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Research Study

# **Socio-emotional Learning in Palestine: Priority & Necessity**

22/12/2018



This research:

In the last decade, the Teacher Creativity Center has become a unique national source of information related to the right of Palestine's children and youth to quality education, as well as information on the best mechanisms, strategies and practises followed either to promote it or to reduce the hindrances to its fulfilment. This fact is best manifested in the quantum and quality of publications, researches and reports the center has produced since its inception in response to the needs of our children, parents, caregivers and teachers in this field. Titled "Socio-emotional Learning in Palestine: Priority & Necessity", this research study constitutes a significant addition to the center's effort in this field, taking into consideration that it's a key component activity of the project "Restoring the Socio-Academic Functioning of Palestinian Children Suffering from Socio-Academic Dysfunction Associated with the Ongoing Political Violence", which was implemented by TCC in Jerusalem during 2017 and 2018, with generous support from the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

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## Abstract

The study pursued to uncover the socio-emotional learning challenges faced by Palestinian students in the West Bank and Gaza Strip from the perspectives of students, teachers and parents, and to explore the impact of the ongoing political violence on the social and academic performance of students (grades 2-6) in the public schools affiliated to the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education. The study aimed to identify the role of the demographic variables of the study in quantitative and qualitative measurement. To achieve the objectives of the study, three questionnaires were constructed; their validity as well as the coefficient of stability had been verified. Interviews were conducted and two focus groups were established. The study sample included 20 schools in Area (C) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 100 students and 100 teachers from the same schools, and 100 families randomly selected.

The results showed that the trends of teachers in Area C in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding the educational process were high and positive despite the challenges, and that teachers' relations with their colleagues and parents of students faced some challenges. The teachers assessed the impact of the occupation practices on the educational process dissimilarly: while surveyed teachers from the West Bank considered that the occupation had really influenced the educational process negatively, Gaza Strip teachers considered that the impact of the occupation was less significant due to lack of direct confrontations with the occupation forces. The results of the study highlighted the need to improve the social and economic situation of both the student and teacher, and to improve the school environment and facilities.

Teachers and parents pointed out that the socio-emotional learning challenges Palestinian students are faced proceeds mainly from: the economic and political aspects, the overcrowded classrooms and the security situation. Teachers pointed out that students suffer from behavioral problems that require follow-up and treatment, and that they have modest academic competencies, which are reflected in their academic achievement in various subjects.





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The results of the qualitative study indicates that the educational materials and infrastructure of the students' schools do not meet the basic needs of the students, and that school administrations are reluctant to provide entertainment and extracurricular activities that develop the socio-emotional aspects of the learners.

The parents pointed out that the impact of Israeli occupation practices is obvious and clear in the course of the educational process and its progress, while it was found that no independent variable affected the attitudes of teachers in Area (C) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, regarding the educational process, except for the region variable.

The researcher recommended that to improve the socio-emotional learning outcomes, teachers, counsellors, the curricula, and schools' Administrations should be targeted. Teachers and counselors should undergo specialized training courses, and activities should be integrated into the curriculum to promote and foster socio-emotional learning.



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## Introduction and Background

For more than 70 years, the Palestinian community members have suffered from different levels of traumatic experiences as a result of the Israeli occupation. Since the second intifada, which began in September 2000, Palestinians have been exposed to various forms of aggressive practices, including restrictions on movement through checkpoints, military checkpoints, closures and curfews, as well as other repressive practices such as shootings, explosions, destruction of houses, and arrests (Abualkibash & Lera, 2015).

The manifestations of war, military violence, threat, losses and atrocities interfere with the fulfillment and commitment to the fundamental human rights of children such as safety, freedom of movement, self-determination and future prospects (Punamäki, Peltonen, Diab, & Qouta, 2014).

Numerous studies have addressed the socio-emotional and behavioral effects of traumatic experiences among children and youth. They have revealed that children living in war zones are at high risk of mental health problems, such as PTSD, insomnia, depression, low self-efficacy and self-esteem, anxiety and symptoms of depression, cognitive malformations, behavioral disorders, and disturbing psychological effects. These studies have also indicated that children and youth show problems in social relationships, Social phobia, Enuresis, social withdrawal, negative social interaction, aggressive behavior, insecure attachment, forgetfulness, physical disorders and psychological behavioral problems (Baker, 1990; Chimienti, Nasr, & Khalifeh, 1989; Clarke, Sack, & Goff, 1993; Foa, Ehlers, Clark, Tolin, & Orsillo, 1999; Garbarino & Kostelny, 1993; Giaconia et al., 1995; Moro, Frančičković, Varenina, & Urlić, 1998; Punamäki, 1997; Qouta, Punamäki, Miller, & El-Sarraj, 2008; Saigh, Mroueh, Zimmerman, & Fairbank, 1995; Stubbs & Soroya, 1996; Vila, Porche, & Mouren-Simeoni, 1999; Worden, 1996). Confronting the events of war and the traumatic military conflicts in the Palestinian society places excessive burdens on children and adolescents. Research has identified a number of psychosocial factors and processes that can help children affected by war to maintain their psychological health and well-being. They include among others family and school support systems, effective coping techniques, and socio-emotional and cognitive strategies. (Trickey, Siddaway, Meiser-Stedman, Serpell, & Field, 2012).

62% of the West Bank is located in Area C, where Israel retains its full administrative and military authority over these areas, and imposes policies that have exacerbated living conditions in a way that is difficult to address. The occupation has posed many challenges to the administration and the progress of the educational process in these areas, such as the policy of demolition of buildings, the complex the planning process, and the difficulty of obtaining the necessary licenses.





The difficulty of obtaining permits to build schools or to renovate the already-existing ones have limited access to adequate and quality education to about 150,000 Palestinians. It also forced residents to build new schools without obtaining the necessary permits and making them vulnerable to demolition by the occupation authorities any time. It should be noted that the policies imposed on the construction process does not only mean the inability to provide the necessary services to the current population but also the inability to meet the needs resulting from the natural increase in population in those areas. Moreover, the construction of houses with insulating ceilings or the use of mobile tents is also prohibited (OCHA, 2010).

In addition, the Israeli settlers' attacks have become a serious threat to children's ability to reach their schools, especially in the Palestinian communities that are adjacent or near the settlements, and lead to psychological reflections and impact on children on early ages. Problems related to barriers, road blocks and separation wall have all delayed teachers and students to reach their schools, and have made it difficult for them to move towards their educational centers and reach their final destination, that consequently led to higher dropout rates, particularly among girls in Area C compared with other areas in the West Bank.

The report supplied by the Ministry of Education indicated that many Palestinians require permits from Israeli military forces to reach their schools, universities or work stations. The presence of the Separation Wall disrupts the system at schools. Teachers and students have to wait on the gates of the Separation Wall for long hours till they are allowed in. Students spend more time on the barriers and checkpoints than the time they spent in classrooms (Ministry of Education, 2007).

The situation in the Gaza Strip is not very different. Actually, it is more complicated for the education sector. Studies and development reports analyzing the Palestinian Territories indicate a decrease in the number of days of attendance for students and deterioration in their academic performance due to inadequate infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms and chaos caused by military operations IDF forces.



Many risk factors and indicators are present in schools; some of which are associated with the low academic performance which leads to academic failure and dropout from the educational system. Indicators on the growth of anti-social behavior and violent behaviors and aggression within schools were also identified, which requires the use of preventive intervention programs to reduce risk indicators and improve students' academic achievement in basic education.

Children living in violent societies and undergoing social struggles are not only exposed to mental health problems such as depression and anxiety, but are also at risk of developing anti-social behavior. The low level of academic performance, and social skills among students, are a strong stimulus for scholastic failure (Mitchell, 2003).

In a survey conducted by the Palestinian Developmental Feminist Studies association (2008) entitled "The Impact of the Siege on the Palestinian Family", women stressed that the siege led to an increase in early marriages of girls due to poverty, increased rates of divorce, high levels of domestic violence, especially against women and children. In addition to problems related to family separation resulting from the repeated arrests of one of the parents and the loss of the breadwinner, all of which have had a significant impact on the increase in the level of psychological and behavioral problems, especially nervousness of tension, anxiety, decline in the level of achievement and increased dropout rates among children.

This study also shows high rates of child labor and school dropout due to economic reasons, increased rates of absenteeism, low success and achievement rates, and a steady increase in aggressive behavior and bullying among students, as well as a high rate of poor understanding and lack of concentration and attention among students. The blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip deprived its students to communicate with the outside world and local groups in the West Bank or the world, which means depriving them of opportunities for academic and professional development.

In his study on the problems of education in the basic stage in Palestine in 2016, Habayeb pointed out a number of obstacles including: the multiplicity of programs





and curricula which are not linked to the learner's life and the reality of his/her environment or the economic, social, historical, and political situation of the Palestinian community, the theoretical part predominates at the expense of the practical one, the increase of literary disciplines at the expense of other specializations, and practical and scientific skills. The obstacles includes also the fact that the educational system follows methods focusing on introducing theoretical information and development of the ability of automatic memorization and dictation through the system of examinations in force based on the classification and competition. And the classification of students as intelligent, stupid, and strong and weak, increased negative phenomena within our society such as selfishness, self-love and individual work and led to a lack of collective work, both within the school or other community institutions.

All this led to alienating students from learning and increased their hatred of the school, which led to problems and challenges that still stand in the way of the progress of basic education and made it difficult for the philosophy of education to achieve its objectives well.

The school is one of the main factors that affect the socialization of students. It has crucial role in the construction of contemporary personality, not only in terms of scientific aspects, but in other social, emotional, cultural and health aspects also. The exclusive focus of the school on the educational role only, leads to undermining its essential essence. Thus, in addition to paying attention to the educational role, the school should focus on providing students with the socio-emotional skills necessary to create a good citizen capable of communicating in a healthy way with others. Integrated efforts to improve and enhance academic learning and socio-emotional learning would lead to more successful schools (Hejab, 2013).

Many young students have not acquired the basic socio-emotional skills necessary to sustain effective social relations, which is necessary for the growth of students as productive members of society. The basic stage of education is central to the development of these skills at a critical age stage which faces many challenges in psychosocial, biological, socio-emotional development (Payton et al., 2000; Ross & Tolan, 2017).



Socio-emotional learning plays a significant role in improving the health of students, enhancing the sense of security, and consolidating citizenship. Although it plays an important role in improving past non-academic outcomes, socio-emotional learning plays a crucial role in improving academic performance and lifelong learning. It helps students to engage in positive social interactions, take good decisions, understand and manage emotions, and solve problems effectively; which help students to improve their academic performance (Pellitteri & Smith, 2007). Socio-emotional learning acts as a protective shield for many indicators of risk experienced by a large segment of students in schools.

Socio-emotional learning programs have improved the academic and social performance of students at risk; positive social learning programs have been found to improve socio-emotional efficiency and reduce behavioral problems of others such as violence, aggression, anti-social behavior, and self-related problems such as anxiety, depression and withdrawal behavior. Socio-emotional learning proved also effective in improving the academic achievement of students in general (Ashdown & Bernard, 2012).

When the school takes care of students' socio-emotional skills, their academic achievement improves, the incidence of behavioral problems decreases, and the quality of social relationships around each student grows. Students become productive, responsible, and active participants in their community (Elias, Parker, Kash, Weissberg, Brien, 2008).

There is a need to develop several early intervention programs that reduce vulnerability indicators, including socio-emotional learning programs; training in skills related to social interactions, conflict resolution, stress resilience, and affirmative skills can reduce behavioral indicators (J. Zins & Wagner, 1997). The improvement of socially desired behaviors and behaviors associated with caring for others, and the prevention of destructive behaviors, are essential components for the development of children's socio-emotional efficiency (Ross & Tolan, 2017).





Socio-emotional learning skills are essential for students to invest in their personal and social potential. Moreover, it is more important to protect students at risk of academic failure and dropout, and to address behavioral problems such as violence, aggression and anti-social behavior. This is why socio-emotional learning was associated with various outcomes related to normal psychological functioning (Jaber, 2004; J. E. Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004).

Students should be ready today not only to pass tests at school but also to pass life tests. Socio-emotional competences and academic achievement are strongly linked, and effective schools focus their efforts on integrated and coordinated education in both areas to improve students' success in school throughout their lives. An increasing amount of research shows that evidence-based interventions based on socio-emotional learning are linked to academic achievement, health and citizenship. Thus, the main challenge facing schools is how to make socio-emotional learning programs an essential component of their curriculum and how programs should be implemented and in sustainable ways. There are enormous opportunities for school staff to help achieve these results, and additional training opportunities should be provided for their numbers for these roles (J. E. Zins & Elias, 2007).

### **Objectives of the study:**

The main objective of this study is to research the socio-emotional learning challenges that result from ongoing political violence and influence the socio-academic performance of students in Area C and the Gaza Strip.

### **Specific objectives include:**

1. Identifying and analyzing the various socio-emotional learning challenges faced by Palestinian students in Area C in the West Bank and Gaza Strip due to ongoing political violence, taking into account the differences between different geographical regions.
2. Assessing the impact of these challenges on the socio-academic performance of Palestinian children in the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth grades.
3. Studying and analyzing the dynamics of social-emotional learning support



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available to students in the target areas.

4. Determining the extent to which these areas require interventions similar to those taken in “the socio-academic performance of Palestinian children suffering from social and academic dysfunction”

### **Study Questions:**

Through this study, the researcher will try to answer the following questions:

The main question:

**What are the socio-emotional learning challenges faced by Palestinian students in Area C in the West Bank and Gaza Strip from the students’, teachers’, parents’, and community’s perspectives?**

To answer the main question, the following sub-questions should be answered:

1. What are the attitudes of teachers in Area (C) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip towards the educational process?
2. What are the views of teachers in Area (C) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip towards students?
3. What are the views of parents in areas (C) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip towards the educational system?
4. Does the teacher’s variable of gender, region, age, grade that he/she teaches, the place of residence, the civil status, and the years of service affect the attitudes of teachers in Area C in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip towards the educational process?
5. Do the gender of the student, the region, the grade in which he studies and the place of residence variables affect the views of teachers in Area C in the West Bank and Gaza Strip towards students?
6. Does the gender or the parent, age, the distance between home and school in meters, place of residence, educational level, working condition, basic means of transportation to reach and leave school, family type, monthly household income in shekels and the main breadwinner in the households’ variables affect the views of parents in Area (C) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip towards the educational system?



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## Methodology and Procedures

### Methodology:

The analytic descriptive approach has been followed, and data was collected both quantitatively and qualitatively to conduct the current study. It is worth noting that the study has constructed special questionnaires for students, parents and teachers, in addition to interviews to achieve its objectives.

### Study sample and society:

The study population is composed of all Palestinian students in grades 2 to 6, their teachers and their parents in the area classified (C) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The sample was random with multiple stages (simple, stratified, and metastatic). The study population (West Bank and Gaza Strip) was divided into units. The study sample covers all areas in the two surveyed regions. Each geographical unit was selected based on domain sampling method, in each geographic unit; a simple random sample was chosen to select the school. Accordingly, 10 schools were selected from the West Bank, distributed in the northern, central and southern West Bank, and 10 schools from the Gaza Strip in the northern, central and southern Gaza Strip.

In each school, 5 students were selected. Each class was represented by one student. Since the study population is the students in the basic grades (second to sixth), the sampling method used to select one student for each row by the domain or quota sampling method, since each row was represented by one student regardless of the number of students per grade. The method of selecting a student from his / her class was followed by the simple random method. It is worth mentioning that the number of male students was equal to the number of female students according to the method of random sampling class, and the distribution of the sample of students according to demographic variables as follows:

Table1: Distribution of students' sample according to demographic variables.

Demographic/ independent variables		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	50	50
	Female	50	50
Region	West Bank	50	50
	Gaza Strip	50	50
Governorate	Northern West Bank	17	17
	Central West Bank	16	16
	Southern West Bank	17	17
	Northern Gaza Strip	17	17
	Central Gaza Strip	17	17
	Southern Gaza Strip	16	16
Grade	Second Grade	20	20
	Third Grade	20	20
	Fourth Grade	20	20
	Fifth Grade	20	20
	Sixth Grade	20	20
Residence	Village	50	50
	City	47	47
	Camp	3	3
Total		100	100

For each student selected for the sample, his / her teacher was chosen to be in the sample of teachers. Accordingly, 100 teachers were selected, 50 males and 50 females distributed equally between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. According to the demographic variables as follows:

Table2: Distribution of teachers' sample by demographic variables.

Demographic/ independent variables		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	42	42
	Female	58	58
Region	West Bank	50	50
	Gaza Strip	50	50
Age	20-29	14	14
	30-40	55	55
	41-51	19	19
	More than 51	12	12
Grade	Second Grade	20	20
	Third Grade	24	24
	Fourth Grade	26	26
	Fifth Grade	16	16
	Sixth Grade	14	14
Residence	Village	51	51
	City	41	41
	Camp	8	8
Civil status	Married	93	93
	Single	7	7
years of service	Less than 5 years	19	19
	5-10 years	31	31
	11-16 years	27	27
	More than 16 years	23	23
Total		100	100

For each student selected for the sample, his/her family was chosen to be in the sample of parents, (100) families were chosen: (50) from the West Bank and (50) from the

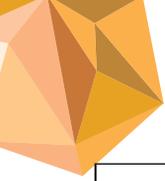


Gaza Strip. The distribution of the sample of the population according to the variables Demographics as follows:

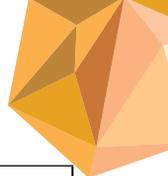
Table 3: Distribution of parents' sample by demographic variables

Demographic/ independent variables		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	49	49
	Female	51	51
Region	West Bank	50	50
	Gaza Strip	50	50
Governorate	Northern West Bank	17	17
	Central West Bank	16	16
	Southern West Bank	17	17
	Northern Gaza Strip	17	17
	Central Gaza Strip	17	17
	Southern Gaza Strip	16	16
Age	20-29	14	18
	30-40	55	58
	41-50	19	21
	More than 50	12	3
Distance between home and school in meters	Less than 300 m	54	54
	300-500 m	11	11
	501-1000 m	28	28
	More than 1000 m	7	7





Residence	Village	50	50
	City	47	47
	Camp	3	3
Educational Level	Primary	17	17
	Elementary	45	45
	Secondary	5	5
	Diploma	28	28
	Bachelor	5	5
Working Condition	Doesn't work	48	48
	Student	3	3
	Free work	24	24
	Public sector employee	20	20
	Private sector employee	5	5
Basic means of transportation for the return and departure from school	On foot	85	85
	Private car	5	5
	Public transportation	6	6
	Others	4	4
Family Type	Nuclear family	63	63
	Extended family	34	34
	Complex family	3	3



Monthly Household income in shekels	Less than 2000	59	59
	2000-4000	30	30
	More than 4000	11	11
The main breadwinner in the households'	Father	93	93
	Mother	3	3
	One of the brothers	4	4
Total		100	100

Therefore, all the sample members of the students, teachers and parents responded to the questionnaires assigned to each of them. The following table shows the distribution of the sample of the study that responded to the quantitative measurement.

Table 4: Sample study distributions that responded to the quantitative study

Target segment	Total	West Bank			Gaza Strip		
		Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Students	100	25	25	50	25	25	50
Families	100	-	-	50	-	-	50
Teachers	100	25	25	50	25	25	50
Schools	20	5	5	10	5	5	10

The sample selected for conducting in-depth interviews consisted of (20) teachers (10 teachers in the West Bank and (10) teachers in the Gaza Strip. Only one teacher was selected from each of the schools that formed the study sample. (20) families: (10) families from the West Bank and (10) families from the Gaza Strip. These families, one of their children study in the schools that formed the sample. The following table shows the distribution of the study sample that responded to the qualitative measurement.



**Table 5: Distributions of the study sample that responded to the qualitative study**

Target segment	Total	West Bank			Gaza Strip		
		Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Families	20	-	-	10	-	-	10
Teachers	20	5	5	10	5	5	10
Schools	20	5	5	10	5	5	10

It is worth mentioning that two focus groups were conducted: one in the West Bank and the other in Gaza. The members of these two groups are from the Department of Planning and Educational Guidance in the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education. Their role was to determine the circumstances, factors and experiences lived by students in marginalized areas in terms of the nature of their academic achievement and the psychological effects of the context of their local environment, concluding with discussing the outcomes of the study.

### Study Tools:

Three questionnaires were constructed to achieve the goals of the study on its quantitative side, and in-depth interviews were conducted to achieve the objectives of the study in its qualitative aspect. For quantitative measurement, two questionnaires were constructed for the teachers.

The first questionnaire focused on the teacher's views regarding the entire educational process, and it consisted of (61) items, divided into several domains.

The first one focused on the teachers' attitudes regarding students and methods of dealing with them, methods of management of the classroom environment, methods of teaching, methods to modify behavioral problems, and the teachers' commitment to the ethics of education. The second domain dealt with the teachers' relations with their colleagues and parents. The third domain focused on the teachers' job satisfaction,



motivation, and self-efficacy. The fourth domain concentrated on the impact of the occupation practices on the educational process. The last domain, involved the teachers' attitudes toward the school administration, the Ministry of Education and the curriculum, and the extent of the school environment appropriateness. The questionnaire followed the five-point Likert-type scale. Some items were positive, while others were negative. The following table shows the domains, positive and the negative items.

**Table (6): The teachers' questionnaire on attitudes regarding the educational process**

Domains	Item number	Positive items	Negative items
First domain	30	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31	27
Second domain	4	28, 34	42, 52
Third domain	10	32, 33, 55, 56, 57, 58	43, 44, 45, 46
Fourth domain	4	39, 40, 41, 61	
Fifth domain	9	54, 59	47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 53, 60

The second questionnaire was allocated to the teacher and it covered the views of the teachers regarding the students. It consisted of (56) items, divided into three main domains. The domain of students' social skills consists of three sub-scales, each one contains 10 items, starting from item (1-30). The teacher assesses the behavior of the child on the axis of cooperation: that includes behaviors such as helping others, participating in and obeying laws and instructions; Self-affirmation: which includes the initiative behaviors , such as asking others about information, presenting oneself to others, responding to others' actions; Self-control: that comprises behaviors shown in the positions of controversy such as responding appropriately to harassment by





others, and the behaviors that appear in positions where there is no difference, but need to reconcile or take different views.

The second domain examines behavioral problems, consisting of three sub-scales, each of which is divided into items (31-48). The teacher assesses the child’s behavior on three axes: External problems: inappropriate behaviors, including verbal and physical aggression against others, and the inability to control emotion and dispute, Internal problems: These behaviors include anxiety, depression and introversion, and low self-esteem, Excessive activity: These behaviors include excess movement and lack of attention and fatigue and reckless reactions.

The first and second domains followed the three-point Likert-type scaling. The third domain measures the social competence of the student and consists of nine items measuring achievement in reading, arithmetic, motivation, parental encouragement and general motor performance. It is measured in items (49-57). The teacher assesses the level of academic achievement of the child compared to others on the ladder listed from (1-5) where the number (1) indicates the least desirable achievement and the number (5) refers to the most desirable achievement. The following table illustrates the domain of the questionnaire and the items distributions accordingly.

**Table (7): The teachers’ questionnaire on views regarding the students**

Domains	Items number	Items
First domain	10	Cooperation: 8, 9, 15, 16, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, 29.
	10	Self-affirmation: 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 14, 17, 19, 23, 24.
	10	Self-control: 1, 4, 5, 11, 12, 13, 18, 22, 25, 30.
Second domain	6	External problems: 31, 33, 41, 42, 43, 44.
	6	Internal problems: 32, 34, 38, 39, 45, 46.
	6	Excessive activity: 48, 47, 40, 37, 36, 35 .
Third domain	9	Social competence: 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57.



The third questionnaire measures the views of parents regarding the educational system. The questionnaire contained 36 items covering three domains: the domain of attitudes regarding teacher, education and the role of the family in educating children, the domain of occupation practices influence in the educational process, and the domain of parental care and family climate. The questionnaire followed the five-point Likert-type scale. Some items were positive, while others were negative. The following table shows the domains, and the negative items.

**Table (8): the parents' questionnaire on views regarding the educational system**

Domains	Item number	Positive items	Negative items
First domain	17	5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 19, 23, 28.	1, 2, 3, 4, 29, 30, 36.
Second domain	2	33, 34.	
Third domain	17	11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27.	25, 31, 32, 35.





## Study Questionnaire s' Validity:

The validity of the study questionnaires was confirmed by presenting them to a number of experts with experience and specialization in the departments of Psychology, Counseling, Primary Education and Teaching Methods at An-Najah National University. The number of judges reached 12, they agreed on the validity of all the items, after redrafting some of them. Some judges referred to increase the items in some domains; others suggested dividing the compound items into two items, all of which were taken into account.

Construct validity was calculated, which is expressed by the ability of each item in the questionnaire to contribute in its domain, and contribute to the total score of each questionnaire. This is expressed statistically by the coefficient of correlation of the paragraph in terms of domain and the total score on the other hand. Field (2005) pointed out the need to look at the level of significance of the coefficient of correlation, to separate the remaining items and the ones that should be deleted. To achieve this, a survey sample of (35) teachers - 16 males and 17 females - was selected, in addition to sample of parents consisting of (41) families: (25) mothers and (16) fathers.

All the items in both teachers' and parents' questionnaires had statistically significant correlation with their domains, and with the total scores of the questionnaires at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). This indicates the validity of the three study questionnaires, cleared by high construct validity.

## Study's Questionnaires Reliability:

Reliability was calculated using the Cronbach Alpha equation. The following table illustrates the reliability coefficients of the three study questionnaires.

Table (9): Reliability of the study questionnaires

Questionnaires	Domains	Cronbach Alpha
The questionnaire of teachers' attitudes toward the educational process	First domain	0.968
	Second domain	0.648
	Third domain	0.732
	Fourth domain	0.760
	Fifth domain	0.679
	Total score	0.919
The questionnaire of teachers' views toward the students	First domain	0.891
	Second domain	0.857
	Third domain	0.941
	Total score	0.926
The questionnaire of parents' views regarding the educational system	First domain	0.866
	Second domain	0.510
	Third domain	0.903
	Total score	0.934



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## Results

The study pursued to uncover the socio-emotional learning challenges faced by Palestinian students in the West Bank and Gaza Strip from the perspectives of students, teachers and parents. It also aimed to explore the impact of ongoing political violence on the social and academic performance of students (grades 2-6), and identify the motivation and enthusiasm of students to learn after the incidents of direct political violence in the targeted domains, and the disclosure of the reality of the effectiveness of teaching and the practice of academic activities in the classroom, especially the identification of social-emotional learning strategies that are already being implemented by teachers and to identify strategies and implementation policies that support the socio-emotional and academic performance of students in the above-mentioned areas and their effectiveness, and the uncover of the reality of parental follow-up of the achievements of their children in schools, and the extent of parental observance of socio-emotional learning of their children. The study also aimed to reveal the level of skills students possess as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, interpersonal skills, and responsible decision-making.

The study also aimed to identify the role of variables of the demographic study in quantitative measurement. To achieve the objectives of the study, three questionnaires were constructed and verified, by calculating the validity of the questionnaires and its reliability coefficients. Interviews were conducted and two focus groups were established in the Department of Planning and Educational Guidance in the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. After the collection of questionnaires, they were encoded and entered into the computer and processed statistically using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The following are results of the study according to the sequence of questions.

### **Results related to the first question:**

**“What are the attitudes of teachers in Area (C) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding the educational process?”**

In order to answer this question, means, standard deviations, and percentages of the questionnaire domains were calculated, the following evaluation has been used to



separate between high, moderate, and low scores (Alawneh & Ghnaim, 2015), the following table clarifies the results.

20% - 39.9% low

40% - 59.9% moderate

60% - 79.9% high

80% - 100% very high

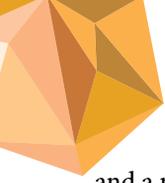
**Table (10): Means, Standard Deviations, Percentages and Evaluations of the teacher's attitudes regarding the educational process**

Domains	Means	Standard deviations	Percentages	Evaluation
First	4.04	0.58	80.84	Very high
Second	3.91	0.48	78.19	High
Third	4.11	0.55	82.13	Very high
Fourth	2.50	1.04	49.94	Moderate
Fifth	3.73	0.60	74.50	High
Total	3.77	0.39	75.43	High

The results of the previous table indicate that the trends of teachers in Area C in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding the educational process were high and positive. The mean of the total score was (3.77) with a standard deviation of (0.39) and a percentage of (75.43%). All domains were very high and high, except for the fourth one, which came moderate. As for the first domain, which focused on teacher attitudes toward students, methods of dealing with them, methods of managing the classroom environment and methods of teaching, methods of modifying behavioral problems, and teacher commitment of Education ethics. The mean was (4.04) with a standard deviation of (0.58) and a percentage of (80.84%) with a very high estimate.

As for the second one, which is about the teacher's relations with his colleagues and the parents of the students, the mean was (3.91) with a standard deviation of (0.48)





and a percentage of (78.19%) which is high. Regarding the third one, mean was (4.11), with a standard deviation of (0.55) and a percentage of (82.13%). That is considered very high.

As for the fourth field, which is the impact of the occupation practices on the educational process, mean was (2.50) and a standard deviation of (1.04) and a percentage of (49.94%), which is moderate.

About the fifth and last domain, pertaining to the teacher's attitudes toward school administration, the Ministry of Education and the curriculum, and the suitability of the school environment, mean was (3.73) and a standard deviation of (0.60) and a percentage of (74.50%). Therefore, it is high and positive.

In fact, it is not possible to rely too much on the above results for the two reasons, which are inconsistent with the qualitative research results below, and the self-report questionnaires approach in the quantitative part of the current study and the results described above. The answer to questions or paragraphs directly affecting them on a personal level, as the respondent must reflect the nature of his/her beliefs and ideas, trends and views. This method of quantitative measurement has encountered many criticisms of inaccuracy and subjectivity, as individuals often distort their responses to this type of tools because of social desirability. If the phenomenon measured is socially desirable, individuals try to maximize their responses and try to hide their feelings, thoughts, and attitudes by claiming what is desirable and even claiming something that contradicts their actual direction. And that's what called Overestimation of the measured trait. If the phenomenon is socially unacceptable, individuals try to answer in a way that shows that they are very far from this phenomenon. Therefore, there will be underestimation of the phenomenon.

#### **Results related to the second question:**

#### **“What are the views of teachers in Area (C) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding students?”**

In order to answer this question, means, standard deviations, and percentages of the questionnaire domains were calculated, the same previous evaluation has been used.

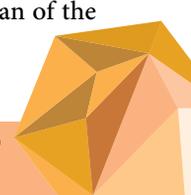


The following table illustrates the results.

**Table (11): Means, Standard Deviations, Percentages and Evaluations of the teacher's views regarding Students**

Domains	Axis	Means	Standard deviations	Percentages	Evaluation
First domain	Cooperation:	.93	.42	46.44	Moderate
	Self-affirmation:	.95	.44	47.69	Moderate
	Self-control:	.98	.33	49.06	Moderate
	First domain total:	.95	.34	47.73	Moderate
Second domain	External problems:	.93	.55	46.67	Moderate
	Internal problems:	.86	.41	42.92	Moderate
	Excessive activity:	.96	.47	48.02	Moderate
	Second domain total:	.92	.39	45.87	Moderate
Third domain	Social competence:	2.55	1.08	50.94	Moderate

The results of the above table show that the views of teachers in Area C in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding the students were moderate, neither positive nor negative, between these two extremes. All domains were moderate. For the first domain, it contained 3 axes; Cooperation, Self-affirmation, and Self-control, means (following 3 point Likert scale, between 0 and 2) are by order (0.93, 0.95, 0.98) and standard deviations (0.42, 0.44, 0.33), percentages, (46.44%, 47.69%, 49.06%). The mean of the





first domain in total was (0.95), the standard deviation was (0.34), and the percentage reached (47.73%) with a moderate evaluation.

The second domain, which has three axes, are External problems, Internal problems, and Excessive activity, (following 3 point Likert scale, between 0 and 2) are by order (0.93, 0.86, 0.96), standard deviations (0.55 , 0.41, 0.47), percentages (46.67%, 42.92%, 48.02%). The mean of the second domain was (0.92) and a standard deviation of (0.39) and a percentage of (45.87%), which is moderate.

As for the third domain, about social competence, the mean (following 5 point Likert scale, between 1 and 5) is 2.55, with a standard deviation of 1.08 and the percentage of 50.94% that is considered moderate.

In view of the results of the first question, the impact of social desirability on teachers is revealed. When asked to disclose their convictions, attitudes and ideas regarding the educational process and regarding the students and methods of dealing with them, methods of managing the classroom environment and the used educational methods, And the teacher's relations with his colleagues and the parents of the students, and the satisfaction of the teacher about his career and trends regarding it and his motivation and self-efficacy, it turns out that the teachers went to appreciate this high in general, although they see that students suffer from behavioral problems they have almost no social competence, so if teachers are self-sufficient in the way they express themselves, why cannot they reduce behavioral problems and increase students' social competence? When comparing the results of the first and second questions with the results of the outputs of the two focus groups, it may be argued that it is preferable to adopt the results of the two focus groups rather than the quantitative measurement results because of the social desirability factor on the one hand and the ability of the focus groups to produce more accurate results, regarding to the nature of its members jobs, as the focus groups were formed by the staff of the Department of Planning and Educational Guidance of the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education, and responded to the question, "What are the elements of socio-emotional learning from your point of view?" The teacher must understand the feelings of the student, the



teacher's awareness of his/her role as a builder of generations, the teacher's awareness of the importance of the role assigned to him, and the validity of the curriculum. In addition to the importance of focusing on activities, and the teacher's utilization of teaching methods and different assessment methods. According to these results there are implicit indications that teachers lack a lot of skills to achieve socio-emotional learning.

The focus groups also found that the teacher must have motivation, willingness to teach, self-awareness, communication and decision-making skills, and the ability to reduce violence among students. The teacher should be subject to teacher training, and policy-making that facilitates the role of the teacher should be conducted.

The teacher should utilize the role of the family in achieving the goals of social-emotional learning, as the teacher can activate communication with parents, and assign awareness meetings for students and parents to view the emotional and social aspects associated with learning.

The focus groups addressed obstacles such as the effects of occupation practices that affect the efficiency of teachers and the performance of students, from persecution, intimidation, violence and repression.

There is a need to improve the social and economic situation of the student and teacher, strengthen the school environment and facilities, expand the classroom walls or add other classes and provide logistical support for the school environment, as well as the need to change negative stereotypes of teachers.

The focus groups emphasized that the student must be at the center of the learning process, and that the teacher should have flexible thinking, tolerance and should abandon traditional practices followed by some teachers.

The focus groups felt that the sources and resources that might help to improve socio-emotional learning were the targeting of teachers, counsellors, and curriculum and school administrations. Teachers and counselors should be subject to specialized





training courses, and curriculum activities should be integrated to promote emotional learning. School administrations need to understand the nature of their roles in socio-emotional learning. It is also the responsibility of the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education to prepare curricula for socio-emotional learning, and to hold workshops and training courses to promote socio-emotional learning through partnership with Private institutions that deal with the issues of human development to transfer experiences to the Ministry of Education, and must train counsellors on socio-emotional learning programs.

According to the focus groups, the existing intervention programs to improve the reality of socio-emotional learning is represented in the school curricula and activities and the adoption of the Ministry of Education the principle that the student is the center of the educational process.

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education also adopts a building program that supports socio-emotional learning. The Ministry also adopts the: Labib Friends/ Reade / Learning Blocks / Free Activity / Activities and Extracurricular Competitions / Olympiad, AMIDEAST, and Sabri / psychosocial support programs for students through counseling and guidance programs supervised and applied by counselors. The two focus groups considered that the intervention programs required to improve the reality of socio-emotional learning include the interest of the current reading project, which supports the socio-emotional aspects of the students. The teachers and counsellors should be sensitized to possess the necessary planning skills to face the difficulties experienced by the students. Socio-emotional Learning supports the students' aptitude for the students in stage 1-4, and is interested in the formative drama, stimulating the work of the School Theater and puppets, publishing media messages showing the student's expression of his feelings.

The focus groups agreed on future perceptions to improve the reality of socio-emotional learning through the attention of teachers, mentors, curriculum and school administrations; all teachers and counsellors must be qualified, trained and able to deal with socio-emotional learning. The curriculum must include various forms of



activities that facilitate Social learning. There is a real need for qualified managers in the field of emotional learning.

In addition, teachers should be subjected to intervention programs to develop their motivation to work, and to target school administrations in order to disrupt the convictions of school principals. Giving students the opportunity to think outside the box, giving teachers margin and space in dealing with students (with the parties of the educational process), and involving students in the expression and decision-making through the formation of committees, for example.

Attention should be given to the schools next to the separation wall, by giving them a higher priority, and encouraging teachers through the promotion of programs based on socio-emotional learning, strengthening the role of the counselor in the school, and disseminating it to all schools and activating the role of school administrations to follow programs based on socio-emotional learning.

The focus groups see that if the above ideas are taken into consideration, the teachers 'awareness of the importance of the students' expression will be increased, the violence among the students will be reduced, their achievement will be improved, the efficiency of the teachers and counsellors will increase, and the number of school counselors will increase, especially those adjacent to the settlers, in C areas. In addition, that will open prospects for social and psychological studies for students to address the problems they are exposed, and will be allocated visits of specialists and professors of the university educators to see the problems experienced by students from injustice and intimidation and persecution of the occupation and settlers, to examine their needs and develop appropriate solutions for them.

The above will result in the creation of policies at the higher levels to raise the efficiency of teachers, counsellors, curricula and school administrations by paying attention to the incentives of these categories, whether financial or spiritual.

The two focus groups recommended that we must start from the needs of the school



especially the poor school environment, which needs to stimulate the existing possibilities, and the formation of higher policies to develop programs to support the idea of socio-emotional learning, and to create a safe environment in schools to practice this type of learning and to establish clear and standardized criteria for work in these programs. These programs need financial support.

**Results related to the third question:**

**“What are the views of parents in areas (C) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding the educational system?”**

In order to answer this question, means, standard deviations, and percentages of the questionnaire domains were calculated, the same previous evaluation has been used. The following table shows the results.

**Table (12): Means, Standard Deviations, Percentages and Evaluations of the parent’s attitudes rEgarding the educational system**

Domains	Means	Standard deviations	Percentages	Evaluation
First	4.15	0.59	82.97	Very high
Second	3.38	1.24	67.63	High
Third	3.94	0.66	78.71	High
Total	3.23	0.42	64.68	High

It is clear from the results of the previous table that the views of parents in Area C in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding the educational system were high and positive. The mean of the total score was (3.23) and a standard deviation of (0.42) and a percentage of (64.68%) Estimates of all domains were high and very high, and for the first domain, which is about trends regarding teacher and learning, and the role of the family in the learning of children, the average was (4.15) with a standard deviation of (0.59) and the percentage was (82.97%) which is Very high.



As for the second domain, which is about the impact of the occupation practices in the educational process, mean was (3.38), standard deviation was (1.24) and percentage was (67.63%). Therefore, the estimate is high. Regarding the third domain, which is concerned with parental care and family climate, mean was (3.94), standard deviation was (0.66), percentage was (78.71%) which is high.

In view of the results of the first and third domains, once again, the influence of social desirability on the part of the parents appears this time. When asked to reveal their views on the educational system, attitudes toward teacher and education, the role of the family in educating children, parental care provided by parents and the nature of the family climate, They generally went on to estimate that highly, even though, students, according to the results of the second question, had behavioral problems and almost half of them lacked social competence. Therefore, if the parents had the efficacy and good care of their students' children, and they have high attitudes toward education and teachers, then what prevented them from reducing behavioral problems and increased social competence for their children students?!

The effect of the social desirability factor was excluded from the results of the second domain, which is the effect of the occupation practices in the educational process for two reasons: the high value of the standard deviation of this field which reached (1.24). This indicates the heterogeneity of the parents in their opinions about the occupation practices and their impact on the educational process, which reflects a degree of credibility. The Palestinian reality and the results of the qualitative study support the validity of the results in the second domain. This field also requires assessing the behavior of the other (occupation) and not the self-evaluation (the parents). This, in turn, mitigated the influence of the factor of social desirability when parents responded to this domain.

With regard to the qualitative study, teachers and parents pointed to the challenges of socio-emotional learning facing the students. These included the economic and political challenges, the accumulation of classrooms, and the security situation (the repeated Israeli shelling of the Gaza Strip, the attacks of the settlers and the Israeli





army and the checkpoints and killings and arrests in the West Bank). The sample indicated that there is a lack of basic needs for students from educational materials and infrastructure for their schools, and the reluctance of school administrations to provide recreational activities and extracurricular activities that develop socio-emotional aspects. The teachers complained about the extent of the psychological pressure on them by the parents, and the inferiority perception suffered by the teacher, whether by students or some parents. Parents complained of the magnitude of the psychological pressure on them and the nature of the duties placed on their backs, which limits their interaction and cooperation with teachers. Teachers complained that students did not focus on the classes because of anxiety, fear, nightmares and a sense of threat.

Teachers and some parents opposed to the new curriculum, especially in the Gaza Strip because it weakens national loyalty and identity. Teachers in the Gaza Strip complained about the Palestinian division, which affects Palestinian life, including education. Many teachers rejected the policy of compulsory retirement adopted by the Ministry of Education.

Teachers and parents felt that there is an impact of the ongoing political violence practiced by the Israeli occupation authorities on the academic social performance of the students in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. These effects include the emergence of academic, emotional and psychological problems, such as; isolation, fear and introversion, which lead to poor achievement, and the emergence of behavioral problems among the students like violence.

Teachers noted that they help students to reduce these effects by conducting debriefing sessions and psychosocial support for students in cooperation with counsellors, conducting recreational activities, taking care of extracurricular activities, and motivating students to dialogue, discussion and exercise their hobbies.

The teachers pointed out that the parents follow their children who have already accomplished high achievement. However, there is no much care for the students who actually need it. Thus, there is need to motivate parents to take care of their children with poor academic achievement and follow them.



Teachers agreed that school administrations encouraged parents to cooperate with the school, create channels of communication with them and value their participation in the decision-making process of educating their children. Teachers also noted that they are interested in knowing the family conditions in which students live to assess their circumstances and psychologically support if necessary.

Some parents said that they volunteered and participated in the activities of the school, and teachers and some parents pointed out that some parents of the privileged contribute financially and intangibly to the celebrations, sports competitions, trips and activities organized by the school and provide some logistics and supplies. Therefore, teachers felt that these people must be involved in school decision-making processes.

The teachers asked for increasing awareness of the parents about the educational process, follow up the children homework, and keep up with the new curriculum, and follow-up projects implemented by the students, and emphasized on the need for cooperation between teacher and family. Teachers felt that the school administration and the Ministry of Education should look at the problems faced by teachers both financially and intangibly.

The teachers noted that the strategies of socio-emotional learning that are already implemented are focused on holding awareness meetings with parents on how to deal with their children and follow them, building remedial plans for students, and designing and publishing educational posters and brochures for parents in matters that should be followed up with students.

Teachers agreed that implementation strategies and policies that support students' social performance will reflect in classroom planning, motivation and encouragement of students, attention to individual differences and openness to all students, the dissemination of teamwork culture within the school and classroom, and creating safe discussion environments for students to express themselves. It will also encourage students to ask questions and exchange ideas and opinions, help the integration of students with each other and non-distinction between them, adopt methods of suspense and motivation and interest in humor and fun, resort to mutual teaching,





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and the implementation of workshops for teachers.

Teachers felt that the strategies that contribute to the promotion of socio-emotional learning should be based on forming remedial groups for students who are poorly supported (supportive or therapeutic education), their integration with excellent students, and the use of behavioral modification, reward and promotion techniques, and behavioral techniques such as the token economy. The teacher conducts competitions within the classroom for gifts. This requires the support and cooperation of several parties. The teacher should play the traditional role entrusted to him. He must be a monitor and supporter of the students. It is necessary to support the skills of the learners in the class by the teacher and cooperation with the parents and the students, and carry out targeted activities in the schoolyard, school announcement, as meaningful songs, theater, painting, seminars and workshops for parents to raise awareness in various fields.

The teachers pointed out that the outcomes of socio-emotional learning among students revolve around improving the level of academic achievement and sense of responsibility and improving the ability to understand and absorb lessons.

Teachers thought that effective social learning programs are opportunities for education based on individual and collective experience. Socio-emotional learning requires an environment that provides support from parents, school administrations, education directorates and the community. Socio-emotional learning is based on interaction between cognitive and emotional aspects, depends on the use of symbols, and socio-emotional learning is a valuable experience that requires the abandonment of obsolete values. It is a goal-oriented approach. It requires the participation of all concerned, and depends on the social interaction, and relations between individuals.



**Results related to the fourth question:**

**“Do the gender of the teacher, the region, the age, the grade that he teaches in, the place of residence, the civil status, and the years of service variables affect the attitudes of teachers in Area C in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip regarding the educational process?”**

To answer this question, the Seven Way ANOVA was used to compare the trends of teachers in C areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding the educational process in view of the levels of gender, region, age, grade, residence, civil status, and years of services. The following table shows the relevant results.

**Table (13): Results of the Seven Way ANOVA to compare the trends of teachers in C areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding the educational process in view of the levels of gender, region, age, grade, residence, civil status, and years of services**

Source of Variance	Sum of squares (SS)	Degrees of freedom (df)	Mean of squares (MS)	F	Sig
Region	1.570	1	1.570	11.505**	.001•
Gender	.009	1	.009•	.069•	.794•
Age	.218	3	.073•	.531•	.662•
Residence	.417	2	.208•	1.528	.225•
Civil status	.024	1	.024•	.178•	.675•
Grade	.816	8	.102•	.747•	.650•
Years of services	.434	3	.145•	1.060	.373•

**\*\*:** statically significant at ( $\alpha = 0.01$ )

It is clear from the results of the previous table that no independent variable affected the attitudes of teachers in Area C in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding the





educational process, except for the region variable. ( $F = 11.51$ ,  $\alpha < 0.01$ ) There is differences in teacher attitudes toward the educational process between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Therefore, the means and standard deviations were calculated and the differences between means were determined by region variable using the Independent Samples t-test. The following table shows the results for this:

**Table (14): Means, standard deviations and independent samples t-test results to examine the significance of the differences between means of the teacher attitudes regarding the educational process**

Domains	C area in the West Bank (N = 50)		Gaza Strip (N=50)		T	df	Sig
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation			
First	<u>4.27</u>	<u>0.33</u>	<u>3.81</u>	<u>0.68</u>	<u>**3.83</u>	98	0.000
Second	3.98	0.47	3.83	0.46	1.47	98	0.143
Third	4.19	0.52	4.01	0.56	1.45	98	0.150
Fourth	<u>3.00</u>	<u>1.07</u>	<u>1.99</u>	<u>0.71</u>	<u>**4.95</u>	98	0.000
Fifth	3.70	0.54	3.74	0.66	0.287-	98	0.775
Total	<u>3.93</u>	<u>0.26</u>	<u>3.60</u>	<u>0.43</u>	<u>4.15</u>	98	0.000

**\*\*:** statically significant at ( $\alpha = 0.01$ )

The previous table clarifies that the region variable played a role in the first domain, on the attitudes of the teacher regarding the students and the methods of dealing with them, the methods of managing the classroom environment, the methods of modifying the behavioral problems and the teacher's commitment to the ethics of the teaching profession, West Bank teachers got: mean was (4.27) and a standard deviation of (0.33). The teachers of the Gaza Strip: mean was (4.27) and a standard deviation of (0.68). The difference between the two means was statistically significant, Reaching ( $T = 3.83$ ,  $\alpha < 0.01$ ). In other words, the West Bank teachers 'assessment of their sensitivity to the socio-emotional aspects of the students' learning was higher



than that of the teachers in the Gaza Strip.

The region variable played a role in the fourth domain as well, which is the impact of the occupation practices on the educational process. The mean of the teachers in the West Bank was (3.00) and the standard deviation was (1.07). The teachers in the Gaza Strip got a mean of (1.99), with a standard deviation of (0.71). The difference between the two means was statistically significant, with a value of (4.95,  $\alpha < 0.01$ ), meaning that the West Bank teachers estimated the impact of the occupation practices on the educational process was greater than that of the teachers in the Gaza Strip.

The region variable affected the final score of teachers' attitudes toward the educational process. Mean for teachers in the West Bank was (3.93) and a standard deviation of (0.26). The teachers in the Gaza Strip got: mean (3.60) and a standard deviation of (0.43). The difference between the two means was statistically significant, with a value of ( $T = 4.15$ ,  $\alpha < 0.01$ ), the attitudes of the West Bank teachers to the educational process were better than those of the Gaza Strip teachers.

#### **Results related to the fifth question:**

**“Do the gender of the student, the region, the grade in which he studies and the place of residence variables affect the views of teachers in Area C in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding students?”**

In order to answer this question, the four-way ANOVA was used to compare the means of views of teachers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding students in light of students' gender, region, grade and place of residence. The following table shows the results.





**Table 15: Results of the Four Way ANOVA of the influences of students' gender, region, grade and residence on the views of teachers in Area C in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding students**

Domains	Source of Variance	Sum of squares (SS)	Degrees of freedom (df)	Mean of squares (MS)	F	Sig
First domain	Region	.029	1	.029	.247	.621
	Gender	.001	1	.001	.005	.944
	Residence	.218	2	.109	.935	.397
	Grade	.316	4	.079	.676	.611
Second domain	Region	.577	1	.577	3.733	.057
	Gender	.025	1	.025	.165	.686
	Residence	.089	2	.045	.288	.750
	Grade	.264	4	.066	.428	.788
Third domain	Region	1.386	1	1.386	1.230	.271
	Gender	.416	1	.416	.369	.545
	Residence	7.149	2	3.574	2.173	.068
	Grade	6.106	4	1.527	1.355	.258

It is clear from the results of the previous table that no independent variable affected the first domain, on the social skills of the students, or the second domain, which revolves around the behavioral problems of the students, or even the third domain, which is about students' social competence.

**Results related to the sixth question:**

**“Does the gender variable or the parent, age, the distance between home and school in meters, place of residence, educational level, working condition, basic means of transportation for the return and departure from school, family type, monthly**



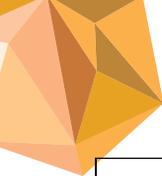
**household income in shekels and the main breadwinner in the households’ affect the views of parents in the (C) areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding the educational system?”**

In order to answer this question, the Multivariate Analysis (MVA) was used to compare the means of views of parents in C areas in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip regarding the educational system in light of gender, age, the distance between home and school in meters, place of residence, educational level, working condition, basic means of transportation for the return and departure from school, family type, monthly household income in shekels, and the main breadwinner in the households’

**Table 16: Results of MVA of effects of gender, age, the distance between home and school in meters, place of residence, educational level, working condition, basic means of transportation for the return and departure from school, family type, monthly household income in shekels, and the main breadwinner in the households on views of parents in the (C) areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding the educational system.**

Source of Variance	Sum of squares (SS)	Degrees of freedom (df)	Mean of squares (MS)	F	Sig
Gender	.001	1	.001	.003	.957
Region	.303	1	.303	1.716	.196
Age	.632	3	.211	1.193	.322
distance	.494	3	.165	.932	.432
Residence	.189	2	.095	.536	.588
Educational Level	.091	4	.023	.129	.971
Transportation Mean	1.085	4	.271	1.536	.206
Family Type	.682	3	.227	1.288	.288
Monthly Income	.080	2	.040	.226	.799





main breadwinner	.055	2	.028	.156	.856
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It is clear from the results of the previous table that no independent variable affected the total score of the views of the parents in Area C in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding the educational system.

## Discussion and Conclusion

- The effect of the social desirability factor on the responses of teachers and parents has been demonstrated in quantitative research results. This effect has been demonstrated by the same quantitative and qualitative research results. As noted previously, the self-report questionnaires method often leads to individuals distorting their answers because of social desirability. The results of qualitative study indicated that the requirements of socio-emotional learning include; teachers understanding of the Developmental characteristics of students and their feelings and emotions, the need to integrate methods related to encourage the emotional aspects in the educational process, the rehabilitation of teachers in relation to emotional and social learning, the curriculum activities related to the development of socio-emotional learning, the need to communicate with the family of the student and sense the psychological needs, and the role of counsellors that must be strengthened in schools. This comes under the umbrella of effective and conscious school administrations for the assets of socio-emotional learning.
- Despite the claim of teachers and parents that they communicate to achieve better educational outcomes, students suffer from behavioral problems and nearly half of them lack social competence, teachers and parents, despite the positive features they claim to have, couldn't reduce behavioral problems and increase the social competence of students.
- The teachers estimated the impact of the occupation practices on the educational



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process in a moderate way. The study sample came from two different regions. While the teachers in the West Bank in Area C jostle the Israeli occupation authorities and the settlers and their strongholds, they see the arrests and repression and tell the threat directly compared to what it is. The situation in the Gaza Strip, which is targeted by the occupation by shelling and there is no direct contact with the occupation forces, and this made the teachers do not agree on one opinion on the impact of the occupation authorities on the educational process, and found through the quantitative study that the West Bank teachers estimate the impact of the occupation on the educational process was greater than that of the teachers in the Gaza Strip. The focus groups focused on the occupation practices, which affect the efficiency of the teachers and the performance of the students, from persecution, intimidation, violence and oppression.

- The results of the study indicated the need to improve the social and economic situation of the student and teacher, and strengthen the school environment and facilities and the expansion of classrooms, supporting the school environment, as well as the need to change negative stereotypes about teachers.
- Teachers and parents pointed out that the challenges of socio-emotional learning are the economic and political aspects, the accumulation of classrooms, the security situation (repeated Israeli shelling of the Gaza Strip, settler attacks and the Israeli army, roadblocks, raids, killings and arrests in the West Bank).
- The results of the qualitative study indicate that there is a lack of basic needs of students from the educational materials and infrastructure of their schools, and the reluctance of school administrations to provide entertainment and extracurricular activities, which develop the socio-emotional aspects of the learners. Teachers complained about the psychological pressure on them by the parents, and the inferiority of the perception of the teacher, whether by students or some parents. Parents complained about the size of the psychological pressure on them and the nature of the duties assigned to them, which limits their



interaction and cooperation with teachers and the school. Teachers complained that students did not focus on classes as a result of anxiety, fear, nightmares and a sense of threat.

- The views of teachers in Area C in the West Bank and Gaza Strip toward students differed. While some teachers held positive views, others held negative. They agreed that students have moderate levels of desired skills, as co-ordinate, self-control and self-affirmation, and half of them lack social competence.
- Teachers noted that students suffer from some behavioral problems that require follow-up and treatment, and that students have a modest amount of academic competencies that appear in their academic achievement in various subjects.
- Parents noted that the impact of the practices of the Israeli occupation is clear in the process and progress of education and despite the poor security and political conditions, the Palestinian family continues to provide parental care and provide a positive family atmosphere for children.
- It was found that no independent variables affected the attitudes of teachers in Area C in the West Bank and Gaza Strip regarding the educational process, except for the region variable. The West Bank teachers 'assessment of their sensitivity to the socio-emotional aspects of the students' education was greater than Gaza Strip teachers'.
- The results showed that teachers in the West Bank are superior to teachers in the Gaza Strip in having positive attitudes toward students and regarding the educational process, the management of the classroom environment and the use of teaching methods, and the methods of modifying behavioral problems and their commitment to the ethics of the teaching profession.
- Teachers in the West Bank estimated the impact of the occupation practices on the educational process to a greater degree than the teachers in the Gaza Strip.



## Recommendations

- In order to improve socio-emotional learning, teachers, counsellors, curriculum, and school administrations must be targeted. Teachers and counselors should be subject to specialized rehabilitation courses, and activities should be integrated into the curriculum to promote socio-emotional learning, such as extracurricular activities and methods such as:
  - Teaching by play.
  - Teaching by using music and songs.
  - Teaching by storytelling (novelist).
  - Promoting the skills of children such as drawing and sports.
  - Focusing on building the personality of children by teaching them methods and life skills.
  - Emphasizing the integration of values and good citizenship in the education.
  - Enhancing the skills of acceptance and respect differences with others among children.
- In addition to providing more objective measuring questionnaires to identify the mental and developmental levels of children, such as the provision of questionnaires and tests based on play and drawing in the detection of the level of knowledge in children.
- Awareness of school administrations must be raised to understand the nature of their roles in emotional and social learning, The Ministry of Higher Education is responsible for the preparation of special curricula for socio-emotional learning, workshops and training courses to enhance socio-emotional learning through partnership with private institutions dealing with





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human development issues to transfer expertise to the Ministry of Education. Counsellors must be trained in socio-emotional learning programs.

- The study recommends the need to raise awareness of teachers and parents on the challenges and difficulties of the educational process. Teachers and parents need to be provided with ways and strategies to modify students' behavior, reduce behavioral problems and raise their social competences.
- Teachers and parents alike need training programs to improve their ability to manage the psychological stress, especially resulting from the practices of the occupation, especially parents and teachers in the West Bank, from north to south.
- The study recommends the need to improve the social and economic situation of the student and teacher, strengthen the school environment and facilities, expand the classroom walls or add other classes and provide logistical support for the school environment. In addition to the need to change negative stereotypes about teachers.
- The study recommends the need to compensate for the shortage of basic needs of students from educational materials and infrastructure for schools, and to pay school departments to provide recreational activities and extracurricular activities, which develop the socio-emotional aspects of learners, and the need to improve the relationship between teachers and parents, and reduce the perception of inferiority suffered by the teacher, whether by students or some parents.



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## Final Reflection

- In reality, empirical evidence discussed throughout this study frames a compelling argument for the urgent need to teach SEL competencies that will support children in the development of skills needed to become productive, well-adjusted, and happy adults. Observations of changes in behavior by students and increased mental health concerns were the driving force behind the research. Daily challenges faced by students triggered the researcher, which created a sense of urgency to help students, staff, and the greater school community foster strategies to decrease these challenges.
- Understanding teachers' and parents' beliefs and examining classroom environments and the home-to-school connections provided a first-hand glimpse into teacher and parent priorities, needs, and requirements, with results that will drive programming, professional development, and a firm commitment to the implementation of socio-emotional learning practices at school.





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