A Guide

to Applied Field Research in

the Occupied Palestinian Territories

Liberation

Inclusion

Freedom

Mobility Freedom
and access to
Resources

Self
Determination

Hope and
Life

Justice and
equity

Right to Return

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Prepared By

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Dr. Abaher Sakka

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جامعة بيرزيت
BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY

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in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

Evaluation of Experience and a Vision for the Future

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Field Researchers: (Annex #1)

3

Table of contents

Introduction:

The idea for developing this manual emerged from the accumulated field experiences of the survey unit at the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) — Birzeit University, which exceeded 15 years in conducting both qualitative and quantitative surveys and field researches. The increase in the surveys conducted in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) since the mid-nineties, in which the CDS had a pioneering role, is a clear indicator for the need of such a manual. Especially when noting the content of many of the surveys conducted which dealt with the effects of Oslo Accord in terms of the relationship between the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli occupation and the types of issues and priorities highlighted. In other words, the disordered basis in the relations between the occupier/colonizer and those occupied/colonized produced immediate issues to the national, class related, and ideological issues.

In this colonial context, many Palestinian institutions competed in issuing monthly or weekly statistics as indicators for social and political issues, some of which reflect the essence of issues that the Palestinian people live through. Most of these statistics, however, are dispatched from reality and exercised arbitrary projections in terms of content, methodology, questions, issues and indicators. To add to this problem, the private sector started competing with academic institutions who produce significant data acting as local agents for opinion polls by implementing approaches, methodologies and ideologies that also ignore the occupied/colonized context.

The most dangerous aspect in this field is that active Palestinian institutions did not seek to present critical views through which they attempt to develop their methodologies and display the challenges they were confronted with in fieldwork under the existing occupation/colonization context. They were mostly in line with the prevailing research practices that ignore the colonial context as their main effort seemed to be on competing to obtain the funding. International funding played a major role in dealing with quantitative data (expressed in numbers) as a key aspect of its developmental policies and approaches. The World Bank had the upper hand in this methodology, as numbers not only conceal many of the existing power relations, but also seek to attribute them to the Palestinian society itself and in doing that completely neglecting the Israeli occupation and its effect on the Palestinian society.

This manual seeks to present a critical view of how field work should be carried out by including structural factors and hence a more complex understanding of realities especially the "occupation/colonization" effect. This is done through presenting several admonitions against being driven by theoretical concepts and frameworks that are incapable of understanding the colonization context. In addition, to be cautious not to be driven by the statistical data that could be

misleading at many times. Accordingly, the manual proposes a key saying: "field work must pursue interactive formulas that are based on partnership with the surveyed Palestinian society in order to establish a partnership that is capable of doing an analyses using a framework that considers the colonial reality and that allows the surveyed the principle opportunity to express and show their experiences. Methodologically, in this manual, we will introduce those field research tools based on the active and flexible participation."

This manual sets the necessary grounds and provides the necessary guidelines before going to the field, meaning the areas that should be considered before going to the field, as well as during fieldwork within the necessary tools for both quantitative and qualitative researches. In a similar vein, provides similar guidelines when writing and analysing, while stressing that this manual is not a framework for scientific research methodologies, but rather a guide to field research manual that contains indicators to understand the Palestinian realities with applications that relate to the different Palestinian categories and groups.

It also attempts to provide operational concepts that could be useful for researchers and students. Simultaneously, it constitutes an important base for Palestinian researchers living abroad and foreign researchers as well. The manual contains two models; application and training. These models provide a prime base for understanding the different aspects of conducting research in Palestine, while providing general formulas on field researches.

Methodologically, preparing the manual was mainly based on the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) at Birzeit University's more than fifteen years of field experience. During which this time tens of field research manuals -tied to specialized surveys- were produced and were considered as references and basis for this manual. Also, this manual benefitted from several workshops held for field researchers on the problems faced while doing field work in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and training workshops for Palestinians in the Diaspora in Jordan and Lebanon that resulted in some important commentaries on field research in the Palestinian Diaspora. In addition, the manual uses supporting background papers by the Survey Unit coordinator at CDS Ayman Abdul Majeed, the head of the Social and Behavioural Sciences Department at Birzeit University Dr. Abaher Al-Saqqa, the director of The Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees in Gaza Strip Mr. Tayseer Muheisen, a development expert from Gaza Strip Mohammad Al-Eileh, and the CDS coordinator in Gaza Strip Ghassan Abu Hatab.

Section One:

Epistemological Introduction

Much literature that investigated the operationalization of concepts in scientific research will fail to apply these operational concepts in the field. Additionally, scientific research approaches and analytical frameworks and methodologies always come to introduce "foreign" concepts that address international contexts are inapplicable to the specific context under study . This manual offers some general knowledge of how to bring out from the field the required research concepts that emanate from the surveyed population. I It is necessary to be aware of the existing economic, social and political context in developing field methodologies as they will affect the outcomes of fieldwork.

Part One:

Introduction to Concepts in Scientific Research

Introduction: general framework on scientific research and linking it to the Palestinian case:

➤ Change Visions: Scientific research is an intellectual process that carries change vision aiming at revealing and characterizing the problem matters of social life for the purpose of identifying political, economic and human rights and tying it to the status quo. (for example: Palestine under settler colonial occupation).

➤ The relation between theorizing (theory) and the practice of field research: This relation that is discussed quite a lot. Palestine under settler colonial occupation.. So, theory leads to contradicting directions with the existing context. In the Palestinian context it should be noted that the relation between theory and the field is an interactive relation where each of them affects the other, thereby, certain theories fail in explaining the existing Palestinian context. Thus, understanding reality forms a basis to amend some of the theories, in order to interpreting the Palestinian reality as it is tied to the research base— it being under settler colonization.

➤ Contradicting field research visions: Some researchers sought that the main objective is to develop scientific knowledge through local community studies, while others believe the objective is to embody the visions and the interests of the different groups in societies and to voice them. The contradiction is not in the knowledge that embodies the vision of local communities and giving voice to them, but the contradiction is in considering local communities an experimental field for testing and developing it without considering the damage this knowledge might have on local communities, "hear your voice or the voice of others."

➤ The research problem and the problematic of research: The research problem in scientific research is a question or a number of ambiguous questions

8

that are on the researcher's mind in relation to the chosen study topic that require an interpretation capable of understanding the existing context[1], the problem falls on the special understanding of the difference, disagreement and lack of agreement. The concept of problem reduces research from the functionalist schools' perspective that perceives the society composed of complementary units (the problem is a disease) that adhere to society, and dealing with studied social phenomena by considering them problems while trying to reduce them through a reformatory approach.

➢ Problems in field research and the use of tools: Harmonization between quantitative and qualitative field tools. Some researchers rely on statistics, forms and statistical projections without taking the existing political, economic and social context into consideration whereby numbers remain a truncated indicator of the general state. In depth analysis of the existing reality certainly needs, in addition to statistical numbers, a quality interpretation by those living it so they do not remain plain numbers, but become a context where the objective structures overlap. It is also important to create appropriate mechanisms to communicate with the local community "through local key persons" rather than superior mechanisms, and the power of perception especially in participation when collecting, analysing it and interpreting it by avoiding faulty judgment in explaining the implications of information the researcher uses and its meaning. This way the researcher humbly does not act as a superior to those who preceded him/her in the area and are subject of his research.

Based on the above premises for a framework that deals with the colonial context of Palestine and the due to the dire need to have the researcher be bind with the societal base in his research, came the need for using what came to be called "Grounded Theory"[2] to make the necessary connection between the realities –as stated by the community on the ground- and the findings. Accordingly, the Grounded Theory allows for a dialogue and interaction with concepts and is thus characterized as a participatory research methodology (not a theory as the title refers to. It is a theoretical framework for doing research that aims at addressing issues on the mind of researcher, an ideological framework that limits stereotypes when going into the field without any preconceived ideas. Glaser and Strauss, who are the main theoreticians and founders of this approach, developed a research methodology that is capable of producing a quality analysis in field research. There are a number of general directions and guiding principles only without the typical restrictions that are found in mostly all other theories. Therefore, the fascination with this approach in collecting data is suitable for the colonial context because it provides a framework that allows for collecting data through interaction with society.

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1 Abdullah Ibrahim, Scientific Research in Social Sciences, the Arab Cultural Center, Casablanca, 2008.
2 for more information: http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/36848_birks.pdf
http://ijds.org/Volume6/IJDSv6p095-114Jones322.pdf

The main characteristics of Grounded Theory include basing it on understanding the existing contexts when collecting and analysing data through a continuous interaction with society until conclusions about structures are reached. The outcome is knowledge that contributes to creating comparative theoretical concepts within the existing societal experiences that are clearly based on experiences, visions of difference and similarity and areas of conflict and cooperation, and how all these processes are formed in the different structures.

Despite the differences between Strauss and Glaser's views, there are key principles that can be summarized as follows:

Entry to the field without preconceived ideas and starting the research with a general question or idea.

Relying on qualitative tools and research methods that rely on interacting with the public.

Reaching conceptual frameworks through analysing data, in-depth dialogue, and interaction with the social environment and the different categories of the society at large.

Constant comparison and analysis while considering the importance of not collecting excessive information.

By coding qualitative data in a conceptual framework that enhances the analysis in order to reach theoretical frameworks (saturation).

Freeing the researcher from preconceived ideas gives them additional ability to go in-depth in understanding socially and ideologically problematic issues, and frees them from the misleading precedent shortcomings of the topic being studied. In addition, interacting with the social base affects the type of data collected that lead to reaching conceptual frameworks springing out from the societal base, unlike those frameworks that are far from their social base which mostly neglects mobility and social movement. This theory leads to creating knowledge based on the interaction with society that gives a strong push towards an in-depth interpretation and analysis, especially through participatory dialogue and interaction tools.

10

It is not an overstatement to say that this theory created a "revolutionary" quantum leap in the social science research field. It constituted a revolution against some totalitarian knowledge and theories at the same time, whether through the existing "forced" separation between theories and field research which is followed by a separation between the collection of data stage and analysis stage. Also, there is a great importance of moving from depending on quantitative data towards dealing with reality and its interactions and contradictions. As well as, eliminating personal impressions (focused around readily made models that could be dropped), especially with orientalist researchers who mainly work on preconceived assumptions and not on the research question or problematic reality.

Using Grounded Theory avoids a number of central and critical problems in researching the Palestinian realities in specific, most importantly the theoretical shortcomings. Other traditional positivist research method follows western theories that mainly reflects experiences of the upper classes and whites in the west and not on the working classes that, in fact, represents the majority of western societies. Creating knowledge using the Grounded Theory (which one must admit was created also by Western theoreticians) was the only methodology that allows for producing knowledge that is closer to reality, or less deformed than the one that is based on western theories. The reason for its applicability is that it allows for patterns to appear without intervention or preconceived theoretical frameworks.

Epistemological Export

Colonization created a structural composition of indigenous peoples' human knowledge that no structure of a non-western reality and experience remained. All this is considered a part of the global knowledge design that produced articulated versions of cybernetic clone. There is a need to detect all attempts at the political eviction of knowledge, accountability of western knowledge of the blind importation and implicitly the importation of many of the destructive dichotomies cognitively and politically and finally at the level of consciousness of space the accountability of the concepts that were implanted in the geographical imagination rooted in the western discourse, the geopolitical narrative and cartography. Thus, expose epistemological imperialism that silences the "other" at the time that it studies the "other." How could we be a "we" that is not an imprint of the "other"? Outside the 'West', virtually in all known cultures, every cosmic vision, every image, all systematic production of knowledge is governed by the western knowledge perspective. Any profound study of how knowledge is constructed embodies the spirit of colonialism that aims always at reducing the value of "other" knowledges. How was the prevailing knowledge constructed and exported after it was emptied from any rivalry with the opposing indigenous knowledge. How was the alternative to western knowledge marginalized using methodological logic equipped with a rational gear? How was the western experience cloned globally?
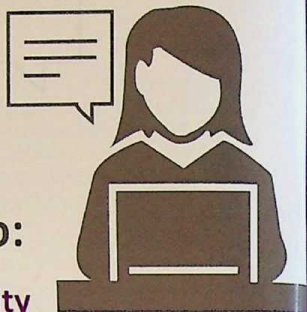
Part Two:

Objectivity and Subjectivity in Scientific Research – The Sociological Rupture

The researcher's task is to study phenomena as they are and not **as they should be**[3], therefore avoid the preconceived quantitative judgements that emanate from philosophical, moral and ideological backgrounds but at the same time understand the effect of the colonial context, and to address the follow up key questions:

> The necessity of depending on facts based on proof and actual narratives rather than reflections and information.

> Objectivity in reaching information without involving emotions. One has to admit that there is a level of subjectivity that is unavoidable, starting with choosing the research question. Therefore, objectivity here means less subjectivity.

> The necessity of avoiding ready-made thoughts pre-conceived, judgements, and stereotypes. This is relative because avoiding it altogether is almost impossible but when addressing these stereotypes from the point of view of the researched would make the subject matter more relevant.

Explanatory example: early marriages are widespread in Palestinian villages. So, dealing with this common opinion based on an imagined image of Palestinian villages, while early marriage is widespread in the Palestinian society as a whole, with no clear difference made between cities, villages and refugee camps is problematic. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) data, the average marriage age is early; 22 years for females and 24 years for males, despite the fact that these ages are high when compared to previous years.

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3   An original idea of a pioneer in sociology, Emile Durkheim.

> The social researcher is a critical consumer of information; therefore he/ she must deal with phenomena as an external and independent body and practice a level of scientific neutrality –as explained earlier it is impossible to become pure neutral researcher. This idea is limited despite it being a core idea because objectivity in social sciences is quite vague and hard to achieve. The researcher, however, may present a reading closer to objectivity when researching an issue through distancing himself from the issue being studied. Since social sciences are relative and not absolute, terms like "maybe" or "could be due to" should be used rather than "definitely" or "absolutely" etc.

> The researcher must not blindly follow the studies of former researchers or theories when studying social phenomenon, therefore it is important to present critical and analytical reading.

Part Three:

Types of Research:

The classification of scientific research (research modules)[4]
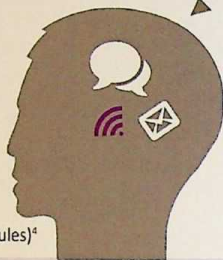
> Exploratory researches help researchers answer questions or preconceived assumptions proposed by the researcher on the research topic.

> Diagnostic researches study the causational assumptions; studying the different causes that lead to the phenomenon and its repetition, which cannot be reduced to one factor.

> Explanatory example: the rise in unemployment rates in the Palestine society that is tied to several factors (political, economic and social).

> Evaluation researches are reports on the value and social feasibility of a project or program. It measures the extent to which an activity or program objectives are achieved. Example: knowing the effectiveness of an educational program on students, the extent to which a program on "empowering women in a certain society" is achieved, or "evaluating the effect of a privatization program on a certain production sector". This type of research is the most spread in the Palestinian society because it is tied with the idea of feasibility and benefit, which requires developing a group of recommendations with the idea of feasibility - an idea that is widespread in the world of economic research. Therefore, this module is widespread in comparison with other sociological study modules, as many Palestinian researchers develop recommendations for studies on social phenomena where developing recommendations is not as feasible as going in depth or expanding in a research topic. This module, however, is the most common since recommendations are presented at the end of the study for social

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4   For further reading:
Salatneyeh, Balqasim and Hassan Al-Jelani. The Grounds for Social Approaches, Cairo: Al-Fajer Publications, 2012.

phenomena -through which recommendations cannot be presented, because they turn into moral lessons-, which confuses the personal visions and the "socially accepted" social perceptions.

Explanatory example: common researches in the Palestinian society: "sexual harassment", a recommendation is given to pay attention to religious education and good parenting ...etc. while this phenomenon is connected to social and economic structural elements (relevant to a socio-economic power practicing roles leading to male dominant society, the female's image as a subject, objectifying women (beauty is her wealth), absence of deterring laws, male perceptions on both sexes' imaginations of themselves...etc.). To sum up, recommendations often reduce complex social and political relations to one single factor and by doing that, they are not able to include those realities any more. In consequence, social realities are distorted. Descriptive researches which include studying facts relating to certain phenomenon or social positions. They do not require the presence of assumptions or questions; they only require the description of phenomena.

Other classifications of researches

> Applicatory research: studies conducted by the researcher in order to apply itsresults to solve existing problems such as education and management.

> Theoretical research: used to answer questions that occur to the mind andilluminatecertain ambiguity surrounding a certain phenomenon.

> Exploratory research: used in researches designed to provide decision makers with the appropriateinformation.

> Experimental research: studies that use experiments continuously and do not rely solely on thoughtsand rules of logic.

> Developmental research: descriptive studies of changes on few variables thataretakingplacewiththe passage oftime.

15
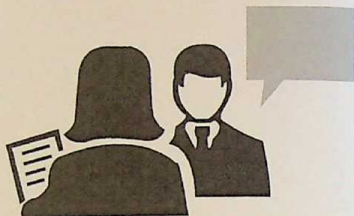
Part Four:
Scientific Research Methodologies[5]

The manual is not in conflict with the scientific research methodologies; but it is different in the logic, question and problematic of commencing in research

Do not commence with preconceived ideas or stereotypes.

Always start with a discussion of problem rather than designing assumptions.

Look for a research question rather than developing theories and assumptions you would be trying to prove.

Head towards understanding reality through the experiences of the locals.

1 Historic Methodology:

The historic methodology depends on describing and recording facts and activities of the past. However, it does not stop at that end; it goes beyond studying and analysing the different documents and events and finding the appropriate and logical interpretations for them in accordance with the scientific foundations in order to get results representing logical facts and generalizations that help in understanding the past. Then, invoke on this understanding in building the facts of the present as well as reaching the basis for predicting the future. The historic approach has key functions of interpretation and prediction -which are important for scientific research. An Example on this methodology is analysing the Palestinian refugee phenomenon.

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5   See also: Khaled Hamed, Scientific Research Approach, Algeria: Rehana for Publishing and Distribution, 2003.

2 Descriptive Methodology (Survey):

It is a description of what is happening and obtaining facts pertinent to something (such as institutions, a certain society or a geographic organization ...etc.), identifying and diagnosing areas that suffer from certain problems and require improvement, while elaborating on the possible changes and predicting possible changes and future variables. Using this methodology, the researcher can collect information on a certain structure to study the existing circumstances and practices in order to reach better plans to improve the existing conditions -through comparing them to previously selected criteria. It could be that the field of such field studies is broad and extends to geographic regions composed of several countries, or it could extend to an institution or a social category in a certain city or region. Data could be collected from each individual of the research community if it was small, or the researcher could select a sample to represent the society so as to be accurate scientifically. Of these methods used in collecting data in such survey studies include questionnaires or interviews.

3 Experimental Methodology:

It is the method that the researcher uses to identify the different conditions and variables that pertain to a certain phenomenon and to control it. The researcher using the experimental methodology depends on studying the special variables affecting this specific phenomenon to arrive at a causal relationship that tie the variables to it. The researcher may resort to introducing new variables to be able to come up with what purported to prove the relationship. Also, the researcher can control a variable and inflict change in another variable to be able to arrive at a form of a causal relationship between two variables. The experimental methodology is no longer limited to the use of the experimental method in natural sciences but it is being used on a large scale in the social sciences too. Even though its use has been associated with certain conditions, such as, and most importantly, the possibility of controlling variables.

The experimental method depends on the observation method as a method of collecting information; there the researcher would be the director, moderator and leader of the problematic and the case and also the one who brings it from start to completion of the collection of information process –where this condition or case terminates. It thus differs from pure observation which in which the researcher does not interfere or affect the problem/condition to be studied

17

but the researcher is an observer and recorder of what is being observed. This method is considered one of the successful ways for incorporating this method as a research method in social and human sciences, such as management, psychology, media, and library studies... etc.

Some view the difficulties in achieving control experiments in topics and social situations because of the peculiar nature of human beings (which is the focus of social studies and humanities as there are many factors that affect the management of humans –like the tendency to be fake... etc.) that can affect the experiment and can be out of control or difficult to adjust. Therefore, there are many factors and variables that can affect the experimental situation that are uncontrollable and thereby it is difficult to arrive at rules that determine the causal relationship between variables. The most problematic element in the criticism of this methodology is the loss of complete similarity in many humanitarian groups that the experiment will be applied to when compared with the similarities between the natural elements.

4 Statistical Methodology:

- It is the use of mathematical and numerical methods in processing and analysing data. This is done through several stages:

- Collection of statistical data on the subject.

- Display of this data in an orderly fashion and representing it in possible ways.

- Analysing data.

- Interpretation of data through the interpretation of what is meant by the numbers compiled from results.

Types of Statistical Methodologies:

> Descriptive statistical methodology: It focuses on describing and summarizing the collected numbers on a certain topic (an institution or a specific community) and interprets them as results that do not necessarily apply to a different institution or community.

> Deductive and inductive statistical methodology: It depends on selecting a sample from a larger community, analysing it, interpreting the collected

statistical data to reach deductions, and generalizations on what is larger than the community being studied. This methodology is also based on identifying what the numbers mean, deducing facts from the data, and understanding their indicators rather than just describing them as in the descriptive methodology.

> Statistical measurement: There are several statistical measurements that can be used in the framework of this methodology, including the mean, the median and the mode. The researcher also uses several methods to present and summarize the data, and compare between data (ratios, percentages, averages and frequency tables). The researcher may use more than one method in analysing and interpreting data.

5 Comparative Methodology:

- Study the similarities and differences between the key patterns of social behaviour.

- Study the growth and development of personal patterns, psychological and social directions in communities, and multiple cultures such as cultural and social researches and studies of a national character.

- Study the different types of organizations, such as political and industrial organizations.

- Study the social structure of different communities, such as the study of marriage standards, family and kinship.

- Study the religious beliefs, as well as the processes and the developments that arise from the social structures such as civilization and analysing whole communities.

Part Five:
Practical Applications

The research problematic may be considered the one key directional step towards establishing research perspectives and understanding the existing reality. The following are supporting resources in drafting any research problematic:

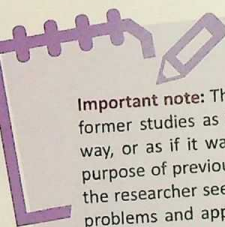**1** The work environment and practical experience: Some research problematic come to the attention of the researcher through his daily practical experience, as these experiences may raise questions pertaining to some issues to which the researcher cannot find an interpretation, or seeking more information to understand the phenomenon. **The researcher is deeply involved and interacting highly with the society.**

2 The research problem is felt during initial meetings with the local community, and indicates that what we think of as researchers has a social impact.

3 Expanded reading: critical reading of what books, periodicals, and newspapers present in terms of ideas and opinions might raise a number of questions for the individual which he could study and research when opportunity arises, without being led to preconceived assumptions without interacting with reality.

4 Previous studies: Researchers normally offer recommendations in the closing chapters such as attending to a new group of concepts, or approaches that they may have identified in previous studies. This leads fellow researchers to think of these concepts and approaches and attempt to study them. It should be noted here, that reviewing previous studies is just to show the differences and similarities rather than narrating process that consumes time and effort and minimizes the value of the research.

Important note: The Palestinian research community normally deals with former studies as if it is a pure summarization process in a journalistic way, or as if it was a collection process, therefore, we clarify here, the purpose of previous studies is to present a critical reading through which the researcher seeks to bring inquiries on what the research is, detect its problems and approaches, offer possible debates towards introducing a new reading that debates the results of previous studies, or introduce counter views, or create new questions/outlooks that justify presenting previous literature –thereby, the researcher while presenting previous studies benefits from these studies either to develop them, counter them, or build on them or use different approaches and methodologies.

1 Subjectivity and the Objectivity:

o **The research is always composed of two parties:** The researcher and the subject. Therefore, we stand before two approaches; either to start from the subject to the self or vice versa, which is accompanied by the duality of observation and the idea. Methodologically, there are two models: inductive -meaning from the observation to the idea-, or deductive -meaning from the idea to the observation.

o **What is the subject:** The subject is an external thing that is the focus of our senses or abstract realization. When studying a research subject we have two approaches, either macro (wholistic view) or Micro (partial view).

The launching question:[6]

What does the researcher want to know? Then, what does he want to explain and understand. Below are some models from well-known/classical studies in sociology that may be considered launching questions:

Model One: Is the student movement of 1968 in France merely an outburst manifested at the university or is it a model for a social movement capable of the challenge in the name of public affairs (Alain Touraine's question)[7]

Model Two: what leads some people to go frequently to museums unlike the vast majority of people who do not go to museums (Pierre Bourdeau's question)?

This is Pierre Bourdieu's question[8] that started his sociological study of sociological museums which was published in his well-known book entitled "The Love of Art".

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6   For further information, see Abdullah Ibrahim, Scientific Research in Social Sciences, previous reference, pp. 55-65.

7   AlainTouraine, Lutte étudiante, Aux Éditions du Seuil, Paris, 1978.

8   Pierre Bourdieu, Alain Darbel, En collaboration avec Dominique Schnapper, L'Amour de l'art, Les musées d'art européens et leur public, Collection « Le sens commun », les Editions du Minut, Paris. 1969.

A collection of research questions and comments on them

➤ What is the impact of changes in organization of the civil sphere on the life of residents? This question is vague and ambiguous in terms of whether it addresses the residents' lives or their professional lives.

➤ Do employers exploit employees? Practically this question is an answer and it is worded in a biased way. The question must be open to a group of different answers.

➤ Thus, the good question should contain the locus of the researcher's interest, what he wants to know, and what he wants to explain and understand. It should avoid the higher levels of abstraction and it should not include the whole society, but selects a social groups or one sector.

Are the changes on the civil society structures after Oslo Accord is an engagement in its manifestations or rejuvenation as a requirement for a new phase?

Is the plurality in labour unions a competitive step to protect the rights of workers from being exploited, or is it to create a conflicting environment competing for personal interests in the Palestinian case?

23

is one of the important phases and key requirements for understanding. In order to reach the exploration phase, we conduct preparatory reviews, exploratory interviews and complementary procedures such as watching, listening and field visits. This could require us to rephrase the launching question, and it could be accompanied by conducting interviews with specialists and people with practical field experience in the field. We could collect texts and discuss the issue with colleagues and friends.

Examples on the research problem/problematic/problématique

Examples

◼ Let us suppose that the research title is "authority and youth in the Palestinian society"

o Such a title would confuse the researcher because it includes the relation between practicing authority and social categories and the relation between the family structure and the existing authoritative structures (the authority of a state under occupation/colonization, family, society...etc.). However, we can choose a more specific title such as "the struggle of generations in Palestinian institutions after the Oslo Accord".

The title is general and researchable; let us suppose that another research is entitled "working mother and her relations with her children in the Palestinian society".

1 **How can the research subject be identified**: the concept of a traditional family, modern family, and social values, roles and positions within the family, the labour market... etc.

2 **How can the research question be selected:** Addressing the educational affairs of children and its reflection on the performance of working mothers, as well as the educational affairs of children when mothers are giving up their jobs?

3 **How can the research question be identified:** the aforementioned presents us with three tenors- this means that three researchers can present three different readings:

> Content of the first question: Does women work and the children's affairs constitute an attempt from her to accommodate her work with household affairs and failure in doing so.

> Content of the second question: Does the nature of the husband's family view, or the husband and the wife's family on her working...etc.?

> Content of the third question: the patterns of work; handicrafts, office work... etc.

Thus, we have three different contents; working mothers and children's affairs within the household, women's work and their household affairs, and the type of women's work and the view of social categories of women working.[9]

Research Problematic: There are differences in the theoretical approaches on the subject. Therefore, we can draft three different research problems or three different approaches.

1 **First research problem:** The working mother is oppressed and exploited. They are obliged to work inside and outside the house but since working outside the household does not provide flexible adaption mechanisms, the end result is always at the expense of children's affairs.

2 **Second research problem:** Work is of high importance to women and constitutes a great motivation. Because of the husband, husband's family, and wife's family views and expectations is that women's work would affect children, the end result is that the mother works on refuting that.

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9   For additional similar examples, see Abdullah Ibrahim, Scientific Research, previous reference, pp. 175-184

3 **Third research problem:** There are work patterns that mothers can create outside the household which do not affect household chores. The more the women's work requirements are the less the mothers tend to care about other work affairs. This means that there are abstract theoretical concepts related to work and educational affairs which require transforming into procedural concepts:

> This means: with the increase of negative behavioural expressions towards women's performance at work the more working mothers would tend to their children's affairs.

> The view on work and educational affairs results from transferring from one job to another that is different in nature.

Example: Citizenship and the Palestinian Social Structure

1 Identify a research topic: We need a group of concepts relating to the concept of citizenship and its historic and legal dimensions especially in a country under colonization (refugee, non-refugee), the dispossession of citizenship within the legal conception and linking it to social responsibility, social and economic dimensions, Palestinians of the diaspora, Palestinians in the 1948 occupied lands... etc.

2 Selecting the research question: Dispossession of citizenship and identity, social responsibility, class and gender differences, placement differences in citizenship issues, coexistence in national issues and the Palestinian identity towards emancipation, legislations and political regimes... etc.

3 Identifying content as it arises from the aforementioned:

> First content: Disconnection between citizenship and identity and the usurped political structure and social structure at the idiomatic concept levels.

> Second content: integration and congruence, and lack of conflict between them, especially, within the location of living.

26

▶ First possible problem statement: Contradictions between concepts of citizenship and identity that appear under a complex political conflicts, dependency on colonial practices, the problem of displacement or dispersion with spatially-restricted local institutions that controls citizenship and identity within the existing social class system.

▶ Second possible problem statement: When there is dependency in the existing colonial context, the "Palestinian" national identity plays an alternative role in maintaining the social structure intact in the face of colonization.

- **Based on the two options, researchers can formulate two questions:**
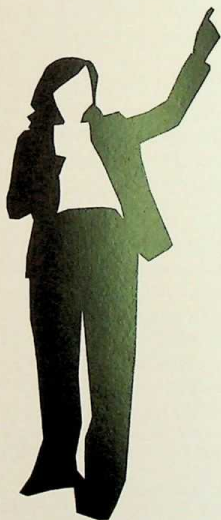
■ **First question:** Does practicing citizenship contradict in the case of entanglement between the subjective and objective?

■ **Second question:** Do spatial and class contradictions dissolve when practicing the Palestinian identity that counters colonization?
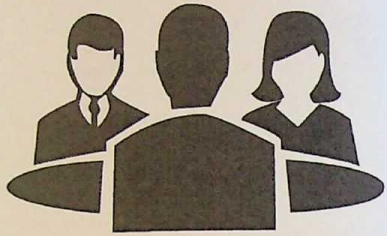
Part Six

In Research: Understanding Palestine Politically, Socially and Economically in the Context of Colonialism[10]

In social studies research, comparisons are often made in relation to the most dominant patterns but in the Palestinian case there are many questions posed such as: is Palestine living an exceptional reality? Is it an exaggeration to address this exceptionality in research studies? Or does the core problem lie in the inability to draw out lessons from the current and past history, whether the ian or the international?

First: A Critical Reading of the General Palestinian Case

Crushing the Palestinian space: Colonialism and occupation worked systemically, permanently, and in an institutionalized way over tens of decades on destroying the Palestinian economic, political, social and geographical structures. British and Israeli colonization produced an ongoing status of discrimination, cleansing and destruction. This includes forced changes into the demographic structure (changes in the demographic formations, radical change on inhabited locations, and changes on population in terms of race, religion and socio-economic status). This leads to fragmentation and dispersion of the Palestinian society and rebuilding its space (entity here means tangible material dimensions such as location, geography and economic institutions; it includes also the moral and intellectual dimensions). The aim is to transform the Palestinian space into small segregated communities and cantons, inside and outside historical Palestine.

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10 This section is based on a paper on the example of the field research conducted by the Center for Development Studies of Birzeit University by Ayman AbdulMajeed. This paper was presented in Vienna University in 2013. While preparing this paper Mr. AbdulMajeed interviewed with Mr. Jamil Hilal, Dr. Adel Samara and Dr. Saed Jasser.

For more information on the same topic, see: Majdi Al-Malki, Researching in an Unfriendly Environment: The Palestinian Case. In Roger Heacock et. Al (eds). Critical Research in the Social Sciences: A Transdisciplinary East-West Handbook. Birzeit University, Palestine: Institute for International Studies, 2011.

Second: Theoretical Projections in the Palestinian Case

1 Profiling research: A number of research studies on the Palestinian case were patterned as traditional. That means dropping experiences that are witnessing stability in the Palestinian context. For example, there is an implied underlying assumption that the Palestinian context is stable after Oslo agreements as before-when compared with other societies. This assumption would cause neglect of many aspects of the occupation effect on the Palestinian context. Thus, these types of research avoid intellectual diligence (existence of a linear ready-to-use track for application regardless of the contexts) that is tied to reality.

2 Indulgence in analyzing theories that addresses a different context and reality especially those of western origin which in being dropped or imported without critiquing it or revising it reflects a Eurocentric view —as it has been practiced by non-westerners but those beyond the center. In contrary to those that address poverty issues in the poorest countries in the world, away from the context of occupation in the Palestinian case. For example: when discussing the different schools of development or the issue of poverty in the occupied states, as well as other issues like food security, and market economy, it is done by isolating the topics studied from the occupation context on one side, and the mechanisms of political economy and their interaction with forced poverty and marginalization on the other. Some researchers apply post-modernity perspectives that are mostly based on cultural approaches to critique the status quo. The paradox lies here: while cultural criticism is an important approach it reduces and projects a great chunk of its doings. On the other hand, applying the methodologies and tools of post-modernity on societies that did not reach modernity yet, is clearly an act of making certain reality arbitrary. In addition to all these, we find those researchers who rely on those neoliberal concepts and free market economy approaches to development and private sector role that are approved by the World Bank's. Most of these approaches tend to devote the relations of power between societies and within societies themselves as well and the occupation will be dealt with as a legitimate reality not a reality that should be challenged and resisted.

29

3 Subjugation of field work and field research so that it is compatible to certain ideologies and theoretical frameworks. The rigorous separation between theoretical and communal is based on theoretical selectiveness in many instances that gave birth to alienation of research from the local communities.

4 Theoretical projections created a clear gap in the policies and institutional approaches. Instead of arriving to frameworks that lead to supporting the existing local developmental initiatives that are based on the grassroots' experiences and steadfastness thought and challenge to the colonial context, we are facing a huge amount of recommendations presented by traditional research that is based on ready-made theories. These recommendations lead the research problem studied to conclusive recommendations that undermines all the contextual complexities and pops up on top of the reality and societal worldview.

Third: Dealing with the Limitations set by Donors and Alienated Researchers in the Palestinian Case

1 Politicization of funding: External funding was closely and directly associated with the tight space for Palestinians (more precisely; the downtrodden Palestinian space) without attempting to understand it or changing it. Despite the attempts to push it towards developmental directions, it remains constraint by politics, its fluctuations depending on the political agenda (tied to the track of peace settlement). In addition, international funding regardless of its origin remained within the neo-liberal frameworks and approaches approved of the World Bank, which is based on free market and structural adjustment. Palestinians were left facing sayings like: the first saying that is inspired by the World Bank is: "Palestinian citizens should see the good grace and impact of international assistance". According to such sayings the international donors address the status quo -as is- without attempting to change it or rise to a development that supports the Palestinian population with it.
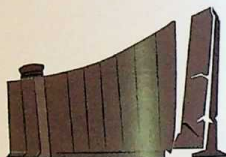
➤ Oslo and the program to invest in peace: A huge flow of funding to build economic peace between the Palestinians and Israelis.

30

➤ The second Intifada and the siege on Arafat: The decline in funding as a result of the new political phase, the second uprising, and re-occupation of the so called area "A" cities. During this phase, the focus was on reform programs and institutional structuring.

➤ Legislative elections and the winning of Hamas movement: The acute decline in funding as a result of the international positions of the democratic elections results that it supported.

➤ Disconnecting Gaza from the West Bank: The Gaza blockade and the program of building institutions in the West Bank. There was a flow of funding to the government in the West Bank under the rubric of building the state institutions.

➤ Irresponsiveness to the efforts to returning to negotiations 2011, where funding decreased and tightening the screws on Palestinian Authority institutions in the West Bank.

2 Funding didn't create radical changes on the Palestinian economic structure as it suffers from fragility and vulnerability to Israel and international funding. This includes: inflation in jobs of the public sector, increasing consumption tendency by citizens, providing conditional bank facilitations and government bids, and decline in size and capacities of the main productive sectors (such as agriculture, mining, and transformative manufacturing) to the benefit of the public service sector.

3 The above mentioned factors contributed to reinforcing the consumption tendency over direct moral productivity. This led to spreading negative manifestations of the capitalist economy that in its turn impacted the benign social values (solidarity, voluntary work, community service, and maintaining public facilities) as opposed to values of nepotism, bribery, favoritism and the misuse of public office, extravagance and corruption. Thereby, poverty rates increased, retreat of the middle classes and immersion in daily life problems instead of struggling for the collective benefit.

4 As a result, the Palestinian internal armed conflict and the economic and political elite conflict emerged elite over the leadership of the Palestinian authority emerged in 2007 between Hamas and Fateh.

Fourth: International Worldview and Impact on Local Research Context

The international world view influenced the path of academic research, as well as policy and programmatic research. Some of the examples include:

1. The use of frameworks and approaches that are mortgaged to the worldview of international donor organizations. These frameworks are reflected in the theoretical and methodological bases of research in issues like the economy, poverty, development, and ... etc. The acceptance of these frameworks reaches a point where they become embedded in the discourse and local practices of research organizations.

2. The submission to the worldviews of international donor organizations created pressure on the research which excludes the existing context (in specific the colonization context). This increased the spread of a number of research studies that are alienated from the local community and that failed in presenting a realistic reading of the status quo.

3. The loss of trust in organizations and political parties and consuming the society due to the increase in consumption tendencies that is based on loaning – as they are perceived by the new economic normative views. This also reflects the case of deformation from colonization that Palestinians live through. This deformation of the lived colonial context brings to the forefront a number of discourses through which different methods to convince people are used so that their collective memory and life under occupation would become internalized. The absence of "liberation" projects, and "voluntary work" values and resisting occupation were substituted with "economic development" discourses and the World Bank reports on "preparedness of the State," and legal discourses that keep the society alerted and distracted.

4. On many occasions, this birthed a state of compliance to ideas and ideologies that serve the reality of the developing nations in post-colonial era. These ideologies ignore the given existing Palestinian case (a limited sovereign authority under an expansive colonization).

32

5 Many research problem statements were substituted with the idea of a problem that in which the frameworks deal with, so it did not generate any deeper understanding of the Palestinian society but it led to marrying the problematique to a theoretical framework governed by stereotypes and values, and alienated views from the Palestinian occupation reality.

6 In conclusion: it is important to speak of a problem statement rather than a hypotheses or a theory that needs to be proven within the context. Thus, we always begin with a question not the prior hypothesis.

SECTION TWO

Interventions on Field Research Tools: General Guidelines for Researchers

Introduction

Researches can be divided in terms of methodologies and tools into two types: Qualitative Research and Quantitative Research. The main differences between the two pertain to: flexibility, spontaneity, deep understanding, arrival at intangible factors, assessment of relationships and communication with participants in the research[11].

A Comparison between Quantitative and Qualitative Research Tools	
Qualitative Research Tools	Quantitative Research Tools
1. High level of flexibility	No flexibility
2. Substantial participation	Little participation
3. Data transcription and analysis during the process of data collection	Data transcription and analysis after data collection process
4. Investigating cause-effect relations	Investigating correlation between variables
5. Aims at understanding phenomena in their context	Aim at measuring something

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11   See: Rayan, Adel. Use of Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in Research: An Exploratory Study of the Literature of Arab Management Reality. Cairo, Egypt: Arab League, 2013. Aldene Shillingford. Data Collection Protocols and Participatory Research Techniques. DFID, 2006.

Creswell, John W. Research Design: Qualitative,Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches Los Anglos, CA: Sage, 2009.

6.	Unlimited number of variables	Limited number of variables based on its existence its existence in the questionnaire
7.	Variety of research tools and methods	Limited research tools and methods
8.	Studying the historic evolution or development of a historic phenomenon	Studying the phenomenon at one specific moment or time
9.	Purposeful sample	Random sample
10.	Ability to study extreme or exceptional cases	Limited ability to study exceptional cases
11.	Limited or few statistical analysis	Substantial statistical analysis
12.	Findings and results cannot be generalized to the research population	Findings and results can be generalized to the research population
13.	Use of induction: the researcher starts with the collected data or observations, and the theory comes afterwards or emanates from the analysis of data during and after the collection process or observation (building the theory step by step).	Testing theories using a standardized methodology: identifying the theory first, building hypotheses, assuming relationships, and based on the findings the acceptance or rejection and modification of the theory.

Part One:
Qualitative Research[12]

Significance of Qualitative Research in studying the Palestinian Context

➤ Investigating phenomena, relations, social, political and economic structures in a historical context;

➤ Studying social phenomena in its interaction with the political, psychosocial, economic and cultural;

➤ Interpretation of various social, political and economic problems, such as: absence of the collective and voluntary work values, like the tendency towards individuality, by highlighting inequalities, social class gaps towards consumption rather than productivity;

➤ Extrapolating the Palestinian context through the given field data in order to contribute to theoretical concepts;

➤ It is based mainly on the active participation by the research respondents on different levels of the research, not only because they are a target group, but also as owners of the experience who are able to interpret and explain the reality.

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12 Look: Saldana, Johnny. The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers. Los Angelos, CA: SAGE. 2009. Strauss A, Corbin J. Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques. London, Britain: Sage, 1990.

38

Approaches to Qualitative Research in the Palestinian Context (People Under Occupation)

➤ Moving from reactions in a form of theories research to participatory action: the researcher moves from closed offices to the field to understand the reality from the social, political and economic context of the phenomenon in addition to its historical development.

➤ Adopting a practical philosophical perspective that is based on human experiences, his/ her views of the existing structures, how they affect his/ her living conditions, and how they can be changed.

➤ Studying the place, the community and the organization in its holistic and partial contexts (for example, studying Palestinians who live behind the separation wall in occupied Palestine).

➤ Developing conceptual and analytical frameworks through studying the experiences, main concepts, and collected data.

Significance of Qualitative Research in Studying the Palestinian Case

➤ Studying phenomena in their historical context (for example displaced Palestinians or refugees), and the ability to analyze phenomena within dimensions and multiple variables tied temporarily and spatially, toed to the quality of life, the interaction of variables and their linkage with each other qualitatively and quantitatively. There is no rigidity (hypotheses that need to be accepted or rejected) but instead a constant assessment of the tools and methodologies within data that emerged from the field, partnership by the respondents in providing an analysis of data within their experiences.

➤ Diversity of research tools utilized: This diversity is due to the many levels of qualitative research that not based on a methodology or a tool emerging from theory. In the Palestinian case qualitative research is capable of studying the peculiar state and exceptional situations.

➤ These methodologies and its research tools allow for high flexibility.

➤ Qualitative research leads us to findings that are not pre-assumed because the goal is to understand phenomena and existing problems, which allows us to arrive at solutions and recommendations.

39

Qualitative research depends on a number of methodologies such as:

1 In-depth interviews: with individuals on highly sensitive topics, and threads of a personal nature.

> Focus groups: with groups on issues in which there is public or vast interest.

2 Participant observation: shows behavior within the status quo.

> Case studies: as analytical and research tools (a research tool that uses many qualitative and quantitative tools).

Content Analysis:[13] is considered one of the main techniques and tools in studying and analyzing documents in all its different forms; (oral, written and photographic) that aim to understand, interpret and arrive at readings and connotations, perspectives, categorization of content to be able to analyze and explain the specific discourses. These perspectives can be used to quantify data. This is done by identifying the unit of analysis first that can be a word, a concept, or a phrases. Then, analyzing meaning and their connotations and tying it to socio-historical context. Content Analysis is based on a number of steps: selection of subject, selection of sample, determining of sample size and its relation to the research subject, and analysis of the content by scrutinizing and interpreting the meaning of the content. As explained earlier, it all starts with a number of units: a word, a concept, a phrase, the context, or the meaning.

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13 See: Norman Farcofe. Discourse Analysis. Translated by: Talal Wahbeh. Beirut, Lebanon: Arab Organization for Translation, 2009.

Ethics of Qualitative Research: General Remarks for the Purpose of Working in the Palestinian Context

➤ The prime priority of studying humans is human development;

➤ Avoid purposeful elimination or neutralization of any variable (some researchers neutralize the occupation factor or the policies of decision makers in the society).

➤ Gaining trust of people is highly significant (trust entails showing the community that the research is significant to them and that they are not only a target of experiments).

Fundamentals of research ethics:

➤ Respect for human dignity, autonomy, and the do-no-harm principle;

➤ Minimizing risk;

➤ Justice and fairness;

➤ Respect of local communities.

➤ Informed consent: It is a mechanism to ensure participants understand of their decision to participate in such research by reading and signing a consent form before carrying out the research that may be written or recorded for documentation.

➤ Providing participants with detailed information about the research: its purpose, its expected timeframe, the voluntary participation, and communication and contact information.

Getting Started: Steps in Executing Field Research

1 Selection of research location: Keeping the focus on the selected location.

2 Literature review: A critical review is important where it is not taken for granted Work with field researchers (or research assistants):

3 Entering the field

> Communicating with the local community through individuals or civil based organizations (CBOs). It is important to ensure that communication with local community is not made through an authority or through officials, as this would affect the community's trust in the researcher.

> Quietness, easiness and comfort in going and entering the field.

> Building mutual trust with the community quickly at the beginning.

> Facilitated logistic and administrative services in order to succeed in implementing research interviews or focus groups.
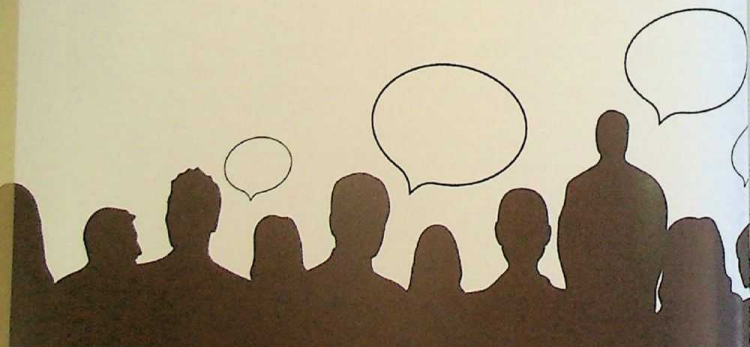
4 Sampling:

- Selecting representatives of the local community, especially in cases where it is difficult to conduct in-depth interviews with individuals.

- Determining the size and methodology of the research in-depth interviews, focus groups and participant observation.

- Arriving at saturation in knowledge and credibility depending on the sample size (number of individual in-depth interviews or focus groups).

Sample types in qualitative research:

- Purposeful sampling: Respondents are identified based on their relevance to the research questions and standards. The sample size is identified based on the state of saturation the research questions. This entails that data analysis simultaneously during the process.

- Snowball sampling: It may be a type of purposeful sampling but its selection is done through communication from one individual to another, taken into consideration the importance of selecting individuals who are relevant to the research questions. The researcher needs to build good trust relations with local experts.

Introducing the researcher:

In introducing yourself be honest and chose smooth and appropriate words. For example "I am a researcher in the social field. I am here to study your culture and social traditions" vs. "I am here to write a research/ or a book on your village".

Begin with introducing yourself and what is your purpose honestly in order not to create any misunderstanding among the group or individual you are interviewing.

First: Qualitative Research Tools[14]

First tool: Structured and Semi-structured Interview (in-depth)

➤ It is a research technique that can be used to arrive at a real picture from the participants' perspectives in the in-depth interviews concerning the research subject.

➤ It is a necessary tool to focus on the individual perspective more than focusing on the collective perspective surrounding the subject understudy.

➤ It gives individuals the chance to express their opinion and perspectives regarding events and issues, and to share their experiences. This qualifies researchers in forming ideas on causal relationships on trends and behaviors.

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14   See also: Hancock, Beverley.1998. Introduction to Qualitative Research. Trend Focus. 1998.

It allows addressing issues that are highly sensitive.

➢ It allows exploring vague phenomena and events that need deep research more than those provided by quantitative surveys.

Procedures of In-depth Interviews

➢ At first, the relation between the researcher and respondents starts at the first moment of field research, therefore the researcher should be aware of the following:

➢ Introductions and proper greetings;

➢ Showing respect in word choices and expressions;

➢ Appropriate dress code.

➢ Self-consciousness of body language

Ethics of In-depth Interviews

➢ Taking enough time for explaining the purposes and the path of interviews.

➢ The researcher should be honest in conveying the purpose and significance of the research, the possible risks and expectations from participants in the interview.

➢ The researcher should not make false expectations from the research.

Interview
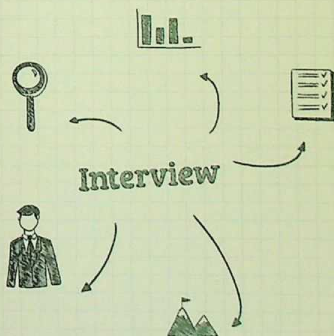
Confidentiality and trust.

1 Researchers should ensure that any personal information will remain confidential and its participants will remain anonymous.

2 Researchers should ensure that the texts will not include any indications of the identity of information providers.

3 Informed consent of respondents to participate in the research

4 It is verbal in most cases or sometimes recorded.

Questions of In-depth Interviews

1 Questions of in-depth interviews are either structured or semi-structured. Closed-ended questions should be avoided, especially those with yes or no limiting answers. For example, "are you for or against negotiations?" vs. "what in your opinion is the future of negotiations with the occupation?".

2 Questions of in-depth interviews should remain in an objective context. That is, questions that guide respondents to a certain type of answers should be avoided. Also, avoid contradictory questions. For example, "I know well that the Palestinian Authority failed in its negotiation policies with the occupation, how do you assess the PA's performance so far?" vs. "how do you assess the PA's performance in the negotiations? Please explain your viewpoint".

Procedures of Developing Questions of In-depth Interviews

1 Start with the questions that build trust between you and the respondents. Don't ask questions that cause them to doubt your purpose, or that provoke them like: "Do you support Fateh or Hamas?" More general questions would be; "how do you assess the status of education and health in your country?" (the role of the pertinent authority which is guided by political orientation in providing a certain service)

46

2 Keep the level of questions simple, its language clear and understandable for all (don't use jargon or indicative language....). For example, "how do the existing colonial structures affect the economic conditions, especially in the context of current globalization? The question should be: "your village is located near settlements and military zones, how does this affect your freedom to move? How does it affect your ability to reach your lands to harvest olive or orange trees during a certain season? How does it affect your ability to market your goods?"

Avoid long questions.

Be aware of what you want from the questions you are about to ask during the interview. Do you want facts or do you need opinions and viewpoints? Examples of factual answers include:

➢ Factual question: In your estimation what is the number of olive planted lands in your village, or number of families in your village;

➢ Viewpoint question: What in your view is the degree of significance of supporting agriculture to reduce unemployment among the youth in your village? And why?

➢ Opinion question: In your opinion how do you assess the performance of the local council, especially in its services such as water or electricity supply? And how?

Pay attention to personal biases and pre-assumptions that emerge from respondents who are participating in the interviews. This is an important aspect for the research. For example, in discussing Palestinian women's attitudes towards marriage (women who live behind the separation wall), it will become clear to researchers that we are underscoring the occupation context (the separation wall, closures) and its impact on lack of free movement, and then start reaching out to their rights. You will find women their ability to move and get out to the public space to create new choices then eventually talking about social barriers will come up. Therefore, when starting with issues that are not sensitive concerning their lived experience then naturally women will express themselves and the researcher can move to research topics easily.

47

o Ensuring collection of the maximum possible information through in-depth elaboration on questions and answers.

o Respecting and protecting the "I" in the respondents' personal knowledge. For example, "do you know the name of the settlement that is built on your lands?" vs. "are there any settlements built on your land?"

o If you are searching for data on people's criticism of or reactions to certain issues, make sure to keep this within their comfort zone and begin with opening comfortable questions. For example, "do you think the society is backward and unjust towards women's rights?" vs. "as a woman, do you have opportunities to be member of the head of the local council in your village?"

Strategies for the Specific Structured Questions

Strategies for collecting additional information during an interview:

1 Building networks: for example, ask if there are other persons who would share the respondents the same or similar attitudes. Or, find out if they know a person whose behavior would confirm or deny this phenomenon?"

2 Discrepancy: make sure to understand differences and/ or similarities between things, how and why? For example, "I have a friend whose wife and himself are employed, while another friend of mine who does not work, but he is a land owner, can you identify ownership and wealth in a different way?"

3 The self and the other: don't ask sensitive questions that pertain to the respondent's personal lives but ask about other things they have seen or examples they have known and to what extent it was practices. For example, "have you heard stories, or incidents where a woman from your community became a victims of violence/ or sexual harassment at the occupation's checkpoints?" Only then, that you can converse with them about women's realities in a direct manner.

How to be prepared for the interview?

1 It is important to be familiar with documents and research which helps you develop it's current questions and many others that follow.

2 Practice for the interview: the researcher should ensure an active participation in interviews by all respondents.

3 The researcher should ensure that all needs and appropriate logistical arrangements are practiced to achieve a successful interview.

How to become highly skilled interviewer?

1 Build relations of trust with respondents;

2 Confirm the correct understanding of the respondent's answers;

3 Adjust your facilitation of interviews in accordance with various types of personalities considering a variety of their emotional statuses (a child, a woman with disability, an illiterate man ... etc.).

4 I an impartial listener without holding any biases and without showing expressions of surprise by their responses. Also, accept with neutrality all what is said. For example, a religious person who expresses his/her support to a leftist political party in elections. Do not show surprise and awe. This may happen because the elections stand one takes is built on social issues not national or religious.
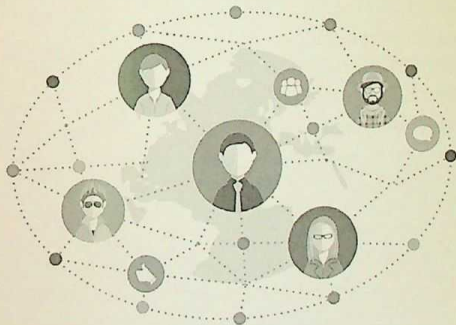
Avoid talking all the time or long whiles.

1 Don't correct the respondents' statements, even if they were contradicting with certain facts.

2 Don't make respondents feel that they have to fill in the silence when it becomes uncomfortable during interviews.

3 Pay attention to your tone and body language.

4 Respect the promises concerning the duration of the interview to ensure that you have credibility, so if you asked for 30 minutes commit to it with a variation of five minutes but not half an hour.

"Testing the waters" to reach for information

Main techniques of interviews:

1 Use objective questions, gestures and phrases to encourage respondents' interaction freely during the interview.

2 Sometimes the researcher needs to interfere to verify correct understanding of respondents' answers, ask for elaboration, or react if the respondents want to know his/ her response to their answers.

Remarks from the Field

1 In cases of a need to do tape recording, it is important to take the permission of respondents. If tape recording was not available, or if the respondents refused it, one of the research assistants can support in writing down all details of interviews.

2 The field researcher should take notes and personal comment or impressions during interviews because they might be forgotten afterwards.

Second Tool: Focus Groups

1 A focus group is a tool that uses elaborate discussion among selected group of respondents on a case or a phenomenon that requires deeper analysis. Within a focus group, key (structured) questions are proposed seeking better understanding of various respondents' views, perspectives, experiences and beliefs regarding the case in question.

2 It is an important tool in qualitative research that formulates originally a common understanding. Selection of focus group participants is not limited to conditions of homogeneity in age or gender, or familiarity to each other. However, the number of participants in a focus group should be within 8-10, and should not exceed in any case 15 participants.

3 Discussion within a focus group is guided by one of the researchers (a facilitator). The focus group is considered a comprehensive and quick tool of data collection and classification under certain criteria.

Characteristics of using focus groups in research:

Methodological advantages of the focus group:

1 Allows for collecting general information on the research topic by contributing to identifying variables and various aspects that should be studied. (For example, what are the challenges and obstacles facing the Palestinian youth in the labor market?).

2 Provides precise details and allows for collecting reliable data on the research topic. It unveils the underlying and potential problems. (For example, what are the challenges and obstacles encountering the agriculture sector in the Jordan Valley? Maybe the Israeli control over these areas, the role of local capital in implementing its interests in this region, or other).

3 Contributes to arriving to the particularities and insights on indicators related to emotions, expressions, feelings, and internalized concepts that can be interpreted into meaningful data. (For example, tying the worst forms of child labor to the existing structure like the occupation).

4 Helps in bringing deeper understanding of the phenomenon in question with in a flexible way that allows exploration of unpredicted sub-topics and unveiling data that would be otherwise hard to validate its credibility For example, early marriage in the Jordan Valley: understanding this issue from a perspective of family security and protectiveness over girls' travel from "settlers and Army forces practices" especially to schools that are out of the village or local community, or even kids who go to find work aspiring to overcome poverty.

5 Provides a source of feedback within the discussions. This allows for collecting additional data that is unattainable using other quantitative tools. Focus group discussions allow respondents to recall and express their experiences freely, reevaluate and assess those experiences and reflect on them. Thus, the experience of the respondents becomes the foundation of discussion; as if they are the experts.

Technical advantages of focus groups

1 Revealing how respondents understand and interact with the research topic or determine meanings of a related concept differently. For example, the youths' understanding of unemployment may differ, contradict with or be similar to the formal definitions in relevant literature because they attached the meanings to their own experiences.

2 Interpreting some of the field-based information and phenomena. For example, there are strong indicators of positive attitudes towards virtual world among the youth; a focus group discussion would help in deeper scrutiny.

3 Saving time, effort and cost in collecting the required quality of data.

4 Allowing comparison among a number of opinions and responses, and allowing respondents to reflect on other respondents' answers (as those may provoke or encourage them), and thus encourages and provokes increasing interaction and honesty with the facilitators.

5 Mostly, the results of a focus group are clear and specific thus facilitates understanding it by the researchers or policy makers.

Focus group's environment, it is important to be aware of the following:

1 Facilitator's control over the interaction holds some risk as it is open-ended and its results are unpredictable.

2 Findings and results cannot be generalized to the research population; they reflect experiences of only one group of respondents.

3 The risk of limiting the discussion for a smaller group within the focus group where some respondents are active while others are passive. This would cause unequal opportunities for respondents in finding creativity ways while answering the questions or adding their contributions.

4 Some respondents may be too anxious, embarrassed, or less confident than others which would limit their participation.

5 It is essential to be aware of at least 5 types of respondents in a focus group and learn know how to address each of them, and encourage their participation with smooth and flexible inference without making anyone embarrassed:

- o Independent/dominant respondent who wants to participate all the time.

- o Shy respondents who prefers not to participate.

- o Interruptive and distractive respondent who engages in side talks all the time.

- o Opponent respondent who wants to express his/ her opposition on everything.

- o Friendly/polite respondent who agrees with everybody and all opinions.

54

Issues that contributes to the success of focus groups:

1. Homogeneous groups would increase comfortable and flexible interaction in the focus group.

2. Open and friendly environment: selecting a neutral place would make respondents more comfortable to give information and express their opinions. Selecting the group set up in a manner that encourages interaction and participation of all is important. It wouldn't be appropriate to organize a focus group to evaluate a local council in the local council's hall, or that a representative of the local council participates as one of the respondents.

3. Facilitator participant: the researcher should play a role of facilitator who ensures comfortable and easy discussion. He/she should have sufficient experience on the topic of discussion.

4. Tape recording: the respondents' consent should be taken before recording their discussions. If they disagree to record the session, an assistant to the facilitator can take detailed notes.

5. Session's duration: duration should be appropriate to all respondents in order to ensure they are freer and more comfortable.

Guidance on implementation of focus groups

1. The objectives of using a focus group in a certain research should be identified. The objectives of using the focus group are similar to the themes that would be discussed within the focus group. Thus, objectives should be clear before discussion starts.

2. Open ended questions are guiding questions that should be put in order logically based on the subjects. Separate topics shouldn't be mixed during the discussion. For example, in a focus group that discusses the challenges facing the youth in labor market should start with the general background on experiences and remarks on the respondents' perspectives regarding access to labor market. It is illogical to start with a discussion on the most important challenges facing the youth in accessing the labor market. The facilitator should be tactless in asking questions and moving from one topic to another. The facilitator's role is to guide the discussion to achieve the objective of the focus group.

For example, in discussing the worst forms of child labor in Palestine with a focus group of local organizations' representatives:

> Start with the general information and organizations' perspectives regarding child labor.

> The most important forms of child labor in Palestine.

> Classification of child labor forms according to their impact and risk.

> Move to discuss the worst and most dangerous forms of child labor.

> Impact of occupation policies and the current economic reality on increasing child labor.

> Interventions and roles that the different organizations should take.

Then lastly their view of the policies.

o The facilitator should be fully meet the various aspects of the research like the nature of the research problem and the questions addresses. This would equip him to assist him/her include certain themes in the focus group discussion. The facilitator should own the following characteristics:

1. Introduce yourself. Start the discussion with a brief and clear description of the session's objective and its significance to the research. For example, we are here to explore child labor in order to put policies that guide the work of local organization. We would like to discuss the twofold causes and effects of this problem: Prevention of the spread of the phenomena, and remedy for the children at risk of child labor.

2. Ask the questions carefully with simple and clear language. For example: colonial structures play roles in disintegrating the socio-economic and protective structures that ought to limit this dangerous child labor phenomena vs. how do you analyze the practices and policies of the occupation in the creation of local agents that deepen the dangerous child labor phenomena?

3. Provide a summary of the comments after discussing each question to ensure common understanding of concepts and confirm your information.

56

4 Ensure participation of all respondents.

5 Avoid questions and remarks that would cause embarrassment to respondents. For example, telling them that they are not being active in the discussion. Instead, within your experience, what are the interventions that are needed to be made to change this thing?

Third Tool: Participant Observation

Participant observation is a research tool used in cases where regular tools wouldn't be beneficial to the purpose of the study. In these cases, the researcher becomes a part of the research population. In addition, participant observation can be used along with in-depth interviews and focus groups, as a complementary tool.

Significance of this tool:

o Contributes to studying environments and positions as they are.

o Contributes to conveying incidents as they are.

o Formulates meaning of data and developing his/ her perspective.

o Contributes to unveiling of certain attitudes, and aspects like characterizing the social, familial, and domestic aspects of the population's life.

o Explores whether what respondents tell researchers about their opinions contradicts with their behavior.

o It is used observation as a verification tool.

o Knows and acknowledges the local context.

Participant observation

- The researcher has an active role in the observed incidents.
- The objective of observation is identified during the implementation of the research.
- Studying the general social characteristics of the researched population.
- Implementing the research through observation of individuals, observing their behavior and taking the necessary notes.
- The researcher should be able to address any obstacles or problems during the research.
- Analyzing collected data and information, and then writing up the final findings.

Be aware of the documented observations because abstract observation of any situation may be misguiding the reality. For example, don't make pre-assumptions about a family that lives in a big house in one of the villages, as being a rich family. Economic changes in light of the Israeli occupation policies may contribute to temporary poverty conditions for this family. Therefore, participant observation requires interaction so you can arrive at your findings. If a woman reports that she lives in a secure household and domestic environment, while her face is full of bruises, make sure to discuss this and verify if this is caused by an accident, for example. Do not prejudge before entering an interaction that proves the reality clearly.

Fourth Tool: Case Study (Research and Analytical tool)[15]

> General definition: a case study can be considered as a research methodology or as a research data collection tool in the social studies. The case study relies on huge amount of in-depth data related to social, psychosocial and cultural comprehensive aspects of a certain case. The case might be an individual, a family, an organization, a neighborhood or an entire community.

> Case study is defined also as a method to study of a representative unit of the local community, families, industry facility or service facility. It includes elaborate study of this unit to scrutinize all aspects of the phenomenon and make generalizations to similar cases. Thus, the big picture is studied, but there is also a considerable focus on the tiny details within.

Case Study Characteristics:

1. Enables the collection of comprehensive but detailed in-depth information on the cases under study, and in their relation to multiple factors (economic, social, psychosocial, cultural ... etc.). For example, issues of women with disability, how they interact with the social, economic and political circumstances, exclusion and marginalization, access to services, employment opportunities and the institutional practices.

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15 For details see: Yin, Robert K. Case Study Research: Design and methods. Los Angeles, California: Sage, 2009.

2. Enables the collection of data related to the history of the cases under study. For example, the history of disability in a historical context of the difference in social attitudes if the disability is caused by injury by the occupation forces or is it natural.

3. Assists in investigating questions whether they ought to be on the holistic situation or a set of factors that help in creating a certain phenomenon.

4. Permits in formulating a precise description of processes within which a certain behavior appears based on the social and institutional contexts. For example, cases study of a certain woman with disability.

5. Enables researchers to correct hypotheses that were identified prior to the case study, through unveiling new variables ignored in the early stages. For example, stereotyping and stigmatizing women with disabilities as being dependent and useless in a community, and presenting them as obstacles in the face of development vs. women with disabilities are active and independent and how the community is not able to understand the individual differences that exist, and that persons with disability are part of the natural human diversity.

6. High flexibility in using research tools. Researchers can use semi – structured interviews, observation, or other tools. In the case of women with disability, the use of multiple research and data collection tools would validate the study of issues of persons with disability as a cross-cutting or inter-sectorial theme that interacts with all aspects of policy making, structures and institutions.

When are case studies used:

1. Studying different aspects of the same phenomenon, or studying the study unit deeply in a cultural or social context.

2. Exploring the historical evolution of the study unit.

3. Studying deeper the internal lives of an individual or group of people through studying their social needs, motives and interests.

4. Complementing another methodology in a bigger research to elaborate on one of its aspects.

Data collection methods and tools within case studies: diversity and ability to use most of the data collection tools

1 In-depth interview.

2 Observation.

3 Documentation, such as autobiography, school and medical records.

4 Collected detailed data in social studies by studying representative units in the population, classifying data and analyzing it. In this case, the researcher identifies problems, hypothesis, and research population.

Characteristics of the case study approach

1 Comprehensive study of the case or the social unit beyond the mere external descriptive analysis. Case studies brings detailed information that help in understanding the case in a deeper way than what other methodologies provide.

2 Beneficial to the targets of the case study, especially those who suffer psycho-social problems and who need assistance in referrals (drug addiction for example) to hospitals. The case study helps also in understanding the impact of the different structures on a certain phenomenon. For example, the increasing problem of drug use among the youth in Jerusalem interacts with occupation policies against Palestinians living in Jerusalem, emptying the place from the human capital that normally protects national identity, and its relation to poverty and the absence of community organizations.

3 The case study assists in making a thorough interpretation of findings of quantitative and statistical analysis. It can be used to implement additional deeper analysis of some unexplained findings, and to put the findings into a wider analytical context.

Second: The Palestinian Case and Field Research[16]

Field research and the reality

➤ **Market and agents: Palestine as a research market for the last 15 years:**

1. Palestine became a market that produces umbers in an unprecedented way. This abundance in production can be attributed to:

   o Market researches: there are a number of private companies that were instituted (over twenty companies) that came to compete with research centers and universities in implementing research. These companies work as a contract or only without the ability to yet contribute to developing research methodologies and tools.

   o Research agents: international organizations created another kind of agents that allowed for individuals to sign contracts and compete in the market of research individually or through private partnerships based on contractual services.

2. Separation of qualitative and quantitative indicators: within the pragmatic perspective promoted by international organizations, which is also adopted by many local organizations and research centers, too much quantitative descriptive analysis of various phenomena is provided, while causes of problems and contexts of those phenomena are not being addressed properly.

3. International organizations' work within the Palestinian context created the illusion of development. This development is promoted in a positive perspective of the future, attempting to convey the message that development is possible in a context of occupation and continuation of settlements. Thus, this perspective ignores the analysis of circumstances created by the occupation and settlements such as dependency, inequality and injustice. It ignores the analysis of the set of powers and authorities created by occupation. For example, in studying poverty, unemployment,

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16   Ayman AbdulMajeed. A paper presented in a workshop in Vienna (Ibid).

education or health, sectors are being described statistically without a thorough analysis or lack of quality in services, impact on citizens and on development. These are things that are reinforced and fed by occupation structures.

4. Transformations in the Palestinian authority structures as fragile without ensuring reproducing itself societally so as to be able to counter the occupation reality but weakening the social, economic and political structures. The use of an economic view caused increasing poverty, state of dependency and individual motivations rather than a collective one. Therefore, the Palestinian society is more dependent and lacks collective efforts that may culminate in a real change of reality.

5 When reading the reality of field research in the occupied Palestinian territories it becomes urgent need develop research methodologies that ensure objectivity and holistic views, taking into consideration the existence of a colonial reality that is being ignored by many research studies. Therefore, awareness to the following issues is essential:

o   Fragility and vulnerability: The fast-pace changes in the Palestinian case due to lack of control on the changing and unpredictable political, economic and external context.

o   Holistic approach: inclusion of various Palestinian communities inside the Palestinian territories (in historic Palestine and the diaspora) into consideration_.

o   Flexibility: addressing the restrictions on movement to different areas in the Palestinian Territories since 1967.

o   Checkpoints: direct measures taken by the occupation risking the lives of researchers. This includes, harassment, detention, delays in access, prevention of access to certain areas such as East Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley. Also, announcing certain areas as closed military zones.

6 Logistics effect: addressing obstacles that threaten the research plan in terms of timeframe, high costs, absence of security and safety ... etc.

PART TWO

Quantitative Research Approaches[17]

➤ Quantitative research: is based on the collection of data through the application of quantitative tools which are developed with consideration of validity and reliability measures. The quantitative tool is applied on a representative sample of the research population. Collected data within a quantitative research is processed statistically leading to findings that can be generalized to the population within a certain degree of confidence.

➤ Quantitative approach is used in research that aims at:

➤ Investigating causes and facts.

➤ Investigating relationships between variables.

➤ Testing variables and testing theories (using measurement).

➤ It is focused on experimentation and exploring the cause and effect relations based on numerical data.

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17 For more information see: Obaidat, Thuqan and Suhaila Abu Sameed, Qualitative and Quantitative Research, Amman, Jordan: Dar Al-Fiker Publications, 2002.
Ibrahim, Amer and Iman Fadel, Scientific Research: Qualitative and Quantitative. Amman, Jordan: Dar Alyazouri Scientific Publications, 2009.
Nardi, Peter. Doing Survey Research: A Guide to Quantitative Method. Boston: Allen & Bacon, 203.

First: Quantitative Research Tools

➤ A questionnaire is a group of written questions prepared to collect data and investigate opinions and perspectives of respondents on a certain phenomenon. It is a tool of data collection which is based on a form that is completed by respondents.

➤ A questionnaire is a principle quantitative tool of written questions for data collection. Questions can include various areas according to the objective of the questionnaire, such as:

   o Exploring public and personal opinion on a certain issue.

   o Provision of judgments expressed numerically.

   o Exploring social phenomena and facts.

   o Exploring incentives.

➤ Basic Advantages

   o Respondents are not influenced by the researcher's perspectives.

   o Easy application of the tool.

   o Potential to cover distant geographical areas with low cost.

➤ Questionnaire Structure (three basic parts):

○ **First section:** introducing the research and its objectives, in a cover letter format that appears as an introduction of the questionnaire including the following:

> The objective of the questionnaire and its subject.

> Confirmation of confidentiality of the data provided and emphasis on its only for research purposes.

> Stating the advantages of participation in the questionnaire and the research.

> Stating the organization responsible for the research.

○ **Second section:** basic demographic information such as age, education, work, gender, residence and other demographic and social data that benefits the research. It is recommended to locate this section at the end of the questionnaire as it contains confidential data on the respondents. It is recommended also to avoid too many personal questions which would cause the respondent not to cooperate.

○ **Third section:** research topics, including a group of questions related to the variables of the research. Questions should be designed to ensure coverage of all aspects and indicators of the research.

➤ General Basis for Constructing the Questionnaire (Survey)

○ Statistical questionnaires should be designed in a clear methodological way and should include sections representing the data needed by researchers.

○ Terms to be considered in questionnaire design:

Easy and clear questions that wouldn't bear different interpretations. For example, do you agree or disagree about continuing negotiations with Israel? 1). Agree   2). Disagree

3). No opinion.

➤ Design of questions in a mechanism that facilitates extraction of data and findings, not complicate it. For example, a questionnaire shouldn't ask a respondent in a refugee camp in Lebanon about his/her opinion regarding accepting to return to Palestine in return to gaining the Israeli nationality.

➤ Questions with chronological or sequential choices as answers are preferred in questionnaires, in addition to questions that have a yes and no responses.

➤ The questionnaire should be designed in order to extract data that assists in descriptive and analytical work by the researchers to reach the final findings.

Disadvantages of statistical questionnaires:

o Lack of accuracy guarantee in the answers.

o Low retention ratio: number of respondents who complete and return the questionnaire to the source.

A research questionnaire should be designed with simple language. Jargons and long explanations should be avoided. Instead, short simple sentences should be used, with each one of them focusing on one idea or aspect. The questionnaire should not include repetitions and overlapping in sections. Main questions should be asked first, general questions should be kept to the end of the questionnaire. Language of the questionnaire should be sensitive to the sample respondents and should not provoke them. A questionnaire should not be too long as well.

69

Second: Related Terminology

➤ Research population: all individuals, incidents or objects within a research topic or question.

➤ Sample: partial group of the population selected within certain methodology.

➤ Research objects: individuals, objects, or incidents that are selected within the sample.

Samples[18]: a sample is identified as a miniature (partial) group from the population of the study, selected by different methodologies and approaches. The sample is subject to the study, and if it is representative, research findings can be generalized to the population.

Random Sampling: random sampling ensures that all units or individuals in the population have equal probability of being selected as part of the sample.

➢ **Simple Random Sample** All individuals in the population are identified

➢ All population individuals are homogeneous

○ Selection of a simple random sample:

1. Draw samples

2. Table of random numbers

Systematic Random Sample

Selection of respondents in this type of random sample is determined by giving sequence of numbers to all individuals of the population and dividing the total number of individuals in the sample by the required sample size. The result number is the sample rate (the number of units that separate between one selected individual and another in the sample).

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18   For more information see: http://pathways-egypt.com/subpages/training_courses/Research-Ar.pdf

Stratified Random Sample

A sample of heterogeneous population.

Steps in the selection of the sample:

1 Dividing the population into homogeneous categories or groups (layers) within a given criteria.

2 Identify the number of sample units in the total sample.

3 Identify the percentage of each category in the population of the study.

4 Identify the number of respondents from each layer in the total sample.

Cluster Sample

A cluster sample is selected in two steps:

1 Geographical distribution, for example, of governorates.

2 Dividing governorates into cities, villages and refugee camps depending on their size.

3 Selection of one neighborhood from each city, village or camp in accordance with the required sample size.

Third: General Instructions

➤ Consistent and organized layout of the questionnaire: the questionnaire should be printed out in a good format and layout, and without typos or spelling mistakes.

➤ Arranging the questions logically and in sequence, questions should lead to each other and not jump from one topic to another and then return back to the first one.

➤ Balanced and adequate blank spaces for answers.

➤ Avoiding too long questionnaires.

➤ Avoiding questions that need deep and long reflection which decrease respondents' motivation.

➤ If data can be collected from published statistics or records, there is no need to include questions about it in the questionnaire or avoid unnecessary questions.

➤ Each question should address one only; complex questions are not allowed in a questionnaire.

Fourth: Questionnaires in Quantitative Research

➤ Types of questions

Types of questions in social studies are determined by the nature, type and goal of the research and type of required information. Generally, there are two types of questions:

○ Open ended questions.

○ Close ended questions.

Open ended questions

○ These are the questions that allow respondents to express their answers without limited choices.

o For example: What is your marital status? And respondents are free to choose how to express their answers.

Close ended questions

In this type of questions, the researcher provides choices for respondents to select from. **There are 5 types of close ended questions:**

o **Multiple choice questions:** Respondents have to decide the answer that best describes them. For example:

Your marital status is:

1). Single   2). Married   3). Divorced   4). Separated   5). Widowed

o Categorical questions: Respondents have to decide and select one category or group; for example: **Gender:**   1). Male   2). Female.

o Likert Scale: Using Likert scale to identify respondent's position regarding certain issues or information.

For example: to what extent the current diet system is significant to the patients?

1). Very important   2). Important   3). Somewhat important

4). Not important   5) never important.

o Sequential: In cases where the requirement is to put respondent's reactions in order (the sequencing is based on the most important to the least important).

For example: what are the challenges that affect Palestinian women the most?

1. Israeli occupation practices (checkpoints, separation wall, attacks);
2. Economic difficulties and poverty;
3. Social traditions and norms;
4. Absence of organizations that work with women;

o Numerical: In cases of expected numbers in the answer. For example: your age is:

1). Less than 18   2). 18-24   3). 25-34   4). 35-44

5). 45-54   6). 55 or more.

Sixth: Field Surveys (the approach of the Center for Development Studies as an example)

This section describes the processes and procedures followed by the Center for Development Studies on sample selection, and field work. There are other research methodologies, approaches and tools such as mapping. However, the methods and tools described here are simplified processes to support field work within research to select a representative sample from the Palestinian society.

مركز دراسات التنمية
Center for Development Studies

Basic instruction for field researchers and completing questionnaires

➤ Prepare all requirements, supplies and other needs for the field work, including: questionnaires, organization's formal letter, the survey's objectives, field work guide, relevant contact information, stationery and any other needs in the field.

➤ Ask questions in the survey as they are written and don't intervene in explaining them or answering them on behalf of the respondents. In case the respondent asks for explanation commit to the guiding materials you have in hand.

➤ Exercise objectivity and neutrality during the field research process.

➤ Cooperate with coworkers and other team members during the field research, and express respect to others, especially during interviews.

➤ In case of unusual circumstances, the researcher should consider these principles:

   ○ Researcher's personal safety.

   ○ The best decision for the benefit of the research and accomplishment of tasks in time.

   ○ Notifying supervisors with the situation and the researcher's decisions.

➤ Fill in the questionnaire with the respondent's answers.

➤ Avoid leaving questions unanswered and review questionnaire before leaving the place to ensure all sections are answered.

➤ Take notes in details including the number of families who refused to cooperate.

74

➤ Avoid engaging in interpreting questions or using words or expressions that allude to the answers.

➤ Scrutinize questionnaires after finalizing the field work and before it is submitted to the supervisors.

Field Research and Sample Selection

➤ Basic orientation: it is crucial to apply a random sample selection approach through: cluster selection of the community, mapping, selection of the starting point (main landmark: mosque, church, school, mall, or medical center ... etc.), and selection of gender within the sample (according to Kish's table- as shown below).

➤ Upon arrival of the research team to the selected location, an initial tour should be carried out to study the landscape and identify the number of blocks.

➤ A basic map should be drawn to identify basic clusters. A cluster is a series of houses (all clusters in one research location should have the same number of houses). The size of the cluster is estimated in the field based on the nature of the location and the landscape and according to the required number of questionnaires.

➤ After splitting the location into "study units" the required number of units or clusters is identified through simple sample selection using numbered cards (random drawing).

➤ Sample rate: a starting point is identified (by the main landmark: mosque, school, mall, medical center ... etc.), and then blocks are processed in circles or horizontally according to the nature of the blocks and the requirements for the sample rate. If in each cluster there are 20 questionnaires required, then, the sample rate is equivalent to this number divided by number of houses in each cluster (10, 20, 30 ... 200, for example).

➤ Movement direction inside the sample: using the principle of random movement.

➤ If within the sample there is a multi-floor building, only one house (one family) is selected randomly by number cards (taking into consideration the correct use of cards according to the number of houses within the building).

➤ During and at the end of the survey, researchers check with the detailed maps of the location, and research coordinator would need to carry out additional visits.

➤ Prior planning for distribution and exact numbers of clusters, blocks and units in each of the research locations. For example, 6 cluster in Jabalia Camp, 3 in Nablus, 11 in Ein El-Helweh Camp, and 3 in Zarqa Camp.

➤ bIdentifying the required gender of respondents before conducting the visit to the house according to equal percentage representation of both genders (odd questionnaires for male respondents, and even questionnaires for female respondents).

➤ Researchers use the Kish's table for sampling to select the respondent inside each household. For example, in the table respondents are registered as grandfather, father, oldest son ... etc, rather than using their actual names. The same applies for female respondents. Respondents should be registered starting with those of the oldest age, and including all who are 15 or more years old, or according to the minimum age identified by the research. For example, if the number of family members is 4 and the serial number of the family (questionnaire number) is 3, the intersection between those two variables according to the grid in Kish's table is 2, then a family member who is registered as number 2 is the required respondent.

Example on the use of the Kish's table: (Take note that there are a number of tools that can be used to select the sample. But for the purpose of our methodology we will use this tool).

○ Identify family members who are 15 years old or more, starting with the oldest as explained below in Kish's grid, and according to the required gender. Thus, there will be two types of questionnaires, one with even numbers for female members, and the other with odd numbers for male members.

○ Practical example: questionnaire number 7 (an odd form that is, the sample member is a male).

o The family includes four male members (available during the research): the father, age 62, the oldest son, age 30, the grandfather, age 80 and the youngest son, age 25.

o Selection mechanism: male members are registered in the relevant column starting with the oldest (grandfather, father, oldest son and youngest son) and they are numbered (1-6).

o Selection of the individual scheduled to be studied: an intersection is made between the column of the last number (4: the number of male members in the family who are more than 15 years old) and the number of the questionnaire number 7. The number of the intersected cell is the number of the sample member who will be selected for the interview. In the case of this example, the member is the father (2).

o The interview sample respondent is the father.

Gender: 1. Male 2. Female

Respondent's number	Respondents 15 years old and more	Age	Serial number of the family – questionnaire															
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1	Grandfather	80	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	Father	62	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1
3	Oldest child	30	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	2	1	3
4	Youngest child	25	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
5			5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	5
6			6	5	4	3	2	1	6	5	4	3	2	1	6	5	4	3

o This is applied only to those who are available during the work day. The re-searcher should ensure that the respondent is available to refer back to him/her at the end of the work day.

o Sample replacement: if the respondent of the required gender is not available by the end of the day, a shift to the next house is needed to search for the required type of respondent, and then to the third. If the required type of sample is still not available, then change the required type of the sample, in this case the gender.

o Register the number of individuals who refuse to make the interview on a daily bases, and explore the causes. It is important also to register the number of sample replacements (all this information should be noted on the back of the envelope and within a separate sheet inside the envelope of the questionnaires).

Participatory Rapid Assessment (PRA)[19]

➤ PRA is a tool for learning from and with the members of the community. It aims to explore, analyze, and assess the available opportunities and challenges and make specific decisions towards different developmental activities.

➤ PRA is a method of condensed learning usually implemented by a multi-expertise team that includes community members. It is a tool that can be beneficial in speedy organized data collection for:

1 General analysis of a certain issue or problem, identifying and planning for needs, developing projects and feasibility studies, prioritizing, and setting up procedures of follow up, monitoring and evaluation.

2 Participation is built in three dimensions: the philosophy (which determines the methodology), the system of beliefs and practices, and the approaches and tools.

o Participation is a philosophy of pressure for doing self-critique and creating interest and commitment to subaltern issues, the weak and the marginalized.

o Participation is a system of beliefs and practices that seek to empower people and encourage them to develop their knowledge of and engagement in their own lives through participation in analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

o Participation is tools and methods. It is it is visible choices opened for participation most of the time and invisible too as it is used to achieve goals.

o Participatory methodology is developed based on the conviction that we are continuous learners. In addition there is a group of underpinning principles for the participatory methodology:

➤ A specific, organized and scientific learning process: It emphasizes group learning including all participants, researchers, respondents, local communities and experts. It focuses on shared analysis and shared contributions.

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19 For more information: Social Development Fund. Reference Guide for Development Facilitator. Sanaa, Yemen, 2011. See: http://sfd.sfd-yemen.org/ar/uploads/issues/maa%20Alnas%20 2-20120919-132120.pdf

➢ Diversity of prospects: The main goal of participation is seeking diversity, which assured the variations of the different perspectives of the groups so they would analyze and evaluations a given issue in a different way. Thus, alternatives can be proposed.

➢ Group learning process: Due to the complexities of the world surrounding us that imposes on us to do group analysis, and within the existing there are three exploratory groups that may be lumped together: different sectors, different expertise, and different perspectives (inside or outside views).

o Particularities of the content: The participatory methodology is flexible enough to accommodate the different particularities of each case and allows for creativity and development.

o Facilitation by experts: The experts' role in this methodology is facilitating the process and ensuring participation and engagement of all.

o Leading change: The participatory processes leads to dialogue and discussions on the desired change. This in turn allows reflection on opportunities for such a change and making the necessary decisions to achieve it.

o Data Triangulation: this is a method used to verify data. Preciseness of informa

➢ tion is ensured through diversification of data sources, and not only depending on statistics. Data triangulation is achieved through:

o Diversifying type of expertise within the research team.

o Diversification of sources of data.

o Diversification of methodologies and tools.

Source: Unpublished report by Heinrich Böll and Partners for Creative Solu tions. Participatory Rapid Assessment in developing local environment policies in Western Bani Zaid villages. Ramallah, Palestine, 2008.

PART THREE

Researcher-Respondent Field Relationships[20]

The communication process starts by requesting a permission to make the interview. Communication is a reciprocal and ongoing process that takes between at least two persons, verbally, nonverbally and both, aimed at achieving a clear objective. In fact, verbal and nonverbal communication modes are inseparable, and are vital for each other in the field work within surveys or research.

With the communication process come mixed images that result in different types of relationships, as follows:

➤ At the beginning of the communication process, a relationship based on caution is developed. It is the respondents' right at this stage that the researcher provides information to explain the objective and the current status of the research.

➤ Then, the researcher's ability to build and develop balanced relationship would be beneficial to the research. This is achievable through allowing the respondents to freely express their perspectives and opinion on the research, its topic, methodology and process before starting the field work.

➤ At this stage mutual trust should be developed through clarifying the whole process for the respondents, and explaining their anticipated role and participation as partners.

Communication between the researcher and respondents[21]

➤ Nonverbal communication: this includes eye contact, facial expressions, head movements, body language, dress, and smiling amongst each other.

[20] From the Center for Development Studies guides for field researchers.
[21] For more information on communication and interaction see: http://cw.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415537902/data/learning/11_Communication%20Skills.pdf

82

> Effective nonverbal communication is a smile accompanied with eye contact, listening carefully, spontaneity, and showing care.

➤ Verbal communication includes also the use of verbal or spoken tools to reveal messages. These tools include words, expressions and phrases. The communication channel in this case is direct between the researcher and the respondent (for example in the interviews). Sometimes, verbal communication is accompanied with supporting explanatory ts or documents.

1 Clarity: What you want to say exactly in a simple language.

2 Length: Using the shortest expressions and least number of words.

3 Organization: Thoughts put into order and logically connected.

4 Style: Plain, direct and positive.

5 Flexibility: In terms of time and allowing discussion and participation.

Images that challenge communication, and awareness about that is high significant for research partnership		
Images	**Researchers**	**Respondents**
Stereotypes	Researcher should clear their minds of any pre-conceived stereotypes and, prejudices or pre-assumptions before starting the field work. A researcher should own information and not pre-assumptions whether positive or negative regarding the local community under study. Biases may be misleading to the researcher and would create difficulties in communication.	Respondents may have also certain pre-assumptions and biases towards the researchers based on previous experiences. The researcher should enhance communication and interaction with the respondents to break these stereotypes in order to avoid passiveness on the respondents› side.
Expression of shock or resentment	The researcher should be aware of his/ her expressions and reactions to respondents› answers. The respondents should not feel that he/ she is shocked by their answers. Researcher›s expressions should be neutral and balanced.	The researcher should ensure not to cause shock for respondents as well. This issue has two dimensions: researcher›s over-reaction in facial and body expressions; and researcher›s shocking unexpected follow up questions. Both cases may cause negative reaction by the respondent.

Humbleness vs. preaching	One of the main characteristics of a good researcher is self-confidence. This characteristic is strongly connected also to humbleness. A researcher listens to and appreciates what people have to say, he/ she doesn't practice preaching with respondents.	Sometimes, respondents would advise the researcher to reconsider some aspects of the research. He/ she should listen to the suggestions, appreciate them and consider them. On the other side, the researcher shouldn›t keep the discussion limited to suggestions on the track of the research, but should facilitate the discussion to the next point in the plan.
Concern in local knowledge and experience	The researcher should give significant attention to the knowledge and practice of people. Those are considered essential to developing the research.	Respondents expect to gain knowledge also from the researcher. Therefore, it is important that researchers give clear and explicit information in order to avoid uncertainty and lack of trust in the researcher.
Local communities include diverse categories such as; age and gender.	The researcher should be aware of diverse experiences and knowledge within various groups of people within the same community.	Respondents might include senior (elderly) persons, uneducated or illiterate persons, or persons who are hesitant in their answers. It is very important that the researcher doesn›t underestimate or undermine any of those respondents and their experiences, as this would cause marginalization and exclusion of certain groups in the research.

Part Four

Field experiences learnt from the field that enhances partnership within the diverse experiences in communities

Following are some lessons learnt from the field experiences on how to overcome challenges and build a relationship with the local community in the Palestinian case.

First: Challenges caused due to dismantling space from the occupation (colonization)

➤ Inability to access certain communities within the Palestinian Territories: such as Palestinian villages in the seam zones, firing zones, or border zones or lands near to borders such as the Jordan Valley and Jerusalem. Some organizations exclude these locations automatically from their research due to the difficulties in access and high cost of field work. Research centers, however, should increase develop strategies to combat these realties.

1. Training a local team that raises the local capacities in collecting local data of the different communities.

2. Dialogue with local communities through opening communication channels with various groups and organizing meetings with the surrounding communities also to provide for facilitation of tasks.

Return Right

3. High level of flexibility in addressing communities in order to achieve the research objective.

- Checkpoints and curfews: it is essential not to tie the research to specific periods of time or tying it to personal interests and the financial interests of institutions but deal with issues with high level of flexibility, keep trying so the research team enters the targeted locations by maintaining their personal safety and respondents' safety as well.

- Lack of safety and security requirements for local communities, especially due to settlers' attacks, on daily bases.

- Flexibility in time and funding to ensure safe movement of researchers and respondents if needed.

> Communication with local communities which are exposed to the risk of occupation violations on a daily bases is considered a significant contribution in expressing solidarity research values with these communities, enhancing steadfastness and maintain their morals high.

- Exclusion of the Palestinian diaspora and the 1948 territories, and limiting the coverage of research to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is not acceptable. It is important to respect the collective identity of Palestinians who live inside or outside Palestine.

Second: Lack of Trust by Community

- Local communities don't trust research. Research is viewed sometimes as a tool for information for certain political parties or organizations. This is due to the internal political conflict and lack of security and stability in the Palestinian Territories, for example, patterning research based on political and institutional formats as an outcome of the case under occupation including cases of detention based on political affiliation.

- Building trust with the local community is fundamentally based on building true partnership with it through conveying messages that this partnership is essential in exploring the community issues and resolving them on various levels.

- It is important for researchers to build relationship with the community through local community-based channels (bottom-up) rather than imposing the relationship through by an organization (up-bottom).

- It is important as well to organize initial awareness meetings with the local community regarding the issue in question and its significance to their lives.

Third: Challenges while Communicating with Respondents

➤ Respondents who request payment for their participation: sometimes, researchers will encounter potential respondents who would request payment for their participation in the research, as a kind of interest-based relationship in the provision of the data. Data emerging from such a process is often misleading. Relationships such as these do not appear in void but are built in the specific institutional policies by simply transferring the voluntary work ethic in research to personal interests. Therefore, this source of data should be discarded.

1. There is no trust or credibility for this kind of a relationship between the respondent and the researcher or the organization, a sense of partnership should be enhanced before starting the research.

2. The objective of the research should be clarified explicitly to respondents with an official letter by the organization or with a presentation by the researcher.

3. It is not allowed for researchers to give promises even if the result would be losing the participation of a certain respondent.

4. The researcher should be aware of the conditions put by local communities to ensure their safety and security. It is important not to cause any immediate or future harm for them based on their participation in the research.

5. Researchers should hold the necessary documents during their field work; ID card, research identification card and business card to provide them to the local community and enhance trust.

Direct examples: Security and taxation conditions imposed by the Israeli occupation on East Jerusalemite community causes confusion for people who live there in responding to research interviews or questions, especially if there are specific questions on their financial or income status. Another example is that people, who carry the Jerusalemite Identity cards, live outside Jerusalem but maintain their Jerusalem address would be hesitant to respond to research questions because of the complexity of their situation.

> Embarrassing situations resulting from not respecting the particularities of families: Some researchers or organizations would consider that their main mission is to commit to the methodological format of the research. Therefore, they would visit families too early, at noon when people want to take their break or at night. Researchers should always respect the particularities of these communities and norms of the local communities and plan ahead of time for the best timing that corresponds to these families' needs.

1. Researchers should be flexible to meet any possible embarrassing, and should be ready to take the responsibility and apologize for any inconvenience caused.

2. If interviewing children or people with exceptional cases prior and explicit permission should be taken. Children must be interviewed with the presence of their parents, with complete attention to their psychosocial and physical development, and with a level of language and discourse that corresponds to and respects their experiences and level of comprehension.

3. Researchers must make sure that families understand the goal of the research clearly and explicitly.

> Emphasizing issues that are important to the community such as child labor, violence or drugs, and sexual harassment. Researchers must guarantee families or respondents that the aim of the research is not to analyze or understand them; it is rather targeting a community issue, problem or phenomenon that needs to be understood and studied, in order to understand how it is shaped and how it affects their lives. For example, how the occupation impacts issues of child labor, violence or drugs, and how the absence of national active institutions impacts them as well.

1. If people feel they are targeted by your questions they would limit their participation.

2. It is important to be accompanied by references key local person who are trusted by the community (as partners not as superiors).

3. References are important in guaranteeing security and safety of researchers; they provide assistance in navigating locations, and provide predictions of possible problems or risk.

4. It is important that researchers work within their field of expertise and within local communities that they already have knowledge and experience about more than other communities.

➤ Sensitivity of questions: there is a difference between frank but sensitive questions and stereotypical questions.

1. It is not acceptable to use stereotypical questions about the local communities.

2. The research team should be trained on how to ask and run discussions with respondents with high sensitively.

3. Questions should be clear and straight forward without manipulation of words.

4. Researchers must have confidence in themselves; they may also need psychological venting sessions to talk about their experience after addressing complicated community issues and hearing respondents' stories.

➤ There is a difference between considering researchers as data collectors or a major partner in research. Your team members must be aware of their role as partners in the research.

➤ Partnering with the field research team and ensuring their participation in developing the research tools is a major part of building their research capacities and building a proper relationship with them which is very important in order to ensure quality data.

1. Provision of a work environment appropriate for field researchers, especially in terms of building mutual trust and respect in monitoring processes.

2. Appreciating the role of field researchers and considering this a part that has a spiritual value not only a material values. This would be an indicator of considering their partnership during planning the research budget.

3. Provision of all possible communication tools, transportation and other costs that may be needed in order to facilitate field work.

Examples of the Diversification with the Community (Cross cutting issues):

Community Groups	How they perceive the researcher	How to enhance trust and relationships
Seniors	Lack of trust	• Respect and appreciate their experiences of the elderly
	High anxiety-as if in an exam	
	Some of them have hearing problems	• Tie these experiences to the topic of the research
	Generation gap	• High level of flexibility and simplicity is speech
	Distraction	
	Feel frustrated and undermined if the researcher attempts to ensure they commit to time.	• Clear messages on serious interest in listening to what people have to say, but in the same time conveying clearly and explicitly time limits and commitment to time frames
		• Effective facilitation and management of the discussion to move from one sub-topic to another in time. For example: "I would like to talk to you in length about this issue later but I would like to first finish this point and move to the other due to the limited time."

Women	Not being able to commit to time frames is one stereotype Sensitivity and anxiety in addressing certain issues based on social norms	• Respect the reproductive role of women and their responsibilities (especially if the research interview is interrupted by urgent matters that housewives for example need to address directly) and avoid shedding a light to the stereotype that women cannot commit to time. • Bring positive and creative alternatives. For example, bringing a football for children to play during the time of the interview with their mother. • Discussing sensitive issues generally and connecting them to community issues without addressing the particularities of these issues to the respondents themselves; if they feel secure and confident they will start engaging and discussing their own views and perspectives. • Planning for proper environment based on the topic in question. For example, hiring a female facilitator to discuss sensitive issues with women such as sexual harassment.
Children	The pre-judgment of being too young and their lack of having significant input to share or add as a form of contribution. This would make the communication difficult.	• Using effective tools to encourage children to engage and express their perspectives. • Belief in children's experiences and their significance –never undermine them. • Avoid pre-judgments. • Respect children's physical, social and psychological development. • Asking for prior permission by parents, and allowing parents or care takers to attend the interview within the condition that the child has the major participation.

Persons with disabilities	Prejudices and negative attitudes (for example, lack of recognition of their identity and abilities, or feeling pity for them)	• Ice breaking
		• Avoid displaying pity, or pre-judgments and prejudices.
	Some of the persons with disability deny their status, especially if it was not apparent	• Building trust with the respondents who have disabilities.
	Dependency that is imposed on them by their families.	• Respecting their experiences and their effectiveness in the society.
	Difficulty in communication, especially with persons with hearing and intellectual disabilities.	• Ensuring provision of the necessary communication tools such as sign language translator, or materials printed out by Braille system.
		• Ensuring sensitivity in preparing for work with respondents with disabilities. For example, don't handle a regular printing research purpose letter to a person with visual disability.
Youth	Rebellious in nature, therefore, do not deal with them with an authoritative tone but positive tone	• Respecting their abilities, experiences and knowledge.
		• Avoiding testing their information as this might affect their confidence in you.
	Avoid stereotyping or acting upon them. Give them the idea that that the information they are giving is important and that you are trying to benefit from their experiences and social relations	• The topic should be in accordance with youth's personal qualifications
		• Ice breaking to ensure positive environment in the research sessions in conflict positions.

Fourth: Challenges for Research within Institutions

➤ There is difficulty in conducting field research within institutions. Some leaders in institutions perceive their participation in such research places them under undue scrutiny; therefore they escape interviews on the pretext of work pressure and numerous responsibilities. Thus, there must be consideration for the following:

1. Prior coordination by research institutes is needed. A letter should be sent to the institution they wish to visit prior to the field researcher's visit.

2. An appointment should be scheduled and a clarification on the duration of the requested interview and the people to be interviewed during the visit should be noted.

3. The researcher should present a clear personal researcher's identity by providing various identification documents.

4. It should be made clear to the institution's officials that their time and responsibilities are appreciated and that it is possible for them to start the interview about the general issues of the institution then to assign whoever they deem fit to continue the interview.

➤ Field and research work within institutions poses a key challenge to field researchers, particularly the perception of inferiority by which some of the researched institution managements view the researcher. Therefore:

1. Clarify in advance through correspondence that none of the research objectives is to critique the institution, but rather to benefit from its extensive experience.

2. Clarity in terms of the information gathered is for analytical purposes only. There will be no reference to the institution without its consent unless it is willing to transfer its experience objectively to others.

3. Make sure to get all information you need, and inquire about all issues you desire to collect. Frequent visits and questioning will undermine the institute's confidence in you and will adversely affect your professionalism and image as a researcher.

4 Don't use your personal relationships to access information. Informal access to information will deprive you from using it in your analysis. You should always resort to formal methods and stay away from deception.

5 When dealing with institutions, make sure that they provide you with information that is useful to your research rather than flooding you with irrelevant and superficial information. The institution could intentionally be doing that in order to direct your attention towards issues that it considers important, but which may be irrelevant to your research.

6 All questions should address a specific issue related to the institutions being researched, since institutional work normally advances beyond details towards addressing issues. Despite that, it is sometimes important to address some details associated with certain situations and practices.

7 It is important to assure the institution that the information and data disclosed are confidential.

➤ Institutions sometimes attempt to follow tactics to delay providing data and scheduling interviews. If the waiting period becomes too long, researchers should impose themselves in a professional, objective and tactful way that does not harm the research's objectives nor negatively affect the researcher's dignity.

Fifth: The Foreign (Socially Alienated) Researcher

➤ In general, there are two situations related to foreign researchers; they are either completely not welcomed or, on the contrary, excessively welcomed by the community.

1 In these two situations these images and their implications are harmful to the research and the researcher. There exists a double faced stereotype regarding the role of the foreigner; one, as a supporter of the occupation and the other as a supporter of the Palestinians in their struggle against "The Wall" and as a provider of external funding. Both cases lead to misleading data and information.

2. As a "foreign" researcher you have to be familiar with the political and social reality of the Palestinian society and should not hold any preconceived ideas or stereotypes about it.

3. You should hold a clear "institutional" key so as not to fall down on the local community by a "parachute."

4. You should possess clear letters and documents from the mother institution and the institution sponsoring your research. You need to establish partnerships with the local community so as not to give them the impression that they are only serving as a test bed for your research.

Theoretical projected preconceptions

1. You should have access to the field and understand Palestinian society in relation to local context, then come out with a theoretical framework that may or may not be consistent with your beliefs. You shouldn't hold on to your own theoretical framework and preconceptions and project them because they may not fit with the "colonial" occupation context of the Palestinian society..

2. You should have a clear goal for your research and what you intend to know about the local community. Is your research considered one of their priorities or does it only create the opportunity for touristic adventure under the guise of research? As the so called "research tourism" has nowadays become a popular term describing foreign researchers' motives (if not brought by them).

3. As a result of theoretical projections, many researchers neutralize the context of occupation and blame all the failure on the Palestinians.

4. Many researchers express hostile attitudes that reaches an extreme; this is clearly demonstrated in deceptively inserting stated or undeclared questions in the context of their research. "You should avoid hostility" because this will only lead to extreme attitudes in return. You have created this atmosphere and you are trying to stereotype the local community with practices that do not originally exist in it (you are the ones who created these practices).

5. Avoid gesturing that you treat the local community and view them in the same negative way that Middle Eastern people are viewed and treated by Westerners; monopoly and inferiority to their culture and experiences. Do not enroot foreigners' ideas and attitudes. You have to be objective and highly professional.

6 Identify and use local research resources and institutions to access information. Do not depend only on stereotypical ideas and Orientalist references to understand the Palestinian case. Some researchers even get information about the state of the Palestinians from the occupation itself.

Discussion on the Guide to the Applied Field Research in the Occupied Palestinian Territories' Manual

June, 26th 2014 at the Department of African Studies, University of Vienna

In the summer of 2014, Ayman Abdel Majeed of Birzeit University together with Helmut Krieger, Philipp Salzmann and Judith Welz of the partner university in Vienna had a discussion on various aspects of a late version of the research manual. The discussion seemed important since reading the manual raised questions about the use of some terminologies and how differently they could be understood in the context of Western as opposed to Palestinian academia. The debate helped to uncover different scientific traditions and standpoints among the discussants and to unpack some misunderstandings. Although we didn't resolve them – in fact, we didn't aim to – we want to share some thoughts and discussion points, since we believe that different approaches debated in our group are also prevalent elsewhere.

Our entry point was the concern that Westernized researchers might not be familiar with describing the Palestinian context as a situation of settler colonialism or colonization. However, Ayman Abdul Majeed explained that this terminology expressed a common understanding among Palestinians of the political situation and its manifestations on the ground and that applying this keyword was indispensable in order to establish tools for emancipatory research. Hence, the discussants agreed that it was impossible to "translate" the terminology for a Westernized audience without losing its deeper sense. As a consequence, the manual could be accused as being biased. But such accusations would simply mistake the authors' geo- and socio-political standpoint(s) for being biased. Yet, laying open which perspective one is writing from is essential when establishing a framework for committed and critical research.

The discussants also debated the concept of objectivity as put forward in the manual, since objective research is deemed impossible in various social science epistemologies. Ayman Abdul Majeed, however, stressed why objectivity was especially important within the Palestinian context: Studies which support hegemonic narratives about Palestine claim to be objective while at the same time they ignore the reality of colonization and of the people living under occupation. For Palestinians, carrying out objective research, on the contrary means, being aware of the context of colonization and taking it into account at all stages of research - from the design to the publication of results. It also means working within certain boundaries and at the same time transforming them.

Section Three
A Futurist Analytical Reading

Attempting to present a futurist view takes place through presenting a critical reading to the different patterns that surfaced for dealing and using fieldwork tools in the Palestinian society. In other words, how did the vulnerability of the Palestinian society to central external factors (occupation/colonization) and the drift that follows this vulnerability of the research frameworks to create a societal culture that is incapable of challenging this context with new frameworks and patterns?

Part One

The Palestinian Society: A Society with Distinction in Research[22].

First: The Palestinian society between vigilance and begging

1 **The Political Factor:**

o The political situation in which Palestinians are living has created a precautionary approach in providing political and economic information about their general status. For example, in Jerusalem people experienced great challenges; particularly the fear of displacement when disclosing information that could go to the non-Palestinian side. The other challenge is the expression of political and patriotic opinions that has in many cases led to arrests by the occupation.

o The Palestinian political division: The security conditions and the state of division that prevails in the West Bank and Gaza Strip have raised some concerns about freedom of expression, especially with the strong presence of security services who conduct political arrests related to expressing political and communal opinions.

2 **The Economic Lived Aspect:** Many international and local funding policies which are based on relief have resulted in behaviors among people that fluctuate between caution and begging.

22 Ayman Abdul Majeed (Ibid) ....

o   Caution should be exercised when providing information that has an economic dimension especially in Jerusalem. This is associated on one hand with the precautionary measures in cases related to taxes imposed by the occupation or on the other hand as a way for soliciting funding and aid. A good number of people are convinced that the "research institutions" may improve their living conditions, thereby; they adopt a precautionary approach in providing objective information about their income. At the same time they demonstrate their poverty as a way of begging for aid. Other insights that are associated with the reluctance of disclosing information may be the fear of denial of certain services and privileges offered by some institutions especially Palestinian humanitarian and relief organizations.

Second: Lack of trust versus courtesy

1 Political, economic and life structures intertwine to form a reality that is absent from the effective institutions or is absent for any program related to social security. This results in the lack of confidence in the role and performance of institutions. Thus people will only provide information that is in their interest and that protects them from any security measures that could be taken against them.

2 Moreover, lack of freedoms, "collective" protectionism and the right of expression especially in the absence of the state gives rise to the notion of courtesy -particularly when it is associated with the existing authoritarian entities.

Third: Individual restrictions versus identifying with the general case

1 The prevailing mindset always affects the minority "individual". In the Palestinian context and within the existing state of poverty, siege and isolation, "attempts remain" to identify with the general situation, especially in surveys of opinion and expression of reality (the individual tends to answer questions in accordance with the prevailing ideas and views in his/her direct environment and not on the basis of his/her own experience).

2 Also linked to this case is the prevailing societal culture which lacks guarantees of freedom and protection.

Fourth: Doubtful thinking versus lack of will

1 Geographical fragmentation, subsequent social fragmentation and the absence of collective action resulting from the decline of political parties and various trade unions (the absence or weakness of the political and social references).

2 This gave rise to individual (questionable) projects especially in the presence of selective support and the lack of will towards working to achieve change or performing clear evaluation that will lead to change.

3 Due to the existing situation of inequality, gaps and the absence of social justice, this concept has been reinforced in dealing with research.

4 Consequently, society has been transformed to a consumer society "a society deprived of developing productive institutions" focusing on individual issues rather than working towards collective rights that lead to achieving change.

Fifth: Stereotypes versus exhibition

1 Stereotypes: Some field research is driven by prior impressions and stereotypes of some areas and some groups. This adversely affects the way subjects view themselves and others.

2 Some respondents take advantage of the situation and exhibit their abilities as intellectuals and analysis by claiming that the issues raised by research are not related to the Palestinian reality and do not have any payoff. Other research subjects however exhibit their poverty and misery in order to deal with the general situation using images reflected from reality.

Part Two

A Research Ethics Vision for the Future

First: Ethics and Principles of Field Research[23]

The principles are divided into two areas; one is the importance of the research for society and the entity being researched and the other is the importance for the researcher and the institution. Within this framework, it is essential to focus primarily on the general importance of the research and its implications on the community, and then comes personal self-thought.

The Field Research Ethics Code of Practice:

➢ Every scientific research must hold a social responsibility that stems from a national responsibility to serve society's purpose of emancipation and liberation on all levels addressed by the research; be it political, economic or social.

➢ It is of great importance that the researcher takes into account the reality of the community and its needs as well as organizations working for the public interest.

➢ It is in the interest of the research to build partnerships with community-based grassroots organizations in various districts.

➢ The research must not cause any harm to the participants (subjects) at any stage of the process including the design and implementation of the field work.

23 For more information see:
Laleh Khalili: The Ethics of social science Research in critical Research..... Edited by Roger Heacock ...... (Ibid).
Linda Whiteford and Robert Trotter. Ethics for Anthropological Research and practice. Long Grove: Wave and Press. 2008.
Ranjit Kumar, Research methodology (second edition) SAGE, 2005, pp 209-216.

- Ensuring confidentiality of the information gathered and setting fixed and specific rules that guarantee non-disclosure of participants' identities without direct authorization, with full awareness that disclosing their names will not cause them any harm.

- Providing time frames for the completion of the field work and informing all stakeholders and participants about it, especially if there are frequent field visits.

- Seeking objectivity, scientific integrity and accuracy in all stages of research preparation.

- Raising awareness about the safety of participants and protecting their rights as well as the safety of field workers.

- Making sure that no partner, participant or researcher seeks any personal gain or causes any harm to the subjects participating in the various field surveys and interviews.

- Humility and openness to public criticism towards the researcher.

- Must not present ideas and perspectives that may influence the community that is engaged in the research and direct it to serve personal interests.

- Openness to the fact that the research process, particularly in the field, is a learning process for researchers and research institutions, in terms of field experience, while implicitly raising awareness about social and national responsibility.

- Full awareness that community participation in the research process is voluntary, both at individual and institutional level. Participants have the right to refrain from participation whenever they want.

- One of the most important issues is sharing information and analysis with the community engaged in the research when reaching key findings. Part of this process is the engagement of the community in the results, and the other part is enriching the knowledge of the researcher by taking advantage of the community views and opinions, especially if the findings are absolute numbers only.

➤ Investment rather than exploitation; It is important that words said and situations that arise during the course of the research are not distorted or exploited without verification. Instead, they should be invested for better and deeper understanding.

➤ Research subjects should not be flooded with promises and hopes that participation in the research will be in their favor because this only means deceiving the public for personal interests.

➤ The researcher has to be convinced that the experience will add to his/her expertise and enrich his/her knowledge. It is important to document the research and the results obtained through numerical or descriptive data, giving credit to its owners in the analysis stage.

Research Ethics with People Living under Occupation

Ethical principles for expatriate researchers/foreign to the local community. Always keep track of the following:

Clear research objective: Why am I in Palestine? Who am I? Is there any person from the local community who knows and supports me? Am I here to prove a theory about an occupied community? Or occupation has nothing to do with people's lives? Who holds the responsibility?

Language issues: Do you ask questions that lead to political answers?

Awareness Issues: Are you aware of the risks that people face and that could result from participating in some research? What is the level of your awareness of the confidentiality of information? Inattention to names of people and some security issues could cause imprisonment or losing lives. The confidentiality of information presented in the research includes non-disclosure of the identities of people participating with you.

Participation should be voluntary with no temptations. Do not be directed by foreign thinking and alienation from society by believing that information should be free for all. Avoid any moral, psychological, physical or ethical damage. Research should be independent with no hidden political agenda pushing you towards goals that are beyond the scope of the research. You should seek the good of the local community being researched whether politically or morally. Do not invade local communities without a clear message but enter with a clear message that proves good intentions.

Respect the culture of the local community. Do not offer material or moral bribes for the purpose of gaining access to information with an unclear purpose.

106

A Model from Birzeit University about General Principles and Guidelines for Ethical Practices in Scientific Research

The Human Component

Special care must be taken in research involving people. Such research requires gathering and systematic analysis of data obtained from surveys answered by human subjects as well as observation and other means of human intervention in the medical, behavioral, social, biological and natural fields among others. The different kinds of research that fall under this category are:

- Research involving direct physical or physiological intervention in the human body such as phlebotomy, obtaining biopsy, aspirating bodily fluids and exposure to X-Ray.

- Research involving psychological and social experiments as well as other experiments that include engagement with the groups researched.

- Research engaging children under 15 years.

- Research including any measures that would lead to revealing the identity of participants regardless of the possibility of this happening.

- Research that aims to influence policies and legislation or any area that may include the risk of promoting partial or partisan interests.

- Protection of dignity, rights, interests and safety of all human participants and society as a whole so as to ensure compliance with the following principles:

- No harm is to be inflicted (in the research stage) upon individuals, communities or the society as a whole. This includes the security, health and well-being of individuals, the public and society as a whole.

- Dignity of the participants must be respected. This requires respecting their rights and independence (including their views, choices and values as individuals and families) specifically making sure that people are not used as research tools in any form or manner and that their general interest is the ultimate goal of the research.

- All people should be treated fairly and away from all bias, regardless of sex, race, disability, age or belief.

➤ The welfare of research participants must be paramount.

➤ Confidentiality of the participants must be ensured.

➤ Participants' informed consent (oral or written, depending on context) should be obtained through:

 o Respecting the right of individuals to refuse or refrain from participation in later stages of the research process.

 o Obtaining informed consent of parents or guardians of children under 15.

 o Providing participants with full relevant information, including the benefits hoped for and the risks that may result from participating in the research.

 o Making sure that the research, when relevant, aims for greater equity as well as the benefit of marginalized groups.

 o Reviewing research proposals before implementation; reviews should be independent, significant, well informed, and sensitive to reality or based on experience as well as compliance with ethical principles during implementation.

Confidentiality

Respect

Providing participants with full relevant information

Review

Part Three

Visions for the Future as a Way for Correcting Mistakes

First: Correcting mistakes and paying back debts

➤ Through this title, we would like to embody the aforementioned idea of scientific ethics in Palestine through a case of scientific research carried out in the USA in the city of Ann Arbor[24]. In that region the racist education authorities refused to provide education for children of black people. In 1979 parents of African American students organized demonstrations and protests against the city's schools for not taking into account the educational needs of their children. Through researching the problem, it was found that, as a result of slavery and racial discrimination imposed by policies and regulations of the capitalist system, black people communicated through a version of the English language that was different from the original language. Therefore the main recommendation came towards the importance of correcting the historical mistakes committed by the apartheid regime in the USA against the blacks by paying debts owed to these marginal groups of the society.

➤ In the Palestinian case, many mistakes have been committed by countries and theorists against the Palestinian people and their cause. Therefore it is time for the World Bank and the donor countries to correct these mistakes and pay their debts. The research and policies through which these coun-

24 for further informations see: https://web.stanford.edu/~arnetha/pdf/ DispositionsArt97.pdf

110

tries and the World Bank led the Palestinian developmental work for twenty years have strengthened the occupation and tightened the Palestinian space. Such policies that were imposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have reinforced the dependency of the Palestinian economy on the occupier and entrenched the exposure of the Palestinians economically, socially and politically to these financing policies. These policies have not come about from void, rather as a result of research ideologies and intellectual orientations influenced by an agenda that ignored the context of the occupation in favor of the occupier and international agendas. On this basis the World Bank led the notion of "investment in peace" as a motto.

Rectifying these mistakes and paying back the debt can be implemented by promoting new research ideas in Palestine that pay attention to the following issues.

The Palestinian society is diverse characterized by a specific particularity:

1 Addressing the Palestinian case with an analytical perspective that reflects the diverse living contexts associated with a weak center that has limited influence while exposed to powerful surroundings that exerts extensive efforts to eliminate the collective strength of that center.

2 Refugee communities and the Palestinians from within (Palestinians in the 1948 occupied territories): The only cases reflected in research are the West Bank and Gaza Strip communities. Thus, the partnership and participation of Palestinian communities in the Diaspora and inside historic Palestine needs to be reconsidered, particularly concerning major issues that are important for all Palestinians, while taking into account the power of the periphery's effect on the center.

3 Restrictions and tight spaces: The occupation divided the West Bank and Gaza Strip to cantons. The reality on the ground in the West Bank have led to the division of the divided and the fragmentation of the fragmented population centers (villages, cities and refugee camps), governorate communities (each governorate isolated from the other), and other exceptional cases such as "C" areas, Jerusalem, villages behind the separation wall and Palestinian communities besieged by settlements. This reality is bound to lead to the importance of understanding the existing contexts and therefore addressing the case studies that reflect the conditions of these areas through analysis and comparative research focusing on qualitative research without neglecting quantitative issues (numbers and figures) for national comparisons.

111

4 Numbers do not necessarily reflect the reality of the situation: Extensive use of numbers without creating partnerships with local communities and understanding them leads to research alienation (the need to understand images and their meaning in the community being researched through in-depth qualitative research in order to understand abstract numbers). This subsequently leads to performing critical studies about quantified social phenomena without supporting them with an in-depth analysis using complementary tools that blend qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

5 On the other hand, theoretical decency and importation of foreign theories, models and analytical frameworks will lead us to dead ends and limit our understanding of the context governed by a narrow perspective. Therefore it is important to address the Palestinian society being researched with an open mind by understanding the existing context before building on theories that have often been proved to create misleading results. This does not mean disregarding theories completely but rather understanding the existing context away from the rigidity and restrictions of theories or trying to adapt those theories and their assumptions to the existing reality.

6 Partnership with local communities and moving towards participatory research rather than building a commercial relationship with them.

7 Avoid the idea that people can be used as guinea pigs. Adopt the approach that peoples' experience enriches the research and its findings and can create milestones. It is important to consider research as a participatory process that raises awareness about collective action that will contribute to creating change (interactive approach)

8 Link the experience of Palestinian people under occupation and the changes in the different aspects of their lives that takes place. This will certainly lead to change-based policy papers.

Second: After reading into the existing reality of the researched
communities, researchers, and the dif-
ferent research approaches and forces
influencing them, it then becomes es-
sential to develop interactive and par-
ticipatory research methods that can
interact with this reality by influencing
it while being influenced by it. These
methods must be capable of develop-
ing various objective multi-dimensional
images within the context of a historic
society and future approaches.
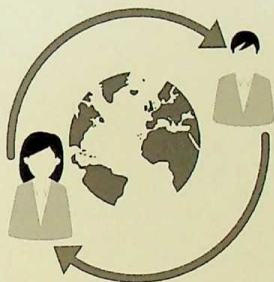
Third: May the tools and meth-
ods of participatory research provide a gateway for research-
ers to address this multi-faceted reality with its influences and
vulnerabilities. This is exactly what we aspire and strive for in the Center for
Development Studies.

Fourth: In summary, understanding reality through the analyti-
cal study built on local communities' experiences for the pur-
pose of coming up with contexts and theoretical patterns rep-
resenting the Palestinian reality and case. The research approach in
the Palestinian case must be inductive stemming from reading reality and analyz-
ing data reaching accurate conceptual characterizations.

Annexes:

Annex # (1)

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Annex #2: Field Researchers list

Abdullah Harb Alwerr	Jmlat Shaaban AlKafarneh
Ahlam Shaerawi	Joumana Mufeed Ewawi
Ala› Ali	Khayriya Ammar
Ala› AlSrooji	Kholoud Hikmat Elkaffarna
Allow Aweidat	Lamia Talahmeh
Amal Ablan	Leena jameL Abdalh Mohmmad
Amina Manasra	Linda Muhammad Altaweel
Ashraf Nizar Mohaisen	Linda Abo Zarqa
Aula mahoud joulani	Louay Zakaria Alsek
Awatif Sameeh al Halabi	Mai Bassam Abu Ghali
Ayat Abo Shamsieh	Mai yousef salem nazzal
Bahaiddin Jamale Alsirr	Majd Abo Jeesh
Basil Mohammad Taher Jalghoom	Malek Ibraheem Mohammad
Belal Ahmad Alnajjar	Mariam Ali
Bodor Nahed Shaushaa	Mary Ali Dhedil
dalal barakat hasan yaseen	Mohammad Masud Al hachach
Doaa› Jawdat Jaouny	Mohammad Turkman
Ferdous Salameh	Mohammed Sobhi Zaqqout
Feryal abd alrazaq ayyad	Mohammed Zidan Naim
Fidaa Fawzi Abu Taha	Mohanad Ahed AbdalBari
Ghada Mahmoud Ibrahim Shafout	Mona Salem Alzeriei
Hanan Amayree	Montase Khodier
Hazem Ibrahim Abu Giap	Muna Fayas Maali

Abdullah Harb Alwerr	Jmlat Shaaban AlKafarneh
Ahlam Shaerawi	Joumana Mufeed Ewawi
Ala› Ali	Khayriya Ammar
Ala› AlSrooji	Kholoud Hikmat Elkaffarna
Allow Aweidat	Lamia Talahmeh
Amal Ablan	Leena jameL Abdalh Mohmmad
Amina Manasra	Linda Muhammad Altaweel
Ashraf Nizar Mohaisen	Linda Abo Zarqa
Aula mahoud joulani	Louay Zakaria Alsek
Awatif Sameeh al Halabi	Mai Bassam Abu Ghali
Ayat Abo Shamsieh	Mai yousef salem nazzal
Bahaiddin Jamale Alsirr	Majd Abo Jeesh
Basil Mohammad Taher Jalghoom	Malek Ibraheem Mohammad
Belal Ahmad Alnajjar	Mariam Ali
Bodor Nahed Shaushaa	Mary Ali Dhedil
alal barakat hasan yaseen	Mohammad Masud Al hachach
oaa› Jawdat Jaouny	Mohammad Turkman
erdous Salameh	Mohammed Sobhi Zaqqout
eryal abd alrazaq ayyad	Mohammed Zidan Naim
daa Fawzi Abu Taha	Mohanad Ahed AbdalBari
nada Mahmoud Ibrahim Shafout	Mona Salem Alzeriei
anan Amayree	Montase Khodier
azem Ibrahim Abu Giap	Muna Fayas Maali
eba Nazzal	Shady Ameen Saqer

Hilda hatem tamimi	shayma osama dirieh
Hisham Abdallah alSatary	Shumus Harab
Hossam Fathi Abu AlRoos	Tala Aqra›
Ilham Mohamad Alame›	Tareq Jamal Salem
Iman Abu Kharoub	Threer Ahmed Asfour
Iman AlTel	Wafa Messad AlSaidi
Israe Ammar	Wesam Mohammed Jamel Saqer
Jaber Qdeemat	Zubiyda Abd El qader Abu Toha
Nabil Akmal Abu mayla	
Najah Samasrah	
Nancy omar Abu Rjailah	
Nisreen Yousef Abbas	
Nour Abdulrahman khraim	
Ohood Khofash	
Oumaima Mohmmed Obaid	
Qetharah Mahmoud husni alyyan	
Raghda Zeed	
Rawad Bdaiwi Badawi	
Reham Fares Ayad	
Saja Dawoud	
Samar mohammad saiad barham	
Samar Weshahi	
Sana›a said abd hafez Salameh	

Annex # (3)

Conflict, Participation and Development in Palestine

In 2011, the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) at Birzeit University, West Bank, and the Department of Development Studies (DDS) at the University of Vienna successfully submitted the three-year research project Conflict, Participation, and Development in Palestine to the newly established programme APPEAR. Funded by the Austrian Development Cooperation APPEAR supports partnerships between higher education institutions in Austria and key regions of the Austrian Development Cooperation. Its thematic focus ranges from poverty reduction, rural development, peace building and conflict prevention to higher education and research for development.

Main components of our three-year consortium project, launched in August 2011, are as follows:

o Implementing an MA programme in development studies at the CDS.

o Building up participatory research methods among 75 CDS fieldworkers.

o Establishing and institutionalizing an academic exchange programme between Birzeit University and DDS scholars.

o Institutionalizing a thematic (conflict and development) research cluster at the DDS to analyze and theorize societal developments in the global South, of which Palestine will constitute one of several areas for study.

In general, the basis of this partnership rests on two main components:

o capacity building in the area of development studies and research both at the University of Vienna and Birzeit University and

o the enlargement of knowledge on development issues, theories, and practices.

funded by

appear

Austrian Partnership Programme
in Higher Education and Research
for Development

financed by

Austrian
Development Cooperation

Activities

Centre for Development Studies
Birzeit University

The Centre for Development Studies (CDS) was established in 1997 as a research programme specializing in development studies. Having lived under occupation since 1967, Palestinian society's right to development remains severely restricted. The CDS therefore aims to deepen and engage development concepts through theoretical and conceptual frameworks that explore and conextualise Palestinian development within the occupation reality. This includes studying the interactions between the economic, social and political determinants of development as well as the structures of power and dominance which preclude sustainable development. In addition, the CDS seeks to provide an institutional framework within which all development-related issues can be considered, researched and discussed, with a view to providing practical guidance and assistance for relevant decision makers.

The CDS reinforces theory with practice through its various academic research and community-oriented activities. These include seminars, workshops, survey research, evaluation studies and needs assessments. The Centre coordinates a number of academic research projects in the area of development with local and international institutions. It is also involved in community-based projects that seek to empower marginalized groups and integrate them in the development process. The Center's activities are supervised by a committee of academic and administrative staff members from Birzeit University, who provide it with both technical and academic support. Over the years, the CDS has built an extensive network of relations with grassroots organizations, the Non-governmental sector, international organizations and the government. The Centre has also executed projects in neighboring countries, particularly in relation to Pa[...] Diaspora. The CDS has been supported in its activities through funding from nu[...] international donors.