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ACADEMIC PROBLEMS OF AFGHAN  
STUDENTS AT A.U.B.

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## ABSTRACT

### Background Statement:

The recently much publicized idea that education is a major source of economic development has contributed to the steady increase in the international flow of students from the developing nations to the more advanced countries of the West. At present, there are nearly 95,000 foreign students under the auspices of the U.S. institutions for higher learning. This magnitude has invited the attention of administrators, sociologists, educationists, and others to investigate the various aspects of cross-cultural education.

The American University of Beirut with its cosmopolitan campus is also a living laboratory for cross-cultural studies. So far, little research has been carried on related to the problems of cross-cultural education. The present study is an attempt to survey the adjustment problems of the Afghan students at AUB.

Statement of the Problem:

The purposes of the present survey are:  
(1) to identify the adjustment problems of the Afghan students at AUB in general, and their academic problems in particular; (2) to ascertain the degree of association between adjustment and the following variables: age, sex, duration of sojourn, pre-arrival acculturation, marital status, pre-arrival expectation, regional position, and socio-economic status.

Methodology:

(1) The Sample: The sample of the study is composed of 30 Afghan students who were studying at the American University of Beirut during the academic year 1966-67. One subject is female and 29 are male students. Their ages range between 19 and 33 years. Almost 70% are single and 68% come from urban areas. Five students have studied in the United States before coming to AUB.

(2) Instrument: The basic instrument used in this research was the questionnaire which included items related to two broad categories:  
(a) academic problems which deal with scholastic

abilities such as note-taking, competence in English, the types of exams, etc.; and (b) psychological factors such as worries due to housing, interpersonal relations, home-sickness, etc..

Major Findings:

(1) Adjustment Problems: According to the expressed opinions of the Afghan students, the three main factors that caused the subjects the most difficulty in adjusting to their studies at AUB were as follows:

- a. Different academic system from what they were used to at home (60% of the sample).
- b. Difficulties with the English language (56.6%).
- c. Social life at AUB is complicated and difficult to adjust to (50%).

The subjects were asked to single out the factors which might account for the difference between the academic systems. The subjects responded that too much reading, specific rather than general questions, and the practice of note-taking at

AUB made the difference.

As to problems with English, the subjects have the most difficulty in writing.

With regard to the adjustment problems related to social life, the subjects indicated that they were disturbed by the noisy atmosphere and lack of privacy in the dormitories; they complained of the lack of adequate conditions for improving English; they cited uncertainties pertaining to boy-girl relationships; and, they were also disturbed by the surrounding culture to the extent that businessmen cheated the non-Arabic speaking students.

(2) Association Between Adjustment and Other Variables: The present study does not show any significant association between adjustment and the following variables: age, marital status, regional position, major field of study, and socio-economic status. However, two kinds of association were found to be significant at the 5% level of confidence: (a) pre-arrival acculturation in the United States and dissatisfaction with recreational activities at AUB ( $x^2 = 4.57$ ); (b) duration

of sojourn and satisfaction-dissatisfaction with financial problems at AUB: the new participants complained of financial difficulties more than the old subjects.

E R R A T A

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

#### A. The Problem:

The rapid increase in international exchange of students, especially after World War II has invited the attention of anthropologists, social psychologists, counselors, administrators, diplomats, and others to survey and analyze the problems related to cross-cultural education each of them from a different point of view. Recent research in the field of cross-cultural education has elucidated the various aspects of exchange programs such as mutual understanding, technical assistance, adjustment problems, re-education, acculturation, diffusion of formal knowledge and know-how, evaluation of exchange programs, etc.. Volumes of books and brochures have been written about the mechanisms and consequences of cross-cultural education, particularly in the United States of America where the number of foreign students enrolled in the institutions of higher learning has steadily increased from 26,759 in the academic year

1948-49<sup>1</sup> to nearly 94,000 in the year 1966.<sup>2</sup>

Besides, some American institutions have founded universities abroad one of which is the American University of Beirut with the enrollment number of approximately 3,000 that has attracted students from nearly 55 nationalities. Despite the fact that the administration has made regular attempts to find and solve the problems confronting the AUB students little thorough research has been done in the area. To the best knowledge of the writer, there is only one thesis entitled "Problems of Pakistani Students" by Nasim Ahmad which partially discusses the academic problems of Pakistani students at AUB.

The aims of this study are: (1) to identify the adjustment problems of Afghan students at AUB in general, and their academic problems in particular; (2) to ascertain the degree of asso-

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<sup>1</sup>American Council on Education Studies, Counselling Foreign Students (Washington, D.C., 1950), V. 14, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Grayson L. Kirk, "Experiences of American Universities in International Cooperation," Journal of the Asian Student, (January 4, 1967), p. 5.

ciation between adjustment and the following variables: socio-economic status, age, sex, regional position, marital status, academic background, pre-arrival expectations, duration of sojourn, etc..

Definition of Terms:

The term "academic problems" simply means educational problems related to higher education. In this study, the "academic background of the students" refers to the educational system of the student's native country as well as the educational background of the individual student in the idiographic sense. "Cross-cultural education" has been defined as "the social process of acquiring knowledge of an intellectual or technical nature, under institutionalized conditions, outside one's own social and cultural environment."<sup>1</sup>

The term "exchange" is no longer used in its strict sense of reciprocity. According to Dr. Cora Du Bois "the term 'exchange' has increas-

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<sup>1</sup>Guy S. Metraux, "Exchange of Persons", (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1952), p. 1.

ingly tended to be applied to exchange of information or views rather than people. But even here one wonders how valid the term is as meaning equal give-and-take."<sup>1</sup> She also maintains that the definition of a foreign student as "a non-national" is imperfect. For example, "a Canadian, who is a non-national, is closer to an understanding of the United States than is a Puerto Rican student, who technically is a national".<sup>2</sup>

B. Background of the Problem:

The Research Status of Cross-Cultural Education - The Significance of Cross-Cultural Studies: Every foreign student is in certain respects (a) like all other students; (b) like some other students; (c) like no other students. While items number (a) and (c) deal with universality and idiosyncrasy respectively, it is the second item that can justify an independent research into the problems of foreign students as a distinct group.

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<sup>1</sup>Cora Du Bois, Foreign Student and Higher Education in the United States, (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1958), p. XIV.

<sup>2</sup>Cora Du Bois, loc, cit.



The foreign students, in addition to the adjustment problems common to all students, "do face certain adjustments growing out of the fact that they encounter a different culture in a different national setting. Frequently, if not usually, they must use a second language and adjust to a different educational pattern including an unfamiliar relationship between professor and student."<sup>1</sup>

A study of the problems related to foreign students can have theoretical values as well as practical implications. On the theoretical level various kinds of research into the problems of cross-cultural education are possible. Although some investigators such as Jeanne Watson and Ronald Lippitt, Margaret Cormack, Cora Du Bois, and George Spindler are not unaware of the theoretical significance of cross-cultural education almost all of the studies in the area have been devoted to the immediate and practical aspects of educational exchange programs.

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<sup>1</sup>Ina Corinne Brown, "The Cultural Background of International Education." Governmental Policy and International Education, ed. Stewart Fraser (Phi Delta Kappa, NAFSA; 1965, John Wiley and Son Inc.), p. 48.

Margaret Cormack feels the need of theory on the basis of which educational activities should be chosen or modified. "As has happened so often in new ventures, we are in the stage of having plunged into many activities with no reference to overall theory".<sup>1</sup> She maintains that there is an urgent need for coordination in the area of cross-cultural education so that the aims will be clarified and the definition of terms can be standardized.<sup>2</sup>

Cormack suggests that a research by the behavioral scientists into the following problems will contribute to the theory of cross-cultural education:

- a. What happens to people in an alien culture?
- b. What are the significant variables related to persistence or change?

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<sup>1</sup>Margaret L. Cormack, An Evolution of Research on Educational Exchange (Brooklyn College: August, 1961), p. 19.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

- c. Can people really "change" once their original cultural personalities have been shaped?
- d. What are the various qualities of responses to new environment?
- e. Is it possible to predict, and therefore control personality integration or disintegration?
- f. What happens to individuals moving abruptly from an autocratic to a democratic setting? From "closed" to "open" societies? From "traditional" to "scientific" modes?<sup>1</sup>

An investigation of the personality type of non-returnees, nationalists, puritans, i.e., persons who are strict in morals and religion will also add new perceptions to the findings of social psychology and social anthropology.

According to Watson and Lippitt the social psychologist and the social anthropologist are both

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 11-12.

concerned with the process by which one culture influences another, and also about the reactions of individuals to new circumstances. One of the important questions regarding cross-cultural education will be to see to it whether or not foreign visits are effective means of social change.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the principles that can be derived from a research into the above-mentioned problems will also be useful for counseling foreign students. A counselor should have some knowledge, for example, about the symbolic nature of language, the gestures and cues that have culturally determined meanings, and the sensitive ingredients of national character. Some of the main principles, which can be of use for the counselors of foreign students, will be presented in the chapter of findings by investigators.

From the standpoint of comparative education a comparison between the objectives, mechanisms, and consequences of exchange programs under totali-

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<sup>1</sup>Watson and Lippitt, Learning Across Cultures: A Study of Germans Visiting America (University of Michigan: Institute for Social Research, 1955), p. 4.

tarianism and democracy will elucidate many socio-political and other aspects of cross-cultural studies. Some of the findings in this area will be discussed later.

The Goals of Student Exchange: An analysis of goals of programs for foreign students by the Committee on Educational Interchange Policy reveals that the main purposes of the U.S. exchange program are as follows:

1. To promote international understanding and good will among the peoples of the world as a contribution to peace.

2. To develop friends and supporters for the United States by giving persons from other countries a better understanding of the life and culture of the United States.

3. To aid in the educational or professional development of outstanding individuals.

4. To advance knowledge throughout the world for the general welfare of mankind.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Committee on Educational Interchange Policy, The Goals of Student Exchange (New York: Institute of International Education, 1955), p. 4.

Watson and Lippitt regard the goals of cross-cultural education to be technical assistance, re-education, and international understanding. A re-education program was sponsored, for example, by the United States government after World War II for visitors from Germany and Japan.<sup>1</sup>

Margaret Cormack maintains that the main goals of the U.S. exchange program are the following:<sup>2</sup>

1. Professional training and advancement:

Since "The United States has recently become an intellectual Mecca, especially in science and technology", the developing nations can import formal knowledge and know-how from the U.S. to their own countries. Of course, the benefits of "the pilgrimage" will be mutual.

2. Foreign policy: It is hoped that the foreign students will develop positive attitudes towards the U.S. as well as towards their own people.

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<sup>1</sup>Watson and Lippitt, op.cit., pp. 2-3.

<sup>2</sup>Margaret Cormack, op.cit., p. 31.

3. Education: A "liberal education" through accurate information on the U.S. and other cultures is another goal of exchange program.

4. International understanding: This goal can be achieved through cross-cultural experiences and increased interaction.

The Constitution for U.N.E.S.C.O. is also in conformity with some of the above-mentioned goals. The Constitution for UNESCO states:"... since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed".<sup>1</sup> Article 1 of the Constitution stresses (a) collaboration "in the work of advancing mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples..", (b) popular education and (c) diffusion of knowledge.<sup>2</sup>

The Objectives of the Individual Students: The motives of the students abroad do not necessarily

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<sup>1</sup>UNESCO Constitution, "Since Wars Begin in the Minds of Men" International Education, ed. David G. Scanlon (N.Y. Columbia University, 1960), p. 83.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 85.

coincide with the goals of their native country and/or those of the host country.

The publicly expressed objectives of the students might be contrary to the actual motives which they cannot express because of fear or courtesy.

The Committee on Educational Interchange Policy summarizes the objectives of individual participants in the following order of frequency:<sup>1</sup>

1. To advance the candidate's personal and professional development.
2. To prepare the candidate for service to his home country through the acquisition of additional knowledge and skills.
3. To promote international understanding.
4. To contribute to the advancement of knowledge through cooperative study and research with professional colleagues in the United States.

A comparison between the foregoing summary and a study by Cieslak reveals the fact that the

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<sup>1</sup>Committee on Educational Interchange Policy, op.cit., p. 5.



kind of instrument and the administration of the instrument may elicit different responses. The following table will show the discrepancy clearly:<sup>1</sup>

Table 1

Categories of Reasons Given by 344 Foreign Students for Coming to the United States:  
By Frequency of Mention and by  
First Mention

Reasons for Coming	Frequency of Mention	Frequency of First Mention
To travel, or to see the U.S.A.	101	48
The U.S. offers modern education in the field of study	73	50
For technical education	73	50
Because the U.S. is the most advanced and is the world leader	66	55
To learn English	49	36
Received a scholarship	30	24
Education desired not offered back home	24	22

(Cont'd)

<sup>1</sup>Edward C. Cieslak, The Foreign Student in American Colleges, (Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1955), p. 40.

Table 1 (Cont'd)

Reasons for Coming	Frequency of Mention	Frequency of First Mention
Relatives or friends are in the U.S.	20	13
Parent's of relatives' decision	16	10
Homeland conditions not conducive to study	15	12
Can work while studying	14	6
To attend a Christian College	12	12
"Be on my own"	3	1
Shorter college program in the U.S.	2	0
Came with father, who is a government offi- cial	1	1
For health reasons	1	0
Better chance to get into college	1	1
"The climate is better"	1	0
Only choice at that time	1	1
Study comparative educa- tion	1	1
"English is my only for- eign language"	1	1
Totals:	507	344

Comparison Between the Goals of Exchange Programs of the U.S.A. and the USSR: Although the governmental policies of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. with respect to exchange programs seem to be much alike at the surface, the real differences lie in the practical situations. U.P. Elyutin, the Soviet Minister of Higher and Specialized Secondary Education, has declared the goals of exchange with the West as follows:<sup>1</sup>

"We maintain useful ties of mutual character with a whole series of capitalist countries. On this basis we are prepared to go on developing our cultural and scientific ties with all countries of the world. We are convinced that in developing and expanding cultural and scientific ties between countries we are helping to increase mutual understanding among peoples and to strengthen peace throughout the world."

Section 101 of the "Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (Fulbright Hayes Act) of the United States" indicates similar goals:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Mestenhauer, "Foreign Students in the Soviet Union and Eastern European Countries," Governmental Policy and International Education, ed. by Stewart Fraser (Phi Delta Kappa, NAFSA: 1965), p. 174.

<sup>2</sup>Margaret Cormack, op.cit., p. 2.

"The purpose of this Act is to enable the government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the United States and other nations, and the contribution being made toward a peaceful and more fruitful life for people throughout the world ..."

Research Status of Academic Problems of Foreign Students in the United States: Here, we are concerned about the findings of the major studies in the area of students' problems in general, and the academic problems of the Middle Eastern students in the U.S.A. in particular.

Cora Du Bois, Foreign Students and Higher Education in the United States, prepared for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Institute of International Education, published by the American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1956, pp. 221.

The author in her approach to the problems of foreign students pursues the processes of change within the framework of broad and explicit concep-

tual formulations. The book is outlined as follows:

1. The Changing Scene - variations in goals and motives of exchange programs.
2. The Foreign Student: prearrival attitudes, sojourn adjustment, and postreturn adjustment.
3. The Relationship of American Colleges and Universities to Foreign Students.

The key-word of the study is self-esteem which the author thinks may be injured by such factors as "inadequate opportunities or abilities to communicate whether because of faulty English, racial barriers, or cultural distance, unfavourably accorded national status ...; inability to achieve the expected educational goal whether because of language disabilities, past educational handicaps, poor placement, or restricted freedom of choice; inconsistency of experiences with regulations, study experiences, and personal relations; and to a lesser degree and more rarely, financial stringencies." p. 99.

A notable characteristic of the study is that it deals with the problems of foreign students in terms of social and psychological processes,

categories, and typologies which can have certain predictive implications.

Franklin D. Scott, American Experience of Swedish Students: Retrospect and Aftermath. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956, 129 pp. According to this study the Swedish students who come to the United States ordinarily with a sufficient mastery of English, a background of factual knowledge, and an educational discipline can adjust quickly and successfully to academic life. Criticism of the educational system and the American way of life by the students was of minor importance. The Swedish students, who thought of themselves as superior to the average American student, could not understand how the educational system of the U.S. could produce such well-qualified scientists. They disliked the frequency of quizzes, broad questions without time to answer adequately, red tape, and an undue emphasis on grades. They appreciated the attempt of the lecturer to motivate his students, friendly relations between teacher and students, public questioning of, and even disagreement with, a professor, direct contact with the top man, and the

freedom of choice. The Swedish students regarded American sex customs as "stimulating but frustrating, and therefore as deceitful and immoral" (p. 121).

The author concludes that in spite of some criticisms and disappointments the very similarity of the Swedish culture to that of the U.S. facilitates adjustment and strengthens learning experiences.

Edward C. Cieslak, The Foreign Student in American Colleges, Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1955, 175 pp. The main purpose of the study is to survey and evaluate administrative problems and practices in relation to cross-cultural education. Whereas the book is for the most part devoted to administrative problems such as admission and selection practices, evaluation of credentials, etc., one of the eight chapters deals with the on-campus and off-campus problems of the foreign students.

The On-Campus Problems: Of 340 students that were asked to comment whether they had special problems due to residence in dormitories or private homes, 295 said "No", 41 said "Yes" and

4 said that they did not know. The problems of the "Yes" group were due to cultural differences, prejudice or discrimination, large number of foreign students in dorm (impossible to learn English), noise, too much special attention and lack of privacy, American food, too much homework, segregation of foreign and American students, thievery, etc.

Approximately one of every four students from abroad complained of his academic placement in American colleges. Because of their incompetence in English many foreign students, especially those from Hispanic-America and the Far East had difficulty in making a satisfactory adjustment to academic life in the early days of their sojourn in the host country. The older, as well as the married students preferred living off-campus.

Selltiz, et al., Attitudes and Social Relations of Foreign Students in the United States. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963, 434 pp. The purpose of the study is to determine the degree of association between objective environmental characteristics, on the one hand, and



attitudes and social relations, on the other. The investigators found several kinds of influences to have an effect on the development of social relations such as individual characteristics, opportunities for associations provided by the environment, and orientation experiences "aimed at helping the foreign student to feel at ease in his new setting." (p. 116).

The study shows significant correlation between living arrangements and academic status, especially in the case of undergraduate students. Those who had been outside their own country for a short period before had less difficulty in adjusting to academic life than those who had never been outside their own country or lived in other countries for a long period. The investigators also found a notable relation between English-language facility and adjustment. Students from Europe were more annoyed by college regulations than students from other parts of the world. As to the academic difficulties, the orientation program had little effect on the students' adjustment. On the whole, the more the foreign students had extensive and intimate social relations with

Americans, the more they enjoyed their stay in the United States. Those who felt that their foreign training is an obstacle to acceptance and advancement in the home country either reacted with grievance to their native country or criticized the host country.

Guy S. Metraux, Exchange of Persons: The Evolution of Cross-Cultural Education. Prepared for, and published by, the Social Science Research Council, U.S.A., 1952, 53 pp. The study is an introductory survey which sheds light on the cultural origin and history of international exchange of students, recent trends in exchange program, and general problems in the area of cross-cultural education.

The author maintains that academic problems are, in part, psychological and personal such as adjustment to a new environment and language difficulties. But they also stem from differences in structure, organization, purposes, and cultural backgrounds. The author, however, does not elaborate on these problems.

Josef A. Mestenhauser (ed.), Research in Program for Foreign Students, NAFSA Studies and Papers, Research Series No. 2, 1961 (The Waldenwoods Report), 98 pp.

This report is not a piece of research itself rather it is a report on the research status of the problems of cross-cultural education. A report by Committee II indicates that the following kinds of problems are encountered by the foreign students in their first days of sojourn in the United States of America:

1. Denouement of idealized expectations.
2. Differences in food and language.
3. Gaps in their knowledge.
4. High cost of living and many unexpected extras.
5. Nostalgia and loneliness.
6. Feeling of being conspicuous because of color or dress.
7. Uncertainty of the rules of behavior.
8. Unsuccessful attempts to find lodging.

It was found that students from Latin America benefited most from orientation programs.

Asian students benefited from orientation experiences more than Europeans. However, there was no difference between oriented and non-oriented students with respect to academic work. Foreign students who had developed friendly relations with Americans were less homesick and more satisfied with academic work.

Committee III reports that dividing the students' life into "academic" and "non-academic" is unreal and dangerous.<sup>1</sup> The committee's report, referring to Vandenburg's study, demonstrates that cultural background might be largely responsible for the formation of abilities. However, the cultural differences may disappear when the student assimilates and relates new experiences to both old and new concepts.

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<sup>1</sup>This kind of generalization also seems to be unreal and dangerous. While it is true that certain specific academic problems are rooted in some specific non-academic situations, not all academic problems stem from non-academic situations. A normal foreign student, for example, may face academic difficulties because of incompetence in the foreign language, unfamiliarity with the educational practices of the host country, and his weak educational background,

According to this report, a study by Louis P. Cajoleas reveals that the median for academic achievement of American and foreign doctoral candidates at Columbia University was the same, but a higher proportion of foreign students belonged to the category of lower performers.

The committee states that the causes of academic failure are: insufficient academic background, the kind of examination, especially objective tests, "the psychological effect of being conspicuous as a foreign student and yet inadequate to meet the demands made upon him", differences in value concepts, defensive stereotypes, etc.

Khalil Ismail Gezi, The Acculturation of Middle Eastern Arab Students in Selected American Colleges and Universities. Published by the American Friends of the Middle East. Inc., Washington D.C., 1960, 102 pp. The main purposes of the study are to discover and analyze the nature and extent of the adjustment problems of the Middle Eastern Arab students, and to determine specifically the association between adjustment and the following variables: pre-arrival acculturation, pre-

arrival favorableness towards the United States, age, sex, American policy in the Middle East, type of college, national status, etc.

The sample included all of the sixty-two Middle Eastern Arab students who were studying during the summer of 1958 in selected American colleges and universities. On the basis of his interview with the Arab students the author summarizes the values and shortcomings of the U.S. educational system as follows:

Curriculum:

1. Values: Ninety per cent of the students held the view that American curricula were broader and deeper than those of the Middle Eastern countries. They thought that American curricula were well-defined in terms of objectives. They hailed the freedom provided by the system of elective courses. They also praised the continuous revision of textbooks.

2. Shortcomings: Ten percent of the students criticized the curricula for their scope of factual knowledge, and their emphasis on quantity

and cold facts that do not stimulate critical thinking and further research.

Professors:

1. Values: Eighty-four per cent of the students professed to be impressed by the professors' cooperation, democratic behavior, and their objectivity in dealing with the students as well as with the area of study.

2. Shortcomings: Ten per cent of the students thought that their professors were prejudiced against Arabs, could not maintain discipline, and neglected research and counseling of their students.

Methods of Teaching:

1. Values: Ninety-five per cent of the total sample stated that they were impressed by the use of democratic methods of teaching. Seventy-four per cent of the students held that they were motivated by cooperation on the one hand, and competition on the other. Eighty-one per cent of the students appreciated the use of many resources and

the syllabi in each course.

2. Shortcomings: Seventy-four per cent of the students were frustrated by the objective type of examinations. Twenty-six per cent of the students complained of too many examinations and regulations, especially for the graduate students.

Recommendations:

It should be made clear that in our review of recommendations we intend to concentrate on academic problems or areas closely related to them and leave out the socio-political, administrative, and non-academic aspects of the recommendations although in the last analysis, they cannot be divorced from each other.

Dr. Spence in his recommendations based on a study of technical training of Pakistani students in the U.S. listed the following points:<sup>1</sup>

1. The students should be provided with more books and equipment.

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<sup>1</sup>Ralph B. Spence, Technical Training of Pakistanis in the United States: An Evolution of the ICA Program 1951-55 (New York: Teachers' College, Columbia University).



2. The training program should qualify the students for their future jobs.

3. The Americans involved should have sufficient information about the work situations in Pakistan.

4. Pakistanis should be invited to cooperate in checking on the utilization of U.S. training.

5. Returnees should be interviewed systematically about their job progress and needed modifications of the program.

The American Council on Education Studies suggest that students from abroad should be selected on the basis of these criteria:<sup>1</sup>

1. Outstanding academic record.
2. Ability to speak, understand, read and write English.
3. Good character and policy.
4. Good health.
5. Be planning to return to his country upon completion of his studies.

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<sup>1</sup>American Council on Education Studies, Counseling Foreign Students, (Washington, D.C.: ACES), Series VI, No. 15, Vol. XIV, 1950, pp. 9-10.

6. Be planning to work for the social and economic development of his home country.

7. Have sufficient information about his own culture.

8. Be between the ages of 18 and 35.

The Council has prepared a list of "do's and don'ts" for foreign student counselor of which we prefer to quote principles concerning the "don'ts".<sup>1</sup>

1. Don't ask the student for his passport as a conversation opener ...

2. Don't try to teach the student English in one easy lesson ...

3. Don't pin the student down with too many pointed questions. He is probably ready to give you his correct age, but he may regard the state of his finances as a personal affair.

4. Don't be too anxious to make referrals. The student may think you are trying to get rid of him ...

The Committee on Educational Interchange Policy recommends that the language barriers in

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 40-41.

exchange programs should be surmounted by efficient methods of teaching in the students' home country or in the United States. In addition to language study the student should have access to an orientation program that might help the student adapt himself to the American way of life. The student should be provided with information about the educational practices in the U.S. The committee also recommends experiment with special programs for foreign students in accord with the special needs of developing countries.<sup>1</sup>

In his recommendations to Middle Eastern ministries of education, Khalil Gezi suggests that the departments responsible for students exchange programs must obtain detailed information regarding American institutions for higher learning. Wise decisions can only be made on the basis of such information. The author is also in favor of an orientation program designed for giving the student information on American culture. American

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<sup>1</sup>Committee on Educational Interchange Policy, op.cit., pp. 20-25.

higher education, and problems that the students might encounter during their sojourn in the United States. Students should be selected on the basis of academic status, a good command of English, good character, and emotional maturity. If the students are sent to AUB or AUC prior to leaving for the U.S., for at least one semester, it may prove very useful.

Afghan Students in the United States:

So far, the writer has not come across the problems of Afghan students in the United States of America in any of the above-mentioned reference dealing with educational exchange programs. However, an article entitled "Afghanistan" in the Yale Review and an unpublished terminal report by Mr. Mohammad Hashem may provide insights into the academic problems of Afghan students in the U.S.

According to Welles Hangen, "The quality of education in Afghanistan has not been high, so even bright Afghans have a hard time making the grade in Western institutions". As one Canadian has expressed, "sending Afghans to take advanced training abroad is like requiring a high school

graduate to do post-doctoral work at Oxford".<sup>1</sup>

The terminal report by Mohammad Hashem dealing, in part, with the problems of Afghan students at Teachers' College, Columbia University, suggests that the giver and receiver of educational aid programs should, first of all, focus their attention on selection procedures. The report indicates that the main obstacle to the academic progress of Afghan students in the American Universities, especially in the Teachers' College, is the lack of proficiency in the English language. According to this report, the students are selected on the basis of an English language objective examination which for the most part puts emphasis on the grammatical aspects of the language. The Afghan students who are aware of the nature and the focal point of this type of examinations beforehand, devote their efforts to memorizing some grammatical patterns. Upon their arrival in the U.S., the selected students are given similar types of examination. Again, the results tend to be in

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<sup>1</sup>Welles Hangen, "Afghanistan", The Yale Review, Vol. LVI, (Oct. 1966), p. 17.

conformity with the outcomes of the previous examinations, and thus the authorities are satisfied with the students' knowledge of the English language. But, in practical situations the student can neither understand his professors' lectures nor can he express his ideas to professors and other students.

According to the report, another problem of the Afghan students is rooted in the discrepancy between the academic backgrounds of the Afghan and American students, specially in the areas of behavioral sciences and Western philosophy. This difference puts the Afghan students in unequal conditions with their American counterparts.

Besides, Afghan students are slow readers, they are unfamiliar with the techniques of using the library, and the objective type of examinations.

Mr. Hashem recommends a specific orientation program for the Afghan students which might help them improve their English, familiarize them with the techniques of using the library and objective

types of examination.<sup>1</sup>

Students' Problems at the American University of Beirut:

In February 1963, a questionnaire was given by the Regional Training Office of the Agency for International Development to AUB students in order to find out what factors caused the students the most difficulty in adjusting to their studies at AUB. An analysis of the data for students from Afghanistan (12), Pakistan (90), Iran (89), Iraq (8), Jordan (91), Lebanon (83) and Ethiopia (50) reveals the following facts:<sup>2</sup>

1. Students from all of the above-mentioned nationalities, with the exception of Ethiopians, regarded differences between the academic system of AUB and their respective countries as the prime factor that caused the most difficulty. The major problem of Ethiopians was homesickness and their

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<sup>1</sup>Mohammad Hashem, "Terminal Report", (Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York, Feb. 1967), pp. 6-11.

<sup>2</sup>The analysis of the data is mine for which I assume full responsibility. Some items of the questionnaire are presented in Appendix.

second major problem was the different academic system.

2. With the exception of Pakistanis and Ethiopians, all the other nationalities rated English as their second major problem. While 75 per cent of the Afghan, and 68 per cent of the Iranian students suffered from incompetence in English, only 5.5% of Pakistanis and 8 per cent of Ethiopians complained of lack of proficiency in the English language. However, Pakistanis and Ethiopians had difficulty with speaking rather than reading and writing.

3. While more than 61 per cent of Pakistani and 42 per cent of the Ethiopian students disliked Lebanese food, 25 per cent of the Iranians and 16 per cent of the Afghans were dissatisfied with the food. Students from Lebanon and Iraq had no complaints in this respect.

4. With the exception of Pakistanis, all the above-mentioned nationalities rated the complexity of social life at AUB as a third major problem. The Pakistanis' third major problem was homesickness. It is noteworthy that Pakistanis and Ethiopians shared many common tendencies and problems.



5. While the Afghans and Iranians preferred objective types of examinations to essay type examinations, students from the other nationalities had the most difficulty with objective quizzes. However, the preference of Afghans for objective quizzes is not statistically significant.

Problems of Pakistani Students at AUB:

A thesis entitled "Problems of Pakistani Students at AUB" by Nasim Ahmad is the first detailed study in the area.

The purposes of the study is to discover the causes of academic failures of Pakistani students at AUB, to find solutions to the students' problems, and to find ways in which their lives may be made more pleasant and productive.

The sample is composed of twenty Pakistani ICA (now AID) students, and the investigation is based on questionnaires, interviews, visits to Pakistani students' rooms, interview with professors, AID officials, etc.

It was found out that the difficulties en-

countered by the students were largely rooted in the differences between the social, cultural, and educational expectations of the Pakistani students and those of AUB, selection procedures, trouble with courses, worries about non-recognition of AUB degrees in Pakistan, financial problems, and misconceptions about the nature of foreign universities and the academic requirements at AUB.

Recommendations to AUB Authorities:

1. Two-week pre-semester orientation plan. The students should be familiarized with the Jafet Library, introduced to the various athletic and social clubs and societies at AUB.
2. A non-credit conversational Arabic course should be offered to all new Pakistani students.
3. The graduate students should be exempted from English 201 unless the course is modified according to their particular needs and backgrounds.
4. The students should be given rooms shared with non-Pakistanis.
5. Cafeteria supper hours should be changed.

6. The Jafet Library should subscribe to some Pakistani newspapers and journals.

#### Summary of Related Research

The foreign students, in addition to the adjustment problems common to all students, face certain specific difficulties that grow out of a different culture in a different national setting. Frequently, they have to use a second language and adjust to an unfamiliar educational system. Besides, living in alien culture also means association with people who very often have peculiar ways of life, mores, interests, skills and attitudes.

It has been made clear that various kinds of research into the problems of cross-cultural education are possible. However, most of the studies in the area are centered upon the immediate and practical aspects of exchange programs such as adjustment problems, attitudinal changes, mutual understanding, diffusion of knowledge and know-how, the objectives of cross-cultural training, the motives of the individual foreign student, etc...

The objectives of the United States' exchange program are:

1. To promote international understanding and good will for the sake of world peace.
2. To contribute to the social and economic development of the developing countries.
3. To develop friends for the U.S. by providing the foreign student with a better understanding of the American way of life.
4. To advance knowledge for human well-being.

The communist countries, with the exception of the Peoples Republic of China, profess similar goals.

The adjustment problems of foreign students in the U.S. are, generally speaking, rooted in the inadequate opportunities or abilities to communicate whether because of incompetence in English, racial barriers, or cultural differences; different educational system; poor placement; the low status accorded to the student's nationality; unfamiliar regulations, and; financial problems.

The adjustment problems of AUB students rated in their order of importance were:

1. Differences between the academic system of AUB and their respective countries.
2. Difficulty with the English language.
3. The complication of social life at AUB.

A thesis entitled "Problems of Pakistani Students at AUB" by Nasim Ahmad reveals that the difficulties confronting the Pakistani students at AUB stem from the differences between the social, cultural and educational expectations of the Pakistani students and those of AUB, selection procedure, worries about financial problems, and misconception about the nature of foreign universities and the academic requirements at AUB.

#### The Place of the Present Study

The present research differs from the foregoing studies in many respects such as the objectives of the investigators, the criterion for appraisal, cultural background of the subjects, etc. Whereas the primary goal of the studies carried out by American institutions and individual investigat-

ors in the U.S. is to foster mutual understanding and to evaluate exchange programs in terms of cultural influence, change in attitudes, interests, and behavior of the foreign student, the purpose of this study is to survey the academic problems and the nature of difficulties encountered by the Afghan students at AUB so that it might result in sound academic growth and well-adjusted life.

This study also differs from that of Mr. Ahmad's in its scope, focal point, and design to a great extent. The nature of the difficulties of Afghan students with respect to academic problems differs from that of Pakistani students to such a degree that we cannot prescribe the same treatment for both cases. For example, in his recommendations to authorities Mr. Ahmad maintains that Pakistani graduate students are reluctant to take English 201 because of their competence in English while the main problem of the Afghan students seems to be their very lack of proficiency in the English language.

## CHAPTER II

### DESIGN OF THE STUDY

#### A. Definition of the Sample

The sample of the study has originally been designed to include all 42 Afghan students who were studying at the American University of Beirut during the academic year 1966-67. Of these 30 subjects (or 71.42 per cent) filled in the questionnaire and returned it directly to the investigator or to his post office box.<sup>1</sup>

Age: The age of the subjects range between 19 and 33 years. The average age is about 24 years and the ages of the majority of the students are 22 years.

Sex: One subject is female and 29 are male students.

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<sup>1</sup>The question of non-returns will be discussed later under the title "Administration of Instrument".

<u>Marital Status</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>
Single	22
Married	7
Widowed	None
Divorced	None
Non-Response	1
Total	30

Duration of Sojourn:

<u>Number of Subjects</u>	<u>Period of Stay at AUB</u>
1	4 years
10	3 years
7	2 years
11	1 year
1	N.R.*

$\bar{X}$  (arithmetic mean) = 2.03

MO (mode) ..... = 1

Regional Position:

Nineteen subjects (or 67.86 per cent of the respondents) come from urban areas and nine students (or 32.1 per cent) belong to the rural areas of Afghanistan.

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\* N.R. stands for Non-Response.



<u>Place</u>	<u>Number of Subjects</u>
City	19
Village	9
N.R.	2
	<hr/>
	30

Major Field of Study:

<u>Major</u>	<u>Number of Subjects</u>
Education	5
P.S.P.A.	7
Engineering	6
Agriculture	3
History	1
Medicine	2
Nursing	1
Physics	2
N.R.	3
	<hr/>
	30

<u>Residence</u>	<u>Number of Subjects</u>
On-Campus	17
Off-Campus	11
N.R.	2
	<hr/>
	30

Academic Position:

Although the academic position represented here by the rank order is not based on standard scores it shows that the majority were among the top students of their classes.

<u>Rank in the last class before coming to AUB</u>	<u>Number of Subjects</u>
1st	7
2nd	11
3rd	3
5th	2
N.R.	7
	<hr/>
	30

Previous Experience of Cross-Cultural Education:

Five of the subjects have been to the United States for study before coming to AUB. Four of the students have spent one year and one subject has stayed for 18 months.

Social Class:

Twenty-one students indicated that they belonged to the middle class, four students identi-

fied themselves with the lower class, and one professed that he came from the upper class. Three students have not responded and one subject has given a vague answer as he writes: "no social class that I see in Afghanistan".

The Locale: American University of Beirut

"In a survey study" says Mouly "it is generally essential to describe the locale in which the study is conducted, for the findings of a survey cannot be interpreted apart from such a consideration."<sup>1</sup> This is especially true in the case of the present study which surveys the academic problems of Afghan students at the American University of Beirut. A description of the characteristics of the University will provide insight into the nature of the problems of the students that might be rooted in the locale. The pre-arrival academic background of the subjects will be dealt with in the next chapter so that we would be able to distinguish between the problems that stem from the current educational practices at AUB and those

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<sup>1</sup>George J. Mouly, The Science of Educational Research, American Book Company (New York, 1963)p.483.

the students have brought with themselves from their respective country.

### History:

In 1826, American missionaries in Lebanon and Syria, under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, decided that a college should be established with Daniel Bliss as its president. At the mission meeting it was approved that this college should have an American character, should be administratively independent from the mission, and should run the chance of being maintained by its own funds. Dr. Daniel Bliss resigned from the mission, raised the needed funds, and opened the institution, then known as the Syrian Protestant College, on December 3, 1866. The first class was composed of sixteen students who were housed in four or five rooms of an insignificant building.<sup>1</sup>

The college gradually developed into one of the greatest universities in the world. In 1920, the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York changed the name of the institution

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<sup>1</sup>From "The Reminiscence of Daniel Bliss" as cited by Bayard Dodge, The American University of Beirut (Khayat, Beirut: 1958), p. 12.

from the Syrian Protestant College to the American University of Beirut.<sup>1</sup>

At present, the university has four faculties: The Faculty of Arts and Sciences; The Faculty of Medical Sciences; The Faculty of Engineering; and The Faculty of Agricultural Sciences.<sup>2</sup>

#### Characteristics of the University

Aims: The American University of Beirut is a private, non-sectarian, and co-educational institution founded on the premise that all men are brothers and can work together for the common cause of human well-being regardless of religion, race, language or color. It is on the basis of such values that the AUB students, numbering 3245 in 1965-1966, represent more than fifty nationalities and many different religious groups such as Sunni Moslem, Shiite Moslem, Druze, Maronite, Greek Orthodox, Romac Catholic, Greek Catholic, Gregorian,

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<sup>1</sup>AUB, The American University of Beirut: Graduate Study Catalogue, 1965-1966, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

Protestant, etc.

Dr. Bliss, the founder, maintained that the institution is after service rather than publicity.<sup>1</sup>

"We were not anxious to appear great, but we were anxious to lay foundations upon which greatness could be built."

Dr. Bliss also felt that the institution should not be an ivory tower but it should take the needs of the Middle Eastern countries into consideration.

According to Dr. Norman Burns the dual objectives of AUB's academic program are:

1. To meet the standards of technical excellence of good universities elsewhere in the world.
2. To respond to the particular needs of the region.

The AUB catalogue 1965-1966 summarizes the aims of the institution as follows:

"The University emphasizes true scholarship which teaches students to think for themselves. It stresses high academic stand-

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

ards and high principles of character. It aims to produce men and women who are not only technically competent in their professional fields but who also have breadth of vision, a sense of civic and moral responsibility, and devotion to the fundamental values of human life."

Student Life:

The location of the AUB in Lebanon where diversity, individualism, and freedom of thought are tolerated more than in any other Middle Eastern country; and the fact that the University is a private, non-sectarian institution under the auspices of a democratic society per se pave the way for academic freedom and disinterested activities. The University's clubs, societies, athletic fields, religious centers, dormitories, cafeterias, publications such as the student newspaper "Outlook", The University Yearbook, etc.. all are conducive to the enrichment of the social, academic, physical and moral life of the students. However, the very cosmopolitan nature of the University's social life; the difference between the educational and cultural backgrounds of the AUB students; the academic requirements of AUB to preserve the higher academic status; and the discrepancy between the on-campus and off-

campus social environments may create some adjustment problems for AUB students.

Cultural and Educational Background of the Subjects:

Education in Afghanistan:

In the chapter on review of related research we cited the views of Welles Hangen and Mohammad Hashem that the academic problems of the Afghan students in the U.S. were largely rooted in their academic background. According to Dr. Arnold Fletcher, the Afghan students in the U.S. are well-adjusted from the standpoint of social relations.

"After a number of years of collegiate teaching as well as service as a foreign advisor I have had the opportunity to meet many foreign students in the U.S. for advanced education. With some exceptions these young men and women have been excellent unofficial ambassadors for their countries. On balance, however, I must say that the ones who have impressed me the most have been those from Afghanistan. This is not only my opinion but one shared by a great many foreign student advisors and professors with whom I have talked ... They have made countless friends. Afghanistan should be proud of them and their parents and families should know that they are conducting themselves in the finest Afghan tradition.<sup>1</sup>"

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<sup>1</sup>Arnold Fletcher, "Afghan Students in America", Afghan Student News, Vol. III, No. 3, March-April 1967, Washington, D.C.



As the responses to the questionnaire by the Regional Training Office of AID in Lebanon reveal, more than 83% of the Afghan students rated the difference between the educational system of Afghanistan and the academic standards of AUB as their first major problem. Only 16 per cent of them indicated that the social life at AUB was complicated and difficult to adjust to.

In this chapter we will shed light on those aspects of education that might have a bearing on the academic status of the Afghan students at AUB.

#### Modern Education in Afghanistan:

Until about a half century ago education in Afghanistan centered in the mosque schools in which the village mullah taught the four "R's": reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion. Modern education inspired by Western models was first introduced by King Amanullah about 1922. The reactionary forces of the country instigated, in part, by colonial powers revolted against the social reform and dethroned the King (1929). Habibullah, an illiterate robber, succeeded King Amanullah and ushered in a reign of terror which lasted for nine

months. The new ruler known as Bacha Saqaq - "the Son of the Water-Carrier" - closed the doors of the modern schools.

King Mohammad Nadir Shah who was quite familiar with the social psychology and the cultural values of Afghan society started from where the people were standing. He re-opened modern schools and revived almost the same kind of reform because of which King Amanullah was forced to abdicate. Today's Afghanistan under the leadership of King Mohammad Zahir Shah is engaged in an all-out effort to modernize education and social and political institutions. The new Constitution (1964) provides for universal primary education wherever it is possible. At present, the rate of literacy is estimated at between 5% and 10% of the population (approx. 15 million). Afghanistan has two universities.

The following table shows the quantity of education in Afghanistan.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"The Kingdom of Afghanistan", The Europa Yearbook, Vol. II (London: 1966), p. 3.

Table 2  
E d u c a t i o n

Year	Schools	Pupils	Staff
1961-1962	1,346	235,301	5,983
1962-1963	1,540	263,101	6,425
1963-1964	1,860	374,854	7,386

Source: Department of Planning, Kabul.

Educational Practices:

In 1949 a UNESCO Mission of expert consultants went to Afghanistan and wrote a report about the educational problems of the country. Despite the fact that many changes have taken place since that time, the methods of teaching, curriculum-making, and a host of practices related to learning experiences remain almost the same. Some of the shortcomings mentioned by the Mission are as follows:

1. Since the Mission was accompanied by some officials from the Ministry of Education, the teachers could not express their views about the obstacles in the path of educational growth. The situation arose from a feeling of insecurity on the

part of the teachers. The Mission holds that they rarely met any Afghan headmaster with independent views because of the highly centralized control of education.

2. Teaching methods were generally verbalistic, memoriter, dogmatic, and authoritarian in character. The typical method of instruction was that the teacher read a passage from the textbook and the pupils repeated it after him.

3. The teachers were, generally speaking, poorly trained and badly underpaid.

4. The school discipline was authoritarian in purpose and manner. Perhaps the best single example of this was the practice of saluting. Children saluted on all sorts of occasions. They were lined up in ranks at the opening of school and saluted the principal or the visiting dignitaries at the word of command.

5. The rate of drop-outs was very high.

6. The physical equipment was very poor; two or three boys sat on a rude bench with a rude desk before them, or in some cases boys crowded on the dirt or mud-brick floor with only a thin carpet to sit on; few maps; textbooks torn, dirty and in-

sufficient in number.<sup>1</sup>

These are but a few examples from the report of the Mission which give an idea about education in Afghanistan. However, there are reasons to believe that the Mission had not visited some of the poor schools of the country. Eighteen years ago there were insufficient textbooks, few maps, and students sat on thin carpets. But last summer the writer visited Sarban Intermediary School where he had completed his elementary education and found that the majority of the students still had to sit on sand; there were no textbooks although subjects are taught on the secondary level; and the majority of the teachers still adhered to the old notion that "licking goes together with instruction."

When the writer told the principal of a certain school to introduce new methods of teaching into the school, the principal accepted the idea in principle but he argued that he could not put it into practice because of the centralized control of education and a feeling of insecurity on the part of

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<sup>1</sup>UNESCO, Report of the Mission to Afghanistan (Paris: 1952).

the teachers. A teacher known to the writer was proud of not knowing the names of his students so that he could grade the essay type questions objectively. By doing this he intended to demonstrate that he was against nepotism. This shows how educational practices are affected by some of the traditional norms of the surrounding culture. In Afghanistan, friendly relations between teacher and student might be interpreted by the layman as favoritism or indicating sexual relations. The school administration is expected not to carry out investigation about the family background of the students. After all, schools are governmental agencies and their "inspections" may harm the family. The schools in Paktia province have always been conducted in a military fashion simply because the governors came from the army. Classes are still organized into companies with their captains. The student who ranks first in his class is called "Keptan", that is, captain. He is the one responsible to the administration for maintaining discipline in the absence of teachers and reporting disciplinary problems. When a teacher or an authorized official enters the classroom the "Keptan" com-

mands the class to stand up.

The majority of Afghan students in the country are quite unfamiliar with the objective type of examinations and note-taking. In case the textbooks are not available, the teacher reads every sentence twice or thrice and the students write it down. Sometimes the teacher breaks the sentence into parts so that the student would be able to write conveniently. Because of the lack of libraries the Afghan students usually do not have access to sources other than their textbooks. Even in places where libraries have been founded, books are seldom given to the student either because the administration is afraid that the books will be "spoiled" or because the student has no idea about the use of a library. In some places various kinds of regulations and pretensions discourage the student from coming to the libraries. For example, a library may be closed for two or three months at the beginning of the academic year for "reasons" such as the introduction of new progressive regulations; to re-cover the used books; books have to be carried to new shelves; to recount

the books; etc...

The textbooks are full of errors in transcription. Not only that, there is also disagreement between the scholars as how to write certain words. For example, in the Pashtu language, the word that stands for "that" is sometimes written چې and sometimes چه even in the same newspaper or magazine. The textbooks are not void of this kind of shortcomings. Many textbooks are full of absolescent and static facts with little attention to basic ideas, concepts, and thought systems.

It is hoped that under the new Constitution which promises freedom of thought, a regard for the individual, and pluralism, teachers and educators will have the opportunity to discuss, criticize and modify the prevalent authoritarian, passive, sterile, and dogmatic educational practices in the country.



Selection Procedure<sup>1</sup>

The number of Afghan students permitted to attend the American University of Beirut is usually consistent with the skilled manpower requirements of Afghanistan. The Afghan government selects the students receiving AID scholarships on the basis of the afore-mentioned needs and signs contracts with them to the effect that upon return to Afghanistan they will work for the government for a certain period. Then, the government proceeds to introduce the candidates with their academic records, time limits, and major fields of study to A.I.D. The latter organization, in coordination with AUB, gives comprehensive examinations and entrance to AUB is obtained for those who succeed. Although competence in the English language is of paramount importance it is not the sole criterion for selection.

The students are not authorized to change

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<sup>1</sup>The information about selection procedure is based on interview with Mr. Abdo Ba'aklini, the academic advisor of the Regional Training Office (R.T.O.) of the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.): Beirut, Lebanon.

their major field of study. The new participants also pledge to abide by all rules and regulations of AUB as interpreted by the authorities in question. The entrants are provided with sufficient information on the educational practices at AUB and social life in Lebanon.

B. Instrument:

The basic instrument used for this research is the questionnaire.

The questionnaire includes items related to two broad categories: (a) academic problems which deal with scholastic abilities such as note-taking, competence in English, the types of exams, homework assignments, etc.; and (b) psychological factors such as worries and anxieties due to housing, financial problems, interpersonal relations, home-sickness, lack of motivation (apathy, fear, inferiority), dislike of campus life (attitudes towards regulations, professors, other students), etc.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For a copy of the questionnaire, see Appendix.

### Administration of the Instrument

The instrument was administered in such a way as to elicit the desired responses by creating a friendly atmosphere and by assuring the students that the study might help them overcome their difficulties.

However, I should mention one shortcoming which was due to the inopportune time. The questionnaire was distributed on May 30, 1967, that is, eleven days before the beginning of the second semester examinations. Some of the students promised that they would fill in the questionnaire as soon as the exams were over. But the examinations were postponed because of the war situation in the Middle East and the investigator was deprived of the opportunity to follow-up the students mentioned.

The obstacle to a high percentage of return for the questionnaire may also be due to the cultural background of the students in which criticism, especially in written form, and freedom of expression are rarely practiced. The students seemed to be interested in the topic as such but they might have been worrying about the consequences of their

responses. For example, one of the subjects has not filled in the items related to his identity but has filled in the items pertinent to academic difficulties and his attitude towards regulations, professors, and other students.

Several students told the researcher that there were clues to their identities such as age, sex, major field of study, etc., that could be used for identifications. The investigator assured them that it was for the sake of the degree of association between problems and other variables such as age, sex, etc., that he asked these questions, not for non-academic purposes.

Reliability:

The reliability of the investigator's scoring was tested by getting twenty-five responses judged by an independent rater. The criteria for evaluation was discussed with the co-scorer. A high percentage of agreement (96 per cent) was found between the investigator's scoring and those of the co-scorer.

Validity:

The validity of the instrument could be tested in three ways:

(1) Checking the responses against an external criterion such as an interview of a random sample of the respondents to see whether their responses to the questionnaire represent their expressed opinions on the subject discussed.

(2) Observation of the students' day-to-day activities in order to ascertain if their actual behavior correspond to their responses on the questionnaire.

(3) Face validity, that is, relevance of each question to the topic under investigation, adequate coverage of the overall topic, clarity, avoidance of duplication, objectivity, etc. Time and space did not permit the investigator to use the first and second methods. So face validity is taken as sufficient.

### CHAPTER III

#### ANALYSIS OF THE DATA AND A STATEMENT OF THE FINDINGS

The analysis of the data comprise: (a) findings and (b) interpretation of the results. In order to quantify the qualitative data such as difficulties with lessons, attitudes toward campus life, the nature of worries and anxieties and the like, we will proceed on the basis of counting the frequency of occurrence. The aggregate of the scores will yield an over-all pattern of the academic problems of the Afghan students at AUB in order of their importance.

The data will be further analyzed in the terms of the subjects' age, sex, previous educational background, marital and socio-economic status, etc.

A. Findings

Table 3

Reasons for Coming to A.U.B.

Reason(s)	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	No. of Choices
a) Simply because I received a scholarship.	7	1	1	9
b) To see Beirut.	-	2	2	4
c) Since the government does not send undergraduate students to the U.S. and W. Europe I preferred AUB to studying at home.	3	3	2	8
d) To learn English.	-	1	-	1
e) Parents' or friends' decision.	1	1	2	4
f) AUB's high academic standard.	6	2	3	11
g) The high status accorded to AUB graduates in Afghanistan.	-	3	1	4
h) For reasons of financial advantage.	1	3	2	6
i) To escape from problems at home.	-	2	-	2
j) For personal and professional advancement.	5	4	3	12

(Cont'd)

Table 3-(Cont'd)

Reason(s)	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	No. of Choices
k) To be of service to my country when I return.	-	3	7	14
l) For world peace and international friendship.	-	1	2	3
m) Other (please specify).	2	1	-	3
				81

The number of choices in Table 1 are 81 due to the fact that there is one non-respondent; five of the subjects have no 3rd choice, and one subject has only one choice.

Some students specify reasons other than those by the investigator. These reasons are as follows:

"Forced by my boss". (1st choice)

"To enjoy the honor and prestige accorded to a man who shows qualifications among his peers". (1st choice)

"To get my degree before my other class-mates do". (2nd choice)



Results:

The three main reasons for coming to AUB as indicated by the majority of the subjects are:

1. To serve their country.
2. For personal and professional advancement,
3. AUB's high academic standard.

Pre-Arrival Expectations

Two items of the questionnaire deal with:

1. The nature of the pre-arrival expectations of the subjects.
2. What they found contrary to their expectations when they came to AUB.

These two items plus the reasons for coming to AUB provide clues to an understanding of the degree of motivation on the part of the students or the lack of it. Besides, the items related to expectations elicit responses about the shortcomings in the social atmosphere of AUB as seen through the spectacles of the subjects.

Table 4

Pre-Arrival Expectations

Expectations	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	No. of Choices
a) Easy lessons	-	-	-	-
b) Feasts, picnics & entertainments	-	-	6	6
c) Lack of nepotism, prejudice and discrimination on the part of professors and administration	3	2	2	7
d) Adequate financial aid	2	2	3	7
e) Character building	4	4	-	8
f) Good health	-	-	-	-
g) Adequate conditions for learning English	1	5	3	9
h) Dating and love affairs	-	2	5	7
i) Concern for the individual	4	1	-	5
j) International spirit	2	3	1	6
k) Freedom of expression	2	3	4	9
l) High academic standard	11	5	2	18
m) { Others (please specify) } { "Participating in social activities" }	1	-	-	1
				83

<u>Subject (s)</u>	<u>Choice (s)</u>
1 non-respondent	-3
1 does not keep order	-3
2 have no 3rd choices	-2
1 have two 1st choices	1
	<hr/>
	7

Results:

The majority of the students (or 60% of the sample) expected that they would benefit from the high academic standard of AUB. Adequate conditions for learning English, freedom of expression, and character building were the next important prospects of the subjects. The following table will show what the students found contrary to their expectations when they came to AUB.

Note: The items of Table 5 are the same as Table 4.

Contrast Between Pre-Arrival Expectations & Local Realities

The subjects found the following items as contrary to their pre-arrival expectations:

Table 5

<u>Contrary to Expectations</u>	<u>Number of Choices</u>
a	4
b	7
c	9
d	12
e	7
f	6
g	11
h	15
i	7
j	6
k	6
l	3
m	1

Results:

Fifteen students (or 50 per cent of the sample) found that the social atmosphere of AUB was not conducive to dating and love affairs in contrast with their expectations before coming to the University. The subjects also anticipated adequate financial aid (40%), adequate conditions for learning English (36.6%), and the lack of ne-

potism, prejudice, and discrimination (30%) which they found contrary to their pre-arrival expectations.

Adjustment Problems:

The subjects were asked to mention the three factors that caused them the most difficulty in adjusting to their studies at AUB.

Table 6

Difficulties in Adjusting to Studies

Factors That Caused the most difficulty	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	No. of Choices
a. Different academic system from what I was used to at home	10	2	6	18
b. Difficulties with the English language	10	6	1	17
c. Social life at AUB is complicated and difficult to adjust to	5	6	4	15
d. Lebanese food	-	3	2	5
e. Homesickness	-	1	4	5
f. Financial problems	2	5	5	12

(Cont' d)

Table 6 (Cont'd)

Factors that caused the most difficulty	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	No. of Choices
g. Others (Please specify):				
"Bad health conditions"	-	1	-	1
"The quantity of material"	-	-	1	1
"Lack of familiar stimuli"	-	1	-	1
"Feeling lost"	-	-	1	1
"Personal Problems" (having had a bad experience at home)	1	-	-	1
"Lack of co-operation among the colleagues"	-	1	-	1
"Imposing inferiority to colleagues"	-	-	1	1
"Bad attitudes of professors"	1	-	-	1
"Hatred toward Arabs"	-	1	-	1
"Deductive type of education not inductive"	1	-	-	1
"Stress on facts" Discrimination based on nationalism	-	-	1	1
"Using of previous exam papers"	-	-	1	1
				85

Results:

Eighteen students (or 60 per cent of the sample) indicated that the difference between the academic system of AUB and that of their own country was one of the main factors that caused the students the most difficulty in adjusting to their studies at the University. Difficulties with English (rated by 56.6% of the sample), social life at AUB, and financial problems were the next main factors, respectively.

Difference Between Academic Systems:

The subjects were asked to single out those factors which might account for the difference between the two academic systems. The results were as follows:

Table 7

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Subjects</u>
Exam	10
Note-taking	7
Teacher-student relationship	5
Use of library	1
Too much reading	11
Academic advising	3

Results:

Too much reading and exams made the difference.

Difficulties with the English Language:

Difficulties with English were divided into: reading, writing, speaking, and understanding.

Table 8

<u>Difficulties With</u>	<u>Subjects</u>
Reading	2
Writing	18
Speaking	6
Understanding	3

Result:

Table 8 shows that the subjects have the most difficulty with writing.

Social Life at AUB and in the Surrounding Culture:

With regard to adjustment problems related to social life the subjects responded as follows:



Table 9

<u>Factors of Difficulties</u>	<u>Number of Subjects</u>
- Unfriendly students	5
- Feeling of not belonging to the University	5
- AUB girls rarely associate with the Afghan students	7
- Rigid regulations and red tape	5
- Noisy atmosphere	10
- Lack of discipline	1
- Non-Arabic speaking students are treated differently by businessmen	12
- Students from some nationalities have feelings of superiority	6
- Lack of sympathy and cooperation	5
- Racial and/or social discrimination	3
- Students from different nationalities are reluctant to associate with each other	3
- Lack of respect for professors	-
- The high value attached to money	8
- Rude and aggressive students	1
- Cultural differences	4
- AUB students are treated as children	6
- Others (Please specify): "Feeling of too much belonging to the University: being on campus, limited activities to Post Box, class, cafeteria and ----- dorm."	1

Results:

Of the 15 students who had indicated that social life at AUB and in the surroundings was complicated and difficult to adjust to, 80 per cent felt that non-Arabic speaking students were treated differently by businessmen; 66.6 per cent rated that they were disturbed by the noisy atmosphere, and; 53.3 per cent mentioned that the surrounding culture was materialistic and attached a high value to money.

Dormitory:

The subjects were asked the following question: "What do you not like about the dormitory?" (Please list the first three things in order of dislike)

Table 10

Dormitory Problems

What the Subjects Do Not Like About the Dorm	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	No. of Choices
a) Noise	11	1	3	15
b) Overcrowding	-	4	-	4

Table 10 (Cont'd)

What the Subjects Do Not Like About the Dorm	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	No. of Choices
c) Small rooms	-	-	2	2
d) Lack of privacy	7	7	1	15
e) Unfriendly students	-	-	1	1
f) High rent	1	-	1	2
g) Rigid regulations	1	3	1	5
h) Female visitors are not allowed in dormitory	1	3	2	6
i) Thievery	-	-	-	-
j) Lack of adequate conditions for improving English	1	2	5	8
k) Sharing rooms with strangers	-	1	2	3
l) Others (Please specify) "(Lack of) air conditioning"	-	-	1	1

Results:

Of the 17 students living on campus, 15 students (or 88.2 per cent of the respondents) rated both noise and lack of privacy as their main dormi-

tory problems. Forty-seven per cent of the respondents pointed out that the dorms were lacking in adequate conditions for improving English.

Obstacles to Concentrating on Studies:

The subjects were asked to point out those factors that turned their attention away when they were studying a textbook.

Table 11

Problems Obstructive to Study

Obstacles	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	No. of Choices
a) Homesickness	1	-	1	2
b) Noise	6	3	5	14
c) Day dreaming	3	5	4	12
d) Sexual frustration	6	6	4	16
e) Health problems	1	-	1	2
f) Worries about exams	4	5	3	8
g) Visitors	3	-	-	3
h) Attitudes towards professors	-	1	1	2
i) Financial problems	1	7	3	11

Table 11 (Cont'd)

Obstacles	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	No. of Choices
j. Personal problems not related to AUB	7	1	5	13
k. Others (Please specify) "Getting bored soon after starting studying"	1	-	-	1

Results:

The main factors that deviate the students' attention from studying are sexual frustration (rated by 53.3 per cent of the sample), noise (46.6%), personal problems not related to AUB (43.3%), day dreaming (40%), and financial problems (40%).

Examination System:

Questions: "In case the examination system caused you some difficulties, what single element caused this difficulty?"

Table 12  
Examination System

Factor	Subjects
a) Objective	5
b) Essay type questions	6
c) Specific rather than general questions	9
d) Drop quizzes	3
e) Frequency of quizzes	5
f) The high value given to quizzes	-
g) Others: "Shortage of time"	3

Results:

Of the 10 subjects who had already complained of the examination system 90 per cent (or 9 students) indicated that they had the most difficulty with specific rather than general questions.

Students' Suggestions:

Question: "What do you suggest might have been done prior to coming to AUB or right after arrival that might have helped lessen the difficult-

ies of adjustment?"

Table 13

Suggestions Made by the Subjects

Suggestions	Number of Subjects
a. Giving new participants sufficient information about AUB and Lebanon before they leave their countries	21
b. Sending new participants at least a week before school starts	11
c. Having somebody meet new participants at the airport and guide around AUB campus for the first two days	12
d. Remedial English courses before we are sent to AUB	18
e. Academic orientation after we come to AUB	9
f. Meeting and talking to other students from our country	7
g. Informal meeting with professors	13
h. Other suggestions (Please specify): "Students (who) come to AUB must be selected according to their academic standing in their previous classes in Afghanistan"	1
"Graduate students should not be sent to this country due to: (a) homesickness; (b) sexual frustration; (c) low academic standard; (d) inadequate conditions for learning English; (financial problems; and (f) more difficulties of adjustment."	1

Table 13 (Cont'd)

Suggestions	Number of Subjects
"Encouraging students to attend more social activities, specially those activities sponsored by office of New Student Program"	1
"Refraining from too much shopping during the first few months"	1
"Our most difficult problem which should be solved before we come to AUB is not something to be done in one or two months. But it is to change the system of teaching English in our country"	1
"A group of old students of their country should be in contact with them in order to make them feel among friends"	1
"Financial problems faced by new students upon their arrival should be lessened"	1

Results:

The majority of the students (in this case 70 per cent of the sample) suggested that the new participants should be provided with sufficient information about AUB and Lebanon before they leave their countries. Sixty per cent of the sample (or 18 students) were in favor of remedial English courses before coming to AUB. Thirteen students (or 43.3% of



the sample) suggested that informal meeting with AUB professors will be of benefit to the new participants.

B. Association Between Adjustment and Other Variables

One of the purposes of the study, as has been mentioned earlier, is to ascertain the degree of association between adjustment problems and the following variables: age, sex, regional position, marital status, academic background, socio-economic status, pre-arrival expectations, duration of sojourn, etc.

Since our data are expressed in terms of frequencies we can use chi square ( $X^2$ ) as a test of significance.

Age:

A study by Khalil Ismail Gezi shows significant association between the age and the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the Arab students with their sojourn in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Gezi, op.cit., p. 44.

A similar procedure is followed here to find out the degree of association between the age and the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the Afghan students at AUB.

Table 14  
Age and Social Life at A.U.B.

	19 - 23 Years of age	24 years of age and over	Total
Satisfaction	7	5	12
Dissatisfaction	11	4	15
Total:	18	9	27

$X^2 = .16$  (with Yates' correction for continuity applied) which is not significant at the .05 level of confidence.

Result:

Table 14 shows that there is no significant discrepancy between the old and young students with respect to adjustment to social life at A.U.B.

Sex:

Since there is only one female student the

sample is small for sexes.

Marital Status:

1. The sample for homesickness is statistically not significant.

2. Sexual Frustration: The investigator presumed that the married students were suffering from sexual frustration more than the bachelors. The following table is based on the subjects responses to item 21 e.

Table 15

Marital Status and Sexual Frustration

	Single	Married	Total
No complaint	12	2	14
Sexual Frustration	8	5	13
Total:	20	7	27

$X^2 = .92$  (with Yates' correction) which is not significant at 5% level.

3. Financial Problems: The following data come from item 21 i.

Table 16

Marital Status and Financial Problems

	Single	Married	Total
No complaint	14	2	16
Complaint	6	5	11
Total:	20	7	27

$X^2$  for Table 16 was found to be 1.30 which is not significant at the .05 level and thus we accept the null hypothesis of no significant difference.

Results:

There is no significant discrepancy between the married and single students in relation to their reports of sexual frustration and financial problems.

Pre-Arrival Acculturation:

1. Some of the Afghan students have been in the United States for at least one year and this led the researcher to presume that they might have fewer difficulties with English.

Table 17

Pre-Arrival Acculturation and English

	Students who have been to U.S.A.	Students who have not been to U.S.A.	Total
Language Barrier	2	15	17
No Barrier	4	8	12
Total:	6	23	29

$X^2 = .86$  (with Yates' correction) which is not significant at the 5% level.

In order to determine whether or not the insignificance of  $X^2$  is due to the duration of sojourn, the following table has been confined to those who have entered the University during the academic years 1965-66 and 1966-67.

Table 18

Pre-Arrival Acculturation and English

	Studied in US	Not Studied in US	Total
Difficulty in English	2	7	9
No difficulty	4	5	9
Total:	6	12	18

$X^2 = 2.48$  (with Yates' correction) which is again insignificant.

2. Some of the students who have been to the United States might have been expecting to entertain themselves by feasts, picnics, and the like as they did in that country.

Table 19, which is based on the data from item (15 b) shows clearly the difference between the disappointment of the subjects with previous experience in the U.S. and of those who have not studied in any alien culture.

Table 19

Pre-Arrival Acculturation & Disappointment

	Previous Experience	No Experience	Total
Complain of lack of entertainment	4	3	7
No complaints	2	20	22
Total:	6	23	29

$\chi^2 = 4.57$  (with Yates' correction for continuity applied) which is significant at the .05 level of confidence.

Results:

There is no significant degree of association between the subjects' competence in English and their pre-arrival acculturation in the United States of America. But a significant discrepancy was found between the above-mentioned groups in relation to their disappointment regarding feasts, picnics, and entertainment at A.U.B.

Socio-Economic Status:

In order to determine the degree of association between socio-economic status and some variables

from the questionnaire such as financial problems, adjustment to social life, racial or social discrimination, complaints about high rent, attitudes towards other students, professors, etc., many items were examined statistically but no significant association was found between socio-economic status and the afore-mentioned variables.

Regional Position:

Upon examination of the various items of the questionnaire, there was no significant difference between the students from urban and rural areas. The tendency of the urban students towards character building (with  $X^2 = 1.46$ ) is statistically insignificant.

Duration of Sojourn:

Table 18 shows the association between the Afghan students' length of sojourn and adjustment to social life at A.U.B.



Table 20

Duration of Sojourn & Adjustment Problems

	Sojourn One Academic Year	Sojourn More Than One Aca- demic Year	Total
Satisfaction	3	13	16
Dissatisfac- tion	7	5	12
Total:	10	18	28

$X^2 = 2.18$  (with Yates' correction) which is not significant at .05 level of confidence.

Table 21

Association Between Duration of Sojourn  
And Financial Problems

	Sojourn One Academic Year	Sojourn Two or More Aca- demic Years	Total
Satisfaction	8	5	13
Disaatisfaction	3	13	16
Total:	11	18	29

$X^2 = 3.86$  (with Yates' correction) significant at .05 level of confidence.

Results:

There is significant association between period of stay and financial problems.

C. Interpretation of the Data:

Objectives of the Students: The three main reasons for coming to AUB as indicated by the majority of the students are:

1. To be of service to their country.
2. To promote personal and professional progress.
3. AUB's high academic standard.

The first reason, that is, to be of service to their country might be due to a moral obligation in the sense that the students are provided with free education on the higher level as well as on the lower level. The Afghan students are well aware of the fact that the expenditure on education comes from the poor and needy people of the country who themselves are struggling against starvation, pestilence, and ignorance. A conscientious student cannot ignore his duty in this respect.

In addition, some students upon their arrival in a more developed country tend to compare the new environment with their homeland which, as a consequence, may arouse patriotic feelings. However, it should be mentioned that, perhaps, the majority of the students rank the service to their country as a tertiary objective so that they may not be looked upon as egoists.

The third reason for coming to AUB is based on the subjects' assumption that the American University of Beirut stands for high academic standards. According to the investigator's interview with a considerable number of the Afghan students, those few who succeed in meeting the high academic standard at AUB are considered to be academically superior to most of the Afghan graduates of universities in the United States. A follow-up study also showed that AUB graduates, generally speaking, did better than the foreign graduates of the U.S. universities.\*

Although most of the Afghan students at AUB

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\* Dean Cajoleas, Address to AUB Candidates of Master Degree, May 1967.

believe that the University is not promising access to higher offices in Afghanistan, they are content with their studies at AUB (Cf. responses to items 13 f and 13 g).

Pre-Arrival Expectations: The majority of the students expected that they would benefit from the high academic standard of AUB whose diplomas are recognized internationally. Their next important prospects were proficiency in English, freedom of expression, and character building.

The high academic standard of AUB has already been discussed in detail. As to the second point, it should be mentioned that learning the English language is of vital importance for Afghanistan, a country that is in need of modern science and technology for its social and economic development.

Freedom of expression is a new experience in the social life of the Afghan nation which is currently passing from a traditional autocratic form of government to a somewhat new form of democratic government. Since the American University of Beirut is an American institution, on the one hand,

and the Afghan students have been suffering from the lack of academic freedom, on the other hand, one can expect their longing for freedom of expression. However, the majority of the subjects (60%) who desired such freedom were disappointed when they found the real situation contrary to their expectations.

Contrast Between Pre-Arrival Expectations and Local Realities:

Fifty per cent of the subjects indicated that the social conditions at AUB were not conducive to better heterosexual relations as they had expected before coming to AUB. Although AUB girls are living in separate dorms under rigid regulations and are not allowed in men's dorms there are opportunities for association between the sexes. The main obstacle to heterosexual relations may be the cultural values of the Middle Eastern countries. Many a girl who is on good terms with her male colleagues in the classroom would not react to their greetings on the street.

The Afghan students who expected greater

freedom of heterosexual relations in Beirut than in Afghanistan where the women were unveiled only ten years ago, did not find this kind of freedom to be in their favor. It is often said that heterosexual relations in this part of the world are largely determined by socio-economic status and the Afghan students in the sample, with the exception of one subject, belong to the middle and lower classes of Afghanistan.

Financial problems and the lack of adequate conditions for improving English were also found by the subjects to be in contrast with their pre-arrival anticipation.

It should be mentioned that the level of expectations of the Afghan students might be determined by their cross-cultural predecessors in the United States and Western Europe who enjoyed adequate financial aid and better positions upon their return to Afghanistan.

Thirty-six per cent of the subjects in the sample complained of inadequate conditions for practicing English. It seems that students from each

nationality tend to associate with their compatriots and thus have little chance to practice English. Those who talk to students from other nationalities will often learn "Arabic English" or "Pakistani English" or "African English".

Adjustment Problems:

The three main problems of the subjects that caused the most difficulty in adjusting to their studies were:

1. The different academic system.
2. Difficulty with the English language.
3. The nature of social life at AUB.

1. In the chapters dealing with the educational practices in Afghanistan and the characteristics of AUB some of the main differences between the two academic systems have been discussed in detail. Here, it is safe to say, as the data reveal, that too much reading, specific rather than general questions in exams, and note-taking are the main factors of difficulties. The Afghan students had rarely been assigned reading other than their textbooks before coming to AUB. Even then there were

few textbooks and the students had to take notes of what the teacher dictated. The teachers would break a sentence into words and repeated them two or three times so that even the slowest student would also have the opportunity to write them down. Hence, their difficulties with too much reading and note-taking appear to be related with the educational background of the students.

2. In mastering English, the Afghan students faced the most difficulty in writing. The data from RTO questionnaire show that students from Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan and Ethiopia had the most difficulty in speaking or understanding. Perhaps, the answer to this question could be found by a scrutiny of the different educational systems of the respective countries.

3. As to off-campus life, the subjects complained of the business men who treat non-Arabic speaking students differently. The student who wants to buy something may ask the company of a clever friend or he may spend a lot of time going from shop to shop to get an idea about the proper price.



The on-campus social atmosphere was regarded by the students as noisy, complicated, and non-cooperative.

The subjects' attitudes towards the social atmosphere at AUB have also been reflected by some other observers in the University newspaper, Outlook. For example, Manhal Ghanma refers to the noisy atmosphere at AUB as follows:

"Although the most common complaint associated with Jafet Library is the unbearable noise that students make, nevertheless, this article is concerned with the shortage problem there."<sup>1</sup>

Association Between Adjustment & Other Variables:

The present study does not show any significant association between adjustment and the following variables: age, marital status, major field of study, regional position, and socio-economic status. The sample for sex was small. With the exception of financial problems, there was no signi-

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<sup>1</sup>Manhal Ghanma, "AUB Library Still Faces Difficulties But Improvements Are Being Made", Outlook, XXIII, No. 6 (Dec. 2, 1967) p. 8.

ficant degree of association between adjustment and duration of sojourn. The study by Gezi also shows that the degree of association found between satisfaction-dissatisfaction and length of sojourn was not statistically significant.<sup>1</sup> But there is a difference between the findings of the present study and those of Gezi with respect to age and the degree of satisfaction-dissatisfaction with sojourn. According to Gezi, the older Arab students (24 years of age and above) were more satisfied with their stay in the United States than the young Arab students (19-23 years of age). Gezi interprets this in terms of the characteristics of the Arab family that keeps a strict hand upon the younger members of the family. He says: "when an Arab student under 24 years of age who has always depended on his family comes to the United States, his foremost problem will be to find someone upon whom to depend."<sup>2</sup>

Since there is no significant difference between the older and young Afghan students regarding

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<sup>1</sup>Gezi, op.cit., p. 47.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

the satisfaction-dissatisfaction with their sojourn in Lebanon, one might infer from the foregoing interpretation that the Afghan family could be less authoritarian than the Arab family. However, this inference may still be invalid on the ground that the adjustment problems of the Afghan students at AUB might be rooted in the locale itself irrespective of the ages and family background of the subjects.

The association between duration of sojourn and financial problems may be due to the fact that the new students do not know how to plan their budgets wisely; they have to pay for things that can be preserved for the coming years such as files, umbrellas, clothes, post box keys, etc.; they have to deposit L.L.100 in the comptroller's office at the beginning of the first semester; they are paid some money in advance which is often spent lavishly either because of high level of expectation or unfamiliarity with the local realities, etc.

A significant association was found between pre-arrival acculturation of the Afghan students in the U.S. and dissatisfaction with dating and love

affairs at AUB.

The following typical comment made by an Arab student in the U.S. might explain why the Afghan students who have been to the United States are dissatisfied with dating and love affairs at A.U.B.:

"It is easy for you to have a good time with American girls, but the relationship is not deep. With Arab girls it is different. Once you take a girl out, and **once** you kiss her, you must be both in love. I do not approve of the great freedom that the American girls enjoy."<sup>1</sup>

It is often felt that the American girls knew many boys **before** they usually get married while the Middle Eastern girls are rarely permitted to enjoy this kind of freedom. So, it seems that the Afghan students who had pre-arrival acculturation in the U.S. complain with reason in regard to dating and love affairs at A.U.B.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 30

## CHAPTER IV.

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### A. Summary:

##### The Problem and Its Background:

1. The Problem: The objectives of this survey are: (a) to identify the adjustment problems of the Afghan students at the American University of Beirut in general, and their academic problems in particular; (b) to ascertain the degree of association between adjustment and the following variables: age, sex, socio-economic status, pre-arrival expectations, regional position, major field of study, marital status and duration of sojourn.

2. Review of Related Research: (a) The Significance of Cross-Cultural Studies: Most of the studies in the area of cross-cultural education deal with the immediate and practical aspects of exchange programs such as adjustment problems, the objectives of cross-cultural education, attitudinal changes, follow-up studies, etc. Despite the fact that some investigators feel the need of an overall theory on the basis of which exchange programs should

be modified and coordinated, no thorough study has been devoted to the theoretical side of cross-cultural education.

On the theoretical level various kinds of research into the problems of cross-cultural education are possible. For example, an investigation of the following questions will contribute to the theory of social and behavioral science:

Are foreign visits effective means of social change?

What are the main principles and cues that can be of use for the counselors of foreign students?

What happens to people in an alien culture?

Can people really "change" once their original cultural personalities have been shaped?

What are the various qualities of responses to new environment?

Is it possible to predict, and therefore control personality integration or disintegration?

What happens to individuals moving abruptly from an autocratic to a democratic setting?

On the practical level, cross-cultural studies can contribute to:

1. The academic growth and well-being of

the foreign students.

2. Enrich the theoretical side of the various branches of social and behavioral sciences by surveys that usually lead to hypotheses and, then, to theories.

3. Promote international understanding and good will by finding proper solutions to the problems of foreign students.

(b) The Goals of Student Exchange: The expressed goals of the United States' exchange program are:

1. To advance the candidate's personal and professional development.

2. To prepare the candidate for service to his home country.

3. To promote international understanding.

4. To contribute to the advancement of knowledge through cooperative study and research with professional colleagues in the U.S.

5. To develop friends for the U.S.

6. To advance knowledge throughout the world for the general welfare of mankind.

The expressed goals of the USSR's exchange

program are:

1. To maintain useful ties of mutual character with the capitalist countries.
2. To develop and expand cultural and scientific ties between countries through mutual understanding among peoples.
3. To strengthen peace throughout the world.

The Constitution for UNESCO states: "... since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed." The main educational goals of UNESCO are:

1. Collaboration in the work of advancing mutual understanding.
2. Popular education.
3. Diffusion of knowledge.

(c) The Objectives of Individual Students:

The objectives of the individual students abroad are not necessarily commensurate with the goals of their home country and/or those of the host country. Some of the common motives of the students are:

1. Personal and professional advancement.
2. Service to home country.
3. Travel.



4. Learning a foreign language.
5. International understanding.

(d) Academic Problem of Foreign Students

in the U.S: A study by Cora Du Bois shows that the adjustment problems of the foreign students in the U.S. are rooted in the inadequate opportunities or abilities to communicate whether because of faulty English, racial barriers, or cultural distance; inability to achieve the expected educational goal whether because of language inability, educational background, poor placement, or restricted freedom of choice; inconsistency of experiences with regulations, study experiences, and personal regulations; and, to a lesser degree financial stringencies.

Edward C. Cieslak holds that the on-campus problems of the students are due to cultural differences, prejudice or discrimination, association with non-English speaking students in the dormitories, noise, lack of privacy, American food, too much homework, segregation of foreign and American students, thievery, etc.

Selltiz found significant correlations bet-

ween living arrangements and academic achievement, and between English-language facility and adjustment. She also maintains that the more the foreign students had extensive and intimate social relations with Americans, the more they enjoyed their sojourn in the U.S.

A report by the Committee on Admission, Selection, and Pre-Departure Planning (ed. Mestenhauser) indicates that the foreign students face the following kinds of problems in their first days of sojourn in the U.S.A.:

1. Denouement of idealized expectations.
2. Differences in food and language.
3. Gaps in their knowledge.
4. High cost of living and many unexpected extras.
5. Nostalgia and loneliness.
6. Feeling of being conspicuous because of color or dress.
7. Uncertainty about the rules of behavior, etc.

The Committee on Academic Achievement and Counseling reports that the causes of academic fail-

ure are: insufficient academic background, objective tests, differences in value concepts, defensive stereotypes, and so on.

Khalil Ismail Gezi in his study entitled "The Acculturation of Middle Eastern Arab Students in Selected American Colleges and Universities" enumerates the merits and shortcomings of the U.S. educational system, as seen by the Arab students, as follows:

Curriculum:

1. Merits: Broader and deeper, well-defined in terms of objectives, characterized by the system of elective courses and up-to-date textbooks (indicated by 90% of the sample).
2. Shortcomings: emphasis on quantity and cold facts (10%).

Professors:

1. Merits: Cooperation, democratic, and unbiased behavior (80% of the sample).
2. Shortcomings: Prejudiced against Arabs, indisciplinarian, and reluctant to do research and counsel his students (10% of the sample).

Methods of Teaching:

1. Merits: Democratic, cooperative and competitive at the same time, and well-equipped.
2. Shortcomings: Objective type of exam, frequency of quizzes, and too many regulations.

(e) Recommendations: The Committee on Educational Interchange Policy suggests that foreign students should have remedial courses in the language of instruction, and an orientation program before leaving for the host country. The special needs of the students' home country should also be taken into consideration.

The American Council on Education Studies suggests that students from abroad should be selected on the basis of:

1. Outstanding academic record.
2. Proficiency in English.
3. Good character.
4. Health.
5. Willingness to work for the social and economic development of home country,
6. Proper age, i.e., between 18 and 35 years.

(f) Afghan Students in the United States:

According to Mohammad Hashem, the main obstacles to the academic progress of Afghan students at Teachers College, Columbia University, are incompetence in the English language, discrepancy between the educational backgrounds of the Afghan and American students, unfamiliarity with the use of libraries, and objective type of examinations.

(g) Students' Problems at AUB: The data from a questionnaire by R.T.O. A.I.D. reveal that the three main problems of AUB students are:

1. The difference between academic system of AUB and that of the students' respective countries.
2. Difficulty with English.
3. Complexity of social life at AUB.

(h) Problems of Pakistani Students at AUB:

The study by Nasim Ahmad shows that the difficulties confronting the Pakistani students at AUB are rooted in the social, cultural, and educational background of the Pakistani students, inadequate selection procedures, worries about financial problems, and misconception about foreign universities, and the academic requirements of AUB.

3. The Place of the Present Study: The present research differs from the foregoing studies in many respects, especially in design and in the cultural and educational background of the subjects.

This investigation will serve as a link in the series of studies on cross-cultural education, problems of AUB students, and acculturation of Afghan students.

The present study tends to generalize some of the findings that coincide with those of previous investigations in the area of cross-cultural education.

#### Design of the Study

(a) Sampling:

1. Description of the Sample: The sample was intended to embrace all of the 42 Afghan students who were studying at AUB in the academic year 1966-1967. Of the 42 students 30 subjects (or 71.42 per cent) filled in the questionnaire and returned it to the investigator.

The sample is composed of one female and

twenty-nine male students. Their ages range between 19 and 33 years with  $\bar{X} = 24$  and  $Mo = 22$ . Nineteen students come from urban areas and nine from villages. Twenty-two subjects are bachelors and seven of them are married. Their period of stay at AUB ranges between one and four years with  $\bar{X} = 2.03$  years and  $Mo = 1$ .

2. The Locale: The American University of Beirut which stands for high academic standard expects of its students true scholarship, honesty, and self-control.

One of the unique characteristics of the University is that it "represents a venture in international education". This uniqueness of character, desirable as it is from the standpoint of international understanding and co-existence, leads to the complexity of social life that exists at AUB. The cultural, social, and educational backgrounds of AUB students differ so much from each other that they bring the problems of adjustment to the fore. Besides, lack of proficiency in English and the academic system of AUB which differs from the educational systems of the students' home country in

many respects, add to the adjustment problems of AUB students.

3. Educational Practices in Afghanistan:

Modern education inspired by Western models is a recent phenomenon in the lives of the people of Afghanistan. The rate of literacy is estimated between 5% and 10% of the population. The main problem of education is more its scarcity than quality. With an estimated population of 15 million, Afghanistan had 374,854 pupils in 1,860 schools with 7,386 staff in the academic year 1963-1964.

The educational system of Afghanistan, generally speaking, is characterized by a higher pupil/teacher ration, low qualifications of teachers, a traditional pattern of education incommensurate with the economic and social needs of the country, higher rate of drop-outs, low salaries, and scarcity of well-equipped school buildings.

The methods of teaching are usually authoritarian, verbalistic, dogmatic, and based on rote learning and convergent rather than divergent thinking.



4. Selection Procedure: Students are selected on the basis of academic achievement, competence in English, health, and the social and economic needs of the country.

(b) Instrument:

1. Questionnaire: The questionnaire includes items related to: (a) academic problems such as note-taking, the type and quality of exams, homework assignments, etc.; and (b) psychological aspects of adjustment like worries due to housing, food, interpersonal relations, home-sickness, financial problems, lack of motivation, and so forth.

2. Administration of Instrument: The instrument was administered in such a way as to elicit the desired responses by creating a friendly atmosphere and by assuring the subjects that the study might help them surmount their difficulties.

3. Reliability: The reliability of the scoring was tested by getting twenty-five answers judged by an independent scorer. A high percentage of agreement (96 per cent) was found between the investigator's scoring and those of the co-scorer.

4. Validity: The validity of the instru-

ment could be tested in three ways: (a) checking the responses against an external criterion such as an interview of a random sample of the subjects; (b) observation of the students' day-to-day activities, and; (c) face validity. Time and space did not permit the investigator to use the first and second methods. So face validity is taken as sufficient for the purpose of this study.

Analysis of the Data:

(a) Major Findings:

1. Objectives of the Individual Students:

The three main reasons for coming to AUB were: (a) to be of service to home country; (b) personal and professional advancement; and (c) AUB's high academic standard.

2. Pre-Arrival Expectations: Sixty percent of the subjects expected that they would benefit from the high academic standard of AUB. Adequate conditions for learning English, freedom of expression, and character building were the next important expectations of the students.

3. Contrast Between Idealized Expectations and Local Realities: The subjects found, contrary

to their pre-arrival expectations, that the social atmosphere of AUB was not conducive to friendly interpersonal relationships (mentioned by 50%). Forty per cent of the subjects complained of financial problems, thirty-six per cent mentioned the lack of adequate conditions for learning English, and thirty per cent indicated that the University was not void of shortcomings such as prejudice, discrimination, and nepotism.

4. Adjustment Problems: The main factors that caused the subjects the most difficulties in adjusting to their studies at AUB were found to be in the following sequential order: (a) different academic system from what the subjects were used to at home country (indicated by 60% of the subjects); (b) difficulties with the English language (56.6%); (c) complexity of social life at AUB (50%); (d) financial problems (40%); (e) homesickness (16.6%); and (f) Lebanese food (16.6%).

Academic Problems:

The subjects were further asked to specify what mattered in the difference between the aforementioned academic systems. They specified too

much reading (61% of the respondents to this question), exams (55%), and note-taking (39%). With regard to the examination system at AUB the subjects were discontented with **specific** rather than general questions.

As to the language problem, the subjects had the most difficulty with writing.

Social Life:

Of the 15 students who had indicated that social life at AUB and in the surroundings was complicated and difficult to adjust to 66.6 per cent professed that they were disturbed by the noisy atmosphere.

Dormitory:

Of the 17 students living on campus 15 students (or 88.2% of the respondents) rated noise and lack of privacy as their main problems. Forty-seven per cent of them pointed out that the dorms were lacking in adequate conditions for improving English. Nobody complained of thievery, and very few were discontented with small rooms, high rent,

and sharing rooms with strangers.

Obstacles to Concentrating on Study:

The main factors that turned the students' attention away when they were studying a textbook were found to be sexual frustration (53%), noise (46.6%), personal problems not related to AUB (43%), day dreaming (40%), and financial problems (40%).

5. Students' Suggestions: Seventy percent of the students suggested that the new participants should be provided with sufficient information about AUB and Lebanon before leaving their countries. Sixty percent of the students were in favor of remedial English courses before coming to AUB, and forty-three percent suggested that informal meetings with AUB professors would be of benefit to the new participants.

(b) Association Between Adjustment and Other Variables: The present study does not show any significant association between adjustment problems and the following variables: age, marital status, regional position, major field of study, and socio-

economic status. However, two kinds of associations were found to be significant:

1. Pre-arrival acculturation in the U.S.A. and dissatisfaction with boy-girl relationships at AUB with  $X^2 = 4.57$ .

2. Duration of sojourn and satisfaction with financial aid with  $X^2 = 3.86$  which is significant at the 0.05 level.

The sample for sex is small since there is only one female student and twenty-nine male students.

#### B. Conclusions:

The major adjustment problems of the Afghan students at AUB fall into one of the following categories:

1. Academic Problems: According to their expressed opinion, the major problem of the students in adjusting to their studies was found to be the discrepancy between the academic system at AUB and that of the students' home country. The Afghan students are not used to so much reading, specific rather than general questions in examina-

tions, note-taking, and the use of the library.

2. Language Problems: One of the main problems of the Afghan students that obstructs their academic progress is their lack of proficiency in English. The students have the most difficulty with writing rather than speaking, reading or understanding.

3. Social Problems: As for on-campus life, the students complain of the noisy atmosphere, lack of privacy, and inadequate conditions for learning English in the dormitories. The students professed that campus life was characterized by the lack of association with co-eds, rigid regulations, absence of sympathy and co-operation, and to some extent by prejudice, discrimination, and nepotism. The Afghan students who have been to the United States are more discontented with the boy-girl relationships at AUB than those who have not been to the U.S.A.

The expressed opinions of the students also indicate that they are disturbed because local business men treat the non-Arabic speaking students differently.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See "Interpretation of Data", p. 62.

4. Economic Problems: The majority of the sample was dissatisfied with the financial aid provided by the government of Afghanistan. However, a significant association was found between duration of sojourn and financial problems: the new students complained of financial difficulties more than the old participants. The fact that the new entrants have to pay for many unexpected extras and do not know how to plan their budgets wisely, partially explains the association between the above-mentioned variables. It is possible, however, that some other variables such as extravagance, gambling, socio-economic status, level of expectation, etc., may be responsible for their complaints about economic problems.

Discussion of the Findings in the Light of Related Research: The findings of the present research are commensurate with those of the previous studies in the following areas:

1. The data derived from the RTO's questionnaire, the study by Ahmad, the terminal report by Hashem, and the present study all suggest that the major problem of the Afghan students at AUB and



the Teachers' College of Columbia University, of Pakistani students at AUB, and of AUB students in general, is the difference between educational systems.

2. With the exception of Pakistani and Ethiopian students at AUB, the findings of the above-mentioned studies are in agreement with regard to the second major problem of the subjects, that is, the inability to use the English language fluently.

3. The complexity of social life at AUB is the third major problem of the subjects of the present study as well as of the subjects of the RTO's investigation. Since the Pakistani students expressed the least difficulty with English, they rated the complexity of social life at AUB as their second major problem. The competence of Pakistani students in English is due to the fact that Pakistan has used English as the medium of instruction.

4. The Afghan and Pakistani students at AUB professed that economic problems obstructed their academic progress at the university. The RTO's questionnaire excludes questions related to financial difficulties.

5. The main reason of the Afghan students for coming to AUB are in line with those indicated by the Committee on Educational Interchange Policy, i.e., personal and professional advancement and to be of service to one's home country.

While the study by Cieslak shows that the main reason of the foreign students for coming to the U.S. was to travel, or to see that country, most of the Afghan students declined to show interest in travelling to Beirut.

C. Suggestions for Further Studies:

1. A survey of the problems of the Afghan students who have withdrawn from AUB, whether because of academic failure or because of maladjustment, would further contribute to an understanding of the nature of the adjustment problems of the Afghan students at AUB. In addition, interviews with the subjects of the present study and with their counselors could have yielded better results. Time and space did not permit the investigator to carry out the survey to the fullest extent.

2. A comparison between the academic pro-

blems of Afghan students at AUB and of those who study in other countries such as the United States, the Soviet Union, France, etc., would provide a deeper insight into the nature of the difficulties of the Afghan students that are rooted in the cultural and educational background of the subjects. It might also elucidate the distinguishing characteristics of an education at AUB.

D. Recommendations:

To AUB

1. The University Orientation Program should train the Afghan students to be competent in note-taking, rapid reading, giving answers to specific rather than general questions, writing, and in the use of the library.
2. The University administration should encourage the Afghan students to participate in extra-curricular activities.
3. There seems to be a need for non-authoritarian or non-judgmental counselors to help the students overcome their problems of adjustment.
4. Something should be done about the noisy atmosphere of AUB dormitories.

5. The very cosmopolitan nature of AUB appears to be a hindrance to the development of better interpersonal relationships. The University administration could have arranged for more communication and mutual ties between the various heterogeneous groups at AUB.

To AID

1. A pre-arrival orientation program that places emphasis on the educational practices prevalent at AUB, remedial courses in English, familiarity with social and cultural differences, and the technique of establishment of rapport with their future colleagues would be highly desirable.

The new participants should also be taught some colloquial phrases in Arabic to facilitate their shopping in Beirut.

2. The Afghan students coming from an authoritarian milieu are usually reluctant to visit their superiors. The Regional Training Office should encourage the students to consult with the authorities should the circumstances demand counseling.

3. AID should have somebody at the airport

to meet the new participants upon their arrival and conduct them for at least two days.

To the Government of Afghanistan

1. The Afghan students receiving scholarships for AUB should be selected on the basis of academic success at home, ability to use English, national goals, good character, health, proper age, interest in the homeland and the major field of study.

The selection procedure should be based on the merit system - open to all candidates who meet the afore-mentioned criteria for admission.

2. The authorities in question should discuss the economic problems with grantees on a realistic level to avoid unnecessary questions in the future.

3. The candidates for admission to AUB with their pre-arrival acculturation in the U.S. would likely encounter problems of social adjustment. The government should take this problem into consideration.

4. The Afghan Cultural Office in Beirut should be encouraged to provide a greater measure

of supervision for students. Such problems as gambling, disputes, laziness, etc., might be alleviated if more guidance for Afghan student were made available.

5. The government could provide the Afghan Students' Association in Beirut with newspapers, musical instruments, books, pamphlets, and films about Afghanistan to keep alive the students' interest in the homeland and to introduce Afghan culture to the people living in Beirut. Conceivably this would also help to raise the sense of unity and to strengthen mutual friendship among the subjects.

To the Afghan Students:

1. The subjects of the study should be aware of the fact that some of their main problems such as the different academic system at AUB, lack of proficiency in English, inadequate conditions for interpersonal relationships, etc., are not peculiar to the Afghan students but are shared, to a certain extent, by other AUB students as well. The mere knowledge of this fact might help the Afghan students overcome their adjustment problems at the University.

2. The new participants should refrain

from spending their money on unnecessary goods and services, especially during the first three months of their sojourn.

3. The new entrants should seek the advice of the well-adjusted and successful students otherwise they may be misled by some prejudiced, maladjusted, and desperate colleagues.

4. The Afghan students should participate in extra-curricular activities which might enable them to practice English, share their views and experiences with students from different nationalities, and adapt themselves to the social milieu at AUB.

5. The Afghan Students' Association which, for the time being, exists in name only can be made into an active organization for mutual understanding, co-operation, self-criticism, and recreational facilities.

6. Finally, every Afghan student should remind himself that it is his responsibility to devote his attention, his time, and his energy to the acquisition of knowledge; to conduct himself in accordance with the spirit and guidelines of the University; and, to remember that he is the "unofficial ambassador" of his country which requires of him refined manners and gentlemanly behavior.

**APPENDIX**



APPENDIX

May 30, 1967

Dear Afghan student,

I am writing a thesis entitled "Academic Problems of Afghan Students at AUB" to identify the nature of difficulties confronting the Afghan students on the AUB campus. It is hoped that the findings of this research will be of much benefit to the Afghan students. It was, in part, my counting upon your sincere help and cooperation that led me to undertake this investigation.

Will you be so kind as to fill in the attached questionnaire and return it directly to me or to the following address:

M.S. Rohi  
P.O.B. 236/96  
A.U.B.

No attempt will be made to identify you with your answers.

Respectfully yours,

Mohammad Siddiq Rohi

1. Age
2. Sex: Male --- Female ---
3. Date you came to AUB
4. Marital status: Single --- Married ---  
Widowed --- Divorced --- Date of Marriage ---
5. Regional Position: City --- Village ---
6. Major field
7. Class at AUB
8. Residence: On-campus --- Off-campus ---
9. Academic background: Graduation rank ---  
Rank in the last class before coming to AUB ---
10. Have you ever been to a foreign country before  
you came to AUB? Yes --- No ---
11. If your answer was yes, to which country ---  
For how long --- For study? Yes --- No ---
12. Which social class do you belong to? Check one:  
Upper --- Middle --- Lower ---
13. For what reason(s) did you come to AUB? (Please  
list the first three reasons in order of importance)  
1 --- 2 --- 3 ---
  - a) Simply because I received a scholarship
  - b) To see Beirut
  - c) Since the government does not send undergraduate  
students to the U.S.A. and Western Europe, I  
preferred AUB to studying at home.
  - d) To learn English
  - e) Parent's or friends' decision
  - f) AUB's high academic standard
  - g) The high status accorded to AUB graduates in  
Afghanistan
  - h) For reasons of financial advantage
  - i) To escape from problems at home
  - j) For personal and professional advancement

- k) To be of service to my country when I return
- l) For world peace and international friendship
- m) Others (Please specify) -----

14. What were your pre-arrival expectations of how you would profit from the future experiences at AUB? (Please list the first three items of your expectations in order of importance)

1 ---            2 ---            3 ---

- a) Easy lessons
- b) Feasts, picnics, and entertainments
- c) Lack of nepotism, prejudice, and discrimination on the part of professors and administration
- d) Adequate financial aid
- e) Character building
- f) Good health
- g) Adequate conditions for learning English
- h) Dating and love affairs
- i) Concern for the individual
- j) International spirit
- k) Freedom of expression
- l) High academic standard
- m) Others (Please specify) -----

15. Which of the above-mentioned items did you find contrary to your expectations when you come to AUB?

a) ---      b) ---      c) ---      d) ---      e) ---  
f) ---      g) ---      h) ---      i) ---      j) ---  
k) ---      l) ---      m) ---

16. What three factors caused you the most difficulty in adjusting to your studies at AUB? (Please list them in order of difficulty).

1 ---            2 ---            3 ---

- a) Different academic system from what I was used to at home
- b) Difficulties with the English language
- c) Social life at AUB is complicated and difficult to adjust to
- d) Lebanese food

- e) Homesickness
- f) Financial problems
- g) Others (Please specify) -----

17. If your answer was number (a) what factor(s) caused you the most difficulty?

- Examinations at AUB -----
- Note-taking -----
- Teacher-student relationship -----
- Use of library -----
- Too much reading -----
- Academic advising -----

18. If your answer was number (b) in which area(s) did you face the most difficulty?

- Reading -----
- Writing -----
- Speaking -----
- Understanding -----

19. If your answer was number (c) what factor(s) caused you the most difficulty?

- Unfriendly students
- Feeling of not belonging to the University
- AUB girls rarely associate with the Afghan students
- Rigid regulations and red tape
- Noisy atmosphere
- Lack of discipline
- Non-Arabic speaking students are treated differently by business men
- Students from some nationalities have feelings of superiority
- Lack of sympathy and cooperation
- Racial and/or social discrimination
- Students from different nationalities are reluctant to associate with each other
- Lack of respect for professors
- The high value attached to money
- Rude and aggressive students
- Cultural differences
- AUB students are treated as children
- Others (Please specify)

20. What do you not like about the dormitory?  
(Please list the first three things in order  
of dislike)

1 ---            2 ---            3 ---

- a) Noise
- b) Overcrowding
- c) Small rooms
- d) Lack of privacy
- e) Unfriendly students
- f) High rent
- g) Rigid regulations
- h) Female visitors are not allowed in dormitory
- i) Thievery
- j) Lack of adequate conditions for improving English
- k) Sharing rooms with strangers
- l) Others (Please specify) -----

21. What factor (s) turn your attention away when  
you are studying a textbook? (Please list the  
first three factors in order of importance)

1 ---            2 ---            3 ---

- a) Homesickness
- b) Noise
- c) Day dreaming
- d) Sexual frustration
- e) Health problems
- f) Worries about exams
- g) Visitors
- h) Attitudes towards professors
- i) Financial problems
- j) Personal problems not related to AUB
- k) Others (Please specify) -----

22. In case the examination system caused you some  
difficulties, what single element caused this  
difficulty?

- Objective quizzes
- Essay type questions
- Specific rather than general questions
- Drop quizzes
- Frequency of quizzes
- The high value given to quizzes

23. What do you suggest might have been done prior to coming to AUB or right after arrival that might have helped lessen the difficulties of adjustment? (Choose these in order of importance)

- Giving new participants adequate information about AUB and Lebanon before they leave their countries.
- Sending new participants at least a week before school starts.
- Having somebody meet new participants at the airport and guide around AUB campus for the first two days.
- Remedial English classes before we are sent to AUB
- Academic orientation after we come to AUB
- Meeting and talking to other students from our country
- Informal meetings with professors
- Other suggestions (Please specify) -----

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