sisters to obtain a university degree, because her sisters failed their high school examinations and were not encouraged to re-sit them. She added that she was determined to obtain high marks in her high school examinations to be able to pursue higher education. Rana's male siblings, after failing their high school examinations, were encouraged to seek employment abroad, while her sisters were encouraged to get married. Rana did not mention distance as a problem preventing her from carrying on with her education; however, Rana is from a non-camp area in East Amman, and distance seemed more of an issue for East Amman camp refugees. Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA) mentioned that one of her sons has a college diploma, and another failed his high school examinations. She added that although she would not let her daughters pursue education because secondary schools are distant, she felt really sad about her other son, and she wanted him to re-sit his examinations. This shows that there are gender differences in access to education, which are based on patriarchal structures that give men control over women's sexuality giving men more opportunities, and that those structures are also reinforced by women themselves. On the other hand, the differences between the experiences of camp and non-camp East Amman women's experiences show us that the operation of patriarchy varies and that there is also class differences amongst residents of East Amman. Material circumstances such as the lack of transport and money can affect women's access to educational opportunities.

East Amman women interviewees also appear to face financial difficulties in terms of accessing education, particularly higher education. Many of them expressed that their families could not afford to pay university and college fees, for either themselves or their siblings. For example, Rana's (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) sister wanted to pursue higher education, but her family could not afford her fees. She also mentioned that even during the pursuit of her education her mother had to sell a necklace she owned, in order to pay for her fees. She added that she had to work during her studies to be able to pay for her transportation and pocket money.

Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA) said that her daughter wanted to go to university but they cannot pay for tuition fees, although she achieved good grades in her high school certificate. She explained that her brothers in law and the community where she lives are against women's education, because they believe that it is dangerous for women to go to university and mingle with men, and they also believe that women's priority is to get married. This reflects the social control women are placed under, as they have to preserve their family honour. Although Amani encourages women's education and resists the patriarchal structures that influence women's access to education, her financial situation limited the power of her resistance, and in this case material circumstances led to the failure of Amani's resistance to patriarchy.

Nadia provides an example of accommodating patriarchy due to poverty and lack of financial resources. Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA) also mentioned that one of the reasons her daughter will drop out of school at the age of 14 is the lack of finances. She said that she cannot pay for her textbooks or uniform. For that reason, Nadia is considering marrying her daughter to someone who can provide for her. In spite of Nadia's encouragement of women's education, she sees marriage as a way of providing her daughter with financial security, because of the patriarchal structure that makes men responsible for providing for

their households. By marrying her daughter to someone who can provide for her Nadia is resorting to and reinforcing patriarchal structures, which in her case would provide her daughter with financial security.

Despite the fact that marriage is apparently a priority in women's lives in East and West Amman, as mentioned in the previous chapter, it does not influence West Amman women's lives in terms of accessing education; however, it is one of the main reasons behind many East Amman women's school dropouts, or not pursuing higher education. Interviews show that for East Amman women marriage is prioritised over education. For example, Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA), Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA), Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA) and Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA) were all forced to drop out of school because their marriage was a priority for their family members. For example, Abeer said,

'I did not want to get married; I was very good at school. I love school to this day; I have great ambitions about getting education. I have the desire to pursue education... My father did that because he wanted to get rid of his daughters' (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA) also said that she only received a high school certificate and soon afterwards got married, and for that reason she did not pursue her studies, even though she wanted to. She explained that she was living with her brother and his wife and children, because her parents were dead, so getting married was the best option to attain some sort of financial security, because her brother's financial situation was not good. Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA) also said that she had always wanted to become a lawyer but she was forced to get married at the age of 17, by her mother, because her mother believed that marriage provides women with *sutra*, which also relates to the preservation of honour.

The experiences of East Amman women in terms of accessing education are influenced by certain socioeconomic factors. East Amman women interviewees mentioned the distance of educational institutions, physical danger, marriage and financial difficulties. Distance of schools and physical danger are related to the preservation of women's honour and the control their sexuality, which find their reasoning in symbolic patriarchal structures of women's honour and women's 'weakness'. Marriage is also seen as a way of gaining financial security, and also as *sutra* for women. Lack of financial resources also prevents many women from pursuing education, and this shows that patriarchal attitudes and social control of women intersect with material circumstances which reinforce patriarchal control and reduce women's ability to challenge patriarchy. Although some women may wish to pursue education and want their daughters to pursue education, the lack of financial means is an obstacle that hinders them in overcoming patriarchal structures. It is important to reiterate that women adopt different strategies to deal with patriarchy, which include resistance, negotiation and accommodation, depending on their material circumstances.

West Amman women's experiences with regard to accessing education are evidently different than those of the East. All West Amman interviewees mentioned that their parents encouraged them to pursue higher education, and for their families it is obligatory to have a university degree. Reema (28, married, no children, economically inactive, WA) was the only West Amman interviewee who went into higher education, but dropped out because she 'did not take it seriously', as she said. However, her family always insisted on her education, but she did not care. Encouraging women's education, in West Amman, can be greatly related to increasing women's marriageability and finding 'better' husbands. None of the West Amman women interviewees mentioned that they had issues with distant schools, as most of them use private cars. None of them mentioned difficulties in terms of paying for their fees, as their families were able to provide for them. In addition, none of them were

forced out of school to get married; on the contrary, one of them was not allowed to get married before obtaining a university degree (Alia, 25, married, 1 child, economically inactive, WA). However, they mentioned different types of barriers placed in their way to accessing education. Some West Amman women interviewees expressed that they are not allowed to pursue their education abroad, unlike their male siblings. East Amman women did not refer to pursuing education abroad because they do not see themselves pursuing it in Jordan. There are, therefore, both gender and class differences in access to education amongst the interviewees.

Questionnaire respondents were asked to state to what extent they agree or disagree with the statements that 'I support women's education abroad' and 'I support men's education abroad'. Most men did not agree that women's education abroad should be supported, as the majority - 65.8 percent - of East Amman men and 52.9 percent of West Amman men disagreed with supporting women's education abroad (see Table 5.1). Women's responses were different, as their views were less traditional. In East Amman 41.3 percent of women and in West Amman 60.9 percent of women support women's education abroad. As for the statement 'I support men's education abroad', the majority of all respondents agreed (see Table 5.2). Only 15.2 percent of East Amman and 8.8 percent of West Amman men disagreed with supporting men's education abroad. The majority of women agreed with the statement, as 52.2 percent of East Amman and 74 percent of West Amman women respondents support men's education abroad

The majority of East and West Amman men rejected women's education abroad, while almost two-thirds of West Amman women supported it. There are class differences and gender differences in attitudes towards women's education abroad. However, the majority of all respondents agreed with supporting men's education abroad, which shows that men's education abroad is more acceptable than women's. Even though there are patriarchal attitudes, they vary with both class and gender, as women support them less than men and they are less supported in West

Amman than in East Amman, which also reflects that the attitudes in West Amman are less traditional than in East Amman.

Table (5.1) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'I support women's education abroad'										
	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	3	7.9%	8	17.4%	0	0%	15	32.6%	26	15.9%
Agree	3	7.9%	11	23.9%	3	8.8%	13	28.3%	30	18.3%
Neither agree or disagree	7	18.4%	11	23.9%	13	38.2%	11	23.9%	42	25.6%
Disagree	7	18.4%	11	23.9%	8	23.5%	5	10.9%	31	18.9%
Strongly Disagree	18	47.4%	5	10.9%	10	29.5%	2	4.3%	35	21.3%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

Table (5.2) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'I support men's education abroad'										
	East Amman				West Amman				Total= 164	
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Men= 34		Women= 46			
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages
Strongly Agree	6	15.8%	8	17.4%	4	11.8%	17	37%	35	21.3%
Agree	14	36.8%	16	34.8%	16	47.1%	17	37%	63	38.4%
Neither agree or disagree	12	31.6%	17	37%	11	32.4%	10	21.7%	50	30.5%
Disagree	5	13.2%	3	6.5%	0	0%	2	4.3%	10	6.1%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.6%	2	4.3%	3	8.8%	0	0%	6	3.7%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	34	100%	46	100%	164	100%

West Amman women referred to the ability of their male siblings to study abroad. For example, Dana said,

'My brother is the only one who pursued postgraduate studies abroad, my parents sponsored his education. He also did his BA at a private university, in Jordan. He studied what he wanted. He goes wherever he desires. For us, the girls, for example, I wanted to do an MA but my father refused to sponsor me. I do not know why. I discussed it with him but he vehemently refused. When, we, the sisters, have a gathering we start talking about how he was able to go abroad and do what he wants, and no one ever says a word to him, and they send him money...They send him a monthly allowance, in addition to University fees' (Dana, 30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA).

This shows that there is differential treatment of siblings based on gender. Samar (25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA) also mentioned that her parents encouraged her brother, after he finished his high school, to pursue his studies in the United Kingdom. This is because the quality of men's education is very important for them to be able to find proper employment, as they will be responsible for families in the future. That men's education is seen as more important than women's can be related to the male-breadwinner model of the family, which is reproduced by families' willingness to invest in their sons' education abroad for better employment opportunities rather than their daughters'.

Alia (25, married, 1 child, economically inactive, WA), who has four sisters and one brother, mentioned that her family encouraged her brother to pursue his education abroad. Although she and her sisters were able to receive undergraduate degrees, her brother was the only one of them to be encouraged to study abroad. Nur (27, married, 1 child, office manager, ft employment, WA), whose male siblings received higher education in the United States, was not allowed to pursue her studies there because her father believed that it would not be a good experience for a 'girl'. Rawan (22, single, student, pt employment in sales, WA) said that her family would never let her

pursue education abroad, but they encourage her brothers to do so, because according to her father 'the boys have to see the world and be introduced to life'. This brings us again to differential treatments of siblings according to gender, as women are viewed as 'weak' and in need of protection, in order to preserve family honour by controlling women's sexuality. In other words, those differences are reflected in parents' voiced fears about the consequences of women being away from their family's protection, while this concern is not voiced about men. It seems to relate to questions of sexual reputation, protecting and preserving family honour, controlling of women's sexuality and the importance of marriage for women.

The difference between East and West Amman women, on those terms, is related to how people from each part view distance differently. For West Amman women interviewees, the distance of schools and universities inside Jordan was not an issue for them because of the provision of cars but it was an issue in terms of studying abroad, unlike East Amman women, who depend on public transportation. Although the concept of distance is seen differently between East and West Amman, the concept itself is an issue that influences access to education, which is in both cases related to the preservation of women's honour.

The experiences of women from East and West Amman, in terms of accessing education, are different. Whereas West Amman women are encouraged and pushed to obtain university degrees, East Amman women are put down by several factors, and some of them cannot even obtain their high school certificates. The finances did not seem a problem for West Amman women; yet distance was influential in terms of women wanting to pursue education abroad. On the other hand, material circumstances apparently play a major role in East Amman women's education, with financial scarcity making it difficult to pay for education. Moreover, whereas East Amman women are encouraged and sometimes forced to get married for financial security and for *sutra*, some West Amman families do not allow their daughters to get married before obtaining their Bachelor degrees. There are certain aspects that

intersect and create different experiences for women. Those aspects include the intersection of cultural and economic class with certain patriarchal gender ideologies. For example, some West Amman women have a financial situation that allows them to pursue higher education; however, patriarchal gender ideologies come into play in terms of pursuing education abroad. As for women from East Amman, in addition to financial barriers, there are gender ideologies which hinder them from pursuing education within Jordan.

Education is very important in women's lives, as most questionnaire respondents agreed; this is because it influences women's life choices and economic activities, in addition to the fact that education helps women in bringing up their children, as some interviewees expressed. So, in the West of Amman education is supported and encouraged to qualify women for their assigned gender roles. This shows that patriarchy is not restrictive in West Amman in relation to education; however it operates differently, as marriage is still the goal behind women's education, as explained in the next subsection. Moreover, women's agency in relation to education is different between East and West Amman women, as West Amman women were less likely to challenge patriarchy because they had the opportunity to receive higher education. In East Amman the case is different, as although many women wanted to pursue education and want their daughters to pursue higher education, their financial circumstances led to either failed resistance or having to accommodate themselves to patriarchy.

5.1.2 Education: Influence on Life Choices and Economic Activity

It has been argued that women’s level of education greatly influences their lives (Mead et al., 2001). The opportunities of women with high levels of education are totally different to the opportunities available to women with less education. For example, women who have more education are far more likely to enter the labour force. Also, education can be empowering for women because it also gives them higher status inside and outside the household. Women’s experiences in terms of accessing education are very different between East and West Amman, and because of the relationship between education and employment it influences their experiences in relation to economic activity. Questionnaire data showed that the higher the level of a woman’s education the more likely she is to be economically active. For example, 87.5 percent of women respondents who had elementary, primary or preparatory schooling, were economically inactive. Of women respondents who had high school certificates 71.5 percent were inactive. Amongst college diploma holders 25 percent of them were inactive, while 31 percent of those who have university degrees were inactive. However, this last figure should be treated with caution, as 11 of those who had university degrees were students at the time they completed the questionnaires, which is around 61 percent of the number of university degree holders who are economically inactive. These numbers reflect that the higher education women receive; the more likely they are to be economically active (see Table 5.3).

Employment Status	Elementary, primary, and preparatory school		High school certificate		College diploma or equivalent		University degrees (undergraduate and postgraduate)	
	Number	Percentages	Number	Percentages	Number	Percentages	Number	Percentages
Economically Active	1	12.5%	4	28.5%	9	75%	40	69%
Economically Inactive	7	87.5%	10	71.5%	3	25%	18	31%
Total	8	100%	14	100%	12	100%	58	100%

Interviewees with lower educational levels experienced great difficulties in finding work opportunities. For example, Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA), who occasionally works as a cleaner, mentioned that it is very hard for her to find a stable job because she stopped studying before secondary school.

'I thought about working but they all require degrees. I have thought of working as a janitor in one of the schools, UNRWA¹⁵ schools but they all require at least a high school certificate. I wanted to have a stable job, but I cannot, I do not have enough education... I am now taking computer courses in a women's organisation, in order to be able to find a good job. They say that these courses are equivalent to college diplomas' (Amani, 39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA) also mentioned that she faced great difficulties finding her current job as a cleaner, because she does not have a high school certificate. Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA), who occasionally sells makeup in the streets, also mentioned that because she only has a high school certificate it is very hard for her to seek employment. She said 'my life would have been much easier if I had a university degree'.

Interviewees who had college diplomas also reflected on the relationship between their education and their ability to find work. Their experiences are different to those of women with less education, but they also told me that they find it hard to find suitable work opportunities with good pay, because many employers require university degrees. For example, Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA), who works as a secretary, said that she spent four years looking for work because there are not as many work opportunities for diploma holders as for university degree holders. Liana (39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA) and Dina (35, married, 5 children, secretary, ft employment, EA) also felt that it would have been easier for them to find a job if they had university degrees. Reema (28, married, no

¹⁵ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

children, economically inactive, WA) said that it would have been really easy for her to find suitable employment if she had not dropped out from university. Dina, who works as a secretary, said,

'If I had a university degree, I would have been able to earn more money. My diploma facilitated my entrance into the labour force, but I do not earn enough money' (Dina, 35, married, 5 children, secretary, ft employment, EA).

All of the interviewees with university degrees said that they did not find it at all hard to find employment, with several mentioning that they had even been able to find jobs in their field of study. Questionnaire data, as well as interviews, support the assumption that the higher a woman's education level the more likely she is to find employment and to be in the labour force.

Several interviewees also mentioned that women's education is a 'weapon' for her to use when needed. For example, Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA) said that she never considered working before her husband's illness, but if she had 'the weapon of education,' they would not have reached that level of poverty. Rawan (22, single, student, pt employment in sales, WA) also said that women's education can serve as a weapon. Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) reflected on her experience and the sacrifice her mother had made for her education.

'I had to carry on with my studies, my parents pinned high hope on me. My mother has sold her necklace to pay for my tuition fees. She does not want me to be like my sisters, who did not receive higher education, and instead got married early... With education, I can have a better life, I can work, and I have a better status inside and outside the house' (Rana, 23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA).

Rana further explained that she feels that she is treated and looked at differently by her family members compared to her sisters. She added that her education was empowering inside and outside the household, and with her education she has been

able to work and to contribute to her household, and through this she has gained relative power which has enhanced her life. For many interviewees education is the way to become part of the labour force and work. Many women mentioned that with higher education a woman can find suitable well-paid work, and through work women can achieve limited socioeconomic independence, unlike women who did not receive higher education. Salha said,

'I believe with education people can have better jobs. Not every job is suitable for women. You need education to be in a well-respected job. Women who do not have degrees can only work as cleaners and just earn pennies, it does make a difference' (Salha, 27, single, economically inactive, EA).

Rana (23, single, social worker, full employment, EA) said that her sisters got married at early ages, they were not exposed to the outside world, their personalities did not develop to stand up to their husbands and that they do not work or contribute to the household. She said that because she had been more exposed to higher education, and because her education enabled her to work, her life would be different to those of her sisters. She also added that her sisters, to this day, fear their mother while she does not, even though she is the youngest. This shows that education can give women power. In other words, it can help women challenge and resist patriarchal structures, and male domination, which can be reinforced by men and women. As Rana says, 'I would never let my future husband treat me the way my sisters' husbands treat them, I am educated, he would not dare' (Rana, 23, single, social worker, full employment, EA).

This leads us to the idea that education can affect women's position inside the household. For instance, Liana said,

'Education is a weapon for women. Educated women in my family have a special position. They listen to them, respect them, and even consult them in everything. It seems like educated women are seen as role models' (Liana, 39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

Moreover, Rana mentioned that because she is the only one with higher education in her family, she is the most respected one, and that her family listens to her.

In addition to improving their employment opportunities and attaining better status in their households, interviewees felt that how educated women are more equipped to bring up and care for their children after marriage. As explained in the previous chapter, women's 'domestic' role is given priority over work outside the household. Therefore, women's education is always referred to in terms of how it helps women live up to their 'domestic' roles and raising the children. Several interviewees said that educated mothers are able to raise their children better than those who are not educated. Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA), who has a high school certificate, said that she cannot help out her children with their homework and that she cannot teach them anything because she believes that she lacks the skills. Liana (39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA) said that receiving a college diploma helped her in following her children's curriculum, and with bringing them up.

Interviewees also referred to education in terms of the skills and experience women gain through it. Experience and skills were mentioned in the context of educated women having more control over their lives, and being able to make decisions regarding their life choices. Education apparently played a major role in the lives of many interviewees, who expressed that after receiving university degrees, which allowed them to work, they have become more in control of their lives and movement. None of the interviewees with university degrees had arranged marriages and they said that no one could force them into marriage. Additionally, they also mentioned that they have relative freedom of movement. For example, Rana (23, single, social worker, full employment, EA) said that she has more freedom of movement than her other sisters who did not pursue higher education, because obtaining a university degree empowered her, and gave her the chance to find a job, earn money and contribute to the household; this has given her the power to resist

patriarchal control limiting her movement. Women who were able to pursue higher education have more opportunities in relation to economic activities as well as life choices, in addition to being able to negotiate and resist patriarchal control.

Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA) mentioned that because she had obtained a college diploma she was able to work, and that allowed her relative freedom of movement compared to others. Thus education helps women to resist and negotiate patriarchal control, because education gives women more employment opportunities and through generating income for their households women might become in control of financial resources, which can allow them relative power and space to challenge patriarchal control. However, the way education empowers women is different between East and West Amman. Educated East Amman women referred to relative freedom of movement as part of the benefits their education brought them, through becoming employed; this was not an issue for West Amman women, but they referred to decision making around choosing a marriage partner and mentioned that education provided them with the skills needed to make their own decisions, and to choose for themselves. This shows that there are class differences in the effect of education. Moreover, it is important to note here that most East Amman interviewees did not receive higher education and thought that their lives could have been different if they had had the chance to obtain university degrees.

The level of education influences the life experiences of women. Women with education are more likely to enter the labour force, they find it easier to find employment, they have relative freedom of movement, they have more control over their lives, and their status within their households is raised. However, women's education is determined by several factors, such as financial resources, age at marriage, location of schools relative to home, and the patriarchal control over their lives exercised by their families. Additionally, West Amman women interviewees and questionnaire respondents are apparently more likely to receive higher

education than East Amman women, which provides them with better opportunities in terms of work and income. On the other hand, many East Amman women interviewees mentioned that they had educational aspirations, but they were not able to fulfil them due to material circumstances and patriarchal control. The lives of East Amman interviewees who were able to obtain college and university degrees are totally different than those who could not, financially and in terms of their status inside the household. This is because education can be empowering for women, can give them relative power in their households, and can give them power to negotiate and/or resist patriarchal structures. For example, educated women are less likely to be forced into marriage, and are more likely to be able to choose their marriage partners, thereby modifying aspects of the patriarchal bargain. Marriage is, however, another factor which influences women's economic activities and, like education, the marriage experience is different for East and West Amman women and is also influenced by women's educational attainments.

5.2 Marriage: Before and After

Although education plays a major role in determining women's economic activities it also intersects with marital status, as many women who receive higher education do not work, or stop working, after marriage. Women in East and West Amman are expected to get married; however, there are important differences between East and West Amman. In both West and East Amman marriage is prioritised over women's economic activity, but in East Amman, marriage is prioritised over education, while in West Amman women's education is seen as important because it increases marriageability. Nonetheless, for many women in East and West Amman education appears to be a way to prepare women for their 'domestic' roles as mothers, and as a backup plan to serve as a 'weapon' when needed. Educating women is to a large extent similar to what Najmabadi (1998: 103) referred to as crafting a housewife. She says 'Ignorant women were not only unsuitable as mothers but also unfit as spouses'. Marriage is therefore the goal of women's education rather than a job. Economic activity therefore continues to be a secondary and in some cases undesired aspect of women's lives, because it is not part of women's assigned gender roles.

Marriage is a priority for women and their marital status influences to a great extent their economic activity. It influences engagement and disengagement in economic activities, and equally influences the type of work women do. In Jordan, women tend to leave the labour force between the ages of 25 and 34, because of marriage, and the Department of Statistics estimates that only 7 percent of Jordan's married women are in the labour force (The World Bank, 2005). Therefore, one may say that marriage is an obstacle to women's engagement in economic activities. However, the marriage experience itself is different between East and West Amman, and the approach to marriage also differs. For all women, however, it is marriage that is expected to provide women with financial security, because a 'man' is responsible financially for his wife.

The influence of marital status on women’s engagement in economic activity is evident from the questionnaire data that show that married women are less likely than single women to be economically active, whether in East or in West Amman. Around 71.8 percent of single women respondents were economically active, while only 28.2 percent of them were economically inactive - most of this group were students. This compares with a lower economic activity rate amongst married women respondents, of whom 46.8 percent were economically active, with 53.2 percent being inactive. Around 62.5 percent of divorced and widowed respondents were economically active (see Table 5.4). Those figures show that married women were most likely to be economically inactive. Interviews provided more details on why it is that married women are less likely to be economically active than other groups of women. They also show that the experience of marriage differs in East and West Amman and is influenced both by material circumstances and the different operation of patriarchal structures.

Employment Status	Single		Married		Divorced		Widowed	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Economically Active	28	71.8%	25	46.8 %	3	75%	1	50%
Economically Inactive	11	28.2%	22	53.2%	1	25%	1	50%
Total	39	100%	47	100%	4	100%	2	100%

5.2.1 Different Approaches to Marriage

Marriage takes several forms, which differ between East and West Amman. In East Amman arranged marriages are more likely to take place than in the West of Amman, as interviews show. Most of East Amman married women said that they got married through arranged marriages, and some of them had even been forced into marriage. Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA), and Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA) had been forced to get married, after being forced to drop out from school. Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA), Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA), Liana (39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA), Dina (35, married, 5 children, secretary, ft employment, EA), and Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA) mentioned that they had arranged marriages. These forms of marriage take place when families of both the man and the woman arrange and agree on the marriage of their son and daughter. In some of these marriages, the bride and the groom meet for the first time on day of the ceremony.

Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA) and Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA) explained that their parents agreed everything with their husbands' families, and they were forced into marriage; both of them had wanted to pursue education, rather than getting married. They mentioned that their families had the final decision on their marriages. Amani, who was forced into marriage at an early age, along with her sisters, said,

'My family oppressed me. I recently told my mother that, I told her that she oppressed me by forcing me into marriage, and she ruined my life. I told her that if they had given us the chance to decide, things could have been different. I know that this is all about destiny, and this is my destiny, but who knows what would have happened. She just threw us away to strangers; she did not even know the families well' (Amani, 39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA) also put the blame on her father, who forced her and her sisters out of school and into marriage. Prior to the marriage, Abeer asked her father to give her the chance to see the man, she said,

'I asked my father to allow me to see him before engagement. My father said: "why would you want to see him? He is a man with a penis." That is what he said. I was shocked by what he said, and I just did not say a word, and I did not ask to see him ever again' (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

Moreover, arranged and forced marriages take place mostly when household members are in financial need, because husbands are expected to provide wives with financial security and stability. All interviewees who had had an arranged or forced marriage explained that their families had arranged or forced them into marriage because their financial situation was not good enough. Therefore, the best solution for them was to marry a girl to a man who would become financially responsible for her. Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA) said that her father wanted to get rid of all his daughters, and that he forced her into marriage because their financial situation worsened. Others said that they had arranged marriages, to which they agreed, because of their unstable situation as orphans. For example, Nadia was living with her grandparents because her parents were dead and her extended family wanted to secure a stable life for her. She said,

'There was no stability. My family did not force me into marriage, it was my destiny, and it is my fate. I wanted to live a stable life. They arranged the marriage for me, and I agreed' (Nadia, 36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

Fatima said,

'I was living with my brother, and his wife. My parents are dead. They told me that there is someone who wants to get married, and they explained his situation. So I said yes. I saw him on the day of the marriage. This is my destiny' (Fatima, 38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA).

The two examples above show how Nadia and Fatima accepted patriarchy in relation to marriage, because of material circumstances. There are several forms of arranged marriage; however, all of their forms take place with great involvement of the families of the bride and the groom, rather than the couples themselves. The first form of arranged marriages takes place when the families of both sides set the potential bride and groom up to meet; however, in this form of marriage the couple decide whether they want to move on into the next stage and get married or not. The other form of arranged marriage takes place when a man and his family hear that there is a potential bride, and they decide to visit the woman and evaluate her to see if she will make a good wife. For the evaluation to take place, the man's mother normally contacts the woman's mother and they set up a date for a visit to view the potential bride, after informing the woman's mother about the groom's socioeconomic situation and age.

In some cases of the second form of arranged marriage, the potential husband goes along with his mother and female relatives to see the potential wife. Normally, if the groom and his mother like the bride they would ask for another meeting with the male relatives of the family, in order to propose. In the meanwhile, the woman's family negotiate amongst themselves about whether to accept him or not. In other cases, the man's mother and some female relatives go to see the woman, and if they like her they ask for another meeting for the man to see the bride. In many cases, the mother meets several women whom she believes to be potential brides for her son, in order to show him his 'options' and to give him the opportunity to decide.

Forced marriage happens under one form of arranged marriage, which involves the evaluation of the woman by the potential groom and/or his family. In the case of forced marriage, the woman refuses to get married to one of the men who have the desire to marry her; however, the decision becomes one made by her family, rather than herself. Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, full employment, EA), for example, did not have the chance to see her husband before marriage. Amani (39,

married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA) saw him and refused to marry him, but her family left her no option to choose or decide for herself. Two interviewees were forced into marriage, however, the rest of East Amman married interviewees had arranged marriages, on which they agreed, because by default they are expected to get married by their families and by society. Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA) said that her marriage was arranged traditionally, as her uncle from her mother's side knew her ex-husband, and told her that he would be an appropriate husband. Liana (39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA) also mentioned that she got married to her cousin, and she had agreed although she had not met him before. These women have to accept or are unable to resist patriarchal practices as they had no other alternatives to oppose patriarchal power.

Single East Amman interviewees are also pressured into arranged marriages, and are in some cases forced into meeting potential husbands. However, this pressure is not always successful because there are other factors that enable some of them to resist patriarchal power, such as education and economic activity. For example, Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) explained that she feels, when the family of the potential husband come to see her, as if she is in a shop, and as if they are evaluating her as a commodity. Although she has been put in the situation of being evaluated, she is able to say no because of her education and due to the fact that she is financially independent, which give her the power to negotiate. She said,

'My mother would love it if I got married and settle, a couple of weeks ago my mother had received people at home because they wanted to see me. And I did not know anything about it, it was arranged. I sat down eating myself alive. I went to my room and started crying, because it did not feel right, it is not fair. The groom's mother starts looking at me, checking me out... she might like me and she might not... the whole situation is not right. I came home, and I found them there... they asked me to take off my veil, and I did. She started checking out my hair, and she asked me if this is how my hair normally looks. It really made me feel bad about myself, who

are they to come and look at me, so what if her son is a dentist'
(Rana, 23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA).

Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) rejected the whole idea of arranged marriage; however, the rest of East Amman interviewees saw it as normal, and part of their traditions. The only difference between Rana and the rest of East Amman interviewees was that she was the only one who had obtained a university degree; even those with college diplomas did not seem to be against arranged marriages. Interestingly, though, Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA) and Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA) were the only ones who were forced into marriage, and had the least years of schooling of all the interviewees. This suggests to us that the experience of marriage is influenced by women's educational attainment. The examples the interviews provide show that education can empower women, and give them the chance to refuse and reject, as a form of resistance to patriarchy, when they do not want to get married. The more education a woman has, the less likely she is to have an arranged or a forced marriage, and the more opportunities she has available.

Very few married West Amman interviewees referred to arranged marriages as an experience they went through. Nur (27, married, 1 child, office manager, ft employment, WA) said that her parents and her husband's parents arranged for them to meet during a biblical studies school in Jordan. She said that it was good that their families arranged their meeting, because their relationship developed into a marriage later on. Haya (26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA) also mentioned that her family arranged several times for her to meet men who could be potential husbands for her, but she did not like any of them at that time. Rawan (22, single, student, pt employment in sales, WA) expressed that her family would set up meetings for her with men, who would be potential husbands for her. It is important to note here that the three West Amman interviewees whose families had set up meetings for them with potential husbands are Christians. However, the sort of arranged

marriages they have is totally different than those in East Amman, as the evaluation takes place by both parties, the man and the woman.

Haya (26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA) and Rawan (22, single, student, pt employment in sales, WA) explained that their families encourage arranged marriages because Christians are a minority in Jordan, and for them it is very hard to meet a good Christian man without a meeting being arranged. Haya said,

'It is because there are not a lot of Christians in Jordan; it is very hard for us Christian girls to meet good Christian guys through work or university. For that reason, many Christian families set up their sons and daughters. Also, good Christian guys are really hard to find here. In our community, we have more women than men, this is why we resort to arranged marriages, and this is why it is not a bad thing' (Haya, 26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA).

As for married West Amman interviewees, they all mentioned that they were in relationships with their partners before marriage, and that they either met them at university, through friends, or in the workplace. Premarital relationships, however, are conditioned by their families who emphasise that any relationship should be 'platonic' before marriage and should end up in marriage. For example, Reema said,

'I had some issues with my family, because they found about our relationship really quickly. They knew that there was someone in my life, but they did not know that we were a couple. My brother prevented me from going out with him alone, and said that I can only see him when we are in big groups or gatherings, but these things became more acceptable after we got engaged. Then, my family suggested that we should get engaged, that he should propose, and things must become more formal' (Reema, 28, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

She added that she wanted to get married to her current husband but things had to be formalised quickly, since her family found out about him. Samar (25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA) said that she was in a relationship with her present husband for five years before marriage. However, they did not openly declare that

they were a couple before they decided to get married. West Amman interviewees said that their families do not mind if they have male friends, and many of them get involved in relationship under the umbrella of collegiality or friendship. In cases where families find out about their daughters' relationships, marriage becomes inevitable. Alia (25, married, 1 child, economically inactive, WA) also said that she, and all of her sisters, fell in love with their husbands before marriage, and that they met them in the university. Dana (30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA) met her ex-husband through friends. It is also worth mentioning that for West Amman women interviewees, higher education enhanced their marriageability and ensured them 'good' marriages.

This shows us that women in East and West Amman have different experiences of marriage. Forced and arranged marriages are more likely to take place in East Amman, and women in the West seem to have more chances to choose their marriage partners. Premarital relationships in West Amman are both condoned and limited to a certain extent, at the same time, but premarital relations for most East Amman interviewees were not even an option. According to my sample, it is very important to note here that the fewer years of education a woman has in East Amman the more likely she is to experience an arranged or even forced marriage. East Amman interviewees, who are working or hold university degrees, had different experiences than to siblings, as reported in the interviews. Additionally, although many of them are put under pressure to have arranged marriages, they still have the chance to decide for themselves, and to resist patriarchal power. For example, Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) said,

'My sisters tell me that I am the only one of them who has the chance to decide things for myself. They believe that I am the spoiled in the family, but it is because I have a university degree, and because I work. I would not live the experiences of my sisters; I cannot. And, no one can force anything on me' (Rana, 23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA).

Although there are differences in marriage in East and West Amman, all women interviewees mentioned that they are expected to get married. The timing of the marriage and the priority given to marriage is different between both sides. West Amman women are expected to get married after higher education, but East Amman women are expected to prioritise marriage over education because they do not have the chance to pursue higher education, either because of school failures, financial need, or the lack of schools and universities near their place of residence; this is particularly acute for women camp refugees. The experience of marriage also seemed to differ, as explained next.

5.2.2 The Marriage Experience

It has been established that the approach to marriage is different in East and West Amman; the marriage experience itself is also different as interviewees explained. Many East Amman interviewees explained that they accepted their marriages and agreed on their partners because they believed that they would move away from forms of oppression, instability, and poverty and find financial security through marriage. However, in the West of Amman, marriage had been portrayed positively, and not in relation to running away from certain situation; rather women expressed their enthusiasm and desire to get married to their 'sweethearts'. There are several factors that had been mentioned in relation to the marriages of East Amman interviewees, such as instability, poverty, and maltreatment within their families. Many of them expressed that running away from one form of oppression led them to another one, through marriage. All married interviewees said that their lives changed after marriage; however, the changes West Amman women went through are totally different to the changes that East Amman women encountered.

Men's roles are generally associated with the public sphere, and they have the responsibility of providing financial resources for their households. On the other hand, women's main roles are associated with the private domain, where they care for their children and husbands in addition to their household responsibilities from cleaning to cooking and feeding. Women referred to their experiences of those responsibilities, with interviewees from both the western and the eastern sides of the city mentioning those responsibilities in association with marriage. Interviews showed, however, that the burden of household responsibilities differs amongst these women. Whereas West Amman interviewees had the ability to hire maids, some East Amman women had to work as maids in West Amman households as well as carrying out their roles inside their own households.

Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA), Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA), Samar (25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA), Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA), Liana (39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA), Dina (35, married, 5 children, secretary, ft employment, EA), Alia (25, married, 1 child, economically inactive, WA), Nur (27, married, 1 child, office manager, ft employment, WA), Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA), Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA) and Reema (28, married, no children, economically inactive, WA) all mentioned that after marriage they had more responsibilities and they felt that their roles inside the household were their priority, because their husbands should be the providers for the family. Samar, who did not have children at the time of the interview, said,

'I will be responsible for the children, he will be at work. He only provides the money, and I manage all other household responsibilities. I will also be responsible for the kids, I will be the one who is following up their homework, and I will be the one who knows what they need, because I am at home with them' (Samar, 25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

Alia (25, married, 1 child, economically inactive, WA) also said that her whole life changed after marriage, because now she has a whole house to take care of. Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA) also explained that she manages the whole household, and her husband takes care of the expenses; however, she added that she makes her daughters help her with the cleaning, and the cooking. The domestic responsibilities of East and West Amman women are the same, however, many West Amman interviewees have maids who take care of the cleaning and cooking in their households, while they do the supervising. For example, Reema, who does not have children yet, said,

'I have become responsible for a house. Although the maid does most of the household work, but there are other things I have to look after. I have to supervise her cleaning and cooking. Also, I have to be here when my husband comes home. I have to take care of him. And, when I have children I

have to take care of them also' (Reema, 28, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA), Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA), Liana (39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA), Dina (35, married, 5 children, secretary, ft employment, EA), Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA), Reema (28, married, no children, economically inactive, WA), and Samar (25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA) had quit their jobs either after or before marriage, because of their household responsibilities. They mentioned that their husbands wanted them to quit their jobs because they would not have the time to fulfil their domestic responsibilities if they did not. Samar said,

'I quit my job, one month before my wedding. I quit because if I work from 7 till 4 we will not see each other. His work is flexible; he does not have to be there early. So, he prefers to sleep, and go to work late. If I keep on working, and he keeps on working, we will not have time to see each other. So, it became a matter of who is willing to sacrifice. He either compromises by not seeing me at home when he is there, or I sacrifice my job... so I had to sacrifice my job' (Samar, 25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

Patriarchal structures that impose the male-breadwinner/female-carer model are prevalent in East and West Amman; however, the differences in the marriage experience amongst women relate to material circumstances. In other words, patriarchal structures that limit married women's economic activities were undermined in specific cases, where poverty pushed many East Amman women to seek income generating activities inside or outside their households. Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA), Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA), and Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA) work as cleaners outside their households, and they all mentioned that they do all the household chores when they come back home. The three of them also expressed that the responsibility of taking care of the children is theirs. However, all of them said

that they work because they need the money, and because their husbands are not providing for their families and are not fulfilling their assigned roles as breadwinners. Abeer said she was forced to get married and that she had had no other option with the worsening of her families' financial situation and being forced out of school, so she thought for a while that she might find some stability in marriage.

'At the beginning of my marriage, I only wanted a man to love me and to feel safe with him, and who does not hit me. I did not care about money. I just wanted someone who is not like my father. He used to love me, but he changed after he met other women. He used to treat me well. I just did not want him to be like my father; that was my only concern. After my husband met another woman, he stopped providing the house with enough money. He treated me as if I did not exist. He stopped caring, as if I have no breadwinner. He found another woman to sleep with, why would he care about me? This is how it goes' (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

She added that she now manages all the housework and pays for their expenses, while he only pays their rent. She also mentioned that although she and her children are physically abused by him she cannot leave him, because he is paying the rent. Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA) mentioned that because of her husband's injury she now has to work outside, as well as inside the household. Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA) also said that she is suffering because her husband walked away, leaving her to take care of her three children. She had thought that marriage would end her misery, as an orphan living in bad conditions with her grandparents, but she is now suffering along with her children from poverty, and physical as well as verbal abuse.

Two interviewees had failed marriage experiences, and both of them were divorced. Dana (30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA) and Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA) mentioned that their divorces took place because both of their ex-husbands did not fulfil their role by providing for the

household. Nadira left her job after she got married, following her ex-husband's desire, and yet he was not able to provide either for her or her children. She added that to the time of the interview he did not even have contact with his son, and she was the sole carer and provider for him. Dana (30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA), on the other hand, did not leave her job when she got married, but during her engagement he used to say 'when you marry me, I will be responsible for you. What would people say, if you take allowance from your father?' She added 'I was delighted, I thought great he is a real man...'

Women's different marriage experiences influence their economic activities differently. Whereas all interviewees explained that their lives had changed after marriage as they had become responsible for their households, not all of them had the same burden of responsibilities, because most West Amman interviewees did not have children at the time of the interview and were dependent on maids. However, despite the emphasis on the prioritisation of women's domestic roles, many East Amman women interviewees had to seek income generating activities because of their dire financial situations, which is undermining to the patriarchal structures that limit women's work opportunities. Women's economic activity is clearly influenced by many factors, including education and marriage. Class also affects the influence of these factors on women's economic activities. In other words, class can determine women's access to education and women's marriage experience, which in turn influence employment opportunities and the type of economic activities women engage in. Also, when financial need exists the male-breadwinner model is often challenged. Women are subjected to structures of patriarchy that make some aspects of their life experiences similar, but not to the same degree. Education and economic activity, for example, empower women, and may in some cases help women in resisting the social control imposed on them because of their gender.

5.3 Social Control

Women from both East and West Amman can share similar experiences due to their gender. There are societal values and norms which place women under certain restrictions. Men do not face the same restrictions, as reported in the interviews. On the other hand, there are certain factors that enable some women to negotiate and/or resist those restrictions, and restrictions do not have the same effect on all women. Interviewees mentioned that paid work made a difference in their lives in terms of freedom of movement and gaining power inside and outside their households, especially as it raises their status. Societal restrictions are manifested, generally, through control over women's lives, in regard to movement, sexuality, and dress codes. This sort of control undoubtedly places women in inferior positions, compared to their male counterparts.

This social control is also due to patriarchal structures of gender relations that shape the assigned roles of both genders, giving men power and control over women. The concept of honour, women's 'weakness', and their alleged inability to protect themselves are part of the patriarchal symbolic meanings attached to women, which give men the 'right' and the power to control women's lives and place women under social control. As women's sexuality represents family honour, in addition to the fact that women are viewed as 'weak' and in need of the protection of their honour by men, social control on women becomes inevitable under the excuse of 'protecting' women and their honour. All interviewees, married, single and divorced, from East and West Amman, mentioned that there are certain rules which they have to follow throughout their lives because they are part of tradition, and culture. In spite the fact that interviewees acknowledged that such norms are unfair and place restrictions on women, it seems that they adopt three strategies to deal with those restriction, which include resisting, negotiating with and accommodating patriarchy.

Women's freedom of movement and mobility were one of the most important themes which came out during the analysis of the interviews. All women talked about their freedom of movement and their physical mobility as part of the experiences they go through because of their gender. Women said that the lack of freedom of movement and physical mobility not only limited their access to education, or their involvement in an income generating activity, but also influences their social lives, and in some cases their choice of friends and even partners. Furthermore, women from both East or West Amman told me that their brothers, husbands and fathers have more freedom of movement than themselves and that men's mobility is not as restricted as women's. Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) said,

'I cannot stay out late all of the time. In Ramadan, I am allowed to come back at 11 p.m. It really depends on the time of the year. In winter, it gets dark early, and in summer it is different. They keep telling me that I am a girl, and I should not stay out till late. And, when I say how about my brother, they say he is a boy and you are a girl. He is younger, but he can stay out, and no one asks him where he was' (Rana, 23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA).

Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) has a curfew, which is determined according to the time of the year. Other women, however, whether from East or West Amman, have to ask for permission to go out, whether during the day or the night, and refusal might take place from either their mothers, who also play a role in reinforcing patriarchal structures, or from their male guardians, including fathers, brothers or husbands. When asked why asking for permission is important, and why they are sometimes prevented from going out, all interviewees referred to culture and tradition, and said that culture and tradition impose this on women, but not on men.

Several women mentioned that they have to accommodate themselves to culture and tradition, while others said that they negotiate and work around them in

order to live the lives they wish. Moreover, many of them mentioned that breaking the rules of their culture and not accommodating the traditions would bring shame to themselves and their families. Therefore, interviewees said that they should conform to gender specific cultural expectations to avoid 'bringing shame' on their families (Alia 25, married, 1 child, economically inactive, WA & Mai, 22, single, fresh graduate, unemployed, WA). Alia explains this fully, by saying,

'Our society restricts women and their movement; men can live more freely than women. Nothing will bring shame to a man, but women can bring shame to their families and husbands... I always hear this from my husband, family, everyone. Everyone says men can never be viewed as shameful but women can. Nothing will disgrace a man whether he drinks alcohol, he goes out with girls, smokes, sleeps out, travels abroad, men have more freedom! I sometimes say to myself I wish I were a boy, because they can do whatever they want, they are not held accountable' (Alia, 25, married, 1 child, economically inactive, WA).

Interviewees also explained the mechanism through which they can bring shame to their families by not following cultural norms. All interviewees mentioned that breaking the cultural codes, whether in terms of dress or staying out late, gives people an excuse to talk and gossip about them. People's talk has been linked to marring the family's reputation and spoiling its image and social position, and is about the distortion and condemnation of their actions (Wikan, 1984).

People's talk and gossip about women's behaviour is a violation for a family's code of honour. For that reason, many interviewees were prevented from doing the things their brother, fathers, and husbands do publicly. For example, Mai (22, single, fresh graduate, unemployed, WA) referred to smoking as something inappropriate for a woman to do publicly. Others also mentioned that they have to avoid talking to non-related men because this would constitute a violation of their family's honour, which would bring shame, through people's gossip, to the family. Awwad (2001) argues that in Jordan, once the family's code of honour is broken, by shame, 'the family is

pressured through the continuation of gossip to take the necessary steps to purify, or “purge” its honour’ (Awwad, 2001: 45).

Families and male guardians restrict women’s movement and control their behaviour and sexuality in order to prevent gossip, which would mar their reputation and cause scandals. However, women from East and West Amman do not have the same experiences in terms of freedom of movement and physical mobility, and their experiences also differ according to age, marital status and access to means for transportation. It is very important to bear in mind that women in East and West Amman, married and single, share the same concept of shame in relation to their behaviour, but the degree to which shame affects their life experiences is determined by several variables. All women said that they have to abide by the rules of culture and traditions, but it was also obvious that some of them use forms of resistance against these forms of social control. For example, some interviewees that they gained limited power through their paid employment explained, which enabled them to negotiate social control.

Research shows that restricting women’s freedom of movement and physical mobility can limit the opportunities of women to see the outside world and raise their awareness (Hussain and Smith, 1999). In many patriarchal Muslim societies women’s movement is largely restricted, and women are more likely to stay at home and take care of their children and household chores (Hussain and Smith, 1999). Women’s movement is not only restricted by their male guardians, but also by senior female relatives, such as their mothers and grandmothers. For instance, Amani reflected on her experience by saying,

‘My mother was very controlling; when we were young we were not allowed to do anything. Everything is shameful! Shame! Shame! We were not allowed to leave the house; we were only allowed to go to school. We only cleaned. We, my sisters and I, were treated differently to my brothers, they had the freedom to move freely because they are males and we are

females. It is shameful for girls to live freely' (Amani, 39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

The experience of East Amman non-working women interviewees in terms of freedom of movement is different from that of working West and East Amman women interviewees. Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA), Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA), Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA) and Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA) had their freedom restricted by their families, and then by their husbands after marriage. However, when they started to seek work outside the house, they had a little more freedom. Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA), on the other hand, who was not allowed to leave the house without a male guardian before and after marriage, mentioned that with age the restrictions her husband placed on her movement have become less stringent. Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) mentioned that her movement is restricted much more than her younger brother's, but still she can find ways to gain relative freedom. Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA), Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA) and Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA), who are engaged in full-time employment, mentioned that they had more freedom after they became engaged in employment. Abeer explained that she attained a level of relative movement, because her husband did not care anymore. She added,

'My family is very conservative. They fear people's talk and gossip. They do not want me to leave the house ever. I had a fight once with my husband, and I went to my family's place. So, they started controlling me. Imagine if this happens while I am married, what the situation would be like if I got divorced, and went back to live with them' (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA) also mentioned that in spite of the fact that she has relative freedom of movement, there are still great restrictions placed on her because she is divorced. She expressed,

'Because I am a divorced woman, people in East Amman always look at me with suspicion, and pose a question-mark on my position... I am 43 and I am not a free person. I cannot go out whenever I want, I cannot go out for leisure or fun. Because I am not allowed to come back late at night and I am divorced and people would start talking. And, my mother cares a lot about people's gossip and talk' (Nadira, 40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA).

In spite of Nadira's age and marital status she is not treated as an independent adult, and the fact that she is divorced make things harder. This is because of the stigma attached to divorced women, which also relates to the family's honour and places divorced women under greater control. Some women, for instance, choose to tolerate their marriage problems and abuse from their husbands just to avoid this social stigma, like Abeer, who said,

'If I get divorced things would be even harder. They will start controlling me even more. They will start to worry about my sexual activity, as I am not a virgin anymore, and this means that I can practise sex however I want' (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) also mentioned that these restrictions are not because of her marital status, as a single woman, rather they are because of the social connectedness in East Amman, and is due to the fact that everyone knows each other. Rana and Nadira mentioned that they cannot either be themselves, or tell their families about their lives. As Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA) puts it 'I feel like I have double lives. I cannot be myself'. Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) also said,

'I cannot be very honest with my family, because they will not accept everything. For example, I wanted to become a member of a dancing band, for a traditional dance and I did not tell them, because I know they would not accept it. I did not tell them because I do not want headaches. They would say that I will be holding a man's hand and we will be dancing so I just do not tell' (Rana, 23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA).

Social control does not only apply to freedom of movement, it also includes the control of women’s dress code, either by their household members or themselves. East Amman interviewees were more likely to mention that their families interfere in the way they dress. All East Amman interviewees covered their heads, and only one of West Amman interviewees covered her head. Questionnaire data showed that wearing the headscarf is more important for families in East Amman. The majority of East Amman respondents - 88.1 percent - answered that women’s wearing the headscarf is important for their family, compared with 57.5 percent of West Amman respondents who said that the headscarf is important for their families (see Table 5.5). There were no gender differences between East Amman respondents in relation to their responses to the statement; however there were obvious gender differences between respondents in West Amman, as men were almost twice as likely to believe that the headscarf is important than women. This shows that the headscarf appears to be more important for East Amman respondents than it is for those from West Amman. This had also been emphasised through the interviews, as many interviewees mentioned that wearing modest clothes is very important as part of the behaviour they have to abide by, in order to avoid people’s talk.

Table (5.5) Is wearing the headscarf important for your family?

Answer	East Amman					West Amman				
	Men= 38		Women= 46		Total= 84	Men= 34		Women= 46		Total= 80
	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Numbers	Percentages	Percentages
Yes	34	89.5%	40	87%	88.1%	27	79.4%	19	41.3%	57.5%
No	4	10.5%	6	13%	11.9%	7	20.6%	27	58.7%	42.5%
Total	38	100%	46	100%	100%	34	100%	46	100%	100%

All West Amman women interviewees mentioned that there are some restrictions on their movement, but they are not prevented from going out, rather they have curfews they have to follow. Almost none of them mentioned that they face problems with their families with regard to the way they dress. Unlike Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA) and Rana (23, single, social worker, ft

employment, EA), West Amman interviewees do not have to change their clothes at work as they leave the house in a different outfit to satisfy their family, and they do not hear objections and orders to wear more modest clothes before leaving the house. Nadira and Rana, who are from East Amman, explained that they do not have a problem with wearing the headscarf, however, they also explained that their families pressure them into wearing very loose clothes. Therefore, before leaving the house they wear long loose shirts, and after they leave the area they take off the long shirts but not the headscarf.

It became apparent that people in East Amman are very keen on avoiding people's gossip and talk. This care can be explained through the fact that the social networks in East Amman are very dense. People in West Amman live much more independent lives. For example, many West Amman interviewees mentioned that neighbours do not recognise each other. One interviewee from the Eastern side described West Amman people by saying,

'They only care about their homes; no one cares about each other. But, here it is different - people care for each other. Neighbours are good with each other. The moment you hear a sound, or you feel that your neighbour needs you, everyone stands up for each other, as if they were one hand. But there people are independent, as if they are not together' (Liana, 39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

Conversely, people's lives in the East are so interconnected that people living in the same neighbourhood know each other very well. People live very closely to each other in East Amman, and they are very much concerned with each other's issues and matters. Amani gave an example of the interconnectivity in East Amman by saying,

'For example, when my daughter wants to go out, people start looking at her clothes, hair, shoes... They blame me for letting my daughter work and they talk about me' (Amani, 39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

The degree of connectedness between people determines the relationships between them and also determines the boundaries between them. East Amman interviewees mentioned that people are very concerned with each others' issues and they interfere in each other's daily lives. For example, Nadira said,

'I HATE the community in East Amman, I do not like it. The East Amman society talks a lot, they care a lot about others' issues, and they do not mind their own business' (Nadira, 40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA).

Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) and Liana (39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA) mentioned that they do not feel comfortable going back home late, because of the way people start looking at and talking about them. In spite of the fact that East Amman interviewees believe that in West Amman women are able to live more freely, there are actually many restrictions placed on West Amman women's movement, which do not amount to those on East Amman women but are manifested in curfews, and having to gain permission. Thus, all women face social restrictions because of their gender; however, the impact of those social restrictions on women is different between East and West Amman due to the fact that there are certain factors such as marital status, economic activities and age that make the type and degree of control different. Although class intersects with gender to make it harder for East Amman women, at the same time there are also other factors that come into play. For example, East Amman women are generally subjected to more control on their freedom of movement, because they live in more conservative and interconnected areas, which is related to both economic and cultural class. The fact that houses in East Amman are very close to each other, with no space between them, and that there are cultural differences between East and West Amman women, makes East Amman women's experiences different. Moreover, social control is always stronger in close-knit networks, such as those in East Amman, which makes it harder for women to challenge patriarchy. Yet some East Amman women can still negotiate those restrictions through their economic activities, and even age in certain

cases. In West Amman, women have relatively more freedom; however, they still have to abide by curfews and the same kind of rules that are lesser in degree than for East Amman women, but still hold the same connotations.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that Jordan is a patriarchal society, class and gender intersect to create different forms of patriarchy in East and West Amman. This intersection leads women to have different experiences in relation to economic activity. These different experiences are due to class differences, and associated with different opportunities in terms of accessing education, marriage and freedom of choice and movement, which affects their economic activities. Women's economic activity is influenced by factors including education and marriage, which are influenced by patriarchal structures. The main patriarchal structures and practices identified throughout this chapter in relation to women's education, marriage, and economic activities are the male-breadwinner/women-carer model, honour and shame, and the concept of women's 'weakness'.

Many women attempt to negotiate the patriarchal structures they face in their everyday lives; however, this form of resistance also depends on women's background and socioeconomic situation. I have identified three strategies women adopt to deal with patriarchal control (1) accommodation, (2) negotiation and (3) resistance. However, the application of those strategies differs according to factors such as educational attainment, employment and material circumstances. For example, education empowers women, raises their status inside and outside their households and increases their employment opportunities; educated women are more likely to negotiate with and resist patriarchal control. This resistance appeared more amongst interviewees who were in full-time employment, which shows that work can empower women and enable them to resist. Other women, on the other hand, accommodate themselves to patriarchy; for example, the male-breadwinner model can provide them with financial security, especially in cases of bad financial situation and lack of education. The more education a woman has, the more likely she is to choose her marriage partner, and in most cases forced marriages occur

where women are either prevented from carrying on with their education, or when their families' financial situation is dire.

This shows that class plays a role in determining women's access to education and women's marriage experiences. However, the fact that West Amman women are encouraged by their families to obtain university degrees is in large part because education increases women's marriageability and enhances their chance to find 'better' husbands. Therefore, West Amman women's education might be reinforcing the patriarchal structures that support the male-breadwinner model, because even in West Amman women are expected to get married and to become 'carers' after marriage. Marital status and the level of educational attainment influence women's choices in terms of the economic activities they can engage in. Furthermore, due to the prevalence of the patriarchal structure of the male-breadwinner model in Amman, when a man is adequately providing for his household women were reluctant to engage in income generating activities, and this is more prevalent in West Amman. Although the same structure is also prevalent in East Amman, due to material circumstances women East Amman married interviewees who did not obtain university degrees find it hard to engage in well-paid regular economic activities. However, the fact that they are engaging in income generating activities shows that the male-breadwinner model is being undermined by financial need. The concepts of honour and shame, and the view that women are 'weak' and in need of 'protection', in addition to the fact that families' honour is dependent on women's sexuality, place women under the control of their male relatives and/or mothers, who can limit their access to education as well as economic activities. This can still be challenged by women, and this challenge is more likely to take place by women who are engaged in full-time employment, and who contribute to their households. This shows that women's economic activities can give women power inside their households and help them in bargaining with patriarchal structures. The next chapter explains how women from East and West Amman engage in different

economic activities, and discusses the factors which influence their bargaining with patriarchal structures. It also explores how women have different hopes, dreams, and ambitions according to their class and financial situation.

Chapter Six: Women's Economic Activities, Dreams, Hopes, and Bargaining

Introduction

'Abdoun Street divides Amman to two parts: East and West. On the way from the Abdoun Bridge to Abdoun Mall, in the middle of the Abdoun circle, you find yourself at the crossroads between two different cities and completely diverse worlds. But it's not only about a topographical division within Amman itself. It is about the society, one part of which seems to have failed in keeping up with the country's growth' (Khalifa and Krzysiek, 2008: Para 2).

There are great class differences between East and West Amman, and the class difference is not only economic, as there are also differences in terms of culture. In Amman, place of residence indicates economic and cultural class, and this influences women's economic activities and the reasons for them. It has been established that upper and upper-middle class women in the Arab Middle East have more employment opportunities (Moghadam, 1993a, El-Solh, 2003); this is because they have more educational opportunities. Women from poorer class backgrounds, however, engage in economic activities that are informal and irregular, meaning that they are underrepresented in employment and labour force statistics. Although upper- and upper-middle class women are more likely to be employed, their employment is also influenced by other factors such as marital status, and household income. Marital status and household income can affect the patriarchal gender structures that influence women's economic activities. In other words, patriarchal gender structures take the form of men earning for their households, and women caring. However, the form that patriarchal structures take depends to a great extent on household income, and marital status. For example, in East Amman married women interviewees engaged in income generating activities because of financial need, while in West Amman most married women interviewees were not economically active because their husbands' income was high; this reinforced the

patriarchal structure of the male-breadwinner/female-carer model. On the other hand, single West Amman interviewees were often employed. The following table shows the different economic activities of employed women interviewees from East and West Amman, who constituted 11 out of 18 women interviewees (Table 6.1).

Table (6.1) Details of Interviewees' Economic Activities, Education and Marital Status		
Interviewee	Education	Economic Activity
Rana (23, East Amman, Single)	Undergraduate University Degree	Employed as a social worker
Nadira (40, East Amman, Divorced)	College diploma	Employed as a secretary
Nadia (36, East Amman, Separated)	High school certificate	Irregular economic activities, sometimes sells makeup in streets and other times works as a cleaner
Amani (39, East Amman, married)	Secondary school	Irregular economic activity, sometimes she cleans offices
Liana (39, East Amman, married)	College Diploma	Irregular, sometimes selling homemade food products
Abeer (33, East Amman, married)	Preparatory school	Employed as a cleaner
Dina (35, East Amman, married)	College diploma	Employed as a secretary
Nur (27, West Amman, married)	Undergraduate university degree	Employed as an office manager
Dana (30, West Amman, divorced)	Undergraduate university degree	Business owner
Rawan (22, West Amman, Single)	Undergraduate university student	Employed as a saleslady
Haya (26, West Amman, single)	Undergraduate university degree	Employed as a social worker

Women in the East and the West side of Amman engage in different economic activities. This chapter will answer the research question: what economic activities are women in East and West Amman involved in and how do they differ? It also draws attention to the fact that the differences in the kinds of economic activities are results of factors such as education, marriage and control. Additionally, this chapter sheds light on the different economic activities engaged in by Amman residents through presenting data on interviewees' households and the kinds of occupations members of the household are involved in. In the second section of this chapter, I attempt to show how women gain social power through their involvement in income generating activities and how they put this power into play within their families.

As patriarchal gender structures influence women's engagement or disengagement in economic activities women bargain with patriarchy by using the resources available to them, such as education. It became apparent that women interviewees adopt three strategies to bargain with patriarchy - negotiation, accommodation and resistance. The use of those strategies differs according to class, marital status, and educational attainment. Economic activity also influences women's bargaining with patriarchy and can give them more space to negotiate with patriarchal control. For example, as explained in earlier chapters, men gain power through patriarchal symbolic structures which have the role of the provider attached to them, but when this structure of symbolic meaning is challenged the balance of power changes. This is why, for example, when the male provider of the household cannot adequately fulfil his role, women often gain more space to negotiate within those structures and gain more power through contributing to the household, or earning money through paid employment and economic activities. It is very important to note that even when women gain power, this power is still limited as I have shown earlier and will show later from my data.

This research is a comparison between the economic activities of women in East and West Amman, and the comparison shows that class influences women's engagement/disengagement in economic activities. The second section explores the way that class not only influences women's economic activities but also leads to women having different hopes and dreams, with interviews showing that the hopes and dreams of women shed light on the reality they are living. For example, the women's hopes and dreams revolved around what they do not have and what they want to have, which also relates to class.

6.1 Economic Activities

There are no official statistics that show the class differences between residents of East and West Amman, however, questionnaire and interview data showed that only households with low-income live in East Amman. I previously mentioned in chapter three that the average household income for East Amman questionnaire respondents was 799 Jordanian Dinars, while the average for West Amman respondents was 1700 Jordanian Dinars. Additionally, interviews and questionnaire data showed that people in East and West Amman engage in different kinds of economic activities, which suggests that there are economic class differences between residents of both sides of the city. Furthermore, many interviewees referred to the differences between East and West Amman in terms of the sort of economic activities, work and employment opportunities available to residents of each area. For example, Rawan said,

‘The beggars are from East Amman. Women from the East also work as maids. People from the West are engaged in more professional jobs’ (Rawan, 22, single, student, pt employment in sales, WA).

Interviewees also mentioned that people from the East work as janitors, mechanics, and secretaries, if they have a diploma. Several also mentioned that East Amman women engage in home-based income generating activities or work as cleaners in houses, and sometimes in factories. These views are, of course, based on stereotypes that are prevalent about people from East Amman, because as data showed there are differences between East Amman women interviewees themselves. In addition, some East Amman women interviewees who have the chance to receive university degrees, may be in similar occupations to West Amman women. For example, Rana (23, single, employed, EA) and Haya (26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA) both live with their parents and work as social workers earning the same amount, but have different life styles. Rana has to contribute to her household, while Haya does not. Rana also faces a different form of patriarchal control, for example, she has to be

at home by nine p.m. while Haya has to be home by midnight. This shows that they are both placed under patriarchal control; however, the way patriarchy operates is different. Rana's contribution to her household gives her limited power to negotiate with patriarchy, for instance she explained that she threatens to stop contributing to the household whenever her mother interferes in her life. Haya's paid employment achieved for her some sort of 'financial independence'.

Data also showed that East Amman women interviewees working in their part of the city earn less than East Amman women working in West Amman. For example, Dina (35, married, 5 children, secretary, ft employment, EA), who has a college diploma and works as a secretary in East Amman, earns 140 Jordanian Dinars per month, while Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA), who has the same qualifications and works as a secretary in West Amman, earns 275 Jordanian Dinars. Nadira said,

'I would not like to work in East Amman. Most of the companies are in West Amman. You might find factories or small offices in East Amman who would pay you low salaries. There are some small companies even in West Amman which are still good, but it's different' (Nadira, 40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA).

Nadira meant that in West Amman, even if companies are small, work opportunities are better. Interviews and questionnaire data showed that people in East Amman are more likely to be involved in semi-skilled or unskilled occupations, and professional positions are mostly held by people living in the West side, and by some East Amman people who had the chance to receive university degrees. Moreover, the interview data showed that income is much higher amongst West Amman interviewees.

Moreover, there are differences between the occupations of economically active women. Those differences were between East and West Amman women respondents, and amongst East Amman women themselves. However, it is

important to note here that in some cases, some East and West Amman women have the same occupations, depending on their education. This still does not mean that women from East and West Amman with the same qualifications and occupations have the same life experiences, or share the same class. Economically active East Amman women interviewees contribute to the household income. The reasons behind East Amman women interviewees' economic activities are different, and they do not necessarily share the same experiences, even if they engage in economic activities similar to those West Amman women engage in. The differences in the reasons given for why women engage in economic activities are related to class. In this section, I explain the different economic activities that East and West Amman women engage in, and what leads women to different economic activities.

6.1.1 Reasons behind Economic Activity or Inactivity

Women exercise choices regarding their economic activities within the constraints of socioeconomic background and marital status. However, the reasons behind women's economic activity or inactivity are different. For example, West Amman women interviewees were not prevented from receiving education but some chose not to become economically active, while most East Amman women interviewees were not permitted to even pursue education, but despite this many of them made it into economic activity for different reasons. The interviews showed that interviewees were engaged or not in income generating activities for a wide range of reasons. Those reasons were markedly different between East and West Amman, due to economic and cultural class differences and differences in the operation of patriarchal structures. Working West Amman women interviewees expressed different motives for engaging in economic activities. Marital status and income were the main factors influencing West Amman women's economic activity/and or inactivity. As we shall see, patriarchal structures do not influence women in the same way; this will be demonstrated through examples.

All the West Amman working women I interviewed have a minimum of an undergraduate university degree. Single working West Amman interviewees live at their parents' houses, and do not contribute to the household expenses. They mentioned that the type of work they do had been their choice, and that they engaged in income generating activities, because of their desire to do so. Further, many of them elaborated on how work makes their lives different, and not empty. Haya (26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA) is a single young woman, who lives with her parents and siblings in a flat comprising two bedrooms, two bathrooms, guest room, living room and a dining room. She shares a bedroom with two of her sisters, and one of them sleeps in the living room while her parents sleep in their bedroom. Her parents' earnings come from their full-time employment in the education sector; her father is a school headmaster, and her mother is a school

teacher. She is the eldest amongst her three sisters, and she has no brothers. All of her sisters either have university degrees, or are working towards obtaining one. She mentioned that her parents believe in education, and for that reason all of them are obliged to obtain university degrees. Haya and her sisters who have already obtained their university degrees are in full-time employment; however, none of them contributes to the household. Rather, they spend their earnings on leisure, going out and going to hairdressers and beauty salons, and on their clothing. Haya said that none of them works because they need the money. For example, she works because, as she put it, 'I want to buy whatever I want, I do not save money and I want to achieve some sort of financial independence' (Haya, 26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA).

For many West Amman interviewees, even economically inactive interviewees, including Samar (25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA), Diala (28, single, student, economically inactive, WA), Rawan (22, single, student, pt employment in sales, WA) and Haya (26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA), the term 'financial independence' was used to refer to being able to spend money freely, because they are able to contribute to their personal expenses. For example, all of them mentioned that when they started earning money they stopped taking allowances from their fathers. They added that earning money enabled them to spend as much as they want, because their parents have responsibilities towards their younger siblings. Furthermore, interviewees explained that being financially independent gives them the chance to avoid asking their parents for money because they feel 'shy' to ask. They said that they would not feel comfortable asking their fathers for spending money on personal things. More clearly, West Amman single working women do not contribute to their household's expenses because their fathers are responsible for providing for the household. The 'financial independence' interviewees referred to did not mean full independence - for example they cannot move out of their parents' houses. Instead, it meant that they stopped asking for allowances from their parents,

and they became able to afford to pay for their own clothes, makeup, or leisure activities, but not as part of their responsibility or duty towards their households. In other words, the fact that their fathers are providing for their households, paying for the food, rent or mortgage, and the fact that their fathers have the ability to give them allowances if they want, show that they are not as financially independent as they believed. Instead their independence is relative, compared to the way that they were totally dependent before engaging in income generating activities. One interviewee said,

'I can control my finances; I can go to the hairdresser, to the salon, or go shopping, as much as I want. My father would give me money for that, but I cannot keep asking him for this... I would not feel comfortable, for him this sort of spending would seem frivolous because he has other financial responsibilities' (Haya, 26, single, social worker, ft employment, WA).

For several single West Amman interviewees, and married West Amman interviewees who stopped working after marriage, engaging in income generating activities had been for the purpose of becoming relatively 'financially independent,' and to have the money to be able to afford, things that their fathers or husbands might not see as important.

Additionally, gaining self-confidence and life experience were also other reasons behind their engagement in economic activities. Many of them mentioned that work outside the household provided them with knowledge and experience about the world, and that through their work they have become more confident and gained communication skills to be able to deal with different people. For example, Samar, who used to work as a teller in a bank before marriage and stopped working after marriage, explained how work changed her by saying,

'I was a different person two years ago, the way I talk even changed. I felt that my work developed my interpersonal skills, and provided me with communication skills. I learnt how to talk to all kinds of people; I learnt how to talk with young and

old people, and how to change my tone according to the situation. It broadened my knowledge, and changed my way of thinking. I became more experienced in life generally; I became a different person' (Samar, 25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

Although single West Amman working interviewees who still live in parental homes expressed that they do not work because of financial need, interview data showed that there are cases where women from West Amman feel that they have to work because of need; this is affected by marital status and childrearing responsibilities. Dana (30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA), for example, is a divorced working mother who lives with her parents and her three year old son, in addition to their Indonesian maid, in a flat comprising four bedrooms, four bathrooms, a kitchen, a lounge, a dining room, a living room, and rear and front gardens. Dana mentioned that when she was single she did not feel the need to work, but following her divorce she now needs to work to provide for her son, who is also living with her parents. Moreover, she mentioned that when she was married she had to work because her husband did not want to work, and so she had to be the provider, and that is why she got divorced. She added that if she did not have a son she would not have felt that she needed to generate income, and get involved in income generating activities. She said,

'I have been working since I graduated. I have been working for eight years now. I started to work at first because I want to develop myself and I wanted to have a career. Now, after the divorce I mean, working for me became a must. At the beginning I just wanted to work, but now working became obligatory. I do not have the option of not working, because I need the money' (Dana, 30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA).

She explained that her family's financial situation is excellent, as her father is a surgeon. In spite of the fact that her father helps her with her son's expenses, Dana feels that her work is vital in her life. However, she also added that she does not contribute to the household expenses, and that she only uses her earnings to take

care of herself and her son, because she does not want to be a burden on her father. She also mentioned that her father keeps telling her that she spends a lot of money on leisure activities, although she is the one who is paying for those activities. She said that her father even pays for her son's school fees, because she cannot afford a good school for him. In fact, Dana does not really 'have to work'; however, she uses her earnings for leisure activities for her and her son, which shows that her earning is important for her personal life, rather than survival needs.

Nur (27, married, 1 child, office manager, ft employment, WA) is another example of West Amman women who feel that they have to work, due to 'financial need'; however the kind of financial need and household resource allocation is different to Dana's case. Nur is married, living with her husband and one year old son, and enrolled in a part-time university course, works full-time, and has full-time household responsibilities. She earns 500 Jordanian Dinars a month, and her husband earns the same amount. She mentioned that they are living in an owned flat in West Amman and that they are both engaged in full-time employment, because, as she puts it, 'it is really hard these days, we both have to work, we have a son, and it is getting really expensive in Amman'. Nur mentioned that her husband would not mind if she quit her job, but she does not want to because he will find it really hard to be the sole provider for the household. Nur's experience of choosing to stay in her job is a form of negotiation with patriarchy. It is worth mentioning that Nur's household income was the lowest amongst West Amman women interviewees. She said,

'Our salaries together are enough for our family. After I gave birth to our son, my husband said that I can stop working and focus on my son and my degree. But, I did not want to. I do realise that it is hard for him to manage all the household finances, and the problem is that he has not had a raise or a promotion for a couple of years now' (Nur, 27, married, 1 child, office manager, ft employment, WA).

West Amman economically active women interviewees are engaged in income generating activities for different reasons. The reasons behind their work depend to a great extent on their marital status, household arrangements, and income. No single West Amman working woman contributes to household expenses, they spend their earnings on personal things. That they do not contribute to their household is due to the fact that their fathers are financially responsible for the household expenses, and they all live in parental homes. The case for married and divorced working West Amman women is different. For instance, it became clear that married West Amman women interviewees work to be able to live comfortably given the increasing prices and living expenses in Jordan. Research showed that the cases of East Amman working women interviewees are totally different, because their economic activities are essential to their own and their families' survival.

For all East Amman economically active interviewees, financial need was the main reason behind their economic activities, and all of them contributed to the household expenses. On the other hand, while single interviewees from the West did not have to work because of financial need, divorced and married West Amman women interviewees felt that they had to work. On the East side all working interviewees, whether single, married or divorced, work because their earnings are very important for their survival and the survival of their household members. Moreover, interview data showed that the household situation of East and West Amman interviewees is drastically different. In other words, in households where income is scarce women's income generating activities become important for survival, not only for women but also for their families. Interviews and questionnaire data showed that households in East Amman have lower income than households in the West of the city. Additionally, the household density is much higher in East Amman than it is in West Amman (see chapter three, section 3.3.1). For example, Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA) is a divorced working woman, who lives with her 68 year old widowed mother, 41 year old

divorced brother, and her 13 year old son, in a one bedroom flat in East Amman. Their home comprises one bedroom in which she and her mother sleep, a sitting room, which at night time gets transformed into a bedroom for her brother and son, and a guest room, in addition to a kitchen and a bathroom. Nadira said,

'My family's financial situation is not very good. I started working because I do not want me or my son to become a burden on my family. I do not want my son to start asking his uncles for money; I want him to have dignity. Now, as I am working, I contribute to the household expenses as well. I have to contribute, because my brother's and my mother's income is not enough for living expenses' (Nadira, 40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA).

Nadira earns 275 JOD, and contributes 50 JOD in cash monthly to the household, in addition to doing some grocery shopping.

Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA), on the other hand, said,

'My family's situation is really hard. I have to help with the household expenses. I give my mother 100 JOD monthly, because my family does not have a pension, and we do not have a high-income. For example, my father works as a porter now, and he only earns 150 JOD. My brothers sometimes help, by bringing food, or sending money every three to four months, because they have responsibilities of their own as well. But, we do not have a steady income' (Rana, 23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA).

Rana added that she does not tell her family the exact amount she earns, saying that she lies to them about it because otherwise they will start asking her for a higher contribution. She told her family that she earns 200 JOD although she really earns 530 JOD, because if she tells them that she earns that much they would start asking why her contribution is only 100 JOD monthly, and they will start questioning how she spends the money. She said,

'They will start asking me. "where do you spend all of that money, and why?" And they would accuse me of not

contributing enough for the house. They believe that 100 JOD per month is enough for me' (Rana, 23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA).

Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA) is another example of a woman for whom financial need becomes the motive to work. When she was single Abeer started working because she wanted to help her mother, and alleviate their suffering because of poverty. She mentioned that they used to live below the poverty line and that her father used to work as a driver, but could not pay for the household expenses. She described their situation,

'Our situation was very bad; we did not even find food to eat. We were ten in the house, and ten is a lot. When my father worked, we ate. Otherwise, we spent a lot of time hungry. My father used to eat out with his family, and he left us hungry at home. When I started working, I gave my mother all of my salary, which was 80 JOD' (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

Furthermore, Abeer was also forced to seek paid work, after she got married, because her husband stopped providing for the house. She mentioned that she takes care of all the household expenses, and he only pays for the rent. She has three daughters and two sons, for whom she provides food and clothing. She mentioned that her husband stopped providing for the household because he got involved in an affair, and 'stopped caring, so it is as if I do not have a breadwinner'.

It became apparent that the motive for women to work in East Amman is survival. Although many East Amman women interviewees suffer from poverty and are in financial need, they cannot engage in steady income generating activities, for several reasons. Some East Amman interviewees were engaged in occasional economic activities, which were not sustainable or continuous. For example, Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA), who lives with her disabled husband and eight children, said that she occasionally cleans offices but she does not tell anyone about this work. This is because there are certain kinds of economic

activities that have negative connotations; for women working as a cleaner is seen as shameful and lowly. She mentioned that they live in a rented basement which consists of three rooms, a kitchen and a bathroom, and they receive 202 JOD monthly from the Ministry of Social Development. The Ministry of Social Development in Jordan provides minimum benefits for families whose male provider suffers from a disability and for that reason cannot engage in income generating activities. However, to be able to benefit from this system, the lack of a male provider and poverty has to be proven to the Ministry. The salary they receive from the Ministry of Social Development amounts to less than 0.70 JOD per day per person, so it is not even enough for basic food items. The poverty line in Jordan is set at 1.3 JOD per person per day by the Jordanian Ministry of Social Development. Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA) mentioned that her occasional work is not enough to sustain their living, and for that reason she had to push her 19 year old daughter to work in order to help with the household expenses. Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA) lives alone with her three children in a rented basement, which consists of one bedroom, a bathroom and a kitchen. She sells cosmetic products in the streets hoping to make a living. Nadia also said,

'I beg my brother and father to give me some money for the rent, and I do not have enough money. I have not paid my water bill, and my flat's door is broken and I cannot afford to fix it. I receive charity from the Islamic Committee, and sometimes my neighbours send us food, for lunch, and food to break our fast in Ramadan' (Nadia, 36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

All East Amman interviewees in occasional or informal economic activity expressed that they want to be engaged in full-time employment or sustainable economic activity, because of their financial situation. However, they mentioned that it is hard for them to do this because they do not have the qualifications to engage in full-time employment. They also added that there are not many work and employment opportunities available. Nonetheless, they mentioned that they 'would

love' to have proper jobs to be able to alleviate the suffering of their poverty and dire conditions.

Poverty levels seemed very high in East Amman, particularly in Palestinian refugee camps and areas around them. Questionnaire data show that for East Amman respondents the average income per capita per day is 3.5 JOD, while in West Amman the average income per capita per day is 6.83 JOD. There are dramatic differences between East and West Amman in terms of living conditions. Liana (39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA), Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA) and Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA), despite the fact that it is hard for them to engage in sustainable economic activity, work occasionally and informally. Liana (39, married, 6 children, irregular economic activity, EA), Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA) and Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA), despite their involvement in income generating activities, believed that they were economically inactive. Their belief was justified by saying that their work is not regular income generating activity, and that it is not formal employment. Many women believe that formal employment is the only form of economic activity, despite the fact that the contribution of those who work informally helps their families. This shows that their work is deemed, even by them, to be invisible because it is not stable and does not generate much income.

Other East Amman interviewees, although also living in dire conditions, are not involved in any sort of economic activity. There are several factors preventing women who are in financial need from seeking employment or work. Moreover, those are the same reasons behind the economic inactivity of many women. For example, Fatima (38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA) was prevented by her husband from doing homemade embroidery, because, according to her husband, it would take so much time. She added that their financial situation is bad, and that her husband's and adolescent sons' earnings are barely enough to cover the household expenses. She said,

'I once started making embroidery at home, because we need the money. But, I stopped, because he did not like it, and now my sons work. Although the money I used to make was very low, not more than 3 JOD a day, I did it for some time' (Fatima, 38, married, 8 children, economically inactive, EA).

Fatima is the only East Amman married interviewee who is not engaged in any sort of income generating activity; she was not allowed to continue working because, according to her husband, the time spent on income generating activity was too much, and would have prevented her from meeting her household responsibility as a housewife. However, when she worked, she contributed the few Jordanian Dinars she earned to the household. This shows that the symbolic structure of the male-breadwinner/woman carer is the reason behind Fatima's economic inactivity, even though she and her family are in dire need. Moreover, Fatima tried to resist this structure by working for a couple of months, but she was stopped by her husband. Her example shows failed resistance to patriarchy, which led to her accommodating patriarchal control. Salha (27, single, economically inactive, EA) is another example of a woman whom patriarchal structures prevented from seeking economic activity. She explained that she had never been economically active and that she did not even try to become economically active, because her father believes that a woman's place is at home, and that her husband, father and/or brother should provide financially to their households. Salha's four married brothers are expected to contribute to their parental household. This also shows that the patriarchal symbolic structure of the male-breadwinner/female-carer model can be a reason for women's economic inactivity. Unlike Fatima, Salha did not resist patriarchal structures because her brothers and father are able to provide adequately for the household, and she mentioned that she does not feel that she financially needs to work. It is important to note that Salha's household income was the highest amongst all East Amman women interviewees.

It became apparent that living conditions in East Amman are very hard, and many women are 'allowed' to work by their husbands, mothers and/or fathers to alleviate the conditions of their suffering. This is a marked contrast with West Amman, where living conditions are better. West Amman women who are economically inactive talked about other reasons for this inactivity. Moreover, household income is a major determinant of their economic inactivity, as most of the interviewees' living conditions in West Amman were excellent at the time of the interviews. For example, West Amman interviewees lived in big houses, owned private cars and most had foreign domestic workers. However, the interview data show that some interviewees stopped working after they got married for reasons which will be discussed later in this section. For example, Reema (28, married, no children, economically inactive, WA) and Samar (25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA) stopped working after their marriage, because they do not need to work or stick to a routine. That most West Amman women interviewees ended their economic activities after marriage reflects their accommodation to the patriarchal structure of the male-breadwinner/female-carer model. On the other hand, the hard living conditions of East Amman married women interviewees pushed them to challenge patriarchal structures and seek work even in positions that are seen of 'low status', as will be demonstrated in the next section.

Samar (25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA) lives with her husband and their foreign maid¹⁶ in a rented flat for which they pay 12000 JOD annually. The flat consists of four bedrooms, a guest room, a living room, a maid's room, laundry room, a kitchen, three bathrooms and a terrace. Samar's husband works in the family business, and she does not know how much he exactly earns. She said that she quit work before marriage because she became responsible for a house. She added that she does not need to work while she is married, but she felt she had to when she was single not because she was in need. She explained that she used to feel shy about

¹⁶ Foreign maids are often temporary workers from Sri-Lanka, Philippines and Indonesia

asking for money from her father, but she does not feel that way with her husband. She said,

'I do not hesitate to ask my husband for money, because it is our money. With my father, it was different, he had other responsibilities, and I felt shy to ask him for money, because he paid for my education and he has to pay for my younger siblings' education. At that time, I felt that I had to depend on myself' (Samar, 25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

Alia (25, married, 1 child, economically inactive, WA) is married and living with her husband, her two year old daughter and a foreign maid in a rented apartment, which costs them 8000 JOD annually. The apartment consists of three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a kitchen, a guest room, a living room and a dining room. Alia's husband is an estate agent, who earns 2500 JOD per month. Alia got married immediately after obtaining her university degree in journalism and media. She explained that she does not need to work, because their financial situation is good and because she has her household responsibilities. Many West Amman married interviewees mentioned that they do not need to work outside the house, as their husbands are providing for the household.

In summary, almost all West Amman interviewees, married and single, mentioned that they do not need to engage in income generating activities because of their families' financial situations. However, some of them, particularly single women living in parental homes become economically active, as a matter of choice, following the completion of their university degrees. For East Amman women the situation is different, as many of them work and have to contribute to their households because of financial need. For example, Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA) mentioned that she had to work during her studies because her family could not afford all of her fees and living expenses, whereas Mai (22, single, fresh graduate, unemployed, WA) and Diala (28, single, student, economically inactive, WA), who

are also students, do not work because their fathers are adequately providing for their expenses.

The symbolic patriarchal structure of the male-breadwinner/female-carer model is prevalent in East and West Amman, making women's economic activity less valued than men's. However, this model is differently experienced depending on class. In other words, household income was a major determinant of women's economic activity/inactivity. Marital status also influences women's engagement and/or disengagement in income generating activities. For married women in West Amman, the higher the household income is, the less likely they were to engage in income generating activities. The case is different for single West Amman interviewees, the fact that they are single meant that they are not expected to either financially contribute or participate in household chores, household income did not seem to be a factor influencing their economic activities, and the lack of household responsibilities enabled them to become economically active. This shows that married women with a high income are expected to follow the patriarchal structures that assign them specific gender roles as housewives and carers. In West Amman, the intersection of household income and marital status can either enable or disable the resistance of the patriarchal gender structures that limit women's economic activities. In other words, married women living in households where income is substantially higher are less likely to be economically active than single women in high income households.

In East Amman, the case is slightly different due to class differences; however, patriarchy still plays a major role influencing women's economic activities. Patriarchal structures in East Amman are sometimes challenged because income levels are lower, and women's economic activities are vital for the survival of their household members. East Amman women's income generating activities undermine and break the symbolic structure of the male-breadwinner, because many men seemed to be unable to adequately provide for their households. All East Amman

women interviewees, married and single, except for two, were engaged in income generating activities because of financial need, and they all contributed financially to their households. This shows that in East Amman patriarchal structures are being challenged and resisted because of poverty and material circumstances, regardless of women's marital status. In other words, women, married and single in East Amman, are pushed to seek income generating activities because of financial need. The economically inactive interviewees from East Amman were prevented from working because of patriarchal structures that assign women domestic roles, even when they are in financial need. In addition to the different reasons behind women's economic activities, women also engage in different economic activities that are determined by class, educational attainment, and patriarchy.

6.1.2 Different Economic Activities

Patriarchal gender structures, generally, influence women's involvement in economic activity; however, there are differences between women, and differences in terms of the effects of those structures according to class. However, patriarchal gender structures not only influence women's engagement or disengagement in economic activities, but also influence the types of economic activities women engage in. In chapter four, I discussed the way that women's economic activity is conditioned, how this conditioning differs according to class, and that there are economic activities that are considered suitable and of 'high status' and others that are deemed 'unsuitable' and of 'low status'. These conditions can be resisted according to class, and women's agency plays a major role in undermining patriarchal control. On the other hand, women's different life experiences in relation to education, marriage, and patriarchal control also result in women engaging in different economic activities. In other words, women with higher education and university degrees are more likely to be in full-time employment or 'high status' jobs, while women with lower educational levels are more likely to be in the informal sector or 'lower status' jobs. Data show that women in West Amman are more likely to have university degree, meaning that they might have more chances to be in full-time employment or in jobs of 'high status'. In spite of having better access to full-time employment, the choices West Amman women have in terms of economic activities are also influenced by their gender, as there are economic activities that are not seen as suitable for women. This is particularly reflected in the finding that the higher the household income for married women in West Amman, the less likely they are to be employed, and the more likely they are to follow the male-breadwinner/female-carer model. This section deals with why and how women have different economic activities, and sheds light on how class and gender influence the type of economic activity women are involved in.

The status of economic activity emerged as an important theme when interviewees were talking about the economic activities they are engaged in or those they would engage in. There are certain economic activities that are seen as more prestigious and of a 'high status' than others. Whereas the concept of status is evident in both East and West Amman, prestige and family image seemed to influence the kind of economic activity some West Amman women interviewees engaged in. For example, Reema (28, married, no children, economically inactive, WA), Samar (25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA) and Alia (25, married, 1 child, economically inactive, WA) are housewives who mentioned that they would only work in their own business, and not as employees, because then they would be able to choose their working hours in order to balance between their household responsibilities and income generating activity. This also shows that they are accommodating themselves to the patriarchal structures that make women's household chores a priority in their lives. They added that owning their own business is an economic activity that is of 'high status', and respectable. They all mentioned that for them, because they do not have to work for the money, they would prefer to work in environments they choose, and in their own business where they can choose their employees. Because, as Reema put it,

'I would not have to work as a saleslady in a shop, because my family would never let me go through this. My brother would give me money instead, and my family would not want to put me in a bad position, where I would have to deal with people I don't want to deal with. They would not just let me work in something I do not like. This is also because of my family's name. As you probably know we are a well-known family in Jordan, and if people know that I am working in an unsuitable position, this would affect their image and prestige' (Reema, 28, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

This quote shows us that Reema and her family, as she explained, view working as a saleslady a 'low status' job, and that she wants to avoid working in a 'low status' job, in order to preserve her family image and prestige. As preservers of their family

honour, women also have to make sure that if they engage in economic activities the job is honourable and respectable. Reema is an example of women accommodating patriarchal structures, as she agrees with her family's views and follows them. This emphasises the idea that patriarchal structures influence the kind of economic activities women engage in. However, there are also forms of resistance as interviews showed. Women from both East and West Amman negotiated with, accommodated and resisted patriarchal structures, which influence the kind of economic activities women 'should' or 'should not' engage in. This bargaining with patriarchy differs according to material circumstances. For example, women from East Amman resisted patriarchal structures by engaging in 'low status' jobs, because of poverty. In West Amman some women bargained with those structures through negotiation with male family members or husbands.

Haya (26, single, social worker, full employment, WA), for example, who was working as a social worker at the time of the interview, faced a lot of opposition from her father when she decided to work as a saleslady during her studies. The reason behind her father's refusal was that being a saleslady is not prestigious and not of a 'high status', and that people would start talking about her occupation, particularly her extended family. Haya's father also told her that she did not need to work during her studies and that this sort of work would not be suitable for their family image. However, after many attempts, her father approved her working under the condition that she would have to balance her studies and her part-time job. After obtaining her degree Haya started working in the banking sector, as a loan officer, and she mentioned that her father was very satisfied with this, because he viewed the work as appropriate and of a sufficiently 'high status' for women. Examples from West Amman show that class and gender can influence the kinds of economic activities women engage in; however, there are also forms of resistance by women against what is seen as inappropriate and of 'low status'.

In East Amman, the status of the work also appeared as a theme; however, the degree of its application differed because of women's material circumstances, which push some of them to seek economic activities that they themselves see as 'low status' jobs. For example, Nadia (36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA) and Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA) work occasionally as cleaners in West Amman offices; they both started working due to financial need. Nadia mentioned that she was forced to work after her separation from her husband, because she became the sole provider for herself and children. Amani mentioned that working as a cleaner is the first income generating activity she had engaged in. But, she added that when she has cleaning assignments she does not tell anyone about them. She said,

'I clean offices in organisations and companies. I do not clean houses, because I do not like to. You never know what you might find in a house. It is not safe. For example, when someone important wants to visit an organisation, they would want it to be very clean and shiny... and the pay really depends on the manager's courtesy. Sometimes they give me five JOD and sometimes ten JOD... I try to hide my work as a cleaner... I do not want anyone to know about it... when I go to work I tell my children that I am going for a training workshop in an organisation. I do not want anyone to insult them or humiliate them because of my work' (Amani, 39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

Amani does not tell anyone about her work, because she believes that it is not honourable or respectable to be working as a cleaner. Although she sees her work of 'low status', she still goes to clean offices because of her financial need. However, by choosing to only clean offices and not houses she is still trying to preserve her family's honour, because she believes that cleaning houses might not be 'safe', unlike public places. Even for some East Amman women interviewees, there are certain jobs that are seen of 'low status'. For this reason Amani chose to conceal the fact that she works cleaning offices from her children, but at the same time, she has to do this work because of financial need, and due to the fact that her husband became

disabled and is no longer able to provide for their family. During her interview Nadia mentioned how people view her work, and how it is a source of humiliation for her and her children. She said,

'When one of my kids fights with other kids in the neighbourhood, they start teasing them. They start saying things like "go you losers, your mother is a servant, who cleans houses." It is very humiliating for them' (Nadia, 36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA) also views her work as a cleaner as humiliating, and she said that she would not want her daughters to become cleaners in the future. When she talked about the reasons behind her work, she explained how her husband stopped caring about her, saying,

'My husband is financially able to provide for the household, but he does not care anymore. I have to work as a cleaner, although it is humiliating. He does not care anymore, and he does not care for whatever I do. The financial burden was lifted off his shoulders' (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

Abeer, Nadia and Amani fight poverty by engaging in economic activities that they see as 'low status'; their engagement in those jobs was due either to the lack of a male provider, or due to the fact that the male provider is inadequately providing. However, all of them mentioned that they would prefer to work in 'better jobs' to earn more money, but the lack of qualifications has been an obstacle to finding formal 'high status' work with a good salary.

Therefore, education also plays a role in determining the kind of economic activities women engage in, and interviews show that there are different economic activities amongst women in East Amman as well. For example, women interviewees from East Amman with college diplomas and university degrees were more likely to find regular employment (for work history details see table 6.1). Dina (35, married, 5 children, secretary, ft employment, EA) and Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary,

ft employment EA) have college diplomas and are employed as secretaries. Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA), who has a university degree, works as a social worker in a humanitarian organisation, an occupation she shares with other West Amman women who have the same qualification. This shows that education can be a resource for women to use to find better employment opportunities and jobs with 'high status.' It is important to reiterate that women in West Amman are more likely to have university degrees, which can also explain why women from East Amman are more likely to be involved in informal economic activities, while West Amman women have more opportunities to find formal employment. Regardless of the status of the economic activity women are involved in, women's economic activities are important for their lives, and in many cases enable women to resist and negotiate with patriarchy, and to gain limited power.

6.2 Bargaining, Hopes and Dreams

This thesis, so far, has shown that there are substantial class differences between women in East and West Amman, and that those class differences influence women's economic activities differently. In spite of sharing the same patriarchal gender structures, patriarchy does not operate in the same way in women's lives. I also noticed throughout the interviews that women's dreams and hopes are shaped by gender and class differences. Part of this section is dedicated to giving women the chance to voice their dreams and hopes, and to showing how women from East and West Amman have different dreams and hopes; this is also a way of clarifying the differences between women's experiences. On the other hand, I have established so far the factors that influence women's economic activities, and also shown how women's economic activities are different depending on their class and gender. However, it must be said that although patriarchy influences women's work, patriarchal control is not only limited to restricting women's economic activities, but also extends to other aspects of their lives, such as their sexuality.

Patriarchal structures are not static, and can be bargained with by women through resistance, negotiation or accommodation by many means, such as economic activities and/or making a financial contribution towards their household. By becoming economically active, women, especially those who contribute financially to their households, challenge the male-breadwinner model. This gives them control over part of their household's financial resources, which in turn raises their status inside the household and gives them relative power. The limited power women gain through contributing to their households is in many cases used to respond to patriarchy. I have identified three strategies adopted by women in dealing with patriarchy: negotiation, accommodation and resistance in relation to economic activity. Moreover, economic activity appeared to empower women in their households, in terms of providing them with more control over their lives, and life choices. For example, by being in control of part of the household's financial

resources, some women gain the power to decide not to get married, or to buy what they want.

Additionally, economically active interviewees mentioned that their lives have improved since they became economically active. Some interviewees who work outside the household view their work as a way of escaping the reality and bad conditions they experience in their homes. For example, Nadira said,

'I cannot be myself at home. The minute I enter the house, my whole identity changes, I become a different person. I have two personalities, two contradictory personalities. When I come back home I go back to the same boredom. There is no life inside the household. I live two lives.... My work is my life. It's the second life that I love' (Nadira, 40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA).

Whereas the previous sections dealt with how patriarchy influences women's economic activities differently, the following section deals with the way in which women's economic activities challenge patriarchy and patriarchal control over women, enabling some of them to escape their realities, control their finances, and become more in control of their lives.

6.2.1 Women's Economic Activities: Bargain, 'Independence,' Escape

Economic activity gives women more space to bargain with patriarchy inside their homes, but only to a limited extent. Women's economic activities seemed to leave an impact on women's life experiences, particularly those who contributed to the household income. This bargain was considered by some women interviewees to be a means of gaining power. Although the term power is particularly problematic here due to the stringent patriarchal structures prevalent in Amman, both West and East, economic activity of some women created room for negotiations within patriarchal gender structures. It is very important to note that the power interviewees referred to was mostly related to them being able to control some aspects of their lives, such as being able to go out of their houses, and that economic activities for them provided an escape. Moreover, it also became apparent that economic activity itself starts to make a difference in some women's lives after they started contributing financially to their households.

Nadira (40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA), for example, is a divorced working woman from East Amman; she lives with her thirteen year old son, mother and divorced brother. Nadira believed that she gained power inside the household through her work and her financial contribution to the household. She added that her mother is conservative, saying that the level of her mother's interference makes her feel that she is 'not a free person, as if I am imprisoned'. Nadira exclaimed that although she is 43 years old, she does not feel that she can make decisions regarding her life as she wishes. She explained that she feels that she has two contradictory lives, inside her house and outside, and that she is not being herself and having to adapt to her family's wishes. In spite of the apparent lack of power Nadira is subjected to inside her household, her economic activity gave her limited space to negotiate her position at her house. Nadira emphasised that through her work she became financially independent, gained more power in the household, became stronger, and that her job is her escape from the house. She said,

'I want to add that I have noticed something, when I started working I did not help with the expenses but after I started making contributions in terms of the household expenses, her comments and objections on me going out lessened. So I have used contributing to the household as a way to make her feel embarrassed. I would never stop working, it's impossible' (Nadira, 40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA).

Although Nadira worked for a while before she started to contribute to the household expenses, her mother became less stringent after she started contributing. Nadira's mother reinforces patriarchal structures that limit women's freedom of movement; however, Nadira's resistance to her mother's control reflects a challenge to patriarchy. In Nadira's case it is apparent that her financial contribution to the household, rather than her work status, allowed her to negotiate the structures of patriarchy. For example, she mentioned that after starting to contribute she gained relative freedom of movement, and that it became easier for her to go out with her friends directly after work, whereas before she had to ask permission from her mother. However, even the power she gained through her financial contribution is still limited. She further explained that her work is her escape by saying,

'My work is my life; it's the second life that I love. So, if I quit my job, I will only have my life, at home, which I am trying to marginalise now. I live my life outside the house; my whole life is based outside the house' (Nadira, 40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA).

Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA), who lives with her parents and her younger brother, also gave an example of how her contribution to the household expenses gave her some sort of power in terms of having the ability to change her family members' behaviour, particularly her younger brother and mother. She said,

'Sometimes when I ask them for something and they do not listen to me, I start saying I pay for this house, what you think I am a bank owner. I say this to my younger brother, who also takes money from me. I can feel that my contribution gives me some sort of power. For example, my sisters were not treated the way I am being treated. They were not allowed to go out,

but now I can. This is all because of my contribution' (Rana, 23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA).

She also mentioned that her work provided her with freedom and some sort of 'financial independence' while she is still living in her parental house, in comparison to her married sisters when they were living with their parents. She added that sometimes she goes out while her married brothers are visiting, and when they ask her where she is going she answers, 'you do not have the right to interfere. You are not paying me a penny!'

Another aspect that Abeer (33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA) referred to in relation to her economic activity and household relations is 'financial independence' from her abusive husband. Abeer's sister pushed her to seek work outside the household in order to forget the pressure she feels at home, and 'instead of begging my husband for the pennies'. She added that she now pays for her children's expenses through her income generating activity, and that her husband still pays the rent but has otherwise stopped providing for the household. The fact that her husband still pays the rent shows that the 'financial independence' she was referring to is limited, as she still depends on him for this contribution. Abeer also explained how she views her work as an escape by saying,

'I am happy in my work, but my suffering starts in the house. At work, I forget a lot about my problems with my husband at home. It is at work, where I can breathe. Besides, my husband stopped caring... who would feed my children if I do not work? But my husband can prevent me from working again, when he wishes' (Abeer, 33, married, 6 children, cleaner, ft employment, EA).

The fact that Abeer's husband can prevent her from working when he wishes shows that the patriarchal symbolic structure of the man as the head of the household is very strong, and does not necessarily change with women's economic activities or contribution to their household. The strength of those symbolic structures provides men with more power and the ability to manipulate those structures when they

wish. Therefore, Abeer's work represented more of an escape from her financial and emotional suffering at home. She used her work to forget about the problems and issues she faces at home, and her economic activity is also necessary for the survival of her children, particularly since her husband refrained from fully providing for the household after starting an affair with another woman.

Amani (39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA), who sought work outside the household because of financial need, said that her mother and brothers, who do not live with her, do not approve of her work. Amani's economic activity is very important for her children and her husband's survival. For that reason, Amani had been able to tell her brothers and mother,

"You can see my situation, there is no one providing for the household and my husband is disabled. If you have the money to support me and my children I would stop working." But, they cannot! They cannot interfere in my life, I am financially independent, and I do not need them. Besides I am not doing anything shameful' (Amani, 39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

Moreover, Nadira, Amani, Rana and Abeer mentioned that their work made them aware of life and provided them with experiences and understanding of the world they could not have gained otherwise. For example, Nadira said,

'If I were not working I would not be like this. Even my ideas were been different. I have met many people and gained experiences. Met people from different places in Amman. I have met the educated, the eastern and the western. I have learnt a lot' (Nadira, 40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA).

Nadia, whose husband abandoned her, mentioned that through work she learnt a lot, and even learnt about her rights. She said,

'My husband used to beat me and my children, and I used to be scared. Through work, I learnt that I can call police if he does such a thing. I became financially independent, and I do not need him. I have become more aware, I have learnt a lot,

and now I know what to do if he ever dares to do it again'
(Nadia, 36, separated, 3 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

All of the interviewees mentioned above were from East Amman, and the impact their economic activities had on their lives related mainly to lessening the impact of patriarchal gender structures, giving them economic independence, and increasing their awareness and understanding of the world. Some considered it to be an escape from their unsatisfying lives at home, and also that it enabled them to resist, challenge and negotiate with patriarchy.

The experiences West Amman women interviewees referred to in terms of the influence economic activities had on their lives were different. Only one of them mentioned the term 'escape', but they all mentioned the 'financial independence' they gained from their economic activities. Dana (30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA) was the only West Amman working interviewee who mentioned power in relation to economic activity, mentioning that she gains this power through being 'financially independent.' She said that her father, as she put it, was 'open' because he lets his daughters go out and does not lock them in the home. However, he sometimes says that he does not like how frequently she goes out. She said,

'My father is open, he allows us to go out and so on, but there is a curfew. Sometimes it just depends on his mood. Sometimes, when I go out too often, he comments on it by saying: "you go out a lot, stay home. Be careful, you spend a lot of money," though he does not know where I go, or how much I spend in the first place. And, it is my money, I earn the money. So, he does not have the power to prevent me from spending, and he does not lock me up' (Dana, 30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA).

Dana's father expresses his dissatisfaction with her going out, however that does not stop her or prevent her from leaving the house, particularly since she herself pays for her leisure activities, although he is paying for the home. She said that if she had not been working, he would have been more controlling and he would have been in control of her leisure activities.

Rawan (22, single, student, pt employment in sales, WA), who is a single working student who lives with her parents, sister and two brothers and works as a saleslady, mentioned that she does not live in a stable home. She added that her parents fight regularly and that her father treats them badly and even beats them because, as she explained, 'he is simply mean'. Rawan explained that her work is an escape for her from her reality at home, but with no mention of power gained through work, because her mother follows her to work, 'to check on her', as she said. Rawan explained how her work is an escape for her by saying,

'I try to adapt to the situation at home... by avoiding being at home. For example, even when I do not have early working hours, I lie to them, and tell them that I have work. I come to the shop, where I work, and I stay there, I spend my time there, to avoid being at home' (Rawan, 22, single, student, pt employment in sales, WA).

Rawan also mentioned that she does not contribute to the household; however, she buys clothing and mobile phone credit for her siblings and sometimes brings food to the house, but without the knowledge of her father because he would not accept it. She also added that her grandfather is the second richest Christian in Amman, so they are not in need of her simple contributions. She said,

'My father would not accept the fact that his daughter is contributing to the household, even if not regularly. He sees it as insulting for him, as if he is 'the man' and not providing' (Rawan, 22, single, student, pt employment in sales, WA).

Rawan's quote shows that the symbolic meaning attached to masculinity and 'men' is very much linked to their ability to provide for their households adequately. Furthermore, it shows that patriarchal structures assign gender roles to men, and if they fail to fulfil these they become detached from their masculinity.

All East Amman working women contribute to their households, and this contribution makes a difference in terms of giving them limited space to negotiate with patriarchy. Although some women felt that their economic activities gave them

power, this power was limited because their families still interfered in their lives. This interference is due to patriarchal structures that give men and older women the right to prevent their wives, daughters and sisters from working or from having 'absolute' freedom of movement and making decisions about their lives. For some women interviewees economic activities provided an escape, and for others it provided 'financial independence'. There are great differences between East and West Amman women interviewees; whereas some East Amman working women interviewees mentioned that they gained more freedom through economic activities, some West Amman women mentioned that economic activities allowed them to be 'financially independent', and others mentioned confidence, experience and interpersonal skills. The 'financial independence' interviewees referred to was also limited - in other words, all interviewees who mentioned financial independence are to a certain extent still dependent on their fathers, husbands, and mothers to provide a roof for them. Although economic activities have an effect, albeit a limited one, on their ability to challenge patriarchy, women are also faced with patriarchal structures which reinforce control over women's sexuality, including control over women's movement and dress code. However, this challenge to patriarchy and the influence economic activities leave on women's lives differs according to class and the application of patriarchal gender structures. Gender and class also shape women's hopes and dreams, as women expressed different hopes and dreams for the future, and that difference was shaped by class differences.

6.2.2 Hopes and Dreams

This section aims to give to women interviewees a voice to express their dreams. These dreams, hopes and goals, are very important to our understanding of women's reality. For some of the interviewees, the dreams and hopes reflect an indirect expression of certain aspects of their lives that they are not satisfied with. For others, they reflect an image they have drawn for their future lives. Women's dreams also relate to the ways women deal with patriarchal structures, as some dreams reflect women's accommodation to patriarchy, and others reflect desires to resist and negotiate with patriarchal structures. There were differences in the hopes and dreams of East and West Amman interviewees because of class differences, and there were also similar themes amongst East and West women interviewees. Also, marital status can shape women's dreams differently. For that reason, I will present the hopes and dreams of a married, single and divorced woman from each side of the city.

In West Amman, most married women expressed their desire to be good mothers and wives and also said that they want to 'become someone in the society'. For example, Samar (25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA) is a married housewife, living with her husband and maid, who mentioned that she is very happy in her life with her husband and with no children. Samar also added that her current priority in life is to be a mother, and a good housewife. In an expression of her dreams, she said,

'I see myself a woman, with children, and I also want to become someone. I would love to become a well-known person. I would love to become someone who leaves an impact. I want to become well-known, I do not know how, maybe through establishing a business, and also I would like to have contacts, to be a prominent personality... you know something, because of my husband's work nature, and the fact that he knows a lot of people; this is possible. He has a lot of contacts, and knows a lot of people... and I can use this to become prominent, to have a business idea, like establishing a

restaurant, a hair salon... I want to be productive; I cannot imagine myself in twenty years sitting at home doing nothing. It is nice to have children, and raise them up in good healthy way, this is also production, but I would love to have my life as well... I would sacrifice myself for my children's well-being in the future, but I also want to leave an impact personally, through something I do' (Samar, 25, married, no children, economically inactive, WA).

Moreover, all of West Amman married interviewees also expressed that by being good mothers and housewives they will be sacrificing their lives for their husbands and children. Although in large parts their dreams reflect accommodation to patriarchy, they also reflect their desire to resist it. For example, Samar emphasised that she does not see herself spending her life as a mother, and she would love to establish a life of her own. The dreams of single West Amman women interviewees were slightly different because of their marital status. Diala (28, single, student, economically inactive, WA), for example, is a single young woman living in her parents' house and undertaking a master's degree in literature. Diala said that in ten years time,

'I would love to see myself, hopefully, with a fulfilling job, married, and with at least one or two kids. I'd like to be settled. I don't see why not... I'm the type of person who needs to be active and productive... I wouldn't want to sit around all day doing nothing... I'd like to apply myself in a certain field to help others as well as learn for myself. Life is about experiences, I suppose...so you need to get out there and test those waters' (Diala, 28, single, student, economically inactive, WA).

Diala sees herself working and a mother at the same time. Dana, (30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA) a divorced working mother living with her son and parents in her parents' house, had a slightly different dream compared to married and single West Amman interviewees. Dana's dream, as a divorced woman, seemed different to the dreams of married and single women. Her dream had been either living on her own, or getting married again to a good man. She said,

'I just wish I COULD live on my own, but it is hard... I cannot afford it, and I do not have a place to leave my son when I go to work. I wish I had my privacy, and my own house. In ten years time, I imagine that my business will be more successful, and I will earn more money. I see myself married to a nice guy... he has to be a very nice guy. I have an image of my future life. I imagine that I will be married to a nice and supportive man. I have learnt this from previous experiences. If I want to relive the marriage experience, I will have to be very picky and careful' (Dana, 30, divorced, 1 child, nutritionist, business owner, WA).

Dana also added that she feels like a guest in her parents' house because she does not have privacy. Nadira, a divorced woman living with her mother, brother and son, also mentioned that she would love to live in her own house. She said,

'My dream is to live on my own, in my own house located wherever I want. To be able to live my life my way, to go out whenever I want, to be able to choose the guests I wish to receive in my house the way I want it. I want to raise my child the way I want; I want mine and my son's independence... I don't have any kind of privacy. I do not feel that this is my house. I feel like a guest here. I sometimes think that I want to re-live the experience of marriage to be able to get out of the prison I am in, and to have my own life and my independence. But what keeps me from doing this is my son, but at the same time I am afraid that this will be moving from one prison to another' (Nadira, 40, divorced, 1 child, secretary, ft employment EA).

Although Dana is from West Amman and Nadira is from East Amman they both shared the same dreams because of the pressure they face in their families' homes as a result of their divorces. They both added that they would consider remarrying; however, they are both concerned because they have sons, in other words, any potential husband must accept their sons.

Rana (23, single, social worker, ft employment, EA), a working single young woman living with her family, mentioned that she sees herself married and working. She said,

'I see myself in my house, married, with my own car. I want to have two children, but I do not want girls, I just want sons. I want to be successful in my work, and in control of my life and of the life of others, through my money. I prefer to live outside Jordan. I want to be one of those who come to Jordan in the summer holidays, and go back to their countries of residence' (Rana, 23, single, social worker, full employment, EA).

Rana expressed that she prefers to have sons and not daughters because she believes that women face more social pressure than men. Rana's hopes reflect her desire to resist patriarchal structures, by hoping to be able to control her life. All East Amman married interviewees mentioned that their dream is to have their own houses, and financial stability for them and for their children. This is because, for them, this is what is missing from their lives. For example, Amani, living with her husband and children, said,

'I wish I could have a proper house, a healthy house, far from where we live now. I wish, I just wish. It is my hope to see my children living in financial security. I would love to feel that I have secured my children, so that they do not need anyone' (Amani, 39, married, 8 children, irregular economic activity, EA).

The hopes and dreams of women showed that there are similarities between women, depending on marital status, and financial situation. West Amman married women based their hopes and dreams on being good mothers and housewives, and some expressed their desires to establish their own businesses. Single West Amman women talked about their future careers, and expressed their desire to have children in the future. Because they are not married they did not build their dreams on becoming good mothers, but their dreams were partly based on having children. East Amman women based their hopes on being able to live comfortably, by being able to afford proper housing and stability. They seemed to lack the material aspects of life; most of them spoke about the bad conditions of their housing, and low income. It also became clear that divorced women from both East and West Amman

who were living with their parents desired to live independently, and away from their parental homes. This shows that there are many factors that shape the hopes and dreams of women interviewees, which include material circumstances and marital status.

Conclusion

Class and gender intersect to lead women to engage in different types of economic activities, and to create different reasons behind economic activity and/or inactivity. Moreover, the different hopes and dreams women have are indicators of the intersection of class and gender. Some of the hopes and dreams reflect women's desire to change their living conditions and resist patriarchal structures, while others show women's accommodation to patriarchal structures. The exploration of dreams and hopes also showed that women's agency differs in relation to women's desire to resist, to accommodate themselves to, or negotiate with patriarchy depending on class. In other words, the dreams of some women revolved around becoming good mother and wives, which shows that they want to fulfil their assigned gender roles. The dreams of some others revolved around securing better living conditions, while others hoped to establish careers and their own business, which reflects class differences between women. Class differences between women are also reflected in the reasons for women's economic activity and inactivity. Women had different reasons behind their activity and/or inactivity and this difference is caused by the different forms taken by patriarchy, which in turn influences women's economic activity differently depending on their marital status and/or household income.

Whereas the symbolic patriarchal structure of the male-breadwinner/female-carer model is prevalent in East and West Amman, its application can sometimes be challenged depending on financial need and on whether or not the male provider is adequately providing for his household. On the other hand, the reasons behind women's economic activity and/or inactivity were influenced to a great extent by marital status. In other words, married women are expected to fulfil their assigned domestic role; therefore, the priority of married women's lives becomes their household. This leads many married women, especially those who are well-off, to become economically inactive. In households where poverty and financial need exist women are more likely to engage in economic activity. Therefore, their assigned

gender role is challenged due to poverty. Furthermore,, because many households depend on women's economic activity for survival it becomes necessary and important.

Women's economic activity is not only important to fight poverty, but also important in women's lives because it provides them with more space to negotiate patriarchy and patriarchal control over their lives. Although this space for negotiation is limited, women believe that their contribution towards their households through economic activities gives them power and enhances their status in the household. Others believe that their economic activities give them the chance to escape their suffering at home, which also demonstrates that the power women gain is also linked to their ability to move beyond the walls of their homes. Also, some women used the term 'economic independence' as a benefit of their economic activities; although this 'independence' was relative and very limited, it gave them space to be in control of some resources. Although 'economic independence' was mentioned, the use of the term differed according to class and financial situation. Whereas some women used their income for leisure activities, others used their income to provide for their households. This shows class differences between women, and that class also influences the kinds of economic activities women engage in. Moreover, class can influence women's ability to bargain with patriarchy.

Women engage in different economic activities, and the kind of economic activities are influenced by gender and class as there are 'suitable' economic activities for women. Education as an aspect of class also influences the kinds of economic activities available to women. Education, as previously mentioned, is a resource that increases employment opportunities; however, women's access to education differs according to their class, and this makes the economic activities available to women different. In other words, women with lower educational levels have limited access to employment and are more likely to be in what are viewed as 'low status' informal jobs. However, class was not the only determinant of women's

economic activities, as there are also patriarchal ideologies that work to control women's sexuality and that portray certain jobs as lowly and unsuitable for the family's image.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions

This research is based on a comparative study of the economic activities of women living in East and West Amman. It addresses the different experiences of women and how those experiences influence women's engagement or disengagement in income generating activities. It also explores the different economic activities women are involved in, and discusses why women's economic activities are different. The research adopts an intersectional approach to understanding women's different experiences in relation to economic activities, and provides a broad understanding of how different social categories such as class, gender, age, marital status, place of residence and refugee status intersect with each other to shape women's experiences. It demonstrates that there are patriarchal structures that define gender roles for men and women, making women's experiences different from men's. Although patriarchal structures are evident in East and West Amman, they operate differently because of the class differences between East and West. This research has also investigated how women's agency and their resistance to patriarchal structures are affected by class. This research has identified three strategies women adopt in dealing with patriarchy - resistance, accommodation and negotiation - and determined that the way those strategies are used is influenced by class, economic activity, marital status and education.

The overall aim of this research has been to provide an understanding of how gender and class intersect and how this intersection influences women's economic activities and life experiences. To achieve this aim, I have explored women's and men's views and attitudes towards women's economic activities, the factors that affect women's involvement in economic activities, and the different economic activities women engage in. These themes have been explored through a comparison of the experiences of women from East and West Amman, which has provided an in-depth picture of the mechanisms through which class and gender intersect. My findings shed light on the importance of understanding the intersectionality of class

and gender, as through understanding the intersections one acknowledges women's different experiences, and we avoid treating women as a homogenous group. As chapter two shows, a large part of the literature on women and work in the Middle East assumes that women face the same patriarchal structures which are imposed by the state or in the family; however, they do not investigate the different operations of patriarchal structures according to women's class. Moreover, studies of women in the Middle East either restrict women's agency to middle-class women (Droeber, 2003; Moghadam, 2003), or to working-class women (MacLeod, 1992). The data and the findings of my study, however, show that women's agency is not confined to one class. In other words, it acknowledges that women's agency is existent in all classes, although it takes different forms.

In my research I have attempted to address some of the gaps in our understanding of women's experiences in relation to economic activities, and in relation to the differences between women themselves. This concluding chapter discusses the empirical and theoretical contributions of my research, showing how the research questions have been addressed and describing the main findings. It also discusses the limitations of the study and suggests future avenues for research on women and work in the Middle East.

Patriarchal Views and Attitudes towards Women's Economic Activities

This thesis has been designed to answer the following research questions,

- How do class and gender intersect to influence women's economic activities and life experiences?
- What are men's and women's views of women's economic activity? What factors influence these views?
- What factors affect women's economic activity and are these different for women in East and West Amman?
- What economic activities are women in East and West Amman involved in? How do these differ?

To answer the research questions I combined qualitative and quantitative research methods. One of the research questions addresses men's and women's views of women's economic activities. To answer this question I used self-completion questionnaires with men and women, and qualitative data gathered through interviews with women from East and West Amman. Jordan is a patriarchal society, and the responses reflect patriarchal cultural values with regard to women's economic activities, and in how women's economic activity is viewed and valued within Jordan. This research shows that there are differences in the attitudes displayed by men and women, and between people from different classes. Women were more likely to believe that women's work is important, and men from West Amman seemed more likely to believe that women's work is important compared to men in East Amman. However, there was a consensus on the importance of men's economic activities and this can be linked to the prevalence of patriarchal structures. The patriarchal structures that shape those attitudes were identified in chapter four and are social constructs that carry with them symbolic meanings of gender which affect both men and women. People viewed men's income generating activities as more important than women's because of patriarchal symbolic structures which

assign roles to both genders. For example, patriarchal structures attach to men the role of breadwinner and to women the role of carer; this, in turn, influences and shapes attitudes towards women's income generating activities. These patriarchal symbolic structures are related to the societal view of what it means to be a 'man' and what it means to be a 'woman.' Men are expected to fulfil their assigned gender role as breadwinners, and women are expected to fulfil their assigned gender roles by being carers, bringing up children and being responsible for household chores.

Patriarchal views, which are based on the male-breadwinner/female-carer model, also enforce an image for men which can be undermined in case of their inability to fulfil their roles. In other words, men who do not, or cannot, provide for their households are seen as 'weak', and this view of men undermines their masculinity. This model also influences what is expected from women, because even when engaged in income generating activities women are expected to prioritise their assigned domestic roles over their economic activities. Further, the male-breadwinner/female-carer model can also provide men with power in the household, as it gives them control over the household's financial resources, and they consequently gain control over the other members of the household.

In chapter four, I also identified other patriarchal structures that affect views of women's sexuality and how it relates to family honour. Families' honour is linked to women's honour, which should be preserved and protected. 'Protecting' women and ensuring their 'safety' are also linked to the societal view of women as 'weak', unable to protect themselves from physical dangers and unable to preserve their honour. Therefore, the protection of women is seen as men's responsibility, and this in turn legitimises men's control over women's sexuality and freedom of movement, which influences women's access to economic activities.

Place of residence also determines what is meant by women's 'safety,' as research findings show that women interviewees in refugee camps referred to real

physical danger, in addition to the concept of honour. Poverty is prevalent in refugee camps in Jordan and this makes the situation of refugee camps different from the situation outside the camps in East and West Amman. In other words, whereas the concept of women's 'safety' is prevalent in both, East and West Amman, most West Amman women did not have problems in relation to accessing education because universities are located nearby in West Amman. In East Amman, on the other hand, women were more likely to face problems in relation to accessing education and freedom of movement because of the distance of the educational institutions and the lack of transportation. In refugee camps in East Amman material circumstances, including income and unsafe camp situation, make it even harder for women camp refugees to access education and/or move freely.

Patriarchal structures also influence which economic activities are considered to be suitable for women and which are not, making women's involvement in income generating activities conditioned and limited as a result of their gender. For instance, balancing household work and income generating activities is expected from women in East and West Amman; all women are expected to achieve this balance. However, some women are pushed to seek income generating activities due to poverty, while others do not have to engage in income generating activities and are expected to focus on their assigned gender roles only, because their household income is high. Views towards the suitability of women's work are influenced by patriarchal and class structures and this shows the intersectionality of class and gender. In other words, the suitability of economic activity for women in West Amman entails avoiding mingling with people from different backgrounds, while this has not been an issue for East Amman women. However, job suitability for women from both sides is influenced by their gender, and some are not seen as 'suitable' for women. This means that gender and class influence West Amman women in terms of determining the 'suitability' of potential jobs, while in East Amman gender seemed to override class in this situation. Nonetheless, findings also

show that some women from both sides of the city resist, accommodate and negotiate those conditions on their economic activities, which highlights the role of women's agency in shaping their experiences. For example, some women accommodate these patriarchal structures and reinforce them. One of the main findings of this research is that married women with higher household incomes were more likely to accommodate the male-breadwinner/female-carer model. Others with lower household incomes were more likely to resist or negotiate this patriarchal structure due to financial need. Some women resist and negotiate with patriarchal structures, and other women accommodate themselves to patriarchy for different reasons. This shows that patriarchal structures are not static and can be changed and challenged depending on several factors such as material circumstances and education.

Although widespread views towards women's economic activities show they are seen as less important than men's economic activities, the findings of this research show that interviewees viewed women's economic activities as important, although not as important as those of men, and the reasons behind the importance given to women's work differ according to class. In the questionnaire and the interview data women's views seemed less traditional than those of men, and West Amman women's views were also less traditional than East Amman women's. This sheds light on the fact that views and attitudes towards women's economic activities are classed, and that there are class differences amongst women's and men's attitudes towards women's work. The importance of women's economic activity is determined according to the circumstances and women's socioeconomic backgrounds. For example, the economic activities of women from the East side of Amman were considered to be very important and even crucial when there is no male provider for the household, or the male provider of the household either fails to provide or inadequately provides for his household. East Amman economically active women mentioned that their income generating activities are very important

for the survival of their families. This view of women's work as important for the survival of their families challenges the male-breadwinner/female-carer model, as poverty pushes many women to seek work. This challenge to the male-breadwinner/female-carer model has been viewed as one of the effects of globalisation, which undermines patriarchy by increasing poverty and income disparity pushing women to seek income (Cagatay and Erturk, 2004, Moghadam, 1999, Abdella Doumato and Posusney, 2003, Mukherjee, 2004, Pilger, 2002, Carr and Chen, 2004). On the other hand, the views of West Amman women seemed to be influenced by their class, and/or material circumstances. Although East and West Amman women share the same patriarchal structures, material circumstances between both sides are different which leads to their views being different. This shows the importance of material circumstances in affecting views and practices. Those differences provide more evidence to critique the arguments that all women have the same experience and/or attitudes because of patriarchy or Islam.

The research findings related to the attitudes and views towards women's economic activities allowed me to identify the patriarchal and class structures on which those attitudes are based. This provided rich data on how the intersection of class and gender can influence views and attitudes of men and women towards women's economic activities, and how women in some cases challenge societal expectations and patriarchal structures. This means that views towards women's economic activities are not necessarily reflected in practice as some women challenge patriarchy and women from different backgrounds can resist patriarchy, although in different ways. While attitudes towards women's economic activities have been explored in the thesis, the thesis also looks at the factors that encourage and/or discourage women's economic activities, how those factors are influenced by class and gender and how they involve different responses to patriarchy.

Factors Influencing Women's Economic Activities

Through using the intersectional approach, and by identifying structures of patriarchy such as the male-breadwinner/female-carer model and the control of women's sexuality and 'safety', I have been able to identify factors that influence women's economic activities as well as the way in which social control influences women's economic activities. Education and marriage were the main demographic factors influencing women's experiences in relation to economic activity, and the social control of women has also been identified as a concept influencing women's experiences. Those factors have been previously identified in literature on women and work. This research looks at how class creates different experiences for women in relation to education, marriage and the social control placed specifically on women due to their gender. It clearly identifies the factors that influence women's economic activities, and shows that those factors are influenced by patriarchy and material circumstances. In other words, women's marriage and education experiences are influenced by structures of patriarchy and class. It also shows how social control exercised by men over women is shaped by class.

For example, education generally increases women's employment opportunities; chapter five explores how women's access to education differs depending on material circumstances and structures of patriarchy. Therefore, women with lower educational qualifications are more likely to be either working informally and/or be economically inactive; however, poverty pushes women to seek work. Research findings show that women in West Amman were more likely to have university degrees than women in East Amman, which shows class differences between women. Also, many women from poor backgrounds were forced to drop out of school and get married at an early age, while in some families marriage was not allowed until a woman has obtained a university degree. In both cases, however, patriarchal structures are reinforced in different ways. For instance, in cases of poverty some women are pushed to get married as the new husband would become

financially responsible for her and provide her with security. In other cases, where women are pushed to pursue higher education, it also relates to increasing 'marriageability' and to increase the chances of them finding 'better' husbands. This reflects a reproduction of patriarchal structures across all classes; however, they operate differently due to material circumstances. Women also deal with patriarchy differently depending on their education. In other words, women with higher education were more likely to resist patriarchy than women with lower educational attainment. For example, women with university degrees from both sides resisted arranged marriages.

Access to education, for some women, has also been determined by patriarchal practices that relate to the control of women's sexuality and freedom of movement, especially in East Amman. For example, distance recurred as a theme, which explained why women from East Amman have less access to education, particularly women from Palestinian refugee camps. Women from refugee camps and the areas around them had to leave school at an early age because of the lack of secondary schools in the areas where they live. It has been clarified that distance for their families was related to the issue of women's 'safety,' and because secondary schools are far from where they live they were not allowed to carry on with their education. This shows that access to education is limited by social control over women exercised by their male household heads and sometimes mothers. This social control was experienced in other ways by women in East and West Amman. For example, women were more likely to wear the headscarf in East Amman than in West Amman, and women in West Amman had more freedom of movement as they owned cars.

All women in Amman are expected to get married; however, the marriage experience differs according to aspects of class, including education. Marriage is a very important determinant of women's economic activities, as is the marriage experience itself, in terms of the changes in responsibilities women go through after

marriage. Many women quit their full-time employment after getting married because they are expected to become responsible for their homes and fulfil their assigned gender roles, which are based on the male-breadwinner/female-carer model. However, financial circumstances influence women's engagement in income generating activities, even after marriage. For example, when the male provider does not adequately provide for the household, women's economic activity becomes inevitable for survival. This can be seen as the undermining of patriarchy, as the man is expected to be responsible financially for the household. Therefore, women's seeking work undermines this 'male breadwinner' patriarchal structure. This example also highlights women's agency in resisting or negotiating with patriarchy. However, one must acknowledge that in spite of the patriarchal structures that limit and determine women's economic activities, women play a major role in challenging those structures and challenging the social control over their lives.

Social control, based on patriarchal cultural values and tradition, not only influences women's economic activities but also their life experiences, including marriage and education. The factors that influence women's economic activities are interlinked and interrelated - in other words, the marriage experience is influenced by education and education and marriage can be influenced by social control. Social control includes the control of women's movement, dress code, and sexuality. This control can be practised by either male guardians or older women in the family, including mothers. This shows that patriarchal practices and patriarchal structures can be reproduced by women. However, women show different forms of resistance to this control, and the nature of this resistance differs between women. For instance, women in paid employment and/or who contribute financially to their households are able to resist social control as a result of having an increased level of power over financial resources. However, class plays a major role in influencing women's agency. For example, women in East Amman face different forms of social control than women in West Amman as East Amman is more traditional than West Amman,

and at the same time all East Amman working women interviewees contributed financially to their household. Their contribution allowed them more space to resist and/or negotiate the patriarchal social control placed on them. There are also other examples of women's resistance to patriarchy in West Amman, as some women challenged their fathers by working in jobs which are viewed as 'unsuitable' for women. Others from both sides chose to accept this control and accommodate patriarchy. Also, as women have different experiences in relation to the factors that influence their economic activities, such as their financial circumstances and education, they also engage in different types of economic activities.

The research question relating to the factors that influence women's economic activities has been answered through an in-depth exploration of women's experiences in relation to paid and unpaid work. This has been done through using the intersectional approach to understand the different operations of patriarchy and women's agency. This represents a contribution to the literature, as through this approach I have been able to identify in detail women's differential experiences that influence their economic activities, how women bargain differently with patriarchy and how their economic activities help them in this bargain.

Different Activities, Differential Work 'Status'

This thesis answers the research questions relating to women's different economic activities - What economic activities are women in East and West Amman involved in? How do these differ? - through providing a comparison between East and West Amman. It also explores the factors that lead to women engaging in different economic activities. Chapter six explores why and how some women are economically active while others are not, and presents the different economic activities women engage in. Women engage in economic activities for different reasons; however, there are variables that influence the reasons behind economic (in)activity. Those variables include material circumstances and marital status. Research findings show that there are class differences – material circumstances - between women, and those differences can influence the reasons behind women's engagement/disengagement in income generating activities. This also supports the idea that women's economic activities can be explained through understanding how class and gender intersect to affect women's experiences.

Income and material circumstances, class, are major determinants of women's economic activity/inactivity. In other words, many women engage in income generating activities due to financial need and this is particularly prevalent amongst East Amman women interviewees, who due to poverty needed to work. Moreover, as a way to resist poverty many East Amman women interviewees engaged in income generating activities that are irregular and are considered of 'low status', such as cleaning, because they did not have a high level of education. For these women material circumstances undermined patriarchal structures, which portray women's work as not important, as they have to seek work for their own and their families' survival. As a result, their agency mediated their resistance to patriarchy. At the same time, their bad material circumstances and/or the patriarchal structures they experienced earlier in their lives resulted in low educational attainment, which in turn prevented them from pursuing 'high status' regular jobs. On the other hand,

when income is high and the male provider is adequately providing for the household resistance to patriarchy can be harder, especially for married women. This is because they are expected to fulfil their domestic roles, which is the case of most married women in West Amman, who were more likely to accommodate patriarchy because the household's income is high and the man is responsible for the household financial resources. Therefore, marriage and high income curtails opportunities for women to resist patriarchy.

Education served as a resource for women as it provided them with better work opportunities and access to full-time employment. However, women are expected to be in 'high status' and 'prestigious' jobs, in order to preserve the image and the honour of their families. Some women, nonetheless, resist and break those limitations and conditions on what is seen as 'suitable' work for women. For instance, it became clear from the data that single women with high household incomes are allowed and encouraged by their families to seek employment that is deemed of a 'high status'. However, not all women from high income households abide by the rules. This, further, shows that women's agency is existent amongst women from all class backgrounds, and is not limited to 'working class' or 'middle class' women.

Moreover, engagement in economic activities grants women relative power and more space to negotiate patriarchy. Also, women's financial contribution to their household gives them higher status in their households, as they become in control of at least part of the household's financial resources. This raise in women's status in the household makes a difference in their lives, and this difference provides them with more freedom of movement and more control over their lives, as well as enabling them to negotiate patriarchy more successfully. Nonetheless, the raise in status in relation to economic activities also depends on class. In other words, as women with low household incomes contribute financially to their households they gain relative power, such as the case of East Amman interviewees. On the other

hand, women who do not contribute financially to their household explained that economic activities are important for self-development and for what they termed as 'financial independence'. Therefore, economic activities change the operation and the control of patriarchy in women's lives; this change does not mean that economic activities end patriarchal control over women, but that patriarchy is being resisted by women through their economic activities and contribution to their households.

The comparison between East and West Amman provided a clear picture of class differences between women, as class divisions are very clear between both sides of the city, and are even visually noticeable. Class, on its own, does not explain women's different experiences as women also face patriarchal control because of their gender. In this case, looking at both class and gender as social categories to which women belong to, and which influence women's economic activities and life courses, is a more comprehensive approach that helps in understanding women's different experiences and avoiding generalisation. This is the merit of the use of the intersectional approach in this research, as it has facilitated an in-depth and detailed understanding of women's economic activities, the factors that influence women's economic activities, women's agency, patriarchal structures influencing women's lives, the different attitudes and views towards women's economic activities and the different ways women resist patriarchy. However, it is important to look at further areas of study that can emerge from the findings of this research.

Bargaining with Patriarchy: Resistance, Negotiation and/or Accommodation

In this thesis, I have identified patriarchal structures that ascribe gender roles to both men and women: the male breadwinner/female carer model and structures that entail controlling women's sexuality because women's honour reflects families' reputation and status. However, I have also identified a typology of how women adopt certain strategies to bargain with these patriarchal structures depending on their economic and social class. Class influences women's experiences and the way women deal with patriarchal structures. Moreover, women's different ways of bargaining result in patriarchy operating differently across classes. Data show that women in West Amman have more educational attainments than women on the East side and consequently they have better employment opportunities. In certain cases, women's education is a tool that helps women in bargaining with patriarchal structures, as it provides them with the opportunity to become employed especially for single women. Moreover, the extent to which women can bargain with patriarchal power depends largely on whether men are able to adequately provide for the household or not. For example, data show that in households where the male breadwinner is able to adequately provide financially, women were more likely to accommodate themselves to patriarchal structures or their resistance to patriarchy was limited. Whereas when the man cannot provide adequately to the household, women's bargaining with patriarchy takes a different form. For example, women have to seek employment to help their families survive. In some cases, women's economic activities were necessary to fight poverty. It is also worth mentioning that there are differences between married and single women's experiences and also those experiences are different depending on women's class.

As for married West Amman women, they all expressed the encouragement by their families to get education for marriageability reasons or to find 'better' husbands. This reinforces patriarchal gender structures that ascribe specific gender roles for men and women– the male breadwinner/female carer model. Moreover,

some West Amman women engaged in economic activities, which were viewed by their families as 'unsuitable', as they belonged to certain social status, thus engaging in such 'lowly' economic activities jeopardises their reputation and their families'. Yet their education assisted them in resisting the patriarchal structures that encourage and/or discourage women from doing certain jobs because of their social status.

Moreover, West Amman women were more likely to resist arranged marriages than East Women, because firstly they had the chance that to go to universities and most of them met their partners during university years. Secondly, their living conditions are better than East Amman women, therefore they would not seek marriage for financial security. West Amman women's negotiation with patriarchy differs according to their marital status. For example, most married West Amman women, who were working before marriage, left their jobs because there is no financial need and their husbands can adequately provide for them. The example of West Amman married women shows accommodation to patriarchal structures. Data also show that West Amman married women who are engaged in economic activities come from households with the lowest income amongst other West Amman households. This is because they feel that they 'need' to work to help their husbands. Nonetheless, their economic activities are conditioned, as they have to be 'suitable' and of 'high status'.

It is also worth mentioning that single working West Amman women expressed that their economic activities helped them in achieving 'economic independence'. They explained that their economic activity enabled them to afford buying their own stuff and to stop asking for allowance from their parents. However, the 'economic independence' they mentioned was limited, because they still lived in their parental houses and they did not lead independent lives, as they are not obliged to contribute financially towards the household.

As for East Amman women, their experiences were different because of their class. East Amman women's negotiation with patriarchy was dependent on their educational attainment, economic activities and also their financial contribution towards their household. Living conditions in East Amman were much worse than in West Amman; therefore, women had to become economically active for the survival of the household. In these cases, poverty challenged patriarchal structures, because women had to work for financial reasons. Moreover, as mentioned throughout the thesis, the patriarchal structure of the male breadwinner/female carer, which entails that men should be the sole financial providers for households, is undermined when men cannot adequately provide making women's work necessary.

Data show that financial need and poverty pushed East Amman women to resist patriarchal structures. Data show that higher education also helped women in negotiating with patriarchy. For example, women in East Amman with higher education had more employment opportunities in 'suitable job', and could resist forced marriages, as their education and employment status gave them some sort of power to resist patriarchal power. Interestingly, women with less education were more likely to be forced into marriage, especially if their financial conditions were bad. In this case, getting married provided them with security, as their husbands, rather than their parents, become financially responsible for them. This shows us that class leads women living in poverty to accommodate themselves to and reinforce patriarchal structures.

East Amman women also expressed that in the absence of a male provider or when the male provider cannot adequately provide, they had to seek 'low status' irregular economic activities, such as cleaners, to provide financially for their families. They had to seek these kinds of jobs because they do not have educational attainments, which could help them find regular employment with good income. Contributing financially towards the household was a factor that helped women in

resisting patriarchy, particularly since their contribution was of high importance to the well being of the household. For example, women expressed that their financial contribution helped in achieving some sort of freedom, although limited, because they still had to abide by the social practices imposed on them because of their gender.

Palestinian camp refugees living situation is the worst amongst all research participants. Women said that the camps are dangerous areas and poverty levels are extremely high compared to other areas and East Amman. It became apparent that camp refugees have a different socioeconomic status as opposed to other areas in East and West Amman. Strategies adopted by refugee women reflect those situations. For example, women were not encouraged to seek education because most secondary schools are located outside the camps, which meant that they would have had to use public transportation. Women expressed that their families in some cases forced them into marriage and in other cases arranged for them to be married because they could not afford sending them to schools. Those women had to stop their education, either because of poverty or because their families did not want to send them to distant schools. Data showed that poverty and camp situations reinforced patriarchal structures, as women got married at early ages. However, in other cases women living in camps expressed that poverty pushed them to seek economic activities for their families' survival, thus making them challenge patriarchal structures.

Preserving women's honour, in addition to camp locations and situations, left women with little opportunities and influenced their experiences differently as women expressed that they were often prevented from seeking education and/or economic activities and they were encouraged to get married. On the other hand, extreme poverty situations in Palestinian camp refugees pushed women to seek work however, they would work in 'low status' jobs because they do not have enough education to secure them regular jobs.

This research shows that patriarchal structures and patriarchal cultural values prevail in East and West Amman; however these values do not necessarily totally determine practices and do not operate in the same way across classes because women negotiate with those patriarchal structures differently, depending on their class- their place of residence, education, economic status and whether or not they contribute financially towards their households. Those different strategies -- resisting, negotiating and/or accommodating -- adopted by women reflect women's different experiences, in general, and with regard to their economic activities specifically.

Potential Research and Research Limitations

The main limitation of this research relates to the interview sample, as there were age differences between women from East and West Amman, and married women from East Amman had more children, meaning that they had different responsibilities. Moreover, the varied nature of the sample limited the ability to compare women in similar circumstances. This research could have made use of interviews with women with a similar number of children and from similar age groups, as this can provide us with data about the different experiences of women from different class backgrounds. Although ethnicity is also a basis of inequality that could be taken into account in a study of women's experiences, I have not included it in this thesis because I have chosen women from the same ethnic group in order to explore the effects of class on women's economic activity thoroughly.

This research explores women's different experiences in relation to economic activities. To understand women's experiences I chose to interview women, and I chose to distribute questionnaires to both men and women to understand their views towards women's economic activities. Further research on women and work in the Middle East could make use of interviewing men in order to understand their views and attitudes towards women's economic activities thoroughly and qualitatively, bearing in mind class differences between men. Since the attitudes and views towards women's economic activities identified in this research were gendered and classed there are evidently differences in the views held by both men and women, and between men of different classes. The views identified in the questionnaires were further investigated and elaborated during interviews with women, and through the interviews I reached an understanding of the patriarchal structures prevalent in East and West Amman that influence those views. The patriarchal structures presented in this research were identified through women's experiences, thus an investigation of the views and attitudes of men might show a different face of the same coin and reveal whether or not men have patriarchal

consciousness. The importance of exploring men's patriarchal consciousness can help us to understand men's role in the reproduction of patriarchy, which will further help in reducing women's oppression.

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Appendix A: Interview Consent Paper

Interview Consent Paper

Name:

Telephone Number:

I, the signed herein below, agree on participating in this interview, which aims to collect information about women's economic activity in Amman, the capital of Jordan. This study is based on a comparison between East and West Amman in relation to women's economic activities. Moreover, this research aims to look at the views and attitudes of men and women in regard to women's economic activity. I declare that I was not forced to participate in this research, and that I will voluntarily take part in this interview, under the condition of concealing my identity and preserving the confidentiality of the information I will provide.

Signature:

Date:

Appendix B: Questionnaire Consent Paper

Questionnaire Consent Paper

Name:

Telephone Number:

I, the signed herein below, agree on participating in this questionnaire, which aims to collect information about women's economic activity in Amman, the capital of Jordan. This study is based on a comparison between East and West Amman in relation to women's economic activities. Moreover, this research aims to look at the views and attitudes of men and women in regard to women's economic activity. I declare that I was not forced to participate in this research, and that I will voluntarily complete this questionnaire, under the condition of concealing my identity and preserving the confidentiality of the information I will provide.

Signature:

Date:

Appendix C: Interview Schedule

Interview Questions

- Age,
- Marital Status,
- Child number what in the family,
- Income generating activities/ why engaged, or why disengaged?
- District; East or West Amman,
- Number of family members, and position of the interviewee in the family,
- Number of rooms in the household,
- Household income and individual income if available,
- Household/ rented or owned,
- Qualifications—age left full-time education,
- Household composition-- who lives in the household with you? How are they related to you? What do they do? What do you do?
- Are you engaged in income generating activities? Why/why not?
- How important is economic activity for women, in your opinion? Do you believe that it really makes a difference for her? Do you believe that it makes a difference for her family?
- To what extent does your family influence your decision regarding seeking a job outside the household?
- To what extent to you consider yourself mobile, explain why?
- If you receive a job offer abroad would you take it? And would you face any obstacles if you want to do so?
- Do you believe that engaging in income generating activities improves women's position in the family and in society?

- Through your observations can you identify any differences between women living in the east and women living in the west? Where would you prefer to live and why?
- Based on your own experience, does the place of residence determine the type of work opportunities available to women?
- Do you believe that culture and traditions can influence women's engagement in income generating activities?
- How important, in your opinion, is women's education? And if you have the resources to pursue your education abroad would you go for it? And would you face any obstacles if you want to do so?
- Where do you see yourself ten years from now?

Appendix D: Questionnaire

Economic Activity in Amman, East and West Jordanian Attitudes towards Females' Economic Activity Self-Completion Questionnaire

Please answer the questions in this booklet. Please bear in mind that all the information provided by your answers are to be treated with confidentiality by the researcher.

Part A General Information

Gender: Male Female

Age: _____

Marital Status: Married Single
 Divorced Widower

Place of Residence: _____

Employment Status: Employed Unemployed
 Self-Employed

If Employed: Public Sector Private Sector

Education: Basic/ Elementary, Primary High school Degree
 College/ Diplomat University Degree/ BA, BSc
 Postgraduate/ MA, PhD Vocational Training

Residential Status: Privately Owned Rented

Monthly Household Income: _____

Monthly Individual Income: _____

Main Source of Economic Support in the Household: _____

No. of Household members: _____

No. of Rooms in the House: _____

Part B**Economic Activity in Amman, East and West**

B.1. If you are economically active, please answer the following part of this survey. If you are not, please skip it to answer part B.2.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements, please tick one box for each statement;

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My job is secure					
My income is high					
My job is interesting					
I come from work exhausted					
I have to do hard physical work					
My work is stressful					
The demands of my job interfere with my family life					
The demands of my family life interfere with my job					
It is easy to balance the demands of my work and family life					
It is not easy to balance the demands of my work and family life					
I am satisfied in my current job					
It is easy for me to find another job					

B.2. This section is for those who are currently economically inactive. If you have already filled in section B.1, Please skip this section to section B.3.

➤ **What is the main reason behind your economic inactivity?**

Please tick one box only

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| I am retired | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I am a student | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I became permanently disabled | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I was dismissed | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| My contract ended | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Family Responsibilities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I got married | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lack of work Opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please Specify: _____

➤ **Would you like to become economically active, either now or in the future?**

Please tick only one box

- | | |
|------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

➤ **How likely do you think it is that you would find a job?**

Please tick one box only

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Very likely | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Likely | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Unlikely | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Very unlikely | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Can't choose | <input type="checkbox"/> |

➤ **Are you currently looking for a job?**

Please tick one box only

- | | |
|------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

B.3. This section is to be answered by all respondents.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements, please tick one box for each statement;

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
There is a big difference between West and East Amman					
The difference between East and West Amman is only geographical					
There is an evident difference in terms of the infrastructure between East and West Amman					
I would prefer to live in West Amman					
I would prefer to live in East Amman					
I would prefer to work in East Amman					
I would prefer to work in West Amman					
Salaries are higher in West Amman					
Salaries are higher in East Amman					
Cultural values are well preserved in West Amman					
Cultural values are well preserved in East Amman					
Religion is well practiced in West Amman					
Religion is well practiced in East Amman					

B.4. This section is to be answered by all respondents.

➤ **Have you ever travelled abroad?**

Yes

No

➤ **If yes, was it**

An Arab Country

A Non-Arab or a foreign country

Both, Arab and non-Arab countries

➤ **Do you, at your household, have 24/7 access to water?**

Yes

No

Most of the Time

➤ **Do you, at your household, have 24/7 access to electricity?**

Yes

No

Most of the Time

➤ **In winter times, what do you use to make your house warm?**

Central Heating

Petrol Heater

Gasoline Heater

Electric Heater

Other than that

Specify _____

➤ **What method of transportation do you mainly use?**

Public Transportation such as buses

Taxis

Private Car

➤ **How frequently do you go out for leisure?**

Once or more a week

Once or more a month
Once a year
Other than that
Specify _____

➤ Do you consider yourself religious?

Yes
No

➤ Do you consider yourself conservative, in terms of traditions?

Yes
No

➤ Do you consider your family religious?

Yes
No

➤ Do you consider your family conservative, in terms of traditions?

Yes
No

➤ Do you pray?

Yes
No
Usually
Rarely

➤ Is 'Hijab' important in your family?

Yes
No

➤ Do you have any economically active women in your household?

No
Yes Specify Please:

Mother Sister Daughter Other _____

Part C

Attitudes towards Women, East and West Amman

This section is to be answered by all respondents.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements, please tick one box for each statement;

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Culture and traditions impose certain social roles on women					
Culture and traditions impose certain social roles on men					
Culture and traditions give men more social power than women					
Culture and traditions give women more social power than men					
Culture interferes with women's engagement in income generating activities					
Culture interferes with men's engagement in income generating activities					
Women's economic activity affects their family life					
Men's economic activity affects their family life					
Women's family life affects their economic activity					
Men's family life affects their economic activity					
Women can not manage their time between economic activity and household chores					
Men can not manage their time between economic activity and household chores					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Women's work outside the household is very important					
Men's work outside the household is very important					
Household chores should be divided equally between men and women					
Women's work outside the household is secondary					
Men's work outside the household is secondary					
Women's work outside the household is primary					
Men's work outside the household is Primary					
Women should prioritise their family life					
Men should prioritise their family life					
Women's role in the household is more important than men's					
Men's role in the household is more important than women's					
Women's education is vital					
Women's education is secondary					
Men's education is vital					
Men's education is secondary					
I support women's education abroad					
I support men's education abroad					
Men and women should have equal opportunities in terms of accessing employment					
Man is the head of the household					
Households are headed by both men and women					