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The Attitudes of English Majors in the Palestinian
Universities Toward Teaching and their Relationship
With their Achievement

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By

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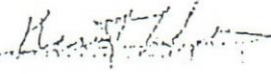
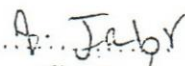
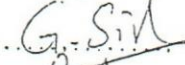
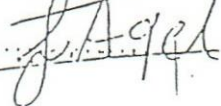
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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my parents who always wished me success in my life.

I dedicate it also to my wife and my sons, Farouq, Tariq, Abdullah, Mousa and Abdul Rahman who fill my heart with joy and turn my gloomy days into bright ones.

To my brothers and sisters, teachers and friends who encouraged me all the way through and helped me make my dream come true.

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Abstract

The Attitudes of English Majors in the Palestinian Universities Toward Teaching and their Relationship with Their Achievement

by

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This study was conducted to describe the attitudes of English majors at Palestinian universities toward teaching. It also tried to investigate the effect of the respondents' gender, place of residence, achievement and university on their attitudes toward teaching. Furthermore, the study sought to answer the major question of the study: "What are the attitudes of the English majors at the Palestinian universities toward teaching career?"

To investigate the major question of the study and the null hypotheses, data were collected from 87 English majors who represented the sample of the study. The subjects responded to a questionnaire in Arabic developed by the researcher. The items of the questionnaire were distributed among social, economic, professional and personal domains.

After analyzing the related data, using statistical packages of social science (SPSS) program, the results revealed that English majors'

attitudes toward teaching were almost positive on the four domains of the study which means that teaching profession is respected by the society.

The results also revealed that the English majors' attitudes were not affected by the respondents' place of residence and achievement.

However, English majors' attitudes were affected by the respondents' gender in favor of female on the social and the personal domains.

The results also revealed that there were significant differences at $\alpha=0.05$ in the English majors' attitudes in the Palestinian universities toward teaching between An-Najah and Al-Quds universities in favor of An-Najah on the social and the personal domains.

Based on the results of the study, the researcher suggested that similar studies be conducted in peaceful times, so as to find out whether the attitudes of the students were affected by the conditions and measures taken in the wake of Al-Aqsa Intifada and its repercussions. However, this study has its particularism because it was conducted during Al-Aqsa Intifada and was affected by the Israeli closure, siege, separation policy of the West Bank, which prevented laborers from getting to their workplaces and destroyed the Palestinian National Authority's infrastructure.

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Chapter one

Chapter One

Introduction

Every year a large number of the graduates of English departments at the Palestinian universities become English language teachers in Palestine. Due to several causes that are beyond the scope of this study, these students generally have a vague idea or no idea at all about what awaits them as English language teachers.

More importantly, the attitudes of these students towards a teaching career in the English language has not been previously studied. Needless to say, these attitudes play a very important role in the future careers of these students. Thus it is important to assess these attitudes and the various factors that influence them to enable English majors who intend to become English language teachers to take a right decision and to contribute to the making of the educational process successful in general.

The English majors' attitudes, with regard to defining the aspects of education from which teachers suffer, may also contribute to getting over the drawbacks and exert efforts to solve them. This can be achieved through stating proper solutions to determine these attitudes and modify desired behaviors.

Attitudes can be defined as "personal experience leading to adopting definite attitudes or behaviors which come out as a result of communicating several ideas, images, perceptions, trends and regular and stable emotions to some extent in response to anything whether it is a concept, subject, individual or certain events". (Mahmoud, 1992).

In 1989, Thurstone defined attitudes as "the sum total of man's inclination, feelings, prejudice and bias, preconceived notions, ideas,

fears, threats and convictions about specific topic". But in 1931 he said simply that "attitudes are the effect for or against a psychological object".

These definitions can be restated in any of the following ways:

- a) Affect for or against
- b) Evaluation of
- c) Like or dislike of
- d) Positiveness or negativeness toward a psychological object.

Bogardus (1960) defined attitudes as a "tendency to act toward or against some environmental factor". And in 1935, Allport maintained that an attitude is a "mental or neutral state of readiness".

Similarly, Campell and Stanley (1963) defined attitude, in part, as "consistency in response to social object".

Fishbein and Ajazen (1975) maintained that attitudinal and behavioral variables could be defined by four elements:

- a) An action
- b) The target the action is directed towards
- c) The context in which the action is performed
- d) The time at which the action occurs.

Shrigley and Koballa (1984) said that defining attitudes has been elusive, so much so that some would abandon the attempt. Shrigley (1983) said that "attitudes are centered on human action." And he referred back to the work of Goldstein (1939) who claimed that essential humanity of mankind resided in our attitudinal capacity. He gave a summary of characteristics of attitudes as this:

- a) Attitudes are learned.

- c) The social influences of others affect attitudes.
- d) Attitudes are readiness to respond to, and
- e) Attitudes are evaluative, emotion is involved.

Davies (1972) reiterated this stance when he argued that "it is difficult to define attitudes, and although attempts to measure attitudes have been more successful than have attempts to define them, it does not follow that