

Abstract

The psychological impact of Israeli racial oppression on Palestinians within two different sociopolitical contexts

Intolerance and racial discrimination are widespread aspects of life in many societies, especially those societies which incur occupation. The previous studies focused excessively on the study of personal characteristics of the intolerant persons along with the methods of amending their intolerant attitudes. They were inattentive to the psychological impact of racial discrimination on the persons who incur this discrimination. Therefore, the current study is significant and indispensable because it addressed the psychological effects of intolerance and racial discrimination for the Palestinians who suffer from the Israeli occupation and its discriminatory practices.

This study aimed to find out the psychological impacts of the Israel racial discrimination and intolerance on the Palestinians in the light of its diverse sociopolitical context. It is likely to assume that there is an integral similarity of the general context, yet the discriminatory forms of the Israeli arbitrary practices definitely confirm the disparity of this context in the light of the current Israeli procedures. As a result, the researcher conducted this study by comparing the

case of the Palestinians in the West Bank with the Palestinians inside the Green Line (the Palestinian territories occupied in 1948) to identify the psychological impacts of the Israel racial discrimination as well as the methods which the Palestinians use to cope with the adverse psychological consequences of the intractable discriminatory practices.

Accordingly, the researcher used the qualitative approach to find out in-depth information about the experience of the Palestinian university students attending the Hebrew University inside the Green Line. This university is characterized by a "complete integration" between the Arab and the Israeli students, yet the Arab students are presumably subservient to the Israeli students' majority and the academic administration of the university. In contrast, the study addressed the experience of the Palestinian Birzeit University students with Israeli military procedures in the occupied West Bank where the aforementioned "integration" is absent in face of a more explicit military oppression.

There are a number of Palestinian students from the Green Line who study at the West Bank universities. It could be argued that this group encounters a nearly similar experience to the previous two groups in varying degrees – though both cases are incomparable in all terms. An intentional sample of this group (case

study) was therefore selected to find out the similarities and differences in the psychological effects of the Israel racial discrimination incurred by the same person in both ways. To achieve this purpose, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with ten students from East Jerusalem and Green Line areas who study at Birzeit University. Besides, the researcher conducted interviews with fifteen students from the West Bank studying at the Birzeit University in addition to five students studying at the Hebrew University. The collected data was then processed by the Grounded Theory method and resulted in four cores (categories) which reflected the results of the study, namely:

The manifestations of the Israeli racial discrimination, the psychological reflection as a reaction to the Israeli discriminatory measures, the methods used by the Palestinians to cope with the adverse psychological impacts of the discrimination, and the debate about the sub-identities.

The study discussed these results and reached recommendations for the future study of the victim's experience with the Israel racial discrimination.