

ARAB STUDENTS AT FIVE OKLAHOMA INSTITUTIONS
OF HIGHER EDUCATION: A STUDY OF
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

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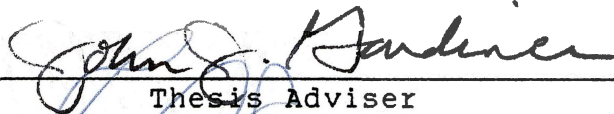
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IN THE NAME OF GOD, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL,
PRAISE BE TO GOD, THE CHERISHER AND
SUSTAINER OF THE WORLDS

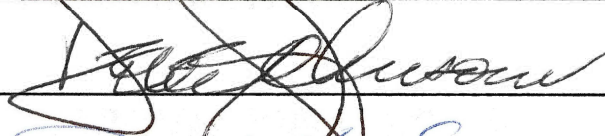
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The rationale for conducting the study is considered. It is divided into the following sections: (1) demographic considerations of international students in United States colleges and universities; (2) statement of the problem; (3) purpose of the study; (4) need for the study; (5) definitions of terms; and (6) limitations of the study.

President John F. Kennedy, speaking at a 1961 White House reception for international students, made the following observations:

I want to tell you what a pleasure it is and honor it is for us that you have chosen to come and study in the United States. You represent, really, the seed for your country ... when you go back you will become among the future leaders of your country. I am confident that in other days the president of the U.S. will be visited by presidents and other leaders of their countries, who are now studying here and who will, I hope, have gotten a better understanding not only of our country and its aspirations, but also of the meaning of a free society. (Overseas, P. 5)

Wells (1964) emphasized America's role and responsibility toward other countries when he stated:

We [Americans] have a responsibility now, to share our wealth. But when we welcome foreign students to our institutions, we also bear other responsibilities- to give these students an education that is in the highest traditions of American scholarship, to pay attention to their special needs, to try to make sure that in coming the long distances to this country from their own

they are not wasting valuable time by being inadequately prepared and poorly guided (p. vi).

The pursuit of learning beyond the boundaries of one's own community, nation, or culture is as old as learning itself. It stems from the human inclination for curiosity and adventure. It also reflects the ability of human beings to communicate with each other at a variety of levels and with varying levels of sophistication across the barriers of social particularities, to communicate with other cultures and learn beyond their own limited environment and culture (Cieslak, 1955). Several countries encourage foreign students to come and study at their colleges and universities; the United States is one of them.

However, students who go abroad for part of their education have an enormous variety of new experiences. These experiences have a tremendous impact on both the students and their countries. Like any other students, Arab students are engaged in developing knowledge and new techniques in their field of study. Being in a foreign country allows them also to learn about a new culture, a new language, and a different way of doing things.

Arab students, in particular, may view their study in America as an opportunity for personal growth and maturity and as an enrichment of their understanding of other people and customs. Experiencing another country also helps to broaden their perspective on international

affairs. However, many countries encourage their young people to study in America because they find that American professional training is excellent in specific fields. The students who return home with an American degree often occupy important positions, and they apply their experience and training to their fields back home. They often are able to bring about improvements in their fields and thus enhance the welfare of their nation.

There are more international students enrolled each year in American colleges and universities than in those of any other country in the world (Open Doors, 1989). Walton (1971) postulated that the number of foreign students in the United States was increasing because some nations encouraged their students to study and be trained in the United States.

Current Population of International Students

In recent years, international students have represented an increasingly significant percentage of those enrolled in American universities. Statistics on foreign students in the United States show dramatic growth in the number of international students; the total foreign enrollment in the 1988/89 academic year was 366,350 students, and they came from more than one hundred and twenty-two countries (Chronicle of Higher Education Oct. 26, 1989: A 40).

According to figures published in The Chronicle of Higher Education, there were 6,673 foreign students studying in Oklahoma colleges and universities during the 1988/1989 academic year. Information obtained from the Oklahoma State University International Office indicated that in the fall, 1989 semester, there were 1,417 international students, and in the fall, 1990 semester, there were 1,433, representing eighty-six countries, enrolled at the university; 135 of these were Arab students, representing 17 Arab countries.

Several studies have shown that foreign students face unique problems compared to native students (Akpan- iquot, 1980; Andalib, 1975; Mograbi, 1966; Santos, 1959). Unlike American students, foreign students who come from different language and cultural backgrounds often lack English language proficiency (Adelegam, 1985; Akpan- iquot, 1980; Melies, 1982; Moghrabi, 1972). Thus, the language barrier is a major problem in the academic experiences of foreign students, especially if they are from countries that speak an official language other than that of the host country. Language proficiency is an absolute necessity, since many situations at school require great proficiency in the English language: class discussions, term papers, taking notes, comprehension of lectures, examinations, and class assignments (Anderson, 1985; Johnson, 1971).

In addition to coping with the language barrier, foreign students are faced with extensive cultural barriers as well.

They have to overcome many obstacles to be successful academically in the United States. Confirming the challenge of language and cultural barriers for international students, Heikinheimo and Shute (1986) asserted that the command of written-spoken English is the first problem all foreign students encounter. American teaching strategies, which are totally different from what foreign students are accustomed to, are the second major problem. Millies (1982) further stated that finance, orientation, social personal relations, the English language, and the living and dining services are the most salient problems foreign students face in the United States.

Arab students, in particular, have special problems because they usually do not come from the small nuclear family which is so typical of American life. Arabs grow up in the large network of the extended family. This extensive social network is an integral part of their everyday life at home. Family gatherings and visits are made to console a sick member, offer support, share in the happiness of others, or simply for the pleasure of company (Melies, 1982; Rodinson, 1981).

Rodinson (1981) stated that "a family for Arabs is the basic unit of all social relations. Grouped in an economic unit around the father, who is the leader, are his male descendants and their wives and children, living together in several nuclear families" (P. 149).

Related to this upbringing, Arab students are highly

contextual; they want to develop feelings about other persons and to make an effective assessment before beginning to deal with cognitive matters. Because of these affiliations and needs, and because of the significance of body movement and eye contact in establishing trust, Arabs tend to be more oriented to the verbal message than to the written one. This cultural orientation carries over into education and can have an obvious effect on the Arab student who comes to the U.S. to study (Hamady, 1960; Melies, 1982). Racy (1970) added that kinship and the extended family are the central, the most durable, and the most influential social institutions in the Middle Eastern countries.

Statement of the Problem

Arab students face significant challenges in their attempts to achieve academic success in American colleges and universities. They strive to reach and fulfill the goals and dreams that they came to accomplish. The subject to be investigated in this study was the academic achievement of Arab students studying at five selected Oklahoma institutions of higher education and the following factors: age, marital status, period of time a student studied English prior to coming to the United States, financial support, the American teaching strategies, English language proficiency, American customs, and culture and interpersonal relationships.

Research Questions

The review of literature covered a wide array of problems encountered by international students in the United States. Arab students, in particular, have faced several problems. These problems, needs, and concerns tend to vary from the early days of arrival of the Arab student to the last days before his or her departure. It has not been established whether the problems become less severe with the passage of time, change from academic classification to another or from one age group to another; whether the problems tend to differ from one institution to another. The following questions were examined and analyzed:

1. How do Arab students' academic performance differ according to age and academic classification--graduate and undergraduate?
2. How does the performance of married Arab students' differ from that of single Arab students?
3. How do Arab students who have studied English for a longer time prior to their coming to the U.S. perform relative to those who have studied English for a shorter period of time?
4. How do finances affect Arab students' academic achievement?
5. How do the American teaching strategies affect the academic performance of Arab students?
6. How does English language proficiency affect

the academic achievement of Arab students?

7. How does American culture and interpersonal relationship with Americans affect the academic achievement of Arab students?

Purpose of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are:

- (1) To describe factors affecting Arab students and hindering their academic achievement while attending Oklahoma institutions of higher education.
- (2) To consider possible ways to improve the academic achievement of Arab students studying at American colleges and universities.
- (3) To provide accurate data concerning Arab students studying at American universities to the agencies and companies that sponsor and support Arab students while studying at American universities.

Need For the Study

In the last two decades, several thousand Arab students received their advanced academic education or training at institutions of higher learning located in countries other than their own. These individuals represent an important segment of today's leadership and management cadres in the Arab world (El Ray, 1988). Among these individuals, considerable numbers chose to study in the United States of America, specifically in Oklahoma

institutions of higher education. The question of the academic achievement of these students is important not only for the students themselves, but also for the schools which they attend, and for both the government of the United States and the governments of the Arab countries.

It is hoped, therefore, that Arab governments and official leaders will use the results of this study to reduce the problems of future Arab students desiring to embark on a course of study in the US. It is hoped that both American and Arab administrators will determine and postulate strategies that will help in reducing these problems.

The researcher hopes that this study will be a milestone on the road to a longer and more extensive and comprehensive study of this subject for the benefit of both the Arab students and their countries. This study therefore limits its focus on the earlier stated factors which seem to have the most important effect on the academic achievement of Arab students.

The population of this study was all Arab students-- graduate and undergraduate-- who, at the time it was done, were studying at five selected Oklahoma institutions of higher education. Previous research on international students seldom concentrated on Arab students. There is a definite need, therefore, for a study of this nature, and its findings should be useful to future planners of programs which involve Arab students.

Furthermore, the few studies which have investigated the overall situation of Arab students studying at American institutions of higher education are now out of date and do not necessarily reflect the present situation and condition of Arab students. There is, therefore, a significant need for research in this area to provide objective data regarding the problems of Arab students, with a view to planning adequately the realistic services which would meet their special needs.

Definitions of Terms

Foreign Student/International Student: These terms are used interchangeably. They identify a citizen of another country pursuing his/her education in the schools of the United States.

Arab Student: Refers to an international student in the USA whose native language is Arabic.

Academic Achievement: The words achievement and success are used interchangeably to refer to academic success as measured in terms of Grade Point Average (GPA) as indicated by the student in the semester the study took place.

Grade Point Average (GPA): A measurement of academic achievement. It is determined on the basis of semester hours. Academic records are A, B, C, D, and F which are given values as follows: A= 4, B= 3, C= 2, D= 1, F= 0.

American teaching strategies: Refers to the

American ways of teaching including use of course plans, instructional methods, and examination procedures.

Cross-Cultural Education: The process of learning and adjustment which occurs when an individual travels for the purpose of obtaining an education in a culturally foreign environment. With the intention of the student to return to his/her country after a limited time period.

Cultural Shock: Emotional and intellectual withdrawal as a response to the stress caused by the sudden placement in an environment where the gratification of physical and psychological needs is uncertain and unpredictable as expressed by feelings of isolation, loneliness, anxiety, confusion, and apathy may be present.

English language proficiency: Term which is operationally defined by the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score obtained by the student prior to his/her admission to the institution.

Interpersonal Relationship: Refers to degree of positiveness of the relationships developed between Arab students and American students as expressed by responses. It thus refers to the Arab students' ability to cope with American cultural norms.

Graduate Student: Refers to a student who is pursuing a Master's or Doctoral degree.

Undergraduate Student: Refers to a student who is pursuing a baccalaureate degree.

Limitations of the Study

This research study was limited to the perceptions of Arab students who were studying at five of Oklahoma's institutions for higher education in the fall of 1989. One cannot, therefore, safely generalize the results of this study to all other colleges and universities in the U.S., as there might be factors other than those identified in this study which play a crucial role in the academic achievement of Arab students. Follow up interviews on the five campuses were used to performed and helped establish self-perceptions and focus issues and concerns.

This study was limited to Arab students whose names and addresses appeared in the registrars' records in the Fall of 1989 for each of the five institutions included in the study: (1) Oklahoma State University (OSU); (2) the University of Oklahoma (OU); (3) Central State University (CSU); (4) Oklahoma City University (OCU); and (5) University of Tulsa (TU).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of studies concerning international students in general and Arab students in particular. The following pages give the reader a brief glance at problems encountered by both Arab and non Arab international students studying at American colleges and universities. Results and findings from previous studies and research in the area under consideration are emphasized.

Students going abroad to study is not a new development; it reaches back to the fourth century B.C. The city of Alexandria, Egypt, was one of the first international centers of learning; the Library and Museum were established there in 332 B.C. The exchange of ideas which took place between Rome and Athens continues to influence modern education. As the conquests of Rome and Greece brought an exchange of ideas among several nations and as this exchange of ideas among nations continues to influence modern education, so did the Jihad, or holy wars, prescribed by Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him. Speakman (1966) explained:

The jihad brought the Arabisation of many lands and the exchange of ideas between the Islamic and Christian civilizations. The influence of the Arab conquests on education contributed to the important transmission of Greek philosophy to the West through the transmission of the Arabian commentaries on Aristotle and Plato made by

Avicenna and Averroes to the scholars in Spain and Sicily (p. 9).

Speakman's statement showed that Arabs had a long history and deep respect for knowledge. They always strived to diffuse and disseminate knowledge wherever they stayed and settled. Arabs, since the beginning of their conquests, paid great attention and respect to scholars. Arab rulers encouraged their people to get education and seek knowledge even if they had to travel hundreds of miles for it. "Seek knowledge even in China" is a widely known proverb all over the Arab world.

Foreign students come to the United States to acquire knowledge and skills that are of prime importance to the progress of their home countries. Being exposed to few American ways of living, behaving, and thinking, foreign students often face a number of problems of adjustment. In addition, they also share the need experienced by U.S. students to resolve personal problems, which is essential to successful adjustment.

DuBois (1965) listed four factors which encourage students to come and study at American institutions: "For general culture enrichment, broadening of horizons, and extension of personality; for bona fide academic credit; for specialized education either in languages, social studies, or both; for gaining international understanding" (p. 11).

Burn (1985) noted that students who study abroad tend to be more ambitious, independent, and intellectually

critical than students who do not. According to Burn, students who study abroad are demanding of themselves and of their higher education institutions, want international content and perspectives in their education, and aspire to careers in international fields (p.48-49).

Adelegan & Parks (1985) expanded on our understanding of the problems that foreign students face. They have reported some of these problems as follows: a) academic problems, including program relevance, academic performance, and familiarity with the American educational system; b) interpersonal problems, including relationships with the opposite sex, discrimination, and communication; c) financial problems, including transfer of funds, living costs, and restrictions on employment; d) psychological problems, including homesickness, separation from family and friends, depression, irritability, tiredness, and alcohol consumption; e) food problems, including preparing and consuming American foods and obtaining familiar foods and ingredients for preparation of traditional meals of the home country; and f) climate problems, including both systematic body adjustment and the selection and purchase of appropriate clothing (p. 405).

Porter (1962) completed a study aimed at determining whether international students' problems at Washington State University could be generalized from the problems of international students reported in literature elsewhere. He found that there was a significant difference between the

scores of international and American students; undergraduate students encountered more problems than did graduate students; and international students who did not speak English as a first preference encountered more problems than did those who did speak English as a first preference.

Hamlin (1970) reported in her study some interesting findings. The study was designed to determine the academic achievement of international students enrolled at that institution. The results suggested that international students proficient in English and with solid and strong academic backgrounds achieved the greatest academic success. Those who had few credit hours generally had better grade point averages, and those students from the same country who lived together were less successful than were other foreign students.

A study conducted by Heikinheimo & Shute (1986) showed the areas which foreign students identified as requiring adaptation and adjustment included language skills, academic issues, cultural differences, racial discrimination, and social interaction with Americans.

Hull (1978) also conducted a comprehensive study concerning foreign students studying in the United States. He studied several variables that he believed affected the success and failure of the international students. Among these variables were the academic, the age, motivation, the contact, duration of sojourn, and the origin variable.

Hull found that in order to achieve success

academically, foreign students must have sufficient English ability, adequate financing, a conscientious teaching staff, and access to facilities that are available to assist them.

As a young woman from West Germany emphasized:

It is very important to feel sure in the language. It is hard for foreign students who cannot speak and act spontaneously and who cannot express their thoughts accurately. They need encouragement and attention from Americans. Foreign students should try to find good American friends, and they often need more courage to do the first step into deeper relationships (P. 37).

There is no question that proficiency in reading and writing of English is vitally important in the successful performance of college work by foreign students. Cieslak (1955) observed that many foreign students did not make a satisfactory adjustment to academic work because of their lack of proficiency in the English language.

Clarke (1976) and Brown (1986) discussed both English proficiency and cultural factors in their articles that supported the idea that they are potentially stressful for international students. Clarke presented a theoretical perspective of second language learning which explains cross-cultural problems in terms of conflicting definitions of reality. He noticed that individuals in a strange environment were perceived to be in a constant state of tension, a necessary precursor to action aimed at solving a problem; if, however, the problem is not solved, the difficulties experienced by the individual are compounded by the unresolved tension.

Klineberg and Hull (1979) found that additional possible

difficulties arose in connection with the international students' problems studying in the United States of America, besides adapting to life in a new environment and financial difficulties: experiences of prejudice and discrimination, and lack of satisfactory contact or of the establishment of friendly relations. All of these problems may create serious obstacles to a satisfactory adjustment. They pointed out that foreign students in the United States might be having as many difficulties with the values of the home culture as with the values of the new or host culture (P. 96).

Klineberg and Hull (1979) have studied the problem of culture shock, a term denoting patterns of behavior which differ from one culture to another, which may cause misunderstanding and even conflict, and which may result in embarrassment as a consequence of failure to recognize and understand the meaning of the "cues" to emotional and interpersonal reactions. This behavior may affect many aspects of social life, including male-female relationships, food habits and table manners, personal status, politics, national pride, and the nature and meaning of friendship (P. 30-31).

One of the interesting results of the experiment was that 60 percent of the American students in the study indicated that their attitudes toward foreign students had changed positively. Foreign students who participated in the study also reported that their feelings toward the American students had been positively affected. The

researcher, therefore, concluded that attitudes of American university and college students toward foreign students could be altered through group involvement methods.

O'Malley et al (1985) provided a solution to overcoming culture shock as quickly as possible: become acquainted with the people of the host country. This could not meet with any success without knowing the language, for language is the principal symbolic system of communication. Even though learning a new language is difficult, particularly for adults, skills in speaking other people's language may be improved by using adequate learning strategies. (557-584).

Moreover, Dillard and Chisolm (1983) examined whether the culture differences of many foreign students on university campuses in the United States affect the behavior of these students within and outside of the counseling relationship. The authors reported that unlike American students who first experience college life, many foreign students encounter tremendous cultural shock once they enter the United States and engage themselves in campus activities. They experience differences in climate, food, social values, modes of behavior, and verbal and nonverbal communication. These experiences often cause the students to lose their personal cultural identity. The report stated that although most foreign students have been academically successful in their home lands, many experience new and stressful academic pressures on college campuses in the

United States. According to Chu, et al. (1971), most foreign students in the United States place a high priority on academic adjustment and view interpersonal happiness as a social accessory (p. 101-102).

Other investigations also indicated that international students did not frequent counseling services for stress-oriented problems. For instance, Porter (1979) conducted a survey in two residence halls at Oklahoma State University to assess the needs for the counseling of thirty-five South American students studying at Oklahoma State University. The study revealed that international students who seek assistance may very well depend on their adherence to their native values as opposed to American values. Counselors' lack of knowledge of the international effects on that culture and value orientations on client behavior may certainly limit the effectiveness of the cross-cultural counseling process (P.102).

In 1976, the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA) set forth guidelines to recognize foreign students' academic difficulties. The English language deficiency was considered as the first difficulty affecting the academic success of a foreign student. Others were inadequate study methods, and preparations for studies and living. Therefore, the report asserted that international students should have reduced course loads, English language training, extra allotted time to finish examinations, and substitution of essay-type examinations for objective

examinations in compensation for their linguistic handicaps.

Shana'a (1979) reported that although the international student could pass English language tests, it is possible for him or her to sit through a class session without understanding lectures because of different forms of American dialects and idioms. Besides, the writer argued that a foreign student may understand the material being tested but still may fail an examination because of tension. In some cultures, periodic examinations are not important. An international student could fail periodic examinations without paying much attention to them because in his country it is the final examination that really counts. The researcher suggested a detailed orientation on this problem by college and university authorities.

Heikinheimo & Shute (1986) stated that lack of language proficiency might cause foreign students to avoid mixing with local people. The researchers reported that half of the international students who do not have American friends assumed the language problem as the most serious problem they experienced in their social life. On the other hand, isolated students reported the academic problem as a major and significant problem that was caused by their poor English skills(p. 405).

Addou (1989) found similarly that one of the major causes of the foreign students' failure was English deficiency. Other causes were lack of motivation, wrong

choices of academic fields, and cultural differences between the students' own culture and Americans'.

A study conducted by Pavri (1963) investigated the academic achievement of 319 international graduate students at the University of Virginia. She found that there was no significant difference in academic achievement among men and women. Younger students tended to be less successful, and married students living with their families performed better academically than those who lived temporary separated from them.

Another study conducted by Michigan State University on the language and related problems of international students, particularly during their period of adjustment to the academic program of the university, was reported by William Schwab in 1956. Questionnaires were sent to 194 MSU students for whom English was a second language. A supplementary survey was made of 1,361 faculty members. The faculty survey yielded information on specific problems, needs, and means of assisting more effectively the increasing number of international students at the university.

The surveys revealed that both students and faculty members confirmed the presence of communication problems between international students and native speakers, that there was a need for a systematic language training for those whose academic program required competence in English, and that there was an extremely marked reaction by international students with respect to multiple choice and true-false types

of examinations.

The faculty questionnaire brought to light four additional problems: (a) excessive claims by some international students on the instructor's time for help with problems which could better be handled by persons trained in language teaching; (b) a tendency for some students to use language difficulties as a cloak to hide other weaknesses which are more fundamental in nature; (c) the unsystematic ways of identifying foreign students at the beginning of a term; and (d) the absence of systematic ways of exchanging information about practices in, as well as suggestions for, handling language and other problems of foreign students.

On the basis of the findings Schwab reported the following conclusions: (1) language problems of foreign students are not always confined to linguistic expression. They involve other areas as well; (2) the failure of communication can be attributed to cultural differences; and (3) the most important finding emerging from entire survey was that effective language training must include the resources of linguistic science.

Moreover, Shana'a stated that the international students' choice of academic majors, selecting electives and planning a comprehensive program leading to timely graduation may pose a problem for those students who come from countries where students do not have much choices to choose among alternatives. The reporter suggested that academic advisers need patience and full understanding of

an international student's problem so that they can help these types of students.

Meloni (1986) stated that many studies have been carried out to determine the major problems faced by international students. Individual characteristics can also account for some of the problems students encounter. Meloni asserted that most studies agree that homesickness seems to rank as the most serious personal problem.

Ellakany (1970) did a predictive study of 454 foreign students at Iowa State University during the academic year 1969-1970. The researcher selected factors of sex, age, language, field of study, marital status, years of duration in the United States, years of English study, and source of financial support to be used as predictors of academic achievement. Marital status and native language were found to be significant at both levels. The marital status and the native language of the graduate showed significance.

Zainuddin (1974) studied factors affecting the academic achievement of Malaysian students at Louisiana State University. His major findings indicated that Malaysian students with a grade point average of 3.18 had a fairly successful academic performance. Students who were enrolled at the University more than one year could adjust to the social and academic environments. Thus, they had a higher grade point average than the students who were enrolled at the university less than one year.

Ranking next after homesickness are problems related to

finances, housing, and food. Hull (1978) reported these problems as the most emphasized ones by international students. Sergent et al (1989) has identified some major problems that confront foreign students during their sojourn in the United States. Financial difficulties stem from the relatively high cost of education and the high cost of living in the United States. They observed that actual costs of colleges and universities are usually much higher than estimated costs given by college and university officials who correspond with foreign students before their arrival.

Many foreign students reported several major academic problems that affect their academic achievement, such as English language proficiency, understanding lectures, participating in class discussions, and preparing written and oral reports. Social problems usually mentioned are American social customs, making friends, and being accepted by social groups (Kaplan, 1986).

Okine (1975), investigated some aspects of the socio-cultural problems foreign students encountered during the course of their studies at George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, Tennessee. The five top-most, socio-cultural problems in order of priority were: "lack of effective communication," "linguistic barriers," "high cost of living," "finances," and "general mannerisms and lifestyle." The study found that the reason that most international students at George Peabody College encountered problems discussed earlier was because they did not spend a

sufficient amount of time learning about the American way of life and culture prior to coming to the United States.

Lesser (1963) studied the cultural adjustment of international students studying at American colleges and universities. He found that the student first engages in a "spectator phase" after he arrives in the United States. During this period he is essentially a tourist and is not forced to face the problems that he will later have to meet. In the second stage he becomes involved in several activities either on the campus or outside the campus, and this is termed the "adaptive phase." During this phase, the researcher stressed, the international students might withdraw, feel depressed, and develop negative attitudes and feelings toward the United States.

Michell (1962) studied the problems other than English language deficiency that affect the academic achievement of international students. He found that the Asian students were faced with greater adjustment problems than the Latin American students. He attributed these findings to the fact that English language proficiency of international students varied according to language backgrounds or home countries.

Schram and Lauver (1988) reported that many foreign students experience a painful period of adjustment. Some characteristics of this period are identified as hostility, vulnerability, loneliness, loss of identity, helplessness, desire for dependence, fear, bewilderment, and alienation. These characteristics were reported as well by Dillard and

Chisolm (1983) . Burbach (1972) defined alienation as including three elements: (a) feelings of powerlessness; (b) feelings of meaninglessness; and (c) social estrangement.

In the same vein, Alexander et al. (1981) reported that international students who have a high amount of social contact with host country nationals are apt to report more satisfaction with their sojourn abroad. Hull (1978) stressed Alexander's idea of the need for social contact with host country nationals. He reported that interaction and contact between foreign students in the United States and Americans is a vital and positive thing in itself. Other research has taken that notion even further and has assumed that interaction and contact would also increase positive attitudes between people from different ethnic groups. Owie (1982) did not find any relationship between alienation and gender, other researchers proposed that female students were more apt to report more problems adjusting to life abroad than their male counterparts.

Chi and Shivananda (1969) studied the "seriousness" of the language barrier and the comparative English language proficiency of international students. They found that the language problem was more serious for the Chinese students than those from India, Africa, Latin America, and Arab countries.

Speakman (1966) reported that language has been a major problem for international students in American universities. Personal problems, such as loneliness, anxiety, and

disappointments were the second major problem international students encounter. Several researchers, such as Helms, (1978), Parker (1986), and Skinner (1977), emphasized that differences between the foreign students' native culture and American culture is a salient issue that may be difficult for foreign students to resolve and that is closely linked to academic success. The stress of cultural shift and its resulting effect on the academic performance of foreign students has been addressed in a number of studies. For example, Kahne (1976) asserted that the personal difficulties suffered by foreign students are due to a number of causes; among them are misinformation, misunderstanding, erroneous stereotyping, and lack of consideration and respect on the part of Americans. In addition, the adaptation and acculturation problems of foreign students were often attributed to problems with language competence, differences in customs and values, and unfamiliarity with cultural cues.

Maxwell (1974) discussed some of the problems faced by international students who studied at American colleges and universities. She studied students' note taking problems, reading assignments, writing term papers, taking exams, understanding examination questions, understanding lectures, etc. She reported, "An Asian student writing an argumentative paper may have a lot of trouble since his/her background requires him/her to defer to authority and discourages forthright expression" (p. 304).

Willard (1973) studied problems perceived by

international students enrolled in public junior colleges in Illinois and compared these problems with problems of international students enrolled in a public university in Illinois. He found that the problems perceived were significantly different in the "sub-scales of financial aid, health services and English language" (p. 1662-A). He also reported that problems perceived by international students who have been on campus less than twelve months were not significantly different from the problems perceived by international students who have been on campus twelve months or longer.

Willard concluded that previous knowledge of English affected students' views of English as the most significant problem encountered by international students. He noted: "International students who speak English as a language of first preference perceived problems significantly different from international students who do not speak English as a language of first preference" (p. 1662-A).

Another set of problems lies in the uniqueness of the United States teaching strategies. The American university teaching strategies are different from that which foreign students are accustomed to in their home countries. They found themselves suddenly transplanted from a type of education which stress memorization and passive participation to one which emphasizes less memorization and more participation.

About this point, Sanders (1963) reported what

international students thought of the American teaching strategies. He wrote that a student from North Africa said: "We students from Africa come to the United States with an educational background different from that of the American student. We find ourselves suddenly transplanted from a type of education which emphasized intensive studies to one which emphasizes extensive studies. Immediately we find ourselves overwhelmed with class assignments; too much is covered in a relatively short time. We find to our surprise that many American university officials know little about educational systems outside the United States" (P. 7).

A study conducted by Salimi (1977) revealed that international students had psychiatric needs. To evaluate the psychiatric needs of international students, the counselor was asked to list the problems most commonly met by these students. They were language difficulty, rapid tempo of life in the United States, standard of education at Harvard, visa and employment regulations, unfavorable political conditions in their home countries, and differences in climate, food, and social customs.

Regarding Arab students, however, there are only a few studies which have been conducted in this area, and there is very little literature explaining the Arab mind to the American or explaining the American mind to Arabs.

Suleiman (1983) stated that until this century "very few Americans came in contact with Arabs. American views

of Arabs were primarily based on their reading of European accounts about the Middle East and its people" (pp. 377-344). Nevertheless, the researcher attempted to find relevant and sufficient articles, books, and researchers who studied and investigated the Arab students' problems as fairly and impartially as possible.

The Institute of International Education (1987) reported that over 40,000 Arabs are enrolled in colleges and universities in the United States (P. 12). Arab students come to pursue advanced or specialized education not available in their home countries; or considered inferior.

Hamady (1960) reported that wherever Arabic is in common usage, the people who speak it share a fund of common ideas- religious, social, and intellectual. The Arabic language is one of the oldest languages and it is the strongest bond among Arabs. The beauty and rhythm of the Arabic language stir the Arabs and inspire awe and wonder.

Afaaf Meleis (1982) noted that education in the Arab world held a great deal of importance as the key to modernization, the door to achieving better status, the means for development, and the promise for improvement. For many Arab students and their families there is an added dimension. As part of this idea Meleis reported: "to achieve a Western degree epitomizes the dream of many and to come to the U.S. is the golden opportunity that most Arab students dream of" (P. 439).

Story (1982) stated that more Arab students, trainees,

and visitors were coming to the U.S., just as more Americans were visiting Arab countries. These Arab students indicated that they had problems not only concerning education and that they had problems not only concerning education and teaching strategies that were unfamiliar to them, but also concerning the lifestyle that was quite different from that to which they were accustomed.

Regarding American teaching strategies, Racy (1970) noted that Arab students in the U.S. were handicapped by differences between American teaching methods and Arab teaching methods. According to Racy, there are two characteristics of the American educational program that particularly influence students' performances: differences in the structure of the curriculum and the presence of optional electives. Optional electives are completely unknown in the Arabian system.

Meleis (1986) noted that in the Arab educational system, students entered a structured program and proceeded through it systematically without being given any opportunity for the selection of an elective other than the choice of a major, and even this is determined by the students' grade point average (GPA) in the last year of high school. This lack of choice can have a negative and serious effect on the Arab students. They usually enter the field of study not because they want to rather because they have to and they do not have another choice.

Meloni (1982) shared this point of view with Meleis

and emphasized that Arab students face problems with an elective course system. According to Meloni, in the Arab educational system each program of study is highly structured with no option for choosing courses. Therefore, Arab students are not used to planning their own programs as American students are. Therefore, they become frustrated when their advisors leave it to them to decide what courses they should take.

Moreover, Farquharson (1989) discussed the learning styles and strategies of Arab students in intensive language programs in the United States. He reported that the educational system in Arab countries tends to be paternalistic and authoritative. For an individual, academic choices may actually be determined more by the father than by the student. Curriculum and timetable are strictly set by the Ministry of Education; as a result most students feel that the teachers are concerned more about finishing their assigned responsibilities within the time allowed, regardless of whether learning is achieved or not, and that passing the final exam is more important than understanding and learning the language (Altwaijri, 1982).

American students, on the other hand, have learned to cope with this more open educational system as early as junior high school. They have learned to solve problems, extensive use of the library for research, get information before making a decision, analyze that information, and to expect certain consequences from their decisions.

For the Arab student, the situation is quite different. Meleis found that Arab students have accustomed to one who is more qualified, more educated, and more expert than they are in matters of education to be responsible for decisions relating to their education. This decision making is, in fact, a symbol that the person in charge cares for the student and works for the student's best interests. When that decision, however, has not been made, not only is the Arab student overwhelmed by unfamiliar alternatives, but there is also concern that the advisor or faculty member does not care about the student. It is assumed that the decision is not made for them because the person in charge does not want to be accountable for the consequences; that, the student believes, is why the advisor or faculty member wants the student to make a decision for which there is inadequate information.

Zonis (1978) reported that adjusting to and reconciling differences between the educational system in Arab countries and the United States and competing values -- including ideas about authority, the individual, religion, political systems, social status, and financial and social pressures-- present serious and crucial dilemmas to Arab students in the U.S. Zonis gave several suggestions to American educators dealing with Arab students. Among them are: (a) vigorous screening of Arab students for competency in the English language, and (b) more vigorous application of existing admissions criteria. Arab students at American

institutions encounter academic problems which are the overriding concern of students from the Middle East.

Meloni (1986) reported:

Other problems ... may be more due to culture than to language. One of the most serious difficulties for many Arab students is writing assignments. There is a strong emphasis in Arab culture on the verbal aspect of language, and, therefore, it is quite possible that Arab students, undergraduate and graduate alike, have never had a written assignment before coming to the United States (P. 3).

Zurayk (1979) maintained that education in Arab countries often places emphasis on quantitative growth rather than qualitative, on numbers over standard. What happens to Arab students when they come to North America to study? Mostly they have to adapt academically to a critical/ analytical style of education.

Khurma (1986) observed that one area that many Arab students have difficulty with is reading. They find a great deal of difficulty reading and understanding textbooks.

Moghrabi (1972) conducted a study to determine the probability of success of Iranian and Middle Eastern students in selected Texas universities. He found that most Iranian and Arab students successfully completed their academic programs and received their degrees although they scored well below their American counterparts on all parts of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). In another study, Andalib (1975) used ten achievement variables to test for predictive significance in determining the probability of success of Iranian and Middle Eastern

students in selected Texas universities. The study revealed that the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and the American College Test (ACT) were not good predictors of academic success for Iranian students in selected Texas universities. His study revealed that the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and the American College Test (ACT) were not good predictors of academic success for Iranians. Since these tests were not good predictors, it was suggested that they not be used in college and university entrance procedures.

Mograbli (1972) supported Sharon's findings and reported that most international students successfully completed their academic programs and received their degrees although they scored well below their American counterparts on all parts of the GRE.

Doushaq (1986) conducted a study reported that weaknesses in educational background of the Arab students has a large effect on the students' understanding English. This previous schooling weakness affected how the students performed in placement tests.

Dealing with the same idea, Holes (1984) added that there might be a correlation between the learners' writing abilities in their native language and their writing abilities in the foreign language. Thus it is possible that weakness in the writing skills in the foreign language can be partially attributed to the learners' poor mastery

of the writing skills of their native language. Dhaif (1984) shared Doushaq's and Holes' viewpoints, in that he found that students who performed well in Arabic language, also performed well in placement tests as well.

Ainsworth (1967) conducted a predicative study of fifty undergraduate Arab students studying at the University of Texas. His findings were: (1) intelligence was related neither to scores on English oral comprehension tests, nor to the length of time in the United States; (2) no significant relationship was found between the length of time in the United States and the grade-point averages of Arab undergraduate students; (3) there were positive relationships between academic achievement and Diagnostic Reading Test scores, and between academic achievement and vocabulary scores; (4) reading ability and the length of time in the United States showed a positive relationship; (5) the highest correlation was between academic achievement and scores on the Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes; and (6) there were no significant differences between the intelligence test scores of high and low academic achievers. In general, the research revealed that the longer an Arab undergraduate student remains in the United States, the better his ability to understand written English becomes.

Moghrabi (1972) analyzed factors that influenced success or failure of 450 foreign students at Texas A & M University. He found that academic achievement was related to maturity and a feeling of responsibility. Thus, grade point averages

of graduate students were higher than undergraduates, and married students had better academic records than single students.

A strong relationship was found between skills in English writing, speaking, comprehension, and grade point averages. Another finding was the relationship between academic achievement and the GRE Aptitude and Advanced test scores. At the graduate level, Moghrabi found that there was no significant relationship between academic success and home country and field of study. He also found that students who depended on earned monthly income maintained better grades than students supported by their families.

Shana'a (1979) reported that there is a real necessity for a detailed orientation for all new foreign students concerning the American educational system, including grading policies, during their first semester. Many foreign students have never consulted a written reference source beyond their textbooks for writing a paper, and thus, have no concept of the value of resources and use of a good library. Because friendship is considered the greatest of virtues by many of the Middle Eastern students, problems may arise for Arab students, for example aiding friends with homework and exams, even at their own risk.

In several studies, English language proficiency was identified as a major difficulty experienced by International students. Elias K. Zain (1965) surveyed one hundred and forty-seven foreign students, most of whom were Arabs

studying at the University of Oregon. His aim was to identify and analyze international students' academic and personal-social difficulties in terms of national origin, duration of stay in the United States, academic classification, age, gender, marital status, previous travel experience, and religion. He found that major academic difficulties stemmed mainly from communication problems.

The major academic problems reported by Zain were writing essays and reports, participating in class discussions, taking and organizing notes, completing essay tests on time, and understanding test questions. The major personal-social problems reported, however, were finding housing with reasonable rent, adjusting to diet and customs, participating in social events, making American friends, and finding suitable companionship with the opposite sex. Recommendations made in light of the previous findings were: (a) make new students aware of the problems of cultural diversity either prior to their leaving their home countries or after their arrival in the United States by organizing orientation classes; (b) give personal counseling by academic advisers; (c) adapt evaluation methods for international students; and (d) emphasize techniques of taking notes in class and participation in classroom discussion in English composition courses.

A study was conducted by Hassan Addou (1989) to investigate the relationship between age, marital status,

and time spent in the United States and English language proficiency of 400 degree-seeking male Arab students attending five District of Columbia area universities. With regard to marital status, the researcher found that married students encountered much more difficulty in adjusting and coping with American culture and customs than did single students.

A significant relationship was found between the extent of difficulty and student age. Addou stated that older Arab students reported that they encountered more difficulty in understanding and comprehending textbooks and materials than did younger students. He also stated that although Arab students share common characteristics, they vary widely in English language proficiency, previous academic preparation and ability. His findings maintained that while educational difficulties differ from student to student, the academic experience of Arab students, in general, on the American campus may best be characterized as a sailboat on a rough sea. Some students sail through and reach their destination safely while others are driven into unknown directions and are thrown off course. A small number sink without given any help. (p. 8-13).

Regarding financial problems, Ciesliak quoted from Theodore Blegen's study in 1950 which reported the causes of financial difficulties. Among the causes of financial difficulties were: (1) the dollar shortage and the consequent limitation by foreign governments of dollar

purchases by international students or their representatives; (2) incomplete and misleading budget information in college and university catalogs; (3) inflation of the dollar; (4) inflation in foreign countries; (5) family emergencies; and (6) personal emergencies, such as illness or unexpected travel needs.

In the same context, John Eddy (1972) stated that financial problems stemmed from the relatively high cost of living in the U.S. He also observed that actual costs of college and university education were usually much higher than the estimated costs given by college and university officials who corresponded with international students before their arrival.

As for interpersonal problems, many researchers have emphasized the importance of this factor on the students' academic achievement. It is a truism that the way a person behaves in a particular situation depends not only on him personally but on his environment, and the opportunities it offers, the requirements it imposes, and the limits it sets.

Many Arab students see personal relations in America as shallow (Racy, 1970 and Parker, 1986). Each author described friendships in the United States as quickly formed and short-lived. They stated that there were less sharing of thoughts and feelings and less sense of reciprocal obligation among friends in the U.S. than in the Middle Eastern countries. Personal relationships, the authors emphasized, are extremely important to Middle Eastern

students. For them, the central thing in life is people-family and friendships. They see Americans as sacrificing people for things. To his two or three good friends, the Middle Easterner will give generously of himself and his time. On each side there will be a sense of affection, of closeness, and mutual obligation in time of need. To many Middle Easterners, American friendship seems quickly formed and sometimes quickly ended, so it appear to them shallow and uncommitted.

Arab students feel frustrated and disappointed when they come to the United States and live and experience a different culture from the one they were used to back home. American culture is totally different from the Arabs; while Americans respect an individual's privacy very much, in Arab countries there is no privacy, even in one's own home, which in itself is hard to define with respect to the persons belonging to it. Hamady described the Arab life as an open book for every one. She noticed that visiting back and forth goes on constantly between the various members of the in-group. It is rare that someone from another household does not drop in daily for some purpose or other. Hamady reported that visits between neighbors are unannounced, paid at any hour of the day, and long lasting. It is hard for anyone to refuse his/her visitors, even if he/she were sick, nor can he/she leave them.

Patai (1983) attributed this feeling to the fact that Arabs used to live as Bedouin tribes, which was carried

over from nomadic to settled Arab society in the form of family and lineage cohesion. Kinship ties, and primarily family bonds, are extremely strong in all sectors of traditional Arab society. They remain an influential factor even after members of a group have moved away from the family home and lived for years in a faraway city or even overseas.

Patai gave a full description for the common Arab family. He stated that the average Arab family is rather large, with an authoritarian father and a loving and compassionate mother. Paternalism rules, and "the children learn to subordinate their own personal interests to those of the family as represented by the father or grandfather" (p. 27).

Parker (1986) stated that growing up in a paternalistic society is an important factor which helps determine the behavioral characteristics of Middle Eastern students. Within the family, the parents' word is final, and great respect for elders is expected and given.

As for Arab behavior, Parker (1986) claimed that the root of Arab behavior lies within a basic characteristic of his society, social morality. Social morality prevails over personal morality; thus, concepts of right and wrong, sin and sham, derive not from an individual's determination of appropriate behavior, but from what society in general dictates as the social norm.

There are certain board traits within Arab culture which

may affect an individual student's attitudes or behavior in a classroom. Patai (1983) reported some of these traits. According to Patai one of these is the matter of respect. How others treat one is very important, especially in how it shows their respect toward him. "Face" is extremely important, a consideration that is connected with shame. Patai stated that "the fear of shame represents such an ever-present psychological pressure, his response often takes the form of merely outward conformity with ethical demands whose substance is largely neglected (P. 107).

In addition, Parker (1986) stated that in Arab society the family, and not the individual, is the social unit. In the Arab countries, one might conjecture that the family as a social unit would have much greater importance than its counterpart in Western culture. It is also becomes apparent that the Arab concept of "kin" differs from the lineal concept typical of the Western culture and includes individuals other than those of the immediate family of procreation and orientation and that a much closer degree of relationship exists between the individual and his collateral relatives. Parker went on to state that the Middle Easterner is consistently polite within his own culture, even to a person he dislikes.

Al-Banyan (1980) conducted a study about Saudi Arabian students in the United States. He studied 132 Saudi students studying at North Carolina in 1976. Al-Banyan reported that the family in Saudi Arabia is the basic social unit. It is

the centre of all loyalty, obligations, and status of its members. Frequently, the social, psychological, and economic security of the individual stem from membership in an extended family El- Banyan emphasized the notion that:

The Arab is known by the family to which he belongs. However great his personal talents, a man without a family to back him is unlikely ever to count for much in the community. It is not surprising, then, that the individual's loyalty and duty to his family are greater than any other social obligation ... All social relations are indirectly if not directly tied to family considerations and the family is the fundamental and essential repository of every individual's personal identity. Family obligations take precedence over all others. Both economic and political life are organized in terms of the family or extensions of it (P. 206).

Thus, if family helps determine cognitive style, surely education must help determine learning styles, or at least learning strategies. And familial solidarity is one of the strongest traditional bonds and values in the Arab world, even among the new, urban middle class families.

Patai (1983) noted that Arabs have quick tempers and self-control. They try to control their joys, fears, and weaknesses. These feelings are not given vent; they are checked with positive overt expression. The Arabic man cannot reveal his private life, for it may affect his public role to a large extent.

Anne Helms (1978) stated that cultural differences between Arabs and Americans might cause misunderstandings when Arab students come to study in American universities. She discussed eight elements of cultural differences:

greetings and farewells, hospitality and food customs, speech styles, gestures, male/female relationships, concepts of honor, shame, and morality, educational customs, and values of time, work, space, and friendship.

Helms stated that international tensions might be eased and business transacted more happily if both Arabs and Americans understood each other and were more aware of the differences in their outlooks. She emphasized that eloquence and rhetoric are highly appreciated in the Middle East. The American tendency to be brief and to the point sounds very abrupt and even hostile to the Arabs. Americans tend to say "Hello, how are you?" and then get immediately to another subject. Arabs, on the other hand, like an extended greeting ritual and may run through elaborate phrases several times before getting down to business.

Helms also stated that hospitality is the most specific and characteristic expression of general value. It is so loosely connected with generosity that occasionally the same term is used to designate both.

Another attribute was added by Patai (1983), and Parker (1986) that Arabs have a remarkable alertness of mind. They understand rapidly from simple allusions and respond quickly to questions. Rarely overtaken by unexpected events, they easily unravel puzzling situations and present appropriate answers.

Hamady (1960), and Racy, (1970) agreed that in spite of some differences among Arab customs, mores, and values,

they still have several common social characteristics. Because of these common characteristics, Arab students, whether they are from Egypt or Yemen, Syria or Jordan, have almost the same problems.

Jarrahi-Zadeh and Eichman (1970), studied the Middle-Eastern students and found that socio-cultural factors were identified by the Middle-Eastern students as principal areas of difficulty. The researchers, using a three-part questionnaire, studied the impact of sociocultural factors on the psychological well being of sixty-one Middle Eastern students at the University of North Carolina. They compared their findings with scores made on the same questionnaire by two groups of American students who had participated in earlier studies.

The results indicated that: "Academic problems" were ranked first by the Middle Eastern students, followed by "social problems" and "study problems" as areas of difficulty. Among American students, "putting off work" ranked first in order of prevalence, followed by "academic problems" and "lack of confidence."

Jarrahi-Zadeh's findings concluded that although Middle Eastern students were better able to cope with American academic life than would ordinarily be expected, they faced enormous problems. Less than desirable adjustment was expected in many cases and emotional breakdown was expected in a minority. This minority, the researchers emphasized, would probably equal or exceed the number of American

students who experience similar distress. The researchers stated that international students have the benefit of the following factors: "an early arrival, before the academic year begins, some degree of 'forced' social interaction such as living in a dormitory, for example; a student advisory group to ease the transition to American life, and support of organizations and families who provide social opportunities" (P. 94).

Kalil I. Gezi (1965), studied 62 Middle Eastern students who were studying at eleven California colleges and universities, with the majority of the students attending the University of California at Berkeley and Stanford University. In responding to the question, "What did you think of the United States before you came here?" Fifty-one out of sixty-one Arab students had formed generally favorable images of the United States before their arrival in this country, whereas only eleven students held generally unfavorable attitudes before they came here. Those students who held favorable images and attitudes were aided in forming these attitudes principally by contacts with Americans in the Middle East, with native students returning from the United States, and by reading books and magazines. The students' favorable images of America included the freedom of the individual in this country, the freedom of speech, equality under the law, availability of opportunities, high standard of living, the value of hard work, industrial production, and the hospitality of American people. The students who came

with negative and unfavorable attitudes toward the United States, however, reported that they had developed these attitudes from American movies, from native students returning from the United States, and from media and stories heard and read.

The findings were interesting in that the Gezi found that the students' pre-arrival attitudes were correlated with their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their sojourn. Of the fifty-one students who had favorable attitudes toward the United States, forty-eight showed satisfaction with their sojourn, and only three showed dissatisfaction with it. On the other hand, of the eleven students who held pre-arrival unfavorable or negative attitudes toward the United States, only two showed satisfaction with their sojourn, with the remaining nine continuing to show dissatisfaction.

Gezi stated that findings of the study emphasized that there was a relationship between the students' judgement of the meaningfulness of their interaction with Americans, their age, their academic status, and their adjustment. There was no relationship, however, between the length of time the students had been in the United States and their adjustment.

Hegazy (1968) compared British and Egyptian students at the University of Minnesota, Ohio State and Wisconsin, and Egyptian students at the University of Michigan and Washington during the winter quarter of 1967 to 1968. The most significant results were: (1) British students'

knowledge of and feelings about the United States before coming were less stereotyped than those of the Egyptians; (2) British students associated more with Americans and were more involved in the American culture than were the Egyptian students; (3) The Egyptian students developed a temporary community in the image of their own culture more often than the British students did; (4) Language was the major problem for those whose first language was not English.

Parker (1986) found that Middle Eastern students in general, and Arab students in particular, are among the most adaptable. They can become fully "Americanized" within a short time. A student who has become a "classic" student type in the U.S. will often readapt within months of his return to his own society's norms.

Such adaptability, Parker emphasized, is not a weakness. The root of such behavior lies within the society and norms from which Arab student comes. Arab students are concerned with what is wrong and what is right. They feel a great deal about what and how should they behave within their people. On their return home, they revert to their own ways immediately even without a period of adjustment.

Summary

Several authors have studied Arab students and discussed problems they encountered. Afaaf Meleis, 1982; Adduo, 1989 and Kaplan, 1986, reported that Arab students face problems in coping with American teaching strategies.

Arab students are not used to American teaching methods which involved classroom discussions, open and free self-expression, examination procedures, and writing papers and conducting research. Zurayk (1979) stated that Arab students found difficulty dealing with critical and analytical styles of education that characterized the American classroom.

Meloni (1986) emphasized that Arab Students face problems with elective courses. They are not used to selecting and choosing for themselves.

Farquharson's study (1989) emphasized Meloni's findings. He stated that Arab students depend mostly on their parents especially the fathers, to plan for the student's academic and career future. He also emphasized that there were some connections between the "tightness" of Arab culture, the corresponding "tightness" of the Arab education system, and the development of a dominant learning style for Arab students.

Addou's (1989) findings found that older Arab students faced more difficulty in dealing with the English language than younger Arab students. His findings also found that married Arab students encounter more difficulties than single Arab students. This indicated that older, and married, Arab students are less flexible than younger Arab students regarding adaptation to a new language and new setting.

Hull (1978) found that financial problems concerned many Arab students. He reported that financial problems could affect the Arab student's academic success or failure.

Farquharson (1989), Parker (1986), and Patai (1983) studied the Arab mind and culture. They found that culture had an effect on learning styles. They reported that Arab culture was characterized by kinship, loyalty to the tribe, friendship, paternalism, and respect.

In light of this literature review, one can conclude that Arab Students present special problems. They share common characteristics, yet they vary widely in English language proficiency, previous academic preparation and ability to comprehend and master English (Addou, 1989). They face several problems that hinder their ability to achieve success and meet their goals. These include English language proficiency, familiarity with American teaching strategies, financial shortages, and interpersonal relationships with Americans on one hand, and with other students on the other.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter explains the procedures that were used in this study in an effort to answer the research questions discussed in Chapter I. The methods of investigation were a combination of observation, interviews with Arab students, and questionnaires. The use of interviews added and provided a better opportunity than would survey research alone for the investigator to analyze the findings and also provide a chance to observe the subjects in a "natural" setting. It also allowed the investigator to observe their interaction with other students.

Research Procedure

Preliminary Contacts--August and September, 1989

During this two month period, the investigator made numerous telephone calls to colleges and universities across the state of Oklahoma to obtain Arab student enrollment figures in order to determine which institutions would be included in the study. Some institutions gave the figures on the phone, and others promised to send a letter releasing the exact number of Arab students.

By the end of September, 1989, the researcher had the final figures regarding Arab students in seven Oklahoma institutions of higher education. The investigator discovered that Tulsa University in Tulsa, Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, the University of Oklahoma in Norman, Central State University in Edmond, and Oklahoma City University in Oklahoma City had more Arab students enrolled than did East Central University in Ada, and Phillips University in Enid.

An institution had to have at least 20 Arab students enrolled to be included in the study. As most of the administrators and foreign student advisors would release neither the names nor addresses of students because of the Beckley Amendment of 1972, the investigator mailed formal letters and questionnaires to each selected university in order to mail the questionnaires to Arab students by their own way. (Appendix A).

However, few Arab students were found in East Central University in Ada and Phillips University in Enid. It is regrettable, though, that some institutions whose administrators and foreign advisors were willing to help in the study could not be included because of the small number of Arab students at those institutions.

Subjects

The subjects selected for the study were all Arab students enrolled in the fall of 1989. The criteria for

selection were: (1) all the subjects were Arab students enrolled on a full-time basis; (2) their names and addresses had to appear in the listing furnished by the college or university. Students' names which appeared with no address were eliminated from the study. This produced 380 students.

The researcher was told that she could send questionnaires to the five institutions 315 to be distributed to Arab students. Accordingly, on October 4, the researcher mailed 315 questionnaires with cover letters explaining and stressing the importance of the study with a further appeal for their assistance. A postage-paid return envelope was enclosed with each of the 315 questionnaires. (Appendix B).

By November 30, 1989, the researcher received 203 responses (64.44 percent) of the total number of 315, distributed as follows: 52 from TU out of 85, then later 18 questionnaires were received from follow up, 95 from OSU out of 135, 17 from OU out of 30, 18 from OCU out of 25, and 20 from CSU out of 30. However, it is important to mention that OSU returned 27 unanswered questionnaire of the total number 135 because of the difficulty of distributing them to the students as a result of changing addresses or sometimes not having an address for a student. OU returned 14 unanswered questionnaires of the total number of 52; TU returned to the researcher 25 unanswered questionnaires of the total number 85; OCU returned 13 questionnaires of the total number of 42; and CSU returned 15 ones of the total number of 45 for the same reasons.

It was believed that if a respondent was unable to return the first questionnaire on time, he could have thrown it away or misplaced it. Another set of questionnaires was mailed with cover letters and postage-paid return envelopes enclosed.

Secon Contact

To meet the appropriate percentage for the study and to make it more beneficial and effective, another contact was made through telephone. The researcher called 6 Arab students living in the Stillwater area, and interviewed another 5. The researcher also called 4 Arab students from the University of Oklahoma, and interviewed 5 students in Oklahoma City University, and another 6 from Central State University. The investigator sent another 54 follow up questionnaires to Tulsa University and received 18 responses. The total number of students who were involved in this study was $(203 + 6 + 5 + 18 + 5 + 4 + 6 = 247$ out of 315 (78.41 percent).

Population

Three hundred and fifteen Arab students were studying at the five Oklahoma institutions of higher education in the state of Oklahoma in the Fall semester of 1989. The five selected institutions of higher education in Oklahoma were: Oklahoma State University (OSU); The University of Oklahoma (OU); Oklahoma City University (OCU); Central State

University (CSU); and The University of Tulsa (TU). The subjects for this study consisted of the 315 undergraduate and graduate; male and female Arab students.

TABLE I
INSTITUTIONS SELECTED FOR STUDY

Name of Institution	Population of Foreign students	Population of Arab students	%	# of Return	# of Good
Oklahoma State University,* Stillwater	1433	135	9.5	27	95
University of Oklahoma,* Norman	1132	52	4.6	14	17
University of Tulsa,** Tulsa	414	106	25.6	25	70
Oklahoma City University,** Oklahoma City	800	42	4.0	13	18
Central State University,* Edmond	858	45	5.2	15	20
Total	4647	380	8.2	94	220

* Denotes state universities

** Denotes private universities

Instrumentation

A questionnaire, written in English devised by the researcher, was used to obtain data for this study. Each question in this instrument was planned from a detailed study of the literature and thorough written and oral discussion with experts in the field of international student affairs.

Interviews with a number of Arab students studying at the selected institutions were used to get additional information.

Procedure

The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part I (12 questions) included questions that revealed students' backgrounds in mastering English. It also included questions to help students express themselves regarding the difficulties they were facing in understanding and communicating in English. Students were asked to give their opinions and their suggestions for improving their academic achievement. They were also asked to rank the most and least positive items they believed to have a critical effect on their academic achievement.

Part II (16 questions) wished for demographic information which revealed the Arab student's age, marital status, field of study, length of the duration of study in the U.S., financial resources, monthly income while studying in the U.S and previous academic records (such as their rank

in high school) and the highest score obtained on the TOEFL. Along with the questionnaire a cover letter and self-addressed stamped return envelope were sent to the Arab students.

The questionnaire was developed because there was no appropriate instrument to fit the nature of this study. A panel of experts examined this instrument for validity of the content of this research.

The questionnaire was evaluated by a number of experts, such as the Coordinator of International Student, the International Students' Advisor, administrators, and other professionals involved in international student affairs at OSU. Such an evaluation insured the validity of content and validity of the instrument. Each expert was asked for criticisms, recommendations, comments, and suggestions for any additional questions that should be added to the questionnaire to attain the research objectives.

Statistical Methods

The study attempted to describe Arab students' academic achievement and descriptors such as age, marital status, the period of time a student studying English prior to coming to the United States, financial problems, the American teaching strategies, English language proficiency, American culture, and interpersonal relations with Americans.

It was felt however that a study such as this must focus on describing and explaining the findings. There was

no need to go beyond the following procedures: total numbers, percentages, and chi-square were calculated when needed.

Simple descriptive statistics (numbers, percentages, chi-square, and frequencies) were computed for the following factors: age, marital status, academic classification, began studying English prior to coming to the United States, financial status, American teaching strategies, English language proficiency, familiarity with American culture and customs, the level of difficulty of the Arab students' experience in the making American friends .

The rationale for using Chi- square was the accuracy and competency that Chi-square shows. Huck et al., (1974) said: "Chi-square (X^2) test is one of the most frequently reported nonparametric tests in journal articles. The test is used when a researcher is interested in the number of responses, objects, or people that fall in two or more categories" (P. 216). Downie and Heath (1965) reported: "Chi- square is used as a test of significance when we have data that are expressed in frequencies or data that are in terms of percentages or proportions and that can be reduced to frequencies" (P.160-161).

Follow-up interviews on the five campuses helped the researcher to understand self-perceptions and focus the issues and concerns.

Analysis of Data

The data collected for the study were coded and

transferred to a statistical computer program, ABC (University of Michigan), and its supporting program ABC ENTRY. The computer results were analyzed according to the objectives formulated for this study. The data from the selected variables were analyzed by means of frequency distributions. These distributions were obtained in terms of numbers and percentages for each category of a variable. Tables were constructed to illustrate the information gained from the questionnaires.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

Chapter IV is devoted to analyses of the data collected for this study. Chi-squares, numbers, and percentages were calculated when needed. This chapter also contains tables, figures, and graphs used to show the Arab students' academic achievements and the selected factors which were thought to hinder their academic achievement--age, marital status, period of time studying English prior to coming to the U.S., financial problems, American teaching strategies, English language proficiency, and American culture and customs, and interpersonal relationships.

Data Collection

Three hundred and fifteen (315) questionnaires were mailed to the five Oklahoma institutions of higher education which had the highest enrollments of Arab students. Of this number, ninety-four (29.8 percent) were undeliverable and returned to the researcher; twenty-seven questionnaires (8.5 percent) could not be analyzed because of missing demographic information--e.g., home country, academic classification, age, marital status, the latest GPA earned.

In other word, 121 questionnaires were eliminated from the study. Twenty-six students (8.3 percent) were either interviewed personally or called by phone; 220 (69.8 percent) were analyzable. Table II contains a summary of detailed information about the 220 respondents.

Home Country

Regarding the home country factor, the researcher grouped Arab countries into eight categories. Each category represented a different region. The analysis of data showed that 44 (20%) of the respondents were from Lebanon and Syria, while 72 (32.73 percent) were from Palestine and Jordan, 26 (11.82 percent) from North Africa--Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and Libya, 9 (4 percent) from Egypt and Sudan, 54 (24.55 percent) from Saudi Arabia, 7 (3.17 percent) from Yemen and Oman, and 8 (3.64 percent) from Kuwait and Iraq. No one was identified as being from the United Arab Emirates. See Table II for a more complete description of this classification.

Sex

Regarding the gender factor, the analysis of data showed that 209 (95 percent) of the respondents were male while only 11 (5 percent) were female (See Table II for a description of these data). Consequently, because of the small number of female students compared to males, the researcher decided to disregard the sex variable for the analysis. (See Appendix F).

TABLE II
 DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS WITH REGARD TO
 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
 N = 220

Variables	N	%
<u>Home Country</u>		
Palestine & Jordan	72	32.73
Saudi Arabia	54	24.55
Lebanon & Syria	44	20
North Africa	26	11.82
Egypt & Sudan	9	4
Iraq & Kuwait	8	3.64
Yemen & Oman	7	3.17
<u>Sex</u>		
Male	209	95
Female	11	5
<u>Number of Children</u>		
none	16	22
one child	18	25
two children	22	31
three children	12	17
four or more children	4	6

Spouse with him/her

The question was worded, "If married, is your spouse with you?" The responses were:

Yes	196	89%
No	24	11%

These figures indicated that most Arab students had their spouses with them while studying in the United States, and only a few did not. (See Appendix F).

Domicile While in the U.S.

Subjects were asked, "Where do you live?" The students chose from the following alternatives and responded accordingly:

In a dorm with an American roommate	9	4%
In a dorm with an Arab roommate	13	6%
In a dorm with a roommate other than Arab or American	5	2%
In an apartment with an American roommate	13	6%
In an apartment with an Arab roommate	79	36%
With my family	66	30%
With an American family	00	0.0%
Alone	35	16%

As one can see, the majority (82%) of Arab students lived alone or with another Arab (family or friend). In contrast, only 12% lived with American or other non-Arabs.

It was surprising that no one was found to live with an American family.

Number of Children

Regarding the number of children variable, the study showed that 16 (22%) did not have children, 18 (25 percent) had one child, 22 (31%) had two children, 12 (17%) had three children, and 4 (6%) had four or more children. These figures show that the majority, 56% of Arab students, had one or two children, while 23% had three or more children.

See Table II.

In summary, and as can be seen through the previous analysis, Jordan and Palestine are the two countries which sent the largest number of students to the United States, followed by Saudi Arabia and Lebanon and Syria. Furthermore, 95% of Arab students were male, and only 5% were female. These findings suggest that Arab traditions and strictness may have prevented female students from studying abroad. That might be explained by the religious and traditional values that prohibit females from traveling alone. Data also showed that 89% of Arab students had their spouses with them while studying at American universities. Regarding the number of children, data showed that the majority of Arab students had a small family while studying at American colleges and universities.

Selected Variables in Relation to Academic Achievement

The performance of Arab students was related to their Grade Point Average (GPA) during the period of time the study took place. Selected variables were analyzed according to the student's GPA which would determine his/her academic success while studying at Oklahoma institutions of higher education.

Of the total number of 220 Arab students, there were 113 undergraduate, 104 graduate, and 3 students classified as "special students." According to the Oklahoma State University's Grading System, among undergraduate Arab students, those who had a GPA ranging from 3.1-4.0 were regarded as excellent. Students who had a GPA ranging from 2.1-3.0 were regarded as performing academically as good or average.

Regarding graduate Arab students, however, the researcher treated them differently. The criteria were different from those used in the undergraduate situation. Students who earned GPAs of 3.6-4.0 were regarded as excellent students; whereas, students who earned 3.1- 3.5 were regarded as performing academically as good or average students.

The following analyses describe the Arab students' academic achievements according to the research questions.

Age

Respondents were grouped into three age categories--less than 20 years, 20-30 years, 31 or over. Among the 220 respondents there were 15 (7%) under 20 years of age, 171 (78%) were between 20 and 30 years; 34 (15.5%) were between 31-40 or over. (See Table III.)

TABLE III
DESCRIPTION OF AGE DISTRIBUTION OF
ARAB STUDENTS

Age	Number	Percent
less than 20	15	7%
20-30 years	171	78%
31 or over	34	15.5%
Total	220	100%

As can be seen from Table IV regarding age and the students' academic achievements, out of 15 students under age 20, 9 students (60%) were found to have GPA's ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. The majority of Arab students, 171 (78%) were between the ages of 20-30, of which 110 (65%) were found to perform academically excellent with GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. Of 34 (15.5%) students between the ages of 31-40 or over, 25 (73.5%) were found to perform academically well with GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0.

Regarding the first part of question one, "How do Arab students' academic performance differ according to age?", the analysis showed that age did not play an important role in effecting the Arab students' academic achievement. Proportionately, age and academic performance did not affect each other. ($X^2 = 1.34$, $df = 2$. See Table V).

TABLE IV
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN RELATION TO AGE FACTOR

Age	GPA (3.1 - 4.0)	% of Total # for Age Group
less than 20	9	60
20-30 years	110	65
31-40 or over	25	73.5

TABLE V
CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO AGE
AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Row	:	Age
Column	:	GPA
N total	:	220
N Included	:	220
N of Rows	:	3
N of Columns	:	2
Chi-squared	:	1.34
Degrees of Freedom	:	2

Academic Classification

In answering the second half of the first research question, "How do Arab students' academic performance differ according to academic classification?" Table VI revealed that there were 113 (52 %) undergraduate students, 104 (48%) graduate students, and 3 (1.5%) classified as special students. Fifty-two (46%) of the undergraduate students had excellent GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. Sixty-one students (54%) had good or average GPAs (2.1-3.0).

Regarding graduate students, the study showed that 64 (62%) had excellent GPAs ranging from 3.6 to 4.0, 40 (38%) had good or average GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 3.5. (See Tables VII & VIII). (See Appendix F).

TABLE VI
DESCRIPTION OF ARAB STUDENTS ACCORDING TO
ACADEMIC STATUS

Academic Status	Number	Percent
Undergraduate	113	52%
Graduate	104	48%
Total	217	100%

* Three students classified as special were omitted from the table.

TABLE VII
DESCRIPTION OF UNDERGRADUATE ARAB STUDENTS'
ACADEMIC STATUS WITH REGARD TO GPA

Performance	<u>GPA</u>	% of the Total # for Academic Status
Excellent (3.1-4.0)	52	46
Good or Average (3.0-2.1)	61	54
Total	113	100

TABLE VIII
DESCRIPTION OF GRADUATE ARAB STUDENTS'
ACADEMIC STATUS WITH REGARD TO GPA

Performance	<u>GPA</u>	% of the Total # for Academic Status
Excellence (3.6-4.0)	64	62
Good or Average (3.1-3.5)	40	38
Total	104	100%

TABLE IX
CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO
ACADEMIC STATUS & GPA

Row	:	Academic Status
Column	:	GPA
N total	:	220
N Included	:	217
N of Rows	:	2
N of Column	:	2
Chi-squared	:	6.5
Degree of Freedom	:	1

Throughout the analysis, the results showed that graduate students performed academically better than undergraduate students. ($\chi^2 = 6.5$, $df = 1$). This finding actually answered the second half of the first research question, "How do Arab students' academic achievements differ according to academic classification?" (See Table IX.)

Marital Status

The second research question was, "How are married Arab students' academic performances different from those who are single students?" Tables X & XI revealed that out of 148 (67%) single students, 99 (67%) were rated as excellent students, GPAs ranging from 3.6 to 4.0.

On the other hand, of 72 (33%) married or divorced students, 53 (74%) were rated as good students with GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 3.5. From this analysis it seemed that Married students did not perform academically better than (X² = 1.03, df = 1. See Table XII).

what?

TABLE X
DESCRIPTION OF ARAB STUDENTS AND
MARITAL STATUS

Marital Status	Number	%
Single	148	67
Married or Divorced	72	33
Total	220	100

TABLE XI
ARAB STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT WITH
REGARD TO MARITAL STATUS

Marital Status	Number	GPA (3.1-4.0)	% of the Total # Marital Status
Single	99		67
Married or Divorced	53		74

TABLE XII
CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO
GPA & MARITAL STATUS

Row	:	Marital status
Column	:	GPA
N total	:	220
N included	:	220
Number of Rows	:	2
Number of column	:	2
Chi-Squared	:	1.03
Degree of Freedom	:	1

Began Studying English Prior to Coming to U.S

The third research question was, "How do Arab students' who have studied English for a longer time prior to their coming to the U.S. perform relative to those who have studied English for a shorter time?"

As can be seen from Tables XIII and XIV, 85 (39%) of the respondents started studying English in primary school, and 73% of these students had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. One hundred and seven (49 %) of the students reported that they started studying English in middle school, and within this group, 72 (67%) had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. Twenty-eight (13 %) of the respondents studied English in high school.

One can easily see that almost half (49%) of Arab students began studying English in middle school. Primary schools had the second largest percentage (39%) of students studying English . No students were found to began studying English for the first time either in universities nor in the English Language schools.

Regarding the question as to whether students studying English for a long time perform academically better than students studying English for a short period of time analysis showed that students who studied English in primary school did not perform academically better than students who started studying English later.

($X^2 = 1.9$, $df = 2$. See Table XV).

TABLE XIII
DESCRIPTION OF ARAB STUDENTS WITH REGARD
TO BEGAN STUDYING ENGLISH

Begin Study English	Number	%
Primary School	85	39
Middle School	107	49
High School	28	13
Total	220	101

TABLE XIV
ARAB STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT WITH
REGARD TO BEGAN STUDYING ENGLISH

Began Studying English	Number	<u>GPA</u> (3.1-4.0)	% of the Total # for Began Study English
Primary School	62		73
Middle School	72		67
High School	17		61

TABLE XV
CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO
BEGAN STUDY ENGLISH AND
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Row	:	Began study English
Column	:	GPA
N Total	:	220
N included	:	220
Number of Rows	:	3
Number of Column	:	2
Chi- Squared	:	1.90
Degrees of Freedom	:	2

Financial Support While Studying in the U.S.
and Students' Academic Achievement

Question four was, "How do finances or their lack of affect Arab students' academic achievement"? Table XVI showed that 42 (19%) of the respondents had a monthly income under \$600, 110 (50%) had a monthly income between \$600-\$1000, 43 (20%) had a monthly income between \$1000-\$1400, and only 25 (11%) had a monthly income of more than \$1400.

Regarding students' monthly income and academic performance, data showed that 75 (64%) of students who had a monthly income under \$600 were viewed as performing academically either excellent or good (GPA ranges from 3.1 to 4.0). Seventy-five (68%) of students who had a monthly income of \$600-\$1000 were viewed as performing academically either excellent or good (GPA ranges from 3.1 to 4.0). Twenty-seven (64%) of students who had a monthly income of \$1000-\$1400 were viewed as performing academically either excellent or good (GPA ranges from 3.1 to 4.0). And 16 (64%) who had a monthly income of more than \$1400 were viewed as performing academically either excellent or good (GPA ranges from 3.1-4.0). (See Table XVII).

Table XVIII showed that about half of Arab students 94 (43%) were financially supported by their parents. Seventy-two (33%) were financially supported by scholarship. Twenty-two (10%) were financially supported by working as graduate assistants. Only 18 students (8%) were supported by their government. (See Appendix F).

TABLE XVI
DESCRIPTION OF ARAB STUDENTS' MONTHLY INCOME
WHILE STUDYING IN THE U.S.

Monthly Income	Number	%
Under \$600	42	19
\$600-\$1000	110	50
\$1000-\$1400	43	20
\$1400 or more	25	11
Total	220	100

TABLE XVII
ARAB STUDENTS' MONTHLY INCOME IN RELATION TO
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Variable	Number	<u>GPA</u> (3.1-4.0)	% of the Total # for Monthly Income
Under \$600	27		64
\$600-\$1000	75		68
\$1000-\$1400	28		65
\$1400 or more	16		64

XVIII

DESCRIPTION OF ARAB STUDENTS WITH REGARD TO THE
FINANCIAL SUPPORT WHILE STUDYING
IN THE U.S.

Chief Source	Number	%
Scholarship	72	33
Parents' Support	94	43
Self-support	14	6
Government Support	18	8
Graduate assistantship	22	10
<hr/>		
Total	220	100

TABLE XIX
CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO MONTHLY
INCOME AND GPA

Row	:	Income
Column	:	GPA
N total	:	220
N included	:	220
N of Rows	:	4
N of Columns	:	2
Chi-Squared	:	.36
Degrees of Freedom	:	3

From Table XIX the analysis of data showed that chi-square was not significant; one can conclude that there was no an immediate effect on the Arab students' academic achievement and the amount of money they were receiving monthly. ($\chi^2 = .36$, $df = 3$).

American Teaching Strategies

"How do the American teaching strategies affect the academic performance of Arab students?" was research question five. To answer this question, Arab students were asked to choose among several items the ones they believed to have a positive effect on their academic success and ones they believed to have a negative effect on their academic achievement. Faculty Teaching Methods were chosen by 151 (69%) students of the total number of 220 respondents as factors which had a positive effect on their academic performance. Of this number, 102 (68%) of the students had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0.

Sixty-nine (31%) of the total number of 220 respondents chose this factor as being to have a negative effect on their academic achievement. Thirty-eight (55%) of which had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. ($X^2 = 3.26$, $df = 1$. See Tables XX, XXI, and XXII).

As for examination procedures, 117 (53%) respondents selected American methods of giving examinations as being a positive factor affecting their academic achievement. Of the total number, 79 (67.5%) had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. One-hundred and three students (47%) selected this factor as being a negative one which affected their academic success. of the total number of 103, 79 (77%) had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. ($X^2 = 2.2$. $df = 1$. See Tables XXIII, XXIV and XXV).

TABLE XX
DESCRIPTION OF ARAB STUDENTS WITH REGARD TO
FACULTY TEACHING METHODS

Response	Number	%
Positive	151	69
Negative	69	31
Total	220	100

TABLE XXI
FACULTY TEACHING METHOD WITH REGARD TO
ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Response	Number	<u>GPA</u> (3.1-4.0)	% of Total # for Faculty Teaching Methods
Positive	102		68
Negative	38		55

TABLE XXII
CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO
EFFECT FACULTY TEACHING
METHODS AND GPA

Row	:	Effect of Faculty Teaching Methods
Column	:	GPA
N Total	:	220
N Included	:	220
N of Rows	:	2
N of Columns	:	2
Chi-Squared	:	3.26
Degree of Freedom	:	1

TABLE XXIII
DESCRIPTION OF ARAB STUDENTS WITH REGARD TO
EXAMINATION PROCEDURES

Response	Number	%
Positive	117	53
Negative	103	47
Total	220	100

TABLE XXIV
ARAB STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT WITH
REGARD TO EXAMINATION PROCEDURES

Response	Number	<u>GPA</u> (3.1-4.0)	% of the Total # for Exam. procedures
Positive	79		67.5
Negative	79		77

TABLE XXV
CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO EFFECT OF
EXAMINATION PROCEDURES
AND GPA

Row	:	Effect of Exam. Procedures
Column	:	GPA
N Total	:	220
N Included	:	220
N of Rows	:	2
N of Columns	:	2
ChiSquared	:	2.2
Degree of Freedom	:	1

Regarding grading patterns, 98 (54%) respondents chose this variable as having a positive effect on their academic success. Of the total number of 98, 66 (67%) of the students had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. One-hundred and twenty-two (55%) students chose this factor as having a negative effect on their academic success. Of the total number of 122, 76 (62%) of the students had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. ($X^2 = .82$, $df = 1$. See Tables XXVI, XXVII and XXVIII).

TABLE XXVI
DESCRIPTION OF ARAB STUDENTS WITH
REGARD TO THE EFFECT OF
GRADING PATTERS

Response	Number	%
Positive	98	45
Negative	122	55
Total	220	100

TABLE XXVII
ARAB STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT WITH
REGARD TO GRADING PATTERNS

Response	Number	<u>GPA</u> (3.1-4.0)	% of the Total # for Grading Patterns
Positive	66		67
Negative	76		62

TABLE XXVIII
CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO EFFECT OF GRADING
PATTERNS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Row	:	Effect of Grading Pattern
Column	:	GPA
N Total	:	220
N Included	:	220
N of Rows	:	2
N of Columns	:	2
Chi-Squared	:	.82
Degree of Freedom	:	1

As for "Using the Library properly", 103 (47%) respondents reported that they could use the library to get his/her assignments completed properly. Among these respondents, 72 (70%) had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. Seventy (38%) respondents reported that they could not use the library properly and that affected their academic success. Among those, 47 (67%) had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. ($\chi^2 = 2.41$, $df = 1$. See Tables XXIX, XXX and XXXI).

TABLE XXIX

DESCRIPTION OF ARAB STUDENTS WITH REGARD
TO THE EFFECT OF USING LIBRARY

Response	Number	%
Positive	103	47
Negative	117	53
Total	220	100

TABLE XXX

ARAB STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT WITH REGARD
TO THE EFFECT OF USING LIBRARY

Response	Number	<u>GPA</u> (3.1-4.0)	% of the Total # for Using Library
Positive	72		70
Negative	70		60

TABLE XXXI

CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO THE EFFECT
OF USING LIBRARY AND GPA

Row	:	Effect of Using Library
Column	:	GPA
N Total	:	220
N Included	:	220
N of Rows	:	2
N of Columns	:	2
Chi-Squared	:	2.41
Degree of Freedom	:	1

Finally, concerning "Understanding Test Questions written in English," 87 (40%) respondents said that they did not have a problem understanding the test questions. Sixty-one (70%) of these students had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. Meanwhile 133 (60%) of the respondents said that they had difficulty understanding tests questions and that would affect their academic achievement. Seventy-eight (59%) of these students had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. ($X^2 = 3.47$, $df = 1$. See Tables XXXII, XXXIII, and XXXIV).

TABLE XXXII
DESCRIPTION OF ARAB STUDENTS WITH REGARD
TO THE EFFECT OF UNDERSTANDING
TEST QUESTION

Response	Number	%
Positive	87	40
Negative	133	60
Total	220	100

TABLE XXXIII

ARAB STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT WITH REGARD TO
THE EFFECT OF UNDERSTANDING TEST QUESTIONS

Response	Number	GPA (3.1-4.0)	% of the Total # for Understanding Test Questions
Positive	61		70
Negative	78		65

TABLE XXXIV

CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO THE EFFECT OF
UNDERSTANDING TEST QUESTION AND GPA

Row	:	Understanding Test Questions
Column	:	GPA
N Total	:	220
N Included	:	220
N of Rows	:	2
N of Columns	:	2
Chi-Squared	:	3.47
Degree of Freedom	:	1

Findings from the previous Tables and analyses showed that chi-squares were not significant. That led to conclude that American Teaching Strategies which include teaching methods, examination procedures, grading patterns, the use of a library, and understanding test questions, did not hinder the academic achievement of Arab students. (See Tables XX to XXXIV).

English Language Proficiency

"How does English language proficiency affect the academic achievement of Arab students?" was question number seven. Analyzing this question, the researcher asked students to write the highest TOEFL score they earned. Eight (4%) students had less than 500 on the TOEFL score, and only 2 (25%) had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. Fifty-five (25%) of the total number of students had TOEFL scores between 500-525, 33 (60%) of whom had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. Seventy (32%) had TOEFL scores of 526-550, 48 (69%) of whom had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. Forty-nine (23%) had TOEFL scores of 551-575, 42 (86%) of whom had GPAs. Thirty-four (16%) had TOEFL scores of 576-600, and 29 (85%) had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. (See Tables XXXV & XXXVI).

It can be seen through the previous analysis that students who had high TOEFL score performed academically better than students who had low TOEFL score. The higher the TOEFL score, the better the student will perform academically. ($X^2 = 20.45$, $df = 4$. See Table XXXVII).

TABLE XXXV
DESCRIPTION OF ARAB STUDENTS' ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENT WITH REGARD TO
THE TOEFL SCORE

Variables	number	%
Less than 500	8	4
500-525	55	25
526-550	70	32
551-575	49	23
576-600 or over	34	16
Total	216	100

* Four students did not take TOEFL

TABLE XXXVI
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT WITH REGARD TO
THE TOEFL SCORE AND GPA

Variable	Number	<u>GPA</u> (3.1-4.0)	% of the Total # for TOEFL Score
Less than 500	2		25
500-525	33		60
526-550	48		69
551-575	42		86
576-600 or over	29		85

TABLE XXXVII
CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO TOEFL
SCORES AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Row	:	TOEFL
Column	:	GPA
N Total	:	220
N Included	:	216
N or Rows	:	5
N of Column	:	2
Chi-Squared	:	20.45
Degrees of Freedom:		4

American Culture & Interpersonal Relationships

The last research question was, "How does the American culture and interpersonal relationships with Americans affect the academic achievement of Arab students?" To address this, the researcher asked the students to describe their interpersonal relationships with Americans and to find the effects of these relationships on the students' academic achievement.

TABLE XXXVIII

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY IN MAKING AMERICAN FRIENDS

Variables	Number	%
Great difficulty	118	54
Some Difficulty	57	26
Little difficulty	45	20
Total	220	100

Arab students were asked to check the degree of difficulty they experienced in making American friends. Data showed that 118 respondents (54%) reported that they found "great" difficulty. Eight-one (69%) of these had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. Fifty-seven (26%) reported that they encountered "some" difficulty, 41 (72%) of whom had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. Finally, 45 respondents (20%) reported that they experienced "little" difficulty, 32 (71%) of whom had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. (See Tables XXXVIII & XXXIX).

TABLE XXXIX

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY MAKING AMERICAN FRIENDS WITH
REGARD TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Response	Number	<u>GPA</u> (3.1-4.0)	% of the Total# for Making American Friends
Great difficulty	81		69
Some difficulty	41		72
Little difficulty	32		71

Through this analysis, chi-square was not significant and that led to conclude that making American friends did not affect the academic success of Arab students. ($X^2 = .02$, $df = 2$. See Table XL).

Regarding American culture and customs, the majority of Arab students, 184 (85%) reported that they were not familiar with American customs, 131 (71%) of whom had GPAs. Thirty-two respondents (15%) reported that they were familiar with American customs, 23 (72%) of whom had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0.

TABLE XL
CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO DIFFICULTY
MAKING AMERICAN FRIENDS AND
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Row	:	Difficulty in Making Am. Friends
Column	:	GPA
N Total	:	220
N Included	:	220
N of Rows	:	3
N of Column	:	2
Chi-Squared	:	.02
Degrees of Freedom	:	2

TABLE XLI
 ARAB STUDENTS WITH REGARD TO FAMILIARITY WITH
 AMERICAN CULTURE AND CUSTOMS
 N = 216*

Variables	Number	%
Familiar	32	15
Not familiar	184	85
Total	220	100

* Four students did not answer the question

TABLE XLII
 FAMILIARITY WITH AMERICAN CULTURE & CUSTOMS WITH
 REGARD TO ARAB STUDENTS' ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Variable	Number	<u>GPA</u> (3.1-4.0)	% of the Total # for American Culture & Customs
Familiar	23		72
Unfamiliar	131		71

TABLE XLIII

CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO FAMILIARITY
WITH AMERICAN CULTURE AND CUSTOM
AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Row	:	Familiarity with American Customs
Column	:	GPA
N Total	:	220
N Included	:	216
N of Rows	:	2
N of Columns	:	2
Chi-Squared	:	.05
Degree of Freedom:		1

TABLE XLIV
DESCRIPTION OF THE EFFECT OF AMERICAN
SOCIAL MANNERS WITH REGARD TO
ARAB STUDENT RESPONSES

Variables	Number	%
Negative	164	75
Positive	35	16
Undecided	21	10
Total	220	101

TABLE XLV
EFFECT OF AMERICAN SOCIAL MANNERS WITH REGARD TO
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Variable	Number	GPA (3.1-4.0)	% of the Total # for American Social Manners
Negative	116		71
Positive	24		69
Undecided	14		67

TABLE XLVI
 CONTINGENCY TABLE WITH REGARD TO EFFECT
 OF AMERICAN SOCIAL MANNERS
 ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Row	:	Effect of Am. Social Manners
Column	:	GPA
N Total	:	220
N Included	:	220
N of Rows	:	3
N of Columns	:	2
Chi-Squared	:	.18
Degrees of Freedom:		2

One can conclude that familiarity with American customs or lack of it had no difference on the Arab students' academic success. ($X^2 = .05$; $df = 1$. See Tables XLI, XLII, and XLIII).

Questions were also included about the effect of American social manners on the Arab students' academic performance. One hundred and sixty-four (75%) of the

respondents reported that it had a negative effect, 116 respondents (71%) of whom had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. Thirty-five respondents (16%) reported that it had a positive effect, 24 (69%) of whom had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. Twenty-one respondents (10%) did not know whether it had negative or positive effect on their academic success. Fourteen (67%) of whom had GPAs ranging from 3.1 to 4.0. (See Tables XLIV & XLV). However, it can easily be concluded that American social manners did not hinder the academic success of Arab students. ($X^2 = .18$; $df = 2$) (See Table XLVI).

All in all, the analysis of data showed that Chi-squares were not significant; that led to conclude that the American culture, interpersonal relationships with Americans, and having American friends or lack of it did not hinder the academic achievement of Arab students.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is divided into five sections: summary of the study, findings, conclusions, recommendations, and concluding thoughts.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate and describe the problems faced by Arab students studying at five Oklahoma institutions of higher education during the school year of 1989/90. More specifically, the study attempted to identify which of those problems which concerned Arab students most and to know whether these problems had any effect on their academic achievements and success.

The researcher mailed 315 questionnaires (see Appendix C) to the five Oklahoma institutions of higher education with the most Arab students enrolled. Two hundred forty-seven (78.41 percent) responses were received. No effort was made to categorize the respondents according to academic classifications or gender, since most institutions would not furnish more than just the names and addresses of the prospective respondents. In addition, some institutions did not reveal even this information; they insisted on mailing the questionnaires through their own systems.

Each of the 315 questionnaires was mailed with an introductory letter (see Appendix B) to inform the participant about the purpose of the study; why he/she was selected for it; and the importance and necessity of his/her contribution for the study's completion and success. Two weeks after the questionnaires were mailed, another letter and questionnaire were mailed to those who had not responded. By the time the last reminders were made, 247 responses had been received; in addition, 26 students were interviewed or phoned either in person or by phone. All in all, 220 (69.8%) of the questionnaires qualified to be analyzed.

Seven characteristics-- age, marital status, number of years the student had studied English prior to coming to the United States, financial difficulties, American teaching strategies, English language proficiency, American culture and customs and interpersonal relationships-- were examined as factors that might hinder Arab students' academic success in American institutions of higher education to determine whether they seemed to have any effect on the students' academic achievements.

Findings

1. As reported in Table IV, older Arab students were found to have higher grade point averages than younger students. The analysis of chi-square in Table V showed that older students did not probably perform academically better than younger ones.

Moreover, graduate Arab students achieved better academic records than their undergraduate counterparts. Tables VI, VII, VIII, and IX reported these data.

2. With regard to married students, the results showed that married students' grade point averages were higher than those of single students. When X^2 was computed, the result was not significant. Tables XI and XII reported these data.

3. As one can see from Table XIV, students who started studying English at an early age had higher GPAs than students who started studying English at a later age. The calculation of X^2 was not significant. See Table XV.

4. When data were examined for evidence of financial difficulties, the researcher did not find any serious problems. Tables XVII and XVIII report that students who had a high monthly income did not perform better or worse academically than students who had a low monthly income.

5. As can be seen from Table XX, data showed that American teaching strategies-- which included faculty teaching methods, examination procedures, grading patterns, using the library, and understanding test questions--did not seem to have a profoundly negative effect on the academic achievement of Arab students. See Tables XXI, XXII, XXIV, XXV, XXVII, XXVIII, XXX, XXXI, XXXIII, and XXXIV.

6. English language proficiency was defined by the Arab students' latest TOEFL scores. Tables XXXVI and XXXVII show that students who had high TOEFL scores performed better academically than those who had lower TOEFL scores.

7. Finally, Tables XXXIX, XL, XLII, XLIII, XLV, and XLVI reveal that students who had American friends and were familiar with American culture and customs did not perform academically better than students who did not have American friends and were not familiar with American culture and customs.

Conclusions

Findings derived from the study justify the following conclusions about the academic achievement of Arab students.

1. The statistical analysis of data indicated that age of undergraduate and age of graduate Arab students did not show an immediate effect on their academic achievement. This conclusion leads to conclude that age was not an important factor that might hinder the academic achievement of both graduate and undergraduate Arab students. That might be referred to individual differences and students' ability to understand and comprehend text books and school materials. Future research would provide more useful information about the relationship between age and the academic achievement. Moghrabi, 1966; Meloni, 1982; and Meleis, 1986 supported this conclusion.

2. The research findings showed that students who had a good mastery of the English language performed much better than students who had a poor mastery of English. This leads to the conclusion that the more preparation in the English language, the less difficulty students encounter. Several

studies supported this conclusion, such as Ellakany, 1970 Maxwell, 1974; Pavri, 1963; Racy, 1970; and Schwab, 1956.

3. The findings showed that familiarity with American culture and customs or lack of it and having American friends or lack of it did not hinder the academic achievement of Arab students. This conclusion leads to assume that Arab students can adapt and adjust to a new condition and a new environment without affecting their academic achievement. This conclusion was supported by Meleis, 1986 and Patai, 1982.

4. Referring to the review of literature and the analysis of data, findings showed that Arab students were not different from any other students in terms of academic achievement. This study did not find differences between both Arab or non Arab studenys. Future study might provide more information which helps to find differences if there is any.

Recommendations for Future Study

On the basis of the findings of this investigation, the researcher makes the following recommendations.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. The sample should be taken from a larger geographic area and should include students from small as well as large colleges and universities.

2. Future studies should include both male and female students.

3. It is strongly recommended that more variables be selected for study in order to cover all difficulties and problems Arab students face while attending American colleges and universities.

Recommendations for Policy Making

1. Since study findings showed that graduate students performed better academically than did undergraduate students, parents, governments, and companies who sponsor Arab students should take this in their considerations.

It is also recommended that higher education authorities in Arab countries give special attention to screening, evaluating, sponsoring, and sending Arab students abroad. If Arab students can be placed in universities in their own countries, they should stay. If not, they should attend in other countries with higher education authorities in both countries fully involved, communicating with one another, and keeping track of each Arab student's academic development through the Arab embassies in these countries.

2. As far as English language is concerned, Arab students must have a good command of English. A well designed program is essential to the academic survival of Arab students. They need extensive courses in English as a Second Language (ESL). It is further recommended that advanced courses in writing, reading, and oral communication be made available to Arab students working beyond the undergraduate level. The host universities should be

responsible for providing these courses through their English departments.

3. Some Arab students will be leaders in their countries in the near future and that their experiences as students will affect their international views. The following suggestions were made so that Arab students can learn more about American that they otherwise would:

a. Involve American students in activities with Arab students on campus to provide an experience which is new to the American students as well as to the Arabs.

b. Initiate a home visit program between American families and Arab students to break the cultural barriers which tend to separate them. The aim would be to provide an opportunity for friendly discussion and for individuals to relate to each other in these small groups.

4. The universities' administrations should provide Arab students before they arrive in the United States with catalogs and publications of the universities' requirements, financial aid, courses of study, tuition and fees, estimated expenses, student housing, the school calendar, the grading system, and degree requirements, so that students can be adequately informed and able to make appropriate decisions before they leave their home country for the United States.

5. An emergency loan fund should be established at universities to aid all foreign students in time of need. This aid fund should follow the same rules and regulations employed for American students' loans. It would be helpful to

arrange a long-term loan fund for students that charged no interest at all. It would also be helpful to have a fund established for those students who achieved high academic standing in previous semesters.

6. The researcher recommends that follow-up studies of Arab students who have returned home should be done at frequent intervals to evaluate Arab/ American student exchange programs.

7. Since Arab students are also studying in various European nations, a comparative study of the problems encountered there and those confronting students in the United States would be helpful. It would be useful to pinpoint special problems Arab students face in the United States' universities but not in the European universities.

Concluding Thoughts

The following recommendations and thoughts are based on personal experience and suggestions made by respondents in order to overcome the problems faced by Arab students.

It is recommended that the International Student Service office (ISS) should distribute a short pamphlet about American idioms, common expressions, and slang to every student registered in their respective institutions. This might help avoid some misunderstandings.

As far as financial problems are concerned, it is recommended that international students should be permitted to work or allowed to pay the same tuition as American

students. As an Arab student stated, "I am paying three times what the in-state students pay so that they do not have to worry about money, which is the foremost prerequisite for education here."

It was surprising that when students were asked whether they would choose their present university if they had a chance to do so, the majority of students (54.55%) answered 'no', and only 39% answered 'yes'. Therefore, the colleges and universities involved in this study should investigate the reason for students' reluctance to choose their current institution.

Meanwhile, when students were asked whether they would choose the United States again as a place in which to study and get their degree, most of students (88%) reported that they would choose the United States as a good place to study and to live . Only 11% would chose not to come to the United States if they had a chance to choose again.

(See Appendix F).

Finally, the research wishes that the faculty, staff, and administrators could visit Arab countries when they have a chance to do so to discuss students' needs and learn about Arab cultures, their language, teaching methods, and customs and norms.

It would be helpful to Americans to experience the feeling of being a minority. I noticed that I can relate well to Americans who had a chance to visit the Middle East and live for a while among Middle Eastern people. They

understand the problems and feelings which Middle Eastern students experience.

By doing so, they definitely will appreciate the courage and sacrifices which Arab students have made to conquer and overcome the obstacles they face while studying in American colleges and universities.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

LETTER REQUESTING POPULATION FIGURES OF
ARAB STUDENTS FOR FALL 1989 FROM
OKLAHOMA UNIVERSITIES

12-8 North University Place
Stillwater, OK. 74075

August, 1989

International Student Advisor

Dear Sir:

As a doctoral candidate in higher education at Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma, Stillwater, I am conducting a study entitled " Arab Students At Five Oklahoma Institutions of Higher Education: A Study of Academic Achievement" The study will include those colleges and universities which have the highest number of Arab students. In order to determine whether your institution should be included in this study, I would appreciate it if you send me the following information: 1) the number of Arab students in your college/university listed by countries; b) the total number of foreign students; and c) the name and address of each Arab student to send him/her a questionnaire.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Haifa El Agha



Sent through:

Dr. John Gardiner
Dissertation Adviser

APPENDIX B

**A COVERING LETTER ACCOMPANYING
THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

12-8 North University Place
Stillwater, Ok. 74075

October, 1989

Dear Arab Student:

As a doctoral candidate at Oklahoma State University, I am conducting a study entitled "Arab Students at Five Selected Institutions of Higher Education: A Study of Academic Achievement" Your help is needed for the completion of this study.

The enclosed questionnaire has been developed to enable Arab students to identify factors they feel affect their academic achievement. You have been selected as a possible participant.

I assure you that all the information you share will be treated confidentially. The data collected in this study will be used only for dissertation analysis.

The successful completion of this project may lead to recommendations that will promote improvement in the content and process of Arab-American educational exchange. As an Arab student, you are in a unique position to provide assistance in this research.

Therefore, I would appreciate it if you would return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelope by November 30th. Successful completion of the study depends upon your prompt response.

Thank you for your cooperation in making this study a success. Thank you on the behalf of the Arab students who will benefit from the results of this study.

Sincerely yours,

Haifa El Agha



cc: John Gardiner
Dissertation Adviser

APPENDIX C
QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

DIRECTION

Please answer the following questions by supplying the information requested. Clearly mark your answer(s) with an (X) in the space provided. Please answer all questions since analysis is less useful with missing data. Thank you.

PART I

1. When did you begin to study English?
 in primary school in my country.
 in middle school in my country.
 in high school in my country.
 in a university in my country.
 in an intensive language institute in my country.
 in an intensive language institute in the United States.
 Others
2. For how many years did you study English before you came to the United States?
 2 years or less 5-6 years
 3-4 years more than 6 years
3. Did you attend any English as a second language (ESL) classes prior to entering the university in the United States?
 Yes
 No
4. If yes, please check length of time:
 For 1 semester For 3 semesters
 For 2 semesters For 4 or more semesters
5. Among the following items, please rank the first, second, third, and fourth level of difficulty you experienced when you first attended classes in the United States. (First is most difficult.)

() Listening	() Speaking
() Reading	() Writing

6. Please check the degree of difficulty you experience NOW in each following item:

	<u>Great</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Little</u>
Understanding lectures -----	_____	_____	_____
Participating in class- discussions -----	_____	_____	_____
Expressing myself orally --	_____	_____	_____
Writing essays and term- papers -----	_____	_____	_____
Taking and organizing notes --	_____	_____	_____
Finishing tests on time.....	_____	_____	_____
Making American friends	_____	_____	_____
Paying rent on time.....	_____	_____	_____
Paying tuition & fees on time..	_____	_____	_____

7. From the list below, rank the seven items which have had the most "positive" effect on your academic performance and the seven items which have had the most "negative" effect on your academic performance. You are to rank seven items under "positive" and seven items under "negative." (#1 is most positive in left column; #1 is most negative in right column.)

	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Negative</u>
English language preparation..	_____	_____
Faculty teaching methods	_____	_____
Examination procedures	_____	_____
Familiarity with American culture and customs	_____	_____
Financial security	_____	_____
Family life	_____	_____
American food	_____	_____
University policies	_____	_____
Grading patterns	_____	_____
Compulsory class attendance ...	_____	_____
Writing essays and reports	_____	_____
Understanding references, textbooks, journals	_____	_____
Taking and organizing notes ...	_____	_____
Locating information in the library	_____	_____
Understanding test questions ..	_____	_____
Homesickness	_____	_____
Political situation in my country	_____	_____
American social manners	_____	_____
Physical/mental health	_____	_____
Other, please specify:	_____	_____

8. Living in the United States culture is completely

_____ Single _____ Divorced
 _____ Married _____ Widowed

17. If married, is your spouse with you?

_____ Yes
 _____ No

18. Where do you live?

_____ In a dorm with an American roommate
 _____ In a dorm with an Arab roommate
 _____ In a dorm with a roommate other than Arab
 _____ In an apartment with an American roommate
 _____ In an apartment with an Arab roommate
 _____ With your family
 _____ With an American Family

19. If you have a family, how many children do you have?

_____ 0 _____ 3
 _____ 1 _____ 4
 _____ 2 _____ 5 or more

20. As of your last birthday, how old are you?

_____ Less than 20 years _____ 35-39 years
 _____ 20-24 years _____ 40-44 years
 _____ 25-29 years _____ 45-49 years
 _____ 30-34 years _____ 50 or more

21. What is your current academic status?

_____ Undergraduate
 _____ Graduate
 _____ Other, please specify.

22. How long have you been in the United States?

_____ Less than 6 mos _____ 25 mos to 4 years
 _____ 6 mos to 12 mos _____ 4 years to 6 years
 _____ 13 mos to 2 years _____ more than 6 years

23. What is your major field of study? (Please be specific)

24. What is your chief source of financial support while in

the United States? (Check all items that apply)

- Parents' support
 Self-supporting
 Scholarship
 Graduate assistantship
 Government support
 Others, please specify

25. What is your current gross monthly income regardless of source? Check one please.

- Under \$600
 \$600- \$999
 \$1000 -\$1399
 \$1400 or more

26. What was your academic rank In high school?

- In the highest quarter
 In the second quarter
 In the third quarter
 In the lowest quarter

27. Please write your highest TOEFL score?

28. As of the Spring, 1989 semester, What was your grade point average on a 4.0 scale?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.0 - 1.5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2.6- 3.0 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.6 - 2.0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3.1 -3.5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2.1 - 2.5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3.6- 4.0 |

Thank you for your cooperation and prompt response.

APPENDIX D

A FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO THE INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS ADVISERS

From: Haifa El Agha
12-8 N. Univ. Place
Stillwater, OK. 74075

December, 10, 1989

To: Associate Dean of International Student

Dear Associate Dean of Student,

I would like to express my deep appreciation and grateful to you. I thank you very much for your concern and help in distributing my questionnaires. I really am thankful to you.

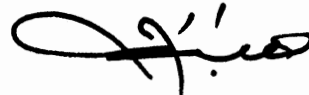
I am sending you 55 more questionnaires. Please distribute these copies to Arab students who are from: Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Kuwait, Jordan, Qatar, U. A. Emirates, Libya, Sudan, Palestine, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.

Again, I thank you very much in making my study successful. Please feel free to call me at (405)744-2911.

Best wishes

sincerely yours,

Haifa El Agha



Sent through:

Dr. John Gardiner
Dissertation adviser

APPENDIX E

RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FROM
THE FIVE INSTITUTIONS SELECTED FOR
THE STUDY

Arab students' opinions were greatly regarded so the researcher copied them. The statements were copied verbatim, and no corrections were made on the sentence structures. The following pages demonstrate the individual opinions expressed by Arab students attending the five Oklahoma institutions of higher education.

Students were asked to write down their recommendations and suggestions as to how to increase the level of Arab students' academic achievement. They were also asked whether they would choose their present university and the U.S. if they had to do it all over again.

Responses to the first question are identified as (a); responses to question 2 are identified as (b); and responses to question 3 are identified as (c).

Opinions of Arab Students Studying at
Five Oklahoma Institutions of Higher Education
(OSU, OU, TU, OCU, CSU)

1. (a) Exposure to English language at home at primary level. Reading a lot of English classics.
(b) No. I would not choose my present university.
(c) Yes, I would choose the U.S. to study in because here a lot of opportunities.

Lebanon graduate; 4 years in the U.S.
2. (a) Having group meetings for open discussions about different problems, if any, and having common activities to raise the spirit.
(b) Yes, I would choose my present university because it is a unique school with a wonderful campus and many classes to develop.
(c) Yes, I would choose the U.S.

Egyptian graduate; less than 6 months in the U.S.
3. (a) Study hard and try to go for better school.
(b) No. My college ECT is not a good one, especially the faculty.
(c) Yes, I would choose the U.S. because my country needs a lot of advanced science and technology.

Lebanon undergraduate; less than 6 months in the U.S.
4. (a) Make American friends, live with American roommate. It will help a great deal to do so for cultural and language experience.
(b) No.
(c) yes.

Syria undergraduate; 6 years in the U.S.

5. (a) Study as hard as you can. Make American friends.
(b) No. I would choose another university in the North.
(c) Yes I would come to U.S.

Jordan undergraduate; 25 months
in the U.S.A.

6. (a) Mix more with Americans. Make American friends.
(b) No I would not choose my present university. I would like to go to Canada or another state.
(c) Yes I would choose either U.S.A. or Canada.

Palestine undergraduate; 6
months in the U.S.A

7. (a) Mixing with Americans more and forming study groups with them.
(b) No, I prefer to be in a better university and bigger city.
(c) No, I prefer to go to Canada for business.

Palestine undergraduate; 25
months in the U.S.

8. (a) You have to have willingness and desire for success.
(b) No.
(c) No.

Saudi Arabia undergraduate; 4
years in the U.S.

9. (a) Having a good relationship with the instructors are very helpful in addition to a good relation with American students.
(b) No. I would not choose my present university because of its bad policy and general attitude toward inter national students and foreigners.
(c) Yes I would choose the U.S.A as a place to study in.

Palestine student; 13 months in
the U.S.

10. (a) Try to mix with Americans and work harder.

(b) No.

(c) Yes, because I want to have a good education.

Jordan undergraduate; 13 months
in the U.S.

11. (a) More preparation as far as English goes. Try to study English before coming to the U.S. This will save time and money.

(b) Yes, I would choose my present institution because it has a good program in agriculture, and it is not as expensive as other schools.

(c) Yes, I would choose the U.S. especially in my case. I have a fairly background in English. It is very convenient to study here.

Syria graduate; 13 months in the
U.S.

12. (a) Give more time and importance to your study. Get serious and try to help each other.

(b) Yes, I would choose my institution because teachers give much opportunities to the students to express themselves. You can feel the teacher, student interaction.

(c) Yes, I would choose the U.S. It is a great opportunity to know the U.S. that everyone has been talking about all over the world. know their culture, experience the life away from your family and country.

Morocco undergraduate female; 6
months in the U.S

13. (a) Give at least a 6 months program for students to refresh themselves in science and math.

(b) Undecided; but I would change my school if I find better school.

(c) Yes, I would choose the U.S. because here I feel I can completely spending my time studying without too many distractions.

Saudi Arabia; 6 months in the
U.S.

14. (a) Learning English very well. Make many American friends.
- (b) No. Too much discrimination against international students.
- (c) Yes, too much freedom.

Oman undergraduate; 25 months in the U.S.

15. (a) Study more and be more serious.
- (b) Yes. The university gave me a lot of opportunities.
- (c) Yes. Many opportunities are present. Know U.S. culture and customs.

Morocco undergraduate; 16 months in the U.S.

16. (a) Enough financial support and give more attention to school work. More academic contests to encourage better academic achievement.
- (b) Yes, because the program is just a continuation of what I had studied in my country.
- (c) Yes, because of the language and the U.S. graduates are more welcome in my country for work.

Jordan graduate; 6 months in the U.S.

17. (a) Attend lectures, read, write notes, write summaries. Know how to invest time. Preserve daily prayers in the Mosque. Adhere to Islamic values.
- (b) No. I would choose more prestigious university.
- (c) Yes, I think the graduate study in the U.S. is very good, and we learn a lot especially in a good university.

Jordan graduate; 4 years in the U.S.

18. (a) More preparation for the life in a new society. I would suggest that a trip of two weeks before the beginning of the study with a guide to the U.S. help the students.
- (b) No, the attitude of people around here is not as I

would expected. I would rather go to one of schools in the North states.

- (c) Yes, I love it here. A new and big society to deal with and try to understand. The U.S. is big and complex country and it is an exciting to live in.

Iraq undergraduate; 25 months in the U.S.

19. (a) Interact more with Americans- Try to get to know your teachers better; join some of the student associations on campus. Most of us stop learning or improving our English once we pass the TOEFL. We should not do this. That is why many of us are facing difficulties.
- (b) No. I did not choose to come here, it was my parents' decision. I would like to go to a better ranked university.
- (c) Undecided. I probably go to France since I know French very well and most of my friends are there. In addition, it is closer to Lebanon.

Lebanon graduate; 4 years in the U.S.

20. (a) Do not get off track with the social life. Get involved with in the same major.
- (b) No.
- (c) Yes.

Jordan Undergraduate; 4 years in the U.S.

21. (a) Know English very well; know basic math and science; try to involve with American society and make friends even it is difficult.
- (b) Undecided
- (c) Yes, I would choose the U.S. It is the best of the worst.

Saudi Arabia undergraduate; 14 months in the U.S.

22. (a) Come to the U.S with a great feeling that you will succeed. Be prepared in English language well.

- (b) Yes, I feel happy and safe here.
- (c) Yes, in the U.S. students can take their opportunities regardless of their nationality, color, or religion.

Palestine female graduate; 4 years in the U.S.

23. (a) First thing is that life in the U.S. is very expensive and the second thing is to give the students more chance to success.
- (b) No, because they require a hard things to do like the English test.
 - (c) Yes, because in the U.S. one can study any field he wants and take any course he likes and less years to finish school.

Palestine undergraduate; 13 months in the U.S.

24. (a) Students should stay away of drugs, alcohol, and girls.
- (b) Yes, even I faced many unnecessary difficulties.
 - (c) Yes, the quality of schools here is much more better than it is in the Middle East.

Kuwait; 13 months in the U.S.

25. (a) Language preparation, culture orientation before coming to the U.S. Being able to work as G.A or other job either on or off campus.
- (b) No.
 - (c) Yes

Libya graduate female; more than 6 years in the U.S.

26. (a) Make Americans aware of our culture and background. Organize sort of meetings where we can explain our views to Americans in certain areas.
- (b) Yes, I would choose my current school. I like it here.
 - (c) No. I really do not like this state and I do not feel home.

Yemen undergraduate; 25 months in
the U.S.

27. (a) Try to do your homework without any help from other students. Make more effort to learn how to be independent from others.
- (b) Yes,
- (c) Yes, I have learned a lot.

Tunisia graduate; 25 months in
the U.S.

28. (a) To improve their language I would recommend them to speak English most of the time and not being discouraged if they find some difficulty.
- (b) Yes, my school is so good.
- (c) Yes, America is a nice place to be in.

Oman undergraduate; 25 months in
the U.S.

29. (a) Mix with Americans, make English speaking friends. Set an excellent example for a good Arab students. Be friendly and honest with people.
- (b) No, I do not like it here. I would rather go to another university especially North. Because I have been toled that North states are better than southern states.
- (c) Yes, I would come to the United States of America because life is much better than I have back home, and opportunities are many and chances for bright future are more.

Jordan undergraduate; 3 years in
the U.S.

30. (a) I see that Arab students, especially the single ones get involved with girls and forget their cultures. This usually affects their academic success. I recommend that they should concentrate more on their studies and keep away from bad things.
- (b) Yes, because I think this city is too small and there is no crime happened here. It is a quite place to live in.
- (c) Yes, because I can study all the time and I do not have any thing to worry.

Algeria; 4 years in the U.S.

31. (a) Study more seriously and actively.
 (b) No, I would like to go to another state.
 (c) Yes, because of the many alternatives of universities and fields of study.
 Saudi Arabia; 25 months in the U.S.
32. (a) Get prepared in the experimental process such that in physics, chemistry, etc. while they in high school.
 (b) Undecided. I Prefer to have the decision after graduating.
 (c) Yes, I will be familiar with the teaching system and the American way in dealing with people.

Oman undergraduate; 5 years in the U.S.

33. (a) Arab students should have a stable financial source. They should have social services, and spend more time in learning English, take Summer off.
 (b) Yes, I enjoy going to school, I meet new friends everyday.

Jordan undergraduate; 25 months in the U.S.

34. (a) Organize your time, understand English language well.
 (b) No. I prefer to go to another university where better education level is available and no discrimination against international students.
 (c) Yes, because having a degree from an American university is more respectful back home than any other place.

Lebanon graduate; 3 years in the U.S.

35. (a) Join Muslim society and get involved in Muslims' activities.
 (b) No, because I like to major in Biomedical Engineering and this school does not offer it.

- (c) Yes, just being in America is quite learning experience.

Saudi Arabia; 4 years in the U.S.

36. (a) Not to get involved in drugs and alcohol.
 (b) No, because of the high tuition and so expensive. Texas universities would be better.
 (c) Yes, here is more opportunities than back home.

Algeria graduate; 5 years in the U.S.

37. (a) Learn English before coming to U.S. Be familiar with American culture before entering U.S.
 (b) No, I would not choose my current school. I would go to another university in the North.
 (c) Yes, I would choose the U.S again. Teaching methods are much better than we have back home.

Palestine Undergraduate; 3 years in the U.S.

38. (a) Organize your time and take school seriously.
 (b) Undecided
 (c) yes, because of the system flexibility in the U.S.

Saudi Arabia; 25 months in the U.S.

39. (a) Arab students must study English before coming to the U.S. this will help them to understand lecture, express themselves well, and take notes.
 (b) No, because I was forced to come to Oklahoma, since all my family is here, but if it was my decision, I would have gone to a better university specialized in business market.
 (c) Yes, since I believe that it is better to gain education and experience from American institutions and specially seeking higher education from the U.S.

Lebanon undergraduate; 13 months in the U.S.

40. (a) Take time to prepare for lectures and frequently review your notes and textbooks.

- (b) Yes, I have had a very good learning experience.
- (c) Yes, because America helps students to get more education as possible as they can get.

Jordan graduate; more than 6 years in the U.S.

41. (a) A little concentration on school, always visualize the goal that made you come here for, stop coping others homework depend on yourself.
- (b) No, because the tuition is high
 - (c) Yes, I would choose to come here because I already know the system and the education quality is good.

Iraq graduate; 4 years in the U.S.

42. (a) They should improve their English ability.
- (b) Yes, because I am not having any problem and we have a good business department and a good university standard.
 - (c) Yes, because of the good academic level.

Syria graduate; 4 years in the U.S.

43. (a) Be serous and compete with Americans, concentrate your study.
- (b) Yes, we have a good program in my school.
 - (c) Yes, American educational system is strong and highly recognized among the world countries.

Palestine graduate; 4 years in the U.S.

44. (a) Emphasis on school than on social life. Forget girls, drinks, and drugs. Make non Arab friends in order learn English.
- (b) No, I do not want to live in Oklahoma.
 - (c) No. It is too far from home.

Saudi Arabia undergraduate; 25 months in the U.S.

45. (a) Study first, then have fun second.

(b) No. I did not choose my present university, my employer did.

(c) Yes. I like living in the U.S.

Libya graduate; 4 years in the
U.S.

46. (a) I recommend that students should always remember the purpose they are here. They should study hard.

(b) No, because there are many universities which are better than mine.

(c) Yes, because America has many good fields.

Yemen Graduate; 3 years in the
U.S.

47. (a) Study hard in order to be recognized by Americans that you are not academically less than they are. Concentrate on your study rather than social problems.

(b) No. I have been struck with so much unethical behavior that it shocked me and affected my entire future.

(c) Yes, the American educational system is flexible and designed to enhance ones ability.

Palestine graduate; 4 years in
the U.S.

48. (a) Arab students should learn the English language well enough before coming to the U.S, they should have a very good idea about the American culture and life-style.

(b) Yes. I like it here. I find every thing is OK.

(c) Yes, because America is the land of opportunities. Everyone has his/her own chance. The more you work hard, the more better opportunity you will have.

Jordan graduate; 5 years in the
U.S.

49. (a) I recommend that students should study hard and compete with American and prove themselves to their teachers and to their governments. Do not drink or

play with girls. Stay away from these bad staff.

- (b) Yes, my current university is so well known and the program I am studying is adequate.
- (c) Yes, I would choose the U.S. as a place to study and live in.

Kuwait undergraduate; 4 years in
the U.S.

50. (a) Study first, study second, and have fun third. Set a good example for your peers and teachers. Respect yourself. Respect others' opinions and culture. Mix with Americans and make American friends.
- (b) No, I would not choose my current university. I would like to go to another school which is better and bigger than mine.
 - (c) Yes, I would come again to the U.S. to study. America is an advanced and highly developed country.

Palestine graduate; 4 years in
the U.S.

51. (a) Study hard, make non-speaking Arabic friends. keep going to the mosque.
- (b) No, I would not choose my current university. I do not like it here. People are prigedest and so as the professors.
 - (c) Yes, I like American school. Here you can have a great opportunity and you can take your chance to prove yourself.

Syria graduate; 25 months the
U.S.

52. (a) Have an open mind concerning the American way of life. Choose a major of your own choice, not your parent's choice or society pressure.
- (b) No.
 - (c). Yes. In the United States one can practice what ever he wants and by his own way. Away from his parents' pressure or family influence.

Palestine graduate; more than 6
years in the U.S.

53. (a) Spend more time studying and less time arguing in

political issues. Do more research in terms of term paper. I like this kind of study. I appreciate your effort to study problems facing Arab students. may Allah bless you. If you need help please call me on..... . . .

- (b) Yes. I like my current university. The university is located in a small town, no crimes or robberies. I can study more here.
- (c) Yes, I would choose the United States to study in its colleges and universities. I like the system here. I like also the teacher-student relationship.

Jordan graduate; 3 years in the U.S.

54. (a) Concentrate on your study, tolerate discrimination, and make money if you can.
- (b) Yes. I like this city. People are nice and students as well. Oklahoma is inexpensive and cheaper than other states.
 - (c) Yes. In the United States one can do what ever he pleases no matter how. Because I do not have family here, I can concentrate on my study more and I do not have to visit or socialize with other people. The problem is life-living is so very expensive.

Morocco graduate, two years in the U.S.

55. (a) Arab students should do their best and study hard in order to prove to Americans that they can be as good as they are. Stay away from drugs, girls, drinks, and crimes. Remember why you are here. Keep going to the Mosque and pray.
- (b) No. I do not my current university. I do not like the city nor the people here. I would rather go to North states. People are better and open minded.
 - (c) Yes. I would come to the United States to study. It is a great opportunity to come and compete with Americans in their own land and in their own universities.

Palestine graduate, 4 years in the U.S.

56. (a) First of all, may Allah bless you and I thank you for this study. We, as Arab students need very

much this type of research. Please if you need any help or more information, do not hesitate to call me on....or write at this address...

I recommend for Arab students to study hard and keep away from drugs, playing, and arguing for nothing. Make American friends and speak English as much as you can.

- (b) No. I would rather go to another state other than Oklahoma. In this state there is no place to go to in your free time. A few places only. Also I do not like this kind of weather. As a matter of fact, next semester I well go to another state.
- (c) Yes. The U. S. is a great country, every one gets his own chance. The harder you work, the better position you will get no matter who you are.

Egypt graduate, 5 years in the U.S.

APPENDIX F

FIGURES FROM 1-8

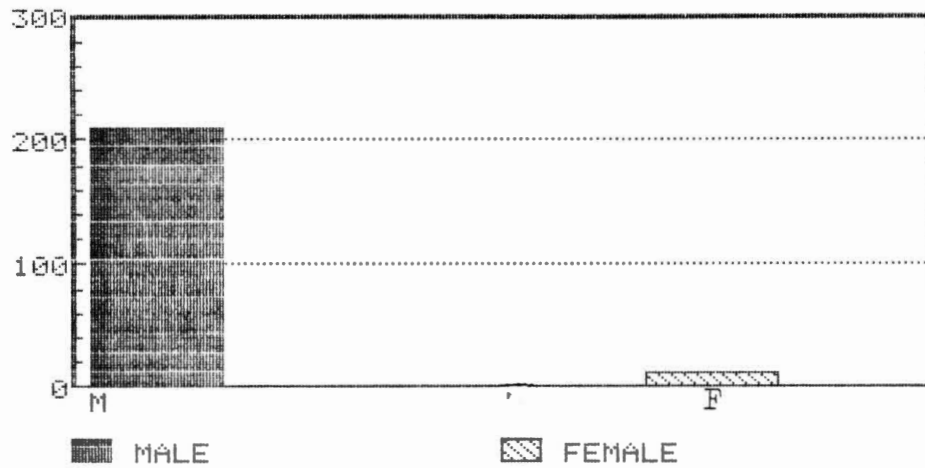


Figure 1. Distribution of Gender

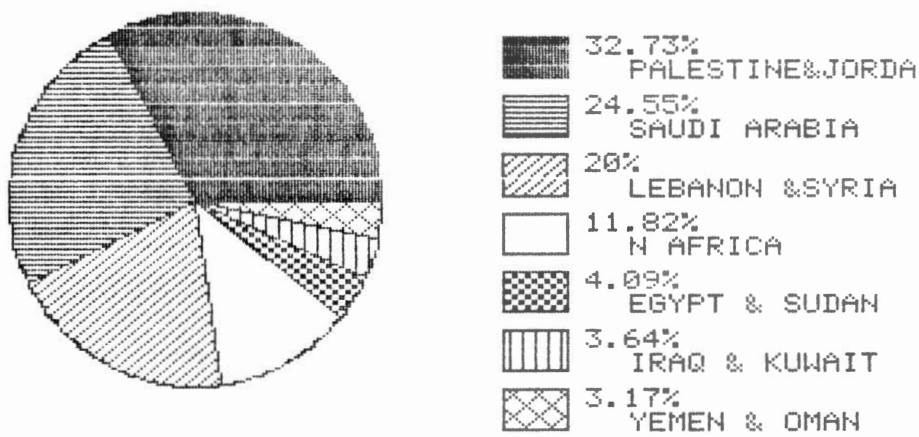


Figure 2. Home Country by Region

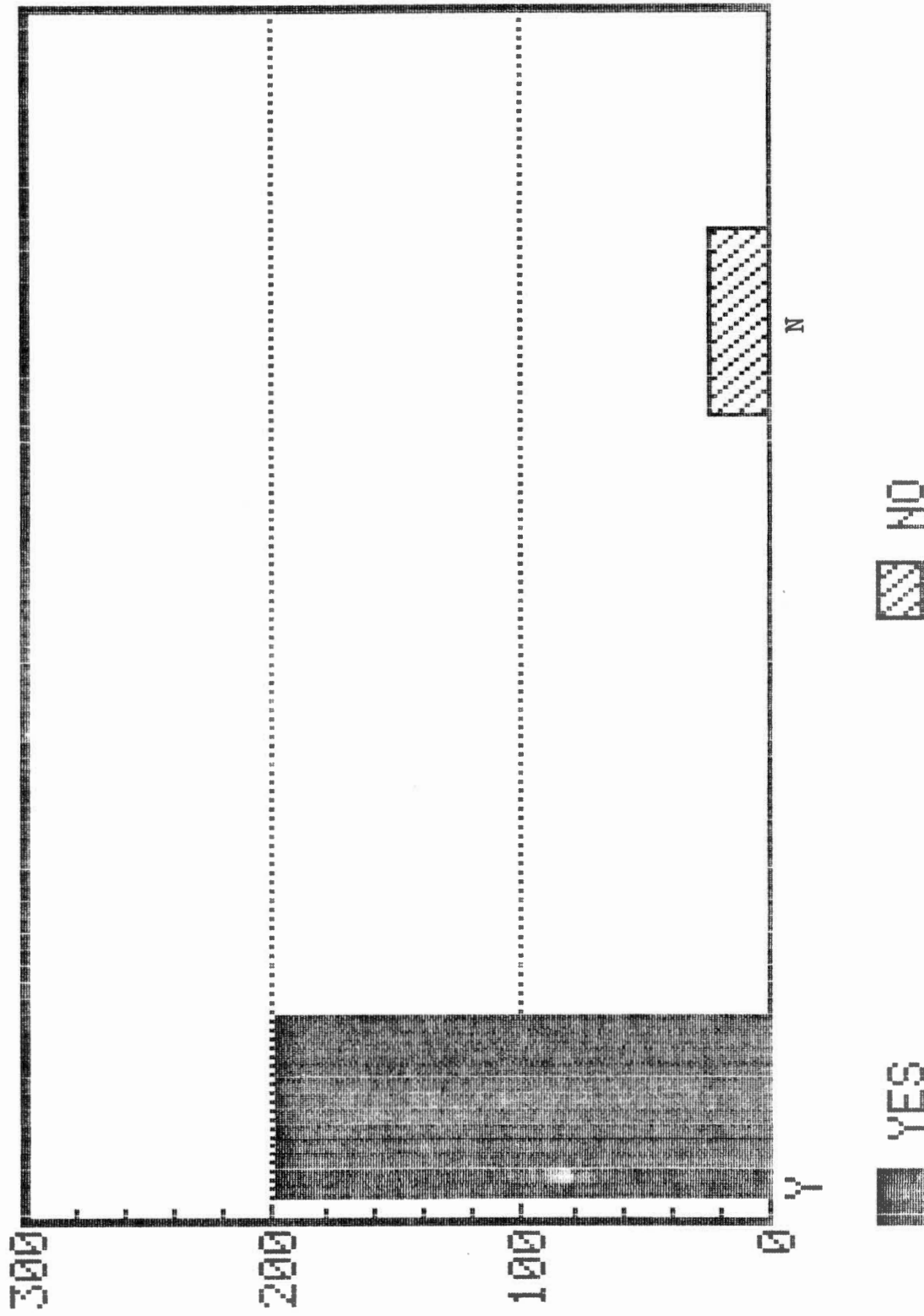


Figure 3. Spouse with him/her

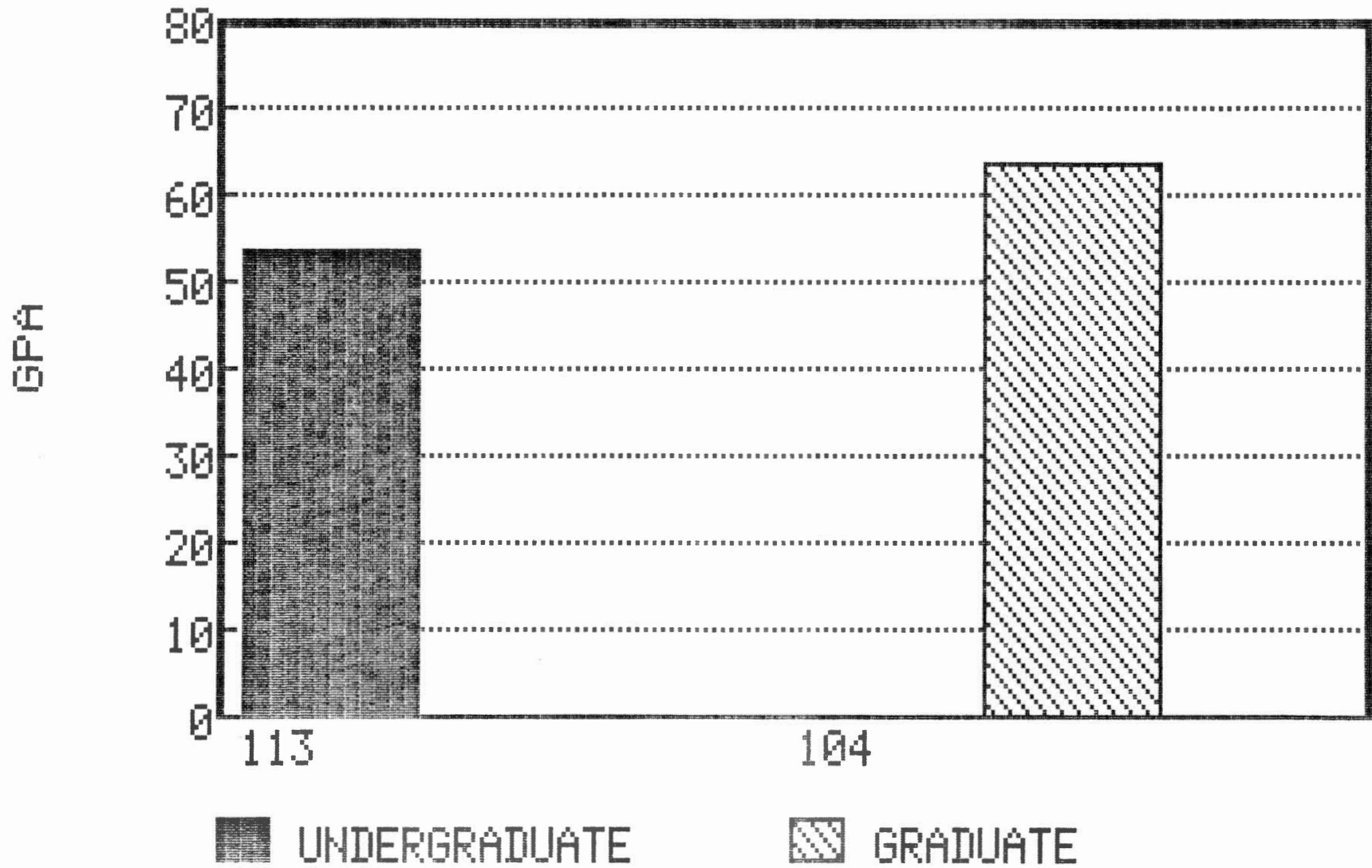


Figure 4. Academic Status with Regard to GPA

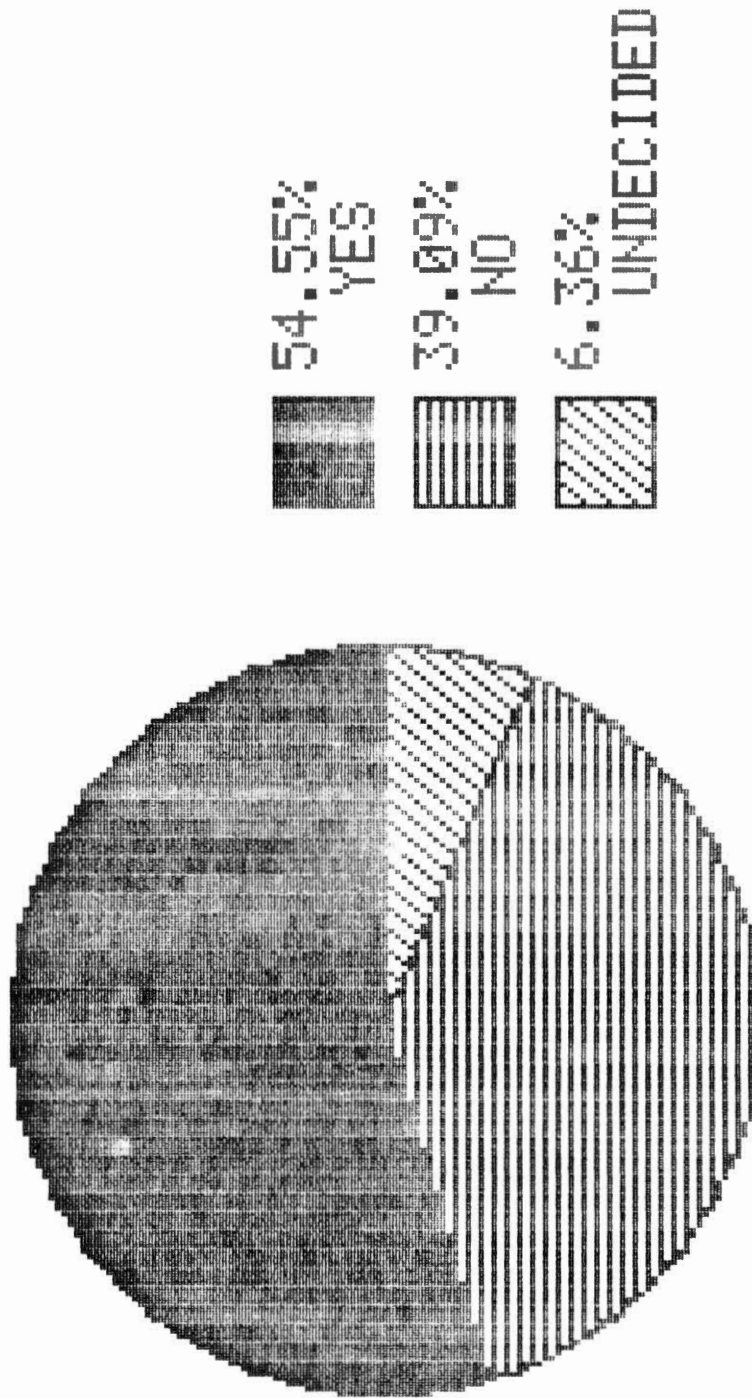


Figure 5. Would You Choose Your Current Institution?

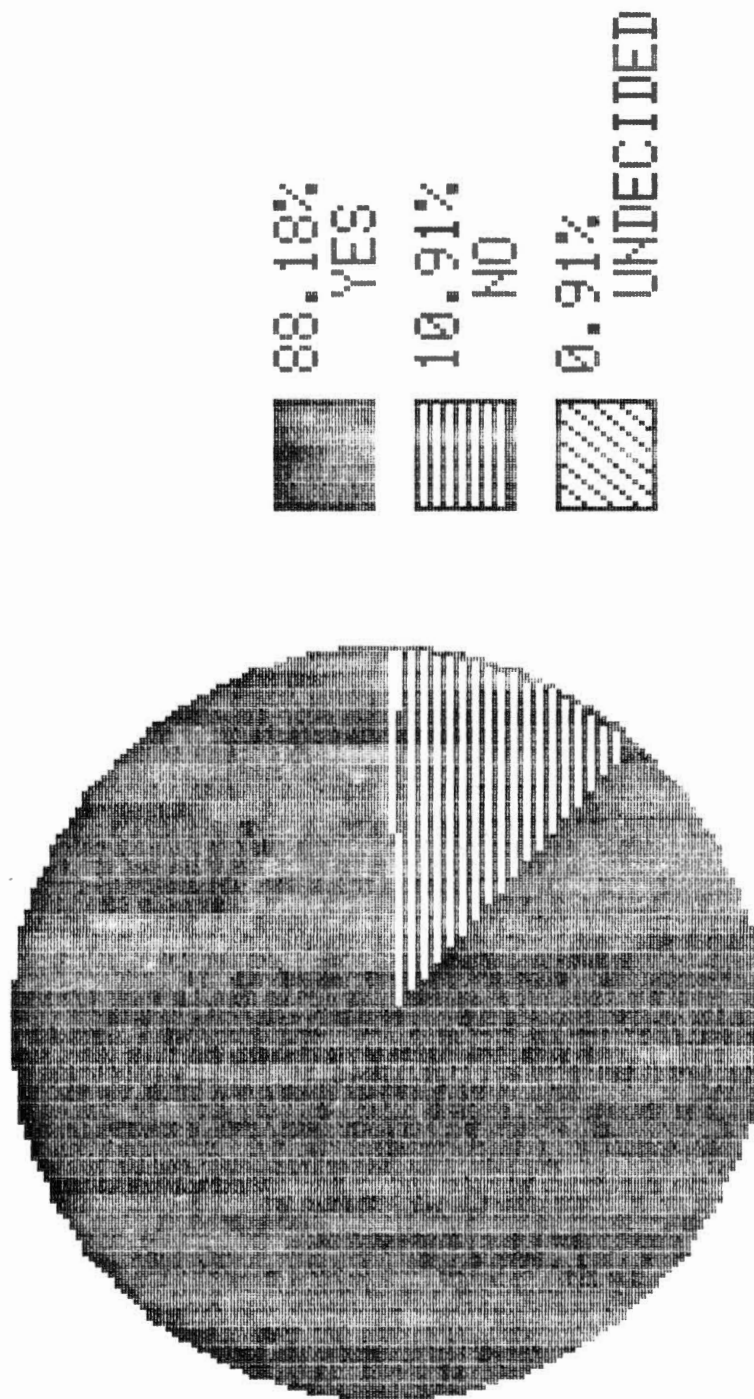


Figure 6. Would You Choose the United States Again?

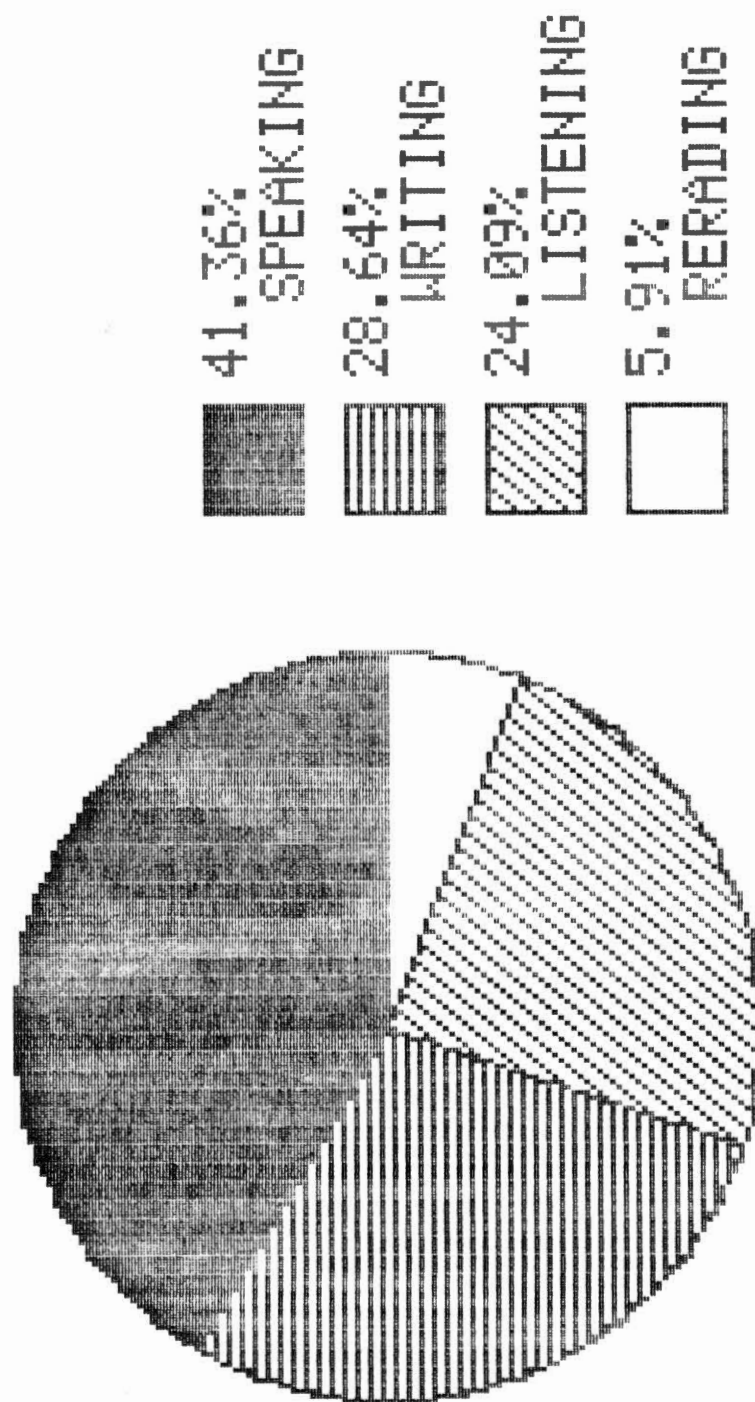


Figure 7. Degree of Difficulty in

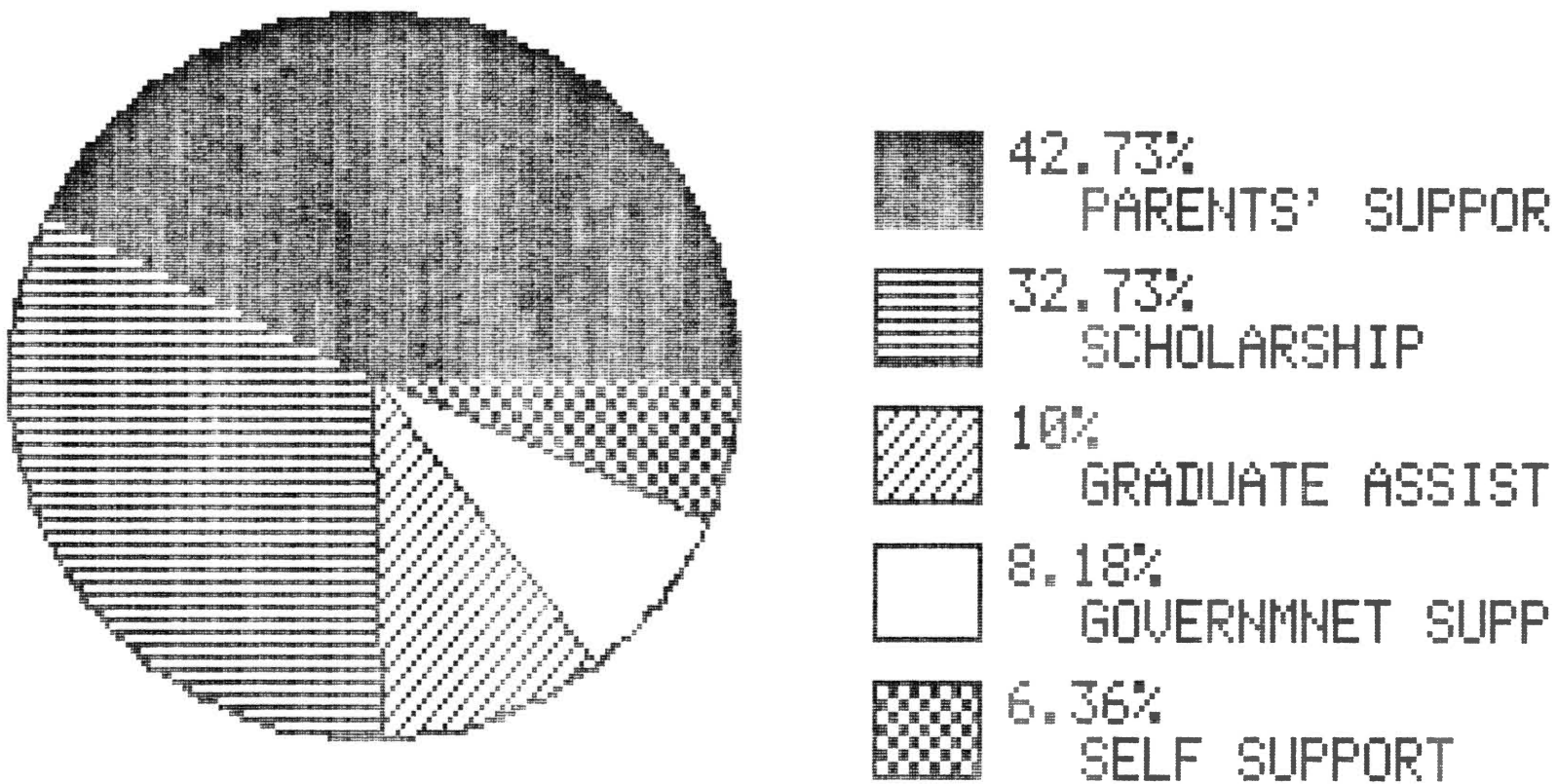


Figure 8. Financial Support While Studying in the United States

2
VITA

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