CHAPTER THREE
TABOO IN ARABIC

3.1 Preliminaries
Talking of taboo in Arabic is a taboo in itself. Due to insufficient knowledge in understanding culture and society in the conservative Arab society, it is difficult to explore various aspects and areas of taboo in Arabic. The fundamental reason for it is the lack of enough references about the dimensions of the word 'taboo'. Arab linguists, whether early or late, have not conducted studies or written books on the subject, unlike in English. Instead, it has been discussed in a superficial way. Thus, the researcher mainly depends on his own insights and intuition as a native speaker of Arabic. Of course, he also makes use of the consultations with specialists in this field and a few scattered writings available.

This chapter is devoted to discuss the background of taboo in Arabic, Arab linguists' point of view, tracing back the history when this topic was first discussed or referred to by Arab linguists, and its current status in Arabic. Features of Arabic culture and society besides some linguists' point of view related to taboo are also dealt with.

3.2 The Meaning of الخطر 'Taboo' in Arabic
The meaning of the word 'taboo' in Arabic is derived from the root word حرم which means banned or forbidden. It is mainly associated with something forbidden on moral or religious ground, as Ibn Faris (1999:45) says, حرم means forbidden, against lawful (permissible) and حرم الينير (taboo of well) means the area around the well where people are forbidden to dig in. the word حرمان (the two harams) means Mecca and Madina, the most sacred places in Islam. They are so called due to their sacredness or holiness, to kill anybody in them is absolutely forbidden in
these places. محرم is somebody who enters the state of ritual consecration. According to Wehr (1976:172), it is the state of ritual consecration of a pilgrimage to Mecca (during which a pilgrim wears two seamless woolen or linen sheets, usually white, he neither combs nor shaves, and avoids intercourse in that state; or garments of a Mecca pilgrim.

A few lexical meanings of taboo can be stated as:

. حرم (the past form of ﻣﺤﺮم) means forbade, prohibited, or interdicted.
. حرمة (noun) means holiness, sacredness, sanctity, reverence or taboo.
. حرام (adjective) means forbidden, interdicted, prohibited, unlawful, something forbidden (offence or sin), inviolable, sacred, cursed, accused or taboo.

A few more meanings of taboo in its annexed form can be given:

. ابن الحرام means illegitimate son
. الأرض الحرام means no man's land
. البيت الحرام means the sacred house, that is Mecca towards which Muslims direct their faces while offering their prayers
. الشهر الحرام means the Holy Month, Muharram (the first month in Muslim calendar)
. المسجد الحرام means the sacred or holy Mosque in Mecca. All these expressions give varied meanings of taboo in the religious context

In his book Taboo, Steiner (1956:68) states that the meaning of taboo in Semitic languages, like Arabic and Hebrew, has the roots hrm and quds. They mean haram, harim, and iham in Arabic. The meaning of حرم in Arabic corresponds to qadosh in Hebrew, meaning ban or taboo. Az-Zubeidi (1985:508) says that ﻣﺤﺮم (means untouchable or not to touch something) is another word in Arabic that refers to taboo. The word is
also mentioned in the story of Samari and Prophet Moses. It was a punishment for him not to be touched by anyone in his life for the sin he committed. It comes in the Qur'an as follows:

"Moses said: "Then go away! And verily, your (punishment) in this life will be that you will say: "Touch me not (i.e. you will live alone exiled away from mankind); and verily, (for a future torment), you have a promise that will not fail. And look at your ilah (god) to which you have been devoted. We will certainly burn it, and scatter its particles in the sea."

20:97.

Some Arab linguists label taboo as المحظور اللغوي (linguistic taboo). The meaning of المحور in Arabic is forbidden, and حظر (noun) is the antonym of lawfulness. Its present form is حظر (verb) which means to hedge in, fence in, or forbid something, prohibits from doing something. حظر means a wall or a partition. And its adjective محور means interdicted, prohibited, and forbidden to do something. المحورات is the plural form of المحور means forbidden things, or restrictions, see dictionaries of Al-Farahidi (1990:196-7) and Ar-Razi (1995:60).

3.3 History of the Term in Arabic
The topic of taboo in Arabic is as old as the efforts that had been put by early linguists in this field. However, the term حظر has a very glorious history in Arabic linguistic studies. Before discussing this issue, it is essential to take into account that Arabic language is ancient in its origin, and had no written records of its development with respect to its writing form was found until the religion of Islam. Islam was the prime driving force that encouraged Muslims (Arabs or non-Arabs) to study the Arabic
language and its systems to understand its various branches of semantics considering the Qur'anic text as the primary source.

Linguistic and rhetoric studies flourished after Islam, especially in the second century after Hijra (immigration) of Prophet Mohammed (peace and blessings be upon him) from Mecca to Medina which marked the beginning of a Muslim calendar which followed the lunar system in the seventh century after the birth of Christ.

In the second century after Hijra, as stated earlier, Muslim scholars tried to record and illustrate Hadith (the prophetic sayings) as well as the Shari'a of Islam (Islamic jurisprudence), according to the interpretation of the Qur'anic text. As more and more non-Arabs embraced Islam, they were in need to know and understand all the duties laid down in the Qur'an and Hadith that a Muslim should follow and practise in his life. Consequently, they started to study Arabic language and evaluate its grammatical or linguistic systems. The third century after Hijra was the time when sociolinguistic and rhetoric studies appeared. Al-Mubarid an Arab linguist of this century, was the first to refer to taboo indirectly in his famous book *Al-Kamil* (1986:855-858), while classifying metonymy in its second type where he explained taboo as an avoidance of mentioning unpleasant and obscene matters. Most of his examples covered areas related to sexual relations, defecation, and how people are named to show reverence and deference.

Al-Ɛaskari (1952), of the fourth century after Hijra, did the same when he explained metonymy and innuendo which means taboo things should not be mentioned directly. His intention was to state taboo things avoiding the direct reference to them. Ath-ThaƐalibi (1998) wrote a book on
metonymy and innuendo. He stated that his book was about how to present things which are unpreferable to mention, reluctant to state, shameful to name, or can provoke bad omen, in a modest way. In other words, he brought to our attention almost all the areas of taboo and their expressions without the usage of bad words.

3.4 Early and Modern Arab Linguists

The term which refers to الحظر 'taboo' in Arabic has undergone through a long process. However, there is no specific term in Arabic like that in English. It was called by different terms since the time it was discussed by early Arab linguist till modern Arab linguists.

Al-Jirjani (1908), for example, wrote a book on metonymy in Arabic in the fifth century after Hijra based on what the modern Arab writers and rhetoricians used and referred to taboo exploring almost all the areas of taboo. The chapterization was done according to areas in which metonymy was employed by them to help express what is unmentionable and unfavourable in speech (that is taboo), see appendix (3). It is really a masterpiece on this subject because of the very tabooed and unmentionable topic he refers to and the way he deals with. It seems to us, from the old Arabic literature we have read, that early Arab linguists dealt with taboo under metonymy and metaphor as well.

Being influenced by the Western linguistic studies, the modern Arab linguists have studied taboo differently. These modern linguists do not agree on a specific single word to signify taboo in their books which especially deal with semantics. Husamuddin (1985) has written on taboo in Arabic where he uses the term المحظارات اللغوية (i.e. Linguistic taboos). Abduttawab (1994:345) uses both اللامساس و الحظر (i.e. untouchable and
taboo), while Ad-Dayah (1996:395) refers to taboo as تابو (taboo) transliterating the term into Arabic; Zuwein (2000:16) uses اللامساس (i.e. untouchable) when he explains the concept of taboo. As-SaEr ran (1963:129) uses both الكلام الحرام و الكلام غير اللائق (i.e. forbidden speech or unacceptable speech). In brief, the terms which refer to the word taboo in Arabic are listed below, how some modern Arab linguists dealt with the term taboo in Arabic is shown in table (8):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term in Arabic</th>
<th>Meaning in English</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>الحظر</td>
<td>Taboo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>المحظور</td>
<td>banned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الحظر اللغوي</td>
<td>Linguistic taboo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>كلمة محظورة</td>
<td>Taboo word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جملة محظورة</td>
<td>Taboo utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الكلام المحظور اجتماعيا</td>
<td>Socially taboo speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>المحرم</td>
<td>Taboo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الاصطلاح المحرم</td>
<td>Taboo idiom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الحرمة اللغوية</td>
<td>Verbal taboo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تحرم المفردات</td>
<td>Tabooness of words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>المستهجن</td>
<td>Unfavourable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الكلام المستهجن</td>
<td>Unfavourable words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الألفاظ المستهجة اجتماعيا</td>
<td>socially unfavourable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>اللامساس</td>
<td>Untouchable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تابو</td>
<td>Taboo itself as a transliterated word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الابتدال</td>
<td>Unpleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الكلام غير اللائق</td>
<td>Unfit speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الكلمات المفضحة</td>
<td>Unmasked words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>المنوع</td>
<td>Forbidden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (8) states terms refer to 'taboo' in Arabic
Thus, early Arab linguists were aware of taboo, and it was discussed in their works under metonymy and metaphor. Unlike them, modern Arab linguists followed the western linguists. So the term was either translated, transliterated, or an independent term was used to label taboo not under metonymy or any other speech device. It seems to us that اللامساس (untouchable) as a term has been taken from the Qura'nic expression mentioned in the story of Moses and Samari, as it has been explained in 3.2.

3.5 Definitions by Modern Arab Linguists

Taboo, as a linguistic phenomenon, has received more attention, especially by the modern Arab linguists. This is either as a result of the references and discussions of euphemism in Arabic or because of the attempts made by modern Arab linguists to read the Western literature in linguistics so as to reveal or reflect their readings in their writings. The latter can be seen while discussing the term taboo in Arabic and the efforts by Arab linguists in this area. This section concentrates on the concept of taboo from the modern Arab linguists' point of view and how taboo is perceived and understood in Arab culture.

1. Zuwein (2000:14), defines taboo, while discussing the term in Arabic, as the avoidance of mentioning bad words or expressions for religious, social, and psychological reasons.

2. Qanbar (2011:88) sees taboo as any phrase or an expression that if mentioned in public causes an embarrassment or feelings of shame or provokes a sense of shock, and it offends the hearer's sensibility or his belief.
3. Ėabduttawab (1994:345) refers to taboo as anything sacred or damned that cannot be touched, or can come close to, whether a name or thing, due to its mythological nature.

4. Sadiqi (2003:78) explains that "a behaviour (linguistic or otherwise) is considered taboo when societal opinion either inhibits or prohibits it in a rational or irrational manner." She adds that one of the features of linguistic taboo is the irrational objection of the use of given words that can be used in a specific context and rejected in a certain other context on social grounds.

5. In his masterpiece on linguistic taboos, Husamuddin (1985:36) mentions that taboo covers things, acts, places, and words that someone should not speak of.

6. Ad-Dayah (1996:395) links between metaphor and taboo as they are widely used by primitive societies to make unpleasant things more appropriate and acceptable ones.

7. In his explanation for semantic development and change, Ėabduljaleel (2001:71) affirms that a linguistic community avoids the use of some words because of their bad connotations due to which there has been reluctance to the use of these words which is called taboo.

8. LeÉebi (1980:105) defines taboo as the avoidance of the direct mention of fearful things.

9. Ėumer (1998) sees that taboo can be defined as the forbidden use of some words because of their unpleasant connotations or their direct reference is unmentionable.
After the analysis of the above definitions, one can arrive at two significant dimensions of taboo. First, the areas and causes behind considering something taboo and secondly, the characteristics of taboo in Arab culture. Motivations and reasons to consider something taboo are many. These reasons are religious, social in nature while others are psychological-related to fear and embarrassment. The strong reaction taboo words or expressions trigger can indicate much about the role of that culture since taboo is subject to the manners in which words or acts are perceived in a linguistic community whose members react according to their culture. Words are weighed and controlled in their usage depending on their connotations, and speakers have to react or interact in a particular situation where they feel safe and comfortable. Some words or phrases are the results due to fear and unpleasantness. Fear is attributed to the magic power that words have to shape and influence people's behaviour.

3.6 Taboo in Arab History

It is important to have a look at the taboo issues in the history of Arab civilizations. The most taboo issues in the ancient civilizations are discussed here to link the ancient with the modern social restrictions imposed in a society.

Babylon

This civilization is associated with Hamorabi (the sixth king of Babylon 1792 BC-1750 BC) and his very famous code. It is believed that he was the first who codified man-made laws. This law was featured by retaliation like an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. It was a code to defend the poor against the rich, and righteous against wrongdoers. The society of Babylon had three classes. The highest class, the middle class
who were free citizens with certain restrictions, and the third one were the salves. Crimes like assaults on close relatives, adultery, and rapes were severely punishable. The capital punishment was given to the more serious offences like false witness, theft, robbery, and tracing of stolen goods. But in case of incest of a son and a mother, both would be burnt alive. The same was applicable in case of father who slept with his son's virginal fiancé. But if it was with father's own daughter, his punishment was banishment from his city. In medical treatment or a surgery, "for causing noble's death or blindness… the surgeon's hand would be cut off." See Bertman (2003) and Moscati (1960). Thus, Babylonians had a variety of taboo issues to be resolved by different kinds of punishments.

**Assyrians**

In comparison with Hamorabi's law, the Assyrian law was more severe and had a much lower cultural level. Like the Babylonians, their society was divided into three classes too but differed in the legal system. Though it was punishable by heavy penalties for slaves and harlots putting veils; it was a custom for ladies of rank and married women. The cruelty of the Assyrian society was reflected in the type of punishments for taboo issues. Mutilation of fingers, nose, breast, and ears was done for certain crimes.

### 3.7 Some Areas of Taboo

In this section, some taboo areas are discussed to explore the culture of Arabs and the forbidden expressions in these fields.

#### 3.7.1 Religious Taboo

Understanding the reasons behind the existence of taboo expressions in religious context is easy after one understands the creed or belief of
Islam. The basic concept of belief is the Oneness of God means to worship none but one Allah. One requires to surrender one's will to the will of Allah. Thus, oneness of God is the fundamental principle in Islam. It means it is Allah alone who is the Creator, Preserver, and Nourisher of everything. This faith is called in Islam the unity of lordship. Even non-Muslims, like many of the idolaters, know and believe that the Supreme Being is one God only who is omnipotent. And so one must acknowledge the fact that it is God alone who deserves to be worshipped, and therefore abstain from directing any of one's acts of worship to someone or something else. This is called the unity of worship. If it is God alone who creates and controls everything then and what end do people worship others besides Him.

Another belief associated with the unity of God is that He has the most beautiful names and attributes. He has ninety-nine names that imply His perfection. Any of His Holy names can not be given to anybody or attribute them to anybody besides Him or mispronounce them. Man has to believe strongly in God. Having faith in God means man has to affirm what he knows, lest man is to face either blasphemy or polytheism, see Philips (1995:4-10) and Abdulwahid (1996). With this background, one can understand the seriousness of the violation of said facts which otherwise may lead to taboo in religion. In this section, naming, swearing and cursing by Allah's Holy names, and other religious issues related to taboo are discussed. Prior to it, the concept of taboo from a Muslim point of view should be presented.

Taboo, as a concept in Islam, is the opposite of Halal. The term حلال connotes permissible, lawful, legitimate, not punishable, and not forbidden, (Al-Jallad, 2008:79). It is possible to generalize that any
violation of Muslim Faith or Creed or something that is حلال is considered taboo in religion.

As far as the names of God are concerned, they can not be given to any person unless they are preceded by the word عبد (slave or worshipper of), as shown in table (9):

| عبد الرحمن | Slave of the Most Gracious |
| عبد الرحيم | Slave of the Most Merciful |
| عبد الخالق | Slave of the Creator |
| عبد الحكيم | Slave of the All-Wise |

Table (9) shows some names of God preceded by the word 'slave' in Arabic

Linguistically, the names of Allah go with the definite article the equivalent to 'ال' in Arabic. Names can be given to persons but without the definite article. They are not allowed to be changed, abbreviated, or distorted. They were given to the idols by pagan Arabs before Islam, like ﷲ (God), العزيز (All-Wise) and المنان (the Giver of all good) respectively. Believing in these idols made them worship, supplicate, pray, and perform all kinds of worship to them. When people accepted Islam, those pagan names were changed lest they should violate the concept of monotheism in Islam, Abu Zaid (1996:390). Prophet Mohammed (peace and blessing be upon him) forbade people to give names to anyone like below, as An-Nuwawi (1972:1985) reports. This prevention was for the sake of avoiding bad omen as a part of taboo.

- عاصية (disobedient)
- حنظلة (bitter)
- حرب (war)
It is clear from the above information based on implications of taboo حظر in Arabic that any act, saying, or manner against the rules and teachings of Islam is considered taboo. This fact is confirmed by Allan and Burridge (2009:380) when they explain that except Islam, blasphemous and religious profane language is no longer considered to be taboo by a majority of speakers and this fact has generated more physically and sexually based modes of expression. Moreover, this state of tabooness expands to include, what Qanbar (2011:92) refers to, words or terms against great persons and symbols of Islam.

Islam is a divine religion, the followers or those who accept Islam are called Muslims who submitted their will to the will of Allah and Prophet Mohammed is a messenger of Allah. So it is avoided to call them Mohammedans. It, as Enright (2005:128) explains, causes offence, due to the meaning it implies. Similarly, it is also offensive to call Islam as Mohammedism. All these misinterpreting terminologies fall into the category of religious taboo. ؤumarah (2000) and Abu Zaid (1996) have given more in details on this kind of taboo in their writings.

3.7.2 Taboo of Death

According to Al-Kafawi (1998:857) death can be defined as the lack of life in what life exists in, or it is the opposite of live, as Al-Feiruzabadi (1987:206) explains. It is a departure of the soul from this world to join the hereafter to live an eternal or everlasting life. In some references, death is a fear-based taboo, according to Anis (1984), or it is a bad omen, according to Ath-Thubeiti (2001). But, historically speaking, this idea is
not feasible to characterize Arab culture. Allan and Burridge (2006:223) state that the miniature mummy that ancient Egyptians used to place on the meal table to remind them of death contradicts with the other views or opinions. Talking of the connotation of death in religion and literature through his book, Nasif (1985) brings to our attention how some dead had elegized themselves when they had been breathing their last, or how they elegized others. In these elegies, they mocked at death, when it came, and thus it was viewed indifferently. Moreover, Arab literature of Pre-Islamic period over fifteen centuries ago has preserved poems and other writings that described men who met death proudly.

Reading post Islamic poetry and biographies, the concern of some people who were on the verge of death was the sense of repentance and sorrow that they did not do great deeds that they should have done in spite of their sacrifice in battles for the glorious causes.

For the virtuous people, Allah promised Gardens under which rivers flow. A believer looks forward to eternal life and believes that bliss and happiness are with Allah after death, or otherwise would be punished severely if person was not a true believer. Familiarity with death is associated since the very first moment when a child is born by whispering 'a call for prayer' into the child's ears according to the traditions of Islam, then some people add to that 'death exists', as narrated by Sanchez (2009:110), though this does not exist in the customs of Islam. Regardless of their age, men in particular are encouraged to participate in funerals by participating in the process of burial. Then men and women offer their condolences to the family members of the dead. It is possible to find men who are funeral directors in cities, while people in rural areas and even small cities do it voluntarily. According to the teachings of Prophet Mohammed that every Muslim has five rights over another Muslims: to
return the greetings, to visit the sick, to accompany funeral processions, to accept an invitation, and to respond to sneeze (i.e. to say 'یرحمكم الله (may Allah bestow His Mercy on you)" when s/he praises Allah after giving a sneeze. In response to someone's death, the teaching of Islam further includes the participation in funeral prayer in large number and supplication for dead's forgiveness, regardless of the status of the dead, as Al-Buxari (2002:71) and An-Neisaburi (1955:1704) narrate.

The reaction to death is sometimes very strong. Relatives of the dead become grief-striken and cry which is natural. This is neither forbidden nor subject to accountability. Only wailing is strictly forbidden. At such crucial moments of grief and stress, mentioning the merits and achievements of the dead person is a good thing and appreciable.

Ways of death vary; Arabic language has many expressions to describe each of them, as Al-Ẽaskari (1999:104) mentions. Death is inevitable, and one has to believe in it. It is to agree with Qanbar (2011:100) that موت (death) as a word in Arabic, and the accompanying ceremonies are not taboo at all across Arab countries. Expressions of condolences like "یرحمنا الله (May Allah cure us all) can be used when talking with a person who is on the verge of dying. Only the educated class of people tries to avoid mentioning the taboo or offensive words and use euphemisms instead. This fact can be generalized to include the places, machines, and technologies associated with death such as قبر (grave), مقبرة (graveyard), كفن (coffin), مشرحة أو تلاجة (mortuary), and جنازة (funeral procession). By the spread of religious education and practice, the offensive nature of taboo words like 'death' can be minimized.
3.7.3 Taboo of Health
Arabs differ in the way they believe in diseases and deterioration of health. To some, disease is attributed to malfunctioning of a certain part or an organ of human body. These people feel so uncomfortable that they live under fear and uneasiness. On the contrary, the others who believe, whether seriously or not, that diseases and ailments are like a bliss to purge the souls of sins committed in life so as to become more righteous. This category of people, though they suffer from very painful diseases, is alleviated by what the sick believe in. They believe that it is a divine punishment in form of sickness for sins committed has a positive effect on the health and it helps ensure quick treatment and a speedy recovery. On the other hand, those who do not have such a belief either keep suffering or they repent and vow to do right deeds in the future. However, there are some people who are unwilling even to hear anything about a disease or a suffering. Thus, taboo effect of words related to sickness and diseases is diluted due to their faith that the diseases come from God to purify them.

People, especially patient's family members, are instructed to be kind to the patient, and inquiries from family members of the patient of his health is recommended. Visitors who are unwilling to hear of certain serious diseases and mentioning of these diseases in their presence is avoided as a respect to them. Doctors have to be very careful when explaining cases. The lack of improving the language expressing diseases is a disease in itself. The patients' perspectives are different from person to person: Some patients do not show that they are discouraged and frustrated, even though they have lost expectations of their life. While some others die many times before the real death. It is the former category of patients who win the battle against the taboo effect of any serious diseases.
Rise in mortality rate due to tuberculosis and measles, which was orally reported from one generation to another, could be the source of fear and symbol of death for many parents. Such kinds of taboo effects are overcome by focusing on vaccines to avoid any infection, Abduttawab (1994:349).

**AIDS and Cancer**

The appearance of more serious diseases in the twentieth century, like AIDS and cancer has decreased the fear of tuberculosis and other diseases from patients' mind. Cancer and AIDS are not only monstrous in nature, but their treatment is unbearable and painful as the patient undergoes the medical therapy. AIDS destabilizes the psychology of both the sick and his/her family. It is due to either sexual malpractices or drug use. Like cancer, people should be careful when dealing with a patient suffers from AIDS as it is a contagious disease. For Arabs, الإيدز AIDS is a loan word and the majority, if not all, people believe strongly that AIDS is a divine punishment for forbidden sexual acts. This disease brings to our mind the story of Sodomities in the Qur'an.

Cancer, on the other hand, is called السرطان in Arabic and shares with AIDS the concept of silent or slow death. Patients countdown their last days which makes it more fearful and dreadful. It is the wrath of God and a punishment. All this is due to the performance of actions forbidden by God. The name of such diseases, their location, and medication and other related issues are taboo to mention openly in Arab culture. Even the sick should not be informed of it directly. The speaker has to twist the words and should use the alternate and soft expressions to achieve the purpose. To tell openly is a real taboo. However, due to the belief that death is
inevitable, and fate is determined, the only way left is to accept the reality and lead the destined life.

In Arab culture, bad omen is associated with اليرص (leprosy). The very idea that deformation of the skin is incurable makes the patients feel unhappy and uncomfortable. This disease, being an incurable one, is narrated from the story of Jesus, as it was one of his signs as a messenger of Allah to heal lepers. So it is impermissible to talk of it. The same is said about العمى (blindness) and العور (one-eyedness). In this way, Arabs react to taboo effects of some of the monstrous diseases that destroy one's life.

**Madness**

The word جنون (madness) as a noun was derived from جنة, meaning to cover because in madness the mind is covered, according to Ibn Habeeb (1987:39). There are eighty words in Arabic that refer to madness, directly or indirectly. The situations and conditions mad persons live in and the symptoms of madness have been described in books of Arab literature and dictionaries. Their movements, gestures, and the way they walk and talk, distortions in behaviour, and their manners have also been written. Being low in intelligence level and mentally retarded are the most prominent symptoms to identify this category of people.

Reciting chapters from the Qur'an was, and still, is a remedy to free possessed persons from an evil spirit, (Xasxusi, 1993:49). This kind of people are not obliged to perform prayers or religious rituals like prayers, fasting, pilgrimage, …etc, because they should be clean and conscious of their actions while doing so. The causes of insanity in Arab culture are
attributed to religion, inheritance, old age, accidents, and even adoration (of love).

Doctors or those who treat them are required to be patient and can expect abnormal acts, like offence and insults from them. In the Abbasid era, the first asylum was established and called "دار المجانین" (House of Mad persons). Before this time, it is reported that the insane, if the case was serious, was handcuffed while some others showed kindness and hospitality to socialize them in their community, as Xaṣṣusī (1993: 185) describes. Thus, the usage of taboo words in Arabic like ﻣﺠﻨﻮن (mad), ﻣﺨﺒﻮل or ﺧﺒﻞ (idiot), and ﻣﻌﺘﻮه (mad) is taboo or offensive to describe mad persons.

3.7.4 Taboo of Naming and Addressing

This section tackles two important things: the taboo ways of naming and means to avoid addressing others in Arab culture.

**Naming**

Naming means giving a name to a person or something. In Arab culture as well as in Islam, one should choose nice names that hold pleasantness in meaning and bring good omen, according to An-Nuwawi (1972: 119-20). It is clear that if the name is taboo, then the word becomes taboo too. As is explained that this issue as far as the names of Allah and His attributes are concerned should be spoken carefully to avoid the guilt of taboo. The word ﻋﺒﺪ (slave) is added before His names to name someone. Further, referring to His names, the definite article ﺗَال (the) in Arabic is prefixed to them.

Moreover, it is forbidden to name someone by ﻋﺒﺪ الرسول (slave of the Prophet) or ﻋﺒﺪ النبی (slave of the Messenger), since this kind of naming
implies worshipping the prophet who is a human being. As it has been stated in religious taboos, the Islamic belief is to worship none but Allah and so this kind of naming defeats the spirit of monotheism and consequently commits a crime of religious taboo.

Referring to the dead person in Arab culture is neither an insult to the surviving members of the family nor an offence to them. But to describe the dead's good deeds and call them heroic figures is more preferable as it may motivate the present generation to follow their steps. It is possible to find a family whose family member passes away and then his relatives name a new born child after him, irrespective if the dead is male or female. All these are still preserved in Arab heritage in forms of Arab proverbs, sayings, and practices.

In their article, Abdullah and Salih (2006) mention that some names are common to both males and females, like نجاح (success), نضال (struggle), and صباح (morning). However, it is not recommended to give a baby boy a name with female connotations, lest people should keep calling him by that name and vice versa.

It is possible to use the names of some animals like أسد (lion) to name persons to show their bravery or courage. While some others are prohibited like camel, crocodile, dog, donkey, fox, and pig, see Husamuddin (1985:93-4). Thus, in Arab culture, naming persons involve a selective kind of treatment keeping in mind the taboo associated with the names.

**Addressing**

When people address each other, they do not do it randomly, but it is subject to certain rules which are culturally-governed. The most important
factors that govern the use of these rules are power, solidarity, and age. A person can be addressed by first name, last name, or a title, depending on the situations and social relations.

In situations when superiors are addressed, they receive a title because of the power they have, as in these relations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Addressee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official</td>
<td>manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>the king</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient</td>
<td>doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child</td>
<td>father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldier</td>
<td>officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child</td>
<td>uncle (fathers' friend)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In turn, the addresses in the type mentioned above could give the first name or can call the low rank persons by name or any title depending on the context. Thus, if a speaker is inferior to his/her addressee, the addressee can use the names as their respective status demand. In other words, formal versus informal relations affect the naming system.

In Arab culture, addressing someone elder, say by twenty years or more, the first name is avoided and unacceptable, even if you are superior. Thus, age is a decisive factor in the system, except the army is excluded. Al-Juboori (2002:68-70) emphasizes that certain forms of addressing persons among themselves are employed to express the status of participants appropriately.
Spolsky (1998:20-22) clarifies that the system of Arab speakers, though there is an elaborate set of patterns to address each other, is characterized by the custom of using the following formulae: father, for example, is addressed as (ابو فلام (father of) + the first name of his eldest son or daughter); they say "أبو احمد" means father of Ahmed. Mother is addressed in the same way, that is: (أم (mother of) + the first name of her eldest son or daughter). "أم أحمد" means mother of Ahmed. Not only is it restricted to those who have children, but it is even implied to those who are childless. Some names are customarily codified as follows:

- عبدالله is addressed as (ابو نجم (father of Najim)
- أحمد is addressed as (ابو شهاب (father of Shihab)
- علي is addressed as (ابو حسين (father of Hussein)
- صالح is addressed as (ابو مهدي (father of Mahdi)

As soon as the parents have a child, a shift is made from this traditional mode of naming to the use of names they give to their eldest child. Most importantly, the role of age is reflected when a high rank, like president or minister, addresses a low rank employee who works for him with (father of so and so or حاج (pilgrim) so and so).

Some forms like حبيبي, حبي, حبيبي, meaning darling, my love, and my life respectively are gender-restricted terms: it is unacceptable and offensive to use them by adults of the opposite sex (male-female) among themselves as they may produce a sense of sexual awareness, Farghal and Shakir (1994:248). As a result, naming in Arab culture is unique and has a wide range of forms.
3.7.5 Swearing

Al-Mursi (2000:350) comments that شتائم (swearing) means insulting or abusing somebody. اللعنة (cursing), on the other hand, means banishing, see Ibn Faris (1999:253). Swearing words, from a historical point of view, have not appeared widely in dictionaries. It is believed they were rare; and Arabs avoided the use of swearwords. Even those words which have been listed for swearing due to cultural change are meaningless and obsolete. Even if they are used, people would be unable to know their structure as well as the meaning.

However, like other cultures, dog-based insults, according to Berlitz (1982:60), have been used for this purpose for thirteen centuries. He adds that "Ya, ibnil kalb" (Oh, son of the dog) is the fighting expression in Arabic. It is thought that "Ya, kalb" (Oh, dog) is used similarly. Animal-based and insanity-based insults are employed to express anger and insults. When applied to people, the names of some animals have harsh and insulting meanings. It is taboo to call a person with animal names like pig, bitch, donkey, cow, ox, horse, hen …etc, unless the context and the situation allow this use.

One of the gravest insults used to offend a person is by talking of his/her mother from a sexual perspective. Similar kind of grave insult is the reference to the vagina of someone's mother, according to Silverton (2009:135-8). The mother-based insults are specifically vaginal. He adds that "through the Arab world, the most terrible thing you can say to insult someone is" kus emak" (your mother's cunt). The Hebrew equivalent is the same, and surprisingly about 70 per cent of Hebrew swearing is Arabic". Sister-based insults are probably the closest in power to mother ones. This is why both mother and sister insults were used to hurt the
feelings of others and insult them. Likewise, calling someone "the son-of-a-whore" is an extreme insult. In general, sex-related insults and swearing are absolutely taboo and should be avoided for what has been explained.

Religion-based swearing words or insults, especially those related to Allah and all His prophets are very offensive and avoided. The consequences of uttering swear words in religious matters should be thought of. The reaction of the insulted person to such an offence is unpredictable, because the concept of faith or blasphemy is deep-rooted in the heart of the majority, especially when these words are uttered by a non-Muslim person, (Hughes, 2006:33).

3.7.6 Taboo and Sex
Under the area of sex, there are several topics to be discussed; all of them are related to forbidden sex acts, sexual organs, or sexual relations.

Sexual Organs
The discussion of matters related to human body organs is sensitive; and this sensitivity increases as we come closer and closer to the names of private parts of the body. Generally speaking, the tabooess behind the avoidance of a direct reference to private parts is decency, taking into consideration the conservative culture of Arabs. Zuwein (2000:18) explains that to refer to sexual organs is unpleasant, reluctant, and shameful.

In Arabic, there is no historical record available that gives an exact date when, why, and how human sexual organs appeared in written texts. Dictionaries recorded the standard and the classical names for sexual organs which are not taboo since tabooess consists in slang. The more
vulgar and slang the expressions are, the more taboo and sensitive naming of the private parts in question would be. Even in secular circles, talking of this issue is like an island in a sea or an oasis in a desert. And serious discussion will be frowned on in these societies. The names of sexual organs in Arabic have different effects depending on their context; if used in slang way, they are taboo, while in standard Arabic they are not. The Arabic slang words that denote sexual organs are still at the heart of Arabic sexual taboos; it is reflected in the place of mother-based insults, which is specifically vaginal in a language like Arabic, as Silverton (2009:135) comments. Thus, the genital organs for women are usually more strongly tabooed than their male counterparts, as Qanbar (2011:97) says. In a place of gathering of men and women, even in a medical context, mentioning an issue related to vagina is strongly taboo. Women themselves do not feel free or comfortable to talk about it openly, unless with very intimate friends. Women still look for female doctors, especially in the matters of gynaecology and obstetrics. Consulting a male doctor for them is the last resort when no female doctor is available.

Though a phonemic replacement occurred in the way of pronouncing male sex organs in its history, they are still taboo in Arabic culture. This replacement appeared in Arab literature and books of language fourteen centuries ago. It is safe enough to say that they come after their female counterpart in their taboo effect. They are referred to politely via general-for-specific device. Doctors, lovers, or close friends are the only ones who can talk about it. Medical terms and metonymy are used when reference is made in conversations and discussions to avoid embarrassment. In brief, tabooness of sexual organs is linked with the use of colloquial or slang rather than standard expression.
Sexual Acts

The word that refers to and describes the process of intercourse has a very long history in Arabic language. This history stretches back to sixteen centuries. The word ﻥﯿﮏ (fuck), though classical, was used to refer to the act directly without any semantic or rhetoric expression. In certain situations like, a judgment by a judge at the court and so on, it is still employed to unveil and disclose the truth, whether a man had it with a woman or not, as narrated by Al-Buxari (2002:167). The word witnessed a change in its level over these long years, and now it is viewed as a colloquial word with the meaning of 'fuck', loosing its standard. It is equal to the rank female sex organ occupies in Arabic. For religious and judicial reasons, this word is used openly and clearly to know what has happened as the judgment is passed depending on this word. People in practice try to avoid the mention of the word due to its clear tabooness. Husamuddin (1985:102-3) explains that sex and other related issues are the most important and the widest field of tabooness in Arab linguistic communities. Books on metonymy and innuendos support this opinion, see Al-Jirjani (1908).

Adulteration

Generally speaking, decency and shamefulness are behind the prohibition of speaking about this topic in Arabic for two reasons: the first, it being related to sex and the second is because these acts are associated with illegality or illegitimacy which is condemned in both religion and culture. Arab culture before Islam allowed polygamy on conditions that a husband should be fair with his wives and financially capable of supporting them. In spite of this provision, it was possible to find some people from both the sexes having either illegal sexual relations or extramarital relations.
The social concepts and values to a certain extent are shared by all people in Arab countries regardless of their religious and social background.

After Islam, polygamy continued if those two conditions are fulfilled but illegal sexual relations were forbidden. Taboo in this context is associated with the place where sexual acts are made and persons involved in such heinous crimes. Historically, prostitution was free and could be made everywhere before Islam. Islam forbade any type of prostitution or extramarital sexual acts. Both the sexes are subject to this prohibition and have to face the same penalties if found committing such an immoral act, depending on their marital status. This prohibition is clearly stated in the Qur'an in the following verse in various chapters as follows: "And come not near to unlawful sex. Verily, it is a great sin and an evil way (that leads one to Hell unless Allah forgives him). (17:32).

Similarly, the place for these acts was, and still, called بيت الدعارة or بيت الخلاعة (house of prostitution or house of nakedness), as stated by أب-سُيْعُوَّتٍ (1998:300). It is shameful to enter these places these days for the dishonour these places bring. Being widely condemned, women who work in such places are called out by very unpleasant and dirty labels like قَحْبَة (whore), فَاجَّرَة (wicked), دَاعِرَة (prostitute), زَانِيَة (fornicatress), سَاقَطَة (fallen), or بَنَتُ شَارِع (street woman), as Kuraε An-Namil (1976:304) explains.

Extramarital acts are the second type of illegal sexual acts wherein the woman is involved in illegal sexual relation is not a prostitute by profession. The two sexes involved in this issue are viewed differently: Sadiqi (2003:139) asserts that "... Arabic terms that refer to men's adultery are much less cruel than the ones that refer to women's adultery."
She further adds that it makes a sort of a bias or an unfairness from a cultural but not religious point of view, "although in the Qur'an, it is stated that adulterous men and women should both be harshly punished. Adulterous women pay a higher price than adulterous men." This discrepancy is likely to encourage men or husbands to force women or wives to accept their husbands' infidelity, and even permits women's close family or husbands to kill as a punishment. The expression الخيانة الزوجية (lit. marital treason: adultery) in Arabic under such a situation is taboo.

Whether married or not, females face the same social punishment; it is sometimes honour killing which is a feature that characterizes not only Arab culture, but even other countries in the Middle East like Iran, Pakistan and India, even though laws are against it. Authorities close their eyes and not follow the killer, as this crime, adultery, challenges conservative values and norms. In the view of Nasser (2010:15), honour killing is "not only seen as a taboo topic, but as a private family issue."

The deflowering of unmarried women brings dishonour because virginity is the symbol of the honour for the female and her family among Arab countries. As women's chastity is highly safeguarded, girls are more watched than boys. Deflowering of unmarried woman has a bad impact on her image which can constitute taboo. In short, virginity is viewed so sacred that it dramatizes its impact on girls and enhances family and social control over families. Talking of it in a mixed gathering can constitute taboo too. Regarding adultery, it could be the result of a sexual act with deflowering a woman or otherwise. Despite of the high possibility of deflowering a woman and not to conceive a child, the probability cannot be neglected and a child born in such an illegal way is called ابن زنا (illegitimate child) or ابن حرام "son of illegitimacy". If taken literally, this word is highly avoided and forbidden because of the
negative feelings associated with this expression, as Al-Jallad (2008:82) explains.

Although Arabic has words like عاشقة (beloved or sweetheart female) and خليجة (girlfriend) which were used over fourteen centuries ago, they are now obsolete and cannot be used because of the bad connotations they have. Both Islam and its culture ban and forbid marriage against one's will. Lawful marriage requires a guardian (like father, brother, ..etc) and two reliable witnesses. We believe that the word صاحبة which in Arabic gives the meaning of wife cannot be used because of the bad sense this word carries in the current Arabic. It denotes a "girlfriend" in the current use, especially in speech as this kind of relations is rejected and refused in culture. To avoid any misunderstanding, when there is a boy student's colleague who is a female one, زميلة (colleague) is used to refer to the friendly relationship.

In Arab culture in the past, polygamy (having more than one wife) was permissible. Islam allows that too. Polygamy is linked to 'darra' phenomenon where, for example, two wives or more are 'darra' to each other. According to Az-Zarī (1992:69), in the context of taboo in this field, to call one of the wives ضرة (darrah), derives from the root ضر "harm", is taboo and harmful too. Under such circumstances, other expressions like الزوجة الأولى (the first wife) and الجارة (neighbour) are recommended, as Al-'zhari (2001:314) describes.

**Incest**

The term 'incest' means "having sex with a family member who belongs to the doer's family", like a man having sex with his sister, daughter, mother, aunt …etc, or a woman having sex with her son, brother, father,
uncle…etc. In Muslim community, this circle enlarges in Arab society.\(^{(1)}\) Death is the punishment for this shameful and heinous act, if it is intentional. Laws are against this act. Further, when amnesty is declared or passed, persons committing such a crime are excluded and are not released from prison. There is no particular word or expression to denote the doer of this act, like motherfucker in English, so this immoral act is expressed as: كَمْنِ يَأْتِي مِهَارُمَهَ like someone (man) performs a sexual act with his/her (so and so) forbidden family member. Thus, there is no taboo word but a long expression to express the crime of incest in Arabic.

**Homosexuality**

Sodomy is one of the areas of taboo in Arabic. If one refers to the story of Sodomites narrated in the Qur'an, the gravity of their crime of homosexuality becomes explicit as follows:

And when our messengers came to Lot, he was grieved on account of them and felt himself strained for them (lest the town people should approach them to commit sodomy with them). He said:" This is a distressful day". And his people came rushing towards him, and since aforetime they used to commit crimes (sodomy), he said:" O my people! Here are my daughters (i.e. the women of the nation), they are purer for you (if you marry them lawfully). So fear Allah and degrade me not with regard to my guests! Is there not among you a single rightminded man?" They said: "Surely, you know that we have neither any desire nor need of your daughters and indeed you know well what we want!" He said: "Would that I had strength (men) to overpower you, or what I could betake myself to some powerful support (to resist you)." They (messengers) said:" O Lot! Verily, we are the messengers from your Lord! They shall not reach you! So travel with your family in a part of the night, and let not any of you look back; but your wife
(will remain behind), Verily, the punishment which will afflict them, will afflict her. Indeed, morning is their appointed time. Is not the morning near?" So when Our commandment came, We turned (the towns of Sodomy in Palestine) upside down, and rained on them stones of baked clay, in a well-arranged manner one after another. Marked from your Lord; and they are not ever far from evildoers (polythesists). 11:77-83.

Surprisingly, their story in the Qur’an provides us with an invaluable record: the first is that the dwellers of Sodomites were the first who committed this terrible crime (2). The Prophet Lot forbade them and warned them not to commit this abnormal sexual act. Etymologically, the word لوطن (sodomy) in Arabic was derived from the name of the prophet Lot, who kept forbidding his people not to commit this crime, as stated by Al-‘sfahani (1990:459). This type of formation of derived words is very common in Arabic. According to Abu Zaid (1996:476-9), Arabic has various ways to derive or attribute things to:

- The cause not the thing that causes it
- Person who causes something and not the cause
- Action but not its doer
- Part-to-whole
- Whole-to-part
- And finally, the action to its close association

The punishment itself is the indication of the gravity of the crime which almost violates human morals, and nature. Thus, the doer of this crime is either burnt, stoned, flogged till death, or thrown down from the tallest building in the place where he lives, as explained by Az-Zarī (1992:364-5). It is still criminalized.
Because of the reluctance resulting from such a crime, words like لوطی (homosexual) and شاذ (queer) are unpleasant to mention openly. Muslim countries are more stringent about the evil practices of such crooked people.

**Menstruation and Masturbation**

Both الحيض (menstruation) and الاشتناء (masturbation) have taboo connotations. As far as menstruation is concerned, its tabooness is derived from the state of woman being unclean. It indicates the puberty of a girl and it shifts her to the status of woman in society. The word menstruation is not taboo in a religious or medical context because in these two contexts it helps people understand the meaning of the process itself, and is not misunderstood. Menstruation marks a new phase in the life of a girl, which is, according to Sadiqi (2003:81), psychologically and culturally remarkable.

Menstruating women should not be involved in religious rites. They are forbidden to perform prayer (salat), fasting, pilgrimage, attending prayer (salat) at mosques, and according to some Muslim scholars' opinion, they are not even allowed to touch the Qur'an. As soon as the menstruation period is over, the women has to take a bath to be clean and resume her regular religious rite the details of which are given in *Fatawa Al-Mar'ah Al-Muslimah* (2005). Normally, women keep it secret when the menstruating cycle starts, unless it is for the first time. Girls, in this case, are advised to inform their mothers of their very first menstruation to avoid the loss of their virginity.

المستنة (Masturbation), on the other hand, is like menstruation: it is taboo to mention or talk about it in a mixed company, or openly. Like
menstruating women, the men who fall victim to masturbation, religious rites are not allowed to be performed, unless they take a bath. It is also called العادة السرية (the secret vice).

3.7.7. Human Body and Taboo
This section addresses the tabooness surrounding human body as some human body organs and excretions are unpleasant and not preferable to speak about.

Body Parts
Some body organs or parts are forbidden to talk of openly as it is indecent and impolite to do so. This avoidance is not only observed in discussions, but it is shameful to look at the pictures of private parts from pornographic magazines. The booksellers who sell them are asked to allocate some special corners to sell such magazines. Whatever may be the reason behind their selling, the perception of people about them is that they spread taboo issues in society.

Let us consider woman's body parts. Sadiqi (2003:80) confirms that women's body itself is one of the strongest taboos in this field. Women in Arab society were not allowed to wear veils till the advent of Islam, according to Az-Zarî (1992). And obviously, the taboo related to this issue was widespread before Islam. All body parts of a woman, if seen, fall under this taboo category. So it is recommended for women to put on full-length dresses and clothes, veils, and even gloves to cover the body in full. The debate over this issue is always hot and it is one of the challenges to Muslims immigrants to Europe, America, Australia and some parts of Asia, and the Muslim women are likely to suffer due to unfavourable circumstances in these countries.
To start this discussion, the most taboo word related to women's body after sex organs is ثدي (breast). This word appears in all dictionaries, but it was, and still is not preferable to mention in poetry. In the course of time, this word became loaded with bad connotations and so in certain contexts results it in a shock to the hearer. Its use in scientific and medical fields is permissible like anatomical contexts, or when breast diseases are discussed. People employ in their everyday communication paralinguistic and some other linguistic devices that help them mention it. The same sanctions are imposed on body trunk, groins, and buttock. Parts like خصر (waist), ساق (leg), and عيون (eyes) are avoided too to mention openly as they symbolize women's beauty in Arab literature.

Men's organs like groins and buttocks are also avoided. All the parts mentioned above are impermissible to talk of in a mixed company or openly, except when the context is medical. Tabooness and avoidance of these words increase when slang expressions are employed. Husamuddin (1985:57) clarifies that the use of نور (the end) was abandoned since the fourth century after Hijra because of the phonemic similarity with صرم (buttock or anus). More examples are found in Kuraε An-Namil (1976:52-4), which denote anus and the areas around it.

**Body Excretions**

In Arab culture, the treatments of body excretions represented by بول (urine) and خرارة (shit) take a top priority. Till the seventies or even the eighties of the last century, these excretions were the ingredients used to treat diseases. Moreover, the solid waste of human body excretions might be used in black magic. People have the belief that the evil eye effect can
be nullified when someone urinates in the place where the person with evil eyes sits.

Common infections and sufferings in urology are shared easily with doctors and other people, but those related to rectum and anus are not easy to share. Their functions even though being similar in nature that is to discharge harmful wastes, are looked upon differently. This difference, consequently, is reflected in the degree of tabooness of both. The nouns تبول (the process) and بول (the liquid) in Arabic differ too when used in speech. The former is freely mentioned as it is associated with medical sciences whereas the latter is somehow unpleasant to talk of openly.

Despite being a standard expression, خراة (faeces) in the course of time has changed its meaning to shit. So it is a taboo word nowadays. This word is associated with stinging and foul smell. To describe how dirty a person is, this word is enough to be employed. When a tribal battle took place, tribesmen of the Pre-Islamic period used to go to fight on an empty stomach, in case they were wounded in the abdominal part to avoid wastes spilling out. In such a case, the wounded persons were viewed as gluttonous which was a disgrace in men's personality. In brief, compared to expressions that denoting urine or liquid excretions, solid wastes are more avoided to be discussed openly for their more taboo effect.

The usage of places where these wastes are discharged is under these sanctions and restrictions. These places acquired various names during the course of history and each has its own story. الغانط (bathroom) was the first name used in Arabic to label toilet. It was derived from the name of the place where people used to go to answer nature's call. It was a big and wide hole dug in earth. Normally, the dwellers of the deserts used them
for this purpose. Their houses were made of wool or hair of animals like goats and sheep. The development in their life style brought them from desert to city-like places which resultantly affected their language too. The name of such a place denotes the solid wastes.

Until recently, the most popular word for toilet was المرحاض. It carries unpleasant connotations these days probably because of foul smell and so that it is forbidden, as stated by Anis (1984:142) and Abduttawab (2000:63).

3.7.8 Politics
Politically, the word هزيمة (a defeat) is usually associated with the loss or the failure in political career or war. It is defined as "the failure to win or to be successful". As a taboo word in Arab world, it appeared after the war with Israel in 1967 for the first time when Arabs did not win the war. It was avoided to use it since that time in order not to make the Arab people feel frustrated and dispirited, according to Kura An-Namil (1976:355) and Abu Zulal (2001:71).

In the political arena too, criticizing political leaders, like the presidents or the government, is taboo and banned by laws which were legislated to prevent this act. It is a crime to publish an article that is considered or perceived as threat to the unity of the Arab World. Same is perceived even if it is a threat to the unity of an individual Arab nation. In some countries such a criticism, as Qanbar (2011:93) describes, is severely censored.

The name of الخليج العربي (Gulf of Arab), has agitated a political debate in the Arab world in geographical context these days. To name it 'the
Persian Gulf' is unacceptable to Arabs. Although from a historical point of view it was called the gulf of Arab not the Persian, as it forms a part of Arab geography and obviously people who habitat around this gulf are Arabs, as Abu Zaid (1996:249) describes. As a result, there are certain dimensions of taboo in Arab politics.

3.7.9 Aging

It is important to know that \(\text{اﻟﻜﺒﺮ} \) (aging) is an unavoidable process in the cycle of human life. Every person, sooner or later, has to face the problems of this phase of age. However, the concept differs from culture to culture. In Arab culture, old age is associated with good connotations. People show reverence to old people and so this age is viewed as virtuous. Two significant factors have shaped the virtue of being aged. The first one is religion. In Islam, it is an honour, a duty, and a blessing to take care of the parents in their old age. Just to pray for them, though it is a duty of youngsters, is not enough. Their children are obliged to behave with them with timeless compassion as they did the same when they were helpless children themselves. Parents, and especially mothers, are honoured. They have to be treated with kindness and selflessness. Ibrahim et al (1997:64-5) clarifies that serving one's parents is a duty of children second to salat (prayer), and it is the right of parents to expect it. It is considered disgraceful to express any sort of irritation even when parents misbehave as it is their old age that makes them lose their temper. This religious duty is stated in the Qur'an as follows:

"And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, not shout at them but address them in terms of honour. And lower unto them the wing of submission and humility through mercy, and say:
"My Lord, bestowe on them Your mercy as they did bring me up when I was young." 17:23-4.

Thus, what would be a "matter of taboo" that is an old person is looked upon as a "matter of reverence" in the religion of Islam. Culture, on the other hand, is the second factor that helps focus on this issue. Old age is associated with wisdom and seniority in the traditions and norms of Arabs. The older the person is, the more there is respect for him. Accordingly, old people enjoy high prestige because of their wisdom and experience which is a blessing for the youngsters. Traditionally speaking, Arabs live according to a tribal and patriarchal form of society that bestows more credit upon the old people, as they are the senior ones in society. Therefore, in Arab culture to show respect and obedience to the aged ones، الشيخ (sheik) or عم (uncle) or حجيج (pilgrim) are the most common titles used for them as a token of respect.

The family system and values further make aged ones free from the feeling of loneliness or isolation. In Arab culture, the families mostly stay united at least for three or more generations. This social system is a wonderful balm to the pains of isolation due to old age. The same values are handed down to the next generations. So it is shameful and dishonourable not to take care of the parents in Arab culture. There are social sanctions imposed upon those who do not take care of their parents.

Thus, it is rare to find an 'old age house' in many Muslim countries. In the researcher's country, it is only one kind of it. Its dwellers are taken care of, and even money is paid to them. Even though the religion of Islam and its culture hold 'old age' at high esteem, there is another side of the coin. Arab do use the expression 'انت خرفان أو خرف' (you are dotard) when they
are upset. In such a situation, there is only tabooess of the word 'old age' in Arab culture.

3.7.10 Other Issues
Under this section, some topics with reference to taboo in Arabic will be discussed.

Envy
الحسد (envy) is defined as one's wish that other person must lose something for no gain of his own. Arabs believe in the word power, and a person's eyes may have an evil effect on anything that he likes or admires, according to Qanbar (2011:96). So people get scared of envy or evil eyes, as stated by Ėabduttawab (1994:350). Evil eye is a source of misfortune, and considered to be a destructive force in society which is physically able to harm other individuals or destroy an object adhered by the admirer. To avoid the bad consequences, the owner may offer the same thing to the admirer. Moreover, Arabs are quick to offer blessings upon another and even the admirer him/herself does the same to protect the admired object from ruin. It is expected that, if the admired thing is a person, the admired may die or meet with an unfortunate accident or suffer from some incurable disease. Thus, taboo due to envy is exhibited in the following lines composed by Nydel (2006:99):

" to the Arab way of thinking… words have power; they can to some extent affect subsequent events. Arab conversation is peppered with blessings, which are little prayers for good fortune, intended to help keep things going well. Swearing and the use of curses and obscenities are very offensive to Arabs. If words have power and can affect events, it is feared that curses may bring misfortune just by being uttered. The
liberal use of blessings also demonstrates that the speaker holds no envy toward a person or object …. Belief in the evil eye (often just called "the eye") is common, and it is feared or acknowledged to some extent by most Arabs although less so by the better educated …. The harm may be prevented, however, by offering blessings or statements of goodwill."

Poverty
Poverty exists everywhere and Arabs are no exception. The jobless poor, in order to support themselves or their families, either beg or ask for help from others to fulfill the basic necessities of life like food, shelter, and clothing. The poor have their own dignity like others which should be safeguarded. It is religiously as well as socially condemned to remind the poor of one's generosity. To offer charity secretly to the poor is always better, and it is from the religious teachings, as stated by Husamuddin (1985:82-3). So it is taboo to call a poor person as ﻫﺎ:@{ (beggar) in Arab culture.

Miserliness and Covetousness
In Arab culture, words that refer to miserliness and covetousness are avoided to use. A person has to be hospitable depending on his/her monetary status. To describe someone directly with any of the following words is harsh and should be avoided, and as explained by Abu Zulal (2001:125-7), it could show taboo effect on some one's personality.

- ﺑﺨﯿﻞ (miser)
- ﺷﺤﯿﺢ (covetous)
- مغ플 آلد (the person with tied up hand).
- ﻣﻘﺘﺮ (niggardly)
- ﯾﻘﺒﺾ ﯾﺪﮫ (the one who closes his hand)
Lying

Generally speaking, الكذب (lying) is defined by Al-Fayyumi (1996: 528) as "telling about something against what it is in reality whether intentionally or by mistake." It is difficult to persuade people with some words without having what proves a said statement. Although institutions tend to be economical with the truth under the pretext they have policies and strategies aiming at securing their entity, it is a matter of not telling the truth. People believe that it is unjustifiable to hide or cover the truth; it has to be shared with others. "Nobody likes to be accused of being" a liar, Holder (2007:28). Lying is forbidden in religion, however, some people do tell lies, and others exaggerate when telling a story. كاذب (liar) and كاذب (exaggerated form for a person who keeps telling lies), these expressions are forbidden to use unless extremely necessary.

People who work in business and commerce are not recommended to be called سماسرة (brokers: old name for tradesmen). This name, according to Abu Zaid (1996:299), was changed before 1400 years ago. These days, for some reasons, it is used as a pejorative title for go-betweens or mediators in trade and commerce.

Like lying, رشوة (bribery) is also condemned in Arab culture. According to An-Nuwawi (1996:115), persons in position are offered or given a sum of money or something valuable to persuade them to help the giver, especially for doing something unlawful and dishonest, it is called رشوة (bribery). The doer of this act is راشي, and the receiver is called مرتشي. Both the actions are banned and are considered to be taboo in religion and law. There are social sanctions against these acts as well.
3.8 Motivations of Taboo

When acts, sayings, or things are avoided and forbidden obviously there are certain reasons behind it. The forbidden things vary from one society to another depending on their beliefs and traditions. It is important to concentrate on the sources that encourage Arab society to forbid and impose sanctions on these forbidden acts. Some of the important motivations are as follows:

Religion

In the religious context, the meaning of the word *taboo* in Arabic was derived from religion, 'ﺣﺮام' (forbidden), which according to Steiner (1956:69) corresponds to the Hebrew word 'qadosh' meaning 'forbidden'. He adds that the sacred things or places were marked in a peculiar manner to indicate their holiness. There are many verses in the Qur'an which explicitly guide Muslims to avoid forbidden things; no matter they are acts or sayings. Consider the following verses: "And insult not those whom they(disbelievers) worship besides Allah, lest they insult Allah wrongfully without knowledge" (6:108), "Say ( O Mohammed) But the things my Lord has indeed forbidden are great sins and every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse whether committed openly or secretly, sins (of all kinds), unrighteous oppression, joining partners (in worship) with Allah for which He has given you no authority, and saying things about Allah you have no knowledge." (7:33). Believers are praised for being not involved in evil talk as in the verse "And those who do not bear witness to falsehood, and if they pass by some evil play or evil talk, they pass by it with dignity." 25:72. Al-Jirjani (1908:3) illustrates this Qur'anic text that the believers avoid the direct involvement in the above acts either in speech or practice. Being Muslims influenced by the teachings of Islam, Qanbar (2011:91) mentions that these teachings play a vital role in
restricting the use of taboo words and acts, as Prophet Mohammed (peace and blessing upon him) has said: "The true believer is modest nor does he/she use vulgar language.", according to Ibn Hanbal (1990:151). On the other hand, Ibn Ėutheimin (2004:5) clarifies that it is not enough to avoid شرك (polytheism) only, but obscene words and expressions must be avoided as well. The expressions that contradict with the concept of the pillars of Islam, the names of Allah (God), His prophets, and all taboo issues in Islam, according to Abu Zaid (1996:11), should never be used to avoid their taboo feature. Thus, religion of Islam has excellent teachings to save the society from taboo practice.

**Psychological Factor**

The psychological factor also plays a significant role in human life which ultimately is reflected in human language. Words have power to influence human behaviour. We utter words to ask for help or protection; some words are avoided to keep ourselves safe and away from any harm and suffering, this is, as Husamuddin (1985:7) describes, how words make a person happy as well as turn him/her sad. This fact is made explicit in the Arabic word جرح (wound), which is used for referring to wounds or injuries resulting from accidents or from insults or bad words. There is a proverb in Arabic which says "wounds of swords are curable, but wounds of tongue are not." Words with bad connotations are disliked by human taste which is subject to the culture of a given society, according to Ėabduljaleel (2001:71) and Anis (1984:140). Under the psychological source, there are a few more factors as follows:
Fear
Zuwein (2000:19) believes that fear is one of the psychological factors behind the avoidance of certain taboo words in linguistic community whereas Ad-Dayah (1996:395) says that fear is confined to primitive societies only. Such fear is the real driving force behind people to shun from certain forbidden words and create new words and expressions in their place which suit to the culture, belief, and traditions of the community. That is why names of certain animals, poisons, and magic which are considered to be sources of fear are substituted by soften words. Anis (1984:143) adds that catastrophes, diseases, and natural tragic events cause a sort of phobia in human psyche as they link the bad names to these fearful events.

Omen
Az-Zamaxshari (1979:461) defines omen as hearing a good word and to see a good omen in. It denotes a sign of what is going to happen in the future. Al-Jirjani (1908:3) explains that expressions suggesting bad omen are avoided and replaced by more pleasant ones. For example, Arabs, as a part of their old traditions and customs, do not feel comfortable with the word يسار (left) when things or people are divided into two groups that is the right and the left. This fact is reinforced by the Qur'an as people on the Day of Judgment will be divided into two groups: أصحاب اليمين (those who are given the Record of their deeds in their right hand) and أصحاب الشمال those who are given their Record in their left hand. The Qur'an, as it has been mentioned, reinforced the connotations of the right and left in the minds of people, as in the following verses:

"And those on the Right hand- how (fortunate) will be those on the Right hand? (They will be) among thornless lote trees, And
among Talh (banana trees) with fruits piled one above another. And in shade long-extended. And by water flowing constantly. And those on the left hand—how (unfortunate) will be those on the Left hand? In fierce hot wind and boiling water. And shadow of black smoke, (That shadow) neither cool nor (even) pleasant.”

56:26-44.

Thus, the image of the fortunate people is associated with the right, whereas the unfortunate ones are with the left. Omen, whether good or bad, according to Ṣbduttawab (1994:345-6), is a force which reflects the influence of words over human behaviour. Man behaves under the influence of certain words uttered. In some rural areas, children are given bad names to be protected, especially when a family has suffered from the loss of children. Certain colours are linked to unfortunate future, for example, in Arab society; black is a sign of bad luck or sadness. This is why Arabs wear black when someone from their family passes away. In the past, when Arabs lived in deserts where no services and facilities existed like what is still seen these days, many sorts of difficulties, if not death, were obvious while roaming through the desert. They called the desert as مفازة (accomplishment) to avoid the direct name like صحراه (desert) with all its barrenness due to its unpleasant meaning. Likewise, الأعمى (blind) is called بصير (clear-sighted), and the person who was stung by a snake or scorpion, was called السليم (sound), as a matter of good omen. For more examples, see Ath-Thaṣalibi (1998:157).

To conclude, in Arab culture, the term الفأل (omen), whether good or bad, is closely associated with the human psychology which governs the human behaviour. Arabs try to transform the human psychology
by substituting the bad words with the good ones expecting good omen and these by protect themselves from the taboo effect of bad words.

**Shyness**

Normally, people feel shy when certain topics are openly talked of. As a matter of fact, these topics are taboo and impermissible to be discussed openly or in a specific situation as stated by Leebi (1980:104). Women sometimes cannot tell what they suffer from, especially when the pain is related to sexual organs or private parts because of shyness. It seems that gynaecology was founded for the tabooness surrounding the body of women than men's. As it is taboo to mention it to any one; girls have to tell their mothers only when they menstruate, especially for the first time. Very sensitive issues in society are not discussed by all family members for the same reason. Some expressions are metaphorized, according to Kamil (1963:25), if a word triggers sexual connotations due to shyness.

**Social Motivation and Delicacy**

The social motivation, as Ath-Thubeiti (2001:11) states, differs from one society to another, from nation to nation, and from one generation to another. For Arabs, being Muslims, blasphemous and swearwords are highly prohibited and avoided. They do not have expressions like girlfriend or boyfriend in their vocabulary. Such kinds of relations are totally rejected. Zuwein (2000:22) brings to attention that the social values of a community make people dislike envy-eyed persons, and put sanctions on them.

Possibly, members of the same society are viewed differently though they share the same values and perform the same duties. For instance, gender
in societies is viewed in a way which depicts them according to the values, traditions, and beliefs. In comparison with men whose jobs as مغني (singer) or ممثل (actor) which has neutral connotations, women whose job is the same have the connotations of "promiscuous and easy" - both feminine counterparts are euphemisms for prostitute. The same is said about the title ﻓﻘﯿﮫ (a teacher of the Qur'an to small children) and its feminine counterpart, ﻓﻘﯿﮭﮥ; the latter gives the meaning of fortune-teller, which holds bad connotations irrelevant to religion; whereas the masculine one has good connotations with religious meaning, according to Sadiqi (2003:138).

The place where human wastes are discharged gained different names: in 1970s, it was called ﻣﺮﺣﺎض, the names ﺧﻼاء (privy) was in 1980s, while ﻣﻐﺎﺳﻞ (sanitations) was in 1990s onward. In offices and homes, people call it ﺳﺤﯿﺎت (sanitary facility). The name given to them in markets differs; when a person wants to shed water, he has to ask about the nearest دورة مياه (water closet). Here, this use is a matter of delicacy since terms gain and loose semantic values in the course of time.

**Decency and Deference**

To be decent and polite, societies attempt all means to reflect this characteristic feature. However, it is relatively practised, depending on how society is conservative or open. Issues under this category also differ; they are subject to the norms of society. It is indecent to hug or kiss a woman openly in a conservative environment. It is worth mentioning that sexual acts, organs, and matters related to this field are taboo to speak of. They are blinded when referring to them; persons who refer directly to them are viewed as indecent and impolite, according to Anis (1984:142), Husamuddin (1996:56-7), and Quneibi (2005:73).
Bilingual dictionaries sometimes do not take into consideration whether a word is indecent when translated in a culturally-different context, or the word is obsolete; they should pick up the most appropriate or equivalent word. This fact is brought to our attention by Šumer (1998:266) who explains the indecent use of the Arabic word حبلى (pregnant) which appears in bilingual dictionaries these days.; it has been translated as 'pregnant' and 'mother-to-be', though it gives the indecent meaning of pregnant in current Arabic. Ath- ThaŒalibi (1998:6) confirms, as a part of Arab norms, they do not mention the names of their wives for the purpose of decency.

3.9 Sanctions on Women

There are various factors that collaborated with each other to practise sanctions over women in Arab society. This section tries to shed light on them. Islam imposed some sanctions only on women that aimed at protecting them and their dignity. Some of these sanctions have been, and are still, employed to criticize and launch attacks against Islam, especially in countries where Muslims are in a minority. These attacks are done by people who do not coexist with Muslims or Muslim countries. Before Islam, as Az-ZarŒi (1992:300) mentions, women did not wear veils, and were allowed to talk and even sit or meet men who admired their beauty and personality, before and after their marriage. This fact depicts the purity of women. Women under Islam are not allowed to do that to protect them and their dignity and honour from the intentions of ill-mannered men.

Women are disallowed to travel from one place to another alone without her husband or a family member who is forbidden to get married with her.
This is to avoid any danger or accident that a woman may face when alone and it requires men's interference that should be provided under the authority of her 'محرم (a person who is forbidden to get married of her). This prohibition is general, and includes even her travel to perform haj (pilgrimage) to Mecca.

A woman is forbidden to work outside the house, however, there are certain conditions under which a woman is allowed to work outside her house. It is possible to see women working in government or non-government jobs to support the family. The impact of education has allowed her to be involved in education and public sector, (Sadiqi, 2003:86). Developing their own business, women are allowed to set up her own business provided that she depends on a man who looks after difficulties or problems.

As language reflects and mirrors the society and its culture, Arabic – as a Semitic language - distinguishes between feminine and masculine forms, according to Ibn Al-'nbari (1970:73). It possesses a word to refer to a feminine gender and another one to stand for its masculine counterpart like ممثل (actor) and ممثلة (actress). Arabic is a male-dominated language. Traditions, norms, and habits of societies are seen in the language of its speakers. Zuwein (2000:16) believes that the avoidance of taboo words or acts is of the factors of social interaction between individual and the group he belongs to. Taboo is not linked to primitive societies, or a religion, or a sect. Rather it is known and practised in all civilizations, regardless of their beliefs, religions, and origins. However, individuals differ in the way language is used: educated people are likely to avoid using taboo words, whereas uneducated people do not. The same is said about adults vs. children in this respect. It is, as Qanbar (2011:97)
believes, more acceptable to hear a taboo expression from a male than from female. The difference tends to view city vs. village in the use of taboo words which is significant: rural people tend to use taboos of sex and bodily functions in public domain more frequently than those who live in cities. It is attributed to the fact that observing animal sexual behaviour is common and visible in agricultural communities. Poor people seem more vulgar because of their life style.

Woman is dealt with differently: it is unacceptable to discuss sensitive issues, especially those relevant to sex and other sensitive or fragile issues. The closer in relation to women when involved in conversation, the more sensitive it would be. Gazing at women is religiously and culturally non-permissible so women are kept invisible as much as possible. Talking to women, even greeting a woman in public places like streets or markets, is not preferable, unless necessity urges both to do that. The tabooness surrounds women and even the reference to them is not preferable. It is not acceptable to mention women's name for certain cultural reasons, not religious beliefs. This exists more in rural areas than cities, Ëufi (2009:135).

In a mixed company, women are listeners rather than speakers. Women can use their full names when introducing themselves in all events, or the names of their husbands, especially in social events. Their husbands' names are used when they are more prestigious. Woman's full name is mentioned in the neighbourhood to tell about the family and their social status. People who live in the same area know each other and social relations in rural areas are stronger than in cities.
In offices, bosses address women who work under them with بنتي (my daughter), though, Sadiqi (2003:135) explains, "the true function of the endearment terms used by men to women is to establish a hierarchical power relations between interactants in a setting and, thus, reproduces asymmetric patriarchal relations." Certain jobs women occupy are associated with bad connotations, whereas the same jobs for men are not, like مغنية (female singer) and ممثلة (actress). Jobs like them lessen reputation and dignity of women. In other words, these kinds of jobs are the euphemisms for prostitutes.

Both hermaphrodites (man who dresses himself like a woman and has an effeminate gait and carriage, and women who do the same) are cursed in Islam. Women should stick to their natural qualities and characteristics, and strictly avoid the imitation of the opposite sex in appearance as well as conduct. مختنش (hermaphrodite) and مسترجلة (man-like woman) are the words employed to refer to these types of people in society, this conduct or behaviour is condemned in religion and culture. The prophetic saying is "cursed are men who copy women, and cursed are women who copy men." according to Ibn Hanbal (1999:143-4). Men and women are ordered to lower their gaze: they should not look at forbidden things, especially when they look at each other (men look at women and vice versa). Women are allowed to use make-up at home to show their beauty to their husbands, but not outside to people.

3.10 Structure of Taboo in Arabic
These are the possible structure of taboos in Arabic:

- one word like كاذب (liar) and زاني (fornicator)
- two words like ابن زنا (illegitimate son)
three words or more like امسك فلان يده (so and so closes his/her hand) and كمن يأتي أمه (like who makes love with his mother)

Table (10) shows the structure of taboo words in Arabic:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Type of word</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>One word</td>
<td>كاذب (liar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Two words</td>
<td>ابن زنا (illegitimate son)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Three words or more</td>
<td>كمن يأتي أمه (like who makes love with his mother)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grammatical classes taboo words take in Arabic are the following:

1- verb , like يحسّد (envy), يكذّب (lie)
2- noun, like بول (urine), مرحاض (washroom)
3- adjective , like منهزم (defeated)
4- adverb , like زانية (manner related to adultery)

Taboo words occupy certain grammatical classes in Arabic shown in table (11) below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>يحسّد (envy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Noun</td>
<td>بول (piss)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Adjective</td>
<td>منهزم (defeated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Adverb</td>
<td>زانية (manner related to adultery)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (11) shows grammatical positions taboo words occupy

3.11 Semantics of Taboo in Arabic

In his book, Natural Language Semantics, Allan (2001) presents his assumptions on taboo in language. This section is concerned with what is
related to the topic. To him, taboo words are the words which are seen as offensive, shocking, or indecent when used in certain contexts and strict and tough sanctions are imposed on their use; penalties for violating the rules of use are imposed too.

As far as the rules of using names and address forms are concerned, they are governed by the role of participants and the situation in which these forms are used, Brown (1965:74). The type of relations is the function of power and social distance: power is perceived as the ability of one or the other interlocutor to affect the other, social distance is a function of relative familiarity, social standing, and group affiliation of interlocutors, differences in age, gender, ethnicity, class, religion, ideology …etc.

When the addressee is more powerful than the speaker, there is a great social distance between them; the normal polite behaviour is for the speaker to be more deferential and to use more formal style. There is a psychological distance that differs from one speaker to another, whether the addressee is the first, second, or third person. Allan's (2001) assumption here is "because the third person is intrinsically more distant from the speaker than the second person, its use to hearer exaggerates the social distance between speaker and hearer." This strategy is widely used.

If the speaker is inferior to hearer, nonreciprocal deferential forms such as Your/Her Majesty, Your/His highness, Your Lordship, Mr. President,…etc, all of which represent formal or frozen style. These relations, in terms of power and solidarity, are represented in the following scale:
Taboos on the use of names of gods are to avoid malevolence by counteracting possible blasphemies or profanities that arouse and invoke their wrath. Allan and Burridge (1991:37) clarify that blasphemy is profane speaking of God or sacred thing, impious irreverence. Names and attributes of Allah, and Muslim figures and symbols are covered under this point. They should not be altered in euphemistic expletives or swearing. Remodelling them is prohibited since such a use indicates irreverent reference.

Giving proper names like حرب (war), مرة (bitter), is forbidden; these names carry connotations of reluctance, disgust, and repulsion, see Az-Zarги (1992;53). Names like عبد الرسول (slave of the prophet) and عبد النبی (slave of the messenger) are forbidden because they imply the allowance of worshipping others beside Allah, and it is the core of tabooiness in religion. All types of worship should be directed to Allah, and the prophet is a human being; he is not to be worshipped.

Animal-based insults are avoided in Arab culture because some animals are used to associate the person to the animal. Some animals are traditionally avoided in this respect; they are:

- جمل (Camel): It is used for insult, it holds the meaning of spiteful and malicious.
- حرباء (Chameleon): It refers to a person who is unstable in opinion or behaviour, depending on the situation.
- **تمساح** (Crocodile): This animal symbolizes untrue or pretended sadness. It is said that a person sheds crocodile tears, it means he/she pretends to be sad, but the reality is not so. In Arab culture also it refers to a murderer who participates in the funeral of the victim and sheds tears, which gives the meaning of pretended sadness.

- **كلب** (Dog): This animal was widely used in the history of insults. Dog-based insults are avoided, according to Berltiz (1982:60), dog is viewed as dirty.

- **حمار** (Donkey) and mule: They are traditionally used to refer to stupid people: these two animals were used to carry huge burdens like books, but understand nothing from them.

- **ثعلب** (Fox): This animal is used to describe a person who is tricky or deceitful.

- **دجاجة** (Hen): It signifies a coward person.

- **بوم أو غراب** (Owl and crow): They are traditionally thought to be a sign for a bad omen.

- **خنزير** (Pig): Its meat is forbidden to be eaten in Islam; it is perceived unclean.

Taboo sexual acts can be summed up through the connotative meaning of زانية (fornicater and fornicatress); these two words carry the connotations of a person to be impure, unclean, unjust, sinful, and traitor. These traits, especially unjust, according to Az-Zarēi (1992:360), are given because the doer scorns the right of the partner (the spouse).

Terms surrounding women are numerous, according to the cycle of life they are in; they are different from their male counterpart terms. For instance, when she is still unmarried, she is described as عذباء (spinster),
in comparison with عازب (bachelor), she is viewed in this case that she is not socially advantaged, and cannot find a husband, or men are not interested to get married to. The problem becomes bigger when some words are used to describe her situation, like بائرة (uncultivated). This word is in classical Arabic through which she is likened to a fallow or uncultivated land; it holds heavy negative connotations. Whereas عازب (bachelor) has positive connotations of freedom and having all choices open to him to get married at any age, (Mills, 1995:84).

The status of woman is transformed from individualism to motherhood, as mother becomes a mother-to-be and gives birth. This status is in danger when women reach menopause, the phase of life during which a woman gradually stops menstruating. In other words, she will be unable to give birth; this age is perceived as old age and the beginning of the end. It is taboo to talk of, especially woman who thinks that her status or prestige in the eyes of her husband may be lessened, and he may start thinking of re-marriage. We cannot generalize to say that this experience exists in all Arab communities, see Sadiqi (2003:82-3,131).

Women who are widows are viewed as respected, well experienced, and successful women, who can manage family affairs either alone or with the support of her or her husband's family. They keep focusing on their children as long as they are living. Divorce represents a social defect for a woman so that it is avoided to talk of in her presence, Qanbar (2011:92).

3.12 Taboo and Strategies
The use of taboo expression, though it is prohibited and social sanctions are imposed over it, can achieve certain strategies in a conversation. These are the expected ones:
In-Group Strategy

It has been stated in (2.11), when there is interaction, two important points are taken into account: the role of participants and the situation they are in. Taboo words are avoided to be discussed freely unless certain rules and norms are followed to avoid violation and trespassing the restrictions imposed by society in dealing with taboos. The concept of a group is helpful for their free use and this makes taboos acceptable and permissible to be discussed. The more intimate a group of participants is, the freer they would be in the use of taboo words, Qanbar (2011:77). Swearwords and sexual taboos are mentionable and speakable by a group who are intimate in relation. It has been clarified how sensitive matters like sex are not mentionable in mixed company when women are a part of company.

Avoidance of Face Threatening Acts

Brown and Levinson (1987:61) define face as "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself." The beliefs, norms, and habits represent the hearer's wants. Any criticism or accusation or insult coming from someone, such act challenges the face and results in Face Threatening Act (FTA).

Avoidance of FTAs means the avoidance of what people believe to be certain embarrassing or offensive acts. Social and religious restrictions are observed to maintain interaction and respect the beliefs and traditions of others.

It has been explained that mentioning sensitive issues about women or asking someone how his wife is are prohibited, especially when it happens in a public place in the presence of people who do not know
about the relation between the person who asks and the person who is asked. Sadiqi (2003:134) believes that they are considered FTAs.

Summing Up

Talking of taboo in Arabic is a taboo in itself due to culture of the conservative Arab society. It is difficult to explore various aspects and areas of taboo in Arabic; the fundamental reason for it is the lack of enough references which have discussed this topic. The term itself was either translated, or transliterated, or an independent term was used to label taboo. The fields of sex, woman, religion, and other social issues give a vivid description of the vital role that norms, beliefs, and values play in society. Taboo words in Arabic occupy the position of verb, noun, adjective, and adverb. Semantically, the meanings of certain words are discussed.
Notes on Chapter Three

1- Muslim women are forbidden to get married with particular men who are mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an as follows:

"Forbidden to you (for marriage) are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your father's sisters, your mother's sisters, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your foster mothers who gave you suck, your foster milk suckling sisters, your wives' mothers, your stepdaughters under your guardianship, born of your wives to whom you have gone in- but there is no sin on you if you have not gone in them (to marry their daughters), - the wives of your sons who (spring) from your own loins, and two sisters in wedlock at the same time, except for what has already passed; verily, Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful." 4:23.

2- The story of the people at the time of Prophet Lot explains that they were the first people who committed sodomy, the Qur'anic text tells this truth, it says:"And (remember) Lot, when he said to his people: "Do you commit the worst sin such as none preceding you has committed in the mankind and Jinn?" Verily, you practise your lusts on men instead of women. Nay, but you are a people transgressing beyond bounds (by committing great sin)." (7:80-1)