

Family Names in Jordan and the USA: A Comparative Socio-Linguistic Study

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Abstract—This study aims to analyze family names in Jordan and the USA from a sociolinguistic perspective. The examination is based on a sample of 1000 family names: 500 Jordanian family names (JFN) and 500 American family names (AFN). As for Jordan, the sample was randomly selected from Al-Rawabdeh's (2010) Lexicon of Jordanian Clans, while in the case of the USA, the sample was randomly drawn from the list published at <https://gist.github.com> of the 1000 most common family names in the USA. The study's findings show that (41.6 %) of family names in Jordan and (54.4 %) in the USA do not reflect any aspect of human life. However, (58.4%) of family names in Jordan and (45.6%) of family names in the USA are found to reflect various aspects of human life. These aspects are reflected in nine categories: social traits, animals, occupations and professions, physical features, plants, geographical areas, natural and timing phenomena, tools and instruments, and financial conditions. The overall findings of this study reveal that although family names in Jordan and the USA are different, they generally tend to reflect the social-cultural and natural contexts in which these names have emerged and maintained.

Index Terms—last names, personal names, proper names, Jordanian names, American names

I. INTRODUCTION

Names, whether first or last names (surnames), reflect not only the identity of their givers or owners but also the identity and uniqueness of the societies and/or cultures in which these names prevail. As such, names are often associated with social, economic, geographical, and cultural features of the society where the naming process occurs. In this regard, Rosenhouse (2002) argued that "naming is a specific linguistic act which shows values, traditions, hopes, fears and everyday events in people's lives, names reveal the preference and concerns of their owners as well as givers in terms of real-life objects, actions and beliefs". Although a naming practice is a universal principle, the patterns, typologies, and stability of such names differ from one place to another within the same society, from one society or culture to another, and from one historical period to another.

The study of names started as a scattered individual initiative by researchers. Then, it was developed to become an independent field of study called 'onomastics' or 'onomatology'. Bochstruck (2013, p. 6) defined onomatology as: "the study of names". It involves both forenames, commonly called first, second, or middle names, and family names or surnames. According to Portner (2005), onomatology as a significant discipline in linguistics can be classified into two core aspects: the first one is etymology, which is the study of the name's origin, and the second one is semantics, which is the study of a word's meaning. The study of names has recently gained growing importance after linguists have recognized the significant contributions of studying names to linguistics. This recognition has led to the emergence of a journal specialized solely in research related to names called "Names: A Journal of Onomastics". This Journal is published by the University Library System of the University of Pittsburgh (ans-names.pitt.edu).

Undoubtedly, the study of names, whether it is first or last, can contribute significantly to our understanding of the mutual relation between language, society, and culture. However, this study contends that studying last names is more important than studying first names. This is mainly because, in today's societies, the need for last names is a contemporary demand due to the drastic increase of people, while in the early times, the need for people's identification was satisfied using the first name only. In this regard, Bardsley (1915, p. 172) states that: "surnames, we must remember, were the simple result of necessity when population hitherto isolated and small, became so increased as to necessitate further particularity than the merely personal one could supply." Applying the same logic, Room (1995), stated that "the concept of a "surname" is a recent historical development, evolving from a medieval naming practice which is called a "by name". Based on an individual's occupation or area of residence, "a by name" would be used in situations where various people have the same name" (Cited in Tahat, 2014). Linguistically, the surname is defined as the name that one shares with other members of one's family, that is, the last name (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019).

Akinnaso (1980), Elias (1991), Atawneh (2005), Lewis (2010), Pappas (2013) have emphasized the importance of studying family names as compared to first names. Accordingly, it should be clear that studying family names can contribute more to our understanding of one's identity than studying first names only. Despite the relative importance of family names compared to first names, the study of family names has not yet been thoroughly investigated from a sociolinguistic perspective (Atawneh, 2005; Tahat, 2014). Hence, this study is expected to attempt to fill the gap in the literature on names.

The significance of this study can be attributed to four main factors. The first is related to its expected original contribution to the linguistic field of onomatology in general. Secondly, it emerges from the earlier observation that most linguistic studies have dealt with names related to first names despite the relative importance of studying family names. This implies that studying family names is more needed and should, therefore, receive more attention than has already been captured. Thirdly, this study is unique in its attempt to study family names in two different cultural settings (i.e., Arab-Islamic and Western cultures). In contrast, most other linguistic studies of family names deal with family names in only one specific culture. The fourth reason is related to its comprehensiveness, as it is perhaps one of the first, if not the first, to study the corpus of all family names in Jordan that are listed in Al-Rawabdeh (2010) 'Lexicon of the Jordanian Clans' on the one hand and the corpus of all the 1000 most common family names in the USA.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze family names in Jordan and the USA from a sociolinguistic perspective and attempts to answer the following question:

To what extent do family names in the Jordanian society and the American society reflect the lifestyle of people in terms of their social, economic, geographical, and environmental backgrounds? In other words, what is the extent to which the practice of family naming, as a linguistic act, in both Jordan and the USA, is associated with the same socio-economic, cultural, environmental, and geographical patterns?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

As indicated above, most linguistic studies on names have dealt with first names compared to surnames or family names. Such studies have tackled a variety of linguistic dimensions and aspects. These studies can be generally divided into three groups.

The first group is the studies of various dimensions of first names. Examples of these studies include: Antoun (1968), Akinnaso (1980), Abed-el-Jawad (1985), Alford (1988), Tushyeh and Rishmawi (1989), Koul (1995), Whissell (2001), Bani-Melhem (2002), Kayed and Lance (2002), Rosenhouse (2002), Agyekum (2006), Saadi (2006), Al Zumor (2009), Eslami-Rasekh and Ahmadvand (2012), Al-Quran and Al-Azzam (2014), Rasul and Sherwani (2014), Adomako (2015), Al-Qawasmi and Al-Haq (2016), Bisilki (2018), Hazaymeh et al. (2019), Aljbour and Al-Haq (2019), Tahat (2019), That (2020).

The second group is the studies dealing with family names in general, such as Akkinaso (1980), Hanks and Hodges (1988), Tushyeh and Hamadallah (1992), Wardat (1997), Butkus (1999), Atawneh (2005), Creider (2007), Koehn (2015), Bilcher (2016), Patterson and Farr (2017), Kandt and Longley (2018).

The third group, which is the closest to the topic of this study, analyzed the actual family names in various cultural settings that attempted to clarify the social, cultural, geographical, or environmental connotations. Baker (1939) found that (80%) of the Americans using the surname 'Washington' are Negroes. He found that lesser but remarkably high proportions of persons known as Johnson, Brown, Smith, and various other long-established family appellations are borne by men of dark skin. In a study of nicknames in one village in Jordan Valley, Antoun (1968) found that those nicknames expressed character, physical and personal traits, occupation, and place of origin. Similarly, in studying family names in Palestine, Atawneh (2005) found that those names reflected the style of life in the past regarding agricultural professions, industry, human characteristics, and the place of living. In his analysis of the English and Chinese family names, Zhu (2010) found that the English family names reflect their love and attachment to everything in their culture, while the Chinese family names express the feudal system that exists in their culture concerning all surnames which the emperors and nobles granted.

In another study of family names in Malta, Chetcue (2014) concluded that the Maltese family names are indicative elements of the country's multicultural history because Malta has always been a place of coexistence for different cultures and ethnicities. Muslims in the thirteenth century and Jews in the fifteenth century who lived in Malta significantly impacted the language, culture, and, therefore, the Maltese family names. In another investigation of the Turkish patronymic surnames ending with -oglu "Son of", Tum (2021) found that these names did not reflect the name of someone's father only. Instead, they denote cognitive diversity, expressing meta-language awareness of Turkish's intercultural richness.

Finally, Aljbour (2022) clarified that surnames are defined legally as the names added to the first names. He illustrated that they are called surnames because, originally, they were written over the name in judicial writings and contracts. He also explained that in the Arabic context, the *nisba* is like the term surname, as it is often used as the last name. He also added that the term family name is often used in the relevant Arab literature instead of surname. It usually stands for a family, an occupation, or a geographical location.

III. METHODOLOGY

The corpus of the study consists of all family names in Jordan (JFN) and the 1000 most common family names in the USA (AFN). Regarding Jordan, Alrawabdeh (2010) developed a Lexicon for family names in Jordan named 'Lexicon of Jordanian Clans'. This Lexicon lists 2650 family names, which are believed to include all JFN. Accordingly, the study's corpus regarding Jordan consists of all those 2650 JFN. As for the USA, <https://gist.github.com> lists the 1000 most common surnames in the USA. As such, the study's corpus about the USA consists of all these 1000 family names.

The study sample consists of 1000 family names: 500 JFN and 500 AFN. This sample was randomly selected from the corpus of the study. In the case of Jordan, the researcher selected the fifth, the tenth, the fifteenth and so on of the 2650 family names, while in the case of the USA, the author selected the odd numbers from the list of the 1000 AFN. This process ends up with 500 JFN and 500 AFN, which will be analyzed below.

Regarding the methodology, most researchers studying family names often tend to use a certain classification of these names. Atawneh (2005) depended on the categorization of Tushyen and Hamadallah (1992), Antoun (1968), Butkus (1999). Then, he developed his own classification, ending up with seven major categories: physical features, agriculture, temperament, geographical area, trade and industry, financial conditions, and timing and plants.

In this study and based on its purpose, the nature of its population, and the derived sample, the author adopted the categorizations used in the studies mentioned above, especially that of Atawneh's (2005) study, leading to a classification of nine major categories that are adopted in this study. Those are social traits, animals, occupations and professions, physical features, plants, geographical area, natural and timing phenomena, tools and instruments and financial conditions. Regarding Arabic words which appear in this paper, they are transliterated according to the following phonetic system.

TABLE 1
THE TRANSCRIPTION SYSTEM USED IN THE STUDY

Symbol	Description	Symbol	Description
/b/	Voiced bilabial stop	/w/	Voiced bilabial glide
/t/	Voiceless dental stop	/x/	Voiceless uvular fricative
/d/	Voiced dental stop	/gh/	Voiced uvular fricative
/k/	Voiceless velar stop	/ħ/	Voiceless pharyngeal fricative
/f/	Voiceless labio-dental fricative	/ʕ/	Voiced pharyngeal fricative
/θ/	Voiceless inter-dental fricative	/h/	Voiceless glottal fricative
/ð/	Voiced inter-dental fricative	/ʔ/	Voiceless glottal stop
/s/	Voiceless alveolar fricative	/dʒ/	Voiced 3hat33- alveolar affricate
/z/	Voiced alveolar fricative	/m/	Voiced bilabial nasal stop
/sh/	Voiceless 3hat33- alveolar fricative	/n/	Voiced alveolar nasal stop
/d/	Voiceless dental emphatic stop	/l/	Voiced alveolar lateral
/TH/	Voiced inter-dental emphatic fricative	/r/	Voiced alveolar flap
/S/	Voiceless alveolar emphatic fricative	/y/	Voiced palatal glide
/dʕ/	Voiced dental emphatic fricative	/ʃ/	Voiceless 3hat33- alveolar affricate
/q/	Voiceless uvular stop	/g/	Voiced velar stop

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of family names in both societies begins with a thorough review of all family names in the Jordanian and American settings. This review reveals that family names can be classified into two major groups. The first group of family names does not reflect any aspect of the socio-environmental context that is reflected in the nine categories employed in this study. However, the second group of family names is clearly related to one of the nine categories of family names adopted in this study.

Regarding the first group, the findings reveal that (41.6 %) of the family names in Jordan and (54.4 %) in the USA do not relate to any of the nine categories adopted in this study. As for the Jordanian setting, Table 2 shows that 208 (41.6%) of the total family names (N=500) in Jordan do not seem to reflect any of the adopted family name categories used in this study. These family names could have history and stories behind their naming, but they do not explicitly reflect specific characteristics of the socio-environmental context in which these names are used. Examples of these names include Aba ʕa, Fanik, TweeT, and Salman. In our culture, as in other cultures, some name-givers prefer to keep track of ancestors and hand it down to later generations. It is worth noting that this finding (41.6) % of the JFN is not related to the adopted categories) is close to the findings of Atawneh's (2005) study, where he found that 38% of the family names in Palestine are not related to environmental or behavioral characteristics prevailing in Palestine.

As for the American setting, Table 2 shows that 272 (54.4%) of the family names do not relate to any of the adopted family name categories used in the study. Examples of such family names include Jones, David, Simon, and Wilson.

These overall findings reflect a difference between family naming practices in both settings (41.6%) and (54.4%) of the JFN and AFN, respectively. That is, there are more family names in the American setting compared to the Jordan setting that do not reflect specific socio-economic, environmental, and geographical aspects. This is understandable because Americans, in general, have more freedom in their practice of naming. Therefore, they are less affected by the social context in which they live compared to that of the Jordanians.

TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILY NAMES IN JORDAN AND THE USA ACCORDING TO THE ADOPTED CATEGORIES IN THE STUDY

Category of family names	JFN		AFN		JFN & AFN	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Not Related to adopted categories	208	41.6	272	54.4	480	48
Related to adopted categories	292	58.4	228	45.6	520	52
Total	500	100%	500	100%	1000	100%

N = 1000 family Names, 500 JFN and 500 AFN.

Having analyzed the first group of JFN and AFN that do not reflect any of the adopted family name categories used in this study, the focus of the analysis turns now to the second group of family names (i.e., 292 JFN and 228 AFN) that are related to one of the nine family name categories adopted in this study. Table 3 below shows the distribution of family names in Jordan and the USA according to the family name categories adopted in this study.

TABLE 3
THE DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILY NAMES IN JORDAN AND THE USA ACCORDING TO THEIR CATEGORIES

Category of family names	JFN		AFN		JFN & AFN	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Social Traits	61	20.89	36	15.78	97	18.65
Animals	50	17.12	23	10.08	73	14.03
Occupations and Professions	42	14.38	38	16.66	80	15.38
Physical Features	39	13.35	26	11.40	65	12.50
Plants	30	10.27	22	9.64	52	10.00
Geographical Area	28	9.58	24	10.52	52	10.00
Natural and Timing						
Phenomena	17	5.82	27	11.84	44	8.46
Tools and Instruments	15	5.13	19	8.33	34	6.53
Financial Conditions	10	3.42	13	5.70	23	4.42
Total	292	100%	228	100%	520	100%

N = 292for JFN and 228 for AFN

A. Social Traits: JFN (20.89%), AFN (15.78 %)

Family names expressing social traits and values of the Jordanian society are well reflected in JFN. As shown in Table 2, 20.89% of the 292 JFN reflects social traits. These traits include generosity, purity, giving, helping, peace, supporting, serving, affection, and determination. The following family names show several values and social traits in the Jordanian society:

/masaʕdih/	'helper'	/alsoxni/	'of heat'	/abo-hazeem/	'of defeated'
/Masalmih/	'peaceable'	/sroor /	'pleasant'	/abo-shareeʕah/	'of law'
/moʕalla/	'highness'	/rawashdih/	'advisors'	/barakat/	'of blessing'
/manaseer/	'supporter'	/ʕabbaad/	'worshiped'	/bsharaat/	'of happiness'
/manaaf/	'prevents'	/ʕazaam/	'determined'	/sʕood/	'pleasant'
/naji/	'survivor'	/ʕaʕiatt/	'given'	/sarhan/	'absent-minded'
/naSrawi/	'of victory'	/ʕlmaat/	'knowing'	/bani-saʕeed/	'of delightful'
/nʕemaat/	'of paradise'	/ʕamayrih/	'builders'	/kassab/	'winner'
/madanee/	'civilian'	/gharaybih/	'strangers'	/bani-ʕada/	'of giving'
/foqhaʕ/	'scholars'	/frihaat/	'happiness'	/al- dʕazzi/	'rewarder'
/darweesh/	'dervish'	/shhadaat/	'request'	/hasasneh/	'advantage'
/bdoor/	'complete'	/karimih/	'generous'	/al-helo/	'sweet'
/kaayid/	'machination'	/kawamlih/	'perfect'	/hanoon/	'affectionate'
/jahamnih/	'tremendous'	/laʕaifih/	'kind'	/dahboor/	'of circle'
/halawani/	'of sweet'	/mahasnih/	'merits'	/xammash/	'scratchy'
		/maxadmih/	'served'	/dʕasasreh/	'brave'
		/madadhah/	'of praise'	/dalloʕ/	'of molly-coddle'
/saakit	'silent'	/radʕwaan/	'gratification'		
/abo-mahfooTH/	'of preserved'	/mahafTHa/	'of maintenance'		
/abo mTaawiʕ/	'obedient'	/abo- lubaad/	'slow'		
/nSiraat/	'plural of victory'	/mhaawish/	'fighter'		
/ʕalawnih/	'of superiority'	/al-fayiz/	'winner'		
/kareem/	'generous'				
/naqawah/	'purity'				

Regarding the USA, the values and the social traits category are also well reflected in AFN. Table 2 shows that 15.78 % of the 228 AFN reflect social traits. This means that 15.78 % of the family names in America are also derived from their values and social traits. The following list shows the family names reflecting this category.

Bright	Duke	Gay	Good	Hale	Savage
Hardy	Holder	Huff	Knight	Little	Warner
Madden	Moody	Petty	Prince	Rich	Bryant
Sharp	Short	Stout	Strong	Sweet	Mann
Wilder	Wise	Young	Gross	Long	Manning
Maynard	Terrell	Goodman	Noble	Lang	Grant

It is obvious that the values and social traits are reflected in both the JFN and the AFN. However, it seems that the values and the social traits reflecting family names in Jordan are relatively more positively and socially preferred than the case in the USA, where some social traits include both positive as well as negative traits.

B. Animals: JFN (17.12%), AFN (10.08%)

In societies where the means of production were and still are traditional, people depend on animals to live. Animals, especially the tame ones such as goats, sheep, hens, horses, camels, cats, dogs, cows, and doves, among others, were and are still used for food, ploughing, riding, protection, and clothes. As for the Jordanian society, they depended in the past on these animals in their daily life, which was reflected in their family names. The findings also show that few Jordanian family names are derived from wild animals such as lions, tigers, and leopards. This can be attributed to the fact that these family names reflect the strength and courage associated with such animals. In this study, Table 2 shows that 17.12 % of the 292 family names are found to be names of animals. Consider the following list:

/aljawamees/	‘buffalos’	/abo-namoos/	‘of mosquito’	/abo-baqar/	‘of cow’
/habashnih/	‘of birds’	/al-assad/	‘lion’	/abo-jamoos/	‘of buffalo’
/ʕaqarbih/	‘of scorpion’	/al-bess/	‘cat’	/abo-ħajal/	‘of hop’
/baTaāt/	‘ducks’	/abo-ʕanzih/	‘of goat’	/abo-ħassonih/	‘of birds’
/al-hsan/	‘horse’	/abo-ghanamih/	‘of sheep’	/abo-hsan/	‘of horse’
/naʕamnih/	‘of ostrich’	/al- dʒedi/	‘Capricorn’	/al-bghaal/	‘mules’
/namaarnih/	‘of tiger’	/dʒarabʕah/	‘animals’	/jahawshih/	‘clot’
/dʒaradeen/	‘rats’	/dʒararwah/	‘puppies’	/fahdaat/	‘leopards’
/ðnibaāt/	‘tails’	/dʒaradat/	‘locust’	/dʕerghaam/	‘lion’
/Thebian/	‘of gazelle’	/al-dʒjarwo/	‘puppy’	/bani-laith/	‘of lion’
/ʕaSfoor/	‘bird’	/θaʕalbih/	‘fox’	/alfaar/	‘mouse’
/ghazalaat/	‘deer’	/al- dʒamal/	‘camel’	/al- nahlih/	‘bee’
/zghelaat/	‘of birds’	/xerfaan/	‘of sheep’	/nsoor/	‘eagles’
/ʔshbilaat/	‘of lion’	/xanazrih/	‘of pigs’	/ħSeeni/	‘hippocampus’
/ʔ Sqoor/	‘falcon’	/deek/	‘rooster’	/ħamarnih/	‘of donkey’
/daboot/	‘swap’			/ħwaraat/	‘son of camel’

In the USA, too, though to a lesser extent, the study finds that names of animals are also used as family names. As shown in Table 2, 10.08% of the 228 family names are found to be names of animals. However, given the nature of the lifestyle in the USA, the names of animals used as family names are, to a certain degree, different from those in Jordan. Most of the names of animals used as family names are of both wild and domestic natures. In addition, in the American setting, more family names reflect names related to sea and water.

Bird	Buck	Bullock	Crane	Seal
Finch	Fox	Griffin	Hart	Salmon
Herrings	Horn	Lamb	Roach	Falcon
Slater	Wolf	Bass	Everett	
Dove	Lopez	Ham	Leonard	

C. Occupations and Professions: JFN (14.38%), AFN (16.66%)

The nature of societies in terms of their means of production has always colored the kind of occupations and professions prevailing in those societies. Having this in mind and given the importance of occupations and/or professions in people’s lives, one can easily argue that the kind of occupations and/or professions of people have always been reflected in their family names, whether in Jordan, the USA, or other societies.

In Jordan, as the society has been more agriculturally oriented than industrially, the nature of professions and/or occupations that people have significantly influences the naming of their families. This is clear in Table 2, where 14.38% out of the 292 family names are found to be occupationally and/or professionally oriented names. These professions and/or occupations and the associated family names are needed for a simple life. Such professions and/or occupations are either food-related or semi-industrial types that would help in making clothes or other needed services for simple societies. The following list clearly shows some examples.

/shammaʕ/	‘chandler’	/al- xateeb/	‘the speaker’	/Sabbagh/	‘pigment’
/Sayiad/	‘fisher’	/alxaiyaaT/	‘tailor’	/ḥayek/	‘weaver’
/ḍabaaʕ/	‘printer’	/dabbagh/	‘dyer’	/ḥadaad/	‘smith’
/ḍaḥaan/	‘miller’	/saraaj/	‘of horse’	/ḥaTaab/	‘wood cutter’
/ʕallaaf/	‘of feed’	/samman/	‘of margarine’	/ḥallaiqah/	‘barbers’
/ghaTaas/	‘diver’	/sankari/	‘plumber’	/alḥallaq/	‘barber’
/al- ḍzalaad/	‘hangman’	/falahaat/	‘farmer’	/Sonaaʕ/	‘makers’
/qaḍaan/	‘cotton man’	/qheawi/	‘of coffee’	/laḥameen/	‘butchers’
/qahwaji/	‘of coffee’	/laḥaam/	‘butcher’	/qamaash/	‘of cloth’
/quddah/	‘judges’	/kaḥallih/	‘of kohl’	/Sayigh/	‘of jewelry’
/al- ḍzundi/	‘soldier’	/ʔmbaydeen/	‘painters’	/ʕaTaar/	‘spice man’
/al-ḥaaris/	‘guard’	/qadi/	‘judge’	/naToor/	‘guard’
/al-bawaab/	‘doorman’	/mallaah/	‘navigator’		
/naḥass/	‘copper’	/najjaar/	‘carpenter’		
/qaSaar/	‘of mending walls’	/al-mʕallim/	‘teacher’		

In the USA, as in JFN, the names of professions and/or occupations have been frequently used as family names. As shown in Table 2, 16.66% of the 228 family names are found to be derived from professions and/or occupations. These family names reflect the nature of the American society, which has been industrially oriented. The following American family names are examples of some professions and/or occupations.

Baker	Barber	Bowman	Brewer
Butler	Carpenter	Carter	Collier
Cook	Cooper	Craver	Dyer
Farmer	Fisher	Foreman	Fuller
Gardener	Hunter	Mayer	Mercer
Miller	Palmer	Porter	Potter
Sawyer	Shepherd	Smith	Wright
Tanner	Weaver	Steward	Parker
Booker	Faulkner	Wagner	
Chandler	Archer	Chambers	

D. Physical Features: JFN (13.35%), AFN (11.40%)

Physical features are considered essential factors in the identity of individuals and then in shaping their personalities. Physical features in terms of height, size, color, and shape serve to give the first impression about individuals and then impact the nature of the interaction between individuals. Furthermore, it is widely believed that physical features play an important role in naming, whether a first name or a family name. Usually, physical features influence the practice of naming the new person, giving him/her a certain identity based on these features, later handed down to the descendants as a family name. Accordingly, physical features play a crucial factor in the practice of family names in both settings.

In this study, as shown in Table 2, 13.35% of the 292 family names are found to be related to physical features. Mainly, these family names reflect the physical features of body organs, color, and defective organs. The following examples of the main physical features reflected in these family names are provided.

(a). Body Organs

/abo raass/	‘of head’	/abo-reden/	‘of sleeve’
/abo- ʕain	‘of eyes’	/abo- elʕeneen/	‘of eyes’
/abo-kaff/	‘of hand’	/shawarbih/	‘mustaches’
/abo- iSbiʕ/	‘of finger’	/xSilaat/	‘curl of hair’
/ḍeenat/	‘ears’	/ḍraaʕ/	‘arm’
/kaʕabnih/	‘heels’	/alrousaan/	‘of heads’
/abo- ḍerʕaan/	‘of arms’	/abo-alshaʕir/	‘of hair’
/baTaynih/	‘of belly’	/ʕaTHamaat/	‘bones’
/xaSaawnih/	‘of testicle’	/ʔkfoof/	‘hands’
		/abo-rokbah/	‘of knee’

(b). Colors

/al- aswad/	‘the black’
/abo-xider/	‘of green’
/abo-zreeq/	‘of blue’
/xdʕeraat/	‘of greens’
/zreeqaat/	‘blues’

/shiabb/	‘white hair’
/alaşfarr/	‘the yellow’
/samarnih/	‘tanned’
/albenni/	‘the brown’
/shqairaat/	‘blonds’
/alasmarr/	‘the tanned’

Defective Organs

/qorşaan/	‘bald’
/qaSeer/	‘short’
/ʔerfooş/	‘thin’
/şumian/	‘blind’
/Turshaan/	‘deaf’
/şarrian/	‘nude’
/abo-Taweelih/	‘of long’
/al-Taweel/	‘the long’
/al-Sagheer/	‘the little’

It is worth mentioning that nowadays, the listeners to these family names derived from defective organs do not necessarily associate the family name with the inherent meaning of the word. Family names, such as /şumian/ ‘blind’ or /Turshaan/ ‘deaf’ do not in this context evoke the image of someone unable to see or a person who is unable to hear, but rather of family names which are known to most of the population in Jordan. Therefore, the words /şumian/ and /Turshaan/ have been extended in meaning to encompass a new semantic category, namely, naming.

Regarding the USA, physical features are also reflected in the American family names. As shown in Table 2, 11.40% of the 228 family names are found to be related to physical features. The findings show that colors and some body organs are the main physical features reflected in the names of family names in the USA, while there are no family names related to defective organs, as is the case in Jordan. The following examples present the family names of this category.

White	Black	Blackburn	Lemon
Golden	Yellow	Beard	Nail
Brown	Browning	Colon	Heart
Gray	Green	Head	Greene
Red	Silver	Body	Orange
Whiting	Blackman	Kidney	
Chin	Liver	Finger	

E. Plants: JFN (10.27%), AFN (9.64%)

Societies, whether industrial or agricultural, depend on farming to meet the feeding needs of their people. In traditional societies, plants are of essential concern for people and have a tremendous impact on their activities, behaviors, and lifestyles. Life in traditional societies is almost centered around land and plants and therefore, the process of giving names as a human practice is influenced by farming and the plants associated with it. Jordan, as one of these traditional societies, has been influenced by this process. Consequently, this study shows that several family names in Jordan are derived from specific existing plants. Table 2 indicates that 10.27% of the 292 family names are directly related to plants, and most of these names reflect the nature of plants existing in Jordan, such as vegetables, fruit trees, herbs, flowers, and beans. Consider the following examples that illustrate family names related to plants.

/baTeexi/	‘of watermelon’	/abo-bandoora/	‘of tomato’
/reeḥanni/	‘of flowers’	/abo-jazarr/	‘of carrot’
/toffaḥah/	‘apple’	/abo-ḥaşeesh/	‘of grass’
/debess/	‘pin’	/abo-roumaan/	‘of pomegranate’
/sukkar/	‘sugar’	/abo-zeit/	‘of oil’
/ʔşdoos/	‘lentils’	/abo-zaytoon/	‘of olives’
/karasniḥ/	‘kenoḥ’	/zaşareer/	‘hawthorn’
/ʔşshibaat/	‘of grass’	/abo-sameedih/	‘of semolina’
/lawzi/	‘of almonds’	/abo-Snoobar/	‘pine’
/hailaat/	‘of spicy’	/abo-alşassal/	‘of honey’
/abut-teen/	‘figs’	/abo-şenaab/	‘of jujube’
/albşool/	‘of onions’	/abo-alfool/	‘of bean’
/abo-alssamin/	‘of margarine’	/abo-karsaanih/	‘of barley’
/ḥalawah/	‘sweetness’	/abo-kishik/	‘of yogurt’
/naşanşha/	‘mint’	/şanaanbih/	‘grapes’

In the USA, some family names are also derived from plants. The findings in Table 2 show that 9.64% of the 228 family names are directly related to plants. Examples of some American family names related to plants are shown as follows.

Bean	Bush	Cherry	Lily	Bloom
Fields	Flowers	Meadows	Oates	Lavender
Perry	Rice	Rose	Rosa	
Wild	Curry	Wood	Plumtree	
Cotton	Pepper	Sage	Blossom	

F. Geographical Area: JFN (9.58%), AFN (10.52%)

The phenomenon of immigration and/or emigration from one country to another or within the same country has been known throughout history. These phenomena have significantly impacted people and cultures in general and the issue of naming in particular. A significant number of family names have been derived from the names of countries people immigrated/emigrated from or from the names of places people migrated from within the same country. In Jordan, as shown in Table 2, 9.58% of the 292 family names are derived from geographical areas, whether foreign countries or local places. The following list illustrates such family names derived from different geographical areas.

/maSarwah/	‘from Egypt’	/hjazaat/	‘from Hejaz’
/maSri/	‘from Egypt’	/halabi/	‘from Aleppo’
/hindi/	‘from Hind’	/dagestaani/	‘from Dagestan’
/remoni/	‘from Raymoon’	/ʔʔraqi/	‘from Iraq’
/bormawi/	‘from Burma’	/ghazawi/	‘from Gaza’
/Salḍi/	‘from Salt’	/nabulsi /	‘from Nablus’
/malkaawi/	‘from Malka’	/maghrebi/	‘from Morocco’
/maʕaani/	‘from Maʕaan’	/iskandarani/	‘from Alexandria’
/ʕajlooni/	‘from Ajloun’	/irani/	‘from Iran’
/karaki/	‘from Karak’	/tamemi/	‘from Tamim’
/shaḍnaawi/	‘from Shaḍana’	/xalylih/	‘from Khaleel’
/hawarnih/	‘from howrann’	/alsoudi/	‘from Saudi Arabia’
/kurdi/	‘from Kurdistan’	/shaami/	‘from Sham’
/boxari/	‘from Bucharest’	/fayuomi/	‘from Faiyoom’

The same logic applies to the USA, where many family names are derived from the names of the original countries people emigrated from or the names of places people migrated from. Table 2 shows that 10.52% of the 228 family names are derived from geographical areas. Consider the list of these family names regarding this category.

Alexander	Beaches	Beck	English	York
Church	Cleveland	England	Valenzuela	German
French	Holland	Norman	Jordan	London
Kirkland	Lane	Park	Washington	Ireland
Rivera	Roman	Valencia	West	

G. Natural and Timing Phenomena: JFN (5.82%), AFN (11.84%)

This category of family names is related to unique natural phenomena that people usually experience in their lives or in the daily, weekly, monthly, or seasonal phenomena they live through. The time of birth for someone was likely associated with such natural and timing phenomena and named accordingly. The name was handed down, at a later stage, to the descendants and had become a family name. In Jordan, according to this study, it was found that 5.82% of the 292 family names are associated with what is categorized as natural and timing phenomena. A list of such family names related to this category is presented as follows:

/rʕood/	‘thunder’	/burqaan/	‘lightning’	/shihabaat/	‘meteors’
/ḍummʕah/	‘Friday’	/al-rabbiʕ/	‘spring’	/alSaifi/	‘summer’
/ghadeer/	‘beck’	/ghodraan/	‘becks’	/maTar/	‘rain’
/waadi/	‘valley’	/wedian/	‘valleys’	/helalaat/	‘crescent’
/Ramadʕan/	‘a month in Islam’	/shaʕbaan/	‘a month in Islam’	/ḥalji/	‘snowy’
/al-nahaar/	‘daytime’	/ʕtmaat/	‘of darkness’		

Family names categorized as natural and timing phenomena are also found in the USA family names. As shown in Table 2, 11.84% of the 228 family names are found to be family names derived from natural and timing phenomena. The following list of such family names illustrates this category.

Day	Gamble	May	Cloud	Rock
Moon	Morrow	Snow	Stone	Pool
Summers	Ware	Winters	Sun	Frost

Spring	Water	Winter	Flood
Weeks	Rivers	Way	Light
Hills	Shell	Hall	Gale

H. Tools and Instruments: JFN (5.13%), AFN (8.33%)

In their daily lives, people often use specific tools and/or instruments; through time, they might become associated with them or become rather skilled in using them. This perhaps partially explains why we sometimes find family names related to the names of certain tools and/or instruments. In Jordan, the findings presented in Table 2 show that 5.13 % of the 292 family names are names of tools and/or instruments. Consider the list below of such family names taken from the names of tools and instruments.

/al-xiTaan/	‘strings’	/xanjar/	‘dagger’	/maxareez/	‘cones’
/al-syouf /	‘swords’	/al-SaTil/	‘bucket’	/abo-saif/	‘sword’
/mesmaar/	‘nail’	/mehbaash/	‘hammer’	/qaSaaS/	‘scissors’
/abo- gazlih/	‘spinning’	/alSahin/	‘dish’	/abo-dalo/	‘bucket’
/alramahi/	‘spear’	/hadeed/	‘iron’	/abo- sekeenih/	‘knife’

In the USA, it was found, according to Table 2, that 8.33% of the 228 family names carry the names of tools and/or instruments. Such family names are listed as follows:

Ball	Bell	Bond	Clay
Cannon	Cross	Gates	Hook
Glass	Hoover	Key	Ring
Reed	Shields	Smith	Spears
Walls	House	Shaver	

I. Financial Conditions: JFN (3.42%), AFN (5.70%)

In any society, poverty and wealth are always present. As such, poor and rich people have different lifestyles, different views of life and different behaviors and exchanges. Language deals with all aspects of life and has always been used to help people to express their interests and concerns. As a linguistic act, naming, whether a first or a family name, finds its way to financial conditions. The findings of this study, as presented in Table 2, show that 3.42% of the 292 family names in Jordan are associated with financial conditions. Examples of such family names are as follows:

/rbiḥaat/	‘winners’	/ryialaat	‘coins’
/ghnimaat/	‘prizes’	/foqara	‘poor’
/mallaak/	‘landlord’	/āḥabi/	‘golden’
/abo- al āḥab/	‘of gold’	/abo-ganeemih/	‘trophy’
/shḥadaat/	‘beggars’	/al-maSarwah/	‘money’

In the USA, the study, as shown in Table 2, found that 5.70% of the 228 family names are associated with financial conditions.

Banks	Cash	Gains	Silverman
Grant	Price	Stocks	
Gold	Silver	Rich	
Royal	King	Diamond	

V. CONCLUSION

Family names in Jordan and the USA are, in part, found not to be related to any aspect of human life. That is, (41.6%) of JFN and (54.4%) of AFN are unrelated to any aspect of human life reflected in the nine categories adopted in this study. This implies that some name givers in Jordan and the USA prefer to keep track of ancestors and hand it down to later generations without being affected by the social, economic, geographical, and/or environmental circumstances in which they live. On the other hand, the other part of these family names reflects the social, economic, geographical, and environmental circumstances in which these names were embedded. That is, (58.4%) of JFN and (45.6%) of AFN explicitly reflect various aspects of human life.

These findings signify important similarities in family naming patterns as a linguistic act in Jordan and the USA, where family names are derived from similar aspects of human life. However, the differences in these patterns are found to be only a matter of degree in terms of the frequencies of the family name categories adopted in this study. For example, while the frequency of family names derived from the social traits category is ranked first compared to other categories in JFN, it is ranked second in AFN. In contrast, the frequency of family names derived from the occupations and professions category ranked first in the AFN; it ranks third in the JFN. Interestingly, the frequency of family names derived from the financial conditions category ranks last among the other categories in both Jordan and the USA.

Finally, it can be concluded that family names in the Jordanian and the American societies reflect the lifestyle of people in terms of their social, economic, and environmental backgrounds and from geographical locations with

historical or social significance. In addition, the findings of this study can lead to new thinking in the field of Onomatology. This thinking argues that although cultures are different, the family naming patterns in these cultures can have common principles.

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