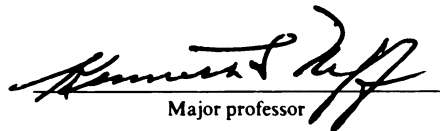This is to certify that the

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FEMALE DROPOUTS FROM THE ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM IN A SCHOOL DISTRICT IN AMMAN-JORDAN

By

Asma Ghaleb Abu-Abboud

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT
FEMALE DROPOUTS FROM THE ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM IN A SCHOOL DISTRICT IN AMMAN-JORDAN

By

Asma Ghaleb Abu-Abboud

The purpose of this study was to understand the reasons behind dropping out from female adult education programs in a school district in Amman, Jordan. Because of sex segregation in schools, the study was conducted on female adult students only.

The ethnographic methods were used to understand the factors behind dropping out. The qualitative research methods used included participant observation, field notes, and interviews. The participants in the study were given forms that indicated that participation was voluntary, the participants could withdraw their participation at any time, and that the identity of the participants would remain confidential.

The data collected provided rich description of the students in the setting and an understanding of the broader segment of society to which the students belong. The study suggests a number of reasons behind dropping out from the centers. They are:
(i) Social factors.
(ii) Psychological factors.
(iii) Economic factors.
(iv) Educational factors.
(v) Factors that deal with the school environment.

The study suggests that although it is important to understand the reasons behind dropping out from the program, it is very important to understand the motivation behind enrolling in the program in order to understand dropping out.

To my children
Lina, Backer, and Omar

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Education in Jordan is a right each individual has, and it is compulsory until the end of the ninth grade or until the student reaches age 16 at the beginning of the school year. In Jordan, education is centralized, and all its aspects are in the hands of the Ministry of Education. The Ministry has done more than just providing regular education programs for the students. It also provides a variety of programs that are flexible in their content and methods to suit the needs of those who cannot or could not attend regular education programs. But, despite the preventive methods the Ministry uses, the phenomenon of illiteracy is still noticeable in Jordan (as illustrated in Table 1.1) and it is clear by now that fighting illiteracy needs more effective and modern methods. Literacy education is very important because it helps to overcome some negative aspects of the regular education programs. Through adult and literacy education programs, it is possible to provide the opportunity to study for some adults who missed the chance in regular education programs. Adult and literacy education helps in reducing the number of illiterate people in the society and eliminating the social differences between people. The adults in adult education programs, hopefully, become more confident in themselves and in their ability to solve life problems. This enhances their job performance and therefore increases their income. This will be reflected in the increase in the national income, and will pull families together and organize them. The literate adult will be able to make sound decisions for him/herself

and participate in life and to vote on issues that concern him/her without any help (Al-Momany(1), P.17).

1.2   A Statement of the Problem

The problem to be investigated deals with dropping out from adult education programs in a school district in Amman, Jordan. The country, represented by the Ministry of Education, spends time and money trying to solve the problem of illiteracy. Many programs have been designed to help adult students continue their education. These programs have succeeded to some degree. There are many graduates from these programs, but the number of the dropouts is very high. Finding the reasons behind dropping out from the programs and proposing ways to remedy the situation is a crucial step in the elimination of illiteracy in Jordan. This study will be conducted only on female adult students because Jordan has a segregated system of education.

1.3   Definitions

(i) Literacy:

- Conventional literacy is "the ability to read, write, and comprehend texts on familiar subjects and to understand whatever signs, labels, instruction, and directions are necessary to get along within one's environment". (Hunter and Harman, p.7)

- "A person is literate who can with understanding both read and write a short simple statement on his everday life". (Cook, p.13)

- In 1962, UNESCO stated that "a person is literate when he has acquired the essential knowledge and skills which enable him to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in his group and community and whose attainments in reading, writing,

and arithemetic make it possible for him to continue to use these skills toward his own and the community's development". (Cook, p.13)

(ii) The Ministry: The Jordanian Ministry of Education.

(iii) The centers: The adult education centers.

(iv) The students: The female adult students in the centers.

1.4   The Significance of the Study

Many studies have been conducted about literacy education in Jordan as will be clarified in Chapter two. Those studies were concerned with the programs provided and with the problems that face the administration, the centers, and the students themselves.The problem of dropouts from adult education programs in Jordan has been examined in a number of studies. But there is a need to study the situation of women in particular, especially since co-education does not exist in the Jordanian educational system. The high number of female dropouts might suggest that there is a weakness or failure in the programs offered to teach adult women. If the number of dropouts was small, then the issue would not be that significant. But by examining the number of dropouts, it is clear that the problem needs immediate investigation. As much as it is important to recruit illiterate adults to adult education programs, it is equally important to motivate these adults to continue in these programs until they graduate. This point is clearly shown in Table 1.2 in which the number of adult education classes that were opened and closed in one school year is shown. This table gives an indication of the number of dropouts from adult education programs. By examining the table it is noticed that the number of female dropouts is larger, in most cases, than the number of male dropouts. Unless the number of dropouts is significantly reduced, adult education programs in Jordan cannot be claimed to be a success. Taking into consideration the special responsibilities a woman has at home and at work if she has a job, her decision to continue her education and perhaps her decision to drop out cannot be decisions made hastily. Understanding the reasons

behind her decision to drop out is very important if literacy education in Jordan is to succeed. As a means of determining why students drop out from the adult education programs in this specific school district, a study of the reasons associated with dropping out was begun.

Table 1.1: Percentage of illiteracy in Jordan in 1983 according to age and gender and number of illiterate people in each age group. (Al-Momany(1), p.15).

AGE	PERCENTAGE OF ILLITERACY			NUMBER OF ILLITERATE ADULT		
	TOTAL	Males	Females	TOTAL	Males	Females
15-19	7.6	2.4	13.3	17920	2970	14950
20-24	14.6	5.2	23.7	22040	3960	18580
25-29	17.2	7.8	26.7	25360	3980	21380
30-34	32.1	11.1	53.7	33030	5790	27240
35-39	42.6	19.2	66.6	41100	9390	31710
40-44	55.5	32.4	77.0	48780	13730	35050
45-49	59.3	38.3	82.3	39400	13320	26080
50-54	60.2	38.0	87.2	30970	10740	20230
55-59	76.4	46.0	87.0	26000	8500	17500
60-64	71.9	59.5	86.7	21580	9700	11880
65+	84.5	73.8	94.8	50720	21650	29070
TOTAL	34.6	19.9	49.6	357400	103730	253670

Table 1.2: Number of adult education classes at the beginning of the year 1981-1982, and the number of classes closed during the same year by county and gender. (Al-Momany(1), p.25).

COUNTY	NUMBER OF CLASSES OPENED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR			NUMBER OF CLASSES CLOSED DURING THE YEAR		
	TOTAL	Males	Females	TOTAL	Males	Females
Amman	277	35	242	12	1	11
Irbid	189	16	173	16	1	15
Palka	31	5	26	6	2	4
Karak	42	11	32	8	4	4
Mu'an	21	7	14	2	2	0
Total	560	74	486	44	10	34

1.5   The Research Questions

The main research question in this study is "what are the reasons behind dropping out from adult education programs in Jordan?" The researcher was also interested in a number of related questions. They are:

(i) Is there a relationship between the level of teachers' qualifications and dropping out from the program?

(ii) What kind of instructional materials and methods do the teachers use?

(iii) What do adult students think about studying in school buildings used by the children in the morning?

(iv) What is the reaction of the spouse to his wife's decision to study? Do his feelings change during the course of her study?

(v) What effect does the children's education have on their mother's decision to continue her education?

(vi) What role does the family's financial status (the need to work) or the marital status (divorce or death of the spouse) of the woman play in the woman's decision to continue her education?

(vii) What is the effect of friends' or relatives' reaction on the woman's decision to continue her education?

(viii) Does the adult student think studying is satisfactory or unsatisfactory?

(ix) What is the relationship between access to transportation and dropping out?

(x) What role does age play in dropping out?

(xi) What is the effect of the experience of other adult students on the female students' decision to drop out?

(xii) What is the effect of the school environment on the adult students?

(xiii) What pressures do the students experience (if any) after enrolling in the program? What is their effect?

These are the types of questions that guided the researcher's inquiry into the reasons behind dropping out from adult education programs in the school district chosen for the study. Fieldwork research methods, with their focus on understanding the social organization and the sense-making of people studied were most appropriate in answering questions of this nature.

1.6 Some Hypotheses About the Study

There are some hypotheses that can be made about female adult students in Jordan by looking at the social structure of the Jordanian society and by understanding the educational system there.

- One hypothesis that can be made is that there is a gap between the teachers and the adult students. The teachers do not begin from the point where the students are, on the contrary, they begin from where the teachers themselves are. In order for a person to deal successfuly with others, especially if the intention is to improve the quality of their lives, he/she should understand the thinking process of those others.

- The curriculum for adult education programs is standardized and is developed by the Ministry of Education. This approach might not be successful in fulfilling the needs of all adult students in the programs. So, even if the teachers are qualified, being restricted to a standardized curriculum kills their creativity. So, the question about education being satisfactory or unsatisfactory is a key one in this study.

- Another issue that might be important in this study is social values and people's reaction to enrolling in adult education programs. People in Jordan

are very close to each other in terms of knowing each other and sometimes interfering in their lives, especially the relatives. Social and family pressures play an important role in influencing the decisions of people. So, the hypothesis that can be made is that if the members of the family do not agree with the decision to enroll in adult education programs, the adult will be likely, in most cases, to drop out.

- The social structure in Jordan is similar to almost all the social structures in Muslim and Arab countries. There are many important aspects that define and control family life in these social structures. One of these principles is caring for and taking the responsibility to look after the old people in the family. Many old people do not feel that they have to look for a job to support themselves. So, another hypothesis can be made is that the need to work and find a job is not very significant in deciding to enroll in the program. This point relates to another issue raised in the research question which deals with age. One can hypothesize that the older the student is, the more likely it will be for her to drop from the adult education program. The fact that she does not need to support herself lowers the likelihood that she will continue her education. But the younger the woman is, the more likely it will be for her to try to achieve a goal in her life.

These are some hypotheses made about the research questions. The findings of the study might confirm or contradict these hypotheses. But these ideas served as a guide during the interviews and participant observation.

1.7   The Participants in the Study

The nature of adult education is different from regular education in the sense that it is broad and deals with different people at different stages with different needs and by being marginal in the educational system. Because of these reasons, the participants in the study are many. They include female adult education students in the school district, adult education teachers in the center, and adult education

administrators in the Ministry of Education and in the school district in which the study was conducted. Female students, both those who are already in the program and those who dropped out, were interviewed. The schools where the study was conducted were chosen in a school district where the population is stratified in the sense that it represents almost all the different socio-economic classes in the Jordanian society.

1.8   The Limitations of the Study

The study was conducted for eight weeks in November and December in the school year 1988/1989. One limitation of the study is that the school year had begun in September, so the study was conducted almost at the beginning of the year. The number of the dropouts may have increased by the end of the year. The researcher did not have a chance to record the changes in attendance over the full year.

Another limitation is that the study was conducted in an urban area whereas the life style of the people in the rural areas is different. Although Jordan is a small country with a small population, there are differences between people who live in the city and people who live in the country. Since the researcher's intention was to study the students in the urban areas, the results found after data analysis cannot be claimed to apply to all the female adult students in Jordan.

Another limitation concerns the fieldwork method used. The qualitative approach is different from the quantitative approach in that it relies on a smaller number of subjects which might limit the range and accuracy of data collected. The findings of a qualitative research project cannot be easily measured and tested or statistically generalized. Although the researcher gets the opportuniy to get to know the subjects well and examine closely their behavior in the setting, some factors might interfere, like being shy or embarrassed, which might affect the accuracy of information given to the researcher because of the direct interaction between the researcher and the subjects.

A perceived weakness for some people might lie in the generalizability of the

findings. Because environments and actors vary it is not always appropriate to generalize the finding from one setting to other settings. However, establishing theory from such rich data might be helpful in revealing significant information for future planning, teacher training and faculty and staff development.

In this chapter, the purpose, significance and research questions of the study have been explored. The limitations and deliminations of the study are mentioned, too. In the following chapter, the problem of illiteracy and the literature related to the study will be explored.

Chapter 2

Overview of the Problem

2.1 Sources of Illiteracy

There are different sources of illiteracy in Jordan. This makes the problem even bigger and means that the problem of illiteracy cannot be solved by just opening new centers to teach adults. Sources that should be located and dealt with are:

- Dropouts from regular school. The number of dropouts from the first grade during the years 1977-81 was 15216 students, both males and females (Dabbor, p.47). This number increases as the grade gets higher. This is clearly illustrated in Table 2.1 which shows that failure in regular school programs is a big factor in increasing illiteracy in Jordan. The reasons for dropping out vary. They include:

  (i) Health reasons.

  (ii) School subjects are difficult for some students and there is nobody to help.

  (iii) Some of the Jordanians are nomads. They live mainly in the desert and keep moving from one place to another. Their constant movement makes it difficult for their children to settle in one school, so they drop out.

  (iv) The need to work. Because of their special circumstances (death of the provider, divorce, low socio-economic status, etc.) some families need the support of their school age children to provide enough income.

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- The socio-economic changes in Jordan. Education is no longer viewed as the single way for social mobility. Rather, people can improve their socio-economic status in a shorter period of time by doing jobs that do not require a degree or a diploma. So, education is not a priority in many families. It can be viewed as time consuming with little pay off.

- Misunderstanding the meaning of compulsory education. Most people in Jordan do not understand the full meaning of the word compulsory (Almomani(2), p.30). They believe that the government is responsible for providing their children with education. On the other hand, they do not know that they have to send their children to school. They think that it is a matter of choice. There has been neglect in reporting the cases of families' failure to send their children to school.

Table 2.1: Number and percentage of students' failure and dropout in the three
educational levels in the school year 1983-1984 (Al-Momany and Jaradat, p.53).

THE STAGE	THE NUMER OF STUDENTS SUCCEEDED	THEIR PERCENTAGE	THE NUMER OF STUDENTS FAILED	THEIR PERCENTAGE
ELEMENTARY	20708	4.43	10917	2.33
PREPARATORY	12547	4.78	12292	7.09
SECONDARY	5166	5.70	7702	8.50

2.2 Historical Overview of the Problem in Jordan

Until the end of the nineteenth century, education in Jordan was very traditional. The emphasis was on both religion and Arabic language, with minor emphasis on arithmetic and writing skills. There were a few elementary public schools for boys in large towns in the area. People were very conservative and were reluctant to educate girls inspite of the fact that Islam emphasizes the education of every individual in the society. Beginnings of the system of modern schools were made in 1921. The traditional village school continued to exist, but modern schools were opened. But then, Jordan fell under the British occupation. It has often been the policy of the occupying country to keep the occupied people illiterate because knowledge is associated with being aware of what happens to people in the society. So, this would prevent or, at least, decrease people's resistance against occupation. But a few missionary schools were opened at the time and a big number of both Muslims and Christians were taught there.

Al-Momany indicates that since independence in the year 1946, there has been all-round growth of primary, secondary, vocational and technical education for both males and females (the educational ladder is illustrated in Figure 2.1). Article 20 of the constitution states that education is compulsory to all citizens and free in public schools. But the demand in those days (1955) was still greater than the achievement. There was a shortage of teachers and building facilities. In 1955, the teacher-student ratio was 1:42. Educational facilities were available to 40% of the girls and 60% of the boys. This was considered a great change from what was going on in 1949. In the year 1949, 9,874 pupils were attending 73 government schools, of which nine were elementary girls' schools. The remaining schools were for young boys in towns and villages. During the same period, 100 private schools registered 6,472 pupils of which 2,600 were girls (Al-Momany(2), p.10). Considering this, it is obvious that the educational system in Jordan failed to absorb all the students in the country. In addition to this, there were factors that had a negative effect on the education of people in Jordan in general , and the education of women in particular. These factors

were:

- The way of life people were used to living. The early Jordanians were mostly nomads and lived in tribes. They depended on raising sheep and on agriculture for living, so education was not a priority in their lives.

- Lack of schools for girls. Early in the century women did not receive education in public schools. Parents relied on what can be taught at home for their daughters. Parents were very conservative and thought that education would spoil or ruin the morals of their daughters. There were many famous schools in Jordan, but all of them were for boys. Later on, when schools were established for girls, the percentage of illiteracy among women was still high.

- Early marriages. Many girls got married at the ages of 14, 15, or 16. So, instead of attending school, these girls would get married and stay home. Even if girls did not get married at this age, some of them would still leave school. The families, especially the nomads, needed their help at home when the boys either went to work or attended school. If some families had a chance to send one of their children to school, this chance was given to the male in the family.

The negative effects of illiteracy were reflected in the weak productivity of the Jordanian society. The ability to accomplish any job successfully is closely connected to knowledge and having an open mind about what happens in one's life and society. This cannot happen without proper education and training for all the people in the society, especially women. Women have the responsibility to raise the children and prepare them to live and participate in the society. So, they need to be aware of the proper ways to raise children and understand their various needs. Otherwise, the young generation will grow up to be weak physically, psychologically and morally. Educating women is a basic condition for them to understand their rights and duties, and participate in the politics of their countries in which they constitute half the

population. Educated women can participate in the development of the economy in their countries.

2.3 The Development of Adult Education Programs in Jordan

Adult education programs in Jordan began in the 1950's. Evening classes were opened to adult students, and the first group to teach adults was sent, by the Ministry, to Egypt in the year 1954 to specialize in adult education. After graduation, they were appointed to teach in rural community colleges to prepare their graduates to develop their communities by fighting illiteracy (Samara, p.23). Then the movement to fight illiteracy increased, and it was carried out by many different societies and unions. The Arab states held a conference at Alexandria, Egypt in October 1964 (Samara p.11). This followed a summit conference of Arab kings and heads of states who had committed the Arab countries to joint action to eradicate illiteracy. Conference participants recommended that the Arab countries should plan a strategy to eliminate illiteracy within fifteen years. They also recommended that literacy campaigns should be accorded their proper place in national plans for development and recommended that a certain percentage of the national income should be spent on the education of the illiterates. Further it was recommended that a special agency should be established to plan the Arab strategy. After the declaration of the educational law in the year 1964, the first organized campaign to fight illiteracy began. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor founded a special departement to fight illiteracy. This departement founded 59 centers to teach adults, forty-four of these centers were for males, and the other fifteen were for females. The number of students attending these centers was 1470 and this was considered a success (Al-Momany(1), p.12). Because of the fact that teaching adults and fighting illiteracy is considered education, and is a part of the whole educational system, the responsibility for teachng adults was transfered to the Ministry of Education in the year 1968 (Dabbor p.26). The Ministry of Education expanded its efforts and opened new centers for adult education.

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"The number of students in these centers increased from 2567 students (both males and females) in the school year 1968/1969 to about nine thousand in the school year 1981/1982" (Al-Momany(2), p.12). As a result of these efforts, the percentage of illiteracy decreased from 67.6 percent in the year 1961 to about 34 percent in the year 1982. The movement to fight illiteracy became a main and important part of the educational system in Jordan, and it has its own philosophy and goals. The increase in the number of classes opened and the students who enrolled in adult education programs is illustrated in Table 2.2. This table shows the progress of literacy education and the increase in the number of students who enrolled in adult education programs and succeeded.

Table 2.2: Number of adult education classes and students for the period from 1968-1982. (Al-Momany(1), p.23).

SCHOOL YEAR	NUMBER OF CLASSES			NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO REGISTERED			NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO ENROLLED UNTILL THE END OF THE YEAR			NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO SUCCEEDED IN ALL LEVELS		
	TOTAL	Males	Females	TOTAL	Males	Females	TOTAL	Males	Females	TOTAL	Males	Female
68-69	127	52	75	2567	1013	1554	1419	537	882	1283	478	805
69-70	160	64	96	3178	1210	1968	1932	597	1335	1677	509	1168
70-71	170	80	90	2968	1405	1563	1697	738	959	1539	642	897
71-72	198	88	110	3920	1785	2135	2170	879	1291	1931	782	1149
72-73	216	96	120	4142	1784	2358	2499	958	1543	2241	823	1418
73-74	221	97	124	4198	1767	2431	2704	1118	1586	2507	1036	1471
74-75	305	160	145	6204	3310	28	4045	2156	1886	3696	1954	1742
75-76	373	178	195	6756	3112	3644	4683	2083	2518	4395	1992	2403
76-77	426	176	250	6947	2756	4191	4620	1670	2950	4451	1575	2876
77-78	470	163	307	7811	2841	4970	4772	1396	3376	4641	1246	3290
78-79	479	112	367	8733	1966	6767	5619	1054	4565	5422	1015	4407
79-80	615	130	485	10164	1945	8219	6829	1102	5727	6622	1047	5575
80-81	651	121	530	11034	1977	9057	7492	1181	6311	7299	1138	6161
81-82	560	74	486	8911	1339	7572	6349	798	5551	6202	767	5435

Figure 2.1. The Educational Ladder

2.4 The Goals and Philosophy of Adult Education in Jordan

The goals and philosophy of adult education are derived from the goals and philosophy of general education in Jordan. The philosophy of adult education is based on respect for the dignity and freedom of the individual, taking into consideration the larger society in which one lives. The philosophy is also based on social justice and equity and on providing equal access to education which gives all the Jordanians (both males and females) an opportunity to gain knowledge. It is also based on respect for the democratic system which gives the citizens the ability to run their lives in the way they want, provided with knowledge and understanding of the Jordanian values and belief system. Derived from this philosophy are general goals that guide adult education in Jordan. These goals concern preparing good citizens who understand their rights and duties. Another goal is developing communication skills between people by the means of writing. The third goal is helping the individual to grow and develop physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally. Another goal is improving the health and financial conditions of the people. And finally, understanding the natural, social, and cultural environment that surrounds people, beginning gradually from the home, then the village, the city, the country, the Arab nation and then, the whole human society. There are specific goals that concern adult education. These are: (Al-Momany(1), p.15)

- Providing the opportunity to study for those who missed it in regular education programs.

- Improving the cognitive level and skills of adult students to enable them to acquire the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic.

- Helping students to acquire the knowledge and skills that would enable them to pursue further education or participate in developing their communities.

It is clear now that adult education is not an end, but a means to an end. This end means active participation in developing the country by understanding and communicating with the environment that surrounds us.

2.5 Legislation Concerning Adult Education

Adult and continuing education derives its legitimacy from all the legislation in Jordan, beginning with the constitution and ending with the rules and regulations that concern education in Jordan. Act 20 of the constitution states that "elementary education is compulsory for all Jordanians and is free in public schools" (Al-Momany(1), p.14) Article 5 section 15 of the educational law for the year 1964 obligated the Ministry of Education to "establish adult education centers that will teach and educate adults in every area in the country" (Al-Momany(1), p.14). The educational law for the year 1964 expanded compulsory education another three years, so it became nine years. So, emphasizing elementary education shows that the Ministry is trying to use preventive methods to fight illiteracy. The same act included a special section for adult education that states that the Ministry "is concerned with educating the citizens by establishing adult education centers that will give adult students scientific, vocational, and technical knowledge and skills that will enable them to improve their lives" (Al-Momany adult and, p.14). To make all this possible, the law allowed the Ministry to use the public education centers for teaching illiterate students. Article 7 of the Educational Law states that the Ministry will establish centers for teaching illiterate adults. For this purpose, the Ministry can use the public education centers and the buildings of public and private institutions as centers for teaching adults. It also states that the Ministry can hire qualified teachers to teach adult students. Those teachers can be recurited either by the Ministry of Education or by any other public institution. Article 9 of the Educational Law states that:

- The student should spend 16 months in the center to reach the fourth grade level.

- The student should spend another 16 months in the center (which is equal to two school years) in order to reach the level of the sixth grade.

- The centers are open two hours a day five days a week.

The regulations governing opening new centers include giving the priority in hiring teachers to those with special training to teach adults, and to those with the experience and interest in teaching adults (the most recent available survey of the qualifications of adult education teachers for the school year 1981-1982 are shown in table 2.3). The educational supervisors in each school district are required to pay occasional visits to the centers (Al-Momany and Jaradat, p.21).

Table 2.3: Categories of adult education teachers according to their qualifications for the year 1981-1982. (Al-Momany(1), p.26)

COUNTY	UNIVERSITY GRADUATES			COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADUATES			HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES			TOTAL		
	Males	Females	TOTAL	Males	Females	TOTAL	Males	Females	TOTAL	Males	Female	Total
Amman	11	12	23	21	186	207	2	33	35	34	231	265
Irbid	4	10	14	12	135	137	2	24	26	18	171	189
Palka	1	0	1	4	26	30	0	0	0	5	26	31
Karak	0	1	1	7	24	31	0	3	3	7	28	35
Mu'an	2	3	5	4	11	15	1	0	1	7	14	21
Total	18	26	44	48	382	430	5	60	65	71	470	541

2.6   The Educational Laws for the National Campaign to Fight Illiteracy for the Year 1981

The purpose of this campaign was to eliminate illiteracy among the Jordanian citizens in the period of ten years, and making them able to continue their education and participate in the development of the society. In table 2.4 the number of classes opened and the number of students enrolled is displayed. According to this law: (the Ministry of Education(6), p.2)

- The government has the responsibility to eliminate illiteracy by emphasizing compulsory education and reducing the number of dropouts from adult education programs.

- The public and private institutions in which the government has more than 50% of the shares have the responsibility to eliminate illiteracy among their workers during the first five years of the campaign.

All the businesses and organizations in Jordan have to take these measures against the adults who refuse to join the literacy programs:

(i) Refuse to hire any of them or even give them license to work.

(ii) Stop any raise to the working illiterate adults.

After five years of the campaign, the illiterate adults who did not enroll in the program are governed by these procedures:

(i) The illiterate adult will be expelled from work if he/she works in a public institution.

(ii) Is not allowed to get a driver's license, and his old one is not renewed.

(iii) Is not allowed to be a member in the local government in his district or county.

(iv) Is not allowed to be a member in the administrative committee in any public or private establishment.

This law governs the people who :

- Are between ten and forty five, not enrolled in any educational institution, and their educational level is below the fourth grade .

- Are illiterate Arabs and live in Jordan.

This law applies to all the people in Jordan except those with a physical or mental handicap. The increased number of female adult students who enrolled in adult education classes is illustrated in table 2.5.

Table 2.4: The number of classes that were opened for adult students in the year 1981-1982, the number of the students who registered, the number of students who enrolled until the end of the year, and the number of students who succeeded. (Al-Momany(1), p.24).

COUNTY	NUMBER OF CLASSES			NUMBER OF STUDENTS REGISTERED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR			NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR			NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO SUCCEEDED		
COUNTY	TOTAL	Males	Females	TOTAL	Males	Females	TOTAL	Males	Females	TOTAL	Males	Female
Amman	277	35	242	4626	688	3938	3468	479	2989	3362	460	2902
Irbid	189	16	173	2901	380	2521	2082	208	1874	2061	198	1863
Balka	31	5	26	466	49	417	283	24	259	279	24	255
Karak	42	11	31	636	125	511	353	54	299	339	52	287
Mu'an	21	7	14	282	97	185	163	33	130	161	33	128
Total	560	47	486	8911	1339	7572	6349	798	5551	6202	767	543

Table 2.5: Number of classes opened and the number of students who enrolled during the years 1972-85. (Al-Momany and Jaradat, p.24).

SCHOOL YEAR	NUMBER OF CLASSES OPENED			NUMBER OF STUDENTS		
	TOTAL	Males	Females	TOTAL	Males	Females
72-73	216	96	120	4142	1784	2358
73-74	221	97	124	4198	1767	2431
74-75	305	160	145	6204	3310	2831
75-76	373	178	195	6756	3112	3644
76-77	426	176	250	6947	2756	4191
77-78	470	163	307	7811	2841	4970
78-79	479	112	367	8733	1966	6767
79-80	615	130	485	10164	1945	8219
80-81	651	121	530	10134	1977	9057
81-82	560	74	486	8911	1339	7572
82-83	558	78	471	9054	1523	7531
83-84	541	76	465	9374	1351	8023
84-85	544	88	456	9726	1742	7984

2.7   The Size of the Illiteracy Problem in Jordan

The most recent available population survey in Jordan (11/10/78) shows that the number of illiterate people (both males and females) is about 357,400 (Al-Momany(1), p.15). This number amounts to about 34.6 percent of the population who are over 15 years of age. The number of illiterate males is 253,670 or about 49.6 percent. The percentage of illiteracy is bigger among the females and in rural areas than among males and in urban areas (Al-Monany(1), P.15). In rural areas, the percentage of illiteracy rises to become 48.64 percent. The percentage of illiterate males in rural areas is 29.91 percent and the percentage of illiterate females is 67.61 percent. The percentage of illiteracy in urban areas is lower, it is 13.34 percent for males and 37.84 percent for females. The percentage of illiteracy in Jordan decreases 1 percent every year (Al-Momany and Jaradat, p.25). According to the Departement of General Statistics, the percentage of illiteracy in Jordan for the year 1985 is about 28 percent of the total number of the fifteen year old citizens. According to this, the number of illiterate people in Jordan is 352,500 which equals 28.25 percent. Of this number 113,500 or 17.37 percent are illiterate males and 239,00 or 40.14% are illiterate females.

2.8   The Curriculum for Adult Education Programs

Al-Momany states that since the beginning of adult education programs in Jordan in the year 1954 and until the year 1967, the books used to teach adults were the elementary school books. In 1968, The Ministry of Education borrowed the curriculum that had been used in Kuwait. In 1970/71, a new curriculum was implemented, and special books to teach adults were published and used in the year 1977. These books are being used nowadays with some modifications every now and then. The curriculum consists of three books for reading and writing and one book for mathematics for the first stage which consists of the grades one through four. The curriculum for the second stage (grades five and six) consists of two books to teach Arabic language, one book for mathematics, and two books to teach general education (Al-Momany(1), p. 16)

2.9   Review of the Literature

2.9.1   Review of the Literature in Jordan

A number of studies have been conducted to investigate general literacy education in Jordan.   One study was done by Aziz Samara in the year 1976 titled *Factors associated with dropping out from adult education programs in Jordan*.   He studied the reasons behind dropping out from adult education programs.   He distributed a 43 item questionaire about the reasons behind dropping out.   His subjects included adult students from different areas in Jordan.   He studied the problems that face the adult students both males and females without special emphasis on the situation of female students.   His findings indicated that the reasons were (Samara, p.55):

(i)   Work

(ii)   Family situation

(iii)   The student's attitude

(iv)   Health reasons

(v)   The centers

He found that the importance of these factors varies according to the student's gender. For instance, work came in first in affecting the males' decision to continue their studies, whereas the family situation and responsibilities came in first in affecting the females' decision. But he also found out that some factors affect both the males and females like the health factor and the condition of the centers.

Another study was conducted by Khaled Mustafa to study the reasons that encourage the adults to enroll in the literacy programs. The reasons were (Mansour, p.5):

(i)   Religious reasons

(ii)   Educational reasons

(iii) Social reasons

(iv) Recreational reasons

(v) Economical reasons

In the year 1979, a study was conducted by Saleh Hindi. His study was about the influence of the economic, social, cultural and educational factors in dropping out from the compulsory school (Mansour, p.6). He concluded that the rate of dropouts increases with low school performance. He also concluded that the economic, social and cultural factors play a significant role in the student's decision to drop out. The lower the socio-economic situation of the family, the higher the propability of dropping out.

Another study was conducted by Murshed Dabbor in 1982. He studied the development of nonformal education programs in Jordan in 1977-1981. He compared the Jordanian program to other programs in the Arab world. He emphasized the point that dropping out from the regular education program is an important factor in increasing the number of illiterates in the society (Dabbor, p.5).

In 1984, Hamza Mansour did a study about the problems that face the adult education centers from the viewpoint of students and teachers. The study reveals five problems that face the adult education students, (Mansour, p.43):

(i) No programs after the sixth grade.

(ii) Students in different educational levels are placed in one class.

(iii) Very little educational activities like field trips and hands on training

(iv) No school during the summer vacation.

These problems were pointed out by students already enrolled in the program and not by dropouts. The study emphasizes the need for more research to study the reasons behind dropping out from the centers.

Another study was conducted by Abdel Kareem Al-Momany. He studied the Jordanian effort to eliminate illiteracy. He reviewed the development of literacy programs from the start and until the year 1985. In his study he reviewed the strategies usually used to eliminate illiteracy. They are (Al-Momany(2), p.21):

(i) The Western Strategy: The basic principle of this strategy is to spread education, make it compulsory, and to increase the years of elementary education.

(ii) the Socialist Strategy. This strategy is followed by the people of the U.S.S.R, the People Republic of China and Cuba. The main principle in this strategy is organizing national campaigns to teach reading and writing and link them to the political and economic goals of the nation. These campaigns are carried out very firmly and in a short period of time.

(iii) The strategies in the developing countries. Because of the shortage in money and expertise, the strategies in the developing countries appear in different forms. They range from concentrating on one geographical area or on a certain slice of the society like factory workers or finally, organizing campaigns. Campaigns are usually organized by the government to eliminate illiteracy in a certain period of time depending on the size of the problem and the resources available.

Then, Al-Momany proposed a strategy to eliminate illiteracy in Jordan. His plan consisted of (Al-Momany(2), p.30):

(i) Eliminating the source of illiteracy by providing education for all school age children (6-15).

(ii) Making education compulsory for both school age children and adults.

(iii) Connecting formal education to adult education which means that the adult students can join formal education after they finish literacy education.

(iv) The combination of the efforts of the government with the effort of the people in the society in funding and teaching.

(v) Providing incentives for the illiterate people to join adult education programs.

2.9.2 Review of the Literature in the Arab World

The problem of illiteracy does not exist in Jordan alone, but the whole Arab World suffers the consequences of this problem. The number of the illiterate people in the Arab World in the year 1970 was about 49 million which is equal to 73.7% of the population over 15 years of age. As the population increased, so did the number of illiterate people. In the year 1985, the number of illiterates became 61 million which equals 56.5% of the population 15 years of age and older (The International Center for Functional Literacy(2), p.12).

Centers for Fighting Illiteracy in the Arab World

(i) The UNESCO: Provides financial support and expertise to the countries that need them to fight illiteracy.

(ii) The Arabic Center for Literacy and Adult Education which was established in 1960.

(iii) The International Center for Functional Literacy in Egypt.

(iv) The Center for Training Adult Educators in Bahrain

(v) The Center for Training Adult Educators in Tripuli-Lybia.

The Arabic Organization for Education, Culture, and science published a study titled *Analytical Study of Literacy Education in the Arab World* in the year 1977. The findings of the study indicated that there is a number of problems that affect the work in the field. According to the study, the problems are (The Arabic Organization for Education, Culture, and Science(2), p.84):

(i) The shortage of experts especially at the administrative level. Experts are not motivated to work in the administration of adult education programs because there is no promotion after that.

(ii) The small salaries and rewards paid for the workers in the field.

(iii) Difficulty of transportation especially in the rural areas which makes it difficult to supervise the centers.

(iv) The educational centers are not properly equipped.

(v) Regular schools are not able to absorb the number of all school age children

(vi) The illiterate adults are not motivated to study.

(vii) The public are not fully aware of the problem of illiteracy and its consequences.

Another study was conduced by the International Center for Teaching Adults in Egypt titled *A Proposed Strategy to Eliminate Illiteracy in the Arab World.* The study reviewed the geographic, demographic, economic, social and cultural situation in the Arab World and studied the problems there and then studied the relation between the existence of these problems and the spread of illiteracy. Then, the study points out the positive and negative factors that affect the efforts to fight illiteracy, and finally, the best ways to fight illiteracy, according to the study, were organized in the form of a strategy which consisted of (The International Center for Teaching Adults(1), p.71):

- The unity of the Arabic efforts to fight illiteracy.

- The connection between fighting illiteracy and national development.

- Supporting the adult and literacy education departments and the people who work in them.

- Concentrating the campaigns of literacy education on certain groups where illiteracy is highest like women, the nomads, and the people who live in the country side.

Iraq is one of the Arab countries that has studied adult and literacy education throughly. There are a number of studies that deal with the problem. One study was conducted by Muhsen Mansori. His study was titled *A Study of the Problems that Face Adult Education Centers According to the Teachers and Students in Iraq*. The Problems are (Mansour, p.79):

(i) The variety of age groups in one classroom.

(ii) Difficult transportation

(iii) No babysitting available.

(iv) Low teachers' salaries.

(v) The teachers are not allowed much flexibility in their teaching

In 1981, Omar Ibrahim studied the obstacles that face adult and literacy education programs in Iraq. He categorized them into financial problems, administrative problems, and problems created because of the lack of coordination between the administrators and the teachers of adult education (Mansour, p.9).

Another study was done by Abdel Fatah Jalal in 1977 which examines the reasons behind adult students' failure to enroll in the literacy programs. The study reveals that the reasons vary. Some students do not have enough time, others needed to rest in their free time, and some others others wanted to increase their working hours. The study recommends providing incentives for the adult students to enroll in the program and helping the adults, through literacy education, to increase their income (Mansour, p.3).

2.9.3 Review of the Literature in the United States

The problem of illiteracy received a great deal of attention in the United States. The situation in America is different from the situation in any other country because of the different ethnic groups that live there. Even the definition of literacy changed as time went by. This is especially clear in a study conducted by Wanda Dauksza

Cook in the year 1977 titled "Adult Literacy Education in the United States". She made an attempt to set forth the phases through which American literacy education has passed. She says that the history of American literacy education is charactarized by individual efforts carried out by state and local governments. The definition of the illiterate in the 1900 was (Cook, p.3) "any person ten years of age or older who was unable to read and write his native language". Illiteracy was not yet recognized as a social problem during that period. But there were specific interest groups which viewed illiteracy as a serious problem. There were a few attempts to study the problem of illiteracy. One of them took place in Passaic, New Jersey. The study concluded with a list of suggestions and recommendations to the State Departement of Education. But it was years later until anything significant was done about the problem.

The period from 1910-1919 was charactarized by the spirit of reform. Illiteracy commissions were established, but the effort was hampered by lack of funds. Local legislation that attempted to solve the problem appeared. It varied from restricting the number of immigrants to providing teachers for the illiterate.

The period from 1920-1929 was a rapidly moving and changing one. There was federal and state concern with the problem of illiteracy. At the close of the decade, President Hoover appointed an Advisory Committee on National Illiteracy. The purpose of the committee was to collect facts and make suggestions for the Committee on Education.

The period of the depression included the years 1930-1939. Federal programs involving illiterates were designed primarily to provide work relief. By the end of the decade, it was clear that volunteer work in fighting illiteracy was not enough and professional help was needed.

During the forties, there was an abundance of materials designed to teach adults. They were produced mainly for the military.

In the fifties, the statistics for illiteracy were lower than ever before. The term "functional illiterate" came into use and changed the definitions of literacy. The National Commission for Adult Literacy was created.

In the period of 1960-1969 functional literacy was recognized as a problem of prominent concern. The curriculum shifted from reading, writing, and arithemetic to a more diverse one. A new curriculum designed to provide the student with the basic literacy skills along with those skills needed to function in a modern society was used in literacy education programs. An interest in literacy research began to emerge and new avenues of the literacy problem were investigated.

In the 1970s, funds were provided for research, teacher training, developing materials, leadership, and providing resources.

Then, Cook moved to talk about the future. She believes that attitude is a very important but hidden value of the literacy problem. "It is this factor which will determine the ultimate success or failure of literacy programs, for there is no program nor legislation that can force a person to learn if he does not want to learn" (Cook, p.122). She recommended two directions to be followed in fighting illiteracy:

(i) To provide opportunities for learning to adults who are motivated to study.

(ii) In order to eliminate illiteracy, the nation must commit itself to preventive measures and focus its attention on elementary and secondary schools.

Another study was conducted by Carman St. John Hunter and David Harman titled *Adult Illiteracy in the United States*. Their study examins data concerning illiteracy in three areas:

- The concepts of literacy and illiteracy and the relation between the demands placed on people in the society and their aspirations in their society.

- The groups in which a large number of people with literacy problems are found.

- The programs and services provided for illiterate people.

They reviewed some programs that are available to adults in the United States. They organized them in three categories:

(i) Programs that aim at developing and increasing conventional literacy skills.

(ii) Programs that focus on functional competence or on functional concerns of ethnic subgroups.

(iii) Programs that depend on broadcast media as a delivery system.

They concluded that a major change in national educational policy is needed to serve the needs of illiterate adults. They recommended the establishment of community based initiatives to help the illiterate disadvantaged people who live in that community.

Another study was done by Jonathan Kozol. In his book *Illiterate America* he described the problem of illiteracy by saying that it is more than just numbers. It is human suffering and depression from what other people take for granted. He propsed a plan of action. In his plan, he described a number of approaches which appear to lie within realistic action in the years to come. Then he suggested a mandate that can be translated into the specifics of a national campaign. He drew a model of that program. The approaches are:

(i) To approach the illiterate people by going to them, and not waiting for them to come to the centers.

(ii) To provide a teaching force. This force may include:

- College and high school students.

- Elderly people and retired persons.

- People in the community itself.

(iii) Providing nonformal places in the community for the adults to study in.

Then the author goes on to say that what is needed is "a multi-billion-dollar national imperative that places universal literacy in the United States on just exactly the same level as nutrition, health care, unemployment compensation and defense"(Kozol,

p.121). He presented a case study which can be described as a model of what he proposed.

The National Institute of Education has a number of publications that deal with the problem of illiteracy. One of their publications is titled *The Adult Illiterate Speaks Out: Personal Perspectives on Learning to Read and Write* written by Anne Eberle and Sandra Robinson. This publication is a document which presents conversations and interviews with illiterate and formerly illiterate adults who talk about their experiences when they were illiterate and the problems they faced. Then those problems are analyzed. In the first chapter, the authors are interested in describing how it is like to be illiterate, and they examine some myths of illiteracy and their effect on the adult students. The first myth which is considered to be at the top of the list is the "dummy image"(Eberle and Robinson, p.1). The source for this belief is that the Federal Government and the states spend large amounts of money to provide the best that is available to students. Many students make it to graduation, and the ones who fail to finish are considered to be of less mental capabilities than the rest of the students. Another assumption is that people who cannot read are incompetent in everything. The illiterate might be at ease with him/herself and confident in the things he/she is capable of doing, but when they face other literate people, the feeling of inferiority arises. The authors themselves say that these myths are powerful because the illiterate adults accept them as true and they define their expecations for themselves and limit their ability to make a change.

In addition to these powerful myths that decrease the adult's ability to improve himself lies the realities of illiteracy, things that really exist and affect the lives of the illiterates. One of these realities is the fear which is generated by the adults vulnerability when they see everyone else dealing with the written word and they cannot. Loss of control is another fear that adult students experience and always worry about. They fear being in a situation where they have to do something and they cannot because they cannot read or write. They fear dependence and having to lean on other people to do things for them like driving a car or filling a form. The other side is the fear of being used or manipulated. They fear that they will not be

hired or that they have to compete with other literate co-workers.

The authors discuss the constraining forces that affect the adult's decision to become literate. The main factor was the negative past experience the students had in regular school. Another factor was the fear of competing with other students in the adult education program. They also feared taking the challenge to learn and have repeated failure. They feared the pressure of the close association with the literates. Another factor was the lack of successful experience that will give the encouragement to study.

Some of the facilitating factors that will encourage the adult students to enroll in adult education programs and study are (Eberle and Robinson, p.23):

- Motivation. The adult illiterate must have a clear and strong motive to learn. This motivation is at its strongest when it is related to understanding that learning will be applied in problem-solving in everyday life.

- The encouragement, not the direct involvement, of other people in the decision to enroll in the adult education center.

They believe that it is very difficult and complicated for the adult to become literate because he/she has to unlearn and modify the experiences he/she had. They believe that the unlearning is of two kinds, cognitive and affective. Although it is not easy to master the cognitive skills, the affective challenge is bigger. The change in adults' attitudes from low self esteem to believing in their abilities is a very big one.

They concluded that adult students seem to be very comfortable in one-to-one tutoring situations because they can have their own time to master the skills. Besides, nobody except the tutor knows their weak points and hears their errors, and they study in an environment where competetion does not exist.

Another publication for the National Institute of Education is titled *Adult Development and Approaches to Learning*. This report includes two papers that explore adult development and its implications for adult learning. In the first paper, which is titled *Current Studies of Adult Development: Implications For Education* Harry

Lasker and James Moore review the works on adult intellectual, moral and psychological development. They divide these works in to two groups. One group examine the phases that all adults pass through at fixed chronological periods. The other group views adults as growing into stages that are similar from person to person, but different in their rate of development and level attained. The study of the phases of adult life goes back for more than 50 years. Many of those studies were based on clinical impression only, but only recently empirical studies were conducted on the issue. The authors of this paper consider David Levinson and his associates the most advanced in studying the phasic development. Their work shows adult life as highly patterned in phases. They believe in the emergence of specific life tasks that can be predicted accurately within a few years of chronological age. They viewed these phases as eras. The era, as defined by Levinson and his associates, is "the setting for important life choices and life structure construction and maintenance" (Lasker and Moore, p.7). According to Levinson, the era is made up of many interrelated factors, which include (Lasker and Moore, p.7):

(i) Biological aspects of aging. This means the amount of physical energy available to the person over the course of a lifetime.

(ii) Age-related changes in social relationships. This means the change in the roles people play in life. For instance, the parents cease to provide care for their children and become in need of care. The children grow and become independent, and then, as they mature, they become members of the dominant generation in their society.

(iii) Age-related changes in occupational status. Youth is a time to test occupational options and, as the person matures, the person has to deal with the consequences of his/her earlier chioce. Although a person might change his/her career choices, the consequences of these changes are very serious and different from those made at an earlier phase.

Levinson and his associates looked for age-related changes in their subjects' lives. They found this change in the form of four major eras in adult life. Within each era

they found certain clustering of key tasks that are involved in establishing different life structures. These eras are (Lasker and Moore, p.8).

- Childhood and Adolescence. The major task in this era is learning the social skills and knowing the various types of adult activity. The person is independent and lives within a structure created and maintained by others.

- Early Adulthood. In the era of adulthood, the major task for the individual is to explore possibilities in his career, personal commitments and intimate relationships.

- Middle Adulthood. In the era of middle adulthood the major task is to critically evaluate the life structure established in early adulthood especially as the individual becomes aware of his mortality and his physical decline. The individual in this era becomes a member of the dominant generation.

- Late Adulthood. The major tasks in this era are not yet clear to Levinson, but he believes that old age reflects wisdom and interest in peace making.

Implications of the phasic approach for education:

- There is a need for research that will help people understand the role of education in their lives. This will help in discovering the contributions education can and cannot make to the development of successful life structures.

- There is a need for studies of the disadvantaged groups and how the educational opportunities can be changed to suit their needs.

- There is a need for further studies that explore the expectations of the adult learner at each developmental phase which will help educators serve the needs of the students. This might help to shed light on the educational programs that do not succeed. Levinson's belief in some adults difficulty in constructing new life structures may help understand the hesitation of some adults to change their established life patterns and start new ones.

The authors believe that the stage approach differs from the phasic approach in that it emphasizes that adults vary in their psychological capabilities. The authors discussed Loevinger studies about personality development especially ego development. Loevinger believes that "the ego is a process primarily concerned with making sense of interpersonal and intrapersonal life: it is the process by which a person creates understanding of self and others" (Lasker and Moore, p.17). She also hypothesizes that there are four dimensions of human development: ego development, physical development, psychosexual development and intellectual development (Lasker and Moore, p.18). The authors believe that education enhances ego development.

Then the authors discuss intellectual and ethical development. They present William Perry's study of Harvard and Radcliffe college students. His findings were that individuals varied widely in development and that these differences were associated with the way the students experienced educational situations. They believe that the primary limitation on Perry's findings is that his study was conducted on a number of college students at two highly selective schools. If his findings are generalized, they mean that students at different developmental levels will respond differently to instruction.

The authors then discussed cognitive development and the work of Jean Piaget. They believe that the work of Piaget is still regarded as a very important exploration of cognitive development. It was confined to the study of children's cognitive development. In the 1950's, Lawrence Kohlberg, stimulated by the work of Piaget, studied the moral development of adults. He focused on people's conception of justice and human rights. Kohlberg's stages of moral Judgment are: (Lasker and Moore, p.25)

(i) Stage 1: Obedience and punishment orientation. The moral values reside in external quasiphysical happening rather than in standards and persons.

(ii) Stage 2: Naively egoistic orientation. The right action is the one that satisfies the self's needs and occasionally other's needs.

(iii) Stage 3: "Good-boy" orientation to approval and to pleasing and helping others. The moral value resides in performing good roles and maintaing the

expectancies of others.

(iv) Stage 4: Authority and social-order maintenance orientation. The orientation in this stage is to show respect for authority and maintain social order.

(v) Stage 5: Contractual, legalistic orientation. The moral value resides in conformity to shared standards.

(vi) Stage 6: Conscience or principle orientation. The orientation to principles of choice involving appeal to logical universality and consistency.

Moral development involves understanding the process and principles through which social relationships are created and maintained. The authors believe that moral development theory can inform education programs in different areas like political science and social studies. They also believe that understanding moral development theory can enable the educators to create environments that support and enhance moral development.

Then, Lasker and Moore discussed the implications of stage theory for education. They believe that there are two points of view about the educational relevance of stage theories. The advocates of the first view believe that matching instruction to the learner's stage of development facilitates learning because the educational material is presented in a way that is suitable for the student's system of thinking and stage of development. The advocates of the second view believe that education has not been designed for development and that is why stage change is infrequent. Rather than matching education to the developmental stage of the students, it is believed that the main aim of education is development. Education should be used to push learners to the next developmental stage.

The second paper in this publication is titled *Adult Learning Theory: A State Of The Art* written by Edwin L. Simpson. Simpson attempts to "blend consideration of learning theories with the practical demands of how to design and develop learning experiences for adults" (Simpson, p.45). The author says that a basic question that

interested the thinkers is "How does learning take place?" (Simpson, p.45). Simpson mentions that Hill explained the nature of learning theory in relation to three functions it performs. Hill states that, "first, theory is an approach to the area of knowledge- a way of analyzing, communicating, and conducting research. Second, a theory of learning is an effort to summarize a large amount of knowledge concerning the laws of learning in an economical fashion. The third function of a theory of learning is a creative attempt to explain what learning is and why it works as it does" (Simpson, p.46).

Simpson believes that in reviewing research on adult learning, three areas surface:

(i) Learning orientation research.

(ii) Learning ability research.

(iii) Learning style

Simpson points out that one of the first who studied the orientation of adult learners was Houle. Houle discovered three distinct classifications of learners:

- Goal oriented learners. They use education to achieve clear cut objectives.

- Activity oriented learners. They take part in the learning activity because of the meaning of participation as opposed to being drawn by content.

- Learning oriented learners. They are the ones who seek knowledge simply for the sake of learning.

Then, Simpson says that many studies have been devoted to the learning abilities of adults and that " among the findings from the research on adult abilities, one major generalization about adult learning best describes ability throughout the life span. Fluid intelligence, which includes perceiving abstract relationships, engaging in short-term memory, forming concepts, and becoming able to reason abstractly- declines from adolescence throughout adulthood. Conversely, crystallized intelligence-

consisting of perceiving relations, formal reasoning, and abstraction, and based primarily on acculturation resulting from formal education pursuits- tends to increase throughout most of the life of adults" (Simpson, p.53).

Simpson then indicates that one of the most exciting but minimally explored areas of research related to adult learning is learning style research. Smith indicates that "the term is used to refer to techniques, as well as to mental processes and dichotomies such as teacher versus self-directed learning" (Simpson, p.53). Simpson believes that cognitive style seems to have received the most attention by researchers as a promising area of investigation. Cawley defines cognitive style as "ways in which an individual selects, organizes, and processes the educative experiences in the environment" (Simpson, p.53). Knox refers to cognitive style as " The individual's typical modes of information processing as he or she engages in perceiving, remembering, thinking and problem solving" (Simpson, p.53). Knox has subsumed the various styles within nine dimensions: (Simpson, p.53)

(i) Tolerance versus intolerance for incongruity.

(ii) Reflectiveness versus impulsiveness.

(iii) Constricted versus flexible control.

(iv) Focusing versus scanning.

(v) Leveling versus sharpening.

(vi) Complexity versus simplicity.

(vii) Conceptual differentiation versus description.

(viii) Analytic versus global.

(ix) Breadth versus Narrowness of categorizing.

In a discussion of concerns about lack of theory and practice integration, Gibb suggests that the adult educator should be aware of several obstacles to the application of learning theory to adult learning: (Simpson, p.54)

- Limited population upon which theories are based.

- Overgenerality in the statement of theories.

- Necessary oversimplification at this stage of theory building.

- Special problems of the adult learner.

- Contradictory and conflicting elements of theories.

- Mass of writing in scattered sources.

In order to overcome the obstacles mentioned, Gibb presents principles of adult learning as an interpretation of the basis of theories of learning. These are: (Simpson, p.54)

- Learning must be problem-centered.

- Learning must be experienced-centered.

- Experience must be meaningful to the learner.

- The learner must be free to look at experience.

- The goals must be set and the search organized by the learner.

- The learner must have feedback about progress towards goals.

Simpson then indicates that the most distinguishing ingredients of adult learning emphasized by adult education theorists are the autonomy of direction in the act of learning and the use of personal experience as a learning resource.

Erick Erickson was one of the first and most influential theorists to chart the course of development over the entire life span. He took a psychoanalytic approach and stressed the importance of cultural influences on development and outlined eight psychosocial stages, periods during which all individuals must confront a common crisis, caused in part by the new demands posed by different phases of life. The individual who resolves such a crisis improperly will, according to Erickson, have

later problems as a result. Erickson's first four stages are similar to Freud's oral, anal, phallic, and genital stages; the last four were added by Erickson to provide a fuller account of the entire life cycle. Here is an outline of what Erickson called *"The eight Ages of Man"* (Elkind, p.11)

(i) Trust verses mistrust: in the first year of life, the infant must gradually learn to trust his mother or other caretakers to satisfy his basic needs. This can help lead to a more general sense of trust in society and in himself.

(ii) Autonomy versus shame and doubt: The second year brings a new source of conflict between the child's growing independence and his need to depend on adults. As he becomes capable of walking and talking, the child is faced for the first time with important distinctions between good and bad and yes and no. Parental firmness and consistency can lead to a sense of autonomy, but too much criticism can burden the child with lifelong sense of shame and self doubt.

(iii) Initiative versus guilt: In the third and fourth year, the toddler begins to play at being an adult. He can initiate his own activities to a greater extent than before. Conscience begins to develop, as the child measures himself against external standards. if the parents are overly harsh and restrictive, the child may lose the desire to initiate new activities and instead be overwhelmed by guilt.

(iv) Industry versus inferiority: From the age of 6 or 7 to puberty, school children are faced with the task of learning what their culture expects of them and how to achieve it. One danger of this stage is that the child may conclude that his own skills or status are inadequate. This can establish a lifelong pattern of feeling of inferiority. More often, the child learns to become an industrious and productive member of society.

(v) Identity versus identity confusion: Around puberty, dramatic physical and emotional changes lead the adolescent to question his/her own identity, and

to wonder who he/she is. Failure to integrate all the different roles each person must fill can lead to identity confusion, with no firm sense of self.

(vi) Intimacy versus isolation: The major challenge of young adulthood involves commitment to relationships and to a career. The person who is secure in his/her identity can make the compromises necessary for an intimate partnership with another person. The alternative is to remain isolated from others. The isolated person may have different affairs, or even a single long-term relationship, but always avoids true emotional closeness.

(vii) Generativity versus stagnation: In middle age, the major crisis involves a sense of making a contribution to society. Generativity is a concern for establishing and guiding the next generation. It may be expressed in a variety of ways of giving to others, whether it be to children of our own or of careers and activities designed to help younger people find their place in society. The generative person leads a productive life that can serve as a model for the next generation. The other side of the coin is stagnation-a selfish concern with one's own goals that can lead middle-aged people to become insensitive to the needs of others or to live in the past.

(viii) Integrity versus despair: Finally, in old age, some people achieve integration. They look back over life with a true long-term perspective and a sense of satisfaction, accepting the bad as well as the good. For those with a sense of integrity, death loses some of its final sting. Others despair that there is no time left to pursue new paths. They face death with bitterness and regrets.

Alan B. Knox edited a book titled *Adult Development and Learning* that contains literature that explains adults and their development. Knox believes that clear understanding and sound proposals regarding adult performance entail attention to individual, societal, and transactional aspects of adulthood. He also believes that one of the main challenges to practitioners concerned with adult development is "to understand the major influences that the social context has on adult development, to

help clarify public policy issues and to propose changes in programs and services that are likely to improve adult productivity and satisfaction" (Knox, p.80). He thinks that the increasing rate of change, complexity and geographic mobility that characterizes the American society is undermining people's sense of security and community, and is increasing the importance of adult capacity for adaptation and learning for an uncertain tomorrow. He believes that personality stability and change is influenced by charactaristics that are universal, charactaristics that are widespread, and charactaristics that are unique. As adults interact with their environment, interactions among biological, experiential, societal and historical systems influence personality development. He says "The sense of self during adulthood is affected by the individual's resolution of childhood and adolescent crises related to trust, autonomy, initiative, industry and identity " (Knox, p. 399). He believes that in most instances in which adults purposefuly engage in systematic and sustained learning activities, their intent is to modify performance. Then, he presents the various types of cognitive learning as presented by Gagne. Gagne believes that they are prerequisite to higher order types as the individual attempts to master any area of content. These are: (Knox, p.409)

(i) Signal: The person learns to make a generalized response to a signal as in classical conditioning.

(ii) Stimulus- Response: The person acquires an instrumental response to a discriminated stimulus.

(iii) Chaining: The person acquires a chain of two or more stimulus-response connections.

(iv) Verbal Association: The person learns and assembles verbal chains that are assembled from a previously learned repertoire of language.

(v) Multiple Discrimination: The person learns to make differentiated responses to varied stimuli.

(vi) Principle: The person learns and is able to apply a principle that consists of a chain of two or more concepts.

(vii) Problem Solving: The person internally thinks through the combination of two or more previously acquired principles to produce a new capability that depends on a higher order principle.

Then, Knox says that learning and intellectual performance are modified by various charactaristics of the individual and of his or her context. Some of these modifiers are: (Knox, P.410)

(i) Condition. Physiological condition and physical health can affect learning positively or negatively. In order to facilitate learning, the adult learner should be in an environment that minimizes the extent to which physical condition and health can interfere with learning.

(ii) Adjustment. The effective assessment and facilitation of learning is less likely when there is substantial personal or social maladjustment in the learning situation. Support and assistance are especially important for adults with few recent educational experiences.

(iii) Relevance. The adult's motivation and cooperation in the learning activity is more likely when the tasks are meaningful and of interest to the learner.

(iv) Speed. Especially for older adults, time limits and pressures tend to reduce learning performance.

(v) Status. Socioeconomic circumstances are associated with values, demands, constraints, and resources that can affect learning ability. Level of formal education tends to be the status index most highly associated with adult learning.

(vi) Change. Social change can create substantial difference between older and younger age cohorts regarding the experience and values internalized during

childhood and adolescence. This makes it difficult to compare two age cohorts regarding learning performance and conclude that the diffeences are the result of age.

(vii) Outlook. Personal outlook and personality charactaristics can affect the way in which an adult deals with specific types of learning situations.

Then, Knox says that there are clear indications of some deterioration of problem-solving performance in old age. He presents some of the factors that seem to contribute to a deterioration of problem- solving performance along with ways in which practitioners can help older adults compensate. He believes that " generalizations about physical condition and health enable the practitioner to identify and interpret aspects of condition important to the individual. Such generalizations also suggest the types of assistance that will help the client achieve and maintain healthy and satisfying performance" (Knox, p. 310).

According to Knox, practitioners can assist adults to develop a more positive approach to education in several ways. One way is to help them successfully do intentional learning activities to cope with adjustments. Major role changes can produce heightened readiness to learn and focus attention on needed competence. A second way is to help adults become aware of role models who have already acquired the competence to which they aspire. A third is to create settings in which adults have the freedom to explore within democratic limits both the achievement of this current educational objective and the discovery of additional desirable objectives.

Knox moves to talk about women's roles. He believes that as a woman moves from one role to the other or performs both concurrently, conflicts can occur in role expectations and the sense of self. In the developmental process, variables related to personality, learning, condition, and context interact as well. Knox says "the career development patterns of working women are distinctive because of the accommodation that is required between their dual roles in family and work" (Knox, p.512). He believes that practitioners can assist women with such transitions by providing relevant educational programs and counseling services and referring them to mutual

support groups, so that the process contributes to career and educational development and personal growth.

Knox believes that practitioners can help adults in many ways to deal better with change. They can encourage the adults not to panic or assume that there is a quick and easy solution, but instead to use the change event as an opportunity for growth. Adults can be helped to broaden their perspective on alternatives and the process of change.

In the State of New York, the Senate Committee on Investigations and Taxation has conducted a study of the problem of adult illiteracy there titled *Adult Illiteracy in New York State- A Hidden Disgrace*. The goals of the study were to estimate the extent of the problem and to evaluate existing efforts to deal with it and to develop new approaches to reduce it.

The state of New York pays great attention to the problem of illiteracy and is committed to fighting adult illiteracy because "it is clear that New York State has a great financial interest- apart from a deep moral obligation–in the fight against adult illiteracy. Millions of taxpayers' dollars are spent to support illiterates who are unemployed, on the welfare rolls, or in prison. Huge sums are also lost each year by businesses as a result of illiteracy among their employees" (the Senate Committee, p. 1)

The findings of the report are: (the Senate Committee, p. 3)

(i) According to the New York State Department of Education, there are 2,040,000 New York State residents over the age of 18 who are functionally illiterate.

(ii) Adult illiteracy costs the state many millions of dollars in welfare payments and unrealized tax revenues.

(iii) Adult illiteracy among employees costs businesses in New York State many millions of dollars each year.

(iv) The State of New York budget fails to allocate the necessary funds to permit local boards of education and other community based organizations to attack

meaningfully this large-scale problem. New York spends 72 cents per pupil on adult illiteracy programs.

(v) The State Board of Regents, which is responsible for setting educational policy and priorities in the State of New York, has largely abnegated its responsibilities in this critical area. Its adult illiteracy programs are given low priority and its allocation of funds is inadequate.

(vi) There are more than 20,000 New Yorkers on waiting lists for entry into literacy training programs.

The Senate Committee came up with several recommendations to solve the problem of illiteracy: (The Senate Committee, p. 4)

(i) The New York State Board of Regents should assign a high priority to combatting adult illiteracy. As the principal educational policy setters for the state, the Board must design a serious, broad scale initiative to teach over 2 million adults how to read.

(ii) New York State should fund within its $6 billion education budget no less than $10 million in each of the next 3 school years for an all out war on adult illiteracy.

(iii) The State Department of Education should work in close cooperation with the New York Public Library, other state public library systems, and community based voluntary organizations to utilize their excellent and effective programs to combat illiteracy. Often, a non-school setting with its informal environment is less threatening to the already battered self-esteem of the adult illiterate.

(iv) Colleges in the state should provide financial aid in the form of work-study grants to students in return for their tutoring adult illiterates.

(v) Colleges in the state should grant academic credit to students who tutor adult illiterates.

(vi) The State Department of Education should develop a "mentor system", encouraging retired professionals, senior citizens with teaching skills, and others with a talent for teaching to tutor adult illiterates.

(vii) School administrators should increase their efforts to identify students with reading problems while they are still in the school system and provide them with special intensive tutoring. This program can be financed out of available funds.

(viii) The State Department of Education should develop new programs using computer-teaching techniques and public access cable television to augment existing literacy training efforts.

Gail Sheehy wrote in her book *Passages* that the years between 18 and 50 are divided roughly into two cycles. She identified the personality changes common to each of these cycles and examined the crises that can be expected that one encounters each stage. She believes that if the tasks to resolve the crises presented by each cycle are accomplished the individual then progresses into the next cycle. To further complicate the picture, male and female are apt to have different tasks in each cycle, many of which are not conducive to the maintainance of a marriage with the same partner. According to Sheehy these stages are:

(i) Pulling Up Roots (roughly 18-22) - Developing autonomy is the main task of this age group. The tasks of this passege are to locate oneself in a peer group role, develop a sex role, find an anticipated occupation and develop an ideology or world view.

(ii) The Trying Twenties (approximately 23- 29) - The problem is trying to take hold in the adult world. The tasks include shaping a dream, or that vision of oneself that will generate energy, aliveness and hope. One also needs to prepare for a lifework, find a mentor if possible and form the capacity for intimacy, without losing in the process whatever consistency has thus far been mastered.

(iii) Catch 30 (roughly 30-37) - The problems faced here result from outgrowing career and personal goals held in the 20's. Male and female have different roots through this passage which often presents difficulty in a marriage. A shift to being more self concerned develops here and is necessary.

(iv) Deadline Decade (approximately 37-45) - Contemplating the halfway mark one has the chance to rework the identity of the first half of life. If one makes full use of this period, one encounters a fullout authenticity crisis comparable to adolescence. Again, men and women have different tasks at this stage if they are to reintegrate an identity that is truly their own.

(v) Renewal or Resignation (starts about 45) - If the tasks of the 40's were adequately met these may be the best years of life (Renewal). If not, a sense of staleness resulting in resignation occurs.

After reviewing the literature in Jordan, the Arab World, and the United States, there are some observations that seem to surface:

- The literature in Jordan and the Arab World did not cover the situation of women in specific except for the work done by Ghada Jabi. Although illiteracy among women in the Arab world is widespread, many studies were done on both men and women which makes generalizing the results, sometimes, misleading.

- The literature in the United States focuses in on other segment of the population. It is not women in particular who face the problem of illiteracy but a big number of minority groups in the United States.

- Although the problem of functional literacy is being attacked in Jordan and the Arab World, the main objective is to fight illiteracy and make people able to read and write, whereas functional literacy is considered a priority in the United States.

- Many of the studies that concentrated on adults and their development have influenced the programs prepared for the adult students. Many countries in the world have used these theories to guide them in preparing programs for the adult students. I believe that these theories have been used where difference in lifestyles, culture, religion, and even life expectancy make the application of these theories unsuccessful and inadequate.

In the next chapter, a description of the data collection procedure, the audience, and the participants will be presented along with the theory and methods.

Chapter 3

Theory and Methods

3.1 Ethnographic approach

This is an ethnographic study which is built on participant observation, conducting interviews, and taking field notes. Ethnography is "one social research method, albeit a somewhat unusual one, drawing as it does on a wide range of sources of information. The ethnographer participates, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions, in fact collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues with which he or she is concerned ... Ethnography is the most basic form of social research." (Hammersley and Atkinson, P.2). Interpretive fieldwork has been used and recognized as a research method in the social social sciences for about seventy years. Erickson identifies fieldwork research as :

(i) "Intensive, long-term participation in a field setting.

(ii) Careful recording of what happens in the setting by writing field notes and collecting other kinds of documentary evidence (e.g., memos, records, examples of student work, audiotapes, videotapes).

(iii) Subsequent analytic reflection on the documentary record obtained in the field, and reporting by means of detailed description using narrative vignettes and direct quotes from interviews, as well as by more general description in the form of analytic charts, summary tables, and descriptive statistics.

Interpretive fieldwork research involves being unusually thorough and reflecting and noticing and describing everyday events in the field setting, and in attempting to identify the significance of actions in the events from the various points of view of the actors themselves"(Erickson, p.120).

Many people believe that it is through ethnographic research that the meanings of the form and content of the social process can be understood. Erickson believes that participant observational fieldwork is appropriate when researchers are dealing with:

- The specific structure of occurrences rather than their general character and overall distribution.

- The meaning-perspectives of the particular actors in the particular events.

- The location of naturally occuring points of contrast that can be observed as natural experiments when we are unable logistically or ethically to meet experimental conditions of consistency of intervention and of control over other influences in the setting.

- The identification of specific casual linkages that were not identified by experimental methods, and the development of new theories about causes and other influences on the patterns that are identified in survey data or experiments (Erickson, P.121).

Erickson believes that fieldwork is best at answering these questions which he paraphrases from Erickson, Florio, and Buchman's work in 1980

(i) What is happening, specifically, in social action that takes place in this particular setting?

(ii) What do these actions mean to the actors involved in them, at the moment the action took place?

(iii) How are the happenings organized in patterns of social organization and learned cultural principles for the conduct of everyday life. In other words, how are people in the immediate setting consistently present to each other as environments for one another's meaningful actions?

(iv) How is what is happening in this setting as a whole (i.e., the classroom) related to the happenings at other system levels outside and inside the setting (e.g., the school building, a child's family, the school system, federal government mandates regarding mainstreaming)?

(v) How do the ways everyday life in this setting is organized compare with other ways of organizing social life in a wide range of settings in other places at other times? (Erickson, P.121)

The ethnographic method was chosen because it gives direct contact with people and gives the researcher the ability to understand their feelings and see the world as they see it. Ethnography starts from where the people are and not from where the researcher is. It gives accurate information(as told by the subjects) about what affects them and doesn't force false ideas or include weak reasons. There are five charactaristics of qualitative research:

(i) The setting is the direct source of data and the researcher is the instrument. When researchers want to conduct fieldwork research, they go to the setting, whether it is a school, a neighborhood, a house or a center. Whatever kind of instruments they use to collect the data, like video or audio tapes or writing field notes, it is the researcher's insight that is considered the key instrument for analysis.

(ii) Qualitative research relies on description rather than numbers. In qualitative research, the data collected are rich with quotations, pictures, transcripts of interviews, fieldnotes, tapes, and documents. It is those instruments of description that bring out the details which play a significant role in analyzing the data collected.

(iii) Qualitative research emphasizes process rather than the outcomes. In conducting quantitative research, the result might be that something occurs. But in conducting qualitiative research it shows how and why this thing occurs. The rich description and the detailed observation of day to day interaction can explain the circumstances under which the result occurs.

(iv) In qualitative research, the theory is built during and after the data is collected not before. In other words, the data are not collected to confirm or contradict preset hypotheses. Rather, the theory is built after collecting the data.

(v) Qualitative approach is concerned with learning the perspectives of the participants. Qualitative researchers like to understand people from where they are, not from where the researcher is. They try to capture the participant's understanding of his/her situation and the way they make sense of their lives. (Bogdan and Biklen, P.27)

These are the charactaristics of fieldwork research. In the next section, there will be a description of the data collection procedures used in conducting this research project.

3.2   Data Collection Procedure

In order for a researcher to get to know the perspectives of the participants in the study and to understand their attitudes and beliefs, he/she must use different data collection strategies. By varying the data collection methods used, the researcher will be able to capture the investigated issue from more than one angle. In describing the process of data collection Erickson says "One approach to data collection in the field is to make it as intuitive, or as radically inductive, as possible. The conviction is that with long term, intensive participant observation in a field setting, begun with no prior conceptual expectations that might limit the fieldworker's openness to the uniqueness of experience in the setting, an intuitive sense of relevant research questions and conclusions regarding pattern will emerge by induction. From this point

of view, fieldwork is seen as an almost mystical process, essentially unteachable. The best preparation is solid grounding in substansive courses in anthropology and/or sociology. After learning relevant substansive theory and after reviewing empirical results of fieldwork research, the novice researcher proceeds to the field and does fieldwork" (Erickson, P.139). This study involved the following procedures:

(i) Interview.

(ii) Participant observation.

(iii) Field notes

3.2.1 Interview

The interview procedure is defined as "a purposeful conversation, usually between two people (but sometimes involving more) that is directed by one in order to get information ... The interview is used to gather descriptive data in the subject's own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world" (Bogdan and Biklen, P.135). Interviewing was an important means in this research project to get the participants perspective on what was happening. Both formal and informal interviews were conducted with the teachers and the students either before or after class. The adult education administrators were interviewed in their offices in the Ministry of Education. Interviews were arranged with the participants according to their schedule. During the interviews, both the teachers and the students were open and friendly, especially when they knew that the researcher lives in the United States of America and that the research was done there. They did not feel that the goal of the research was evaluating either the students or the teachers. This is very important in conducting fieldwork research. Erickson believes that "trust and rapport in fieldwork are not simply a matter of niceness; a noncoercive, mutually rewarding relationship with key informants is essential if the researcher is to gain valid insights into the informants points of view. Since gaining a sense of the perspective of the informants is crucial to the success of the research enterprise, it is

necessary to establish trust and to maintain it throughout the course of the study" (Erickson, P.142). All of the participants in the study were given forms that assured their freedom to participate or not in the research or to withdraw their participation at any time. They also were assured that their identity will remain anonymous. The researcher interviewed four adult education administrators in the ministry of Education, the four teachers in the centers, some of the students already enrolled in the program and all the dropouts. During the interviews, the participants were asked a set of questions that were helpful in revealing the reasons behind dropping out. The interviews gave the researcher the chance to explore the beliefs, attitudes, values, and the perspectives of the participants. The interviews gave the researcher the opportunity to look for evidence that will either support or contradict the research hypotheses.

3.2.2 Participant Observation

Another method used for collecting data was participant observation. In face to face interaction with the participants the researcher was able to get more unbiased information. Information gathered by participant observation provides a comprehensive picture of the events. Erickson explains the method of participant observation by saying that "The participant observer, present in particular spaces and times in the field setting, waits for particular types of recurrent events to keep happenning.... The researcher may seek out particular sites within a field setting where a particular type of event is most likely to happen. This gives the participant observer a situation analogous to that of the subject in a learning experiment, the opportunity to have multiple trials at mastering a recurringly presented task. In this case, the task is that of learning how to observe analytically a particular type of event, and how to make records of the actions that occur in the events, for purposes of more careful study later" (Erickson, P.144). The teachers and the students in this study were observed during and after classes. They were observed in formal and informal settings.

3.2.3 Field Notes

Field notes can be defined as "The written account of what the researcher hears, sees, experiences, and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on the data in a qualitative study" (Bogdan and Biklen, P.74). The researcher describes everything he/she sees in the site like the participants, the activities, conversations between people, and events. The researcher also records his/her feelings, ideas, and hunches he/she has. In this study, the notes provided a rich and detailed description of the events and of the people in the study. The factors that are believed to influence the students' decision to drop out are ranked according to the number of times each factor was mentioned by the participants.

3.3 General Description of the Participants in the Study

The participants in this study were female adult education students ,both who were in the program and those who dropped out, from the Oasis school district in the school year 1988-1989. The study also included the teachers in the centers and the adult education administrators in the Ministry of Education. The study was conducted in the four adult education centers in the school district. The age of the students in the centers ranged from 12 to 55 years. Among the 73 students in the centers, 40 students had no school experience prior to the center, two of the students had to leave school for health reasons, and the rest dropped out from regular school. All of the students in the centers, except for two, were Jordanians. The two non-Jordanian ladies were middle aged. One of them was from a neighboring Arab country, married to a highly designated official in their embassy in Jordan. The other lady was German married to a Jordanian. Among the 73 students in the centers, one was divorced, three were widowed, thirty five were married and the rest were young single girls. The students who agreed to participate in the study were 15 students enrolled in the program and 11 dropouts. Ten of them were older ladies and sixteen of them were young. The youngest student in all the centers was 12 years old, and the oldest was 56 years old. Almost all the students lived in the neighborhood of the

center or a few blocks away. All of the students, except for one, were from blue collar families. Some students lived in middle class areas, and a big number of them lived in low class areas. All of the students, except for one, came to the centers on foot. Only one student had a luxurious car and a driver to take her to and from the center. The students were categorized, according to their line of work:

- House wives.

- Females who helped their mothers at home.

- Working ladies.

The students in the centers study the first and the second grade in one year, and the third and fourth in another. The fifth and sixth grade are studied separately each in one full school year. So, the students have to spend four school years in the center in order to finish their elementary education. Studying in the centers is free until the students finish the sixth grade. Although education is compulsory in Jordan until the ninth grade, adult and literacy programs cover only the first six grades. If the student wishes to continue his/her education, he/she has to enroll in nonformal education programs. The student has to pay an amount equal to $120 a year. In the classrooms, the students were grouped according to their abilities. This is based on tests given to the students at the beginning of the school year in Arabic language and mathematics. So, one can find a very young student in the same grade with an older student.

Four adult education teachers participated in the study. The first teacher, Amal, was in her mid thirties. She was married and had three children. She lived near the girls' school and taught in it in the morning, then she returned in the afternoon and taught in the adult education center. The teachers who work in the centers are not volunteers. They are paid for the hours they teach in the centers. The motivations for the teachers to teach in the centers vary. Some teach because they need the extra income, others because they have nothing to do and need to do something to keep them busy, and a few others teach because they feel responsible about helping others.

Amal was serious and did not try to establish any kind of a relationship with the students in the centers. To her, it was work; she wanted to get it over with and go back to her family and children.

Another teacher, Sara, was also in her late thirties. She was single and lived with her mother and her sister in a building they owned across the street from the center. She also was a teacher in the girls' school in the morning. She wanted to teach in the center because she had plenty of free time and she had nothing to do at home.

The third teacher, Fatima, was in her early thirties and single. She worked as a teacher in a school in eastern Amman and lived there. The transportation from eastern to western Amman was difficult and time consuming, but she loved her work very much and had a very warm and friendly relationship with the students.

The fourth and last teacher, Nadia, was single and in her late twenties. She lived in a low socio-economic status in eastern Amman. She developed a good relationship with the students, but was very busy and occupied in her personal life. She could not wait to visit her friends in the university after school. She would not talk to the students about their lives and problems, but was friendly with them.

3.3.1 The Site

When choosing a site for the study, the researcher chose a school district where the population is stratified. People from upper, middle, and low socio-economic classes live in that area. People with white and blue collar jobs live in the same neighborhood. This research project was conducted in four female adult education centers in the Oasis school district in western Amman, Jordan. Three of these centers were located in a girls' school and the fourth was in another boys' school. The girls' school was located in a rather middle class location in the school district, whereas the boys' school was located in a low socio-economic area. This was reflected in the kind of people who attended school. The students in the girls' school were a combination of high, middle, and low socio-economic status, whereas the students in the boys' school were from a lower socio-economic status. The first building was a middle school. The school children usually left school at 1:15 p.m., and the adult education centers classes

started at 2:30 p.m.. The classes where the students met were the same ones used by the school children with no special arrangements for the adult students. Even the way the seats were arranged was similar to the way they were arranged for young students who attended the building in the morning. The students sat in rows behind each other. The desks on which the students sat were the same ones used by the school children. The students spent two hours daily in the school with no break. The school was in their neighborhood, so many of them walked to school and back home.

In the previous section, the participants in the study were described. In the next chapter the data gathered will be analyzed and the findings of the study will be stated.

Chapter 4

Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the reasons behind dropping out from female literacy programs in the Oasis school district in Amman, Jordan. Factors associated with dropping out from the adult education program have been studied in the attempt to provide information which could assist the administrators to organize and maintain programs of literacy education.

Conducting interviews, taking field notes and observing participants gave the researcher the opportunity to understand the reasons that make the adult student leave the program. The students were interviewed and given the chance to talk about their feelings and attitudes towards literacy education.

Although the researcher experienced teaching high school students for two years after graduation from college and is familiar with the school setting, conducting research in adult education centers was a new experience in many ways. First of all, living in the United States of America for seven years gave the researcher the chance to view the Arab society in general and the Jordanian society in particular in a different way. Being exposed to a different culture, religion, language, values and way of life made me think more about our society and appreciate or criticize things previously taken for granted. In the United States, the great emphasis on the fact that each individual has certain rights and duties and a certain role to perform in the society no matter what his/her social status is, made the researcher think more about the distribution of power in the Jordanian society and how some individuals are deprived

of their rights just because they are poor or powerless. In the United States, people are governed and protected by the law, and they understand their rights and demand them. In Jordan, laws that protect people and govern their behavior also exist, but many people are not aware of them. So, many times, people accept certain situations just because they think that this is the way things are supposed to be. For instance, when I talked to Mr. Saleh Ali, an administrator of adult education programs in the Ministry of Education, he said *" when eight people would express their interest in studying and continuing their education, the Ministry would open a new center for them in any public place in their neighbourhood like a school, a mosque, or a community center but they do not ask"* . Then I asked *"but do the adult students know they have this right?"* He replied *" I am not sure, although the availability of adult education programs is advertised in the media"* . When I asked the students if they knew that they have this right all of them answered by *"no"*.

Another reason that made this research project a new experience to the researcher is the fact of going back to the school setting with new information about teaching, learning, and the adults and their development. The researcher's first experience was as an English language teacher for high school students. But studying the field of education and the experience of the United States in this field gave the researcher the opportunity to know other educational systems and the way they operate. Although the differences in religion and culture between the United States and Jordan will affect the application of different educational methods there, it is always important to understand different educational methods and try to choose the ones that best suit the society's needs.

A third reason concerns conducting field work study in lower middle and low socio economic neighnbourhoods, and getting to know the people who live there and understand their problems. It also made the researcher compare class structures in Jordan and the United States, and gave the researcher the opportunity to get to know the American efforts in trying to solve the social problems.

In ethnography, it is important to "make the familiar strange", and the researcher believes that those aspects helped in achieving that.

4.2   Analysis of Data

Although it is difficult to define a typical student at the Oasis Literacy Education Center, two larger groups include the older students and the traditional school dropout occured. The model dropout is a low school achiever usually below grade level for her age. No matter what the social status is, the students have special pressures or outside commitments that influence their attendance at the centers.

After reviewing the data and reading the notes, the factors associated with dropping out can be divided into these categories:

(i) Social factors.

(ii) Psychological factors.

(iii) Economic factors.

(iv) Educational factors.

(v) Factors that deal with the school environment.

Each factor will be discussed seperately.

4.2.1   The Social Factors

In order to understand the social factors that affect students' attendance at the centers, it is important to understand the social structure of the Jordanian society. There are different forces that shape the Jordanian society. There are some internal forces as well as external ones (as illustrated in Figure 4.1). The difference between the internal and external forces is that the internal ones have always been there and will continue to exist, whereas the external forces are not permanent in the society and may change when the situation changes. The internal forces are:

(i) Religion.

(ii) Culture.
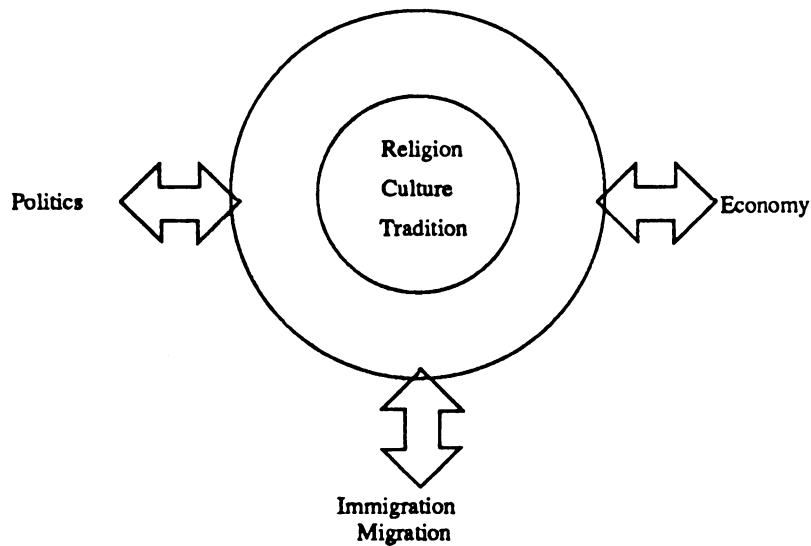
Figure 4.1. Intrinsic and Extrinsic Forces that Shape Jordanian Society

(iii) Tradition.

The external forces are:

(i) Politics.

(ii) Economics.

(iii) Immigration and Migration

Religion

Islam is the dominating religion in the country. A large number of people are religious. The teachings of Islam with their emphasis on family unity are very respected there. There are certain rules that govern people's behavior. The role of each member of the family is explained, and the rights and duties of the individuals are set. Therefore, people perform their duties and exercise their rights with no stress or emotional problems. The parents are the ones responsible for their children and they

keep on carrying this responsibility even after the children are grown up and married. The children do not leave the parents home until they get married. There is no pre-marital relationship between males and females. So, different aspects of family life are defined and controlled by religion.

Culture

Another aspect that shapes the Jordanian society is culture. The Jordanian society is homogenious. Many of the Jordanians come originally from nomad tribes. Their value system is very strong. They are brave and generous. Many of the tribes are very rich. They own land and sell it for a very high price. They also believe that the family is the man's responsibility. Marriage also is a very important part of family life. It is very important for a girl to get married when she is in her twenties, and for some families, earlier than that. Even if the woman does not get married and stays single, she could never leave the family home and live in her own place by her self. This is not acceptable socially. She will continue to live with the family.

Another aspect of the Arab and Jordanian culture is having large families. Although the trend now is to have fewer children, many families have a large number of children. Although the father is usually the provider in the family, the responsibility of raising the children and attending to their needs is usually the women's responsibility. If a woman has a career or does any kind of work outside the house, she still has the same big responsibilty at home. This kind of situation limits the women's ability to handle the responsibility and stress both inside and outside the house.

Living with extended families rather than nuclear ones is also another cultural aspect that shapes the Jordanian society. Although this phenomenon is not wide spread in large cities, it is usually the case in rural areas. When different members of the family like the grandparents, the uncles, and the aunts live together in one house, problems are certain to occur. These problems become serious when conflict about who makes the decision arise. Many women suffer from this situation mainly because they have families of their own but still can not make their own decisions.

Another aspect is that the Jordanian society, like many societies in the world, is

male oriented. Although Islam emphasizes the fact that both sexes are different but equal, the Arabic culture is a male oriented one. This has its roots in the history and origin of the Arabs. They used to live in tribes, and they needed men to work, fight, travel and look for a new place to live in when they wanted to move. Because of the weak physical nature of women, they were a target for the enemies. So, men were prefered for their strength. Although the life style of the Arabs changed dramatically, their love for having male children still exists. Women now in Jordan are educated, but this aspect still affects their lives especially among the nomad tribes and in the rural areas, where the priority is given to the males rather than the females.

Tradition

Tradition is the way cultural aspects are displayed. Both religion and culture shape the Jordanian tradition. In fact, it is very difficult to separate religion, culture, and tradition. They all combine together to shape the Jordanian society.

There are external forces that shape the Jordanian society, these are:

The Economy

The economic situation in any country affects people's values and attitude. The priorities in their lives change according to their financial situation. If the financial situation of the people is high or, at least, acceptable, people will start thinking about other things in their lives such as education. But if the people are poor or have to struggle every day to provide food, then education is not their priority.

In Jordan, education was very important to people and still is to some classes in the society. Everybody used to view education as a means of social mobility. It meant financial security and independence. But, nowadays, the rewards of getting a high school diploma are very little if any. A college diploma is not enough to provide the financial security people want. Except for certain professions, unless a person gets a higher education diploma, his/her diploma is worth very little. For instance, school teachers do not earn enough money, in fact, they earn the least amount of

money compared to other occupations. Nowadays, it is not necessary to be educated to earn a large amount of money. Skilled workers in blue collar jobs can earn a huge amount of money. This fact made people from lower middle and low socio-economic classes think of education as time consuming with little rewards. So, the rate of school dropouts among those groups is very high.

Politics

The political situation in Jordan, as in many countries in the Middle East, is very complicated. Jordan lies on the east bank of the River Jordan. The West Bank which is known as Palestine is an area characterized with upheaval and unrest for more than 40 years. Many of the Palestanians came to live in Jordan as an escape from the situation there. Although those people have settled in Jordan, their roots are still in Palestine. Because Jordan is on the border of Palestine, the country is affected by the ups and downs there. Jordan is affected by the situation in Palestine in many ways: political, economic and social. The situation the Palestinians face, either in Palestine or Jordan, makes it difficult for them to lead a normal relaxed life. They have many problems to face and complications to overcome. This in turn, has its reflection on the priorities in their lives and therefore, on the way they view education.

Immigration and Migration

Immigration and migration have an important effect on the society. Immigration to and from Jordan plays an important role in changing the social structure and the familial structure there. Usually, the father or the male provider in the family is the one that goes to another country to work. When the head of the family leaves this creates a problem in the household. When the father is absent, many times the mother finds it difficult to control the older sons. So, many of them leave school. They either start to work in low paying jobs or do nothing which creates a social problem.

Migration to and from different parts of Jordan also creats a problem. The people who usually move are people who live in tribes and keep changing their place of residence. They do not have a specific place to live. Their children have to quit school because of the constant moving. Those people create a problem because they are difficult to track down, and they do not have a permanent address in which they can be reached.

After reviewing the data, it was found that different aspects of the social factor play an important role in decreasing attendance and increasing the number of dropouts from the adult education centers. These factors are (illustrated in Figure 4.2):

   (i) Disapproval by the spouse or family members.

   (ii) The attitude towards adult and literacy education program.

Disapproval by the spouse or family members to the woman's enrollment in the literacy program.

The majority of the students in the program are women from low socio-economic backgrounds. In most cases, the men in the families did not finish their education. The rejection is caused, in most cases, by the male ego. Jordan is a male oriented society. In many families, being a "man" means being the most knowledgeable, the decision maker, the provider, and the head of the family. In many cases, men do not like their wives to be educationally superior to them. They believe that if the woman is educated she will have everything going her way. They believe that they no longer have the power to lead the family as they used to. This attitude may ruin the relationship between the man and his wife and destroy the family. One student, Shadya, who was still enrolled in the program but was about to drop out because she was not sure how things will go in her family, said *"I want to learn, I want to be able to make decisions for myself. I want to be able to face my in-laws and tell them what I want for my family and what I don't. I want to feel confident in what I say"* . I asked her to explain what she meant and she said *"Sometimes, when I am in the*

company of other people and would like to say something and express my opinion I stop because I am never sure that what I am going to say is right". This shows that women feel more confident in themselves if they are educated. They feel that people respect them and their opinion more. To some men who are not educated and used to their wives agreeing with them on everything, this might be threatening.

Living with the in-laws in the same house causes problems because the parents try to interfere with their son's life. They try to control him as if he was not married. Shadya, who lives with her in-laws said *"At first, I asked my husband if I could enroll in the program and he agreed because he is away from home most of the time. He is a truck driver. He wanted to keep me busy, and going to the center was a chance for me to get out of the house while he was away. But, after enrolling, his parents began feeding him ideas about educated women and how I am going to change, and that he will not be able to control everything as he used to. So, he became insecure about my education. Now, I think that in a short period of time I will leave the center".* Some men might not be direct about showing their feelings like what happened with another student, Mona. Although both of her parents are alive, her brother is the one who makes the decision in the family. He refuses to allow his sister to continue in the program. He keeps telling her that they are doing just fine and that they do not need education to improve their lives. At the same time, he cannot afford to buy his sister or wife new clothes and they live in a very low socio-economic neighborhood.

Another reason for the families to reject their daughters' education is their belief that women do not need education. They believe that the woman will get married and be supported by her husband. So, why bother and study? Financially, women are secured by religion. Their financial rights are preserved. The woman is not expected to earn her own living in order to live a decent life. But some people misunderstand this security and think that their daughters do not need education because they are not going to work. This belief comes from an illiterate generation who survived without education. The life style in early Jordan did not require literacy skills, so a great number of people remained illiterate. The communities were small, life was simple, and people did not need to read and write. They forgot that the world

has changed, and that their children will find it difficult to live their daily lives as illiterate people. This is further explained by Paulo Friere. He says (Friere, p.14) that a peasant told him *" one cannot say that the indian is illiterate because he lives in a culture that doesn't recognize letters. To be illiterate you need to live where there are letters and you don't know them".* This attitude is apparent in those excerpts from an interview with Mrs. Ahmad who is an older married student in her fifties:

Q: *Why did you decide to come to the center?*

A: *I want to be able to read and write so as to be able to read the Holy Quran.*

Q: *Are you going to continue to come to the center until you finish the program?*

A: *I would like to be able to read and write. I don't care about getting a diploma.*

Q: *Do you have school age children?*

A: *My three sons work with their father in the auto shop and my 2 daughters stay at home.*

Q: *Did any of them finish their education?*

A: *No, they left school before finishing their education.*

Q: *Why, if you believe in the importance of education didn't you encourage your children to continue theirs?*

A: *Well, you see, my husband needed help in his auto shop. He also wanted to teach our sons how to run our business in order for them to take over in the future. They make so much money that they are doing better than some college graduates.*

Q: *Do they think about continuing their education?*

A: *Why, they are doing great. Why waste time?*

Q: *What about your daughters?*

A: *Well, you see, girls do not need education. What do they need it for? We do not like our daughters to get a job and work. Even if they get married, their husbands must take care of them and attend to their needs. That is what happened to me and I have had a very nice life, and hopefully, my daughters will, too.*

The families sometimes reject their daughters' education because they are very conservative and worry a lot about the females in the family. Many of these families live in low socio-economic neighborhoods. Although they might not be religious in particular, they set strict rules for the females in the family. One of the girls in the center, Nada, said that her brother spends lots of time outside the house with his friends. She said:*he is not religious; he does not pray or perform the religious rituals, he does not go to the mosque, and I do not believe that he has a clear understanding of the religion, but at the same time I am forbidden to do what many religious women take for granted.*

In Jordan, as in many countries in the Arab World" the lower the socio-economic status of the family is, the more women are deprived of their rights provided to them by the Islamic religion and the law. This is noticed by observing the large number of dropouts from school and the high percentage of early marriages. Those occur mostly in low socio-economic classes. People who are educated value education a lot and insist that their daughters get theirs" (Jabi, P.21).

Family related factors are important in causing and increasing adult illiteracy. The physical environment of the disadvantaged adult home does not facilitate his/her school work, and also, his/her educational involvement may have put a strain on the family. The homes of many disadvantaged persons are apt to be extremely crowded and noisy, and there is little opportunity for concentration on school related matters. An example of this is the situation of the school janitor. She also was a student in the literacy program in the center where she worked in the morning. She was a widow and the only supporter of a family of six. During an interview with her she described the environment in her home by saying *"I rarely if not never had a chance to study at home. It is always late in the afternoon when I reach home because of the*

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                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │ The Social Factor│
                    └─────────────────┘
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┌──────────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ Disapproval of the spouse or │   │ The attitude towards adult │
│ family members   │   │ and literacy education program │
└──────────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────────┘

-Male ego
-Living with the in-laws
-The belief that women
 do not need education
-The families are con-
 servative.
-Family related factors

Family's Attitude | Student's Attitude | Society's Attitude

Young Single Students | Young Married Students | Older Married Students | Widows and Divorced

Figure 4.2. Social Aspects Associated with Dropping Out from the Adult Education Programs

difficult transportation between work and home. When I go there, the kids are always fighting. I have to prepare dinner then do some house work. We live in a very bad and dangerous neighbourhood. Recently, my oldest son engaged with a group of other young men in a fight and one man was killed. My son was accused of the killing but not found guilty. The problem now is that the family of the victim wants revenge and they are threatening to kill my son. So, we moved from that neighbourhood, and we are on the run ever sense. We do not feel safe for my son's life"

The Attitude Towards Adult and Literacy Education Programs

Another reason associated with the social factor is the attitude towards adult and

literacy education programs. this attitude can be divided into:

(i) The family's attitude.

(ii) The students' attitude (single, married)

(iii) Society's attitude

Each of these will be discussed separately.

The family's attitude

The female adult student comes, in most cases, from low income families where the parents have low educational attainment. Many of the males in the family dropped out from school. Nowadays, it is becoming the case that people with white collar jobs don't make as much money as people with blue collar jobs in Jordan. Besides, education is no longer viewed as a means for class and social mobility. Having a degree does no longer mean prestige and high income. It is viewed by many people from low socio-economic background as a waste of time. They need the money, and there is a great demand for mechanics and skilled workers and they make lots of money. They cannot afford spending many years studying, so they drop out and work. When I talked to the older married ladies in the center they told me that their husbands and sons don't feel a need to get a diploma.

It seems that although the males deny and hide their need to read and write, the females are quite convinced that the males don't need education. The men in those families carry all the responsibility. They are the providers, the ones who take care of other family members, the ones who solve the family problems and the decision makers. The women mainly stay home, provide a comfortable family environment for the other family members. They do not feel the pressures that exist outside the house. So, when everything they need is provided, and they hear their husbands and sons say that they are happy with their present situation, they become really convinced that there is no need to learn.

The Students' Attitude

The students in this study can be divided into four categories according to their marital status (as illustrated in Figure 4.3), they are:
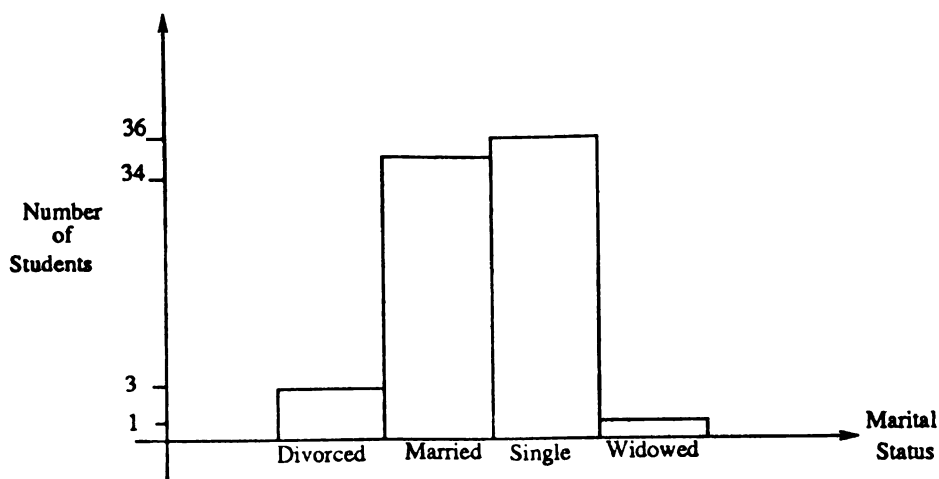
Figure 4.3. Number of Students According to Their Marital Status

(i) Young single students.

(ii) Young married students.

(iii) Older married students.

(iv) Widowed and divorced students.

The attitude of the students towards adult and literacy education differ according to their marital and family circumstances, and according to their goals for attending the centers. The differences in attitude are directly connected to their expectations from the program. The motivation of the illiterate female students to study is very important for the program to succeed. Many of the young single students were not serious about enrolling. They were not academically oriented and not highly motivated. Many of them told me that they were going to leave school as soon as they get married. They came from very conservative families who would not let them go out often. The society in Jordan is, in general, conservative. Combining religion with culture, dating does not exist. Pre marital relationships between males and females

does not exist either and is not acceptable at all. It is considered a sin and is punished. So, going to the center is a chance for them to leave home and socialize with others. It is also a chance to change the environment especially for students who live in low socio-economic neighbourhoods. As soon as the students' status in the family changes, and they get more freedom to run their own lives, they would leave the program.

The study seemed to reveal that the students who dropped out from regular school because they hated school, the teacher or because they couldn't do well in school had the same negative attitude about the literacy education program. Those students told me that their attitude didn't change and that they still hate school. Those students had a bad experience in school and that experience is reflected in their attitude towards literacy education, whereas the students with no school experience or the ones who had to leave school for familial reasons came to the center with a positive attitude. One student called Ilham who was 19 years old and in the third grade level was different from the others. If I had seen her walking down the street, I would have thought that she was a college student. She was elegant with a very nice appearance. She didn't look look like the average student in the literacy education program. When I asked her about her previous school experience during an interview she said that she studied until the fifth grade in the traditional school before she dropped out. This is part of the interview I had with her:

Q: *Why did you leave school when you were young?*

A: *I hated it very much.*

Q: *Why?*

A: *The teacher was very mean to me. I was afraid of her, and I became afraid of going to school.*

Q: *How did your parents agree to you leaving school?*

A: *I remember that I used to cry a lot and tell my parents that I didn't want to go to school, besides, my grades were bad.*

Q: *Do you regret taking that decision now?*

A: *No, not at all.*

Q: *Why are you back in school then?*

A: *Because a very close friend of mine enrolled, and I wanted to do like her and be with her.*

Q: *Will you continue with the program?*

A: *I do not think so, I will leave as soon as I get married.*

Another student, Nada, who was 18 years old and lived in the refugee camp was very much different than Ilham in appearance and in attitude towards education in general. She believed in the importance of education, not because of the obvious reasons like getting a better understanding of life, having a job or earning money, but in the importance of education as a means for social mobility. She believed that being educated insures a better chance for marriage to the right person. She said that a number of young men asked for her hand in marriage, but she refused because their socio-economic status was the same as hers. She felt really disappointed because her chance to improve her life was very small. During the interview, I asked her many questions. Her answers to some of them were important in revealing her attitude about going to the center:

Q: *Did you have a school experience when you were young?*

A: *Yes, I attended school until the third grade.*

Q: *Why did you quit?*

A: *At that age I could not make a decision. My family decided that I should quit school because they were very conservative and that year the school had boys and girls in the same class.*

Q: *Do they object now especially this center is for ladies only?*

A: *Yes, my brother does. He doesn't like me to go out of the house everyday. He says that he is worried about me, but the fact of the matter is that he wants me to stay home to help his wife. He is married and has 3 children. His wife complains if she sees me going out and she is left with the house work and the children.*

Q: *So, what will you do, are you going to continue with the center?*

A: *Even if I continued coming to the center, I will not be able to study farther than the sixth grade. To continue, I have to enroll in informal education program, and the tuition is 40 Jordanian Dinars a semester* (which is equal to $120). *My brother says that he can't afford that. So, it is useless.*

Q: *What does your father say about that?*

A: *Nothing. My brother is the decision maker in the family.*

Although the aspect of familial responsibilities exists in the lives of the older married students because they have their husbands and children to take care of, it is also present in the lives of the young single students. Many of them have to help their mothers at home. They told me that coming to the center was a chance for them to relax and not do house work. This was further proven whenever a class was cancelled. The married and older students would rush home, whereas the younger students would stay in the center and talk for the whole session.

The motivation for the young married students to enroll in the program was stronger than that of the single students. Most of them came from lower middle class. Although some of them had no school experience prior to the center, many of them had a successful school experience but had to quit for familial reasons. The higher the

social class, such credentials of schooling as diplomas and number of years completed in school are considered important in affecting a person's job and income prospects. Being young encourges them to study. They had time because their husbands were at work most of the day and their children were in school. Their children play an important role in motivating them to learn. One of the students whose name was Nora told me that the reason she enrolled was her 11 year old son. He once came to her asking for help with some math problems, and so, she helped him. The next day he came from school crying and told her that his teacher punished him because the solutions for all the problems were wrong. She felt that she destroyed her son's faith and confidence in her. So, she decided to learn and help her children.

The young married students seemed to be eager to study. Despite their responsibilities at home, they rarely missed the class. They tried to organize their schedules and meet the demands of the family members and then go to school and try to find time to study at home when they get back. During classroom observation, the young married students were the ones who participated the most. They always did their homework and volunteered to solve math problems written on the board. All of those students, except for one, told me that they were going to continue in the program and then move to the informal education program. They seemed to have more control of their lives than the single students. The one exception was Shadya, who lived with her in-laws and was not sure about her family circumstances.

Although the younger married students were eager to study, it was difficult for some of them to come to the center because there was nobody to leave the children with. Even if the children went to school, this would not solve the problem. Some young children's schools have two shifts, one in the morning, and one in the afternoon to accomodate the high number of school age children in the district. The students' schedule vary. One month they go in the morning, and the following month they go in the afternoon. So, the mothers' scheduls also changes. When the children go to school in the morning and return home in the afternoon, many mothers couldn't go to the center because they couldn't leave the children alone at home. Once I saw some children playing in the school yard, and when I wondered who they were, a lady told

me that she had to bring her children with her because there was nobody to babysit.

The age of the older married students in the center ranged from 40 to 60 years. All of the older married ladies in the centers, except for one, came from low socio-econmic status. They lived in poor neighbourhoods. Although some of the families of the older married students earned large amounts of money, they lead poor life styles. Almost all of these students were motivated by one thing: to read the Holy Quran. They wanted to learn more verses than they did. They wanted to be able to read books about religion. They said that their husbands and children were too busy to teach them about religion. The belief that education will provide them with a better life style was not behind their enrollment in the program. They were satisfied with their current situation. Mrs. Ali, who was in her fifties, told me that her daughter in-law is a dropout. She lived with her in the same house. When I asked her if her daughter in-law came to the center she said: *" No, she doesn't study anymore. She quit school after marriage. She leads a very comfortable life. When I go home, she usually helps me practice."* The older students' attitude towards literacy education was a means to satisfy an immediate need. After achieving the goal or goals they had in mind they would leave the center. Almost all of them told me that they didn't need diplomas and that is why they do not need to continue. The teachers in the centers knew that and were treating the students in the centers accordingly. They did not try to convince them to change their minds.

There was a descripant case which was an older married modern lady in her early fifties. She was a friend of a younger married student in the center. Both of them came from a higher socio-economic class than the rest. This lady had two sons. One was a doctor and the other was a business man. She said that she had to leave school because she got married at a young age. Then she was so busy raising her two sons and taking care of her husband that she couldn't find time to study. But now, she has a lot of free time. So, she wanted to study to fulfill a need she was prevented from earlier. She said that she believed in the importance of education and that was the reason she encouraged her sons to continue theirs. Those two ladies didn't interact with the other students in the class. They came to the center together and

left together. In the center, It was apparent that communication between different socio-economic classes did not exist.

Aside from their immediate family responsibilities, there are family problems that face the students in the center and cause them to drop out, like death of a child or the spouse or a parent. One Palestinian lady told me that she had to quit because her brother was killed during the unrest in Palestine. He had a wife and five children. Her father died a long time ago, and her late brother was the oldest. She couldn't concentrate on studying because she kept on thinking about her brother's family, and was plannng to go to Palestine and take care of them. She said that she might bring his family back with her to live in Jordan. So, the problems they face, and the situations they encounter play an important role in affecting their decision to continue with their studies.

In general, the motivation of the older married students to enroll in the program was to find out more about subjects that interest them, and to be able to write to friends and relatives and read their letters, rather than to obtain advancement or to read books of general interest.

Three widows and one divorced lady in the center participated in the study. Although they were similar in sharing a single life style, they differed from each other a lot. The widows were older students (50 and over). They were independent and free to choose the life style they wanted. Two of them had grown up children, and the third was the only supporter and provider for a family of six. Although it is common and encourged that the children take care of their parents when they are older, there was one case in the center that didn't apply to this rule. Islam and the Arabic culture and tradition emphasize taking care of the elderly. For instance, in Jordan and in the Arabic and Islamic world in general, it is rare that a person would send his/her parent to a nursing home. Except for certain cases where the physical or emotional condition of the person requires special care, this is religiously and culturaly unacceptable. The parents and grandparents are supposed to enjoy their children and grand children, their needs and wishes are supposed to be fulfilled and their lives are supposed to be satisfying. But this was not the case in this lady's situation. She was very poor and

neglected by her son and brother. When I asked her why she didn't live with her son, she said that he was poor with four children and that his wife was not nice to her. Then, when I wondered why she didn't live with her brother, she said *"No way. I do not want to impose. Sometimes, when I visit them and it is time to eat and I am starved, I would eat just a few bites so as not to say that I impose or come to eat."* This lady led a very hard life. It was difficult for her to make ends meet. When I asked her about her attitude towards literacy education she said *"For me it is too late now to start all over again. I can't wait years to get the diploma. Even if I want to, I can't afford it."* When I asked her about the reason she dropped out from the center, she said *"I had to work"*. I asked her about the kind of work she did, she said that she worked as a cleaning lady. She said that although it was not a steady job, it was the only thing she could do. It was a very hard and demanding job for her. She got so tired and exhausted that she couldn't come to the center, or sometimes, her working hours were in conflict with the center hours.

One of the two remaining widows was taken care of by her sons and was still enrolled in the program. She wanted to learn to read the Holy Quran in order to pray better. She had plenty of leisure time and the center was the perfect place for her. The third lady had to quit because she had to work in order to support her family.

The attitude of the divorced lady was different. She was young, in her early thirties. She had a boy and a girl. Although Islam gives the mother custody of young children, her children lived with their father for reasons beyond her control. She seemed to be heart broken when she talked about her children. She said *"After the divorce I took my children to live with me in my father's house. We live in the refugee camp and our lives are very difficult. My family is poor, and my parents could not tolerate my children or afford their expenses, so, they made me send the children to live with their father, especially as my ex-husband had not paid the almony. I am very mad at my parents. I want to study and continue my education so as to work and be able to support my children and get them back."*

The students' goals in attending adult education programs vary, and the study of

the attitude of the students in the center brings out results similar to Houle's findings in describing the kinds of learners that can be found in the classroom. He divides them into:

(i) Goal oriented learners. In this study, the goal oriented learners are the older married ladies who join the centers to be able to read the Holy Quran and to be able to read and write so as to read letters from their children abroad.

(ii) Activity oriented learners. In this study, the activity oriented learners are many of the young single students who came to the center to escape from the environment in their homes and to enjoy themselves with their friends autside the house. They wanted to meet new people and experience life outside their low socio-economic neighborhoods.

(iii) Learning oriented learners. The learning oriented learners in this study are the students who joined the center and they were uncertain that they will be able to continue, but they wanted to gain knowledge and become educated.

Society's Attitude

The older generation in the Jordanian society is mainly illiterate, especially the females. It is common to find that the grandparents and the parents of a middle aged person are illiterate. Sometimes, a wrong message is transmitted to the children, and they think that it is all right for them, too, to be illiterate or quit school.

The male behavior, sometimes, transmits the message that illiteracy is acceptable. Some men, driven by their male ego, don't like to marry educated women. They prefer to marry women with lower educational achievement than theirs. Some of them even like to marry women with no high school diploma at all so as to feel superior to them. Many examples can be seen by observing the families that come to study in the United States. Many ladies whose husbands have Ph.Ds or are graduate students are high school dropouts. The reason for these cases might be that the woman is from a middle class family but chose not to finish her education, or that the man is originally from a low socio-economic class who moved up by education, but still can

not marry an educated middle class woman. This gives some females the message that it is all right to leave school, especially in a society that doesn't care much about women's achievements. For example, if there are two lawyers or doctors, one is male and the other is a female, many people trust the male lawyer or doctor more than the female.

Living in a male oriented society, many females are deprived from their rights especially in the country and among the nomad tribes. Almost all the attention, education, and money is given and spent on the males. The females are supposed to get married and join another family, so if valuable resources are spent on them, it is considered a waste. In Jordan, the family remains the main provider for the children until they get married. Even after marriage, the males are still considered a part of the original family, whereas the females, especially in the financial aspect, are considered outsiders. The situation gets very bad when a woman is deprived from the rights given to her by the religion and the law, and at the same time prevented from pursuing her education to achieve by herself what she has been denied.

4.2.2 The Psychological Factors

The range of the students' age at the centers differ. Therefore, the stages of their psychological development differ. It is very important to understand the psychological stages that a human being passes through over the entire life span. This will help the educators deal with the students and the problems they face.

The students who participated in the study were interviewed individually, and their problems were discussed in private so as to eliminate or, at least, reduce embarrassment and protect privacy. It was apparent to the researcher that no matter what the motivation to enroll in the literacy program was, or how strong it was, the students felt some embarrassment about enrolling in the centers. To them, it was like admitting to the public that they, whether young or old, lack education and need help. It meant dissatisfaction with their present situation and needing the help of, sometimes, a younger teacher. After analyzing the data, the psychological reasons came in second after the social reasons. They were:

(i) People's attitude towards adult and literacy education: Many students in the center told me that the idea of enrolling in the program was met with irony and sarcasm. Members of the family and friends did not encourage them to enroll. On the contrary, they used to make fun of them and joke about their wish to learn. Some of them told me that nobody other than the immediate family knew about their enrollment in the center. It seems to be socially more acceptable for the young people to enroll than the older married ones. This attitude was apparent when observing the people who pass by the center while the students were standing at the entrance or going in to the building. People used to stare at the students, and sometimes pointed at them. Sometimes I was embarrassed when I waited for the students to arrive to the center because some students in the traditional school would talk to each other and point at me, or people who pass by the center would stare. The young students were very embarrassed when they came to the center and students from the formal school were still there. They would avoid them by going inside the building. It was especially embarrassing to the students who came from low socio-econmic areas and met with students from middle and upper socio-economic areas. Even if the other student was younger, the adult student would not initiate any pattern of interaction with her.

(ii) Another reason is the fear of making mistakes in front of the peers in the classroom. Many students thought that they were too old to make a simple mistake in reading, writing or mathematics. They felt embarrassed when they made a mistake. This was especially clear when the teacher would ask a question, and nearly one or two students only would volunteer to answer. The others were afraid of trying and making a mistake. I heard some students after the response was given to the teacher say *"I knew that"*, and *" I was right, my answer was correct"*

(iii) Another reason is suffering from a handicapping condition that prevents the student from learning, decreases her ability to learn, or makes her shy or

uncomfortable attending school. One student called Huda who was 18 years old had to quit school when she was young because she had an accident and needed care. She fell on her back and injured it. The treatment took a long time. But the consequences of the accident were permanent. Her physical growth became very slow. Although she was 18 years old, she looked as if she was 12 years old. She was very self conscious about her condition. She seemed withdrawn and isolated from the others. She dropped out from the center two weeks before the research in the center was started. When I asked her about the reason she quit she said" *I do not like coming to the center. The teacher does not like me and neither do the students. They treat me in a different way than they treat each other . They think that I am different just because I am ill. I might be ill, but I have the same feelings as them."* Another student called Fatima , who was 12 years old, told me that the reason she had to quit regular school 4 years ago was that she could not speak well. The teacher was never patient with her. She used to make fun of her reading. The teacher's constant remarks, and the students' bad attitude, combined with the fact that her family was poor and could not afford to treat her, made it impossible for her to stay in school. So, she quit school. Now, after a few years, she decided that she wanted to continue her education. Although she was still unable to speak well, the teacher, and her peers in the center, who were all older married students, encouraged her a lot. Once, one lady in the center made a comment about Fatima's progress in studying by saying *" Fatima is a very good and intelligent student. We hope that she will continue her education because she can do it."* The attitude of the peers and the teacher encouraged Fatima to study and continue her education. When I asked her about her plans for the future, she said *" I will continue with the literacy program until the sixth grade, then hopefully I will go back to the regular school."* When asked if her condition will affect her as it did in the past, she said *"No, now I know my abilities and know what I want. I will try to do my best."*

Even though the teacher in the adult education center was patient with Fatima, her situation proves that the attitude of some teachers towards the students with handicapping conditions can affect students' enrollment whether in the regular school or the adult education center.

(iv) Another reason is the students' inability to remember all that has been taught to them. Some older students told me that it was very difficult for them to remember everything the teacher taught them. They had so many things on their minds, and being older increased the likelihood that they would forget many things taught to them. Then, when they came to class and the teacher asked them questions, they found it embarrassing not to know the answer.

Another student said that it took her longer than the other students to understand the subject taught, especially math. The teacher explained the lesson, and then she and the students tried to solve the problems. Some of the students said that they could not apply what the teacher said to the problems in the text. What bothered them the most was that sometimes some students, often younger than themselves, came up with the solution. Some students said that this bothered them when the people who would know the answer were their children. They said that although it made them happy and proud to see their children able to do the work, they were ashamed that they did not know the answers themselves.

These reasons which were mentioned by the students are similar to what Eberle and Robinson call as "the constraining forces". Some of these forces are:

(i) Negative past experience in regular school.

(ii) Fear of competing with other students in the adult education program.

(iii) Lack of successful experience that will give the students the encouragement to study.

Although these factors affect the students psychologically, the source for all these problems may not be the students alone, but the teachers and the educational system. The next section discusses the economic factors which came in third in affecting the students' decision to drop out.

4.2.3 The Economic Factors

The literature indicates that the illiterates are often handicapped and often helpless in today's job market in finding any kind of job, much less a job that provides adequate income. Usually, they are the last ones hired and the first ones fired. People who lack literacy skills are often virtually unemployable, so, they must rely on unemployment and welfare assistance.

In this research project, the economic reasons came in third after the social reasons and the psychological reasons in increasing the number of the dropouts. According to their economic status which is illustrated in Figure 4.4, some students were employed and the majority were not working. The employed students were two widows who had low skill jobs such as part time maids, cleaning ladies or school janitors. The financial situation affected the students' attendance in different ways. For the older ladies who were widows, they had to work to support themselves. One of them had school aged children that she needed to work to take care of. She needed to work in order to support her children. After work, she was usually tired and could not spend more time outside the house, especially with no one to take care of the children at home. When I asked her about her goals for attending the center, she said *"I did not want to get a diploma. All I wanted is to learn to read the Holy Quran. But I could not afford quitting my job, so I left the center"*.

When I discussed with the teacher in the center about the availabilty of financial assistance to the students in general from the Ministry of Social Affairs, she said that she knew nothing about their financial situation, or the way they run their lives. So I decided to ask the students themselves and I did. The lady told me that she applied for assistance, but she was denied. It was not easy to get assistance especially because she had a job, and there were more severe cases that needed help.
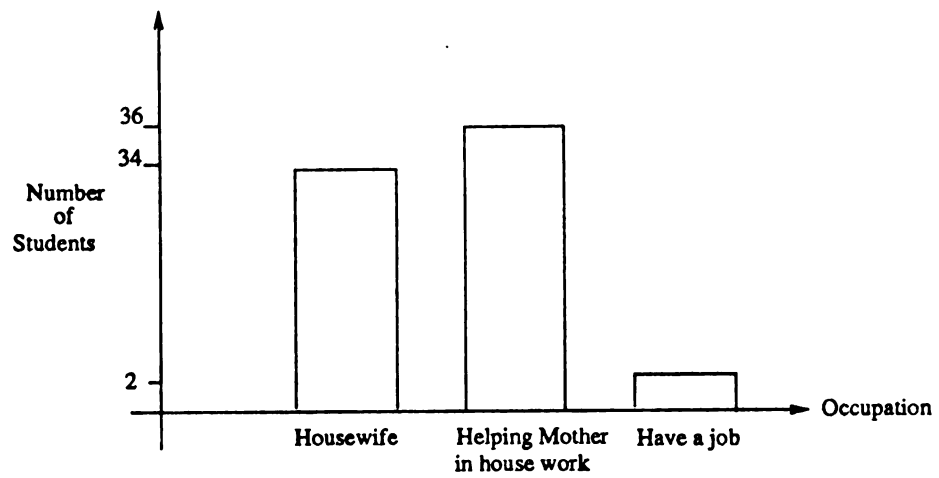
Figure 4.4. Number of Students According to Their Occupation

Another lady who worked as a part time maid said that she had to quit the program because, sometimes, she had to work in the afternoon and could not go to school. Although her work was not permanent or guaranteed, she saved all she earned in order to pay for the rent. She lived alone in an almost condemned apartment. She did not get any outside help except for a small amount of money given to her each month by a man who gives to charity.

Although the economical reasons were found to be third in place after the social reasons in this research project in affecting the enrollment of female students in the adult education program, the situation would likely have been different if the research was conducted on male students or in the rural areas. In general, it is the male's responsibility to provide income for the family. Except in some cases where the woman is the single provider for the family, it is rare to find women with high salary jobs or careers in low socio-economic classes because the women are not highly educated and their role is believed to be at home. In the rural areas, the role of women is different. They usually help in doing work on the farms. Although they do not work outside the house and earn money, it is still a time and effort consuming job. So, the definition of women's work is different in the city and the country.

The study revealed that educationally disadvantaged persons who are employed are apt to be engaged in jobs which are physically demanding, and so they cannot join evening classes because they will be exhausted. Frequently, the employment of the illiterate is insecure. Their worry about their work and the fact that they are last hired and first fired may disturb them to the point of losing concentration on educational matters.

4.2.4 The Educational Factors

There is more than one aspect of the educational system that affects the attendance of the students in the centers, like the teachers, the curriculum and the exams given to the students. Although the ones affected the most by these aspects are the students themselves, it seems that they are the ones neglected in making the decisions about the curriculum or the method of teaching. The students themselves did

not feel that they had any role in making the decisions. If they were not satisfied or happy with a procedure, they would not try to improve the situation by talking to the teachers. Rather, they avoided the problem and ran away from it by quitting school. The academic progress of students is illustrated in Figure 4.5. " *The fact that educational programs are controlled and extended by affluent outsiders to poverty means that the programs reflect other concerns of the educators than the provision of education. The poor are also taught to be docile and not endanger public safety or the public treasury. In other words, a major object in educating the poor is to control them, while the purpose of education of affluent adults is their self-realization. But social control from outside interfere with enabling poor adults to assume self-responsible adult roles and thus reduce their motivation to become educated at all*". (Haggstrom, p.147). The educational factors are:

- The teachers in the centers where the study was conducted, unintentially, made mistakes that were significant in affecting the students' satisfaction with the program, and therefore, their attendance. During many observation sessions, the researcher noticed that "*some students made mistakes and even cheat and the teachers did nothing about it. The teachers pretended that they did not see anything. They would accept the students' work as if they did not copy from the book or cheated by looking at another student's solution. The teachers did not try to forbid the students from cheating, or try to know what areas they needed to understand or needed help with.*" When I talked to the teacher about that she said " *I know that the subjects are difficult for the students, so I try to make things easier for them. I do not want them to be discourged from coming to the center. If they feel that they are doing well they will be motivated to come.*" When I tried to get the students' opinion about their progress in the center they did not blame the teachers on their slow progress. They believed that the teacher knew what the students were doing. Rather, the students thought that they were slow learners or hopeless and haven't had a big chance to succeed.
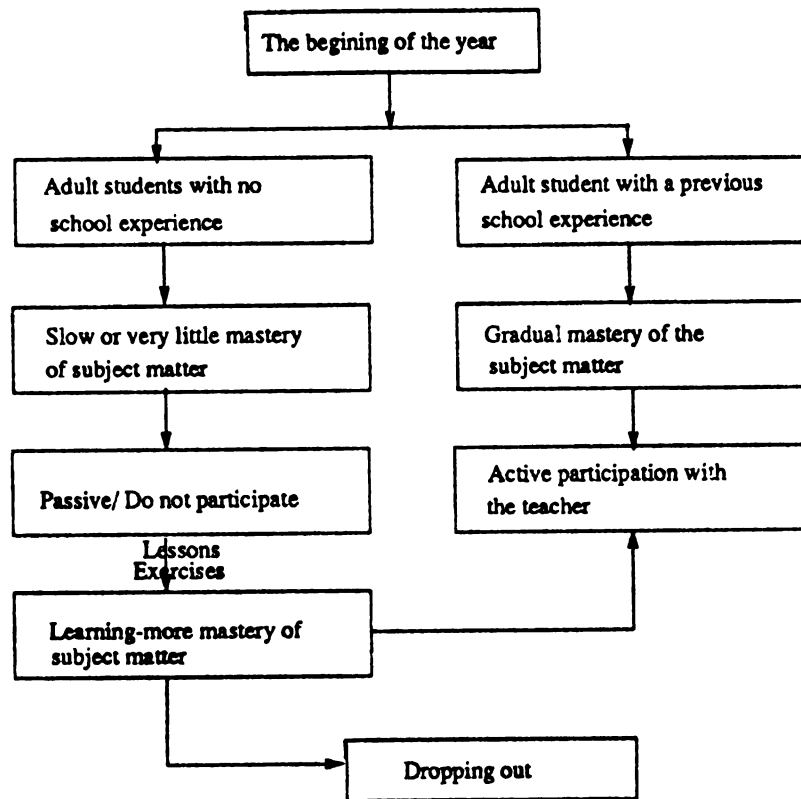
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┌─────────────────────────────┐
│   The begining of the year  │
└─────────────────────────────┘
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┌──────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Adult students with no│   │ Adult student with a previous│
│ school experience   │   │ school experience   │
└──────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Slow or very little mastery│ │ Gradual mastery of the│
│ of subject matter   │   │ subject matter   │
└──────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Passive/ Do not participate│ │ Active participation with│
│   │   │ the teacher   │
└──────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────┘

Lessons
Exercises

┌──────────────────────┐
│ Learning-more mastery of│
│ subject matter   │
└──────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────────┐
│   Dropping out   │
└──────────────────────┘

Figure 4.5. Academic Progress of Students in the Adult Education Centers

- Another reason is the lack of interaction and communication between the teachers and the students. One teacher, Amal was tough with the students. During class observation, I have never seen her smile to any of the students. Even the relation between the researcher and this teacher was very serious. Amal used to come to class, explain to the students the math lesson, and then solve some problems with them on the board. Even if nobody volunteered to solve the problems, she would do them herself without trying to help the students understand. This attitude was not apparent in the other teachers, but this teacher taught the highest grade in the center, and relatively, the subjects she taught were getting tougher for the students.

- The teachers never used any instructional aid or method to help the students understand especially in language and mathematics. The teachers did not use instructional methods that are suitable for older students. The teachers worked in the traditional schools in the morning and taught young children. The methods they used were not different from the methods they used with the young students.

- The material that was covered in the literacy education curriculum was not interesting for the students. The reading curriculum dealt mainly with life in the country. It talked about farmers, their unions, and their agricultural co-operations. The curriculum in all the educational levels in Jordan is standardized, and so is the curriculum for literacy education. Although the available curriculum might be interesting to a portion of the adult students in the country, especially those who live in the country, it is not likely to be of interst to females who live in the city. Life in the city is much more different than life in the country, especially in Jordan where the difference between the city and the country is very big. Facilities that are taken for granted in the cities are considered luxuries in the country. Everyday life essentials are rare in the villages in the desert or in the south. Although the Jordanian society is homogenous, and the population is small (3 million), there are big

differences in people's life styles in the country and the city. Although the students never complained frankly about the lack of instructional material, this aspect has a lot to do with the level of their achievement in the center and their satisfaction with their progress there.

- Another reason is the sudden shift in the complexity of subjects taught especially in math. In the literacy and adult education program, the first and second grades are taught together in one year and so are the third and the fourth grades. But the fifth and the sixth grades are taught separately. There is a sudden change in the level of material covered. The teachers agree that this sudden transition from easy to difficult is too much for the students to handle. With no special preparation or training, the teachers can not do much to help the students, especially those with no previous school experience, to understand the subjects. The students in the center, especially the older ones, seemed to concentrate more on learning how to read and write more than mathematics. They seemed to ignore mathematics because it was difficult for them to understand. During classroom observation, the researcher noticed that *"The older students in the class came to the math class without doing their homework. The teacher did not check whether the homework was done or not. She immediately began asking for volunteers to go to the board and solve the problems. Only one student volunteered. She went ahead and solved the problem. The teacher did not do any further explanation of the the problems and their solutions, instead, she went ahead to solve the following problem, and the students did not ask her any question."* This is an important factor that might discourage them from continuing their education because they do not feel that their progress is satisfactory. This is very important because the adult students, and the people in general, might get the impression that adult education is difficult or useless for older students, therefore the potential students might be discourged to enroll.

- Combining the first four grades in two increases the pressure on the students. The students in the program are taught every two years together and they only come to the center two hours a day five days a week. In addition to the pressure the students face, they cannot concentrate fully on the subjects taught in such a short period of time. One student may be well beyond the second grade level, whereas another student have not mastered the subjects taught in the first grade. The result at the end of the year is that both students will go to the next level because the teachers do not want to discourage the students by failing them. The teacher who is in charge of the center said during an interview *"We do not want the students to fail. We want them to succeed and feel capable of studying in any way we can even if they do not deserve that success. We do not want them to quit."* So, what really matters to the teachers is having the center open with students enrolled so as to secure another income no matter what the expenses are. So, the teachers make it easy on the students, and the students feel that they are not gaining much. The stages that the students pass through are illustrated in Figure 4.6. Some students have had a previous school experience, whereas for others, the literacy education center was their first encounter with school and studying. The students are usually placed in grade levels according to their ability to read. So, some poor readers who have had a previous school experience were placed with students who have never been in school, and therefore, cannot read. This practice was not fair to the students with no school experience. They felt that they did not belong there, so their interaction with the teacher and the other students became less and less. Teachers, unconsciously, ignored them and concentrated more on the students who already knew something. In this situation, the difference in the student's age was significant, too. When an older female student with no school experience was surpassed by another younger student, the embarrasment of the older student increased. Mrs. Omar, an older student in her fifties said during an interview *" I do not think that I am going to continue coming to the center.*
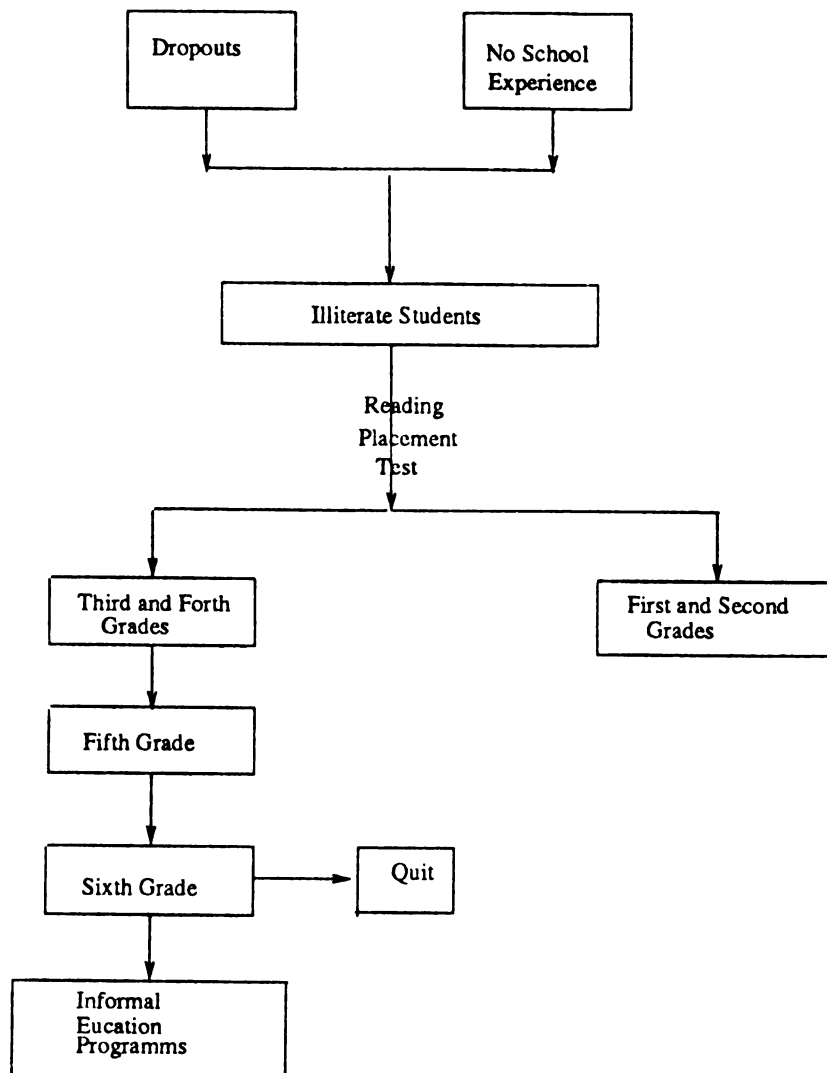
Figure 4.6. Stages of the Adult Education Program

I have tried, but I am very slow and I know nothing. It is useless. Education is not for me, it is for young people who still have the energy and the ability to study and achieve, not for me, an older lady whose mind is not performing well enough."

● The carelessness of the teachers in performing their jobs is also another factor in discouraging the students from continuing in the center. This carelessness was displayed in different ways one of them was neglecting to take the attendance. This gave the students the message that it did not matter if they attended or not. Some students missed many classes and lost track of what was taught in class, and therefore found it difficult to understand the subjects, and therefore quit. An older student, Mrs. Fathi, said *" it is easy here in the center. Nobody asks you why you are absent, and nobody counts the days that you do not come. When I have certain things to do at home I do not care about coming to the center."* This carelessness about attending is also apparent in the teachers' behavior concerning their punctuality and starting school on time taking into consideration the short time the students spend in the center. The classes in three of the four centers were scheduled from 2:30 pm. until 4:30 pm. Mr. Ali, an administrator in the Departement of Adult and Literacy Education in the Ministry of Education said *" the students and the teachers are free to schedule their meetings at the centers as long as it is two hours a day five days a week. After deciding on the time, the teachers should notify the Department about it."* But the classes were rarely started on time. Because the teachers were late most of the time. But they would leave the center on time and never compensated for the time they wasted. In the forth center, the situation is worse. The center consists of one room located at the basement of a regular boys' school. Once I went and waited for a long time but nobody showed up. When I asked the regular school principal if he knew anything about the class that day, he told me that the teacher cancelled the class because only two students showed

up and they left a few minutes before I arrived. Another aspect which was very irritating to the students is the absence of the teacher with no previous notice. One day I went to the center to spend the day with Sara's class. Usually, at that time, everyone would be in her class and the hall would be quiet. But, there was students' noise coming from the hall which meant that one class hadn't started yet. So, I went outside to see what was going on and found that Amal had not arrived yet and her students were outside waiting for her. They waited for a long time, then after 35 minutes, some older students began to leave. They were angry because they came to the center on time to find that the teacher was absent. They said that this was a waste of their time. Mrs. Ahmad said *"I had a million things to do at home, and I left everything to come to the center. I wasted time here waiting, and by the time I get home the two hours will be over with nothing accomplished."*. No one of the other teachers knew that Amal was not coming prior to the time of the meeting, nor they knew why. One student was exceptionally upset because she could not go home on foot because she lived in Western Amman and had to wait for her driver to come and pick her up at 4:30. There was no phone to call him and she had to wait the two hours in the center. She had children at home and felt that what happened wasted valuable time for her. The following day the students went to their rooms and classes were started as usual except for Amal's class. She did not come to the center the next day either. The students were waiting and wondering about the reason for her absence. Then Sara came from her classroom and told the students that Amal's brother-in-law died and will not be able to come to the center the following day either. The students were very upset because they wasted another day. they were complaining about the teacher's irresponsibility toward the students. She did not even bother to send them a message or leave them a note. And Sara did not come to them directly after she arrived in the center and tell them what happened. Rather, she only came when she heard the noise in the room. There was no substitute teacher coming. This

situation and others similar to it convey a message to the students that they are not important and not considered a priority in the situation. This is reflected in their negative attitude about continuing to go to the centers. This also seemes to prove that the teachers' priority is not teaching the illiterate students as much as having another job with extra income.

- Another reason for dropping out can also be imposed on the students when the center gets closed because of the insufficient number of students in it. Fatima, a teacher in the center, told me that she used to teach in another center where the number of the students who registered was 14, then at the beginning of the school year it dropped to 10, and a month later the number dropped to 3 and the Ministry had to close the center and the other 3 students were asked to join another center if they wanted to.

- Another reason that was very important to the students and played a major role in their attitude towards continuing their education, especially for young single students, was the tuition paid for the enrollement in informal education. The students have to pay 40 Jordanian dinars which are equal to $120 dollars a semester in tuition to continue their education. Adult and literacy education covers until the sixth grade only. Some students are independent whether married, divorced, or widowed and generally they do not find the tuition a problem either because they do not intend to continue their education or because they can afford the tuition. But it is a problem for the young single students who still depend completely in their financial support on their families. Sometimes, when the families are poor, the members have other priorities in their life than paying for education. When the students know that they are not going to continue their education, they lose their motivation to study. Nada was an example of this situation. When we were talking she said *" I feel that there is no use in attending the center. I will not be able to continue my education higher than the sixth grade. My brother says that he will not pay the tuition. He refuses to pay for anything I ask*

*him for. He has his own family, and it is his priority. Even my father listens
to him. He is the decision maker because he is the one working."* Tuition
for informal education is not viewed as a problem by the Ministry of educa-
tion. When I talked to Mr. Mohamad and discussed the problem with him
he was surprised. he said *" But it is only 40 dinars a semester. It is not
much."* It was clear that there is a gap between the Ministry of education
and the students. This gap exists in the ministry's lack of understanding
the situation of the students. The administrators want the students to make
education their priority, and at the same time they do not give them the
chance to accomplish that.

The findings of the study confirm with Mansour's findings that combining more
than one grade in a single classroom and the unavailability of adult education classes
after the sixth grade are important factors in affecting the students' decision to drop
out.

4.2.5 Factors that Deal with the School Environment

It is very important to provide a comfortable environment if the students are to
benefit from their experience at the center. Although people in the Ministry are
committed to solving the problem of illiteracy, they seem to neglect some details that
affect the success of the program. They believe that if the school building is good for
the young children to study in it is good enough for the adults. The problems with
the environment of the schools are:

- Lack of facilities that are important for the adult students. For example, the
  center is not heated in the winter although it can get very cold in some days in
  the winter. The weather in Jordan, like many countries in the Mediterranean,
  is mild. It is hot and dry in the summer, and cold in the winter. It snows
  for only a week in Jordan. So, central heating is not available in every
  home. People use portable heaters. In the centers, the teachers are allowed
  to use the heaters in their lounge, but not in the classrooms. So, it gets very

cold and uncomfortable for the students. In the summer, the situation is not much different. Air conditioners are not available and neither are fans. So, weatherwise, the situation is not comfortable for the adult students. Although the same situation affects regular school students, but school age student are forced to come to school, whereas the older students are not.

Although all the classes are held in the late afternoon, The days in the winter become very short, and the sun disappears. The centers are not equiped to deal with this kind of situation. The light in the center is very weak and the students, especially the older ones find it difficult to read. Many of the students have poor eye sight, and combined with weak lights, it is very difficult for them to read.

Telephones were not available in the center. In the regular school, there was a phone in the principal's office. Although the regular school and the adult education centers were located in the same building, they were considered separate schools. When the regular school day was over, the school janitor would close the principal's office and nobody could go in until the following morning. Even the teachers in the center could not use the telephone. On the two days when Amal was absent, the situation was difficult for the students, especially Mrs. Fares who needed to call her car driver to come and pick her up. But because there were no telephones in the center, she had to wait for two hours before her driver arrived. There were no public phones in the area, and the nearest store where she could use the phone was far from school.

- Public transportation, to and from the center, was not available to the students in the centers. The students had to walk or drive to come to the centers. Since most of the students have low socio-economic status, they did not own cars. So, they had to walk to school. For many of the older adults, it was difficult to walk a few blocks every day back and forth to the center. It was both tiring and time consuming. For the younger students who enjoyed to walk, it was dangerous to walk alone, especially in the winter when it gets

dark very early in the afternoon. During an interview, the older lady who worked as a maid said " *I rarely find time to rest after my work is over. I used to come to the center immediately after work. I had to walk because there was no transportation to the center. I used to get exhausted.*"

- Another problem was the location of the centers. Although it was convenient for the Ministry of Education to assign school buildings to be adult education centers, many students found it difficult to come to the centers because, sometimes, they were embarrassed, and many times, the school was too noisy for them to be able to concentrate on their studies.

The findings of the study done by the Arabic Organization for education, Culture, and Science which is titled *Analytical Study of Literacy Education in the Arab World* indicate that difficulty of transportation and the poorly equiped adult education centers are important in affecting the students decision to drop out.

The study revealed that although the factors that affect dropping out from school vary, sometimes it is difficult to set them apart and treat them individually. The factors are combined together and the students may be affected by more than one reason at a time. The reasons are illustrated in Figure 4.7. Although the people directly affected by the problems of illiteracy are the students, solving the problem requires the combined efforts of the students themselves, the people in the Ministry of education and the society.

4.3   Summary of Findings

Many of the students in the adult education centers have special circumstances and life situations that affect their attendance at the centers. The conditions of the centers like their organization, location and the availabilty of public transportation to and from the centers combined with the lack of co-ordination between different ministries in the country, play a significant role in affecting the students' attendance at the centers.
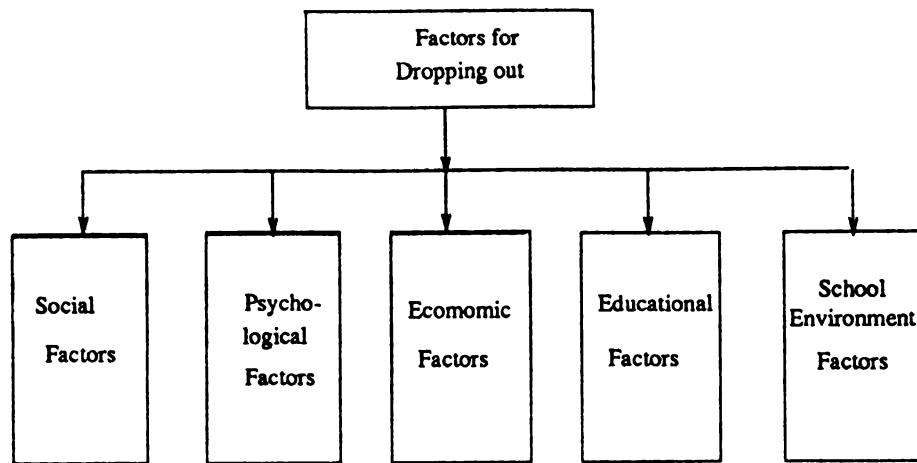
Figure 4.7. Factors Associated with Dropping Out from the Adult Education Programs

According to the data collected in this study, the factors associated with dropping out can be categorized as follows:

(i) Social factors.

(ii) Psychological factors.

(iii) Economic factors.

(iv) Educational factors.

(v) Factors that deal with the school environment.

There were other questions related to the main question, and the findings of the study addressed them. The first question was about the relation between the level of the teachers' qualifications and dropping out from the centers. The response to this question was a little interesting because it could be answered by yes and no at the same time. When the students were asked directly whether the teachers were good

or not, almost all of them said yes. Then when they were asked about the reason they said yes they all complemented the teachers' efforts in teaching them. To the students, being able to read and write and teach those skills to others was considered something to be proud of and a high achievement. But participant observation and taking fieldnotes revealed the other face of the coin. The students with their simple knowledge and experience in the field of education were not able to understand the implications of the teachers' behavior on their decision to drop out. Teachers' lack of understanding of the different developmental stages of the adult students made them, sometimes, unable to deal with the students. This is very important because students from different age groups can be found in the same class.

The teachers knew the information they were teaching to the students, but they seemed not capable of delivering it to the students. They did not seem successful in making the students understand the information taught. The students ended up thinking that it is their fault that they did not understand, or that they are unable to learn, so, they dropped out.

The second question asks about the kind of instructional material and methods the teachers use in teaching the adult students. The curriculum used in the centers is a number of books prepared by the Ministry of Education. No instructional aid methods were used in the classroom other than the text. The teachers used the lecturing method in explaining the lessons to the students. The interaction in the classroom was always teacher initiated. The students sat in rows at the same desks used by the school children in the morning. No class discussion or group assignments were present. The teachers did not divide their attention between all the students. They concentrated only on the students who participated or volunteered to answer the questions asked.

The third question deals with the students' attitude towards studying in school buildings used by young children in the morning. In three of the four centers studied in this research project, the students were not bothered by this fact, because they usually came to the center after the other students had left. They were more concerned with the attitude of the people who live in the neighbourhood and who pass by the

center. Those three centers were located in a middle class neighbourhood where the areas was not very crowded and the streets were quiet. People who lived in that area knew each other very well. So, when the students, who live in other areas, came to the center, they were noticed immediately. The fourth center was located in a low socio-economic neighbourhood. It was in a school that works two shifts, one in the morning, and the other in the afternoon. It was a boys' elementary school. It was very noisy and very poorly equiped. The class was held in a room down stairs on the children's way to the play ground. It was very noisy and the door could not be locked because the lock was broken. It was a dark and damp room. The students in that center came from the same neighbourhood. They knew each other or, at least, felt equal to each other. So, they did not feel embarrassed coming to the center because everybody was the same. But they felt uncomfortable in the presense of the children. The young students used to make fun and comment about the ladies coming to the center to study. The language of the boys was not polite, and they did not respect the ladies. Besides, the noise they used to make in their lunch hour made it very difficult, if not impossible for the students to concentrate. Although the older students could choose the time they want for their meeting, this specific school building was occupied the whole day, so, the adult students did not have much choice.

The next question asked about the husbands' attitude towards their wives studying at the center. This turned out to differ according to age, goal and the social status of the wife. The young students' husbands were reluctant to allow their wives to study because they were afraid of losing the authority in the house. Only one student's husband encouraged her to study because he was so successful in his business and made lots of money that he felt very secure. She said "In fact, he was the one who encouraged me to continue my education. He wants me to achieve something in my life. I do not think that I will be able to work because of my home responsibility, besides my husband is very successful and makes lots of money from his business". The husband spent most of his time at work. The wife came from an educated middle class family, and was eager to continue her education and to achieve something she was prevented from because of her mother's sickness. The husbands of the older

students did not seem to care much about their wives' education and did not seem to take it seriously because the students themselves did not. They wanted to study just to learn to read the Holy Quran. So, their goal was not threatening. One older student was serious about studying and was encourged by her husband. He held a high ranking job at his country's embassy in Amman, and it was embarrassing that his wife was illiterate, so, he encourged her to study.

This study revealed that the education of the children in the family plays an important role in affecting their mother's decision to enroll in the adult education program. If the children were still in school, this would encourage the mother to study in order to help her children do their work, or at least, so as not to feel inferior in her knowledge. If the children were educated, they would encourage their mother because they realized the importance of education and did not want their mother to be prevented from it. The illiterate children and the school dropouts did not encourage their mothers to study because if they did, it would look as if they admit their mistake of not continuing their education.

The women's need to work appeared in the study in two categories of students; the widows and the divorced. Two of the three widows in the study needed work because they were the only supporters and providers for their families. Because of the contradiction between school hours and their jobs, and because they got exhausted from work, they had to quit school. The one exception was one lady who did not have young children to support, and was living comfortably with her son. The divorced lady needed to work and be independent because she wanted to be able to support her children.

The effect of friends and relatives on the woman's decision to continue her education was significant. The pressure of peers and cohort groups affected the women's attitude towards education. The study revealed that many students who were enrolled in the program, whether related or not, tried to keep their enrollement in the center confidential. They did not tell everybody they knew about their decision because they were worried about other people's attitude.

Although many of the adult students did not complain in so many words about

the quality of education, many of them could not read or write very well or solve mathematical problems. They did not know what the reason for their failure was. They know that they were not doing very well at school. The teachers tried to make things easy for them, but this turned out to decrease the students' satisfaction with the program except for a small number of students who were doing well. Those students had a successful school experience in the past but for some reason had to quit. The students with no school experience did not show as much progress.

The data revealed that although a large number of students in the centers were older ladies, they were the ones most likely to dropout after their goals were achieved. Usually their goals did not include continuing their education or getting a diploma, rather, they were only concerned with being able to recognize the letters and being able to read. They lacked motivation to continue their education. But, on the other hand, the young students who were highly motivated to finish their studies and get a diploma, in many cases, had to leave the program because of different reasons. The study revealed that there is no direct correlation between age and dropping out. In other words, it cannot be claimed that the young students stayed in the program and the older ones dropped out.

The experience of the adult students in the center did not seem to have a big effect on the decision of other students to enroll. Except in a very small number of cases, most of the students in the center did not know each other. The social and familial pressure on the students from the outside was greater than the encouragement they got from their peers in the centers.

The study also revealed that the school environment played an important role in affecting the students' decision to drop out.The availability of transportation to and from the centers was, according to the majority of students, a very important factor in affecting the students' willingness to continue coming to the center. Those students lived a few blocks from the center. Although they could walk to and from the center, and many of them did, especially at the beginning of the school year, many of them said that they were not sure they would be able to keep it up in the winter. Some older ladies said that they got tired from walking all that distance. They were poor,

so, they did not have their own cars and could not afford to take a taxi every day. Besides, the bus did not pass near the school. So, it was considered a problem for both the older ladies and the younger ones who felt it was dangerous to walk alone especially at night.

The centers were located in traditional school buildings. This was considered an inconvenience to the students because, sometimes, the adult education classes were held at the same time when the young students had recess or during their lunch hour. It would be very noisy for the adult students to concentrate on what was being taught.

The seats in the classes were not comfortable for the adult students. They were the same seats used by the young students in the morning. They were arranged in rows which limited the students' interaction with each other and did not encourge whole group discussions. The lecturing method was the one used and the teachers did not give the students any large group activities or assignments.

The students were not given a break to relax in the two hour period. They were not allowed to use the telephone, in fact, there was no telephone available for emergencies in any center.

The data showed that the although the centers were opened for the benefit of the adult students, they were not equiped to provide the desired comfortable learning environment for the students.

The last question in the research study was about the kind of pressures the students experience after enrolling in the program. The study showed that the pressures vary according to the age of the student. For instance, the single students faced family pressure and interference in their lives from different family members, and were under the influence of the decision maker in the family. The married students had familial responsibilities and had to take care of other members of the family. The widows had to work in order to support themselves and their children and the one divorced lady had personal problems with her family about the custody of her children that diverted her attention from education. It seemed that no matter what the degree of

students' commitment was, they had outside pressures that interfered with their education. Although these pressures might have existed before the students' enrollement in class, their effect in interfering with their future plans was not apparent to them until they enrolled in the program.

The study also revealed that although the people in the Ministry of Education think that they are doing their best in advertising the availabilty of the adult education programs, the message does not reach all the potential students. So, there is a need to change and improve the methods used to announce the programs to the public.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

5.1   Introduction to Problem

Successful development of any nation cannot take place without the development of the people. Development must take place among the people to increase their social and cultural experiences in order to help them gain a greater understanding of the world around them.

The adult illiteracy problem is considered to be the most significant concern in any nation in the world, whether in developed or under developed countries. Much effort has been made to reduce illiteracy among the illiterate people and to raise their standards of living. Many different ways are conducted and expanded to reach the people in both rural and urban areas in the world.

It has been assumed that literacy education programs for female students should be an important segment of the total educational system in Jordan. Although the Ministry of Education and the Department of Adult and Literacy Education establish and supervise many literacy education centers, the high rate of dropouts affects the success of literacy education programs.

5.2   Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the reasons behind female students' decision to drop out from the adult and literacy program in a specific school district.

It was believed that information of this kind will enable the Ministry of education to provide programs that will be acceptable to the adult students and encourage larger enrollement and regular attendance and decrease the number of the dropouts.

Previous Jordanian studies related to adult education have examined the programs available and the problems adult students face. No special attention was given to the problems adult female students face. This is especially important considering the important role women play in the society.

5.3 Procedure

In this study, ethnographic methods were used to explore the reasons behind dropping out from female adult and literacy education programs in a school district in Amman, Jordan. The data for this study was gathered by conducting interviewes, taking fieldnotes, and observing the participants. The particpants in the study were eighteen students enrolled and eleven dropouts. The four teachers in the centers and four adult education administrators participated in the study, too. The study was conducted in four adult education centers in the Oasis school district in Amman, Jordan. The study was conducted for five weeks in November and December of 1988. The participants were given forms that indicated that participation in this study was voluntery, and the identity of the participants will remain anonymous, and that the information gathered will not be used to evaluate either the students' progress or the teachers' performance. The students who participated in the study were categorized according to their age, occupation, and marital status. The names and adresses of the dropouts were obtained from the schools, and after consulting with the teachers, it was found out that the best way to get in touch with the dropouts was to ask them to come to the center. Upon the teachers' request and the help of other students and neighbours of the dropouts, the researcher was able to meet with the students and ask them to volunteer in the study. The information given by the students was compared with the field notes, notes gathered by participant observation, and information provided by the teachers in the center to test its validity. The questions

asked to the students were the research questions stated at the beginning of the study. The researcher analyzed the information given, and the situation of the students was analyzed case by case to find patterns to categorize the problems the students face and the reasons behind their decision to drop out.

5.4 The Findings

Although the study was limited to a small number of participants in one school district, the results can be generalized to understand the problems the adult female students in Jordan face because the population there is small, (3 million), and homogenious. The success of literacy education programs can largely be achieved by understanding the factors that make the students drop out. These factors were categorized as follows:

    (i) The social factor.

    (ii) The psychological factor.

    (iii) The economic factor.

    (iv) The educational factor.

    (v) Factors that deal with the school environment.

5.4.1 The Social Factors

    (i) Disapproval of the spouse or family members.

    (ii) The attitude towards adult and literacy education programs.

5.4.2 The Psychological Factors

    (i) People's attitude toward adult and literacy education.

(ii) Suffering from a handicapping condition that prevented the student from learning, decreased her ability to learn, or made her shy or uncomfortable attending school.

(iii) Students' inability to remember all what has been taught to them.

(iv) Being surpassed at school by younger students or one's own children.

5.4.3 The Economic Factors

(i) Engaging in a job that is physically demanding which makes the student too exhausted to attend school.

(ii) Having to work at the same time when classes are held.

5.4.4 The Educational Factors

(i) Ignoring the input of the students when making educational decisions.

(ii) Teachers' ignorance of the methods that would encourage the students to learn and achieve.

(iii) Lack of interaction and communication between the teachers and the students.

(iv) Using the text as the only instructional method.

(v) The material covered in the text was not interesting to the students.

(vi) The sudden shift in the complexity of subjects taught especially in math.

(vii) Combining the first four grades in two.

(viii) The carelessness of the teachers in performing their jobs.

(ix) Closing the center because of the small number of students in it.

(x) The tuition students have to pay to enroll in the informal education program.

5.4.5 Factors that Deal with the School Environment

(i) Lack of facilities that are important for the adult students.

(ii) Inavailability of public transportation to and from the centers.

(iii) Locating the centers in noisy school buildings.

The qualitative data suggest that there are many interrelated factors that affect the students' decision to drop out from the adult education centers. What seemed to be important is not the quantity of the subjects covered in the centers or the hours spent there, rather, the relationship the students form with the teachers in the centers and the quality of the education they receive play an important role in their attitude towards the centers. Further, the study suggests the importance of understanding the motives behind enrolling in the centers as well as the reasons behind dropping out.

5.5 Recommendations

(i) A more serious application of the compulsory education law which is significant in eliminating or, at least, reducing the sources of illiteracy. This implies keeping record of school age children in each school district and forcing the parents to send their children to school even if it means using the police force or court orders.

(ii) Cooperation between the different ministries in the country is essential in the implementation of the Educational Laws. For instance, the Ministry of Labor prohibits the employment of youngesters under 16 years of age where in fact the majority of unskilled labor is composed of young children in that age range. The possibility of getting work is tempting for some needy students to leave school.

(iii) Improving the elementary school. This means hiring qualified teachers who are prepared to teach elementary school children. Usually, the university

graduates are assigned to teach preparatory and secondary school children, whereas community college graduates teach the elementary school children. Improving classroom instruction is essential in improving the achievement of the students. Whole group instruction is the only method used to teach the students. Combining this method with ability grouping and special education for children who need it will increase the achievement of the students.

(iv) Making education meaningful to the students. This will happen if the students can find jobs after they graduate, and if they feel that education contributed to the improvement of their lives.

(v) Canceling the tuition usually paid to enroll in informal education programs in order to give the adult students a chance to continue their higher education.

(vi) Improving the curriculum designed for the adult students, making it more interesting, and making it compatible with the curriculum taught in regular school.

5.6   Reflections

One of my professors at Michigan State University once said   *"When you want to choose a topic for your research, choose a topic you can live with because you will spend a long time thinking, breathing and living your topic,"* and he was right. During this research project, I faced many difficulties and experienced many emotions, the greatest of which was the joy of getting my research organized and written.

I believe that conducting a fieldwork research requires a big effort and demands a great responsibility. The researcher is not only responsible for organizing and analyzing the data collected, but also has to be objective and acqurate in pointing out the places where the data failed him/her or where it contradicted some of the hypotheses he/she had.

When I was thinking about choosing a topic for my research, I knew that I wanted to do something that concerns and affects women in Jordan. Jordan is a young country

and is developing in many areas, one of which is providing education for all members in the society including illiterate men and women. Being a woman, and having the responsibility of a wife, a mother, and a student made me feel close to the adult female students and able to relate to them and the problems they face in pursuing their education.

Although I had some research questions in mind before entering the site, new questions came to my mind as I was conducting the study. The reason for these questions to occur was that I did not have a full and clear picture about the whole situation of adult and literacy education until I got to the centers and talked to the teachers and students there. A major question was the definition of the adult student. A definition in terms of who the students in the centers are, where do they come from, what is their age range, what are there goals, and what motivated them to enroll. When I used to think about the adult students, I never thought of them in different categories like single, young married, older married, widows and divorced students as they turned out to be in the centers where I conducted the research. I used to think of them as a one unit.

My main concern during the study was to find out the reasons behind students' dropping out from the center, but what I found relevant and very important is finding out the reasons behind their enrollment. This was very important because, as it turned out, most of the time, when the students' goals were achieved, they would leave the program without finishing it. Although it is very important to encourage the students to enroll in the program, it is equally important to understand their motivation to enroll if the problem of adult education dropouts is to be solved.

Another point that came up during the research is that the success of adult education programs is not the responsibility of the Ministry of Education alone, but it is a social issue and needs the help and concern of the different governmental institutions. I used to think that the Ministry of Education is the one responsible, but what I saw and heard about the problems the adult students face in their lives made me wonder about the role of the other ministries, like the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Social Affairs, and the Ministry of Labor.

I used to think that living in a homogenious society with a small population means sharing the same values and beliefs with the other members of the society. I realized, during the study, that this is not necessarly true. There is a very big difference in the life styles of the haves and the have nots. What surprised me the most was the family structure of the poor. In general, in a nuclear family, it is the parents who make the decisions in the family. Even if one of the parents is dead, the other one takes the whole responsibility. But the situation is different in most low socio-economic families. The parents give this responsibility to the older son or to the one who is working and supporting the family. Sometimes, the parent, especially the father loses his authority if he does not work any more.

Although many families, especially the ones from low socio-economic status, in the Jordanian society are male oriented, I used to think that the older women in those families, especially the mothers, try to change this attitude and give their daughters the rights they deserve. But I found that the older women, too, share this attitude and they favor the male over the female. In many cases the reason is that the mothers can depend on their sons to work and support the family and protect the other members, whereas the females cannot do that.

Another point that came up during the study which I never thought of before, was the relationship that exists between literacy education and informal education and its effect on the adult students. Literacy education covers grades one through six. Students who wish to continue their education beyond the sixth grade, have to enroll in another program called the Informal Education Program. This is different from the literacy program in the sense that students have to pay tuition. This was considered a problem because many students could not afford to pay tuition. Another point relates to this matter is that all of the teachers in the female literacy education centers were females. But many teachers in the female informal education centers were males because there were not enough qualified female teachers who would want to do extra work in the afternoon. The informal education program prepares the students for the General Secondary Education Examination. The subjects that are taught in the informal education centers are the same as the ones taught in the regular school

program. They need highly qualified teachers to teach subjects for the secondary level. So, the Ministry cannot recruit any person who is willing to teach as what happens in the literacy education program. The Ministry has to hire qualified teachers to teach in the informal education centers to be able to serve the increasing number of students enrolled in the program. The problem arises when many very conservative families object to the situation and refuse to let the females join the program. Many girls in the literacy education centers expressed their disappointment because their families would not allow them to enroll in the informal education program for this reason.

Those were some of the new questions and ideas that emerged while conducting the study. They helped me in getting a broader perspective about the study, its subjects, and implications.

Before entering the site, and conducting the study, the researcher had a number of hypotheses about the study. One hypothesis was that there was a gap between the teachers and the adult students. The data suggested that this was true. The teachers were not trained or qualified to teach adult students. They were graduates from two-year community colleges with no special training in teaching adults. They knew nothing about the different developmental stages of the adult students. They did not treat the adult students different than the way they treated school age children. The teachers were from a higher social class than most of the students. They knew nothing about the students and the special problems they face, and they did nothing to help solve these problems. The relationship between the teachers and the students would end as soon as the students leave the center in the afternoon. The motivation for the adult students to enroll in the program was to get better at reading and writing, whereas the motivation for the teachers to teach in the center, in most cases, was to increase their income. The commitment of the two parties was not equal.

Another hypothesis the researcher had was that the standardized curriculum would not be suitable for all the students around the country. The needs and intrests of the students vary according to their gender, age and background. The standardized curriculum limits the creativity of the teacher. The study confirmed

these hypotheses. The material covered in the reading text was not interesting to the students in the centers. The material discussed life in the country, and the problems the farmers face there. The students knew almost nothing about that. The curriculum provided for the female adult students lacked subjects that might be interesting and important for the adult students, subjects that might help them become better mothers and housewives, since many of them lack these skills. The curriculum was designed to teach the students the basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Functional literacy was not stressed. Subjects that teach the students the skills and gives them the information about the way to run there daily lives were not available.

Another hypothesis was that if family members rejected the enrollment of the female students in the program, they would be likely to drop out. The study confirmed this hypothesis. The attitude of the other family members turned out to be significant in affecting the female's decision to drop out, especially if the students was single and living with the family.

One hypothesis was that the need to work and find a job was not significant in the students' decision to enroll in the program. The study revealed that the students goals for enrolling in the program varied according to age and socio- conomioc status. Almost all of the older married students, except for two, wanted to learn how to read and write in order to read the Holy Quran. They were not concerned about getting a diploma. The other two students wanted to finish their education and get the diploma to improve their self image. The need to work was not apparent in their goals. The goals for the young married students for attending the program were to feel more confident in themselves, and to be able to help their own children do their school work. There was one divorced student, and her goal was to get a diploma so as to be able to work and find a job. The young single students' goals were to complete their education so as to improve their life styles, gain more respect from other, and have better chances in life like being married to the right man.

The researcher had a hypothesis that many old people do not need to work in order to support themselves. But the study revealed that sometimes, when the husband is dead, and the mother is the only supporter of the family, she has to work in order

to support her children. One discrepant case was the widow who had to work as a cleaning lady in order to support herself. This case contradicted the general norm that the children would take care of their elderly parents when they grow up.

Another hypothesis that was contradicted by the findings of the study stated that the the older the student was, the more likely it would be for her to drop out from the program. The study revealed that age is not very significant in affecting the number of the dropouts. Although it was clear that the enrollment of the older students is, in most cases, a short one, the number of young students who leave the program before finishing it is quite large, too.

The study revealed that the psychological factor was significant in increasing the number of the dropouts, especially when the students were embarrassed by going to the centers. But there was a discrepant case where one of the students was a foreigner. She was German married to a Jordanian. She seemed to be from a higher socio-economic class than most of the students. She was not embarrassed about going to the center because it was apparent to everybody that she needed to learn the language because she was a foreigner and not because she was a school dropout.

Those were some of the new ideas and thoughts that occured during the study, and some of the facts that confirmed or contradicted some hypotheses the researcher had before conducting the research.

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