

Factors and Manifestations of Ideological Extremism as Seen by Youth in Jordanian Universities: An Empirical Sociological Study

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Abstract: The aim of the study is to identify the factors behind ideological extremism and its manifestations from the perspective of Jordanian universities youth. It further aims to relate these factors to variables such as gender, place of residence, college type, family's monthly income, number of family members, parents' level of education, academic year, and accumulated average. This study was applied on (304) students of Yarmouk University, and data were collected by questionnaire. The result of the study revealed that youth in Jordanian universities reject ideological extremism albeit the presence of some of its manifestations. This was clearly shown when expressing opinion on a number of issues including co-education, openness to the West, boycotting Western products, or dealing with people from other faiths. Ideological extremism could mostly be ascribed to social factors, followed by the religious factor, then the political, the academic, and the economic. The study has found some slight differences attributed to gender in favor of females pertaining to political issues, while no differences in ideological extremism factors were attributed to the rest of the study's variables. The study recommended that for effective dealing with ideological extremism, all of the above mentioned social factors should be equally addressed.

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Introduction

Extremism has attracted much attention in social, political, and religious studies because of the dangerous consequences and the heavy burden placed on the shoulders of governments and communities. It has now become an international challenge because it is connected to other phenomena such as terrorism, violence, aggression, and hostility. There is no doubt that extremism and violence are as ancient as history. It can be tracked down to the first murder in humanity-- that of Cain killing his own brother Abel. Greek and Roman history and literature also abound with stories of violence, aggression and brutality. "The History of the Peloponnesian War", the war between Esparta and the Athenians accounts, and the accounts of the Roman Cicero 106-43 B.C. testify to this. Nicola Machiavelli, much later, mentioned tendencies of evilness in his famous book *The Prince*, which drive human beings to extremism and tyranny. Thomas Hobbes considered human beings evil by nature who always sought their own interest without caring for others. He maintained that competition and mistrust changes the tempers of the human being who is considered a wolf trying to empower himself and who uses cheating and deception to win, and that Man lacks mercy when it comes to achieving his own ends (Hobbes, 1968).

Durkheim mentioned violence and extremism as cultural phenomena resulting from social development and the ensuing transformation of human communities from primary to complex then to complicated societies (Durkheim, 1972). It is a given that human communities change and mutate by nature, yet the change process is slow and takes a long time if not accompanied by rationality. Herein lies the difference between modern and traditional societies, as viewed by Max Weber (Weber, 1958). Human communities have experienced many changes in the current age which have been characterized by many irrational activities that drive communities into extremism such as local and international chaos, mistrust, community break down, and an increasing sense of insecurity.

In fact, violence and extremism are not a social phenomenon that is strictly related to individuals; it also relates to countries and human

communities in general, where constant wars, conflicts, and disputes among countries have affected people everywhere. Given the fact that extremism has found fertile soil the world over, due to the aforementioned social, economic and political changes, extremism in Jordan seems not an exception, particularly that the Jordanian society has gone through many rapid changes in the past few decades. Even university students' violence, which has hit many campuses abroad, has become 'contagious', with its model spreading around the globe, Jordan not excluded. The violence this study addresses pertains mostly to ideological extremism.

There is no doubt that ideological extremism is a dangerous phenomenon which threatens the individual and the whole community (Rashwan, 2002). But it is the youth that are at higher risk of this dangerous illness because they, vivid and active as they are, have the desire for change at any cost. Trapped in the contradictions of their societies, frustrated by their incapability to cope with national and personal political, economic and social crises, they form a fertile soil for emotional manipulation that is likely to be conducive to extremism.

The study depends mainly on the structural functional theory pioneered by Herbert Spencer, Talcot Parsons, Robert Merton and others, which views social phenomenon as the result of parts or structural entities the phenomenon appears within. Its appearance has social functions derived from other parts of the social structure.

The Theoretical Frame of the Study:

The Concept of Extremism

The concept of extremism has become a buzzword like never before and the reason for this is that it is related to important concepts such as intolerance, militancy, exaggeration, sectarianism, violence, terrorism, and other terms. Extremism is what feeds all of these phenomena.

Extremism has been defined as the act of bypassing moderation or not being in the middle (IbnManzur), in other words it is standing aside, away from the center (Qaradawi, 2001). Some others link extremism to exaggeration (Jarrad, 2000). Because this concept of extremism is derived from a signifier in the Holy Quran (Say, O People of the Scripture! Do not exaggerate in your religion beyond the truth; and do not follow the opinions of people who went astray before, and misled many, and

themselves strayed off the balanced way) (Holy Quran, Almaid, 77). In this sense, extremism as defined by religion, is exaggeration in thought or action which transgresses normal limits by exaggeration, although extremism is still more general than exaggeration (Almor'eb, 2009).

The term 'extremism' has also been explained as the exaggeration of a belief, ideology, doctrine, or any other term which concerns a religion, a group of people, or a party (Sawy, 1993). The *Philosophical Dictionary* briefly defines 'extremism' as an unbalanced absolute enthusiasm towards one ideology, and the extremist as one who adopts this ideology and becomes self-centered, or suffers from a mental disorder which will make him lose his sense of distinguishing between good and better, bad and worse (Aljarrad, 2000).

In the light of the foregoing, the procedural concept of ideological extremism is determined according to the purposes of the current study as follows: it is the exaggeration to the limit of being militant and to hold on ideologically, in thought or action, to a group of ideas which could be a religious doctrine, or a political, economic, cultural, or artistic way of thinking. Doctrinal adherence makes a person feel that he owns the absolute and indisputable truth which sets him apart from his cultural structure and community, and cuts him off from the social structure that he lives in and belongs to. It is inevitable in a case like this that he suffers from alienation from both himself and the community.

Motives of Extremism

The phenomenon of extremism is not limited to one place or one country. It is as ancient as time itself. It started at the dawn of human history and has remained with us to this very day accompanying emerging religions, beliefs, regulations, doctrines, and interests, since every creed or ideology has had its extremists and moderates (Bayoumi, 2004). Several researchers were more interested in religious extremism in our Arab societies, especially in the Gulf area. The reason behind that is the spread of the *Takfiri* ideology which oppresses most Muslims and doubts their beliefs; and because it is the most dangerous type of extremism, where youth are recruited to achieve goals against the community and its security (Alharbi, 2011).

The absence of freedom and democracy and the spread of corruption, tyranny, and the poverty in most of the Arab countries

have provided a fertile environment for the growth and the spread of extremist ideology. Several other factors gave rise to an environment of extremism in the Arab world chief of which are: the ascent of Islamists in Arab politics; the conflict with powers and groups which hold different ideologies, the deep disputes over political, social, and religious issues; the oppression of governing political regulations, and citizens' feelings of being trapped in the corner and deprived of their simplest rights (Bani Salameh and Alkhataybeh, 2009). Added to this is the fake relationship between the rulers and the ruled where the majority is deprived of true political participation, equality, social and economic justice, democratic practices, let alone being left to live in hard social and economic conditions. It is the Arab political systems that themselves can be considered extremists by their monopoly of power without legal justifications, and by their committing the ugliest human crimes of liquidating opponents and freedom seekers and plundering their money. It is such systems that generated ideological extremism and made it an inevitable choice for the frustrated youth in the face of long term suffering and deprivation.

It seems that resorting to political sociology in order to combat and treat the extremism phenomenon in modern communities is not the most successful means. Ideological extremism is an issue with psychological, social, economic, political, educational, and religious dimensions; therefore, it requires to be studied and investigated in order to be understood and explained (Bani Fyadd, 2008). This can be viewed from two perspectives: as a result of external factors such as colonial and military policies, wars, unjustified conflicts, and global economic crises and their effects on our communities. The other perspective is internal factors which concern the hard economic and social conditions of individuals and groups, political and democratic deprivation in the community, and factors of family and community disintegration as reflected in the individuals' extremism of thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors.

Sociologists in general have offered a variety of explanations regarding the phenomenon of extremism, each according to his own preferentiality of thought. Émile Durkheim, Parsons, and Merton who follow the structural functional theory had related emerging disorders in the community such as extremism to the existing deficiency within the social structure such as lack of the individual's integration within social

groups, the dominant culture, the weakness of controlling mechanisms or rules which govern the individual's behavior; and the disintegration of values and morals in the community. These circumstances produce anti-values which generate unprecedented perverted behavior within social customs and standards. This case shows the systems' and institutions' inability to meet individuals' and groups' needs and ambitions, which therefore generates cases of ideological extremism.(Gerber, 2010).

On the other hand, Marxists maintain that such phenomenon is caused by the bad economic circumstances which surround major categories in the community, or the residues of capitalism such as poverty, unemployment, suffering from economic deprivation, political exclusion, absence of social justice and equality, rising feelings of persecution and alienation, and realization of the presence of monopoly, corruption, and exploitation in all life aspects. Such reasons engender several problematic phenomena where ideological extremism is the most dangerous. Extremism can be defined as denoting disharmony among groups' interests, increasing feelings of injustice, deprivation, inequality, as well as different forms of persecution, especially political, economic, and social persecution.

The Problem of the Study

Extremism is a reality, and is frequently noticed in our modern communities. However, social field studies on this issue are rare, especially in the Jordanian community. Extremism didn't emerge randomly; there are surely reasons and causes behind the phenomenon, risks and effects which affect individuals, groups, and the community in general, as well as developmental plans. All this makes it incumbent that a proper knowledge of extremism, its reasons, roots, and how it relates to political, economic, social, cultural, intellectual, and security aspects is viewed as an important key to determining appropriate remedies for handling it. Hence the study is basically concerned with identifying the most prominent manifestations of ideological extremism among Jordanian universities' students and their stand from such phenomenon. It further seeks to identify the reasons and factors behind it in the light of some social variables such as: gender, place of residence, economic situation, the number of family members, the accumulated school average, and type of college.

The Importance of the Study

The importance of this study comes from the importance of its topic, from the fact that ideological extremism is a pathological phenomenon which has affected certain categories in the social structure of the Jordanian community. Such phenomenon threatens the security and the stability of communities and particularly harm youth if left unleashed. Moreover, the study is directed towards the majority of the Jordanian population, hence its large scope, and address a variety of important related subjects such as energy, vitality, activity, ambition, and the strong desire for change among citizens at time of crises when new ideas and orientations are battling on the ground.

It is an important study from both sides: the theoretical part, by providing information and ideas about a dangerous phenomenon which are considered useful to both, the local and the foreign library beside researchers in this field. On the other hand it is important from the practical side by what it does explain and reveal to the youth, and to entities concerned with ideological stability and social development institutions in order to perform their role in handling the phenomenon. The significance of the study also comes from its relevance to such currently vital areas of research such as the sociology of religion, sociology of social problems, criminology, sociology of knowledge, and sociopolitical science. It also derives its significance from the fact that it fills an important theoretical gap by offering information on the phenomenon of extremism without neglecting its local color.

Previous Studies

There are several studies on extremism, where violence is considered the most prominent manifestation of extremism; the following studies are the most important studies which are related or nearly related to the subject of this study:

Jordanian Studies:

- Alkhataybeh et.al. (2012), a study entitled “Cultural alienation of the Arab youth in the age of globalization and informatics,” a stratified sample of (440) persons. The study has found that the university youth have displayed certain alienation symptoms such as anomie, indifference, lack of clear plans, nonchalance, deficiency, loss of control, frustration and feeling of inability to affect change and or

the sequence of social events. These symptoms are attributed to several external factors related to the cultural effects of globalization and the impact of the advanced communication and the information technology revolution, as well as to internal factors related to the relative absence of youth care, and lack of means for social and cultural integration at times of crises within the international complicated variables. Extremism seems to be the choice for those who are culturally and politically alienated.

- Albdanyneh, et.al (2009), a study entitled “Factors of severity in the university environment for youth in universities in Jordan”, which was conducted on a sample of (3702) students (males and females) in (19) Jordanian universities. The study indicated that more than 50 % of the sample pointed that there are problems such as students’ fights. The study also indicated that 50% of the sample mentioned the existence of problems such as fights among students, unemployment, and poverty. More than two thirds of the questioned believe in the seriousness of violence among students as a social issue. The majority indicated the existence of violence and extremism in the local community, and a fewer indicated the existence of this phenomenon (violence and extremism) in their own families.
- Bani Fayadd’s study (2008), conducted on a random sample of 1069 students, which represent 3% of the Jordanian university, found that the manifestations of ideological extremism there appears in a medium degree. There were no changes in the results according to gender variables, college, or education level, but there were changes according to the variable of the school year under investigation. The study also identified factors responsible for the rise of ideological extremism phenomenon and rated them in accordance with their significance where the academic factor ranked top, followed by the economic then the social. There were no differences in the students’ responses in terms of gender, college, and level of education, as there were differences in the results in terms of school year (for the first and the second levels).
- Alfokahaa’ (2001), a study entitled “Levels of tendency to violence and aggressive behavior for Philadelphia University students and the correlation with variables such as gender, college, grades, number of family members, and family’s income. The study also

found that Philadelphia University students are divided in their tendency towards extremism, violence, and aggressive behavior, where (20%) showed high tendency towards violence, (80%) low tendency, (44.3%) medium tendency, and (47%) displayed no tendency towards violence.

Arabic Studies

- Alharbi (2011), the study found that Saudi university students' stance towards ideological extremism is positive, where most of them recognize its reality and reject its different manifestations and forms, especially religious and social extremism, which they considered the most common in Saudi community. There are no differences in terms of such variables as college type, place of residence, family monthly income, number of family members, and cumulative average. The reasons behind this came in the following order: religious, social, political, then comes the academic, and finally the economic reasons. The study also found disparity that was due to only one college type, monthly income, and number of family members.
- Almor'eb's study (2009) was conducted on (418) students in the Education College in Ha'el city. The study found that the highest degrees of extremism were in the area of politics, followed by religion, then economics, then education, and last the domestic field. No differences in degrees of extremism were noted due to the level of education or monthly salary. The study also indicated that there were indicative correlations between economic-related extremism and educational, domestic, and media-related extremism.
- Alogly's study (2006) referred to the necessity of exerting international efforts in order to eliminate political, economic, and social factors which stand behind certain phenomena such as terrorism and extremism, and to enhance international cooperation in security and judicial fields, as well as to work on setting an international strategy to prevent and combat extremism..
- Wattfa and Alahmad's study (2002) investigates intolerance in the Arab world by examining a sample of (714) students at Kuwait University. The study found that intolerance in its different forms is one of the major challenges which face our Arab communities. It maintains that sectarianism for sure is the most dangerous and

common in Arab communities followed by tribal intolerance, then religious intolerance and intolerance against expatriates. The study didn't indicate differences between males and females, and there was a trace of school year and academic major variables.

- Albar'ee's study (2002), entitled "University's role in combating ideological extremism". It found that the prominent reasons behind violence in the Egyptian community are: unemployment of university students, bribes, embezzlements by senior governmental officials, the absence of social justice, decreasing of families' welfare, deficiency in the guiding role of university faculty, and the absence of good role models. Therefore, the study recommended the following in order to handle violence and extremism: the need for visible and good role models, enhancing political participation and democracy, activating students' religious culture, securing job opportunities for graduates, and developing the spirit of tolerance among individuals.
- Ibrahim's study (1989) is a study on the phenomenon of intolerance in the Arab community. The researcher indicated that authorities in Arab communities couldn't create the right integration among all members of the communities, and failed to create a patriotic sense that could unify sub social groups and provide them with a sense of belonging and security instead of leaving them on their own, which may lead to a high degree of narcissism and isolation.

Non-Arab Studies:

The West has already realized early on in time the importance of research on extremism and its effect on human behavior and on community's security and stability especially that, generally speaking, it is extremists who constitute a serious threat against World community. The most prominent studies are the following:

- Hoffer, (1941), offered a study titled "The True Believer" where the researcher discussed the issue of political intolerance. In this study the researcher gets inside the fanatic mind and clarifies how people turn to be extremists as a result of psychological, social, or religious circumstances. The study is an attempt to **trace the creation** of the fanatic and determine the aspects and the sides of his personality, where the fanatic seeks excellence for himself and demands privileges for his category, nation, religion, race, or his holy cause.

- Schlesinger, 1949, discusses human nature and authority. The study defended liberal democracy against its opponents such as: left-wing politics, right-wing politics, communism, and fascism. The researcher indicated that free community's mistakes lead to a collective decision to follow comprehensive alternatives, accordingly, the researcher called out for restructuring the democracy belief to be based on a realistic understanding of human nature in order to protect people from extremist alternatives.
- Lipset, 1970, discusses the nature and the concept of political extremism. The researcher reviewed the history of extremism in the United States of America from its beginning until 1970 passing through years of recession, McCarthyism, George Wallace, and finally the past and the future of extremism.
- Ellis, 1982, the researcher in this study indicated that individuals who are described to be aggressive often feel that they are persecuted and harmed by the community, and such feeling makes them want to take revenge from others because they think that they were wronged by them.
- Noris & Kaniasty, 1996 indicated the importance of social relations in softening and reducing effects resulting from pressures and events which one faces in life. Such softening highlights the effect of social support in alleviating pressures of life and the ensuing psychological effects. It helps in meeting the needs of belonging, integration, gaining respect, recognition, and appreciation.

Study Objectives and Inquiries

The study objectives are specified in answering the following questions:

- 1 - What are the ideological extremism manifestations in the point of view of the youth in Jordanian universities?
- 2 - Are there indicative differences in youth's points of view towards extremism manifestations due to variables such as gender, place of residence, college type, the family's monthly income, the number of family members, parents' education level, school year, and the cumulative average?
- 3 - What are the most important causes behind extremism as viewed by youth in Jordanian universities?

Study limitations

The limitations of time and space for this study are determined by the following:

This study was determined by the responses of a sample of bachelor degree regular students in Yarmouk University in the second term of the 2011/2012. It is one of the biggest Jordanian universities in terms of number of students and the academic achievements. It is located in the north of the Kingdom of Jordan. All this recommends Yarmouk University as a good choice for the present investigation.

Study Methodology (method and procedures):

Study methodology: this study uses the structural functional theoretical approach as a basic image of society that guides thinking and research. Sociologists such as Talcot Parsons, Herbert Spencer and Robert Merton were the founders of this approach. The structural functional approach is a framework for building theory that views society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability; this approach focuses on both social structures that shape society as a whole, and on social functions; it also looks at society through a macro-level orientation (Gerber, 2010). Structural functional theory is based on several factors such as:

- 1 - Society, local community, group, and institution, regardless of their size and purpose consist of parts and units, though these parts differ from each other, but they are interrelated and mutually supportive, and responsive to each other, and they can be analyzed structurally and functionally.
- 2 - The parts that the institution, or society, or social phenomenon analyze are integrated parts that complete each other. Any change in any part reflects on the rest, and this leads to the process of social change.
- 3 - Functions performed by the institution, community, or society satisfy the needs of individuals; these needs could be basic, social, or spiritual.
- 4 - The existence of a normative or value system that divides the work of individuals and defines the duties and rights of each.
- 5 - The theory believes in communication systems or human relations

through which information and directives are passed from the leadership to the basal center.

The study also uses the method of social survey, which is commonly used in this type of studies, where a sample of university students are chosen to represent the studied community for the purpose of collecting data on ideological extremism from the perspective of youth in Jordanian universities.

The Community and the Sample of Study: the studied community represents the total of registered students in Yarmouk University, which is one of the biggest Jordanian universities located in the north region in Jordan. The sample of study is a (304) students (males and females), who were chosen by a stratified sample of the studied community; and it has been taken into consideration that the sample is representative of the entire university covering different colleges and majors.

Study Instrument: the study uses the questionnaire form in order to collect data from the studied community sample. The questionnaire, designed to apply measurements used in previous studies, was meant to cover the different aspects, inquiries, and main objectives of the study.

Credibility and Constancy of the Instrument

A. **Credibility:** after having the questionnaire assessed by professional specialists in sociology and political science, who have experience in designing field study tools, 50 questionnaires were prepared to test its credibility in the field and to know the requested method of responding. In the light of the results of this experimental test, the researcher amended some inquiries and the previous procedures were considered a virtual credibility for the instrument.

Constancy: in order to confirm the constancy of the instrument, the questionnaire was distributed to 50 students (males and females) and the experiment was repeated once again two weeks later on the same sample. This is called the Pearson test (test-retest), then Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated and the result was (0.87), which is an acceptable average for the study's purpose and objectives. Consequently, the questionnaire could be used in the field's main procedure as the following table indicates.

Table No. (1)
The values of the internal consistency

No.	Field	No. of paragraphs	Internal consistency
1	Manifestations of ideological extremism	14	0.74
2	Economic reasons	10	0.76
3	Social reasons	11	0.75
4	Religious reasons	8	0.72
5	Academic reasons	7	0.71
6	Political reasons	7	0.70
overall		57	0.87

Table (1) indicates calculating internal coefficient of consistency between the results of the two applications. All coefficients ranged between (0.76-0.70) for the fields and (0.87) for the instrument overall.

Statistical Handling

The study used (SPSS) and the descriptive statistics represented in repetitions, percentages, and arithmetic means in order to describe characteristics of individuals in the study sample and for the purpose of achieving the research objectives. Several statistical means were used to process the database and turn it into quantitative aspects in order to be analyzed and interpreted. In order to answer the first question which is divided into four sub-questions, arithmetic means and standard were extracted for each sub-question. In order to answer the second question, arithmetic means and standard divisions for fields and the instrument according to the study's variables and analysis of variance, was used for indication.

Viewing and Discussing the Results

Demographic characteristics for the study sample individuals

In order to know the most prominent social, economic, demographic, and educational manifestations related to individuals of the study sample, table (2) indicates the following:

The gender table (2) indicates that females had the highest redundancy that reached (183), with a percentage of (60.2). The

redundancy for the males was (121) with the percentage of (39.8). This reflects the gender combination for the university students, where the females' percentage is higher than the males. It also indicated that those who live in the village had a redundancy that reached (163) with a percentage of (53.6). Badia (the steppe) residents had a redundancy that reached (8) with a percentage of (2.6). City residents had (118) redundancy with (38.8) percentage. These are normal percentages which reflect the general distribution within a university that is located in a governorate with a vast majority of rural lands. It also showed that most of the sample individuals were from scientific colleges, the redundancy is (158) with a percentage of (52.0). The number of students in community colleges is (146) with a percentage of (48.0).

As for family income, the income category (350 JD or less) had the highest redundancy reaching (140) with the percentage of (46.1). The income category (351-700) was (106) with a percentage of (34.9). The redundancy of the income category (701 or more) was (58) with a percentage of (19.1). Regarding to the number of family members, the category of (7-9) individuals had the highest redundancy reaching (135) with a percentage of (44.4). The category of (3 members or less) had the least redundancy reaching (17) with a percentage of (5.6). This is attributed to the nature of the general community to which the students belong- a mostly rural community which still believes in the culture of having large families with many children. The majority of individuals in this community seek to mainly satisfy their economic conditions and financial needs.

As for the father's level of education, it was found that the bachelor degree holders had the highest redundancy reaching (91) with a percentage of (29.9). The primary education level had the least redundancy reaching (16) with a percentage of (5.3). As for mothers, the results showed that the secondary education level had the highest redundancy reaching (77) with a percentage of (25.3), while post-graduate education had the least redundancy reaching (9) with a percentage of (3.0).

With regard to the school year, results indicate that the fourth year level had the highest redundancy which reached (85) with a percentage of (28.0), while the first year level had the least redundancy which reached (62) with a percentage of (20.4). These are convergent percentages and

reflect the general distribution in the university. Regarding the cumulative average, results indicate that “Good” level had the highest, which reached (128) with a percentage of (42.1), while the category of “No answer” had the least redundancy which reached (22) with a percentage of (7.2).

Table (2)
Frequency distribution and percentages of the sample according to demographic variables

Independent Variable	Categories	Repetition	Percentage
gender	Male	121	39.8
	Female	183	60.2
Place of residence	City	118	38.8
	village	163	53.6
	Camp	15	4.9
	Badia (steppe/desert)	8	2.6
College type	Community	146	48.0
	Scientific	158	52.0
Family's monthly income	350 or less	140	46.1
	351-700	106	34.9
	701 or more	58	19.1
Number of family members	3 or less	17	5.6
	4-6 members	108	35.5
	7-9 members	135	44.4
	10 or more	44	14.5
Father's level of education	Illiterate	17	5.6
	Primary	16	5.3
	Preparative	45	14.8
	Secondary	66	21.7
	Diploma	31	10.2
	Bachelor degree	91	29.9
	Higher education	38	12.5

Cont. Table (2)
Frequency distribution and percentages of the sample according to demographic variables

Independent Variable	Categories	Repetition	Percentage
Mother's level of education	Illiterate	40	13.2
	Primary	16	5.3
	Preparative	34	11.2
	Secondary	77	25.3
	Diploma	61	20.1
	Bachelor degree	67	22.0
	Higher education	9	3.0
School year	First year	62	20.4
	Second year	81	26.6
	Third year	76	25.0
	Forth year	85	28.0
Cumulative average	Acceptable	40	13.2
	Good	128	42.1
	Very good	79	26.0
	Excellent	35	11.5
	No answer	22	7.2
Total		304	100.0

Presenting the results in the light of the inquiries

The first question: what are the manifestations of ideological extremism from the perspective of the youth in Jordanian universities?

In order to answer this question, arithmetic means and standard divisions for the manifestations of ideological extremism from the point of view of Jordanian Universities youth were extracted as indicated in the table below.

Table (3)
Arithmetic means and standard deviations for the youth's sense towards
ideological extremism ordered by downward classification according
to the arithmetic means

Ran- k	No.	Paragraphs	Arithmetic mean	Standard Deviation	Degree
1	1	A person has the right to refuse arguing in any issue that he is convinced of	1.38	.74	Few
1	2	Extremism is when a person is convinced that his thoughts are true and others' thoughts are wrong	1.38	.81	Few
3	6	I agree with gender segregation in all fields	1.32	.79	Few
4	12	Whoever thinks that Arab culture is greater than any other culture reflects a case of ideology extremism	1.31	1.11	Few
4	13	I believe that encouraging exposure to the West is now the most dangerous issue for our culture	1.31	.91	Few
6	7	I think that the media and TV channels have become demonic means	1.25	.92	Few
7	8	Western products should be boycotted since the West is the second enemy of the Arab nation	1.22	.88	Few
8	4	It is rightful to stop dealing with people from other faiths	1.19	.84	Few
9	5	I think it is fair to refuse that women work outside their homes	1.16	.84	Few

Cont. Table (3)
Arithmetic means and standard deviations for the youth's sense towards ideological extremism ordered by downward classification according to the arithmetic means

Ran- k	No.	Paragraphs	Arithmetic mean	Standard Deviation	Degree
10	10	I don't prefer to be rude and rough with people because it is not a proper behavior	1.14	.90	Few
11	3	An extremist always feels afraid and insecure	1.11	.77	Few
12	9	I don't prefer to deal with people who have rigid beliefs	1.10	.95	Few
13	11	Absolute acceptance and absolute rejection of others' opinions is considered an unjustified extremism	1.09	.92	Few
		All manifestations	3.16	.49	Medium

Table (3) indicates that arithmetic means ranged between (1.09-1.38). Paragraphs (1 and 2) "A person has the right to refuse arguing in any issue that he is convinced of" and "Extremism is when a person is convinced that his thoughts are true and others' thoughts are wrong" rank first and the arithmetic means is (1.38). Paragraph No. (6) "I agree with preventing gender segregation in all fields" ranks second and the arithmetic mean is (1.32), while the two paragraphs (12 and 13) "Whoever considers that Arab cultures is greater than any other culture reflects the ideology of extremism" and "I believe that encouraging exposure to the West is now the most dangerous issue for our culture" came in third rank and the arithmetic mean is (1.31). Paragraph (7) "I think that the media and TV channels have become demonic means" is in the fourth rank and the arithmetic mean is (1.25). Paragraph (8) "Western products should be boycotted since the West is the second enemy of the Arab nation" is in the fifth rank and the arithmetic mean is (1.22). Paragraph (4) "It is rightful to stop dealing with people of other faiths" is the sixth rank and the arithmetic mean is (1.19). Paragraph (9)

“I don’t prefer to deal with who has rigid beliefs” is before the last rank and the arithmetic mean is (1.10). Paragraph (11) “Absolute acceptance and absolute rejection of others’ opinions is considered an unjustified extremism” rank last and the arithmetic mean is (10.9), and finally the arithmetic mean for all extremism manifestations is (3.16).

The second question: is there an indicative disparity between the youth’s point of view regarding the extremism manifestations due to variables such as gender, place of residence, college type, the family’s monthly income, number of family members, parents level of education, school year, or the cumulative average?

In order to answer this question, arithmetic means and standard divisions for extremism manifestations were extracted according to their demographic variables.

Table (4)
Arithmetic means, standard divisions, analysis of variance according to demographic variables of youth’s sense towards extremism

Variable	Choices	Arithmetic mean	Standard division	Value	Statistical significance
Gender	Male	3.25	.465	6.713	.010
	Female	3.10	.492		
Place of residence	City	3.17	.514	.872	.456
	Village	3.14	.470		
	Camp	3.34	.407		
	Badia (steppe/desert)	3.12	.533		
College type	Community	3.15	.451	.167	.683
	Scientific	3.17	.518		
Family’s monthly income	350 JD or less	3.20	.467	2.764	.065
	351-700 JD	3.18	.484		
	701 JD or more	3.03	.521		

Cont. Table (4)
Arithmetic means, standard divisions, analysis of variance according
to demographic variables of youth's sense towards extremism

Variable	Choices	Arithmetic mean	Standard division	Value	Statistical significance
Number of family income	3 members or less	3.24	.411	1.433	.233
	4-6 members	3.20	.521		
	7-9 members	3.16	.449		
	10 members or more	3.03	.524		
Father's level of education	Illiterate	3.12	.449	.485	.819
	Primary	3.26	.388		
	Preparative	3.15	.540		
	Secondary	3.14	.413		
	Diploma	3.25	.628		
	Bachelor degree	3.17	.496		
	Higher education	3.09	.450		
Mother's level of education	Illiterate	3.24	.449	1.371	.226
	Primary	3.08	.564		
	Preparative	3.09	.527		
	Secondary	3.16	.467		
	Diploma	3.18	.491		
	Bachelor degree	3.20	.491		
	Higher education	2.79	.333		
School year	First year	3.06	.519	1.260	.288
	Second year	3.17	.439		
	Third year	3.22	.518		
	Forth year	3.17	.472		
Cumulative average	Acceptable	3.20	.503	.235	.872
	Good	3.19	.487		
	Very good	3.14	.445		
	Excellent	3.18	.577		

Table (4) indicates the following:

- The existence of statistical indicative disparity (0.05) due to gender and the disparity is in males favor.
- There are no indicative disparity (0.05) due to (college type, family's monthly income, number of family members, father's level of education, mother's level of education, school year, and the cumulative average)

The third question: what are the reasons behind extremism from the point of view of youth in universities?

In order to answer this question, arithmetic means and standards division for the most important reasons behind extremism in the point of view of youth in universities were extracted as in the table below i.

Table (5)
Arithmetic means and standard divisions for the most important reasons behind extremism from university students' point of view descended according to the arithmetic mean

Rank	No.	Axes	Arithmetic mean	Standard division	degree
1	2	Social reasons behind ideological extremism	3.89	.59	Large
2	3	Religious reasons behind ideological extremism	3.76	.61	Large
3	5	Political reasons behind the ideological extremism	3.69	.62	Large
4	4	Academic reasons behind the ideological extremism	3.64	.67	Medium
5	1	Economic reasons behind ideological extremism	3.49	.63	Medium
		All reasons	3.70	.43	Large

Table (5) indicates that arithmetic means ranged between (3.49-3.89). The area of social reasons behind ideological extremism came in first rank and the

arithmetic mean is (3.89) which is the highest. The area of religious reasons is in second rank and the arithmetic mean is (3.76). Political reasons are in the third rank and the arithmetic mean is (3.69). Economic reasons are in the fourth rank and the arithmetic mean is (3.64). While economic reasons are in the last rank and the arithmetic mean is (3.49). And finally the arithmetic mean for all reasons is (3.70).

Arithmetic means and standard divisions for the study sample individuals' estimations were calculated separately for each area paragraphs as follows:

1. The area of economic reasons behind ideological extremism:

Table (6)
Arithmetic means and standard divisions for paragraphs in the area
of economic reasons behind ideological extremism descended
according to arithmetic mean

Rank	No.	Paragraphs	Arith- metic mean	Stan- dard di- vision	degree
1	14	The absence of equal opportunities for individuals produces ideological extremism for the aggrieved	3.96	.93	Large
2	16	The spread of unemployment among youth makes them extremists	3.72	1.06	Large
3	17	The cause of ideological extremism resulted from corruption in governmental institutions	3.63	1.06	Medium
4	21	Different products continuous price increase pushes individuals to extremism	3.63	1.03	Medium
5	22	Being deprived from essential materials is the main source for ideological extremism	3.62	1.13	Medium

Cont. Table (6)
Arithmetic means and standard divisions for paragraphs in the area
of economic reasons behind ideological extremism descended
according to arithmetic mean

Rank	No.	Paragraphs	Arithmet- ic mean	Standard division	degree
6	15	Class inequality pushes the poor towards extremism	3.55	1.14	Medium
7	18	Increase of university education expenses contributes to ideological extremism	3.48	1.17	Medium
8	23	Ideological extremism is a result of economic recession	3.34	1.09	Medium
9	20	Depriving some students from university financial assistance leads to extremism	3.30	1.24	Medium
10	19	Most extremists are poor	2.66	1.17	Medium
		overall	3.49	.63	Medium

Table (6) indicates that arithmetic means ranged between (2.66-3.96). Paragraph (14) “The absence of equal opportunities for individuals produces ideological extremism for the aggrieved” is in the first rank and the arithmetic mean is (3.96). Paragraph (16) “unemployment in the youth sector makes them extremists” is in the second rank and the arithmetic mean is (3.72). Paragraph (23) “Ideological extremism is a result for economic recession” and the arithmetic mean is (3.34), while paragraph (19) “Most of extremists are poor” is in the last rank and the arithmetic mean is (2.66).

2. The area of social reasons behind ideological extremism:

Table (7)
Arithmetic means and standard divisions for paragraphs in the area
of social reasons behind ideological extremism descended according
to arithmetic mean

Rank	No.	Paragraphs	Arithmet- ic mean	Standard division	degree
1	27	The abundant existence of family disintegration in the community	4.20	.98	Large
2	24	The absence of moral discipline in the community	4.12	1.03	Large
3	30	Prevailing ignorance and unawareness of some families	4.10	1.02	Large
4	29	Consorting with bad company especially extremists	4.06	1.12	Large
5	26	The spread of depravity in the community exemplified in use of hashish and drugs	4.04	1.15	Large
6	25	Weakening of such values as loyalty and citizenship within the family	3.88	1.07	Large
7	32	Concealment of truth and lack of indictment of extremism by public media.	3.84	1.08	Large
8	33	Cruel and ill treatment of sons.	3.83	1.16	Large
9	28	Absence of social involvement which pushes some individuals to extremism	3.71	1.06	Large
10	31	Generation gap and conflict of opinion between sons and fathers can be conducive to ideological extremism	3.65	1.09	Medium
11	34	The individual's feeling of inferiority	3.34	1.26	Medium
		All the area	3.89	.59	Large

Table (7) indicates that arithmetic means ranged between (3.34 and 4.20). Paragraph (27) “The abundant existence of family disintegration in the community Is in the first rank and the arithmetic mean is (4.20). Paragraph (24) “The absence of moral discipline in the community” is in the second rank and the arithmetic mean is (4.12). Paragraph (30) “Prevailing ignorance and unawareness for some families” is in the third rank and the arithmetic mean is (4.10). Paragraph (31) “id Generation gap and conflict of opinion between sons and fathers can be conducive to ideological extremism” is the one before last and the arithmetic mean is (3.65), while paragraph (34) “The individual’s feeling of inferiority” is the last and the arithmetic mean is (3.34).

3. The area of religious reasons behind ideological extremism:

Table (8)
Arithmetic means and standard divisions for paragraphs in the area
of religious reasons behind ideological extremism descended
according to the arithmetic mean

Rank	No.	Paragraphs	Arithmetic mean	Standard division	Degree
1	38	Absences of a genuine understanding of sharia is a source of extremism	4.13	1.02	Large
2	41	Incompetence of proper guidance and assistance in the community	3.93	1.02	Large
3	42	Extremism is the result of the presence of extremist religious groups	3.75	1.12	Large
4	40	Accepting 'fatwas' (religious opinion) from satellite channels without reasoning is a source of extremism	3.74	1.09	Large
5	35	The feeling of religious marginalization is a main cause for ideological extremism	3.73	1.03	Large

Cont. Table (8)
Arithmetic means and standard divisions for paragraphs in the area
of religious reasons behind ideological extremism descended
according to the arithmetic mean

Rank	No.	Paragraphs	Arithmet- ic mean	Standard division	Degree
6	37	Extremism is a result of the unjustified wars launched against Islamic countries	3.68	1.02	Large
7	39	Extremism is a result of the unjustified wars launched against Islamic countries	3.60	1.14	Medium
8	36	Abuses by people of other faiths is a source of Muslims' extremism	3.48	1.20	Medium
		All the area	3.76	.61	Large

Table (8) indicates that arithmetic means ranged between 3.48 and 4.13. Paragraph (38) “Absences of a deep understanding of *Sharia* is a source of extremism” is in the first rank and the arithmetic mean is (4.13), while paragraph (41) “Incompetence of proper guidance and assistance in the community” is in the second rank and the arithmetic mean is (3.93). Paragraph (39) “Extremism is a result of the unjustified wars launched against Islamic countries” is the one before last and the arithmetic mean is (3.60). Paragraph (36) “Abuses by people of other faiths is a source of Muslims' extremism” is the last one and the arithmetic mean is (3.48).

4. The area of academic reasons behind ideological extremism:

Table (9)
Arithmetic means and standard divisions for paragraphs in the area
of academic reasons behind ideological extremism descended
according to the arithmetic mean

Rank	No.	Paragraphs	Arith- metic mean	Stan- dard di- vision	Degree
1	43	Deficiency of universities' pedagogical role	3.95	1.02	Large
2	44	School curriculums lack subjects which fight prejudice and bias	3.91	.94	Large
3	49	Lack of sufficient and adequate educational and cultural activities at universities	3.66	1.15	Large
4	47	Inadequate cultivation of a sense of citizenship among university students.	3.60	1.20	Medium
5	46	Abuse of social communication media (emails, etc.) for promoting prejudice and bias.	3.55	1.20	Medium
6	45	Use of the internet to promote extremism in academic circles	3.52	1.16	Medium
7	48	Parents' low educational and cultural level	3.26	1.32	Medium
		All the area	3.64	.67	Medium

Table (9) indicates that arithmetic means ranged between (3.26-3.95). Paragraph (43) "Deficiency of universities' pedagogical role" is in the first rank and the arithmetic mean is (3.95). Paragraph (44) "School curriculums lack subjects which fight prejudice and bias" is in the second rank and the arithmetic mean is (3.91). Paragraph (49) "Lack of sufficient and adequate educational and cultural activities at universities" is in the third rank and the arithmetic mean is (3.66), while paragraph

(48) “Parents’ low educational and cultural level “ is in the last rank and the arithmetic mean is (3.26).

5. The area of political reasons behind ideological extremism:

Table (10)
Arithmetic means and standard divisions for paragraphs in the area
of political reasons behind ideological extremism descended
according to the arithmetic mean

Rank	No.	Paragraphs	Arithmetic mean	Standard division	Degree
1	51	Individuals’ feelings of lack of political justice pushes them into ideological extremism	3.92	.86	Large
2	52	Lack of freedom of expression is a source of ideological extremism	3.89	.90	Large
3	56	Extremism is a result of western hegemony and domination of Arabs	3.83	1.07	Large
4	55	Lack of politicians’ concern with the rights of citizens	3.71	1.06	Large
5	50	Extremists are individuals who severely suffered from political alienation	3.56	1.09	Medium
6	54	The conflict between the country’s foreign policies with citizens’ aspirations is a source of extremism	3.50	1.07	Medium
7	53	The weakness of peoples’ participation in political work pushes them to ideological extremism	3.41	1.14	Medium
		All the area	3.69	.62	Large

Discussing and Interpreting the Results:

The study reached a set of results, the most important of which is: the disparity in the attitudes of Jordanian university youth towards the manifestations of ideological extremism. This means that youth's attitudes were centered on the fact that the individual has no right to refuse a dialogue or a discussion on an issue he has strong convictions about; it is unacceptable for an individual to believe that he is right and everyone else's opinions are wrong. This is a positive attitude. It was also noted that Jordanian youths also see that those who believe that the Arab culture is greater than any other culture are extremists. But the surprising finding is youth's acceptance of the idea of gender segregation in all fields of life. They equally consider exposure to the West dangerous and threatening to Arab culture; hence, many of them accuse cyber space and the new media technology of being corrupting agents and sources of evil. It follows that the youth under study do not agree with the current co-education or the co-work of males and females, neither with the opening to the West, nor with modern media that can spread ideas that do not align with local values and beliefs. The study found indicative statistic differences due to gender, as the differences were in favor of the males. And finally this study didn't find differences which are due to the rest of the study's variables.

The idea of boycotting 'enemy' Western products, which seemed acceptable to them on grounds of refusal to deal with non-Muslims is but an unhealthy sign of ideological extremism.

The presence of such thoughts in the university environment is very dangerous in the Jordanian community. This can be explained and attributed to bad economic, political, and social circumstances which surround Jordanian youth, also to various forms of deprivation which engulf the lives of young people who try to survive in the middle of crises including lack of freedom and political participation, spread of ethical, administrative, and political corruption, suffering from the lack of social security, equality, and justice, losing confidence in the current state of affairs in The Arab world especially in the wake of the false Arab Spring. What adds to their dilemmas is the prevailing chaos in modern communities, the disintegration of established values and the mass anarchy in the age of globalization. The total sum of these difficult variables makes certain categories of modern youth inclined to embrace

ideological extremism. The study is found to be in total harmony with the results of many other studies by Arab scholars such as Wattfa and Alahmad (2002), Alharbi (2011), where there seems to be a consensus of opinion that extremism and different forms of intolerance constitute the major challenges facing Kuwaiti society and the rest of the Arab world. The same findings have been reached in several local studies such as that of Albadayneh (2009), which showed that most of university students challenge the presence of violence and extremism in the academic environment.

With regard to the most important reasons behind extremism in the point of view of university students, social reasons came in first rank, the arithmetic mean being (3.89), where the youths see that the strongest causes of extremism are family disintegration, poor guidance, lack of awareness, absence of social order, a weakening of the value of belonging, failure of a constructive media, ill treatment of offspring, a drop in social rank, and lack of social integration. All of these factors contribute to the growing ideological extremism among the youth. Such findings are in agreement with those of Aharbi, 2011, and Alogli, 2006. It was found necessary to exert international efforts in order to terminate the factors generating extremism including social factors.

As for religious reasons, these were found to rank second, the arithmetic mean being (3.76). The strongest reasons for the emergence of extremism are the lack of religious guidance, in addition to abuses which Muslims have been exposed to. This result is a little different from the feedback of Alharbi, where religious reasons were ranked first rank while it ranked second here. This prompts a need to have religious preaching move away from intimidation, and to use encouragement instead, thus opening the door of hope before people, all in line with Islamic teaching that reminds of the importance of control of the self, the mind, religion, money, and life. An urgent need is also to remind people that Islam is innocent of terrorism charges and all forms of violence, extremism, and intolerance. A refutation of the erroneous belief that the entire world is against Islam and Muslims is now of tremendous importance more than ever.

Political reasons ranked third including lack of political justice, lack of freedom of expression, lack of concern for citizens' rights, poor political participation and awareness among university students of their political alienation and marginalization whether in Jordan or in the rest

of the Arab world..The previously mentioned deprivation is found to be at the heart of problems in our communities today as it is mostly thought to be the main reason behind youth's minds embracing ideological extremism and bypassing moderation. This agrees with Sa'ad Aldeen's proposal early in 1989, who maintained that authorities in Arab societies failed to provide integration among the different social groups or to create a national consensus.

The establishment of democracy and the rule of law, and applying standards of justice and equality are indispensable to any modern community as confirmed by a countless number of studies published locally and abroad from early time till the present.

External political influences have been found to include: Western domination and hegemony; exploitation of Arab countries as reflected in the wars launched against Arab and Islamic people; economic hegemony and control over national assets; manipulation of political will and unjustifiable harnessing of it to serve western interests. The study further found that females more than males see that political reasons are mostly responsible for the emergence of ideological extremism among Jordanian youth. This indicates that females are concerned with politics as noticed in the ratio of educated females category, and also as shown in other studies that equally confirmed the same finding (Almor'eb, 2009).

With regard to academic reasons that came in fourth rank with an arithmetic mean of (3.63), the most prominent manifestations were: the deficiency of educational institutions concerned with the cultivation of minds, inadequacy of universities' role in enhancing a sense of citizenship, the Internet's negative role in promoting ideological extremism and defending its thoughts, the educational curriculums are empty of subjects that discuss ideological extremism. This agrees with the result of (Almaghamisi, 2004) study which confirmed the important influence of education on the medial approach in all life issues and on the level of individuals and groups. This could be achieved by all educational and cultural institutions as well as by a close cooperation between youth and religious scholars through series of guided lectures and forums. These results meet with Alkhataybeh 2011 results, which found that the spread of "cultural alienation" is among the various reasons that drive them towards extremism.

Concerning the economic reasons behind extremism, which came in the fifth rank with an arithmetic mean of (3.49), it was found that the most effective reasons for the emergence of extremism are: the absence of equal opportunities, the spread of unemployment, and the feeling of injustice, all lead to extremism side by side the increase of prices, the inequality, the results of recession crisis, the deprivation of some students from financial help, and poverty. This agrees with (Albar'ee, 2002) which concluded that the most prominent reasons behind violence in the Egyptian community are: university students' unemployment, the spread of bribes, embezzlement, the absence of social justice, the decrease of the family's welfare, and the absence of a good role model.

Based on the previous findings, we conclude that the best ways for addressing ideological extremism lies in the handling of social, religious, political, and economic reasons which were proven to be powerful causes behind the emergence of extremism according to the point of view of the youth in Jordanian universities.

Recommendations:

In the light of the previous results, we offer some important recommendations for the handling of ideological extremism in the Jordanian community. These are as follows:

- 1 - A specific and a comprehensive definition of the concept of "ideological extremism" should be determined; and basics related to security and scientific findings should be set in order to combat modern forms of ideological extremism.
- 2 - A call out to social, religious, media, and academic institutions to adopt a scientific strategy which aims to combat ideological extremism and other dangerous phenomena.
- 3 - An urgent need to improve individuals' political, economic, and social conditions to prevent the emerging of ideological extremism, violence, and terrorism in the community. Equally important is the need to activate mosques' role in spreading awareness regarding these phenomena and revealing Islam's stance from them.
- 4 - The need to handle nepotism and corruption in the various institutions to combat the spreading of extremism among people. Another is the need to develop the family's role in teaching citizenship and loyalty towards both family and community, as well

- as guiding and keeping an eye on offspring to point out the mistake of following extremist groups and the negative repercussions to the community.
- 5 - Conducting more research on Ideological extremism and placing it in the forefront of urgent topics requiring investigation and scholarly work.

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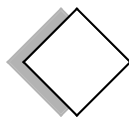
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عوامل التطرف الفكري ومظاهره كما يدركها الشباب الجامعي الأردني: دراسة سوسيولوجية إمبريقية

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محمد بني سلامة**

علاء الرواشدة***

ملخص: هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تعرف عوامل التطرف الفكري ومظاهره بنظر الشباب الجامعي الأردني، وبيان علاقة ذلك ببعض المتغيرات كالجنس، ومكان الإقامة، ونوع الكلية، والدخل الشهري للأسرة، وعدد أفراد الأسرة، ومستوى تعليم الوالدين، والسنة الدراسية، والمعدل التراكمي، وأجريت الدراسة على عينة طبقية مكونة من (304) طلاب وطالبات من جامعة اليرموك، وتم جمع البيانات بوساطة أداة الاستبانة. وتوصلت الدراسة إلى أن الشباب الجامعي الأردني يرفض التطرف الفكري، على الرغم من وجود بعض من مظاهره، وهذا ما يبدو واضحاً على أفكارهم المتطرفة بمواقفهم من قضايا الاختلاط، وإعادة صياغة معاداة الانفتاح على الغرب، ومقاطعة منتوجاته، وأصحاب الديانات الأخرى. وكانت أبرز عوامل التطرف الفكري عند الشباب الأردني تعود إلى عوامل اجتماعية، تليها العوامل الدينية، فالعوامل السياسية، ثم العوامل الأكاديمية فالاقتصادية وغيرها. ووجدت الدراسة بعض الفروقات البسيطة التي تعزى للجنس، لصالح الإناث حول العوامل السياسية ولا توجد فروق حول عوامل التطرف تعزى لبقية متغيرات الدراسة. وأوصت الدراسة بضرورة معالجة التطرف الفكري من خلال علاج العوامل الاجتماعية السابقة الذكر جميعها.

الكلمات الدالة: التطرف الفكري، الشباب الجامعي، العوامل، المظاهر.

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