

## **An Evaluation of Archaeological Fieldwork Training at Palestinian Universities**

### **Loay Abu Alsaud**

Associate Professor, Department of Tourism and Archaeology  
An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine  
[loayabualsaud@najah.edu](mailto:loayabualsaud@najah.edu)

### **Soheil Salha**

Assistant Professor of Education, Faculty of Educational Sciences and Teacher Training  
An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine  
[ssalha@najah.edu](mailto:ssalha@najah.edu)

### **Saida Affouneh**

Faculty of Educational Sciences and Teacher Training  
An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine  
[s.affouneh@najah.edu](mailto:s.affouneh@najah.edu)

### **Ali Shaqor**

Assistant Professor of Education, Faculty of Educational Sciences and Teacher Training  
An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine  
[zuhdi4@najah.edu](mailto:zuhdi4@najah.edu)

### **Abdel Khaliq Issa**

Faculty of Humanities, Department of Arabic Language and Literature  
An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine  
[abed.esa@najah.edu](mailto:abed.esa@najah.edu)

## **Abstract**

The aim of this study is to shed light on archaeological field training at Palestinian universities. A review of field training courses conducted during the summer months at Palestinian universities was undertaken in order to assess their effectiveness in providing students with skills in archaeological excavation techniques. The five universities that took part in the study, conducted from 1 October to 30 December 2020, were Gaza, Hebron, Al-Quds (Abu Dis), Birzeit and An-Najah universities. A total of 104 questionnaires were distributed to mainly third- and fourth-year students at the universities. In addition, interviews were conducted with specialized field training instructors who had supervised the archaeological field training courses at excavation sites. Analysis of the results indicated the field training was effective, despite difficulties encountered. An important aspect of the study was that it was the first carried out by a Palestinian university to examine the developmental processes of archaeological education. The study concluded that there was a need to coordinate archaeological study programmes between Palestinian universities and that financial and logistical support was lacking. Insight was provided for defining and challenging current practice to determine the most appropriate forms of teaching and assessment. Comparison with similar studies conducted

beyond Palestine also provided information on new approaches in key areas. A model of field training with a more general focus was proposed.

**Key words:** archaeological programmes, cultural heritage, training modules, higher education, Palestine.

### Study Overview

In undertaking a review of archaeological field training at Palestinian universities, the authors set out to examine a subject that had not previously been studied in Palestine. The goal is to optimize field training for future Palestinian archaeologists, while creating an archaeological framework for protecting and promoting archaeological heritage in the region. Archaeological sites form a significant part of the cultural heritage of Palestine and may not survive without measures for their protection.

The study examines the current field training courses taking place during the summer and proposes ways to improve their effectiveness. The analytical study was based on qualitative and quantitative data obtained from a sample of students and instructors who took part of summer field training courses conducted by the universities offering archaeology courses. These are Gaza, Hebron, Al-Quds in Abu Dis, Birzeit and An-Najah universities (Figure. 1). The courses were mainly held at local archaeological excavation sites that provided opportunities for site review (Figure. 1 and 4). Methodology used for the analysis focused on responses from student questionnaires and interviews with instructors. Accordingly, the aim of this study is to evaluate current training practice in order to identify and challenge teaching and assessment methods, as well as to achieve a modern model of archaeological field training in Palestine<sup>1</sup>.

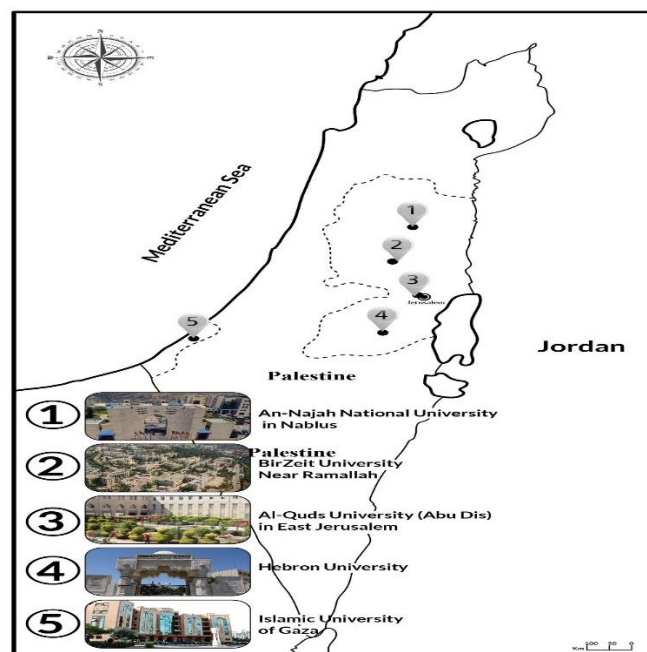


Figure. 1. Distribution of the five Palestinian universities in the West Bank and Gaza (L Abu Alsaud and A Jawabreh).

<sup>1</sup> Brookers 2008: 1.



Figure. 2. Main archaeological sites in Palestine (L Abu Alsaud and A Jawabreh).

### Tertiary Education and Cultural Heritage in Palestine

Study programmes for archaeology at Palestinian universities were not introduced until centuries after westerners had first travelled to Palestine to study Palestinian culture in the nineteenth century. Also preceding the introduction of archaeological studies in Palestine were large numbers of successful fieldwork projects carried out by foreign scholars who employed local inhabitants to assist them. These included the Bethlehem, the Belen and the Hisham Palace projects. The marked increase in archaeological activity in the area taking place during mid-twentieth century

drew local attention to the discipline, and encouraged a number of Palestinians to go abroad to study archaeology at Arab or European universities and subsequently at American universities<sup>2</sup>.

Higher Education was not established in Palestine until the 1950s, when the first tertiary education colleges offering two-year courses in teacher training, technical education and liberal arts were founded. They were initiated by the government or the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). Universities were not to be established in Palestine until the 1970s. Archaeology courses, which would later develop into teaching programmes, were introduced for the first time in Palestine at Birzeit University in 1970 (Figure. 3). These early colleges, created under Israeli rule, were part of a Palestinian collective effort to preserve the Palestinian identity, as well as to provide young Palestinians with the opportunity to undertake higher education, especially after it became increasingly difficult for them to go abroad to undertake these studies.



Figure. 3. The Palestinian Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, Rula Ma'ay'a (front row left), the Governor of Ramallah and Al-Bireh, Lyla Ghannam (front row second to right), and supervising archaeologist, Hamed Salem (front row right), with others during official visit to BirZeit University fieldwork training at Tell et-Tell, east of Ramallah (BirZeit University website).

In Palestine has been associated cultural heritage, in order to promote understanding of the need to preserve archaeological sites as a part of cultural heritage. However, research attempting to define and address the main pedagogical issues involved is still at an early stage<sup>3</sup>. Thus, university archaeology departments in Palestine play an essential role in reviewing, documenting and preserving historical sites under threat, while preparing students for careers in archaeology. Another way to promoting cultural heritage has been the use of technological resources such as MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) and the open-source learning platform, Moodle (Figure 4). A course using the Moodle platform was designed by the Department of Tourism and Archaeology at An-Najah National University and has been used to teach theoretical components of field training courses (see course curriculum in Appendix). The Department of Tourism and Antiquities has organized exchange visits

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<sup>2</sup> Al-Houdalieh 2009: 163.

<sup>3</sup> Brookers 2008: 1.

to archaeological excavations in progress, such as one to the Al-Tire site managed by the Institute of Archaeology at Al-Quds University, Abu Dis.

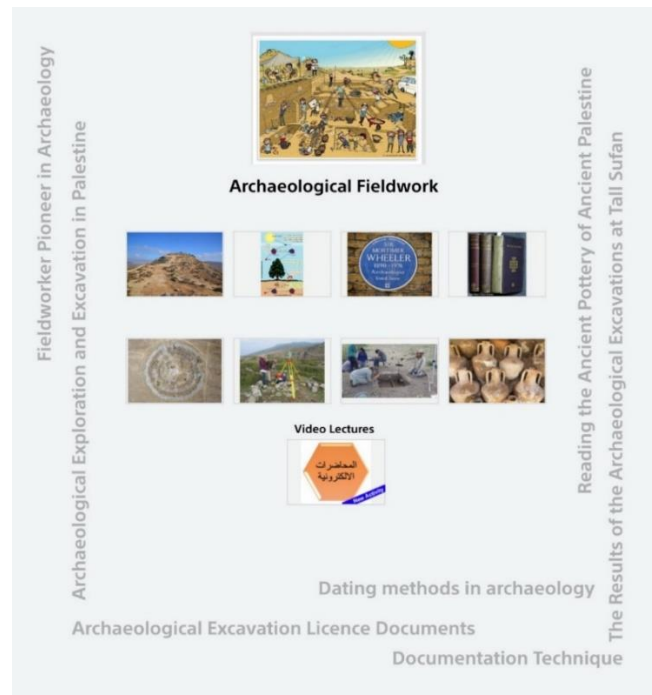


Figure. 4. Archaeological fieldwork course on Moodle platform

(Created by R. Khelfeh and Loay Abu Alsaud).

Since the signing of the 1993 Oslo I Accord, a large number of projects and activities involving protection and promotion of cultural heritage has been undertaken throughout the Palestinian National Territories (PNT), mainly by local teams funded by foreign grants, such as the Bethlehem 2000 Project, the Tell Es-Sultan (Ancient Jericho) 10,000 Project, the Hisham Palace Mosaic Floor Project and the Tell Balatah (Shechem) Archaeological Park. However, coordination between the organizational bodies concerned with preservation of heritage resources will be necessary for future protection of Palestine's archaeological and historical heritage.

### Previous Research on Archaeological Field Training

Training in fieldwork techniques is widely recognized as an important component of archaeological degrees. However, in Palestine, research on fieldwork training is at a formative stage and until now very few studies have been carried out. One such study, Salah Al-Houdalieh, from Al-Quds University (Abu Dis), examined relationship between university archaeological programmes, employment opportunities governmental institutions following the Oslo I Accord<sup>4</sup>. Other studies by Cobb and Croucher provide a theoretical basis for revising current practices, highlighting the benefits of reviews of archaeological pedagogic research regarding the integration of field training in curricula<sup>5</sup>.

Messenger and Bender (2019), drawing on relational theoretical perspectives in archaeological discourse, discuss the undervaluation of research into archaeological training. Bearing in mind Ingold's

<sup>4</sup> Al-Houdalieh 2009: 161-183.

<sup>5</sup> Cobb; Croucher 2014: 197; Croucher ; Cobb; Brennan 2008.

meshwork metaphor and De Landa's assemblage theory, they examine the relationship between fieldwork, teaching and research, and suggests the division between teaching and research may be eroded and students and pedagogy become the basis for archaeological knowledge<sup>6</sup>. Although not dealing with pedagogy alone, the transnational project, discovering the Archaeologists of Europe 2014 (DISCO 2014), also provides context for understanding trends in pan-European archaeological practices, including training<sup>7</sup>. The project, undertaken with the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union, examines transnational archaeological employment and barriers to mobility across twenty-one European countries. It followed the DISCO 2006-2008 project.

### **Comparisons with Field Training Abroad**

We compared Palestinian field training courses were compared with similar courses at universities abroad in order to assess their place in the broader sphere of archaeological training. While fundamental aims proved to be consistent, there were significant differences in approach. These included the smaller size of training groups in universities abroad, with often less than half the number of students found in Palestinian groups of up to 35. Courses abroad are often shorter than the Palestinian, but they are similarly offered in the final years of the undergraduate degree.

Yarmouk University in Irbid, Jordan, offers a very similar archaeology training course, but is considering increasing its credits from the current three to six. The course runs for four to five weeks with six to eight hours of work each day and is offered to undergraduates. Another example, from the University of Barcelona, based in a major Mediterranean city, where colleagues have provided information, provides a diverse. Training there, offered to final-year undergraduates takes place at archaeological sites; the 60-hour course is given to groups of 15. A further example, from the Autonomous University of Madrid, offers compulsory archaeological fieldwork training to Master's Degree students, who spend two weeks, in groups of fifteen, working on excavations.

Another perspective on the Palestinian study was given by comparison with a somewhat similar study by Paul Everill (2015), which analyzes data from all universities offering archaeology to gain an overall view of the role of fieldwork training plays in providing skills and increasing job opportunities. Both the British and Palestinian universities experienced difficulties obtaining funding. Differences in approach are outsourcing and location. In the fieldwork training may be conducted by external bodies, and at some distance from the university, or even abroad. In Palestine, courses are always run by the universities themselves. Questionnaires in the UK study were designed for staff only and they examine student funding whereas in the Palestinian study, the authors do not analyze specific figures and costs, apart from recognizing funding needs. General study examines preferred location and assessment. To greater extent, the UK study was based on more concrete information to a greater extent than the Palestinian, which examines student and staff opinions in assessing course satisfaction and staff performance. Everill points out that there are many archaeological skills beyond those required for excavation, but considers that understanding excavation processes is fundamental to a career in archaeology. It can be concluded that, despite differences in student funding (students bear all their own costs in Palestine, whereas universities may subsidize students in the UK), scheduling, assessment methods and location, the fundamental aspect of hands-on experience gained from field training gives

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<sup>6</sup> Ingold 2018: 315-321; De Landa, M. 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Aitchison 2009.

confidence and skills to job seekers and enhances their CVs. Palestinian universities are aware of the advantages of reducing group numbers where possible to allow more individual tuition.

Another paper has shown that, although 18% of archaeology to pursue a career in archaeology, of the remaining students who do, the percentage of those such employment is quite<sup>8</sup>. The paper suggests that finding the reason for the lack of correlation between those wanting a career in archaeology and achieving it needs further investigation. In Palestine, most archaeologists are Palestinian, with few from abroad, and a large percentage of students wish to pursue careers in archaeology. Employment opportunities are limited.

Furthermore, field training at archaeological sites run by Palestinian Universities is complex due to logistical, practical, financial and ethical reasons. In comparison with universities abroad, the approach to field training courses in Palestine could seem conservative, with an emphasis on recording and stratigraphic method the nature of the ongoing excavations, where training takes place, demands precision work and careful handling and management of finds. Teacher supervision and instruction is essential, as students are participating in excavations for the first time

### **Collaborative Projects with Foreign Archaeologists**

Collaboration between the archaeology departments of Palestinian universities and foreign expeditions is infrequent. However, there are a few examples of joint operations. The French Institute for the Middle East participated in two joint expeditions. The first collaboration of Archaeology at Abu Dis University, led by Hani took place near the Hippodrome in the ancient city of Sebastia (ancient Samaria) in 2016; in the second case, collaboration was with the Department of Tourism and Archeology at An-Najah National University and took place at Tall Et Telul<sup>9</sup> in June 2021 (Figure. 5). One of the most significant results of these collaborative efforts was an increase in the number of training instructors relative to the number of students, resulting in pedagogical benefits to archaeological education in Palestinian universities. At present, a Spanish-Portuguese expedition is in progress at the Tall Al-Fara'a site (Tirza); led by Juan Luís Montero Fenollós from the University of Coruña and Francisco Caramelo from the Nova University of Lisbon. It has attracted a number of graduate students to the antiquities sector. Another joint expedition conducted during the winter of 2017 carried out a site survey of Tell Asur, the ancient Baal Hazor, in the West Bank. The survey team comprised present of Eric Wagner, and William Miller. Research grant from the Graduate School of the Catholic University of America, and research were provided by the Albright Institute for Archaeological Research. Although Baal religious remains were not found, the remains and make a significant contribution to the archaeological profile of the area during the Byzantine Era. William Miller analysed bone samples, the surveyors analyzed the pottery, and Conn Herriott illustrated the pottery. All finds from the survey were delivered to the Palestinian Department of Antiquities in Ramallah<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Cobb; Brennan 2008: 52; Smith; Brown; Rankin 2021: 105-125.

<sup>9</sup> Chalcolithic and early Bronze Age site. Excavation results to be later published collaboratively.

<sup>10</sup> Miller II 2018: 201.



Figure. 5. Students participating in excavations during training at Tall Et Telul , June 2021, under scientific collaboration between the French Institute for the Middle East and the Department of Tourism and Archaeology at An-Najah National University (Courtesy W. Abu Azizeh).

### **Archaeology at Palestinian Universities**

Of the thirteen Palestinian universities currently operating, five offer archaeology: Gaza, Hebron, Al-Quds in Abu Dis, Birzeit and An-Najah universities. The departments at each university differ in name and course content; An-Najah National and Hebron universities (Figure 6) included in the Departments at University and Islamic (Gaza) University. The Institute of Archaeology at Al-Quds University is the only department devoted exclusively to archaeology. Table 1 shows a history of the establishment of the archaeology as a discipline at Palestinian universities.



Figure. 6. Students from Hebron University with instructor in the field (Courtesy S Abu Arqob)



The archaeology departments at these universities have carried out or participated in several projects to raise public awareness of the socio-economic and political roles cultural heritage resources play in Palestinian society, and to encourage communities to participate effectively in protecting their heritage<sup>11</sup>. Furthermore, these archaeology departments have to date carried out fifty-four summer field training courses at seven different sites<sup>12</sup>. Each of these excavation seasons has typically lasted for three weeks with a limited number of squares excavated squares.

Due to the political situation in Palestine, academic departments, especially those needing to carry out fieldwork, face restrictions causing study programme to focus more on theoretical aspects than on practical experience. On the other hand, low enrolment numbers for the programmes the impact students have on protecting and managing heritage resources. Their effect on helping to protect and manage heritage resources very limited. Addition, local authorities hinder these students from proposing solutions for protection and conservation of cultural heritage.

Table 1. Archaeology undergraduate programmes at Palestinian universities

University	Year Established	Credit Hours	Degree	No. Staff Members
An-Najah National	1995	126	Major	4
Birzeit	1977	27	Minor	2
Al-Quds (Abu Dis)	1992	132	Major	4
Hebron	2012	127	Major	3
Gaza Islamic	2003	27	Minor	2

### Field Training Courses

At present, all archaeology departments offer summer field training courses at archaeological sites, giving hands-on instruction in areas such as surveying, excavation methods, illustration, photography, site recording, and architectural drafting (Table 2). The Palestinian universities provide studies in Cultural Resource Management (CRM) as part of their archaeology curriculum, the field training concentrates on creating opportunities for the students to apply their theoretical knowledge in acquiring the fundamental practical skills mentioned, as well, pottery classification, recording of finds, stratigraphy, radiocarbon dating, cross-dating or artifact preservation, among others. Thus, theoretical lectures on these subject areas, may be a prerequisite for enrolling in fieldwork training.

<sup>11</sup> Al-Houdalieh 2010: 43.

<sup>12</sup> The Khirbet BeirZeit, Tall Shwekeh, Tall ET-Tell and Khirbet ET-Tireh site in Ramalla (Figure 7) ; the Tall Sufan (Figure 8) and Bir Al-Hamam (in Nablus); Ta'anach (in Jenin).



Figure. 7. Students from An-Najah and Alquds Universities during scientific excursion to Tell Et-Tereh

(Photo: L Alsaud)

Assessment methods vary according to each university; reports, presentations or examinations may form the basis for assessment. Courses are offered as a major or a minor and vary in length, with an average length being length of 60-100 hours, providing three credits. For example, the duration of field training courses at both An-Najah National and Hebron universities is sixteen-weeks, at Birzeit University, six weeks, and at Al-Quds University, three weeks. Enrollment numbers, teaching schedules, commencement dates and timetables also differ between the universities, but they all take place in summer. Excavations organized by these programs take place at the Tall Sufan site (Figure. 8)<sup>13</sup>. Tall Sufan is an example of a site where excavations take place as part of the An-Najah programme. The training students are introduced to basic field and laboratory techniques and obtain a wide range of skills, including architectural and artifact drawing. Instruction in archaeological excavation techniques is given a high priority and students are prepared for employment as archaeologists in cultural resource management. At An-Najah National University, four supervisors is for every 20-40 students. Students are taught learn basic field surveying (total station and theodolite) and mapping, test unit excavation, soils and stratigraphy (including the Harris Matrix soil recording

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<sup>13</sup> Tal Sufan, a 1.5 hectare hill in an area with a number of archaeological sites, is located 1.5 km west of the town of Nablus. It's dates back to the Bronze Age (3600–1200 BC), Iron Age II (918–539 BC) and the Roman (63 BC–324 AD), Byzantine (325–638 AD/16H) and Islamic (638/16 Hijra–1918) remains and was used for agriculture from the Ottoman-Turkish period to modern times. In recent decades, some remains at the site have been destroyed by human activity. Those surviving include a fortification system, a pond, an aqueduct, a watermill, several dry-stone terraced walls, a cylindrical oil press, silos, and burial caves (Abu Alsaud 2019: 12).

technique), feature excavation, field recording, soil sampling, flotation, and identification of material culture.



Figure. 8. Archaeological illustrator I. Iqtiat (left), teaching illustration at Tell Sufan, Nablus (Photo taken by L Abu Alsaud)

Table 2. Outline of training courses in archaeology at Palestinian universities

	<b>University</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Course Description</b>
1	An-Najah National University	Tourism and Archaeology	Training in Archaeology	10316446	Through practical experience at summer fieldwork courses, third- and fourth-year students learn different excavating methods, recording and drawing techniques and theoretical and practical aspects of archaeological surveying. For assessment, the students present a detailed report on the site.

2	Birzeit University	Department of History and Archaeology	Field Archaeology	ARCH367	The department offers a six-week summer fieldwork course as part of an archaeology major, teaching principles and practices of stratigraphic excavation, with department approval as the prerequisite. The same course is offered as a minor in Palestinian Archaeology
3	Al-Quds (Abu Dis)University	Department of Archaeology	Archaeological Excavation in the Field	8042650	Students participate in archaeological excavations or surveying for three weeks in order to gain the required skills.
4	Hebron University	Department of Tourism and Antiquities	Fieldwork	27413	Students learn methods of excavating, recording, drawing, and archaeological surveying through fieldwork at archaeological excavations, as well as theoretical aspects. For assessment, the student presents a detailed report on the site and visits to museums and various archaeological sites.
5	Islamic University of Gaza	Department of History and Archaeology	Field Training	ARCH4325	Students learn various methods of engraving, recording, drawing, and archaeological surveying through fieldwork at archaeological excavations, with a theoretical component. At the end of the training, the student presents a detailed report on the site and visits to museums and various archaeological sites.

## **Study Description and Interpretation of Results**

The undertaking of this project was of great relevance because it was the first of its kind carried out by a Palestinian University to examine the developmental processes of archaeological education in the region. Until the present time, archaeological excavations and annual summer field training courses carried out in Palestine by the different university departments of archaeology have been unsystematic and independently organized in regard to scientific materials, assessment, student levels, development of instructor performance, and outcomes. Due to financial constraints, the field training groups can be as large as forty, making the ratio of instructors to students very low. The reduction of class sizes to half would prevent instructor overload and lead to students carrying out scientific tasks, recording finds, and devoting time to various tasks requiring individual and detailed attention.

### ***Aims of analysis***

The specific aims of the analysis were the following:

- To examine student assessment methods, such as through participation, reports, or examinations.
- To assess means for improving instructor performance;
- To determine the student's viewpoints on problems, needs and expectations.

### ***Method***

The authors collected both quantitative and qualitative data. The first step was to design a questionnaire for distribution to archaeology students who had participated in field training at archaeological sites where excavations were being carried out by their university. Questionnaires were distributed to 104 students.

### ***Instruments***

The researchers used two instruments: a questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire consisted of 23 questions. The interview was semi-structured and included eight pre-formulated questions.

### ***Reliability***

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to measure reliability for the questionnaire. Reliability was high at 0.934 and suitable for scientific purposes.

### ***Study population***

The study population of 331 comprised all students from the departments of the five Palestinian universities offering studies in archaeology. The figures were supplied by student records at the universities (Table 3).

Table 3. Distribution of students according to university and degree (March 2019).

Univer sity	Bachelor Degree (Major/Minor)	Postgraduate Diploma or Master's Degree	Students per University
An- Najah	150		150
BirZei t	10		10
Al- Quds	30	1	31
Hebro n	100		100
Al- Eslami a	50		50
			Total: 331

### *Study sample*

The study sample consisted of 104 students (45 male and 59 female) chosen as a stratified random sample from the whole population according to two variables, gender and experience level. In relation to gender, the 2019 Palestinian population figures for the West Bank and Gaza were 4.98 million inhabitants, of which 2.53 million were male (51%) and 2.45 million, female (49%)<sup>14</sup>. Because Palestinian society is moving, year by year, toward providing more freedom for women, there are correspondingly more females entering the field of archaeology. The gender variable demonstrates this. The level variable differentiates between third- and fourth-year levels.

### *Procedure*

All students in the study sample were asked to fill in the questionnaire from 1 October to 30 December 2018. Reasons for the analysis were explained to students.

### *Statistical Analysis*

Researchers used SPSS V.17 software. Means, frequencies, percentages and standard deviations were calculated and the t-test for independent samples was used.

### *Results*

Means and standard deviations were used to measure student satisfaction with the field training courses. The results produced means of 3.63 - 4.35, standard deviations of 0.69 - 1.16, percentages of

<sup>14</sup> PCBS: <https://tinyurl.com/y6qpfdd6>

72.6 - 88.2 and ratings of High for each questionnaire item. The mean was out of 5 and the ratings were ranked as: Very high – over 80%, High – 70-79.9% and Moderately High – 60-69.9%.

The results show that students thought very highly of the training, giving the archaeology training modules and program an overall mean rating of Very High, with an overall mean of 4.14 (81.8%). This could be due to the learner-centered programme design models based on “learning by doing”.

Table 4 shows training assessment results according to gender. No statistical differences were produced. Table 5 shows the training assessment degree of satisfaction results according to level. No statistical differences were produced.

Table 4. Results of T-test showing assessment differences according to gender

Gender	Number of Students	Mean	Std. Deviation	T- value	Sig.
Male	45	4.18	0.62	0.592	0.555
Female	59	4.12	0.49		

Table 5. Results of T-test showing assessment differences according to level

Level	No. of students	Mean	Std. Deviation	T- value	Sig.
Third	31	4.05	0.54	0.942	0.348
Fourth	70	4.17	0.55		

## Interviews

### *Method*

Interviews were conducted with five faculty members who had taught specialized courses in archaeological field training in archaeology at the following four Palestinian universities: the Islamic, An-Najah, Hebron and Jerusalem. The prospective interviewees were told that their informed consent was needed for the interviews to be conducted. Hence, it was explained that any information provided would be treated anonymously and with strict confidentiality. Permission was asked to publish the information (including direct quotes) as part of the research project, with the option of using the information for extending its scope. The interview format and analysis method were explained and suitable locations and times were arranged at the convenience of the interviewees. The responses to the interview questions were analyzed and for each part of the four-part interview the authors included key quotations from respondents according to the importance and recurrence of the viewpoint.

### Results

Responses from both student questionnaires and instructor interviews gave first-hand information on the field training courses, providing an assessment of their effectiveness and their place in Palestinian

archaeology. Analysis of the data highlighted aspects of the courses in need of improvement demonstrating that the principal limitations facing archaeological advancement and the preservation of archaeological heritage sites in Palestine are financial and organizational. The results showed the following obstacles:

- Lack of logistical support;
- Lack of archaeological excavations because greater focus is placed on preservation and restoration;
- Lack of community cooperation with archaeological projects;
- Conflicting dates – examinations coinciding with enrolment in field training courses;
- Lack of funding;
- A low percentage of students enrolling in Archaeology programmes at Palestinian universities, due to a high unemployment rate among graduate students.
- Suspension of activity during the month of Ramadan due to the fasting practices of Muslim students (rarely necessary, due to the month of Ramadan rarely falling in summer).

### **Proposal for Improvement**

Interviewed instructors proposed recommendations for improving student training opportunities, the most important of which was repeated by all of them. They all agreed on the need for partnership and collaboration between universities. They proposed:

- Increasing the number of field training courses that include archaeological excavations and surveying, so that there are at least two groups each summer;
- Carrying out excavation projects or restoration work providing opportunities for training students; • Participating in the programmes of other universities, either local or foreign, to exchange student knowledge and skills;
- Allocating the necessary budget and full logistical support for students in terms of transport, equipment and other requirements.
- Establishing laboratories specializing in the restoration of antiquities;
- The establishment of educational museums in universities, which would provide opportunities for preserving cultural heritage and allow students to train in museum management;

### **Conclusion**

A significant aspect of this study is derived from the fact that it is the first undertaken by a Palestinian university to evaluate archaeological field training courses in Palestine. The aim was to assess their effectiveness and identify areas in need of change or modernization. Comparisons with training courses at universities abroad highlighted some of those needs, but also showed similarities in approach. Other needs brought to light that would enhance field training in Palestine included increased coordination between universities conducting summer training courses and collaboration of universities with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to enhance future employment prospects for students. Other



important results of the study showed that substantial increased financial and logistical support would be necessary to bring about the proposed changes. Specific recommendations for improvement of the courses included coordination of course curricula across universities, the introduction of assessment guidelines, the establishment of a system for monitoring and assessing the performance of training course instructors and the pooling of resources, such as materials and field guides.

Analysis of the data from questionnaires and interviews provided a formula for improvement that would in the longer term play a part in the preservation of Palestinian cultural heritage, through instigating interest and awareness and increasing the number of qualified archaeologists in Palestine directly participating in the protection and conservation of archaeological sites.

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#### **Internet Addresses**

Alquds University, Abu Dis: <https://tinyurl.com/y2wo6x5c>

An-Najah National University: <https://tinyurl.com/y3x2tkah>

BirZeit University: <https://tinyurl.com/yxjycr6g>

Hebron University: <https://tinyurl.com/y6gep7tg>

Gaza Islamic University: <http://tinyurl.com/y373als9>

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS): <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/postar.aspx?lang=ar&ItemID=3405>