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British University
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A Critical Analysis of Education in Palestine: Exploring the Challenges of Politicisation

تحليل ناقد للتعليم في فلسطين: استكشاف تحديات التسييس

by

AHMED MAHMOUD MOHAMMAD AL RAHL

**A thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION
at**

The British University in Dubai

Prof. Sufian Forawi

April 2018

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Abstract

The present study investigated the impact of the socio-political conditions and challenges of the current educational system in Palestine based on Freire's critical pedagogy theory. A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Data was primarily collected using questionnaires administered to 1,705 students, 623 teachers, and 611 guardians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect data from four political leaders and four educational leaders. Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis tests were performed using SPSS while thematic analysis of qualitative data was conducted using NVivo. The study found that complex and dynamic socio-political conditions in Palestine shaped education negatively with the three main factors currently impacting education in Palestine being the Israeli occupation, international governments, and the Palestinian political parties. The study concluded that the nearly 70-year Israeli occupation led to a highly politicised Palestinian society. Specifically, politicisation has had a crippling effect on the Palestinian educational system in terms of curriculum, policies, and operations. The study underlined the role of the Palestinian political and educational leaders as being crucial in mitigating the negative effects. The efforts of political and educational leaders in unifying the nation and exploring independent sources of funding helped to ensure the establishment of a depoliticised national educational system through a neutral administering body. Finally, the study confirmed that despite all the critical challenges, the Palestinian people were able to achieve tangible success and growth in the field of education.

Key Words: *Freire, pedagogy for liberation, Socio-political conditions, politicising education, Palestine, Israeli occupation, education*

ملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استقصاء الظروف الاجتماعية والسياسية المؤثرة في النظام التعليمي الحالي في فلسطين، والتحديات القائمة استناداً للنظرية التربوية النقدية لدى فريري. وبناء على ذلك، تم استخدام التصميم التفسيري ومنهجية البحث المختلط في جمع البيانات الكمية والنوعية. في البحث الكمي، تم إجراء الاستبانات لجمع البيانات من 1,705 طالباً وطالبة، و623 معلماً ومعلمة، إضافة إلى 611 من أولياء الأمور في الضفة الغربية وقطاع غزة. أما في البحث النوعي، فقد تم جمع البيانات من خلال إجراء مقابلات شبه منظمة مع أربعة من القادة السياسيين وأربعة آخرين من القادة التربويين. وتم إجراء اختبارات تحليلية وصفية، واستنتاجية إحصائية باستخدام برنامج التحليل الإحصائي SPSS، فيما تم إجراء تحليل البيانات النوعية باستخدام برنامج Nvivo. وتمثلت أهم النتائج التي أفرزتها الدراسة في أن الظروف الاجتماعية والسياسية المعقدة والمتغيرة في فلسطين قد أثرت سلباً على التعليم. إضافة إلى أن هناك عوامل عديدة مؤثرة أهمها الاحتلال الإسرائيلي، والحكومات الدولية، والأحزاب السياسية الفلسطينية. وُجد كذلك بأن التعليم في فلسطين يجب أن يكون فلسطينياً من أجل التخفيف من الآثار السلبية للظروف الاجتماعية، والسياسية الراهنة. وخلصت الدراسة إلى أن الاحتلال الإسرائيلي الممتد منذ نحو 70 عاماً قد أدى إلى تسييس المجتمع الفلسطيني، مما كان له أثر معيق على النظام التعليمي الفلسطيني بشكل خاص، وذلك من حيث المنهاج الدراسي، والسياسات التعليمية، والعمليات التربوية. كما أكدت نتائج الدراسة على أهمية الدور المفصلي للقادة السياسيين الفلسطينيين في التخفيف من حدة هذه التأثيرات، حيث يسهم اضطلاع القادة بتكريس جهود جماعية لتحقيق الوحدة بين فئات المجتمع واستقصاء مصادر تمويل مستقلة تحت إشراف هيئة إدارية محايدة في ضمان إعادة بناء نظام تعليمي وطني في فلسطين ينأى بنفسه عن التسييس. وأخيراً، أكدت الدراسة على أنه وبالرغم من العديد من التحديات القائمة، فقد تمكن الشعب الفلسطيني من تحقيق تطور ملموس في مجال التعليم.

كلمات مفتاحية: فريري، التعليم التحرري، تسييس التعليم، فلسطين، الاحتلال الإسرائيلي، التربية

Dedication

للمظلومين ،

وإلى الذين يعانون معهم،

وأولئك الذين يعتبرون دعم المظلومين واجبًا إنسانيًا،

وأولئك الذين يضحون بحياتهم لتأمين حياة كريمة للمظلومين

To the oppressed,

and to those who suffer with them

and to those who consider the support of the oppressed as a human duty

and to those who sacrifice their lives to secure a decent life for the oppressed

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Acronyms

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BUiD	British University in Dubai
CT	Critical Theory
GCHS	General Certificate of High School
GS	Gaza Strip
JCA	Jewish Colonisation Association
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
NCLB	No Child Left behind Act of 2001
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organisation
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
QUAL	Qualitative
QUAN	Quantitative
RQ	Research Question
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SRS	Simple Random Sampling
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
WB	West Bank

1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Palestine passed through major socio-political conditions throughout the past century (1917-2017) disrupting Palestinian social, economic, and political institutions (Michaels 2017; Nasir-Tucktuck, Baker & Love 2017). The pressure exerted by international and external powers is one example of a condition that was imposed on Palestinians in an effort to shape their ideology and to prevent Palestinians from developing their social norms, values, heritage, and national identity (Ramahi 2015; Abu-Saad 2006a). This pressure contributed to shaping the educational practices to the extent that other means, such as social and political activities were explored to promote those norms and values. The significant socio-political conditions are demonstrated in Figure 1.

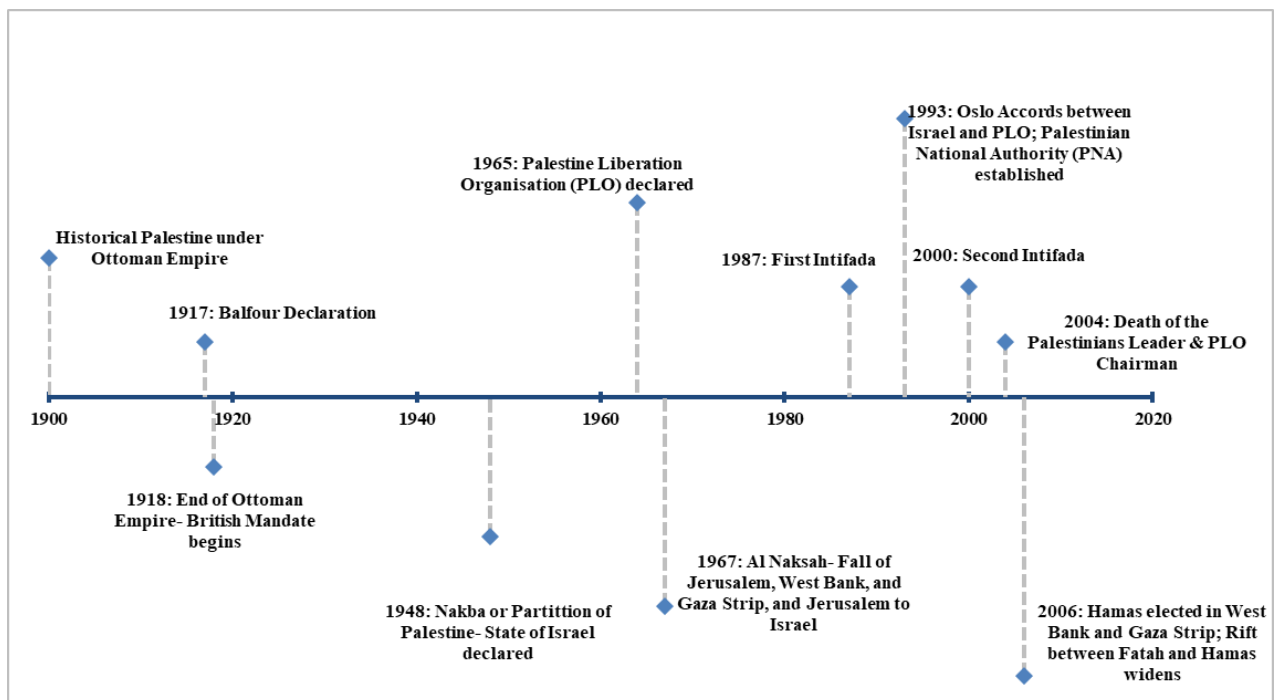


Figure 1: Major Socio-Political Conditions that Shaped Education in Palestine (1917-2017)

The socio-political issues began as the Ottoman Empire collapsed with the Balfour declaration in 1917 followed closely by the establishment of the British Mandate on Palestine in 1918 (Feen, Rothem & Seidemann 2017). The issues intensified as the 1948 Catastrophe (known as *Al Nakba*) ended the British Mandate and implemented the Balfour declaration of 1917 enabling Jewish leaders to declare the state of Israel in 1948 (Elsayed 2014; Farsoun &

Zacharia 1997; Schneider 2018). This major event contributed to the expulsion of Palestinians from their villages and cities making them refugees inside and outside Palestine (Klein 2017; Sayigh 1986). Israeli militant groups occupied the villages and cities.

To mitigate the internal and external difficulties faced by Palestinians after the Catastrophe of 1948, the need arose to establish an umbrella body representing all Palestinian political parties and movements before international organisations (Matar 2018). In 1964, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) was formed to respond to this mandate (Matar 2018; Sayigh 1986). The PLO was recognised by League of Arab States in 1974 and by the United Nations (UN) in 1988 as the legitimate leadership representative for Palestinians before the international organisations (Dunne 2010; Katzman 2002; Matar 2018; Rubin 1994).

The second catastrophe (*Al Nakсах*) took place in 1967 leading to the Israeli occupation of the remaining parts of historical Palestine: East Jerusalem, West Bank (WB), and Gaza Strip (GS) (Nasir-Tucktuck et al. 2017). The *Al Nakсах* catastrophe led to an increasing number of refugees inside and outside Palestine, the loss of more Palestinian lands, and the loss of control over all Palestinian institutions. Education, for example, became entirely administered by the Israeli authorities (Hutton & Hutton 2018).

Even though Palestinians struggled and used all means available to develop their institutions during that period, the losses were greater than the gains. By 1987, the first Palestinian uprising (*intifada*) started resulting in a peace Accord (*Oslo Declaration of Principles*) between the PLO and the Israeli government in 1993. In response to the underlying socio-political issues, the PLO charter was revised, and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) was formed under its leadership to establish Palestinian institutions within Palestine.

Disregarding the principles of the peace accord, the Israeli prime minister visited Al-Aqsa Mosque and Haram al-Sharif in 2000. This visit marked the end of the Peace Accord by Palestinian opposition political parties and sparked a second *intifada* that rejected any agreement with the Israeli government if not supporting Palestinian rights in the holy places of Palestine. The Al Aqsa *intifada* continued until the death of the former Palestinian president and the chairman of PLO, Yasir Arafat, in 2004 which created a new direction for the PNA and PLO.

By 2006, the Islamic movement of Hamas, a non-member in PLO, won the legislative council election of the Legislative Council and had the opportunity to form the Palestinian government. Most international governments, especially governments of the donating countries,

conditioned their recognition of this government on Hamas accepting the Peace Accord between the PLO and the Israeli government. The Islamic Movement of Hamas rejected some parts of the agreement and this rejection resulted in a rift between the two major Palestinian movements: Fatah and Hamas (UN 2017). This rift escalated to militant actions and caused an administrative split between WB and GS with one government in GS legitimised by the 2006 official election results and the other in WB legitimised by the presidential election of 2004 (UN 2017). The Palestinians of GS were held under Israeli occupation siege and some donating governments stopped their funding to the Palestinian government projects and public institutions in GS (Qarmout 2017). The lack of funds to public institutions in GS prompted citizens to explore other sources, such as political parties and charity from national and international organisations like United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to get financial aid (Qarmout 2017).

The impact of these socio-political conditions on the land distribution is illustrated in Figure 2 (Rahim 2011). The map shows the four stages of land loss: pre-1948, 1967 Partition Plan, 1967 De Facto Line, and Present, illustrating that before 1948 Palestinians held 100% of Palestine land whereas currently Palestinians hold only 12% of the land which is still under Israeli occupation. Losing Palestinian land affected the Palestinian societal structure by altering the education, economic, and political systems.

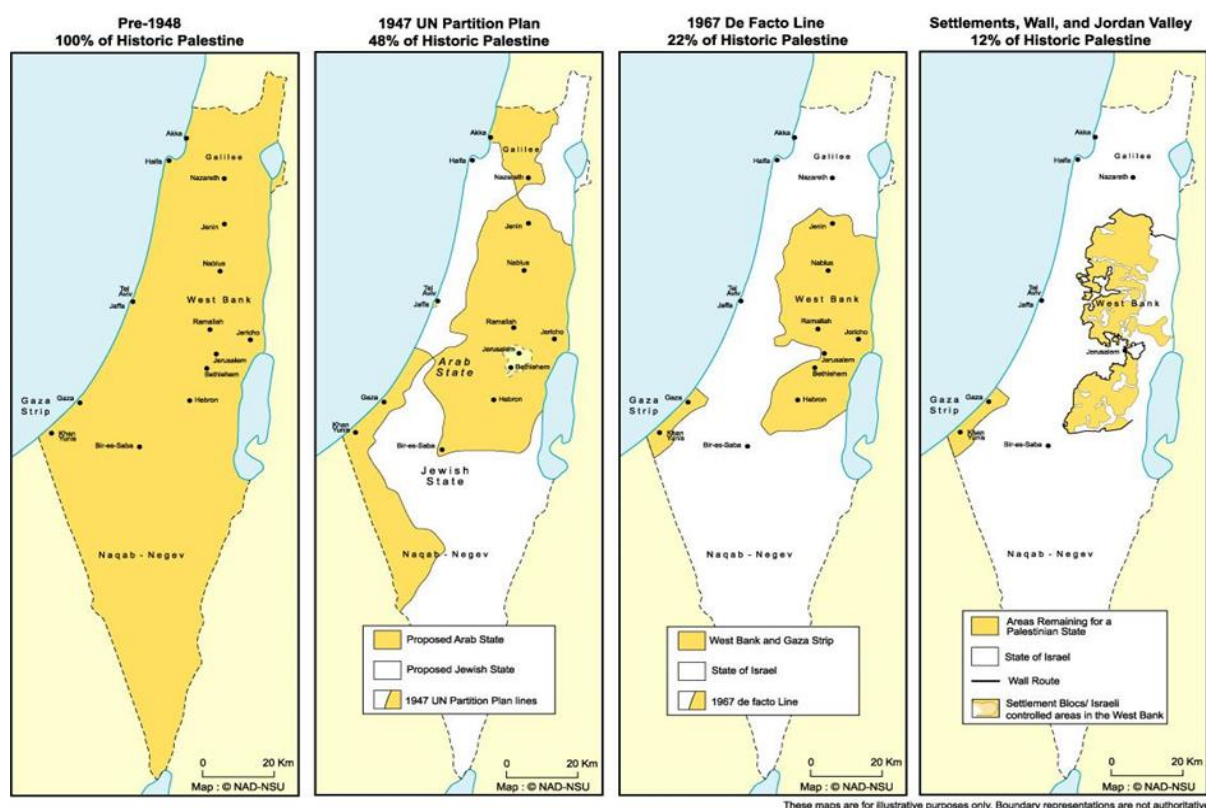


Figure 2: Distribution of Historical Land throughout Four Historical Periods

To understand the education of Palestinian children, it is essential to understand who controls education and how education is controlled. Before 1948, the British ran all Palestinian institutions, including the educational ones (Ramahi 2015). During that time, two main educational systems were implemented: one for the Arab students and the other for Jewish students in addition to students of some special and religious schools (Bowman & Berkson 1928; 1937). The Hebrew Public school system, used to educate the Jewish students, was established in response to the Zionist movement, which called for an educational system with high standards similar to the European educational systems (Aumann 1974; Dajani 2005; Stevens 1972). However, the education system for Arab children remained as basic as it was during the Ottoman administration (Mizel 2013).

The first socio-political issue that transformed education negatively in Palestine was the end of British Mandate and the declaration of the state of Israel in 1948. During that time, Israeli militant groups destroyed most of the Palestinian educational institutions in the occupied cities and villages and expelled around 750,000 Palestinians from their land to find themselves refugees inside and outside their homeland (Hutton & Hutton 2018; Klein 2017; Silwadi & Mayo 2014). This divided the Palestinians into various groups with each group educated differently.

Firstly, the Palestinians who continued to live within the area called Israel became a minority and the Israeli military government imposed an educational system on them whose mere purpose was to impact them ideologically to believe in the Jewish case (Abu-Saad 2006a; Schneider 2018). This educational system was administered by Israeli educators including curriculum development and support services. Literature shows that the Arab students who study using this system had a lower performance than the Jewish students (Kashti 2016; Magnet 2015).

Secondly, the Palestinians who have become refugees inside Palestine, specifically in the refugee camps of WB and GS, were and are educated using the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) educational system. This system was not developed to preserve or promote the Palestinian national identity but rather to prepare children to be able to support their families (UNRWA 2017).

Thirdly, the Palestinians, often referred to as indigenous Palestinians of Jerusalem, WB, and GS, from 1948 to 1967, were educated according to their geographical location. Students of Jerusalem and WB were educated using the Jordanian curriculum, whereas students of GS studied the Egyptian curriculum in addition to some special and religious school curricula. The fourth group were those Palestinians who were refugees outside Palestine in the surrounding countries of Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon (Chen 2009). Those refugees were educated using either the UNRWA curriculum or the curriculum of the host country.

Thus, the year 1948 was crucial and contributed to the split of Palestinians into smaller communities inside and outside Palestine. Palestinian national identity was not, in most cases, allowed to be promoted through education.

The same socio-political issues continued to shape Palestinians' national, social, and political identities. By 1967, East Jerusalem, WB, and GS fell completely under the Israeli occupation. As a result, more Palestinians became refugees inside and outside Palestine while most of the remaining educational institutions were destroyed. Immediately after the 1967 war, the first action that was done by the Israeli militant government was to remove the Jordanian and Egyptian curriculum and to impose the same curriculum they imposed on the Palestinians who lived within the geographical area called Israel (Fasheh 1989). Palestinians of WB and GS rejected the Israeli policy. The outcome of this rejection was that Palestinians were allowed to continue using the Jordanian and Egyptian curricula provided that specific textbooks and

lessons were omitted or cancelled. However, Palestinians of East Jerusalem were forced to study the curriculum of the Palestinians who lived in Israel (Fasheh 1989).

Table 1 summarises the educational systems that Palestinians were exposed to from 1517 to 2017. The various types of educational systems imposed on Palestinians with purposes and learning outcomes formulated to meet only the interests of those who imposed those systems led to Palestinian children seeking other means to promote their national and social identities (Ramahi 2015). The unexpected result was that Palestinian youth could not distinguish between their social, national and political identities. Most children believed that in order to be a loyal Palestinian, they had to be affiliated to one of the political parties. Unfortunately, political parties have not come to a consensus on whether the national and social identities are supposed to be constructed and promoted through education.

The socio-political conditions and their consequences presented new challenges to the Palestinian political and educational leaders and resulted in the absence of geographical, historical, social, religious, heritage, and traditions knowledge about Palestine in the overall experience of learners (Barmil 2018). This study explores the role that socio-political conditions have played in shaping the Palestinian educational system and the challenges faced by the Palestinian political and educational leaders in relation to promoting knowledge pertinent to Palestinian national identity and social norms. In the next section, the background and rationale for the study are discussed to provide insight into the existing circumstances in Palestine.

Educational System/ Period	1517-1917	1918-1948	1948-1967	1967-1994	1994-Present
Palestinian	---	---	---	---	WB & GS
UNRWA	---	---	WB & GS	WB & GS	WB & GS
Jordanian	---	---	Jerusalem & WB	WB	---
Egyptian	---	---	GS	GS	---
Mizrahi	---	---	Inside Israel	Jerusalem & Inside Israel	Jerusalem & Inside Israel

Ottoman	Historical Palestine	Historical Palestine	---	---	---
Hebrew	---	Historical Palestine	---	---	---
Special & Religious	Jerusalem – WB – GS				

Table 1: Educational Systems in Palestine (1517-2017)

1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Up to the date of this study, Palestinians did not have an approved national constitution owing to continual Israeli occupation. They seek to emancipate themselves from the injustice on them so that they can preserve their history, traditions, and heritage while coping with rapid scientific development. Due to the absence of a national constitution, the available references for the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) are the Basic Law and the Declaration of Independence, in addition to a mixture of educational policies with multiple references as highlighted by Dr. Asaaf who worked as an educational consultant to MoEHE. The most famous of these references are the Ottoman laws, the British Mandate laws, the Egyptian Educational policy that prevailed until 1967, the Jordanian educational policy of 1964 and the amendments by the Israeli occupation after 1967.

To provide a decent education to Palestinian children, the education system is governed by a set of principles according to MoEHE (2013):

- education is compulsory to ensure that every Palestinian citizen has the right to access free education up to the age of 16 with no discrimination between learners based on their religion, colour, gender, social status, living area, or special needs and disabilities.
- Education in Palestine promotes student's proficiency in the Arabic language. The Ministry allows the teaching of other languages such as English (the most common), French and German.

With the consolidation of religious and moral values through education, the Palestinian educational system is concerned with promoting the idea that Palestinians are Arab Muslims and Palestine is an integral part of the Arab nation and its heritage and civilisation.

In general, the political references for education in Palestine are the Declaration of Independence, the Palestinian Basic Law and all the Charters approved by the PLO and the intellectual, psychological, social and moral bases that emerged from them. Education is based

on the philosophy of forming a balanced citizen in physical, mental, spiritual, emotional and social aspects of personality as highlighted by Dr. Asaaf in 2016.

Thus, investigating the socio-political conditions and current educational practices through a critical explanatory study is essential to establish a better understanding of the current educational system that is implemented to educate Palestinians in WB and GS. Jabr (2009) , Michaels (2017) and Safadi (2014) assert that the Palestinian society in both territories reflects its highly-politicised atmosphere due to the diverse ideologies. They argue that this diversity poses a challenge for educational and political leaders who wish to establish a national educational system that provides an inclusive curriculum to fit the diversified Palestinian society (Jabr 2009; Maharmeh 2017; Ramahi 2015; Safadi 2014), in other words, a curriculum that is based on social justice (i.e. emancipatory education).

There is a need to understand the major challenges the Palestinians face in terms of their pursuit of a well-established and robust educational system. Primarily, the system is influenced by multiple socio-political conditions that shape the Palestinian society and its national and social organisations (including the educational ones). Hence, the study attempts to account for the socio-political conditions that influence the political, economic, and social status in the Palestinian society and the impact of the conditions on the performance of institutions. In so doing, the study seeks to identify possible solutions that could provide a national strategy to develop the existing Palestinian educational system. The proposed strategy should consider the competing and conflicting ideologies. It also presents ways to promote socialisation over political ideologies and to eliminate the role of internal and external powers who use education as a vehicle to impose their agendas on Palestinians.

Exploring the socio-political dimensions in the current study involves multidisciplinary aspects, such as education, sociology, psychology, leadership, and economy – an involvement that makes the problem more sophisticated to study without a thorough critique. For this reason, the critical pedagogy of Freire (1970) is adopted in the present study to investigate the impact of the socio-political conditions on educating the Palestinian children. Critical theory is a school of thought that responds to similar problems by focusing on critiquing, changing societies and delving deep into the social life. Put differently critical theory goes beyond the bare understanding of the impact of the problem on education to critiquing the educational system and how it operates given politics, culture and society (Glesne 2011). The literature contains abundant explanations of critical theory as well as its limitations (e.g., Agger 1991;

Apple 1995, 2000, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2010; Boggs 2013; Collins 1985; Held 1989; Murphy & Fleming 2010; Nichols & Allen-Brown 1996; Ozmon 2012; Peters, Olssen, & Lankshear 2003), explored in the literature review chapter.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Palestine has been under occupation for a century. It experienced three decades under British occupation (1918-1948), followed by seven decades under Israeli occupation (1948-present) (Mitter 2014). This extended period of occupation has contributed to politicising the society in Palestine (Issa 2010; Michaels 2017; Nasir-Tucktuck, Baker & Love 2017; Spangler 2015). The occupation (British and Israeli) negatively transformed all Palestinian social systems, including the education system. For instance, Michaels (2017) noted that in the past century, the Palestinian society suffered under the occupation as the Palestinian nation was divided into small communities to maintain a higher degree of control and management. This level of control exerted by the Israeli occupation prohibited the development of a national educational system that is necessary for emancipation.

According to Freire (1970), education is an essential requirement for the liberation of an oppressed people from the oppressor. However, several researchers reported that education in Palestine failed to be used as a means for development and liberation (e.g. Maharmeh 2017, Ramahi 2015). Ramahi (2015) and Qarmout (2017) added that the inability of the Palestinian leaders to establish a national education system could be attributed to the complex and dynamic socio-political conditions associated with connecting funding education with policies. Ramahi noted that the quality of education in Palestine is declining and Michaels (2017) attributes this deterioration to the complex and unstable socio-political conditions in Palestine. Therefore, establishing a national educational system in Palestine based on development and liberation is becoming increasingly important, especially with regards to preparing the Palestinian children for the upcoming state of Palestine.

1.4 PURPOSE AND QUESTIONS

The purpose of this research study is to investigate the socio-political conditions and challenges of the current educational system in Palestine from the perception of the stakeholders and develop a national strategy for emancipatory education. In short, a national strategy for

emancipatory education must be an inclusive educational system for all students regardless of their ideological beliefs and political stance that can be sustainable under the unexpected foreseen socio-political conditions.

Based on related literature review and critical pedagogy theory, this study aims to address the following research questions:

- 1) How do the present socio-political conditions and challenges shape the educational system in WB and GS?
- 2) What are the perceptions of Palestinian teachers, guardians, and students of the factors influencing the educational system in WB and GS?
- 3) What are the perceptions of Palestinian political and educational leaders of the necessary conditions to develop the educational system in WB and GS?

1.5 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Education forms the basis for the social and economic development of any country (Nasir-Tucktuck, Baker & Love 2017). It reflects the rate of success at which national goals have been achieved. However, if severe challenges are not adequately addressed, several critical problems might emerge and lead to the failure of the entire educational system. These challenges might vary from poverty, a disparity in culture, and insecurity due to political variance amongst all. The quality of an educational system is influenced by the same factors (e.g. social, economic, and political) (Michaels 2017; Nasir-Tucktuck, Baker & Love 2017).

The Western colonisation of the fallen Ottoman Empire reached its apogee during and after World War I when British and French officials carved up much of the empire and colonised its regions and territories. Palestine, which was under the administration of the Ottoman Empire suffered this fate and fell under the Mandate (i.e. occupation) of Britain. Shortly, after the end of World War II, the British mandate was terminated and the State of Israel was created. The establishment of the state of Israel caused a significant amount of suffering and impairment not only to the Palestinian people but also to the Palestinian structures including its educational system.

At the personal level, I was negatively impacted socially and academically as a result of the continuous manipulation of the Palestinian society. This of course made this study mean a lot to me, as a Palestinian researcher who completed his school studies from grade one in 1981 to

grade twelve in 1993 in the Palestinian educational system. I experienced several challenges during that time with regards to curricula, policies, and teaching methods. For instance, during that time, the curriculum was Egyptian with not even a single mention of Palestine in any of the used textbooks. I studied the geography and history of Egypt, which I knew for sure that I was not going to benefit from but did so to obtain the General Certificate of Education, a necessary requirement for undergraduate studies. The textbooks that I studied the most included outdated knowledge, particularly in science and technology. Due to the lack of the availability of those textbooks, families used to use the same copy of a textbook several times. For example, I studied my grade six curriculum by using the same textbooks my older sister had used seven years earlier.

On top of the textbooks issues, there has always been a shortage of teachers. For example, in most years, we had a substitute teacher every month throughout the year. Most teachers were highly passionate about educating. However, most of them were not qualified or specialised in the subjects they taught. This resulted in most of the teachers indoctrinating us more than focusing on critical thinking and problem-solving. As students, we used to challenge those teachers and discovered that they only knew particular bits of information that they had memorised earlier. They then wanted us to do the same. On top of their neither being specialised nor qualified, some of them used to work two or more jobs to survive as they were underpaid. I noticed that most of them worked as taxi drivers before and after school. Because they worked hard outside the classroom to survive, most of them used to come to class unprepared, and they were sleepy as well. Those teachers were mostly trying their best to educate us at their best level. Unfortunately, we struggled to learn and get prepared for higher education. During that time, we also knew that some of the teachers were following either secular or Islamic ideology; even so, this did not influence us. On top of that, a few families in my village were labelled with certain political ideologies, whereas the majority advised their children to be loyal Palestinians without being affiliated with any of the political parties. Hence, the political affiliation issue was rarely discussed in schools among students or teachers. In addition to curriculum and teacher issues, school buildings were not up to standards. For instance, throughout my studies, my school was not maintained. I remember that, during the winter, it was freezing cold inside, and, in some classrooms, the ceiling was damaged and the roof was leaky. On top of that, most of the buildings were cleaned by the students themselves as the school could not afford to hire custodians. With the majority of the schools operating on a two-shift basis, I had the opportunity to attend in the morning and

evenings in classes with at least 40 students crammed into classrooms that could not comfortably sit more than 25 students. The challenge of the morning shift is that it starts at 6:00 AM, which was very early and particularly hard in the winter. The evening classes were no better as students arrive home at around 6:00 PM and it is dark outside. The two-shift system affected me negatively as it was not possible for me to sleep in the morning when I attended the school in the evening as my brothers and sisters woke me up early to get ready for school.

Additionally, no science labs were available in any the schools that I attended throughout my studies. Throughout my experience, I have never conducted a single science experiment due to the lack of resources and the lack of specialty among teachers. Some science teachers who happened to have science degrees shared with me that the Israeli occupation did not want us to learn science and build science labs as it may have been threatening if children had learned how to use chemicals.

After 25 years, I wanted to explore if the political and educational leaders in Palestine had overcome the challenges my generation of students faced and see if education is now considered a significant instrument for state development and liberation.

Further, the present study adopts critical analysis to explore the socio-political components that shape the Palestinian educational system. There is a plethora of research devoted to effective and ineffective educational systems around the world (Pretorius 2014; Scheerens 2015). However, the literature reveals that there is a noticeable dearth of investigation of critical studies about socio-political aspects in Palestine (Maharmeh 2017; Ramahi 2015; Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2017). The existing studies did not explicitly discuss the challenges that political and educational leaders face due to the different ideologies in Palestine. Despite the pervasive studies which compared feeble and adequate educational systems, there is an evident dearth of similar studies involving the Palestinian educational system.

Therefore, the present study is meant to be a contribution to filling this gap in research and to propose necessary reforms. Moreover, exploring and critiquing the educational system using mixed methods will add to the knowledge about the nature of education in Palestine given the different ideologies and the dynamic and complex socio-political conditions. According to Matar (2017) and Ramahi (2015), reform initiatives can support continuous improvement of the educational system in WB and GS. The results of the study are expected to support the reform initiatives that help to build education for liberation based on Freire's dialogical action principles.

1.6 STUDY DESIGN

The present study adopts a mixed methods approach to investigate the socio-political conditions and challenges of the current educational system in Palestine from the perception of the stakeholders and to develop a national strategy for emancipatory education (Creswell 2012). The rationale behind using a mixed methods approach is to consolidate the findings of the study by capitalising on the major benefits of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Utilising data triangulation will enable the researcher to address the multifaceted and sophisticated research problem adequately. Methodological extrapolations based on the underlying assumptions of the transformative paradigm disclose the probable asset of mixing qualitative and quantitative methods (Cameron 2011). A qualitative element is used to gather the perspectives of the community at every stage of the research process, while the quantitative dimension gives the opportunity to demonstrate results that have credibility for community members and researchers. Explanatory mixed methods provide a systematic way for addressing the complexities of research in culturally complex situations that can establish the basis for social change.

1.7 THESIS STRUCTURE

This study includes six chapters. The six chapters are an introduction, literature review, methodology, analysis, discussion, and conclusion.

The first chapter has seven main sections: introduction, background and rationale for the study, statement of the problem, purpose and research questions, the significance of the study, study design, and an overview of chapters in this study. The introduction section is meant to introduce the reader to the current socio-political conditions in Palestine. The second section presents the impact of those socio-political conditions on education. The third section presents the statement of the problem, whereas the fourth presents the purpose and research questions of this study. The fifth presents the significance of this study. The last two sections present the study design and an overview of the study chapters.

The second chapter discusses the theoretical framework and presents the review of literature related to the study. The chapter contains two main sections: theoretical framework and

literature review. The theoretical framework section is divided into four subsections: critical theory, critical pedagogy theory, limitations of critical pedagogy theory, and section summary. The second section includes six subsections that aim at explaining how education used to be carried out under (1) Ottoman administration, (2) British administration, (3) League of Arab States, (4) Israeli Occupation, and (5) Palestinian National Authority in addition to an introduction and summary sections.

The third chapter of this study presents eight sections. The first section discusses the research approach, whereas the second describes the research methodology with emphasis on the explanatory sequential mixed methods design. The third section addresses the context of the study, whereas the fourth presents the data collection methods including instrumentations, validity, reliability, and pilot study. The fifth section introduces the data collection procedures whereas, the sixth and seventh address the qualitative and quantitative data analysis procedures which used descriptive and inferential analysis statistical tests and thematic analysis. The final section emphasises the ethical considerations throughout the study.

The fourth chapter contains seven main sections: analysis of demographic data, analysis of political identity questions, descriptive results, analysis of closed-ended survey questions, analysis of survey open-ended questions, analysis of the interviews, and integrated data. In the analysis of survey closed-ended questions, there are four subsections. The four subsections are analysis of political statements, analysis of sociological statements, analysis of ideological statements, and summary subsection of the closed-ended questions. The fifth section includes four subsections: crucial factors to improve teaching and learning in WB and GS, political factors that influence education, necessary factors to improve curriculum and assessment, and social conditions that impact education in WB and GS. The sixth section focuses on the analysis of the interviews through four subsections. The sixth section includes four subsections are influences of the Israeli occupation on education, the impact of the international governments on education, influences of the Palestinian political parties, and summary of the interview section. The final section integrates the qualitative and quantitative data for each research question.

The fifth chapter includes three main sections. This chapter focuses on integrating the quantitative and qualitative data to answer the three research questions in relation to theoretical framework and literature. The first section attempts to answer the first research question through three subsections namely: politicisation of education, politicisation of funding, and

quality of education in WB and GS. The second section attempts to answer the second research question through three subsections namely: education curriculum quality and relevance, teaching and learning practices, and socialisation through education. The final section in this chapter attempts to answer the third research question through four subsections namely: establish a national curriculum, enhance the teaching and learning, explore other sources of funding, and prioritise education by leadership.

The final chapter includes nine subsections. Those subsections are conclusion, limitations of the study, strategy for emancipatory education based on Freire (1970), implications, recommendations, recommendations for further research, contribution to the theory, contribution to the practice, and final word to conclude the study.

The introduction chapter presented the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, study design, and overview of the chapters of this study. The next chapter presents the theoretical framework of the study and the review of the literature.

1.8 DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

Politicisation refers to the concept of geographically dividing the Palestinians into smaller communities and then dividing those smaller communities into subcommittees to restrict their movements and interactions and further ideologically divide those subcommittees into smaller and smaller subgroups for the purpose of manipulating the Palestinian society and not allowing it to be united or at least making the union of those subgroups a true challenge for any Palestinian leader in future.

De-politicisation refers to the concept of uniting all the Palestinian communities regardless of their geographical location or ideological perspective under a legitimate leader that has a revolutionary action plan and no internal conflicts or external pressures to manipulate the Palestinian society.

Official knowledge refers to the knowledge that is produced as a result of dialogue among the Palestinian communities related to history, geography, civics, customs, and traditions.

Socialisation refers to the process of applying the official knowledge to the social partners. This process highlights the necessity of transferring the official knowledge from one generation to another and, at the same time, ensures that the society is united and equity is maintained among the Palestinians regardless of their religion, gender, location, age, and academic background.

Political Affiliation refers to the term where the individual Palestinian is politically oriented with one of the political parties in Palestine (e.g., Fatah, Hamas, and Jihad). This affiliation could refer to the fact that this particular Palestinian believes in the ideological perspective of that political party and consequently, he/she votes for them in official elections (e.g., presidential, legislative council, municipality).

Emancipatory Education/Education for Liberation/Education for Social justice refers to the concept of educating oppressed people using critical pedagogy and based on a revolutionary action theory to understand why and how the oppressors dehumanise them and work collectively to liberate themselves without oppressing their former oppressor.

Secular Ideology refers to the concept that all Palestinians, regardless of their religion, are responsible for being united and have the same economic, national and political priorities. From the secular perspective, all Palestinians, regardless of their beliefs, are equal and have the same rights and responsibilities.

Islamic Ideology refers to the concept that Palestine should be an Islamic state. However, all Muslims, regardless of their nationality, have the same rights in Palestine. Moreover, the non-Muslim citizens can be part of the state provided that they are being administered by Islamic rules.

2 CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The introduction chapter highlighted the statement of the problem, purpose, research questions, significance of the study, study design, and an overview of the chapters in this study. This chapter is meant to present the theoretical framework and the review of the literature. It is divided into two main sections. The first section of this chapter discusses the framework of the study, whereas the second section presents a review of the literature. The first section is divided into four subsections: critical theory, critical pedagogy theory, limitations of the critical pedagogy theory, and summary of the theoretical framework. The second section is divided into six subsections: education under the Ottoman Empire, education under the British mandate, education under the League of Arab States, education under the Israeli occupation, education under the PNA, and literature review summary.

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To comprehensively respond to the research questions, this study is based on the critical pedagogy theory of Freire (1970). Figure 3 illustrates the connection of the central concepts may lead to establishing education for development and liberation in Palestine. Each of the concepts is discussed in relation to the impact of politicisation on the purpose of education in an under established social systems. This section is divided into four subsections: critical theory, critical pedagogy theory, limitations of critical pedagogy theory, and summary of the theoretical framework.

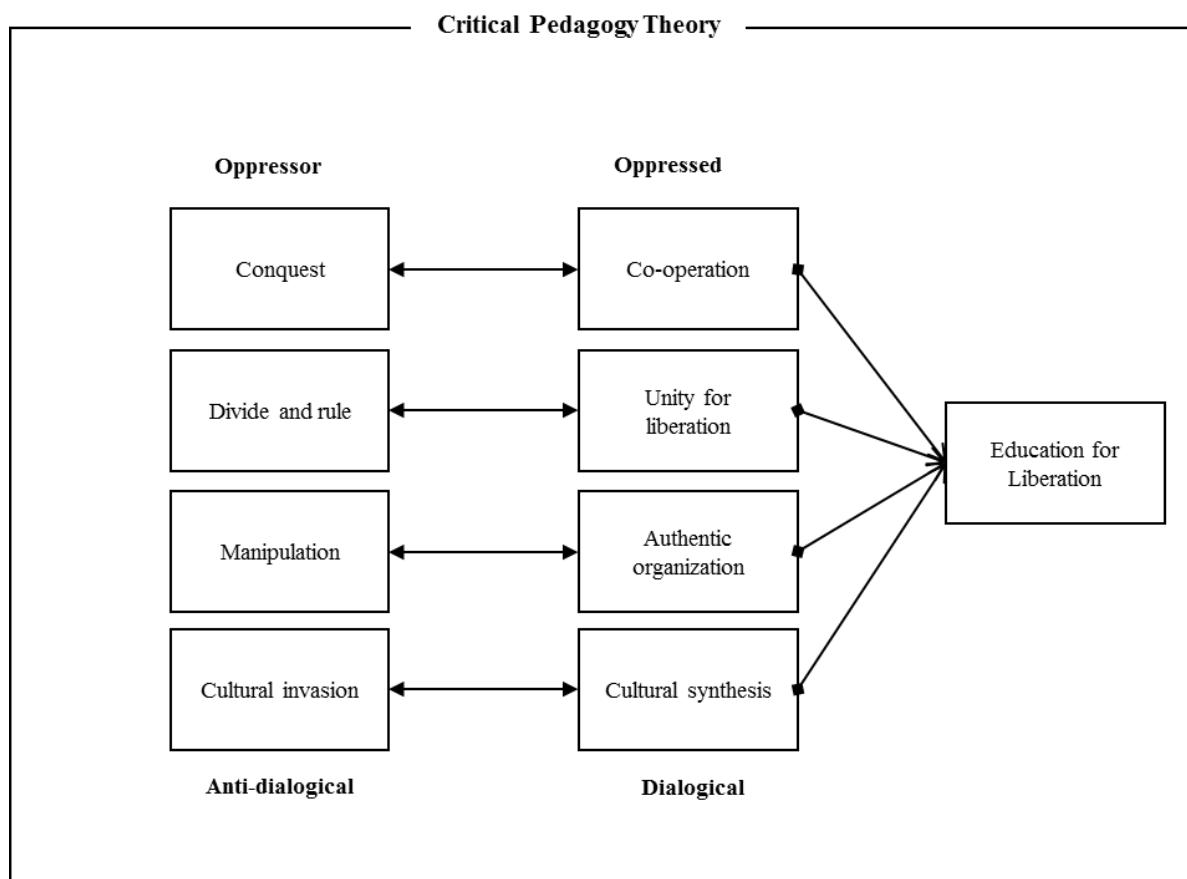


Figure 3: Elements of the Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Critical Theory

The literature suggests that the critical pedagogy theory of Freire is based on the critical theory that stemmed from the Marxism school of thought (e.g. Abraham 2014; Aliakbari & Faraji 2011; Au 2007). According to Abraham, its significant thesis is that education should go beyond the transfer of knowledge and train the future labour force to develop critical consciousness, which leads to transformation of the individual, learning environment and society at large.

Before critical theory was established as a primary theoretical ground, critical thinking was exercised among scholars of different generations as a way of viewing reality. The relevance and the acts of critical thinking were topics for discussion among the Greek philosophers as well as among the intellectuals of the 19th and 20th centuries. Critical theory, which is a foundation for critical pedagogy, has its origins in Hegel's work, Kant's critical philosophy, which was introduced in his book *Critique of Pure Reason* in 1881, and Karl Marx's and

Fredrik Engels Communist Manifesto from 1848 and Capital Volume One from 1867 (McKernan 2013).

Critical theory or Neo-Marxism (also known as Western Marxism or the Frankfurt school of thought) refers to a group of scholars who met at the Institute of Social Research at the University of Frankfurt, Germany in 1923 (Agger 1991). The group agreed on developing the Scientific Socialism Theory (Marxism) while retaining main Marxist views on social class, the theory of ideology, and theory of political conflict, as a defensive mechanism toward the development and progress of capitalism. In fact, the goal of neo-Marxists was to go beyond material production and class conflict (as central explanatory concepts of Marxist analysis) toward a more extensive cultural explanation of power relations and conflict. Some researchers (e.g., Allan, Briskman & Pease 2009) link the notion of critical theory to the social and political movement that was produced by prominent figures at the Frankfurt school. Other researchers argue that the concept of critical theory is related to the word “criticism” and thus given to any work that can be considered as an acquisition of knowledge before the inquiry (e.g. Peters, Olssen & Lankshear 2003; Zanetti & Carr 1997).

The focus of critical theory is to guide those researchers who intend to go beyond the description of a research problem to proposing solutions (Glesne 2011). Usher (1996) affirms that studies based on critical theory usually aim at determining and unmasking the beliefs and practices that limit human freedom, justice, and democracy. Glesne (2011) stresses that the standpoint of critical theorists is known as ‘historical realism’ (i.e. the life of a human is shaped by political, social, cultural, economic, and gender values over time). She also emphasises that critical theorists analyse the historical and structural conditions of oppression and seek the transformation of those conditions. In fact, the fundamental concept of critical theory research is that ideologies work to distort reality and that the role of critical theorists is to uncover and criticise distorting ideologies and any related structures, mechanisms, or processes that try to maintain them in place (Prasad 2005). In other words, critical theorists situate and voice the experiences and perspectives of the oppressed group in a social and historical context by disclosing how conditions serve specific groups and not others. Finally, critical theorists focus on problems related to power and domination and seek to promote understanding from the perspective of the subjugated group (Nichols & Allen-Brown 1996).

In connection with critical theory, Marcuse’s thoughts on the limitations of the Marxist theory were presented in his 1969 article “An Essay on Liberation” (Ozmon 2012). These limitations

made him respond to the necessity of further movement toward new socialisation. Following Marcuse's footsteps, Jürgen Habermas (1929-) took critical theory to a new level when he integrated the developmental psychology theories of Jean Piaget as well as some parts of the American pragmatism and language analysis (Mitrovic 1999, Ozmon 2012; Scott 1978). The purpose of this integration was to support the establishment of a socio-theoretical analysis particularly in social psychology and developmental psychology. This analysis is considered the foundation on theory of communicative action.

The German sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas has had a wide-ranging and significant impact on the understanding of social change and social conflict. His influence on ideas generated in the fields of sociology, political science, philosophy, law, and other areas, such as media and communication studies, has been almost unparalleled (Murphy & Fleming 2010). Scott (1978) asserts that the movement made by Habermas to develop a methodology for social theory through systematic reconstruction of the works of Hegel and Marx shaped the traditional social theory. Scott (1978) argues that the new form of the critical social theory presented in Habermas's theory of knowledge represents the new form of critical social theory. Scott also affirms that the link between scientific methodology and social action is the element that distinguishes Habermas' epistemology. Education development, implementation, and evaluation require the involvement of all societal segments according to Habermas. This involvement dictates presenting the official knowledge of all societal partners in the educational systems to preserve their nation's heritage, traditions, and history (Freire 1985; Habermas 1984). In addition to Habermas' epistemology, Freire's in-depth analysis of critical pedagogy provides a theoretical base for this study rooted in critical theory perspective. The next section discusses Freire's discourse of the role of education in emancipating the oppressed people from the oppressor.

2.1.2 Critical Pedagogy Theory

As mentioned previously, critical pedagogy has its origins in critical theory. One of the leading figures that contributed to critical pedagogy is the Brazilian educationalist Paulo Freire (1921-1997). His contributions to promote the education for liberation made this field more considerable among educational activists throughout the globe (Larson, Allen & Osbor 2010; Rugut & Osman 2013). Thus, this section discusses Freire's thoughts which are relevant to this study and can guide the build-up of the 'Literature Review', 'Methodology', and 'Discussion' chapters of this study. This theoretical framework can help us respond to several critical

questions about education in Palestine including: is education used for social and economic transformation? Does education promote socialisation? Who controls education? Which ideology is dominant and why? Does education serve only political and economic agendas and why? Do education systems produce critical thinkers and creative citizens? What is the role of political leadership in the development and transformation of educational systems? Which curriculum should be taught in schools and why? Which knowledge should be considered as the official knowledge in the curriculum? Who should develop, implement, and evaluate educational policies? These questions, and others, dictate the need for a comprehensive framework that appreciates the role of education in the development and transformation of economic, social, and political systems.

This framework can help educators view education as a practice of domination versus education as a practice of freedom. Countries and states tend to disseminate the official knowledge they want to school children through an entire control of educational policies, practices, and textbook contents (Apple 2003).

Critical theory responds to the interaction among conflicting political powers and can explain how social justice can be maintained. However, critical pedagogy theory views society as a divided and hierarchical structure (i.e. based on power relations) and views education as an instrument used by dominant groups to legitimise unjust arrangements (Freire 1970). Critical pedagogy attempts to enable the oppressed by first examining the oppressor's ideologies thoroughly. Critical pedagogy explains how education can assist the oppressed in ridding themselves of their 'false consciousness' in their struggle for liberation. Unlike traditional claims about the 'neutrality' of education, critical pedagogy views all education theories as intimately connected with ideologies shaped by power, politics, history and culture (Apple 2004; Girou & Simon 1988). Darder (1991) and McLaren (1988) consider that the primary function of the critical pedagogue is to empower the powerless and transform those conditions which preserve human injustice and inequity.

Freire as a primary philosopher of critical pedagogy attempted to reorganise pedagogy on a global basis in the direction of radical politics of historical struggle - a direction that he expanded into a lifetime project (McLaren 1998; Yamaguchi 2000). Freire considered that by linking critical theory and practices to political doctrine and emancipation, education would be the essential tool that can serve as an ideal referent for social and economic transformation (Freire 1970, 1973, 1975, 1985). For Freire, education moves beyond the concept of schooling

to the struggle over power relations (Freire 1985). It is a dialectical relation between individuals and groups who live out their lives within specific historical conditions, and structural constraints, and those cultural forms and ideologies that give rise to the conditions and struggles that define the lived realities of various societies. Education, as seen by several critical theorists, is the underpinning of development and liberation, whereas power and politics are the main players (Apple 2004; 2006, 2010). It is where humans engage in meaningful desires, language, and values to respond to the more profound beliefs about their struggle for a better way of life (Giroux 1988, 1999; Giroux & McLaren 1989; Hinchey 1998; Kreisberg 1992; McLaren 1998; Robinson 1994; Shaw 1996; Shor 1992; Shor & Freire 1987; Taylor 1993; Torres 1998).

Critical pedagogy theory of Freire links education and praxis to oppression and its causes by way of the narrative of liberation. While education can at best undermine a system from within or provide the knowledge to ground a strategy of action, it cannot by itself produce political change (Moran 2014). Critical pedagogy theory of Freire is based on two dimensions (see figure 3). The first dimension describes the role of the oppressed in liberating themselves (also called the theory of revolutionary action). The second dimension focuses on the actions and reactions of the oppressor to impede the oppressed of achieving their goals (also called the theory of oppressive action).

Paolo Freire's critical pedagogy establishes a theory of education fitted to the desires of the marginalised members of capitalist societies. Connecting educational and political philosophy, critical pedagogy offers an analysis of oppression and a theory of liberation (Moran 2014). Freire trusts that traditional education serves to support the dominance of the power within society and thereby maintain the dominant social, political, and economic status quo (Aliakbari & Faraji 2011). To overcome the oppression endemic to a manipulative society, education must be reshaped to instigate and enable the oppressed in their struggle for liberation. This form of education emphasises consciousness-raising, dialogue, and collaboration between teacher and student in the effort to achieve greater humanisation for all.

A critical pedagogy of Freire asserts the importance of consciousness-raising, as the means enabling the oppressed to recognise their oppression and commit to the effort to overcome it, taking full responsibility for themselves in the struggle for liberation. He addresses the "fear of freedom," which constrains the oppressed from assuming this responsibility. He also cautions against the dangers of sectarianism, which may undermine the revolutionary purpose

as well as serve as a refuge for the committed conservative. The struggle for liberation is a struggle to reclaim humanity. By objectifying and debilitating the oppressed, oppression dehumanises them as well as their oppressor. Conditioned by oppression to mistrust and undervalue themselves, the oppressed weaken, submerged in the concrete reality of their oppression, thereby developing a false consciousness that is politically immobilising.

Freire claims, however, that humanisation is the ability of human beings. People are challenged to develop their humanity and this entails the exercise of free will in creating themselves and transforming the world through their labour. The historical task of the oppressed is to liberate themselves and their oppressors by becoming subjects in the historical process and prevailing the social institution of domination. The pedagogy of the oppressed, therefore, aims to overcome the false consciousness of the dispossessed by penetrating the “culture of silence” that afflicts them and unveiling the structures and causes of oppression (Freire 1970).

Freire attacks traditional education, which he calls the “banking” method. In this form of education, the teacher “deposits” information in the student, who serves as a passive receptacle for knowledge. A strict hierarchy prevails between the authoritarian teacher who possesses the knowledge and the receptive student who is presumed by the educational system to be ignorant. By denying creativity and agency to the student, this type of education serves to disempower and indoctrinate the student in the ideology of the dominant elite, adapting his/her ideology to the oppressive social order.

Problem-posing education, by contrast, encourages students to think and collaborate with their teachers in the process of acquiring knowledge (Freire 1970). A humanist form of education, it relies on dialogue, which requires humility, faith, and hope, and results in the mutual trust of educator and student. These qualities enable problem-posing education to be an instrument of social transformation. The task of the educator is to facilitate the development of critical awareness among the oppressed, focusing on the concrete conditions of their existence and posing these as problems to the students. In dialogue, teacher and students share in the act of creating knowledge in which each teaches the other. This process of education leads to the development of the revolutionary praxis of the oppressed, in which critical reflection and liberatory action cooperate and influence each other in the emancipatory struggle.

Freire provides an example of how teachers can undertake problem-posing education with a group of people. Observing the population from a sociological and anthropological viewpoint, educators work with the people to identify “themes” that reflect the conditions of their

existence—their hopes, beliefs, fears, and challenges. These themes are represented to the group in codified form, using pictures, films, audio recordings and other media to stimulate discussion of their significance. The aim is to enable the public to discover the relation of these themes as dimensions of a more extensive totality of oppression and recognise the contradictions underlying the social structure of domination.

According to Freire (1970, p. 54), the oppressor and the oppressed have different agendas but both fear freedom. From one hand, the oppressed work hard to emancipate themselves. From the other, the oppressor works hard to impede this liberation by all possible means. According to Freire, the oppressed are responsible for developing their theory of revolutionary action based on critical pedagogy.

The pedagogy of the oppressed cannot be developed or practised by the oppressors. It would be a contradiction regarding the oppressors not only defended but actually implemented a liberating education. However, if the implementation of a liberating education requires political power and the oppressed have none, how then is it possible to carry out the pedagogy of the oppressed prior to the revolution? This is a question of the greatest importance.

For instance, Freire argues that for the oppressed to liberate themselves, they have to develop a theory of dialogue that comprises four components. Those components are cooperation, unity for liberation, authentic organisation, and cultural synthesis. Freire confirms that the oppressor plays a significant role in ensuring that the oppressed fail to achieve their goals through the theory of dialogical action. The theory of anti-dialogical action is also comprised of four main components. Those components are conquest, divide and rule, manipulation, and cultural invasion. The oppressed and the oppressor use their theories to achieve their goals.

For instance, Freire argues that the oppressor demands that the oppressed be dominated, kept passive and made to adapt, and therefore remain oppressed. He suggests that the oppressed people should respond to this by communion between leaders and the people and promote a process of liberation. Phelps (2000) and Testa (2016) conclude that the communion is necessary for liberation. Phelps (2000) adds that communion leads to unity for liberation. Freire articulates that the oppressed should dialogue to develop an action that leads to communion as opposed to the oppressor's strategy of domination, keeping them passive, and making them adapt to oppression. The division of the oppressed by the oppressor should be mitigated by the oppressed as highlighted by Freire (1970, p. 173).

To divide the oppressed, an ideology of oppression is indispensable. In contrast, achieving their unity requires a form of cultural action through which they come to know the why and how of their adhesion to reality—it requires de-ideologizing.

The oppressor also divides the oppressed to practice more control over them (Freire 1970, p. 48). The fundamental argument raised by Freire is that the divided oppressed people are easy to be manipulated.

The central problem is this: How can the oppressed, as divided, unauthentic beings, participate in developing the pedagogy of their liberation? Only as they discover themselves to be "hosts" of the oppressor can they contribute to the midwifery of their liberating pedagogy.

The division of the oppressed by the oppressor aims at preserving the status quo. People's problems are here not looked upon as part of totality but focalised into problems of local areas. This prevents the people from having a proper understanding of their real condition and militates against the process of the oppressed people's unification and united action on their part. Divide and conquer is a legal problem mainly when used as a tactic by oppressors to alter the social norms and structures (Posner, Spier & Vermeule 2009). Freire (1970, p. 145), however, suggests an action from the oppressed to respond to the oppressor's action on divide and rule. This action, according to Freire, should be to unity for liberation.

Every move by the oppressed towards unity points towards other actions; it means that sooner or later the oppressed will perceive their state of depersonalization and discover that as long as they are divided they will always be easy prey for manipulation and domination. Unity and organisation can enable them to change their weakness into a transforming force with which they can re-create the world and make it more human.

The unity for liberation must necessarily be based on cultural action on the part of leaders and the people, which permeates all spheres of living and is based on a real understanding of their total situation. Hence, the oppressed people have to have an action plan for uniting to facilitate the liberation. Without a united oppressed group, the oppressor will maintain the division among the communities, and this will result in having subordinates. Those subordinates will be more loyal to the oppressor than they are loyal to the oppressed. Dividing the oppressed to rule is usually connected with the manipulation process.

The manipulation is achieved using myths propagated by the oppressors. This prevents people from thinking critically and also the emergence of an official organisation of the people for their real liberation. Conversely, Freire advises the oppressed to respond to this action by establishing an authentic organisation. Authentic organisation involves the process by which real unity is forged for the common task of liberation.

Finally, the oppressors use various methods to invade the culture of the oppressed. By this process, the oppressors impose their views of the world and inhibit the creativity of the invaded by curbing their expression and by creating a sense of inferiority in them. To overcome this

oppression, Freire suggests implementing the cultural synthesis process. This is achieved through continuous dialogue between the leaders and the people, thereby enabling them to create their own guidelines for action. Freire (1970, p. 48) notes that the pedagogy, if developed by the oppressed, can help the oppressed to be engaged in the struggle for their liberation.

This pedagogy makes oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come their necessary engagement in the struggle for their liberation. And in the struggle this pedagogy will be made and remade.

Olaniyan and Okemakinde (2008) perceive education as a vehicle utilised by political leaders to promote the development of a nation, culture, and society from several aspects such social, economic, and political perspectives. Coleman (1965), as well as Zeigler and Peak (1970), claim that educational systems are viewed as politicising agents of people because they transmit the social norms and values that are necessary for keeping on a steady political system. Apple (1990, 1997) agrees with the researchers above and even questioned the legitimacy of official knowledge in his book *Ideology and Curriculum*. Apple asked intriguing questions regarding who has the right to decide what should/should not be included in school curriculum and textbooks. Apple provided a detailed answer to such questions in his book, *The Politics of Knowledge*, which was published in 2003. Apple's (2003, p. 1) ideas about knowledge in formal schooling are provided below.

“Formal schooling, by and large, is organised and controlled by the government. This means that by its very nature the entire schooling process- how it is paid for, what goals it seeks to attain and how these goals will be measured, who has power over it, what textbooks are approved, who does well in schools and who does not, who has the right to ask and answer these questions, and so on- is by definition political. Thus, as inherently part of a set of political institutions, the educational system will constantly be in the middle of crucial struggles over the meaning of democracy, over definitions of legitimate authority and culture, and over who should benefit the most from government policies and practices”.

In this regard, the educational system is viewed from literature to serve the political agenda. Carnoy and Samoff (2014) argue that education serves beyond the agenda of political leaders, and serves the economics of a nation to grow and thus serves the agenda of economists. It is argued that education should only serve political and economic agendas or serve the needs of the society in promoting the national identity and cultural aspects. Benveniste (1983) advocates that the primary role of education is to transfer the knowledge and cultural heritage of the nation from one generation to another rather than serving the needs of the dominant élites. It is argued by several scholars, such as Apple (2003), Benveniste (1983), Carnoy and Samoff (2014), and Hovsepian (2008) that quality education systems promote the culture of a society. One of the aspects that is important and needs to be transferred from one generation to another is the national identity and social norms. The construction and promotion of national identity and social norms through education have been extensively investigated by several researchers,

such as Cinpoes (2008), Heap (2004), and Tajfel (1981). Those researchers affirm that a formal educational system is the most appropriate vehicle to construct and promote the national identity and social norms of a nation.

To conclude, political leaders, gain their legitimacy to build up the societal, economic, and political institutions - institutions which fulfil any nation's needs. One of the most important societal institutions is the educational institution since it contributes to the transfer of cultural heritage from one generation to another. The literature suggests that well-developed educational systems usually go beyond serving political and economic agendas to the construction and promotion of the national identity of the nation.

2.1.3 Limitations of the Critical Pedagogy Theory

Freire's commitment to this struggle developed through years of teaching literacy to Brazilian and Chilean peasants and labourers. His efforts at educational and political reform resulted in a brief period of imprisonment followed by exile from his native Brazil for fifteen years. This theory was mainly developed as an adult learning pedagogy and researchers continued to test it in schools. Furthermore, critical pedagogy opens up the possibility of engaging educators and students in developing the critical ability, aimed at transforming society. While having these visions for action, critical pedagogy is criticised for many reasons. One of the criticisms is that it is mainly concentrating on a macro level system critique than engaging in action at a micro level in a classroom reality (McArthur 2010). Another point considered as a weakness is that it is more engaged in critique than creating a "substantive vision" (Breunig 2005). The critique extends even further, that critical pedagogy more than criticising the existing system, for not "having model towards which schools aspire," it is also criticised for being "excessively abstract and too far removed from the everyday life of school" (Breunig, 2005, p.110). Abraham considers that macro level system critiques are essential and that they need to continue. On the other hand, as some critics pinpoint, critical pedagogy as a field must strive to make its concepts and analysis easily accessible to students, teachers and other scholars. Through constant research and analysis, critical pedagogy should facilitate the ground for making itself implementable in praxis.

2.1.4 Summary of the Theoretical Framework

The framework is based on critical pedagogy theory, which was derived from critical theory. In essence, the critical theory is concerned with injustice and inequality in societies; how the elite dominate and dictate what the majority others learn in schools. Critical theory helps educators understand dominating ideologies in societies. To mitigate any effect by the oppressor, Freire (1970, p. 66) believes that political leaders should work according to revolutionary pedagogy.

Political action on the side of the oppressed must be pedagogical action in the authentic sense of the word, and, therefore, action with the oppressed. Those who work for liberation must not take advantage of the emotional dependence of the oppressed—dependence that is the fruit of the concrete situation of domination which surrounds them and which engendered their unauthentic view of the world. Using their dependence to create still greater dependence is an oppressor tactic.

The belief is that in democratic systems, good societies produce good leaders and good leaders build excellent educational systems. Thus, if education is unable to do this, then there is a conflict or a struggle that translates to oppressed people being controlled by privileged ones (Freire 1970). He also believes that the oppressed must be empowered so they can utilise education as a primary driver to counter this struggle and to become an essential part of the decision-making process that runs educational, economic, and political systems. Hence, when educational systems are not providing a platform for the voiceless, the society is lacking fair leaders (Freire 1970).

The framework suggests that education influences leadership, which in turn influences societies. This chain reaction can oscillate. Societies can also impact leadership which, in turn, can impact education. The essence of this framework suggests that societies which lack democratic systems need to reexamine their educational system which is very much needed to produce qualified leadership (Amaele & Undie 2011). Freire (1970, p. 95) emphasises that political leaders of the oppressed have to engage the oppressed in dialogue to understand their perception and then reflect it in their revolutionary pedagogy.

....revolutionary leaders do not go to the people in order to bring them a message of "salvation," but in order to come to know through dialogue with them both their objective situation and their awareness of that situation—the various levels of perception of themselves and of the world in which and with which they exist.

Education becomes the proper foundation system that is needed to provide good leaders who can establish favourable societies. The work done by Freire (1970, p. 51), who is a significant contributor to the above framework, helped to develop a critical pedagogical system which

streamed from critical theory. His main argument is that education is the primary instrument needed to transform society provided that leaders are empowered and supported by the oppressed people.

Just as objective social reality exists not by chance, but as the product of human action, so it is not transformed by chance. If humankind produces social reality (which in the "inversion of the praxis" turns back upon them and conditions them), then transforming that reality is a historical task, a task for humanity.

Freire concludes by offering a theory of revolutionary action that counters the oppressor's cultural tactics to preserve his/her dominance. The oppressor attempts to dominate the oppressed through conquest, division, manipulation and cultural invasion. The revolutionary response to these "anti-dialogical" forms of action are "dialogical" forms: cooperation, unification, organisation, and cultural synthesis, all of which reflect the communion of the revolutionary leadership with the oppressed in the joint struggle for liberation.

For Freire, education is political and functions either to preserve the current social order or to transform it. The theories of education and revolutionary action he offers in critical pedagogy are addressed to a radical audience committed to the struggle for liberation from oppression.

To sum up, this framework considers essential dimensions of educating children in highly politicised societies. The framework's essential dimensions are leadership, national identity, ideology, social system, curriculum, and educational policy. Freire's critical work established a roadmap for analysing the interaction among all these dimensions in relationship to education. Thus, Freire's work in general and the critical pedagogy theory, in particular, are the guiding framework for this study. The next section discusses education in Palestine in relation to the dimensions mentioned above.

The impact of the sociopolitical conditions in Palestine on education based on Freire (1970) was explored by several researchers (e.g. Abdullah 2016; Hammond 2012; Maharmeh 2017; Ramahi 2015; Silwadi and Mayo 2014; Tapper 2013; Tapper & Kroll-Zeldin 2015). A thorough analysis of the findings of those studies is presented in the literature review section.

2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The historical and political background of the Palestinians as introduced by different scholars enriches the theoretical backgrounding of this study. The history of the Palestinian-Israeli

conflict dates back to the beginning of the 20th century (Fean, Rothem & Seidemann 2017; Michaels 2017). This conflict left an enormous impact on the Palestinian educational system and significantly affected the social and economic structures in Palestine. Indeed, education in Palestine has passed through critical historical events that contributed to shaping the educational system. The purpose of this chapter is to review and understand the implications of these critical events on education at the time of the event and whether these implications are continuing in shaping the current education system. Each historical period, between any two events, is discussed thoroughly to understand the extent to which education is developed to serve political agenda rather than responding to societal and economic development. The analysis highlights the periods as follows:

- 1) Education under the Ottoman Empire: Before 1918
- 2) Education under the British Mandate: 1918 to 1948
- 3) Education under League of Arab: 1948 to 1967
- 4) Education under Occupation: 1967 to 1993
- 5) Education under Palestinian National Authority: 1993 to Present

During each historical period, the power of political order exerted on education is explicitly discussed and implications on the current educational system are highlighted from the Critical Theory point of view.

2.2.1 Education under the Ottoman Empire: Before 1918

This section presents the socio-political implications when considering political leadership and economic system on the development of the Palestinian educational system before 1918. Those socio-political conditions have contributed to the suffering of Palestinians to date (KARAŞ 2009). Lack of independent political leadership, economic system, and education system in Palestine is rooted back to the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. Freire (1970, p. 47) suggests that the oppressed people should critically analyse the reasons behind the oppression so that they can develop an action plan to overcome this oppression.

To surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognise its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation, one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity.

Thus, building an efficient education system dictates that Palestinian scholars should study the roots of the problem and consider the existing socio-political challenges. Once the cause of the

problem is explored, scholars can establish and implement an education system that preserves the Palestinian national identity and produces scholars who are capable of developing and implementing political and economic systems for the nation that are independent of external powers (KARAŞ 2009). Without establishing an independent education system, Palestinians will continue to suffer from funding their education system and improving the quality of education in Palestine will continue to be impossible (Hovsepian 2008; Maharmeh 2017). This dictates that this study should shed light on the socio-political conditions, political leadership, and economic system in Palestine before 1918. It also aims at highlighting the policies and practices that contributed to the development of the current educational system in Palestine with the influence of the pre-1918 socio-political conditions. The discussion is then used to analyse the social structure of the Palestinian society through political and economic powers imposed on the educational system in particular.

2.2.1.1 Leadership and the Structure of Palestinian Society before 1918

Despite the serious implications of some Ottoman laws on the national identity, and educational outcomes, Palestinian decision-makers could not amend, let alone abolish, any law imposed by the Ottoman Empire. The power of the Ottoman administration was exerted on people through local community representatives that were deemed loyal to the Ottoman Empire (Mitter 2014). The Ottoman administration granted support to those representatives. The representatives were endowed to ensure that policies were implemented as dictated by the top Ottoman authorities but they were not empowered to voice any concern or even change decrees or policies. In the case of Palestine, the Ottoman administration chose reputable Palestinian families who were well known to represent their communities. Those representatives were accountable for tax collection, ensuring implementation of decrees and policies, as well as preserving and maintaining buildings and governmental establishments (Mitter 2014). Members of Al Husayni family – a family that existed in Jerusalem for almost 250 years, were chosen to represent Palestinians in that city (Mitter 2014; Pappé 2010). The Al Husayni family gained its legitimacy from its claim to be a direct descendant of Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him). This connection to the prophet was stronger than any other connection during the Ottoman administration. This indicates that no direct Palestinian leadership brought all Palestinians who lived together within the geographic area identified historically as Palestine to preserve their national identity, political, economic, and educational systems (Mitter 2014). The focus of the Palestinian representatives was to implement policies

and regulations rather than setting strategic goals and objectives for Palestine as a nation. Those elites (representatives) were keen to maintain their positions for more extended periods to gain more power and wealth (Mitter 2014; Pappé 2010). The Ottoman administration supported those elites by giving them the right to collect taxes from Palestinians, manage the religious endowments (*waqf*) which included funding the restoration and maintenance of religious buildings and centres, educational system and social services (Mitter 2014; Pappé 2010). Apparently, the Ottoman administration wanted to keep those representatives in control so that they become recognised as more or less the commissioners or proxy leaders in Palestine. For the Ottoman rulers, existence within its vast empire translated into maintaining the status quo in its regions (including Palestine) to stall and buy time to survive for more years (Elsayed 2014). Indeed, this approach enabled the Ottoman administration to gain more power in controlling Palestinians and keeping them without a patriotic leadership (Elsayed 2014). In the subsequent part of the study, the implications of the socio-politics manifested by a weakened Ottoman administration on reshaping the Palestinian society is discussed.

Literature proves that building an efficient educational system requires the establishment of a joint background or what is called the *official knowledge* of the nation (Habermas 1984). This could not be the case in Palestine before 1918 due to several factors. Such factors include the fact that Palestinians never enjoyed a national government, let alone sovereignty (Asaaf 1997; Elsayed 2014). In this sense, Palestinians did not have much say in the arenas of politics, economy, and education policies and practices (Elsayed 2014). The Ottoman administration used to decide what Palestinians should learn and how they should learn it and for what purpose (Ramahi 2015).

As the tide of the First World War started to turn against an already frail Ottoman Empire, the Zionist movement extorted the Ottoman administration to use education as a façade to serve the political and economic agenda of Zionism (Elsayed 2014). Most prominently, the administration legitimised the immigration and settlement of European Jews in Palestine (Stevens 1972). This paved the way to envision the establishment of a Jewish state on the land of Palestine (Schneider 2018). The Ottoman administration granted orthodox Jews to start their immigration into Palestine (Stevens 1972). Several researchers attest that the Jewish immigrants who settled in Palestine established an educational system to accommodate the teaching of indigenous and immigrant Jewish students (Aumann 1974; Dajani 2005; Schneider 2018; Stevens 1972). In other words, Jewish students of Palestine were taken from the public schools, who used to use Turkish as a language of instruction according to

Ramahi (2015), and joined the Jewish schooling system (Tibawi 1953). Al-Ju'beh (2014) believes that allowing for this unwarranted let alone reckless immigration contributed considerably to the alteration of the Palestinian national identity. Indeed, the arrival of new homogenous people demanded the creation of a new political order. Stevens (1972) believes that Jewish leaders pledged the Ottoman administration to improve the economic conditions of Palestine once Jews were allowed to immigrate to it.

Dajani (2005) reports that at the end of the 19th Century, the Jewish population of Palestine was less than five percent of the total population. Bachi (1977) corroborates this by reporting that the percentage of Jews was the lowest compared to other Palestinian groups such as Muslims and Christians. However, Bachi (1977) reports that eight percent of the population of Palestine in 1890 were Jews. Both arguments suffice to deduce that Jews were a minority in Palestine. It is apparent that various policies and regulations were imposed on Muslim and Christian Palestinians to assist Ottoman administration to reshape the Palestinian society and accept any changes in future (Dajani 2005).

Aumann (1974) and Dajani (2005) consider that Jewish immigration from Europe began as early as 1882 immediately after announcing the land reform law and taxation by the Ottoman administration. This immigration was funded by Jewish organisations (such as the Jewish Colonisation Association (JCA)) to support the colonisation of Palestine through land acquisition that was legitimated by the land reforming law (Dajani 2005). The taxation law mandated higher tax rates on Palestinian peasants who were incapable of paying the newly imposed high tax rates (Dajani 2005). With unpaid taxes and relaxed land purchasing laws, land acquisition by the Jews promoted the establishment of early Jewish settlements as the original people of the land were expelled (Dajani 2005). This land reforming law contributed considerably to altering the societal and economic structures of Palestine.

Several researchers studied the Palestinian educational system as it was at the turn of the 20th Century (e.g. Abidin & Nor 2013; Bowman & Berkson 1928, 1937; Mizel 2013; Nasir-Tucktuck, Baker & Love 2017; Ramahi 2015). Some of them (e.g. Ramahi 2015) investigated the history of the educational system in Palestine during the Ottoman rule (from 1571 to 1917). She found that equal opportunities to learn were available for all segments of the Palestinian society regardless of their religion (Jewish, Christian, and Muslim). Living under the Ottoman administration did not prevent Palestinians from retaining their national identity and a sense of belonging to the geographic area identified as Palestine (Mizel 2013). This trend continued

during the British Mandate when the geographical area of Palestine fell under the British occupation immediately after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1918 (Nasir-Tucktuck, Baker & Love 2017).

The Ottoman administration became weak particularly in the late 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th Century. With a fragile economy and a collapsing army, the Ottoman administration acceded to imperialistic powers which were primarily manifested by the British Empire and France. International active political and economic powers pressured the Ottoman administration to accept their demands to allow the influx of the Jews into Palestine (Schneider 2018). Jewish Colonisation Association (JCA) mainly funded these incursions. When the war ended in 1918, the imperial British Empire and France moved swiftly and occupied many of the regions and territories of the fallen Ottoman Empire which constituted the Levant region. This region was eventually carved up to different states including Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, and Trans-Jordan.

In closing remarks, the political and economic pressures on the Ottomans allowed the creation of multiple educational systems in Palestine and consequently established a new nation required to promote its national identity through education (Tibawi 1953). In the next section, the implications of the newly established educational system on the socio-political conditions on Palestine and education are discussed.

2.2.2 Education under the British Mandate: 1918 to 1948

In 1918, Palestine fell utterly under the British Mandate. This major event contributed to the establishment of a new political and economic administration in Palestine. Similarly, the British administration maintained the leaderless nation for all Palestinians except for Jews (Elsayed 2014). The leaderless nation in Palestine promoted the notion of a land without people and at the same time supported Jewish leaders to become internationally well-known (Elsayed 2014). However, it was never a land without people for the Palestinians inhabited the historical and geographic area of Palestine in earlier centuries before the creation of the Israeli state (Sayigh 1986).

It is worth mentioning that, British administration played a major role in supporting the JCA to bring more Jewish immigrants to Palestine in preparation for establishing a Jewish state in Palestine. This patronage was based on the Balfour Declaration, which was announced on November 2, 1917, marking a dark point in history as Palestinians remember this date with

sorrow and bitterness (Fean, Rothem & Seidemann 2017). Arthur James Balfour, the British foreign secretary, pledged British support for the Zionist movement to establish a national home for Jews – the first step into legitimising the creation and existence of Israel. Consequently, the Jewish immigration from Europe to Palestine soared. Naturally, Palestinians rejected this Declaration and demonstrated against it, but the British administration refused and denied the Palestinians any right to protest let alone voice their concerns over the catastrophic implications of this pledge (Fean, Rothem & Seidemann 2017).

British administration was unfair and it aimed to ease the process of establishing a state for Jewish settlers in Palestine (Boyle 2018). Thus, the scant number of Jews before 1917 witnessed a massive shift as the colossal Jewish immigration to Palestine abruptly impacted the demography of the country. This can be corroborated by observing the population of Palestine years after the end of the First World War in 1918. In fact, Bowman and Berkson (1937) studied the demography of Palestinians, and as of 1936 census, the total population count reached 1,269,965 out of which, 62% identified as Muslims; 29% identified as Jews; 8.2% identified as Christians; and 0.8% as others. According to Schneider (2018), Bowman was appointed as a director of education from 1920 to 1936.

Moreover, the Palestinian society, which was still a majority in its homeland was left without leadership for several years while the British administration was implementing policies that controlled political, economic, and educational systems in Palestine without consulting prominent Palestinian figures (Schneider 2018). The British, however, endorsed a policy of double standards when they allowed Jewish settlers to establish their leadership, economic, and education systems. This support to the Jewish settlers helped them in significant measures to develop and promote a national identity based on a Zionist ideology (Fean, Rothem & Seidemann 2017). Zionism was officially leading the Jewish movement politically and funding settlers to develop an advanced education system using the Hebrew language as a medium of instruction (a first in Palestinian schools). According to Bowman and Berkson (1937), the JCA, which surfaced in the late 19th century, played a crucial role in altering education in Palestine when it aimed to construct a dual national educational system based on language and race: one for Arabs and another for Jews. Palestinian Jews found themselves immersed in another national education: The Hebrew Public School Systems (Bowman & Berkson 1937). Thus, it was no longer a national education for all Palestinians but rather a segregated system that provided national education for Palestinian Jews and settlers only. This deliberate distortion of the Palestinian educational system contributed to the beginning of the disintegration of the

national identity amongst all Palestinian society segments. Work on the ground seemed to be influenced by an objective to produce a generation of Jewish Zionists who were only loyal to the Jewish cause (Bowman & Berkson 1937).

In conclusion, educational policies and practices were administered by the British administration for Muslim and Christian Palestinians from 1918 to 1948. The literature (e.g. Fean, Rothem & Seidemann 2017) suggests that the British administration suppressed the Palestinians and prevented them from establishing any political, economic, or educational systems that could run parallel to the Hebrew schooling system. This contributed to a gap between the two groups living in Palestine: the majority composed of Muslims and Christians versus the minority composed of Jews (Elsayed 2014). The gap was not only regarding educational quality but also regarding political representation, as well as economic control. In the next section, the implication of the establishment of the state of Israel on the Palestinian political, economic, and education systems from 1948 to 1967 is explored.

2.2.3 Education under League of Arab States: 1948 to 1967

Morris (2010) considers that the century-old conflict between the Zionist movement and the Arab national movement is neither the result of an error committed by either side nor the result of a misunderstanding by either side of the true motivations of the other. The bitter confrontation was unavoidable from the moment that Jews decided, at the end of the nineteenth century, to claim national sovereignty in Palestine according to Morris. In 1948, the Zionism committed the unavoidable war against the indigenous Palestinians and their Arab supporters, which resulted in Al Nakba. Al Nakba (which means *the Catastrophe*), or the ‘Palestinian exodus’ is a well-known term to Palestinians (Masalha 2009). It refers to the period when Palestinians fled their homeland Palestine as it was falling to Zionist militants and guerrillas (Farsoun & Zacharia 1997; Matar 2018). Palestinians started fleeing on foot as horror stories of massive atrocities and rape committed by the militants began to spread from neighbouring villages that were targeted first. Indeed, the horror stories were not unwarranted (Barmil 2018). On April 9th, 1948, about 120 Israeli crept into the Palestinian town of Deir Yassin, near Jerusalem and committed one of the worst atrocities of 1948 War. The surviving generation of Palestinians who witnessed those horrifying days still remember the Deir Yassin when hundreds of defenceless men, women and children were slaughtered in cold blood by the Zionist militants (estimates give around 600 men, women and children) (Barmil 2018). The continuous onslaught on Palestinian villages was also carried out by air as Israeli planes

bombed Palestinian villages and paved the way for ground attacks by the armed Zionist militants. This war led ultimately to the displacement of 60-65% of the Palestinian people (Sayigh 1986). The expelled Palestinians soon found themselves refugees inside and outside their homeland.

By May 1948, a considerable portion of the Palestinian territory had fallen under Israeli occupation (Matar 2018). The year 1948 was marred by appalling events to Palestinians when Palestine was partitioned and torn. Palestinian public organisations were either destroyed or occupied by the Jewish militant groups, and slowly the available land of Palestine was partitioned and torn between a Jewish state and an Arab one. On 14 May 1948, the state of Israel was declared and applied for membership of the United Nations (Chen 2001). Almost a year later, the UN Security Council voted in favour of Israel's membership and so it was.

The creation of Israel contributed to dividing Palestinians into four major groups. These four groups are the Israeli Arabs, Palestinians living in WB, Palestinians living in GS, and refugees outside Palestine (Fasheh 1989; Nasir-Tucktuck, Baker & Love 2017).

Palestinians who lived within the borders of the newly established State of Israel were referred to as Israeli Arabs, Israeli Arabs of 1948 or Arab citizens of Israel. The Israeli government treated them as a minority and disregarded their rights in new policies and practices imposed on them by the Israeli administration (Peled-Elhanan 2013). This group of Palestinians were forced to accept being part of the State of Israel and abide by all policies and regulations established to control their lands, politics, economics, and education (Arar 2012). In fact, this group was pressured to be underrepresented or misrepresented in the Jewish government sectors. Their heritage and traditions were silenced or claimed by Jewish people in most instances (Arar 2012). At first, their education system was left as it was during the British Mandate. However, afterwards, the Israeli government developed a curriculum that is called *Mizrahi* which is still used to reprogram the mindset and perception of Palestinians so that they accept the Jewish cause for claiming their land (Abu-Saad 2006a). Literature shows that the Arab children within the State of Israel always performed lower than their Israeli counterparts and experienced higher dropout rates (Peled-Elhanan 2013; Arar 2012). This group of Palestinians (20% of Israel's population in the 2010 census) has no control over the education system. The Israeli government was and still is the one who dictates what Arab Palestinian children should learn, how they learn and for what purpose they should learn. This group has no official means to preserve their Palestinian national identity especially since they do not

have access to any Palestinian higher education institution when they graduate from high school. Their only option is to apply to join one of the Hebrew-based universities or travel abroad. In conclusion, the education they were exposed to did not allow them to contribute to the development and advancement of their Arab Palestinian society within the state of Israel.

The second group of Palestinians lived in WB from 1948 to 1967. The territory of WB, which includes Jerusalem, was annexed by Trans-Jordan (later known as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan) in 1948 as part of UN partition plan of Palestine. Until 1967, WB was under the control of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. This group of Palestinians was also divided into two major factions: local Palestinian citizens and Palestinian refugees. The local citizens were those Palestinians that lived in WB before the dreadful events of 1948 and annexation of WB while the Palestinian refugees were those that fled their villages and towns and took refuge in WB away from the massacres that were being committed by the Zionist militias. Unfortunately, even those local citizens in WB were unable to develop a sense of autonomy and control over their political, economic, and education systems. The Jordanian administration regarded them as part of the Hashemite Kingdom and imposed the same political, economic and education systems on them. The history, geography, and traditions of Palestinians were not part of the Jordanian curriculum to the extent that the Palestinian heritage, as it was taught before the annexation of WB, was never included in the Jordanian curriculum of Jordan. The curriculum of Jordan focused heavily on the legitimacy of the Kingdom of Jordan. Thus, Palestinian students were mandated to write and sit for the Jordanian high school exams to earn their General Certificate of High School (GCHS) from Jordan. The implications were clear – the Palestinians living under Jordanian authority were more or less infused with a curriculum that promoted a Jordanian nationalistic ideology. As for the Palestinian refugees in WB, their education and curriculum were managed by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) with more focus on vocational education. Those refugees studied up to the ninth grade only and should anyone be interested in continuing studying past grade nine they had to shift to the public schooling system and study the Jordanian curriculum of grades ten, eleven, and twelve. However, despite all of this, those in WB were more privileged than the Israeli Arabs of 1948, as they were still obtaining a certificate that prepared them for higher education and benefited from the similarities in the Arab traditions and heritage promoted and preserved by the government of Jordan. The second group of Palestinians failed to develop a political, economic, and education system that is independent and supported by the government of Jordan during the period 1948 to 1967. This failure contributed to maintaining the same trends

of a leaderless nation until 1964 when the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) came to life (Matar 2018).

The third group consisted of the Palestinians who lived in GS from 1948 to 1967. This group of Palestinians was also divided into two main groups: local citizens and refugees. The local group of Palestinians were studying the Egyptian curriculum under the Egyptian Administration whereas Palestinian refugees (those who fled from other towns and villages) studied under the protégé of the UNRWA. Much like their peers in WB, refugee students under UNRWA who expressed an interest in studying past grade nine were allowed to join the public high schools and study grades ten, eleven and twelve. Moreover, much like those in WB, Palestinians studying for a high school certification in Gaza did so under the Egyptian curriculum. The Egyptian administration regarded them as part of the Arab nation and hence expected them to adhere to all Egyptian policies and regulations. Palestinians experienced the leaderless nation for centuries, and there were none critical Palestinian leaders to represent them before the Egyptian administration. The Egyptian administration was keen to maintain similar conditions between those living in GS and those living in Egypt when it came to education, economic, and political circumstances. The Palestinians of GS were mandated to study the heritage and socio-political legacies of Egypt, which included several Egyptian-related historical events that were irrelevant to their homeland. Palestinians were not allowed to intrude let alone join in any decision related to what their children were studying under the Egyptian authorities. The institution of the PLO by President Nasser of Egypt was a significant leap forward toward some Palestinian autonomy. The leadership of the PLO did not engage in any attempts to change the socio-political conditions of Palestinians nor promote a Palestinian National identity through education as Egypt did. The role of League of Arab States was absent and did not propose to establish a Palestinian education system promoting the Palestinian identity.

The fourth group of Palestinians were those who were expelled from their lands and had to flee to neighbouring countries such as Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt. Most of those Palestinians lived in refugee camps, depending in which country they settled (Chen 2009). Most of the Palestinians in this group studied in UNRWA – controlled curriculum while some studied the national curriculum of the hosting country. For this group of Palestinians, they were not impacted by the socio-political conditions inside Palestine but rather by the socio-political conditions of the hosting countries. With the advent of the PLO, many Palestinians believed that this was the end of the tunnel - the PLO gave them great hope of a return to their lands in

Palestine (Matar 2018). Many of those Palestinian refugees in the previously mentioned countries supported the PLO, especially in its early years. The declared cause of the PLO was to represent the Palestinians diaspora and to liberate Palestine – something that attracted thousands of Palestinian youths to join PLO and even sacrifice their lives (e.g. engage in armed conflicts against Israel) for the sake of empowering the PLO leadership so that they could contribute to the establishment of the State of Palestine (Matar 2018). Fasheh (1989) believes that education provided for Palestinians was an instrument of survival, development, and to express their identity and rights. Palestinian refugees educated their children through informal education to understand their rights and return one day to Palestine and claim their lands. Those Palestinians were struggling to preserve survival needs for their families much like they struggled to rebuild their organisations and systems. The connotation of Arab nationalism started to flourish as the Israeli State was being established. This connotation compelled Arab leaders to condemn inhumane actions by Israel towards the Arab Palestinian civilians.

To conclude, the fourth group contributed to the establishment and empowerment of the PLO (Matar 2018). This group of Palestinians was not involved in impacting the decision making of the hosting country related to educating Palestinians or the development of economic and political leadership representing them (Barahmeh 2014).

To bring their conflict to the world's attention, the Palestinians needed a political leadership organisation that could represent them and fight for their legitimate rights before international organisations. The next section discusses the role of PLO in leading the Palestinians.

2.2.3.1 PLO and Education of Palestinians from 1964 to 1967

This section discusses the role of PLO in Palestiniating education in Palestine. In 1964, the PLO came to light. The establishment of the organisation was a result of the efforts of the late Egyptian president, Jamal Abdul Nasser, to urge Palestinians to congregate under one political umbrella (Sayigh 1986). Ahmed Shuqairi chaired the PLO for few months before Yasir Arafat, the leader of Fatah, took over in 1964 (Dunne 2010; Katzman 2002; Matar 2018; Rubin 1994). The PLO was the first political leadership body to represent the Palestinians before international organisations. The leadership and headquarters of PLO, however, were outside of Palestine and hence could not directly impact the socio-political conditions of Palestinians who lived in WB, Jerusalem, and GS (Matar 2018).

The charter of PLO emphasised the importance of establishing a Palestinian identity through an educational system contextualised by a Palestinian national curriculum (Hovsepian 2008). When the time came to write the charter of the PLO, the organisation involved as many Palestinian political parties as possible in this task (Matar 2018). Two articles in PLO's charter assert that a planned educational system should be a medium to preserve a genuine Palestinian national identity (PNC 1968). The establishment of a Palestinian state on the 1967 geographical land of Palestine is one facet of this identity. The other facet is the recognition of East Jerusalem as the official capital of Palestine. The charter dictates that these facets be achievable when the Palestinian youth are well equipped with knowledge and skills that best prepare them for building up their state (Hovsepian 2008).

The PLO was formed to include the full spectrum of Palestinian factions under the leadership of one entity: The National Movement of *Fatah* (Pearlman 2009). The PLO housed members with various ideologies including nationalists, radicals, democratic, and leftists (Pearlman 2009). Palestinian sociologist, Yezid Sayigh, who specialises in Middle Eastern Studies at King's College London, concludes that the primary focus of Palestinian and Arab leaders after the catastrophe of 1948 was to provide Palestinians in refugee camps with means of survival (food and shelter). Alzarroo and Hunt (2003) selected thirteen Palestinian figures born before 1948 to be participants in an interview. All thirteen participants expressed the importance of education especially for those who live in refugee camps. They also revealed how the Israeli occupation denied them their fundamental right of learning ever since early childhood. Hutton and Hutton (2018) agree with Alzarroo and Hunt (2003) that refugee camps in WB still lack the basic resources and add that the students who live in refugee camps are concerned about their future and do not believe they will achieve their personal dreams. Palestinian factions had no option but to carry armed conflicts to defend defenceless Palestinian civilians who were being ruthlessly attacked by Israeli soldiers (Alzarroo & Hunt 2003; Matar 2018; Sayigh 1986). These defensive mechanisms have been reflected in the PLO charter which was released for the first time in 1964 and then reviewed in 1968. Badran (1980) affirms that during the period from 1963 to 1967, the educational policies governing the education of Palestinian children were of a highly contentious nature. Mazawi (2000) agrees with Badran (1980) that educating Palestinian children was next to impossible at that time. The Diaspora of 1948 forced Palestinian families to abandon their homes and lands. Finances became rather stringent. Only wealthy and some middle-class families were able to provide a decent education to their children. Other unfortunate ones succumbed to the harsh reality of child labour to afford rising

living costs (Badran 1980; Mazawi 2000). Abu-Saad (2006a) affirms that private Jewish schools in Palestine were well established before the declaration of the Israeli state in 1948. However, he claims that this system was in continuous development to accommodate for Jewish students while it denied Palestinians from their education rights. Abu-Saad (2006b) found that the Palestinian educational system was governed by a strict military government throughout the years from 1948 to 1966. The government segmented Palestinians into several groups in which each group followed a distinct education system (Abu-Saad 2006b; Jabr 2009; Hovsepian 2008; Mazawi 2000). Moreover, here a question comes to mind: did the PLO contribute to the education of the Palestinians during the period from 1963 to 1967? The literature suggests that the educational learning outcomes that Palestinians were exposed to did not in any sense help them build a Palestinian national identity (Brown 2001).

The literature reviewed did not provide any indication that the PLO had contributed to educating the Palestinians during the period from 1963 to 1967. Thus, it can be deduced that none of the educational systems that Palestinians were exposed to aided in establishing a national identity. For the PLO, building a Palestinian national identity was through informal education (Matar 2018). The reason for that is because the PLO was found during a period that focused more on the restoration and re-establishment of an accord between different Palestinian factions. One of the primary goals of the PLO at the time was to provide Palestinian youth with essential armed training for defensive purposes and to establish communication channels with some Arab and non-Arab states. Ever since the occupation of Palestine, Palestinians studied under an educational system that was funded by the taxes collected from Palestinians or international donors (Ramahi 2015). The funding party provided the teacher salaries. Thus, teachers in GS received their salaries from the Egyptian government, while teachers in WB received their salaries from the Jordanian government. The UN paid for teachers in refugee camps. Several researchers noted that financial supporters were granted the upper hand in dictating the curriculum. Hovsepian (2008) and Murray (2008) share the same thoughts with Abu-Saad (2006b) that the education system in Palestine has never been impartial. For over 50 years, Palestinians were exposed to the same curriculum without any development regarding Palestinian national identity. According to Abu-Saad (2006b) and Hovsepian (2008), the curriculum delivered in the occupied lands emphasised Jewish culture and heritage and completely disregarded the Palestinian one. However, Lomeland (2011) disagrees with Abu-Saad (2006b) as she believes that curriculum is a minor reason. In her opinion, teachers were accountable for not adding specific narratives to the content they

delivered. Her remarks indeed contradict what many scholars believe such as Meyer (1976), Alzaroo and Hunt (2003) and Affouneh (2007).

To sum up, Palestinians experienced several educational systems from 1963 to 1967 which varied considerably according to the region in which they lived. During that period, the PLO was not ready to establish a meticulous educational system for all Palestinians. The PLO faced its share of obstacles which included a lack of financial support, a lack of recognition by international establishments (such as League of the Arab States and the UN), and the continuous Israeli attacks on Palestinian towns and villages.

2.2.3.2 The Impact of Socio-political conditions on Education 1948-1967

The step towards having a single leadership entity to represent Palestinians worldwide was a significant movement in the modern history of Palestine. Researchers consider this movement as an initial step towards the declaration of an independent Palestinian state (e.g. Matar 2018). This will be discussed in the next section.

This section shows how Palestinian school children were exposed to different and sometimes conflicting ideologies from 1948 to 1967. These ideologies were not mainly Palestinian ideologies but rather foreign ones that were imposed on the children to accept. For the first group, the Israeli Arabs, the Zionist ideology was dominating the socio-political conditions of their society (Fasheh 1989). The Zionism ideology used education to reshape the mindset of the Israeli Arabs to accept the Jewish cause (Abu-Saad 2006a; Fasheh 1989). The second ideology was the Arab nationalistic ideology which was endorsed by Egyptian President Nasser and that was very dominant in the Egyptian and Jordanian curriculum. Both curricula promoted the notion of Arab unity, all Arabs belong to one Arab homeland and had to believe that they share similar heritages and cultures. In addition to the Arab Nationalism ideology, Palestinians who studied under the influence of Jordanian and Egyptian curricula were infused with values that conditioned them to be loyal to the country in which they studied. The third ideology which was structured by the UNRWA schooling system promoted an ideology that is reliant on global dimensions without any connection to Palestinian history, geography, traditions, and identity. The fourth ideology was amongst the Palestinian refugees in neighbouring countries. This group experienced a sophisticated form of ideologies ranging from extreme religious to secular and leftist ideologies. Considering exposure to assorted ideologies between 1948 and 1967, one should not be surprised that Palestinian refugees were

acquainted with different schools of thoughts derived by politicians and economists from all around the world. This interaction influenced the ideologies that Palestinian factions adopted. Primarily, there were two main ideologies: secular and Marxist. Fatah, for example, adopted a secular ideology. The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine adopted a Marxist ideology. Slowly but rapidly, these new ideologies found their way to the socio-political conditions of Palestinians who lived inside and outside Palestine particularly those who lived in WB and GS.

It can be concluded that Palestinians who lived in WB from 1948 to 1967 failed to promote the Palestinian national identity because they studied within a system that was wholly hegemonised by non-Palestinian textbooks. It is evident that the Arab League also failed to establish a Palestinian educational system independent of politics and economics to preserve the Palestinian traditions, history, customs, and identity. In essence, Palestinians inside or outside Palestine were exposed to various education systems that were not interested in promoting the Palestinian history and traditions. The Arab League failed to sponsor and establish an education system that promoted a unified Palestinian identity for Palestinians in WB, Jerusalem, GS, or even those who lived in refugee camps within or outside Palestine. This failure caused Palestinians to be impacted by different political ideologies (Matar 2018). The lack of an independent educational system which should have aimed at documenting and promoting the Palestinian National identity spiralled to the failure of establishing such a system during the Israeli occupation from 1967 to 1993. The implications of socio-political conditions on education between 1967 and 1993 are discussed in the next section.

2.2.4 Education under Occupation: 1967 to 1993

As a result of 1967 war on Palestinians, Jerusalem, WB, and GS fell completely under Israeli occupation. All Palestinian institutions, including the educational ones, had been either obliterated or negatively transformed to serve the interests of the Israeli military government (Abu-Saad 2006a; Dawarji 1989; Farsoun & Zacharia 1997). The consequences of the 1967 war fragmented Palestinians into more groups. Alzaroo and Hunt (2003) and Barmil (2018) affirm that Palestinians struggled under the Israeli Occupation for decades and most of them were frequently forced to abandon their homes and flee to refugee camps abruptly. The 1967 war increased the number of refugee camps inside and outside Palestine. Regrettably, the refugee camps lacked necessary resources needed to preserve one's dignity and humanity, not

to mention the essential resources needed to educate children (Alzaroo & Hunt 2003; Hutton & Hutton 2018).

The period from 1967 to 1993 had several socio-political events that influenced the education of Palestinians inside as well as outside Palestine. This section explores three major socio-political events that contributed significantly to the transformation of the education of Palestinians. These three socio-political events were (1) the recognition of PLO in 1974 by the Arab League, (2) the Palestinian uprising (First Intifada) in 1987, and (3) the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Accord in 1993. The implications of these three major socio-political events are explored, and their implications on the four identified groups of Palestinians are discussed.

Fasheh (1989) confirms that the implications of the 1967 War on education inside Palestine were enormous. The military government of Israel used its experience of educating the Israeli Arabs of 1948 in the previous 19 years (from 1948 to 1967) and implemented the same curriculum in Jerusalem schools. Next, in August 1967, the Israeli government banned most textbooks from Jordan from being used in WB and banned books from Egypt from being used in GS. As an example, 78 out of 121 textbooks were banned in WB. This outlawing of books triggered Palestinian teachers and students to start a strike against the unjustifiable Israeli actions (Fasheh 1989). The outcomes of this strike resulted in Israel allowing the return of 59 banned textbooks but with some restrictions – removal of some text and pictures. The justification given by the Israeli government was that those texts and pictures suggested anti-Semitic contents (Fasheh 1989).

The four groups of Palestinians continued to study a specific curriculum that was prescribed according to where they lived. Israeli Arab students studied the Mizrahi curriculum, which was imposed on them and Arab students in Jerusalem. Arabs in WB studied either the UNRWA or a modified Jordanian curriculum, Arab students in GS studied either the UNRWA or a modified Egyptian curriculum, and refugee Palestinians in neighbouring countries continued to study either the UNRWA or the curriculum of the hosting county. It is important to note that the number of refugee children had almost tripled inside and outside Palestine (Barmil 2018).

The first major socio-political event that happened was the recognition of PLO by the Arab League in 1974. This event shaped the Palestinians society inside and outside Palestine. Palestinians came to realise that there was a pressing need for them to be under the shield of one organisation that could present their just case before the world community. In 1974, all Arab states endorsed the PLO to be the sole official representative of the Palestinian people

worldwide. Before this, Palestinians were siding with one political party against another. Those political parties or even factions wanted to legitimise the Palestinian question. Every party operated according to its ideology (UN 2017). The PLO accepted all ideologies and these political parties accepted the legitimacy of PLO and the authority of the PLO to represent the Palestinians before international organisations (Matar 2018). This event shaped the society of Palestine and had direct implications on education. Most Palestinians found themselves selecting one political party either to follow or to support. These political parties were legitimising the Palestinian Question using a particular ideology. Palestinian educators played a significant role in promoting the success of having a leadership that is representative of all Palestinians. Educators, like others within the Palestinian society, had discussed their thoughts with people from their society in addition to their students in schools privately.

However, until 1974, there was no clear indication of the impact of the Palestinian leadership, PLO, on education during the period (1967-1974). In 1988, the Chairman of the PLO, Arafat, revealed before the Arab League his intention to establish a peace accord with Israel. This accord, or treaty, would be manifested under the title: Land for Peace. Arafat's intention was well received by many member states of the United Nations. This gave the PLO an international recognition by most member states in the United Nations (Dunne 2010; Katzman 2002; Mark 2001; Rubin 1994). To date, the UN acknowledges the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of Palestinian people inside and outside Palestine (Al-Omari 2015).

The ultimate goal of the PLO is to establish a state in Palestine and build much warranted social, economic, and political institutions (Dunne 2010; Katzman 2002; Matar 2018; Rubin 1994). The PLO responded to difficult circumstances in reaction to shifts in national and international politics and disposition. The PLO radically changed its position as an advocate of armed conflicts with its nemesis, Israel, to crafting peace agreement accords.

2.2.4.1 PLO and Education of Palestinians from 1967 to 1993

Several critical issues took place during the time span from 1967 to 1993. In 1967, WB, GS, and Jerusalem fell completely under the Israeli occupation. In 1974, PLO was recognised by the UN as the sole legitimate representative of Palestinians inside and outside Palestine by League of Arab States (the UN followed suit in 1988). By 1993, the Palestinian question had a dramatic twist: Palestinian and Israeli leaders officially signed the Peace Declaration of Principles. These significant events had made this period very critical and sensitive to

Palestinians and neighbouring Arab states. The educational systems imposed on Palestinians during the period from 1967 to 1993 continued to be the same as it was before 1967 (Mazawi 2000). Palestinians of WB continued studying the Jordanian curriculum; Palestinians of GS continued studying the Egyptian curriculum, Palestinians living in refugee camps continued studying the UNRWA curriculum up to grade nine, and Palestinians living in Israel continued studying the Israeli curriculum. The PLO had funds from Arab and non-Arab states to efficiently improve the social, economic, and political life of Palestinians. Hovsepian (2008) reported that the education system in Palestine, including institutions, teachers, administrators, and students, had been undermined by Ottoman, British, and Israeli rulers. In addition, during the first Intifada in 1987, a team of Palestinian educators played a vital role in developing ideas for building an independent Palestinian educational system long before the establishment of the PNA which was formed in 1994. Hovsepian explained that several difficulties faced educators including the transformation of radical ideas into state-building ideas. Some scholars assert that the PLO did not contribute to the educational system in Palestine before the peace agreement between PLO and the Israeli government in 1993-4 (Hovsepian 2008). What are the achievement indicators of the PLO in educating the Palestinians inside and outside Palestine? Although the PLO gained recognition by the UN, important countries like the US and its strategic ally, Israel, did not recognise it. This obstructed the functions of PLO and made it impossible to reach to those Palestinians who lived within the geographical boundaries of historical Palestine where most Palestinians were still living.

To sum up, the Israeli occupation of WB, GS, and Jerusalem in 1967 caused a new struggle for the newly-born organisation. The PLO was under high pressure to protect civilian Palestinians inside and outside Palestine. Recognition by the League of Arab States helped Palestinians to form one entity so that they could face the challenges inflicted upon them by Israel. The UN recognition of the PLO that was achieved in 1988 resulted in more political actions by the PLO leaders. The first Intifada, which started in 1987, led to the signing of the Oslo Peace Agreement between Palestinian and Israeli leaders. Education did not have a role in this agreement, and no changes were reported in the educational systems in Palestine. The PLO was still not in full control of any educational system for the stateless Palestinians. Moreover, once again, the Palestinian national identity was still restricted from becoming a reality (Ramahi 2015).

To conclude, education is essential for any society or nation to sustain or develop itself (Sexton 2012). The people of Palestine suffered a lot due to several political shifts over the past 70

years (Nasir-Tucktuck, Baker & Love 2017). The educational system in Palestine has been one of the most impacted institutions and failed to provide the Palestinian children with equity and quality education. Educators affirm that children should be educated in schools that are set up to serve them and parents must be keen in selecting educational institutions that best match their children's expectations (Fung & Lam 2011). However, the Palestinians did not have the opportunity to select or to have a fair education that prepares their children to build the much-anticipated state of Palestine. The PLO dominated the lives of Palestinians without having the power to influence their educational system before 1994. Brown (2003) claims that the PLO used its revolutionary legitimacy to continue its representation of the Palestinians without any official labelling.

Hovsepien (2008) supports Brown's claims and adds that the PLO had no access to the educational system due to the hegemony of the Israeli occupation. Palestinian families faced challenges in their day to day life especially in educating their children. These political challenges have negatively impacted the educational system in Palestine. According to several researchers, Palestinian families considered educating their children a top priority (Badran 1980; Hovsepien 2008; Jabr 2009; Murray 2008; Nasir-Tucktuck, Baker & Love 2017; Peretz 1990; Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2008). As a sole legitimate representative for all Palestinians, the PLO has the full responsibility of educating Palestinian youth in institutions that meet their expectations and thus help them to contribute to the formation of the state of Palestine. Zucker (1987) and many other theorists assert that internal and external factors exist that may hinder the progress of the organisation. From 1964 to 1993 there was no evidence to substantiate that institutions under the protection of PLO contributed to the process of providing Palestinian children with formal education. Although education is one of the prominent articles in the PLO agenda, in reality, there was no tangible evidence to suggest that the PLO contributed any effort towards improving the education of the deprived Palestinians. The PLO could not even participate in the creation of a national curriculum for Palestinians.

2.2.5 Education under the Palestinian National Authority: 1994 to Present

For over a century, education in Palestine has been highly politicised and inconsistent due to internal and external powers exerted on Palestinian decision-makers. These powers were not limited to Palestinian political parties, which ranged from leftists to rightists; instead, they extend to external powers which legitimated the Israeli occupation of the Arab Palestinian land. The power exerted at both the internal and external levels contributed to altering all aspects of

education in Palestine. An example of this is the Palestinian national curriculum project funded by a foreign government, Italy, under the umbrella of UNESCO. In this respect, internal and external pressures were exerted on the educational policymakers of Palestine. Fowler (2013) considers that depending on the level of internal and external exercised power on educational and political leaders, formulation of educational policies, implementation, and evaluation might be influenced. On the one hand, such pressure may contribute to eliminating some basic knowledge that is common and considered to be essential for the cognitive, social, and moral development of Palestinians. On the other hand, some knowledge that supports internal or external agendas could be imposed. Researchers who are concerned with curriculum development, such as Apple (2006), believes that “knowledge” is power and that all members of a society should be represented in the development process of considering the official knowledge for that society to ensure the society’s growth and advancement. Such official knowledge should aim to be transferred from one generation to another using formal and informal educational institutions (Apple 2006; Winch & Gingell 2004).

Furthermore, the Palestinian people had no control over educating their children for a future state-building mission. In other words, the Palestinian people did not get the chance to decide which curriculum to teach in schools, which knowledge to consider as official knowledge, and which history, geography, or national studies were legitimate. Furthermore, the Palestinian people have no control over such underlying issues as the number of school days per year or the number of morning/night shifts a school should teach. This was confirmed by the Palestinian Ministry of Education (1998), which indicated that 88% of schools in GS implemented a two-shift teaching per day to accommodate the constraints imposed by the Israeli occupation (e.g. curfews). These demanding work shifts impacted teachers’ workload and teachers’ professional development. Hence, to discuss the problem of power and domination, critical theory has explained the socialisation process and placed it over ideologies with more emphasis on power and domination. In the case of Palestine, economics, politics, and socialisation have not been comprehensively studied. This study aims to fill the gap in the literature and proposes a solution from the critical theory perspective.

By 1994, and immediately after the Peace Agreement Accord between the Palestinians and Israelis which was signed in Oslo, Norway, the PLO delegated some of its responsibilities such as building Palestinian institutions (including educational ones) to the newly-formed PNA which was established in 1994 to educate nearly 1.1 million students (Hovsepian 2008; Nasir-Tucktuck, Baker & Love 2017). Immediately after its establishment, the PNA began to build

up political, social, and economic institutions in GS and WB (Hovsepian 2008; Nasir-Tuckuck, Baker & Love 2017), one of which was the Ministry of Education (MoE) which has two operational arms: strategic planning and daily operations.

The MoE proposed an educational system that aims at improving the quality of education in Palestinian territories. The MoE of Palestine proposed the educational system framework shown in Table 2.

Age	Year	Type of Education	Stage			
More than 22	Post Graduate Studies	Optional Education	Doctorate Masters Post Graduate Diploma			
21	Senior		Four Year College or University			
20	Junior					
19	Sophomore			Two Year College		
18	Freshman					
17	12		General Secondary Stage	Academic	Scientific	
				Art		
16	11		Vocational and Technical			
15	10	Compulsory Education	Empowerment Stage			
14	9					
13	8					
12	7					
11	6					
10	5					
9	4		Preparatory Stage			
8	3					
7	2					
6	1					
4	Kindergarten	Optional Education	Provided by Private Sector Not under Ministry of Education			

Table 2: Education System Structure in Palestine

2.2.5.1 Leadership and Education in Palestine

In the case of Palestine, Hovsepian (2008) considers the need for a healthy and wise political leadership as essential to building a quality educational system that, in turn, promotes the national identity of Palestinians. This section discusses the role of Palestinian political leaders in building up the societal institutions especially the educational institutions. Also emphasised

are the challenges that Palestinian political leaders face such as impediments in constructing state institutions that qualify the Palestinian Territories to become an independent state.

In fact, Burns and Stevenson (2011) assert that the central role of the political leadership is to construct the national identity for a nation. They also consider that political leadership should construct and promote the national identity before the execution of any strategic political agenda. Sanchez-Mazas and Klein (2003) and Tajfel (1981) suggest that education is the essential vehicle needed to understand the most appropriate approach to construct and promote national identity. Otherwise, Spruyt (2009) argues, some political leaders use physical force to execute their political agenda and legitimise their authority.

Even with renewed presidential elections, Dunne (2010) claims that the legitimacy of the Palestinian political leaders is draining away as there is an ambiguity in their political agendas. On the other hand, Lavie (2011) found that there is satisfaction among the Palestinians with the President Mahmoud Abbas' performance over the past three years. Tiltne et al. (2011) interviewed around 4,000 Palestinians from 2005 till 2011 in order to explore their satisfaction with Mahmoud Abbas' government. The responses reveal that there is satisfaction with Abbas' performance in reappointing Prime Minister Salam Fayyad. Mr Fayyad began building social services institutions through his two-year plan in 2009. Lavie (2011) advocates that the Palestinian prime minister in WB, Salam Fayyad, was successful in the implementation of his program agenda which aimed to build an independent Palestinian state from the bottom up (began by building institutions). Support and approval of Fayyad's political agenda urged Abbas in September 2011 to head to the United Nations and demand recognition to establish an independent Palestinian state.

Dunne (2010) and Lavie (2011) have different viewpoints regarding Fayyad's program. On the one hand, Lavie considers it the first significant attempt towards state building. On the other, Dunne (2010) affirms that the program has significant limitations due to the suspension of normal political life as a result of the huge rift between the two main Palestinian political parties (Fatah and Hamas) in 2007. It is expected that this split between the two main political parties in Palestine negatively impacted Fayyad's plan. Issa (2010) affirms that the lack of leadership in the occupied territories remains a critical and specific problem. Michaels (2017) agrees with Issa and points out that without capable leadership in the territories, political instability may continue. Michaels also criticised the interference of the Israeli occupation in

transforming the political and social settings of the Palestinian society through supporting some parties over others.

Tiltne et al. (2011) conclude that despite the rift, a considerable approval of Fayyad's performance, as opposed to Abbas' and Haniyeh's (one of the disputed prime ministers of the PNA), has existed. This achievement of Fayyad could be attributed to his program. Tiltne et al. (2011) assert that around 50% of the participants suggested that Fayyad's plan brought the Palestinians a step closer to an independent state solution. Lavie (2011) advocates that Fayyad's government managed to overcome many obstacles including security issues, legal issues, and issues with the economic system, welfare and social services infrastructure. Lavie's viewpoint regarding the development of the educational institutions was disputed by Mazawi (2011) who claims that the education system of Palestine is still struggling to survive under difficult circumstances.

Dunne (2010) argues that the Palestinian political leaders require much development in order to become prepared for the anticipated growth sure to happen by establishing an independent state. Spangler (2015) points out that the Palestinian leadership is divided, and periodically subject to arrest and even assassination. Their allies pay lip service to their needs more often than providing real aid. Despite their long tradition of literacy and entrepreneurship, Palestinians live constricted lives, uncertain of their ability to remain in their homes or to rebuild their lives elsewhere.

Besley, Montalvo and Reynal-Querol (2011) conclude that quality leaders matter for the preservation or the development of a nation or society. Pendleton and Furnham (2012) agree with Besley, Montalvo, and Reynal-Querol (2011) and advocate that the quality of leaders improve when leaders have more professional development. Although Dunne (2010) and Lavie (2011) have different viewpoints regarding the performance of the political leaders, both claim that the societal institutions, especially the educational institutions, are not yet fully prepared needing more work to be accomplished. Hovsepian (2008) and UN (2017) claim that Palestinian political leaders failed to prioritise the role of education as an instrument to construct the Palestinian national identity.

Furthermore, Michaels (2017) and Spangler (2015) note that following the Oslo Peace Accords, Israel's road construction to access settlements and creation of blockades and checkpoints isolated Palestinian communities and exacerbated tensions. These actions stifled economic activity in GS and WB, leading to severe economic conditions within the occupied

territories. He also observed that the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis entirely neglects the social context. Thus, social factors may be pertinent to attempts at peace-building because the dispute is heavily politicised. Politically inspired attempts at resolution often fail in part because conflict is simplified into lists of demands and implicit casual “if-then” statements through negotiations.

To conclude, the Palestinian government should plan more work towards building Palestinian institutions, especially educational ones, which, in turn, will contribute to an endorsement of Palestinian national identity. This plan would positively contribute to rectifying the underperformance of the Palestinian political leadership’s legitimacy and its powerlessness before international organisations such as the UN (UN 2017; Makkawi 2013)

2.2.5.2 Challenges to Constructing and Promoting National Identity through Education

The focus of this section is to discuss the role of leadership in constructing and promoting the Palestinian national identity through education. There are several challenges when attempting to do so. The first challenge is the Israeli occupation. The Israeli occupation between the years 1967 and 1993 denied the Palestinians their fundamental rights in establishing a national curriculum. Palestinians instead were forced to adopt other curricula, such as the Jordanian national curriculum for people who live in WB and the Egyptian national curricula for people who live in GS. The UNRWA also imposed its curriculum on Palestinians living in refugee camps inside as well as outside Palestine. Further, Israeli curriculum (also called *Mizrahi*) was imposed on some Palestinian villages that existed within the boundaries of WB or GS. The second challenge is the strategy of the Israeli occupation to split Palestinian villages and cities from each other (a process that makes it very difficult for students and teachers to commute safely from homes to schools and vice versa). The third challenge is the rift in 2007 between the two main political parties in Palestine, which contributed to the fragility of the political, economic and social institutions in Palestine. This rift has significantly impacted education. The fourth challenge is the education of Palestinians who live in refugee camps where schools lack the very essential resources, such as libraries and laboratories. The fifth challenge is the intervention of international agencies and donors in the development of the Palestinian national curricula. The final challenge is the rapid political changes, both national and international, and their impacts on the Palestinian question.

Murray (2008) and Santisteban (2002) discuss the endorsement of a Palestinian national identity through legitimate education in the occupied territories of Palestine. Several researchers, such as Abu-Saad (2006a), Affouneh (2007), Hovsepian (2008), Mazawi (2011), Murray (2008) and Santisteban (2002) take the position that education in Palestine cannot be discussed impartially if isolated from politics. Politics has always influenced education in Palestine. This is attributed to challenges that political leaders in Palestine face in educational funding in Palestine. To date, the Palestinian political leaders, even after the Peace Accord, were not able to establish an economic system that functions and is capable of sustaining an educational system on its own. Mazawi (2011), Murray (2008) and Santisteban (2002) argue that the Palestinian political leaders are facing challenges imposed on them by internal and external powers that serve the international agendas of Israel, USA and some European Countries. The agendas of those countries negatively affect the establishment of political, social, and economic institutions. In fact, educational institutions were mostly affected. Murray (2008) supports the view that one of the vital internal challenges is the actual prolonged Palestinian struggle which had dramatic consequences on the advancement of the educational system. Promotion of a Palestinian national identity through education has been negatively impacted by the intervention of international agencies and donors as well as the powerlessness of the Palestinian political leadership in facing Israel and its political and military supporters.

Palestinian educators have tried for years to reflect the struggle of their people in subjects such as history, geography and social studies. Unfortunately, international donors who fund the education of Palestinians in occupied territories and refugee camps intervene in developing the Palestinian national curriculum by imposing specific measurements on what subjects or lessons to include (Murray 2008; Mazawi 2011). Many researchers argue that these interventions reveal a hidden agenda behind these donations and at the same time question the purpose behind them (Hovsepian 2008; Mazawi 2011; Murray 2008; Santiseban 2002).

Abu-Saad (2006a) maintains that the Palestinian education system has been built and developed to be nothing more than a tool that serves the interests of Israeli regimes. He also clarifies that the imposed educational system aims to restructure the mindset of indigenous Palestinian Arabs and youths to accept and adopt the Israeli ideology - to believe in the saga that Israelis are the actual inhabitants of the land and that Palestinians are nothing more than nomads. Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2017) affirms that education in Palestine is a tool for oppression, primarily and precisely because it is used to affect social and political transformation, emancipation, and liberation. Murray (2008) shares the same opinion with

Abu-Saad (2006a). Murray also affirms that education in Palestine cannot be considered neutral or fair because the funding of education in Palestinian Territories is controlled by international agencies and donors who impose strict conditions and measurements on the PNA (Ramahi 2015).

Even though Murray (2008) and Santisteban (2002) share the same view that education in Palestine does not help in constructing and promoting the Palestinian national identity, they use different methods to construct their conclusions. Murray (2008) interviewed curriculum developers while Santisteban (2002) conducted document analysis. Both of them discuss the history of the Palestinian educational system as well as the initiative behind establishing the Palestinian national curriculum in 1996. Murray (2008) and Santisteban (2002) accept the viewpoints of Brown (2001) that political transitions and economic realities in Palestine have negatively affected both the Palestinian education and the national identity. Some researchers contend that the cognitive development of Palestinian children has been oppressed by the long-lasting Israeli occupation which produced generations of youth who lack knowledge, skills, and proper attitudes (Affouneh 2007; Halstead & Affouneh 2006; Jabr 2009). Indeed, the many years of isolation and separation techniques used by Israel through military barriers, confiscation of lands and demolition of homes led to the partitioning of Palestinian areas and difficulties in commuting from one place to another. Santisteban (2002) and Murray (2008) concluded that politics played an imperative role in devaluing the education of Palestinian children.

In essence, it is not a secret that all the previously mentioned challenges created frustrations amongst the populace in Palestine. The Israeli hostility left little hopes and options for Palestinians (Veronese et al. 2018). It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the consequences of these frustrations but domestic violence and aggression have become one standard inclination among Palestinian families and against children.

The people of Palestine have sustained an enormous amount of suffering during the past century. The educational system in Palestine has been one of the most negatively impacted institutions and failed to provide the Palestinian children with equity and quality in education that can contribute to constructing and promoting a genuine Palestinian national identity (Spangler 2015). Moreover, the Palestinians did not have the opportunity to select or to have just education that prepares their children to build the much-anticipated state of Palestine. Brown (2005) claims that the Palestinian political leaders have used their legitimacy to

continue their administration of the Palestinians without having the power nor the resources to build the Palestinian institutions including educational ones. Thus, the political leaders relied heavily on international agencies and donors to contribute to the building of institutions which, in turn, resulted in a great deal of intervention in the affairs and decision-making of Palestinian leaders. According to several researchers, Palestinian families consider education as the most prominent investment in human capital and a chief priority to build a state (Peretz 1990; Badran 1980; Hovsepian 2008; Murray 2008; Jabr 2003; Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2008). By and large, Palestinians count and expect a lot from the PLO. After all, it is still regarded as the sole legitimate representative for all Palestinians. They view the PLO as the entity most responsible for the education of Palestinian youths. The literature suggests that there exists no evidence that the institutions under the protection of PLO contributed to the process of providing Palestinian children with a formal education that is geared toward building the Palestinian national identity. Matar (2018) believes that PLO did not fulfil all the conditions for revolutionary transformation and did not achieve its stated goal, liberation. She further adds that with time, it began to function as a political system. This, according to Matar, contributed to failure to developing a clear strategy for liberation.

Education was and still is an intense topic for politicians across the globe. When electing presidential candidates, people have always voiced their concerns about what a candidate can do for education. The No Child Left behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) was spearheaded by former President George W. Bush to serve primarily disadvantaged students from all levels. It called among others for inclusion of students with disabilities. For Palestine, Nasir-Tucktuck, Baker & Love (2017) noted that it is not that only minimal resources are available for students with a disability but also there are no specialised teachers to contribute efficiently to this field of education. On the contrary, it is probable that several educators hailed and supported similar acts in different nations. Unfortunately, when it comes to educating Palestinian children there are always regulations and sets of laws that obstruct progress and development.

At the political level, PNA and other opposition parties have different viewpoints regarding the peace agreement with the Israeli government (Ramahi 2015). For the PNA, the borders of the new state of Palestine exclude all the land and territories occupied by Israel before 1967 (Dunne 2010; Hovsepian 2008). As for the opposition, the state of Palestine is all of the geographical and historical area known as Palestine before falling to the Zionists in 1948. The problem even goes beyond this. The PNA defines legitimate Palestinian citizens as ones who are living in GS, WB, and East Jerusalem. For the PNA, this segment of the Palestinians are

the ones who fall under its responsibility and control. For the Palestinian oppositions, the definition is much different. Palestinian citizens include all Arabs who lived in the historical and geographical area known as Palestine before its fall in 1948. This includes the sizeable Palestinian diaspora who fled Palestine. These distinct viewpoints are essential for socialisation and nationalism which should be reflected in any national curriculum (Matar 2017). It is apparent that when a dominating group in the society dictates what is considered to be the official knowledge for this particular society, a conflict among social partners will surface and over time this conflict will deepen and could take an ugly turn: military aggression.

Jayousi and Oteer (2017) conclude that the administrative staff within the MoEHE are not engaged in the strategic planning activities. They recommend to consider the economic and political challenges when developing, executing, and evaluating any strategic plan for the MoEHE. Jayousi and Oteer (2017) state that the Israeli occupation practices negatively transformed education in Palestine. They also note that several factors are contributing to the ineffective administration practices conducted by the MoEHE. Those administrative practices can be summarised as centralisation, lack of communication among school districts, lack of staff professional development, and lack of the partnership between the developers and implementers of the MoE strategic plan (Jayousi and Oteer 2017).

2.2.5.3 Sociological Aspects of Education

Michaels (2017) studied the social forces sustaining the Israeli-Palestinian tensions. Michaels concludes that four main social factors may contribute to ending the Palestinian and Israeli conflict. These four social aspects according to Michaels (2017, p. 11) are:

“1) enhancing opportunities for Palestinian youth expression, success, and achievement; 2) initiating new social services which may reduce reliance on services presently provided by groups that have historical affiliations with militant organizations; 3) opening new lines of communication between the occupied territories, which may reduce the volatile group clustering observed in the GS by better connecting this isolated territory with the larger WB; and 4) developing new lines of communication between the occupied territories and Israel, offering non-conflict oriented exchanges between the people living in these area, which may gradually lead to new understanding and spreading tolerance between the two groups.”.

Contribution to Socialisation: Kumar (2011) affirms that formal education is necessary to complete the socialisation process. This leads to understanding the meaning of socialisation from sociological perspectives. Williams (1972) defines socialisation as a process that aims at transferring human culture from one generation to another, whereas Berger and Luckmann (1996) describe socialisation as the internalisation of values or norms. Those scholars

emphasise the role of education in promoting socialisation through schools. In relationship to the Palestinian curriculum policy, the authors of the policy anticipated an educational system that promotes socialisation throughout education. In order to measure the progress, a research study was conducted by Fannoun in 2008. Fannoun (2008), UN (2017) and World Bank (2017) report that the current education system does not produce qualitatively- and quantitatively-capable graduates that can meet the expectations of the Palestinian society in terms of knowledge and skills required for building up the Palestinian social institutions. This indicates that there is a gap between what was planned and what is happening. Several reports questioned whether the lack of promoting socialisation in Palestine through education contributed to a rift among Palestinians in 2007. The consequences of this rift contributed to the existence of two governments: one in WB and the other in GS (UN 2017). The government in WB – which is mainly formed from the faction of Fatah, reports to the PLO Chairman, the officially elected president of Palestine Mahmoud Abbas, whereas the government of GS gained its legitimacy from formal elections held in Gaza by the Palestinian Parliament in 2006. The rift contributed to a significant deterioration of the education system in terms of socialisation when teachers were appointed and dismissed based on their political ideology (Sa'adeh 2013; UN 2017). Sa'adeh reports that over 1,500 teachers were dismissed due to the infamous Fatah-Hamas split.

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills: In simple terms, the educational policy document that was developed as a framework for the current educational curriculum, states that the planned curriculum would produce critical thinkers and problem solvers which ultimately would lead to the enhancing the percentage of grade twelve (*Tawjihi*) graduates up to 70%. And not only that; it promises an improvement in teaching linguistics, mathematics, sciences, and technology. Jabr (2003), Ramahi (2015), and Richmond (2007) consider that promoting critical thinking and problem-solving skills hinge on the pedagogical skills of teachers regardless of the curriculum content. A study conducted by Jabr in 2009 revealed that because of the absence of teacher professional development, Palestinian students lack critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Edelson and Vallone (2000) consider that successful implementation of professional development programs for teachers is a crucial factor for promoting critical thinking skills. Jabr (2009) also discussed the reasons behind the absence of professional development, attributing them mainly to the continuous Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories. This occupation resulted in difficulties for Palestinian people to commute from one city or village to another. The lack of professional development sessions

led to the lack of critical thinking and problem-solving skills in Palestinian children and this explains why the policy document did not include a theoretical framework of how to go about implementing and improving such skills throughout the education system.

Technical/Vocational Education: The policy document considers that technical education is essential for reducing the unemployment in the Palestinian society. Khalifa and Abdul Aziz (2010) claim that the policies for developing the technical education system back in 1996 were never implemented. This demonstrates the gap between theory and practice. Such a gap could be attributed to human, technical, or economic factors. Unfortunately, continuous evidence of student performance in the technical field illustrates that this gap is broadening day after day.

2.2.6 Literature Review Summary

Murray (2008) affirms that the PNA inherited an obsolete and outdated educational system from the Israeli occupation. The imposed curriculum lacks concepts that can aid in constructing and promoting the national identity. The congested areas in which Palestinians live along with the harsh policies of the Israeli occupation along with its harsh policies on commuting Palestinians resulted in overcrowded classrooms and shortages in teaching staff. The PNA indeed did not have an easy task. With objectives stemming from the Charter of the PLO, the PNA was responsible for funding its educational system. The PNA assigned the Ministry of Education to adopt a clear strategic plan that promotes a national identity, constructs a solid educational philosophy, and develops the first Palestinian national curriculum. At the same time, the ministry needed to recruit and train teachers (Hovsepian 2008). All of this requires funding but with the troubled Middle East and specifically the troubled region of WB and GS, the PNA stood helpless. On paper, the PNA has control over the territories it is governing but in reality, the Israeli watchdogs are the ones dictating policies, blocking trade and imposing economic sanctions at any time they please. These desperate conditions left the PNA and the Palestinian economy in ruins. Perhaps, the PNA realised the obstacles and problems ahead but as newly founded leaders of the Palestinian people, PNA had to assume its responsibilities in addressing these challenges.

Despite an increased interest in the different curricula Palestinian students get exposed to, it is surprising that almost no empirical research has been conducted on the impact of these diverse curricula on the establishment of Palestinian national identity. What remains vividly missing is that although researchers have often highlighted the Palestinian agony, the quality and goals

of education as permeated by certain ideologies have been implicitly overlooked (Affouneh 2014).

Several questions need to be addressed such as: did the education system promote socialisation in schools before the rift? Are opposing political ideologies dominating education in Palestine? What is/are the necessary factor(s) needed to build up Palestinian institutions, socialisation or political ideologies? Was the rift in 2006 among Palestinian political factions a consequence of the steps taken by PNA to neglect or silence the Islamic ideology transmutation through formal education in schools?

To understand the socialisation situation in Palestine and to answer the above questions, the following interesting question emerges: is it possible that social institutions established by political parties as a way to transfer their political ideologies were the result of the politicisation of the Palestinian society? A considerable amount of research studies need to be conducted over time to learn more about this question (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2017). Indeed, the rift may have widened when opposing ideologies were silenced in schools. The process of building social institutions was successful and many institutions and organisations were established to serve the purpose of politicising the society and they promoted their ideologies and neglected merely socialisation in favour of political ideology. Extensive research studies were conducted in the areas of curriculum development, curriculum implementation, and curriculum evaluation. Policy studies were conducted to ensure that the processes of formulation, implementation, and evaluation occur in Palestine. However, there is a dearth when it comes to studies relating to the socio-political conditions influencing education in Palestine (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2017). Thus, this study aims at addressing this gap and proposing solutions using the critical pedagogy theory. To systematically and comprehensively address the research problem, the methodology of this study is detailed in the methodology chapter.

3 CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The theoretical framework and literature review chapter emphasised the research gap that this study is proposing to close. To ensure the credibility of the findings of this study, a detailed methodology chapter describing the research approach, context of the study, methods, data collection and analysis, validity and reliability is presented. Indeed, this is meant to accomplish the purpose of this research study which is to investigate the socio-political conditions and challenges of the current educational system in Palestine from the perception of the stakeholders and develop a national strategy for emancipatory education. The researcher investigated the socio-political conditions and current educational practices that shaped the current educational system that is used to educate Palestinians in WB and GS. This chapter localises the study within the suitable research paradigm and justifies the selection of the methodology, including its design, data collection instruments and procedures for the research. To answer the research questions, a mixed-methods approach is legitimate as it fulfils the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the Critical Theory (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011). The reasons for selecting the mixed-methods approach is due to the theoretical framework, the nature of the study, and research questions through a systematic review of the literature (Heyvaert, Hannes & Onghena 2017). Several scholars consider that the link between mixed methods and social justice has implications for the research paradigm chosen by the research (e.g. Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011; Creswell 2014; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner 2007; Mertens 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie 2010; Tsang 2013).

3.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

This study addresses the socio-political conditions and current educational practices that shape the Palestinian educational system. An explanatory mixed- methods design is used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Questionnaires are used in the first quantitative phase of the study to collect data from students, teachers, and guardians of WB and GS to test Freire's (1970) explanation of ways in which socio-political conditions contribute to shaping educational systems. The second qualitative phase was conducted because quantitative data could not be sufficient to respond to the research questions of this study. In this explanatory follow-up, the rationale behind politicising education in Palestine was tentatively explored

with political and educational leaders at WB and GS. The reason for the explanatory follow-up was to help explain or build upon initial quantitative results.

Mixed methods research comprises both the method and the methodology for carrying out research that involves collecting, analysing, and integrating quantitative and qualitative research in a single study (Creswell 2008; Creswell & Clark 2007). The rationale behind using the mixed methods approach is to consolidate the findings of the study by capitalising on the major benefits of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. According to Creswell (2008), there are four philosophical standpoints, which should be explicitly stated in any study. The post-positivism approach is the form of research in which assumptions hold true more for quantitative studies than qualitative studies (Glesne 2011). The second research paradigm, social construction, is usually combined with interpretivism and is typically seen as an approach to qualitative research. The third approach is the advocacy or participatory research paradigm. The participatory paradigm was developed because post-positivist assumptions imposed structural laws and theories that did not fit marginalised individuals in societies or issues of social justice that needed to be addressed. The advocacy or participatory paradigm is typically seen with qualitative research, but it can be a base for quantitative research. Finally, pragmatism as a paradigm arises out of actions, situations, and consequences rather than precursor conditions (as in post-positivism). Instead of focusing on methods, pragmatist researchers focus on the research problem and use all methods available to understand the problem. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) note the significance of the pragmatist which focuses on the research problem in social science research using mixed methods approaches to derive knowledge about the problem.

In addition, using mixed methods enables the researcher to address multifaceted and sophisticated research problems adequately. The study aims to answer the following research questions:

- 1) How do the present socio-political conditions and challenges shape the educational system in WB and GS?
- 2) What are the Palestinian teachers', parents' and students' perceptions of the factors influencing the educational system in WB and GS?
- 3) What are the Palestinian political and educational leaders' perceptions of the necessary conditions to develop the educational system in WB and GS?

In order to answer these questions, a mixed-methods approach under the pragmatism paradigm was used because it fulfils the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the Critical Theory (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011; Creswell 2008; Creswell & Clark 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie 2010). Additional considerations were the theoretical framework, the nature of the study, research questions, and literature (Creswell 2008).

The research problem, however, involves multi-disciplinary aspects, such as education, sociology, leadership, and economy. Friere (1970) is a school of thought that responds to similar problems in Western societies. Several scholars (e.g., Agger 1991; Apple 1995, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2010; Boggs 2013; Collins 1985; Held 1989; Murphy & Fleming 2010; Nichols & Allen-Brown 1996; Ozmon 2012; Peters, Olssen & Lankshear 2003; Prasad 2005; Sewell & Woods 1983; Shelby 2003; Trainer 2010; Usher 1996; Zanetti & Carr 1997) explain the nature of the critical theory as well as its limitations.

Literature suggests that the mixed methods research approach has been developed to respond to socio-political questions underlining Critical Theory (e.g. Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011; Creswell 2014; Creswell 2008; Creswell & Clark 2007; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner 2007; Mertens 2007; Smyth 2006; Tashakkori & Teddlie 2010). As the beliefs of the researcher may affect the way he/she may interpret the data, the philosophical assumptions held by the researcher to justify why a particular approach is used in his/her study justify the interpretation (Guba 1990). Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) advise that ontological assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions; these, in turn, give rise to methodological considerations; and these eventually give rise to issues of instrumentations and data collection. Indeed, added to ontology and epistemology is axiology (Hitchcock and Hughes cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), however, contend that a mixed-method approach is based on ontology that accepts that phenomena are complex to the degree that single method approaches result in partial, selective and incomplete understanding, and on epistemology that necessitates pragmatic combination of methods- in sequence, in parallel, or in synthesis – in order to fully comprise and understand the phenomenon and to do justice to its several facets (Creswell 2008; Creswell & Clark 2007).

Thus, the link between mixed methods and social justice has implications for the standing point of the researcher and his/her selection of a certain research paradigm (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011; Creswell 2014; Creswell 2008; Creswell & Clark 2007; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner 2007; Mertens 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie 2010; Tsang 2013). The

paradigm that aims at addressing inequality and injustice within society using the cultural factor is called the transformative paradigm (Creamer 2018; Shannon-Baker 2016). The transformative paradigm along with its related philosophical assumptions provides a framework for addressing inequality and injustice in a society using mixed methods strategies (Biren, Gurin & Lopez 2003; Creamer 2018; Mertens 2007; Shannon-Baker 2016). The recognition that realities are constructed and shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, and racial/ethnic values signifies that power is a vital element of which reality may be privileged in a research setting (Creamer 2018; Glesne 2011; Shannon-Baker 2016).

Methodological extrapolations based on the underlying assumptions of the transformative paradigm disclose the probable asset of mixing qualitative and quantitative methods (Shannon-Baker 2016). A qualitative element is desired to gather the perspectives of the community at every stage of the research process, while the quantitative dimension gives the opportunity to demonstrate results that have credibility for community members and researchers. The transformative mixed methods approach provides a systematic way for addressing the complexities of research in culturally complex situations that can establish the bases for social change (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2010).

The literature reveals that education in Palestine has been studied using quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approach. The purpose of the quantitative studies was to measure the extent to which the educational system in Palestine was affected by ideology and the factors contributing to altering education in Palestine (e.g. Iftaiha 2009; Saádeh 2013; Tiltne et al. 2011). These studies focus on using questionnaires as a tool for data collection. However, more research was conducted using the qualitative tradition (e.g. Abu-Saad 2006a; Affounch 2007; Jaber 2003; Mazawi 2007, 2011; Mizel 2013; Murray 2008). The focus of qualitative studies was to understand, explore, or discuss the status of the education in Palestine. Those qualitative researchers used various methods, such as interviews, document analysis, meta-analysis, focus groups, literature analysis, and narrative analysis.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To maintain a systematic research approach, this study was conducted using four main phases (see Figure 4). The first phase includes reviewing the literature, establishing the research questions and the rationale behind conducting the research and finally underpinning the study under a theoretical framework. The second phase establishes a philosophical framework for

the study that guided the research approach, research methods, context of the study in terms of population, sample, data collection procedures, validation and trustworthiness of the study, establishing ethical considerations and limitations of the study and the data analysis procedures. The third phase analyses the quantitative and qualitative data, integrated quantitative results with qualitative results, discussed the results in relation to the theoretical framework, literature, results of this study, and presented the researcher's experience. The fourth phase concludes the study with recommendations and possible future research studies that this study did not respond to as the questions fell outside the scope of this study.

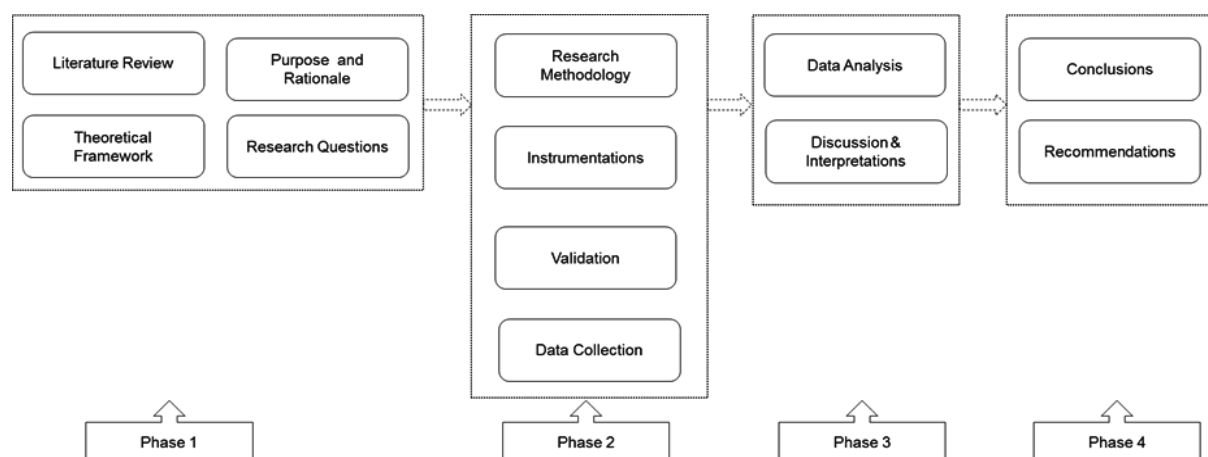


Figure 4: Research Design Phase

The first phase includes a review of the literature pertinent to education in Palestine from a general view. The reviewed studies revealed that education in Palestine is not promising, and it does not have a bright future (UN 2017). This contributed to the desire to understand from a macro level: who has controlled education in Palestine? Why did internal and external powers control education? Moreover, how education is controlled? Is there an opportunity to overcome these challenges? These questions seemed to arise from a critical perspective which underpins the Critical Theory. These questions were then revisited and shaped into the three research questions. Upon identifying the Critical Theory as a framework to guide this study, the next step was to study the various schools of thoughts within the Critical Theory. It was found that Paulo Freire established a framework from a critical Theory point of view to address the pedagogy of the oppressed in 1970 and the politics of education in 1985. Studying Freire's view of education about politics is well received in societies similar to Palestine when the majority of citizens could not control the education system. Upon exploring Freire's perspective, the research questions were revised for the second time. These three questions are the research questions that guide this study. At this point, the literature was reviewed again to

determine the appropriate philosophical framework, methodology and methods. In the second phase, these were explored in greater detail.

The second phase of the study started by adopting the pragmatism as the philosophical framework to guide the research experiment. Once the pragmatism framework was adopted, the research methodology was identified as the mixed methods approach which is in alignment with the literature, framework, and can address the research questions. The explanatory mixed methods approach was then used to ensure that quantitative and qualitative data are used to investigate the research problem. The utilisation of both research methods required designing and testing formal instruments. Three carefully designed questionnaires were used to collect data from students, teachers, and guardians. These tools included statements that produced two types of data: qualitative data through the open-ended questions as well as quantitative data using closed-ended questions. Face validity and a pilot study were used to validate the instruments for almost 10% of the sample. The collected data was reviewed and analysed before the implementation of the internal consistency test using *Cronbach Alpha*. Based on the qualitative and quantitative data collected through the questionnaires, the interview guide was developed. This instrument was piloted by a university professor who served as an educational leader within the Ministry of Education earlier. The next phase was the analysis of qualitative data and integrating the quantitative with qualitative results in preparation for discussing the results.

The third phase of the study started by analysing the qualitative data collected through the in-depth interviews with political and educational leaders. Upon the completion of this stage, the qualitative and quantitative results were then integrated into themes to guide the discussion. Throughout the discussion section, the results obtained through this study were examined apopos the theoretical framework, published research studies, and researcher experience. The outcomes of this phase lead to conclusion and recommendations that are discussed in the next phase.

The fourth phase of the study started by identifying critical findings as a result of the discussion chapter. These key findings are presented in the conclusion section in addition to recommendations and possible future research opportunities.

To conclude, the four phases are used to ensure a systematic approach to conducting this study. The second purpose of using a systematic research approach is to ensure that this study adopts scientific processes and procedures to construct reality.

Furthermore, the methodology section first discusses the subsection of the setting and participant selection as the context of the study followed by the collection of data for analysis and interpretation. The second subsection of the methodology discusses the data collection methods that include a self-administered questionnaire, semi-structured and in-depth interviews. The third section explains how ethical considerations were dealt with, and the fourth section discusses the limitations of this thesis. Table 3 identifies the approaches to align the research questions with the methods. Although qualitative and quantitative research methods are designed to accomplish different goals, Patton (2002) explains that both research methodologies are complementary and can be efficiently combined.

Research Phase	Research Question (RQ)	Participants	Type of Data collection	Instruments used	Data Analysis Technique
I	RQ 1. How do the present socio-political conditions and challenges shape the educational system in GS and WB?	Students Teachers Guardians	QUAN	Questionnaire	Descriptive Statistics
		Political and Educational Leaders	QUAL	In-depth Interviews	Thematic Analysis
I	RQ 2. What are the Palestinian teachers', parents' and students' perceptions on the factors influencing the educational system in GS and WB?	Students Teachers Guardians	QUAN	Questionnaire (Closed-ended Questions)	Descriptive & Inferential Statistics
			QUAL	Questionnaire (Open-ended Questions)	Thematic analysis
II	RQ 3. What are the Palestinian political and educational leaders' perceptions on the necessary conditions to develop the educational system in GS	Political and Educational Leaders	QUAL	In-depth interviews	Thematic Analysis

Table 3: Approaches to Align the Research Questions with the Methods

3.2.1 Sequential Mixed Methods Design

Creswell (2012) recommends that mixed methods researchers legitimise their selection of the research design. This legitimacy should address the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, the sequence of data collection, the methods of data analysis, and the rationale for mixing the quantitative and qualitative traditions. Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) add that mixed methods research studies should make differences in their design by including the time

orientation dimension and suggest a concurrent or sequential method of data collection. The sequential research design is used when the collected two types of data (quantitative and qualitative) are related and involves the collection of the data in two phases in which one set of data builds on the other (Bowen et al. 2017; Creamer 2018; Creswell 2003). Creamer (2018) and Creswell (2012) also note that the sequential mode of data collection indicates that data can be collected through explanatory or exploratory means. For the purpose of this study, since one of the rationales for the mixed methodology is data development, the explanatory sequential design has been adopted due to its suitability in obtaining comprehensive information linked to the research problem under study, as discussed by Creamer (2018).and Creswell (2012).

In this research design, the two data sets are collected sequentially in two phases, whereby one data set follows and informs the other. According to Creamer (2018) and Creswell (2012), in this type of research design quantitative data is collected first, followed by the collection of qualitative data that helps explain or elaborate on the quantitative results. He explains that the rationale behind this type of research design is that the initial quantitative results provide a general database for the research problem, but a more in-depth analysis is facilitated by the qualitative data set which expands upon the initial quantitative picture by exploring a few samples in more detail. Bowen et al. (2017) and Creswell (2012) argue that this type of research design has the advantage of precise quantitative and qualitative parts, which is an advantage while designing and conducting the study. Figure 5, is an illustrative overview of the research design used in this study.

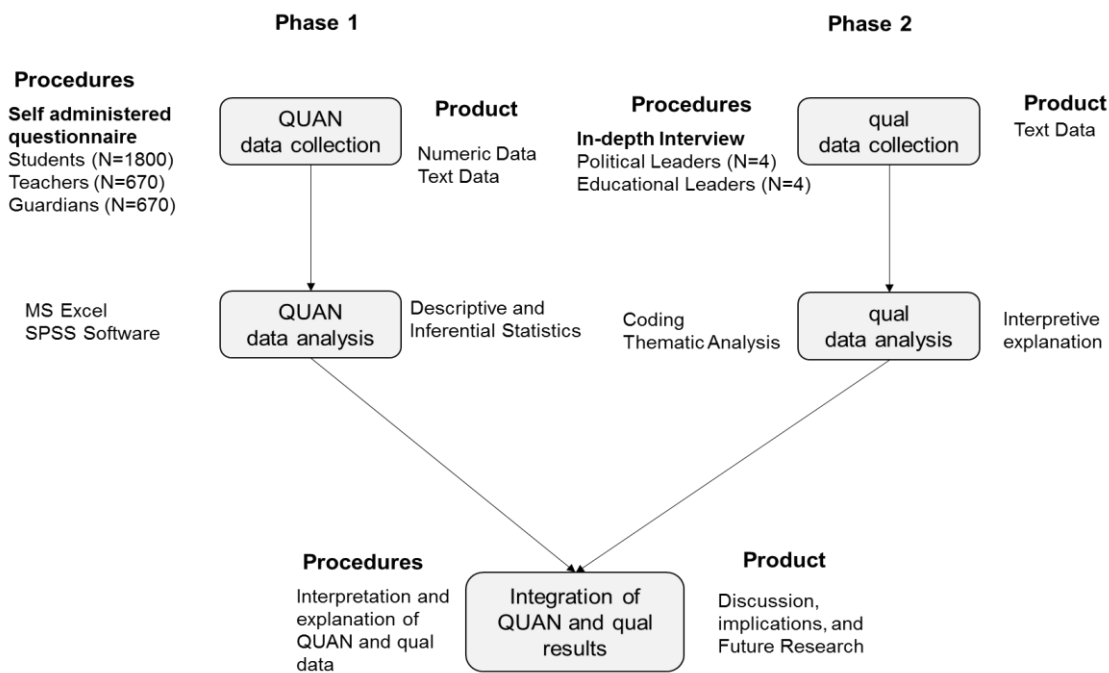


Figure 5: An Overview of the Study Research Design

3.3 THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

This study is conducted on territories under the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) administration of WB and GS. These areas are primarily using the Palestinian national curriculum. Table 4 presents the total number of students, teachers, and guardians in the annual statistical report of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics published in March 2016. The report also points that the average household size in Palestine is 5.2 children per family. This allows for approximating the number of guardians in Palestine.

	Males	Females	Total
Number of Students	596,144	603,722	1,199,866
Number of Teachers	21,717	33,396	55,113
Approximate number of Guardians	114,643	116,100	230,743

Table 4: Number of Students, Teachers, and Guardians in Palestine

Sampling is an essential step in the research process as it informs the reliability of the interpretation made by the researcher that is stemmed from the primary results (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011; Creamer 2018; Onwuegbuzie & Collins 2007). In both quantitative and qualitative studies, a crucial step in process is when researchers decide on sampling strategy and sample size (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison 2011; Greener 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998). Creswell (2012) believes that the choice of sampling strategy is different in qualitative

research from quantitative research and based on a specific population. In qualitative research, the sample may include a broader scope of participants to examine the research questions and determine whether outliers or extreme cases require selection. Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) observe that mixed methods researchers use the non-random sampling scheme regardless of the study objectives, goals, and purpose or research question. They suggest that the type of sampling strategy depends on the objective of the study, for instance, if the goal is to generalise the findings then a 'random' sampling scheme is most appropriate, if the goal is to obtain insights into a particular phenomenon or individuals or events, a purposive sampling strategy is appropriate to gain maximum understanding regarding the research problem.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) assert that there are two main types of samples: probability and non-probability. The probability samples are usually used in quantitative studies for generalisation provided that reasonable sample size is selected. The probability samples can be simple random, systematics, random stratified, cluster, stage, or multi-phase sampling. The main objective of any estimation problem is to get an estimator of a population parameter which can pay attention to the salient features of the population. If the population is homogeneous concerning the characteristic under study, then the method of Simple Random Sampling (SRS) may yield a homogeneous sample and the sample mean can serve as a reliable estimator of the population mean. Therefore, if the population is homogeneous concerning the characteristic under study, then the sample drawn through SRS is expected to provide a representative sample. Furthermore, the variance of the sample means not only depends on the sample size and sampling segment but also on the population variance. In order to increase the precision of an estimator, a sampling scheme which can reduce the heterogeneity in the population should be used. If the population is heterogeneous concerning the characteristic under study, then one such sampling procedure is stratified sampling (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011; Field & Hole 2003; Greener 2011; Johnson & Christensen 2014; Oancea 2014; Punch & Plowright 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998).

The purpose of stratified sampling is to divide the whole heterogeneous population into subpopulations, such that the sampling units are homogeneous with respect to the characteristic under study within the subpopulation and heterogeneous with respect to the characteristic under study between/among the subpopulations (Johnson & Christensen 2014; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison 2011; and Tashakkori & Teddlie 2010). Such subpopulations are termed as strata and each stratum comprises several strata.

After careful analysis of the Palestinian society in terms of demographic factors, such as gender, location (WB and GS), living area (rural, refugee camps, and urban), age, and educational level, in addition to the research questions, and the purpose of the study are major contributors to the phenomena of the politicisation of education in Palestine. These factors contribute to having heterogeneous groups. Since this study aims at including participants from all subpopulations within WB and GS, the Stratified Random Sampling approach was applied.

In addition to educational level and age, Table 5 presents the subpopulations included in this study.

Location	Living Area	Students		Teachers		Guardians	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
WB	Rural	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Refugee Camps	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Urban	√	√	√	√	√	√
GS	Rural	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Refugee Camps	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Urban	√	√	√	√	√	√

Table 5: Subpopulations of Data Collection

Quantitative researchers tend to report “statistical” generalisations, which involve generalising findings and inferences from a representative statistical sample to the population. Thus, in addition to the stratified sampling strategy discussed earlier, the sample size is also an essential factor to be considered (Bailey 1994; Creamer 2018).

The sample size is studied by several researchers such as Bartlett et al. (2001) and Krejcie and Morgan (1970). According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) and with a 95% confidence interval the number of participants should be 384 students, 382 teachers, and 384 guardians. However, according to Bartlett et al. (2001) and with 95% confidence interval the number of participants should be 663 students, 653 teachers, and 661 guardians. Bartlett et al consider that sample size for categorical variables (e.g. gender, living area, education: level) differ from continuous variables (e.g. marks in a test) which is applicable to this study more that Krejcie and Morgan. Hence, this study is based on the framework of Bartlett et al. for determining the sample size.

Table 4 presents the minimum number of participants according to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) and Bartlett et al. (2001) based on the numbers in Table 6.

Participant	Minimum Sample Size	
	Krejcie and Morgan (1970)	Bartlett <i>et al</i> (2001)
Students	384	663
Teachers	382	653
Guardians	384	661

Table 6: Minimum Number of Participants according To Krejcie and Morgan (1970) and Bartlett et al. (2001)

In contrast, qualitative researchers, tend to make “analytic” generalisations, which are “applied to wider theory” on the basis of how cases are selected (participants in quantitative research). Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2011) list several forms of the non-probability sampling strategies, such as convenience, quota, purposive, dimensional, snowballing, volunteer, and theoretical. The nature of this study based on the research questions suggests that the qualitative part will use the purposeful sampling strategy. Creamer (2018) and Glesne (2011) consider purposeful sampling strategy one of the most common strategies used in qualitative research as it leads to selecting cases that are *information-rich*. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2011) suggest that purposeful sampling strategy has various forms, such as typical case, extreme, intensive, maximum variation, homogenous, and reputational case. The reputational case sampling, adopted in this study, is based on selecting the cases with specific characteristics that can respond to the research questions. The cases can include decision makers, such as ministers, deputy ministers, and directors. Tashakkori & Teddlie (2010) propose a minimum sample size when conducting qualitative research using interviews to be six to twelve cases.

The purpose of the qualitative part of this study is to gather information from educational and political leaders pertinent to education in Palestine.

To summarise, based on the sampling strategies and sample size frameworks from the literature that support this study, Table 7 illustrates a summary of the sampling strategy and sample size in this study according to Bartlett et al. (2001) and Tashakkori & Teddlie (2010).

Approach	Sample Strategy	Sample Size
Qualitative		
Political Leaders	Purposeful Sampling	4
Educational Leaders	Reputational case sampling	4
Quantitative		
Students	Stratified Random Sampling	1,800
Teachers		670
Guardians		670

Table 7: Summary of the Sampling Strategy and Sample Size

3.4 INSTRUMENTATIONS

There are several methods of data collection in quantitative research including the use of instruments, such as questionnaires, closed-ended interviews and closed-ended observations, according to Creswell (2012). On the other side, qualitative research methods of data collection include open-ended interviews, open-ended questions on questionnaires, open-ended observations, documents such as policy documents and visual materials (e.g. Johnson & Christensen 2014; Tashakkori & Teddlie 2010). In this study, quantitative and qualitative data from students, teachers, and guardians was collected using questionnaires, followed by the collection of qualitative data using in-depth interviews from the political and educational leaders.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

This section describes the selection and design of data collection instruments beginning with the questionnaires and then followed by the in-depth interview guide for political and educational leaders in the next section.

Anonymity encourages objective responses when compared to interviews where participants might feel the need to disclose ‘socially appropriate’ answers to questions asked (Taylor, Kermode and Roberts 1998). Another advantage in administering questionnaires is the ease with which they can be tested for reliability and validity. Questionnaires were designed after an extensive literature review of studies using this approach to research the politicising problem of education in Palestine. The analysis of questionnaire results informed the preparation of the in-depth interview guide.

Questionnaires are an appropriate way to gather primary research data but they should be clear, smooth, and aligned with the research questions. In this study, questionnaires included closed-ended and open-ended questions. Each questionnaire contained four main sections: demographic, political identity, socio-political experience through education, and open-ended questions.

Literature suggests that students, teachers, and guardians in Palestine represent greater variability in terms of demographic factors. The demographic factors are presented in Table 8.

FOR STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND GUARDIANS

Participant: Student(1) Teacher(2) Guardian(3) Location: WB(1) GS (2)
 Living Area: Urban (1) Rural (2) Refugee Camp (3) Gender: Male (1) Female (2)
 Educational Level: Illiterate (1) Primary (2) Preparatory (3) Secondary (4) Diploma (5) Bachelor (6) Master (7)
 Doctorate (8)
 Age: _____

ONLY FOR GUARDIANS

Guardian Job: Private Sector (1) Public Sector (2) Self Employed (3)

ONLY FOR TEACHERS

Teacher's Years of Experience: Less than 5 years (1) 5 to 10 Years (2) 10 to 15 Years (3) 15 Years or higher (4)
 Teaching Level (Stage): Primary (1) Preparatory (2) Secondary (3) University (4)
 Teachers Specialization: Arts and Humanities (1) Natural Sciences (2)

Table 8: Demographic Questions

The second section includes questions pertinent to participants' political identity. The purpose of this section is to understand the political background of participating students, teachers, and guardians in relation to Palestinian popular political parties. The section includes six questions that were asked to the three participating groups using different forms for clarity and sensitivity (see Table 9).

Student	Teacher	Guardian
(1) Would you like to be a member of a political party? Yes (1)/ No (2) (1A) If Yes, which political party?	(1) Would you like to be affiliated with a political party? Yes (1)/ No (2) (1A) If Yes, which political party?	(1) Do you belong to a political party? Yes (1)/ No (2) (1A) If Yes, which political party?
(2) Which factor influenced you the most to be affiliated with a particular party? Curriculum (1) Teacher (2) Family (3)	(2) Which factor influenced your students the most to be affiliated with a particular party? Curriculum(1)Teacher(2) Family(3)	(2) Which factor influenced your child (ren) the most to be affiliated with a particular party? Curriculum(1) Teacher (2) Family (3)
(3) How old were you when you became politically affiliated? Less than 12 Years (1) 12 to 15 Years (2) 15 to 18 Years (3) 18 to 21 Years (4) 21 Years or higher (5)	(3) What is the approximate age when students start disclosing their political affiliation? Less than 12 Years (1) 12 to 15 Years (2) 15 to 18 Years (3) 18 to 21 Years (4) 21 Years or higher (5)	(3) How old was your child when s/he became politically affiliated? Less than 12 Years (1) 12 to 15 Years (2) 15 to 18 Years (3) 18 to 21 Years (4) 21 Years or higher (5)
(4) Did you change your political affiliation from a political party to another? Yes (1)/ No (2)	(4) Do students change their academic affiliation with a political party to another through the stages of study? Yes (1)/ No (2)	(4) Did your child change his/her political affiliation from a political party to another through the stages of study? Yes (1)/ No (2)
(5) How many times did you change your political affiliation from a	(5) If yes, how many times did the student change his belonging from a	(5) If yes, how many times did your son changed his belonging from a

political party to another? Once (1)/ Twice (2) Three or more times (3)	political party to another through your teaching to him? Once (1)/ Twice (2) Three or more times (3)	political party to another through the stages of study? Once (1)/ Twice (2) Three or more times (3)
(6) What are the reasons that make you change the membership of a political party to another? Curriculum(1)Teacher(2) Family(3)	(6) What are the reasons for the students to change the membership of a political party to another? Curriculum(1)Teacher(2) Family(3)	(6) What are the reasons for the child to change the membership of a political party to another through the stages of study? Curriculum(1)Teacher(2) Family(3)

Table 9: Political Identity Survey Questions

The third section includes the 24 closed-ended statements pertinent to the participant's socio-political experience through education (see Table 10).

These 24 questions are divided into three main categories: seven political, seven sociological, and ten ideological statements. The same 24 questions were asked to the participating students, teachers, and guardians. Participants are asked to indicate their agreement with each statement using a Likert scale from one to five (one indicates "Strongly Disagree", two indicates "Disagree", three indicates "Neutral", four indicates "Agree", and five indicates "Strongly Agree"). Measurement of the scale is done by using a five-point- semantic differential scale with lower scores reflecting negative response. Semantic differential scales help the participants voice their evaluation, potency and activity level regarding a particular object or phenomenon in a verbal dimension, and are particularly useful in assessing concepts in the affective dimension like attitude and feelings (Osgood 1969).

Political Statements	Sociological Statements	Ideological Statements
The Palestinian educational system....		
1) Presents that Palestinian political system is democratic and based on political pluralism.	1) Articulates that the Palestinian society is dominated by brotherhood and tolerance between Muslims and Christians.	1) Ensures that Palestinian curriculum emphasises that Holy Books such as Quran, the Torah and the Gospel have the same sanctity.
2) Influenced me/my students/ my child to be politically affiliated with one of the Palestinian political parties.	2) Equates between mosque and church.	2) Ensures that Palestinian curriculum distinguishes between the Dome of the Rock mosque and Al-Aqsa Mosque.
3) Influenced me/my students/ my child to strengthen my attachment to the homeland.	3) Ensures that Palestinian curriculum includes the names of the Palestinian occupied towns and villages.	3) Contributes to increasing religious faith.
4) Contributes to strengthen my/ my students/ my child	4) Affirms that discrimination among students, according to	4) Promotes that the negotiations with the Israeli

Political Statements	Sociological Statements	Ideological Statements
faith of resisting the Israeli Occupation and consolidating the rights of the Palestinian people.	the academic level or social class, leads to poor teamwork inside and outside the school.	Occupation are the way to gain the Palestinian rights.
5) Demonstrates the Palestinians' question and their aspirations.	5) Ensures that Palestinian curriculum prepares students to be adhering to the land and keeping it.	5) Promotes that Islam is a comprehensive life system.
6) Elucidates the rights of the Palestinians in the return to the lands which they were expelled from.	6) Ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights that Palestinians are supporters of the comprehensive peace.	6) Ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets.
7) Articulates that the Palestinian people are part of the Arab world.	7) Ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in the Israeli jails.	7) Accepts that resisting the Israeli Occupation is a terroristic action.
		8) Endorses in the Palestinian curriculum that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is due to religious conflict.
		9) Ensures that Palestinian curriculum contributes to promote the spiritual and emotional link between students and religious holy places of Palestine.
		10) Ensures that Palestinian curriculum calls on respecting the intellectual pluralism and the national unity.

Table 10: Closed Ended Survey Statements

The fourth section of the survey collects suggestions and recommendations from the participants to improve education in Palestine. This open-ended question enables the participants to share their concerns and provide constructive feedback. The data obtained from this section are not quantitative data. Thus, it is added to the qualitative part of the study.

3.4.2 Validity

Validity and reliability are two essential characteristics of behavioural measures and are referred to as psychometric properties. Validity is the extent to which a formal instrument (e.g.

questionnaire) measures what it is supposed to measure whereas, reliability is the degree to which a formal instrument consistently measures whatever it measures. Reliability and validity are essential measures of study trustworthiness. Validity must be faithful to its premise to post-positivism such as controllability, replicability, predictability, and generalizability, and context- freedom, randomisation of samples, neutrality, and objectivity (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011; Creamer 2018).

The questionnaires of this study are self-developed, and their validation will follow the conventional procedures that are recommended by the literature (e.g. Brace, Kemp & Snelgar 2009; Field 2009; Field & Hole 2005; Green & D'Oliveira 2009; Harris 2010; Mertens 1998). Fowler (2002) and Schutt (2006) suggest that to ensure content validity, the items should be developed based on a careful review of relevant literature and revised with both experts in the field and prospective respondents.

The content of the survey was validated through face- validation by reviewing the questionnaire with ten university professors who are experts in the field. Based on their suggestions and recommendations, the questionnaires were revised, and a few words were changed for further clarity in the meaning or sometimes to simplify the sentences. Some of the comments received were to add educational level and age to the demographic data, to translate the survey into Arabic and to refrain from sharing the English version with the participants.

Thorsteinsson (2012) affirms that the objective of the translation is to develop an equivalent meaning of the items in the original instrument rather than a word-to-word translation. Brislin (1970) suggests four techniques for keeping content equivalence between the original and translated text: back-translation, bilingual technique, committee approach and the pre-test procedure. Back-translation is commonly used to assess translation quality and to accomplish concept equivalence between original and translated versions. Following this technique, the original versions of the questionnaires were translated from English into Arabic by a bilingual translator who is knowledgeable about the field. To ensure the accuracy and clarity of the translation, the original questionnaires and the translated versions were reviewed by two bilingual professionals whose native language is Arabic to ensure that each item carries the same meaning in both languages. Based on their recommendations, some words in the translated versions were revised to reflect more precisely the concepts being used. The Arabic version was then sent to a different translator to be translated into English. The back-translated

version was very similar to the original English version of the questionnaires and reflected almost the same meanings.

3.4.3 Pilot Study

A pilot study is used as a small scale version to prepare for the major study (Polit, Beck & Hungler 2001). Baker (1994) and Lancaster et al. (2004) suggest that the purpose of the pilot study is to test the instruments for appropriateness to the subjects in terms of readability, clarity, and understanding as well as to estimate the reliability of the questionnaire. Baker (1994) suggests that a sample size of 10-20% of the sample size for the actual study is a reasonable number of participants to consider enrolling in a pilot. In this study, the questionnaires were then pilot-tested to around 10% of the actual sample size (200 students, 70 teachers, and 70 guardians). The total number of valid responses received was 243 (146 students, 49 teachers, and 48 guardians). During the administration of the pilot questionnaires, assistant researchers asked participants about the language of instructions and questions in terms of clarity. Positive feedback was received indicating that questions are clear and easy to complete. The average time taken by participants to complete the survey ranged from ten to twenty minutes.

3.4.4 Reliability Test

Reliability was conducted using Cronbach's alpha (coefficient alpha) test, which is the most commonly reported measure for testing reliability (Brace, Kemp and Snelgar 2009; Schutt 2006). Results show that Cronbach's alpha for the scale was 0.863. Brace, Kemp and Snelgar (2009) and Field (2009) consider that if the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is more than 0.7, then the instrument is of an acceptable internal consistency level. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.863, indicating a high degree of internal consistency of the questionnaires. These results indicate that the instrument has sufficient reliability to measure students', teachers', and guardians' perceptions of the phenomena under the study.

3.4.5 Interviews

There are a number of different types of interviews that can be employed in social research. Each type has its own objective and focus. Research questions and the information needed to provide full answers to these questions dictate the best convenient type to be used. These types

are as follows: structured, semi-structured, unstructured, and focus groups interviews (Alsaawi 2014).

The structured interview is a pre-planned interview in a controlled way to obtain information from interviewees where the researcher writes down the interview questions before conducting the interview (Bryman 2012). The advantages of the structured interview are that it makes the interview comparable among interviewees, but it lacks the richness and limits the obtainability of in-depth data. The variation among responses is limited due to the strict interview format that is used. Therefore, the flexibility of the interviewer in terms of being able to interrupt, and the interviewee to elaborate, is restricted (Alsaawi 2014). It has been emphasised in the literature that this type of interview is appropriate for researchers who identify the exact form of information they are seeking (Dörnyei 2007).

Unstructured interviews are the opposite of structured interviews in which the flexibility of this type is wide open. Interviewees can elaborate, leading in unpredictable directions (Alsaawi 2014). Bryman (2012) notes that the unstructured interviews are similar to conversations in which the interviewers might ask a single question, and then the interviewees have the choice concerning the extent to which they respond. Dörnyei (2007) points out that interruptions on the part of the interviewer are kept to a minimum, which has made some researchers name this type of interview an “ethnographic interview”.

A Semi-structured interview is commonly used in social sciences. This type of interview is a mixture of the two types (structured and unstructured), in which the questions are pre-prepared before the interview, but the interviewer gives the interviewee the opportunity to elaborate and explain particular issues through the use of open-ended questions. Semi-structured interviews are appropriate to researchers who have an overview of their topic so that they can ask questions and do not prefer to use a structured format which may hinder the depth and richness of the responses (Bryman 2012). Dörnyei (2007) recommends piloting the open-ended questions in advance to ensure the relevance and applicability.

Focus group interviews can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured (Alsaawi 2014). Dörnyei (2007) argues that the role of the interviewer and the format of this type are different from the structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews. Focus group interviews involve a brainstorming focus group of usually six to twelve interviewees (Dörnyei 2007). It can produce “high-quality data” which is meaningful for the interviewer. Interviewees can challenge, argue and debate with each other, and this technique usually leads to the occurrence

of in-depth and rich data. Carey (1994) states that focus groups are the best approach for sensitive topics. One of the drawbacks of this method is the confidentiality (Robson 2011).

Polit & Beck (2006) consider interviews to be a common qualitative self-reported method which can be fruitful when an enormous amount of data is gathered by questioning participants about a topic. Patton (2002) classifies the interview questions follows “kinds of questions include experience/ behaviour questions, opinion/value questions, feeling questions, knowledge questions, sensory questions and background / demographic questions” (p. 53). Kvale and Brinkmann (2006) agree with Patton (2002) and add that interview questions should include thematic and dynamic dimensions to ensure comprehensive outcomes. Therefore, educational and political leaders in Palestine (ministers, deputy ministers, general managers, and directors) were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews to further explore the phenomena under the study. The interview guide was carefully designed to be aligned with the research questions (see table 11).

<p>Part -1: Introduction of the Research Topic</p> <p>The researcher in this part of the interview aims at introducing the interviewee to the purpose of the study with some preliminary results of the data obtained from participating students, teachers, and guardians.</p>
<p>Part-2: Introduction of the Interviewee</p> <p>The researcher will ask the interviewee to introduce him/herself with an explanation on how his/her knowledge and experience can contribute to this study.</p>
<p>Part – 3: Interview Main Questions</p> <p>From your point of view,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does the Palestinian educational system meet the aspirations of Palestinian political leaders? And how is that? 2. What are the most important political leaders' plans to promote education in Palestine? And how they will be executed? 3. What do you think of those who say that education in Palestine is politicised? Which political party controls education in Palestine? Who is controlling it? And what ideology is promoted through education? 4. Is political Islam involved in the development of the objectives of national and social education; considering the fact they are not part of the PLO? And why? 5. Which actions should be taken to neutralise education in Palestine and make it respond to Palestinian national call? 6. How the rift between the two major political parties (Fatah in WB and Hamas in GS) affected the education system in Palestine? Do you think, education was used as a tool to do so? 7. Does the Palestinian curriculum represent the Palestinian cause in terms of history, geography and citizenship? 8. What is the ideology that the current education system avoids and does not mention and educational and political leaders see it as a crime? 9. Does the Ministry of Education in Palestine provide children with relevant and up to date education?
<p>Part-4: Overall Feedback and Suggestions</p> <p>The researcher will give the interviewee the opportunity to provide feedback pertaining to the research topic, interview administration or questions, etc.</p>

Table 11: Interview Guide

The interview guide was pilot-tested with a university professor who was briefed about the nature of the study and gave consent. The participant was later given the opportunity to review the transcript but did not make any changes. The information gathered as a result of the pilot study is included in the interview results.

Due to the difficulty in conducting face-to-face interviews with the educational and political leaders in Palestine, all interviews were conducted via video conferencing, all interviews were videotaped with permission and then transcribed in details. Since the interviews were conducted in Arabic, the interviews transcriptions were back-translated by professional translators who have experience in the field.

3.5 ALIGNMENT OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS WITH SURVEY AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

This section presents the alignment of research questions with the survey and interview questions. The first research question is addressed using quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data is collected from participating students, teachers, and guardians. The results of the quantitative data collected from students, teachers, and guardians, are discussed with interviewees.

Firstly, the quantitative data was collected from the participating students, teachers, and guardians considering three dimensions namely, political, social, and ideological. The purpose of including these three dimensions is to measure quantitatively the extent to which participating students, teachers, and guardians agree or disagree that education in Palestine is a tool for development and liberation.

1) Political Dimension Survey Questions:

- a) Presents that the Palestinian political system is democratic and based on political pluralism.
- b) Influenced me/my students/ my child to be politically affiliated with one of the Palestinian political parties.
- c) Influenced me/my students/ my child to strengthen my attachment to the homeland.
- d) Contributes to strengthening my/ my students/ my child's faith in resisting the Israeli Occupation and consolidating the rights of the Palestinian people.
- e) Demonstrates the Palestinians' question and their aspirations.

- f) Elucidates the rights of the Palestinians in return to the lands from which they were expelled.
- g) Articulates that the Palestinian people are part of the Arab world.

2) Social Dimension Survey Questions:

- a. Articulates that the Palestinian society is dominated by brotherhood and tolerance between Muslims and Christians.
- b. Equates between mosque and church.
- c. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum includes the names of the Palestinian occupied towns and villages.
- d. Affirms that discrimination among students, according to the academic level or social class, leads to poor teamwork inside and outside the school.
- e. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum prepares students to be adhering to the land and keeping it.
- f. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights that Palestinians are supporters of the comprehensive peace.
- g. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in the Israeli jails.

3) Ideological Dimension Survey Question:

- a. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum emphasises that Holy Books such as Quran, the Torah and the Gospel have the same sanctity.
- b. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum distinguishes between the Dome of the Rock mosque and Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- c. Contributes to increasing religious faith.
- d. Promotes that the negotiations with the Israeli Occupation is the way to gain the Palestinian rights.
- e. Promotes that Islam is a comprehensive life system.
- f. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets.
- g. Accepts that resisting the Israeli Occupation is a terrorist action.
- h. Endorses in the Palestinian curriculum that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is due to religious conflict.
- i. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum contributes to promoting the spiritual and emotional link between students and religious holy places of Palestine.

- j. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum calls on respecting the intellectual pluralism and the national unity.

Secondly, the qualitative data is collected from the political and educational leaders participating in the study. The main questions used to understand how the present socio-political conditions and challenges shape the educational system in GS and WB from the political and educational leaders perspective based on the quantitative data. The main interview questions that are used to address the first research question:

- 1) What do you think of those who say that education in Palestine is politicised? Which political party controls education in Palestine? Who is controlling it? In addition, what ideology is promoted through education?
- 2) Is political Islam involved in the development of the objectives of national and social education; considering the fact they are not part of the PLO? In addition, why?
- 3) How the rift between the two major political parties (Fatah in WB and Hamas in GS) affected the education system in Palestine? Do you think, education was used as a tool to do so?
- 4) 7. Does the Palestinian curriculum represent the Palestinian cause in terms of history, geography and citizenship?
- 5) What is the ideology that the current education system avoids and does not mention and educational and political leaders see it as a crime?

To sum up, the first research question is addressed using quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data is collected using 24 survey closed-ended questions representing three dimensions, political, social, and ideological. As for the qualitative data, five interview questions are used to enrich the quantitative data. The perceptions of students, teachers, and guardians regarding the factors influencing the educational system in WB and GS are addressed in the second research question.

The second research question explores the perceptions of students, teachers, and guardians of the influencing factors educational system in Palestine. This research question focused on quantitative and qualitative data using surveys conducted for students, teachers, and guardians. For the quantitative part, in addition to the same survey questions were used to generate the required quantitative data for the first research question, the following political orientation questions were used measure the level of politicisation in society and schools.

- 1) Would you like to be a member of a political party? Yes (1)/ No (2). (1A) If Yes, which political party?
- 2) Which factor influenced you the most to be affiliated with a particular party?
Curriculum (1) Teacher (2) Family (3)
- 3) How old were you when you became politically affiliated? Less than 12 Years (1) 12 to 15 Years (2) 15 to 18 Years (3) 18 to 21 Years (4) 21 Years or higher (5)
- 4) Did you change your political affiliation from a political party to another? Yes (1)/ No (2)
- 5) How many times did you change your political affiliation from a political party to another? Once (1)/ Twice (2) Three or more times (3)
- 6) What are the reasons that make you change the membership of a political party to another? Curriculum(1) Teacher(2) Family(3)

In addition to the closed-ended and political orientation questions, an open-ended question is added to collect qualitative data from participating students, teachers, and guardians with regards to the main factors currently influencing education and what is required to improve education in Palestine. The perception of the participating political and educational leaders regarding the necessary conditions to develop the educational system in Palestine is addressed using interview.

The third research question perception of the participating political and educational leaders regarding the necessary conditions to develop the educational system in Palestine using qualitative data collected through interviews. The main interview questions that are used to address the third research question are:

- 1) Does the Palestinian educational system meet the aspirations of Palestinian political leaders? And how is that?
- 2) What are the most important political leaders' plans to promote education in Palestine? And how they will be executed?
- 3) Which actions should be taken to neutralise education in Palestine and make it respond to Palestinian national call?
- 4) Does the Ministry of Education in Palestine provide children with relevant and up to date education?

Additional to the previous four interview questions and discussion of quantitative and qualitative data collected from students, teachers, and guardians, interviewees were given the

opportunity to add more information concerning the necessary actions required for improving the quality of education in Palestine.

To summarise, the quantitative and qualitative data collected from stakeholders through formal survey instruments or interview questions are aligned with the study research questions. Each of the research questions is directly connected with the theoretical framework as the interpretation of the results is based on the principals of critical pedagogy theory.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Researchers face several challenges when collecting data from the participants in Palestine due to several factors. Khatib et al. (2016) report that Israeli checkpoints and roadblocks, the separation wall, and military presence in WB restricted movement and limited access of research participants. Therefore, movement restriction in WB was an expected challenge to this study. In addition to this challenge, movement from WB to GS and vice versa was the second challenge. This movement is only allowed to the pathological cases, and some of these pathological cases were arrested at Israeli checkpoints. Thus, the researcher studied the possibility of accessing the participants without negatively affecting the participants and the assistant researchers.

Due to the political rift between the two major political parties, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) prohibited the members of educational institutions from addressing their political affiliation explicitly. This was the third challenge to this study as several participating students and teachers preferred not to answer the political identity questions.

The inability of the researcher to access the areas of WB posed another challenge resulting in non-participation of students, teachers and parents in the mobilisation of special tools of the study because they feared for their lives. They have been pursued by the Israeli occupation forces or the security systems or followed by the Palestinian National Authority. This was especially true if the political parties are religious and do not fall under the umbrella of the PLO (e.g. Hamas, Islamic Jihad) or if the parties which are opposed to Oslo Peace Accord with the Israeli government, such as the Popular Front for Liberation of Palestine. The fourth

challenge was the nature of the study as Palestinians fear to share their political identity explicitly.

The presence of the previously mentioned challenges dictated exploring alternative methods of data collection other than just visiting schools and universities. Hence, to be able to collect this data, the researcher recruited experienced researchers who have conducted similar studies to assist in the data collection of this study. Circumstances differ in WB as eight assistant researchers were recruited due to the movement restrictions and the fear of having the filled questionnaires confiscated at the Israeli Occupation checkpoints. Those eight researchers were sent a softcopy of the questionnaires to print, enter the data to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) after questionnaires are being filled, and send it back to the researcher daily. In GS, two researchers were recruited to do the same. The recruited researchers have field data collection experience as they were trained for the national census data collection. Their experience encouraged the approach of collecting data from students at homes rather than collecting the data in schools.

The researcher called for a video conferencing meeting to explain the data collection, data entry, and data validation process to the assistant researchers. This session was also a brainstorming session to discuss what challenges they might face and possible ways to overcome them. The researchers were asked to sign a contract to ensure that they follow the research ethics and confidentiality of the data.

Sax, Gilmartin and Bryant (2003) believe that paper-based surveys have higher response rate than online surveys. Thus, it was decided to administer paper-based questionnaires. An informed consent form that included the research objectives and participants' rights were distributed to students before the administration of the survey and the assistant researchers explained it to them in Arabic. Participants were informed of their rights and assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. Participation was voluntary. The data from the demographic and closed-ended questions were entered into SPSS for analysis using appropriate statistical tests while thematic analysis was used to analyse the responses from the open-ended questions.

The researcher prepared the SPSS template for data entry. The coding of closed-ended questions is presented next to the possible response. An authentic data collection strategy guarantees a great deal of objectivity and accuracy of the obtained responses. Thus, it has been agreed with the assistant researchers to take the following steps in order to consider the filled

questionnaire a valid response. Before entering the responses to the SPSS, the assistant researchers made sure that the participant signed the consent form if he/she is older than 18 years and his/her guardian signed the consent form if they were younger than 18 years old. The second step was to ensure that the responses were completed appropriately and entirely on the hardcopy. Once the above two conditions were achieved, the completed questionnaire was valid and was given a unique serial number. The data was entered into SPSS reviewed by another researcher to maintain high accuracy level.

3.7 QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

The employed research methods dictated that the quantitative and qualitative data be analysed separately (e.g. using qualitative data analysis techniques for qualitative methods and quantitative data analysis techniques for quantitative methods) (Brace, Kemp & Snelgar 2009; Bryman 2012; Niglas 2004; Sandelowski 2000). In other words, descriptive and inferential statistical tests were used to analyse the data from the closed-ended questions of the questionnaires, whereas thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected from the responses to the open-ended questions of the three questionnaires. Then, the results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis were integrated at the interpretative level during which the researcher went through the qualitative and quantitative findings, compared and assessed the results, and formulated a conclusion about how the qualitative and quantitative research findings addressed the research questions (Creswell & Clark 2011; Greene, 2007).

For the analysis of the quantitative data, the researcher created a database to gather the data from the questionnaires. Statistical values were calculated using descriptive and inferential statistics techniques, such as percentages, arithmetic means, frequencies, standard error of the means, standard deviation, independent samples *t*-test and F-test analysis of variance (ANOVA) using the SPSS version 22.0 to carry out the analysis of the quantitative data (Muijs 2011).

Greene (2007) suggests five steps in order to effectively analyse quantitative data. These five steps are: (1) data cleaning process in which invalid responses were excluded, (2) data reduction process in which raw data were analysed into descriptive statistics and descriptive themes, (3) data transformation process during which data from different assistant researchers

were consolidated (e.g. consolidating students, teachers, and guardians responses for each question to come up with an overall theme for the interview questions), (4) data comparison and correlation process during which patterns of relationship and/or differences were investigated, and (5) finally, higher-order analysis conducted by the researcher to draw conclusions or inferences.

For the first and second sections (demographic and the political identity sections), descriptive analysis measures, such as frequencies and percentages were calculated. The third section, both types of statistics: descriptive and inferential were calculated. The descriptive statistical analysis using mean, standard deviation, standard error mean, and the percentage is discussed for each of the 24 statements per participating group (students, teachers, and guardians) with some graphical representation indicating the level of agreement with each statement (ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree). Secondly, inferential statistical tests, such as independent samples *t*-test which is used to find out if there is a statistically significant difference in means between participants according to location and gender, and finally ANOVA test using *Scheffe Post-hoc* test is used to find out if there is any statistically significant difference in mean according to participant type (student, teacher, and guardian).

The independent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine if the difference in mean is statistically significant among participants pertinent to location (WB and GS) and gender (Male and Female). The *p*-value that is less than 0.05 indicates that there exists a significant statistical difference in means between males and females or participants of WB as compared to their counterparts of GS. The positive sign (+) added before the *p*-value in the analysis section indicates that males have significant mean compared to females for the gender, whereas it means the mean value of WB participants is significant compared to their counterparts of GS when analysing the mean values per location.

3.8 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

This section presents the way thematic analysis pertinent to the open-ended question and the semi-structured interviews will be conducted. The software application, Nvivo, was utilised throughout the analysis of qualitative data. The process of analysing the responses to the open-ended question and the interview responses was carried out using six steps (see Figure 6) (Saldaña 2013, 2015) and Cerritos College (2016).

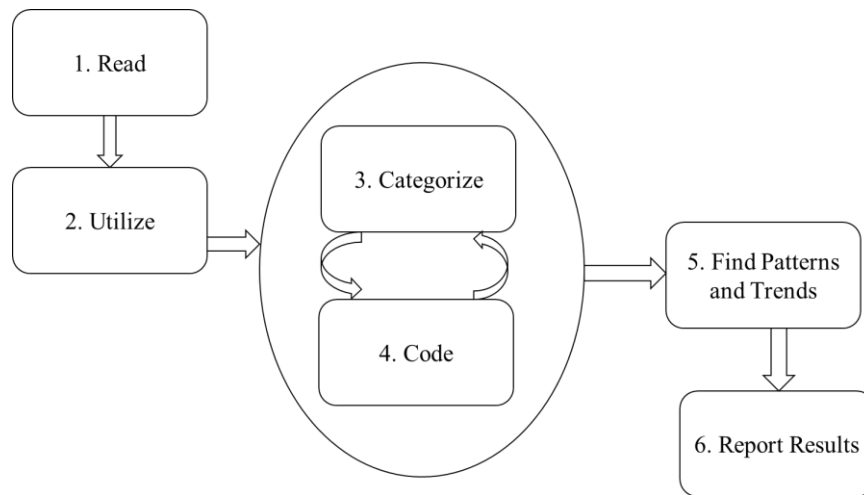


Figure 6: Thematic Analysis of Survey Open-Ended Question

The first step was meant to read all the statements carefully and understand the meaning of each statement. The second step was meant to utilise each statement by ensuring that each statement includes only one idea. Statements that have more than one idea were split into smaller statements with one single idea each. The third step was meant to put statements with similar ideas into one category. During this process, names of categories were evolving and sometimes merging categories or generating new categories. The final list of the categories was coded under themes. Each theme represents a variety of ideas within the same theme. Once themes were constructed, the fifth step started by ensuring that statements within each theme are arranged to find patterns or trends so that they can be used to report the results in the sixth step.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Researchers determine the importance of ensuring firm implementation of research ethics throughout the stages of the study, particularly on the daily interactions between the researcher and the participants (Creswell 2011; Glesne 2006; Lincoln 2009; Mertens & Ginsberg 2009; Stake 2005). To that end, the researcher adhered to BUiD's ethical code of conduct. He made sure that all participants were aware of the objectives of the study, and that no data was collected before obtaining informed consent from the targeted entities and participants (Appendix 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7). Furthermore, to maintain the dignity of all participants as well as the validity of the entire research, a well-established ethical consideration was carefully designed. Firstly, the researcher distributed an informed consent form suggested and approved by the British University in Dubai (BUiD) before conducting questionnaires and interviews

every time it is needed (Fraenkel & Wallen 1993). All participants were asked to sign the form to ensure privacy and confidentiality. This consent form informed the participants of their commitments and responsibilities as well as the researcher's commitments and responsibilities. Secondly, all participants were fully informed of all aspects of the research in order to avoid deception including their willingness to continue with all their questions and concerns addressed and taken into account (Fraenkel et al. 2015). Finally, significant differences within the research population (cultural, social, religious and gender) were taken into consideration in the planning, conducting and reporting the research. As for the students, a letter was sent to their parents/guardians to assure them that their children would not be at risk by taking part in the present study (Appendix 5). Furthermore, the researcher anticipated that risks to participants were minimised because their anonymity was maintained during data collection, and the data was used only for the purpose of the research. Additionally, the collected data were kept in a safe place till the dissemination of the results. Then, a shredder was used to get rid of all hard copies, whereas the soft copies were deleted.

The methodology chapter thoroughly explained the research approach, methods, validity, reliability, and ethical consideration of the study. In the next section, the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data is presented. Furthermore, the next chapter presents the integration of the quantitative and qualitative to highlight the main findings of this study.

4 CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS

This chapter analyses the data collected from the participants in this study. The chapter is divided into seven main sections, namely: analysis of demographic data, analysis of political identity questions, descriptive results, analysis of the survey closed-ended questions, analysis of the survey open-ended questions, analysis of the interviews, and finally integrated data. Discussion of the results in relation to theoretical framework and literature is conducted in the discussion and conclusion chapters.

4.1 ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

This section presents the analysis of the demographic data. Table 12 presents the number and percentage of Students, Teachers, and Guardians who responded to the survey from the two major study areas, WB and GS. The analysis shows that 47% (out of 1,705) students were from WB, 44% (out of 623) teachers were from GS and 57% (out of 611) guardians were from WB. This shows the even distribution (51% from WB compared to 49% from GS) of participants from WB and GS. To ensure fair distribution of participants pertinent to demographic factors, particularly gender, Table 13 illustrates the results.

Location	Student	Teacher	Guardian	Total
WB	802(47%)	349(56%)	348(57%)	1,499(51%)
GS	903(53%)	274(44%)	263(43%)	1,440(49%)
Total	1,705	623	611	2,939

Table 12: Number and Percentage of Participants According to Geographic Location

The gender distribution is presented in Table 13. The analysis of the data discloses that there were more male participants than female participants at 1,718 (58%) for males and 1,221 (42%) for females. Furthermore, the percentage of male participants to students, teachers and guardians were 56%, 57% and 66%, respectively. Additional demographic factors were examined pertinent to participants' distribution.

Gender	Student	Teacher	Guardian	Total
Male	959(56%)	354(57%)	405(66%)	1,718(58%)
Female	746(44%)	269(43%)	206(34%)	1,221(42%)
Total	1,705	623	611	2,939

Table 13: Number and Percentage of Participants According to Gender

The number and percentage of participants according to the living area in WB and GS are illustrated in Table 14. The analysis of the data indicates that urban participants are leading

with higher rates compared to participants from rural areas and refugee camps. The percentage of the urban student, teacher, and guardian participants are 54%, 50%, and 42% respectively. On the other side, refugee camp participants are of greater consistency as a student, teacher, and guardian participants are 18%, 22%, and 21% respectively. Participants from rural areas varied as the percentages of participating students, teachers, and guardians were 28%, 28%, and 37% respectively. Overall participation was 30% from rural, 20% from refugee camps, and 50% from urban areas. Education background as a demographic component was also studied. Analysis of findings from the education background demographic factor are presented in Table 15.

Living Area	Student	Teacher	Guardian	Total
Rural	472(28%)	176(28%)	225(37%)	873(30%)
Refugee	315(18%)	136(22%)	130(21%)	581(20%)
Urban	918(54%)	311(50%)	256(42%)	1,485(51%)
Total	1,705	623	611	2,939

Table 14: Number and Percentage of Participants According to Living Area

Table 15 presents the numbers and percentages of participating students, teachers, and guardians of WB and GS according to their educational background. Participating students' academic backgrounds were as follows: 12% from primary (Less than 12 years old), 27% from preparatory (13 to 15 Years old), 31% from secondary (16 to 18 years old), and 30% from university (18 to 24 years old). Teachers' background as of their highest academic qualification is also presented here: 9% for Diploma (studied two years after high school), 71% for Bachelor, 15% for Masters, and 6% for Doctorate. As for participating guardians, almost 45% of the participants have completed high school or less, 16% hold Diploma (studied two years after high school) degrees, 35% hold Bachelor degree and 5% hold Masters or Doctorate. This analysis shows that the collected data from students, teachers, and students involve participants from the various academic background from WB and GS. This academic background is followed by analysing the demographic factor of participants' age. The age of participants is grouped into intervals of five-year length starting from the age of 10 (see Table 16).

Student		Teacher		Guardian	
Primary	204(12%)	Diploma	55(9%)	Illiterate	11(2%)
Preparatory	465(27%)	Bachelor	440(71%)	Basic Read and Write	90(15%)
Secondary	521(31%)	Master	93(15%)	High School or Less	171(28%)
University	515(30%)	Doctorate	35(6%)	Diploma	95(16%)
---	---	---	---	Bachelor	215(35%)
---	---	---	---	Master's or Higher	29(5%)
Total	1705		623		611

Table 15: Number and Percentage of Participants According to Education Background

Table 15 presents the distribution of participating students, teachers, and guardians from WB and GS according to their age group. The analysis reveals that 98% of the participating students are aged between ten and 24 years old. As for the teachers, 99% of participating teachers were aged between 25 and 63 years old. All guardian participants were older than 25 years old. Three additional demographic factors were pertinent to teachers namely teachers' specialisation, years of experience, and the level they currently teach. Additional demographic factors pertinent to guardians' employers are presented in this study.

Age	Student	Teacher	Guardians	Total
10 to 14	387 (23%)	---	---	387 (13%)
15 to 19	976 (57%)	---	---	976 (33%)
20 to 24	312 (18%)	9 (1%)	1 (0%)	322 (11%)
25 to 29	25 (1%)	108 (17%)	32 (5%)	165 (6%)
30 to 34	4 (0%)	148 (24%)	88 (14%)	240 (8%)
35 to 39	---	134 (22%)	136 (22%)	270 (9%)
40 to 44	1 (0%)	77 (12%)	139 (23%)	217 (7%)
45 to 49	---	63 (10%)	104 (17%)	167 (6%)
50 to 54	---	56 (9%)	67 (11%)	123 (4%)
55 to 59	---	23 (4%)	22 (4%)	45 (2%)
60 or higher	---	5 (1%)	22 (4%)	27 (1%)
Total	1,705	623	611	2,939

Table 16: Number and Percentage of Participants According to Age Group

Further analysis of teachers' specialisation is presented in figure 7. Out of 623 participating teachers, 446 (72%) were specialized in subjects that are considered to be Humanities, such as Religion, Languages (Arabic or English), Geography, History, Education, Arts, Music, and Physical Education and 177 (28%) have a Science background such as Mathematics, Technology, Engineering, and Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, or Geology). The participating teachers currently teach in primary, preparatory, secondary, or university levels. The teachers' current teaching level is presented in Figure 8.

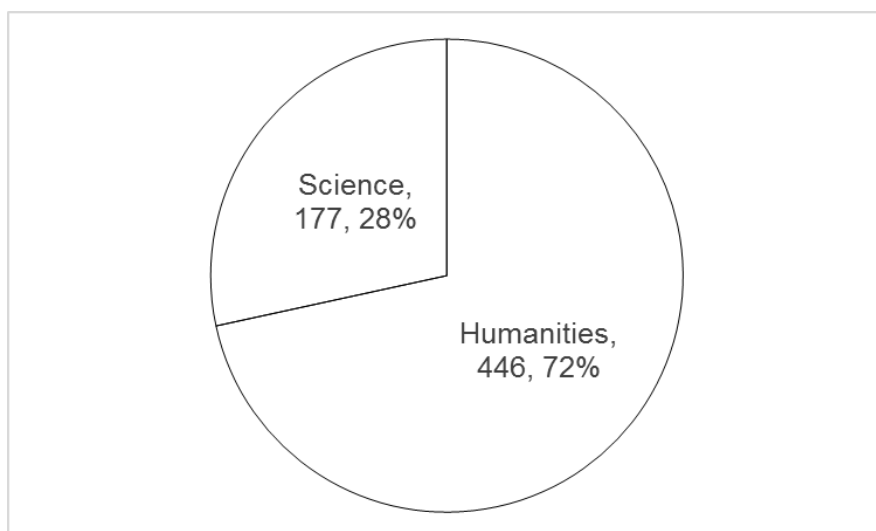


Figure 7: Distribution of Participating Teachers According to their Major

Participating teachers are distributed according to the academic level they currently teach, classified as primary, preparatory, secondary, or university. Figure 2 illustrates the number of teachers according to the school level they currently teach. Data reveals that the participating teachers are currently teaching as follows: 152 (24%) primary, 185 (30%) preparatory, 202 (32%) secondary, and 84 (13%) university. The years of experience is the last demographic factor used for teachers and it is presented in Figure 9.

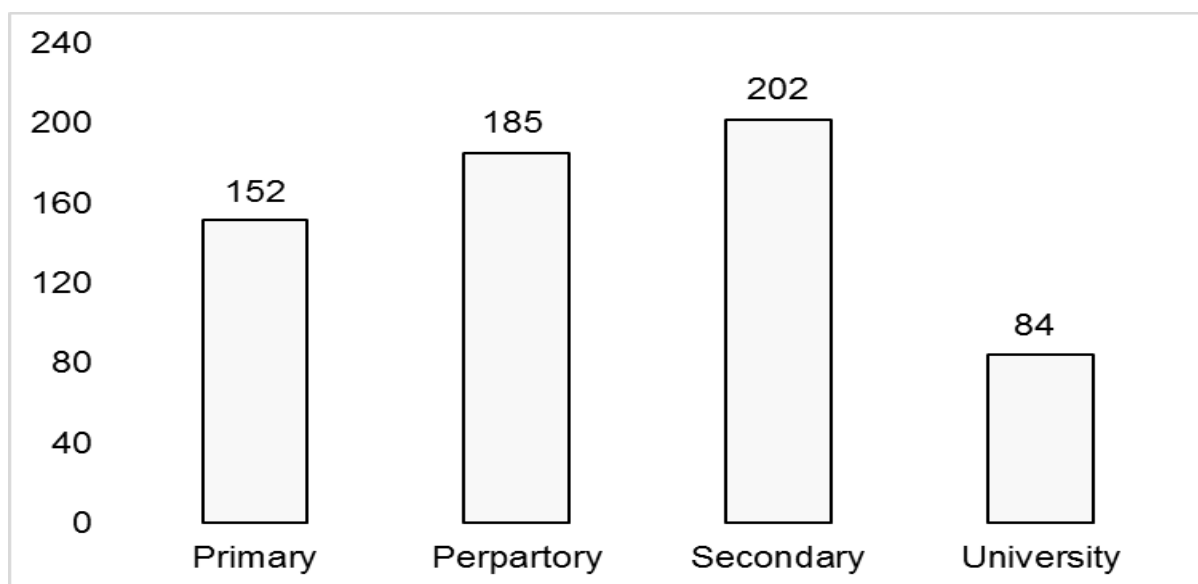


Figure 8: Distribution of Participating Teachers According to the Level they teach

Figure 9 shows that 476 (76%) of the participating teachers have at least five years of teaching experience whereas, the remaining 24% have less than five years of teaching experience. The highest participating group (31%) has five to ten years of experience. Additional demographic factors pertinent to employers of guardians is presented in Figure 10.

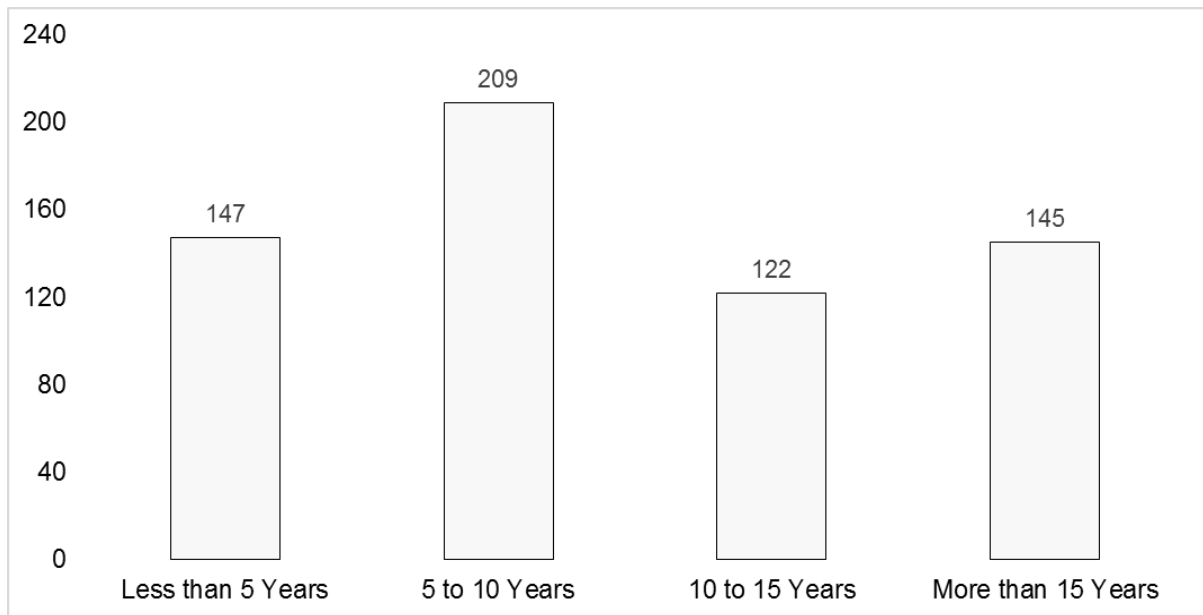


Figure 9: Distribution of Participating Teachers According to Years of Experience

A total number of Guardians 569 (93%) who participated in this study responded to the question pertinent to their employers (see Figure 4). The majority (41%) stated that they were self-employed, 30% currently worked for the public sector, and 23% were employed in the private sector. A presentation of the number of participants considering several demographic factors is shown in Table 5.

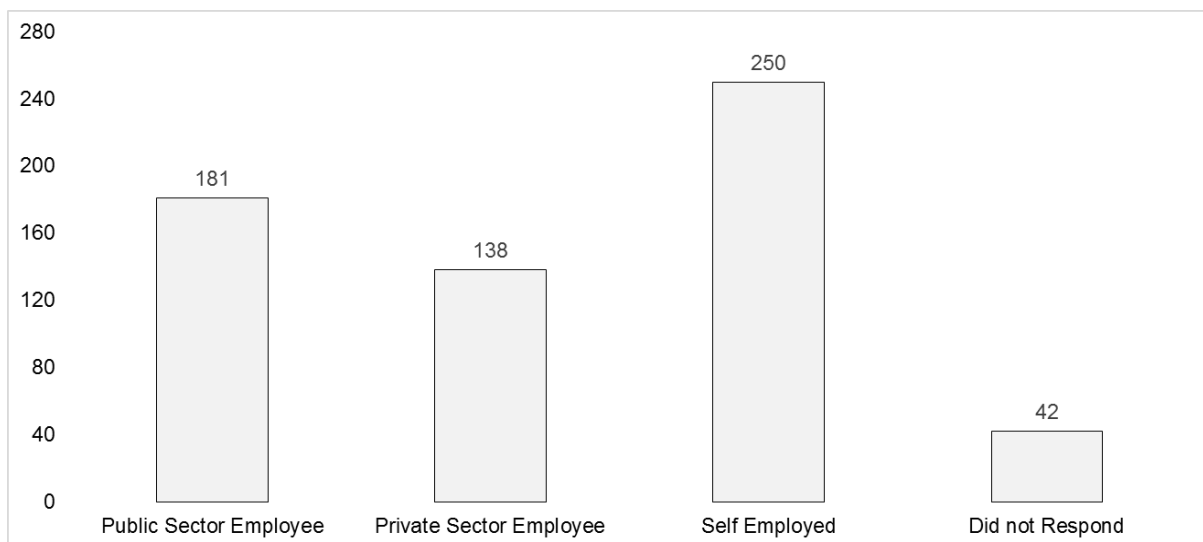


Figure 10: Distribution of Participating Guardians According to Their Employers

Table 17 presents the number of participants considering several demographic factors, such as Location, Living Area, Gender, and Survey Type (Student, Teacher, Guardian). This analysis shows that the respondents to this study are representing all aimed demographic factors with reasonable percentages.

Location	Gender	Survey	Rural	Refugee Camp	Urban	Total
WB	Male	Student	266	58	129	453
		Teacher	86	18	76	180
		Guardian	110	34	51	195
	Female	Student	177	38	134	349
		Teacher	74	42	53	169
		Guardian	86	29	38	153
GS	Male	Student	22	149	335	506
		Teacher	7	53	114	174
		Guardian	16	47	147	210
	Female	Student	7	70	320	397
		Teacher	9	23	68	100
		Guardian	13	20	20	53
Total			873	581	1,485	2,939

Table 17: Number of Participants According to Several Demographic Factors

To sum up the demographic result section, the study considers five common demographic factors among the three participating groups: Students, Teachers, and Guardians. These five demographic factors are: Location (WB or GS), Living Area (Rural, Refugee Camp, or Urban), Gender, Age, and Educational Background (Illiterate, Basic Read and Write, Primary, Preparatory, Secondary, Diploma, Bachelor, Master, or Doctorate). Three additional demographic factors were added to the teachers' questionnaire. These three factors are Specialization (Humanities or Science), Years of Experience, and the Academic Level they currently teach at (Primary, Preparatory, Secondary, or University). In addition to the common demographic factors, Guardians were asked to respond to additional demographic factors related to their employers. The analysis shows that all segments of Palestinians were represented according to the identified demographic factors. This enriches the analysis of socio-economic aspects of Palestinian education from the participants' point of view.

4.2 ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL IDENTITY QUESTIONS

The purpose of this section is to understand the political background of participants in relation to Palestinian popular political parties using six questions. These six questions were asked to the three participating groups using different forms. The way the question was formulated for each group is presented prior to disclosing the results of the analysis. The purpose of including these questions was to explore the political orientation of the participating students, teachers, and guardians. The six questions provide a base to understand the (1) political affiliation of participants, (2) influential factors of student's political affiliation, (3) age of students at the time of political affiliation, (4) changing political affiliation by students, (5) number of times

students change their political affiliation, and (6) influential factors for changing political affiliation.

Student	Teacher	Guardian
(1) Would you like to be a member in a political party? Yes (1)/ No (2)	(1) Would you like to be affiliated with a political party? Yes (1)/ No (2)	(1) Do you belong to a political party? Yes (1)/ No (2)
1A) If Yes, which political party?	1A) If Yes, which political party?	1A) If Yes, which political party?
(2) Which factor influenced you the most to be affiliated with a particular party? Curriculum (1) Teacher (2) Family (3)	(2) Which factor influenced your students the most to be affiliated with a particular party? Curriculum(1)Teacher(2) Family(3)	(2) Which factor influenced your child (ren) the most to be affiliated with a particular party? Curriculum(1) Teacher (2) Family (3)
(3) How old were you when you became politically affiliated? Less than 12 Years (1) 12 to 15 Years (2) 15 to 18 Years (3) 18 to 21 Years (4) 21 Years or higher (5)	(3) What is the approximate age when students start disclosing their political affiliation? Less than 12 Years (1) 12 to 15 Years (2) 15 to 18 Years (3) 18 to 21 Years (4) 21 Years or higher (5)	(3) How old was your child when s/he became politically affiliated? Less than 12 Years (1) 12 to 15 Years (2) 15 to 18 Years (3) 18 to 21 Years (4) 21 Years or higher (5)
(4) Did you change your political affiliation from a political party to another? Yes (1)/ No (2)	(4) Do students change their academic affiliation with a political party to another through the stages of study? Yes (1)/ No (2)	(4) Did your child change his/her political affiliation from a political party to another through the stages of study? Yes (1)/ No (2)
(5) How many times did you change your political affiliation from a political party to another? Once (1)/ Twice (2) Three or more times (3)	(5) If yes, how many times did the student change his belonging from a political party to another through your teaching to him? Once (1)/ Twice (2) Three or more times (3)	(5) If yes, how many times did your son changed his belonging from a political party to another through the stages of study? Once (1)/ Twice (2) Three or more times (3)
(6) What are the reasons that make you change the membership of a political party to another? Curriculum(1)Teacher(2) Family(3)	(6) What are the reasons for the students to change the membership of a political party to another? Curriculum(1)Teacher(2) Family(3)	(6) What are the reasons for the child to change the membership of a political party to another through the stages of study? Curriculum(1)Teacher(2) Family(3)

Table 18: Political Identity Survey Questions

Question 1: Political Affiliation of Participants

Participants were asked about their political affiliation. The expected answer to this question (see Table 19) was either “Yes” or “No”. Those who responded yes, were asked a follow-up question which is highlighted later.

Participant	Question
Student	Would you like to be a member in a political party?
Teacher	Would you like to be affiliated with a political party?
Guardian	Do you belong to a political party?

Table 19: Political Affiliation Status

Figure 11 shows the number and percentage of responses obtained from Students, Teachers, and Guardians. The highest political affiliation was among students with 53% and the lowest among teachers with 41%. Half of the guardians expressed explicitly that they were affiliated with a political party. The percentages were so close when comparing students and guardian percentages. The participants who are politically affiliated were asked a follow-up question, “If yes, what is the political party which you like to belong to?” to learn about the name of the political party with which they were affiliated.

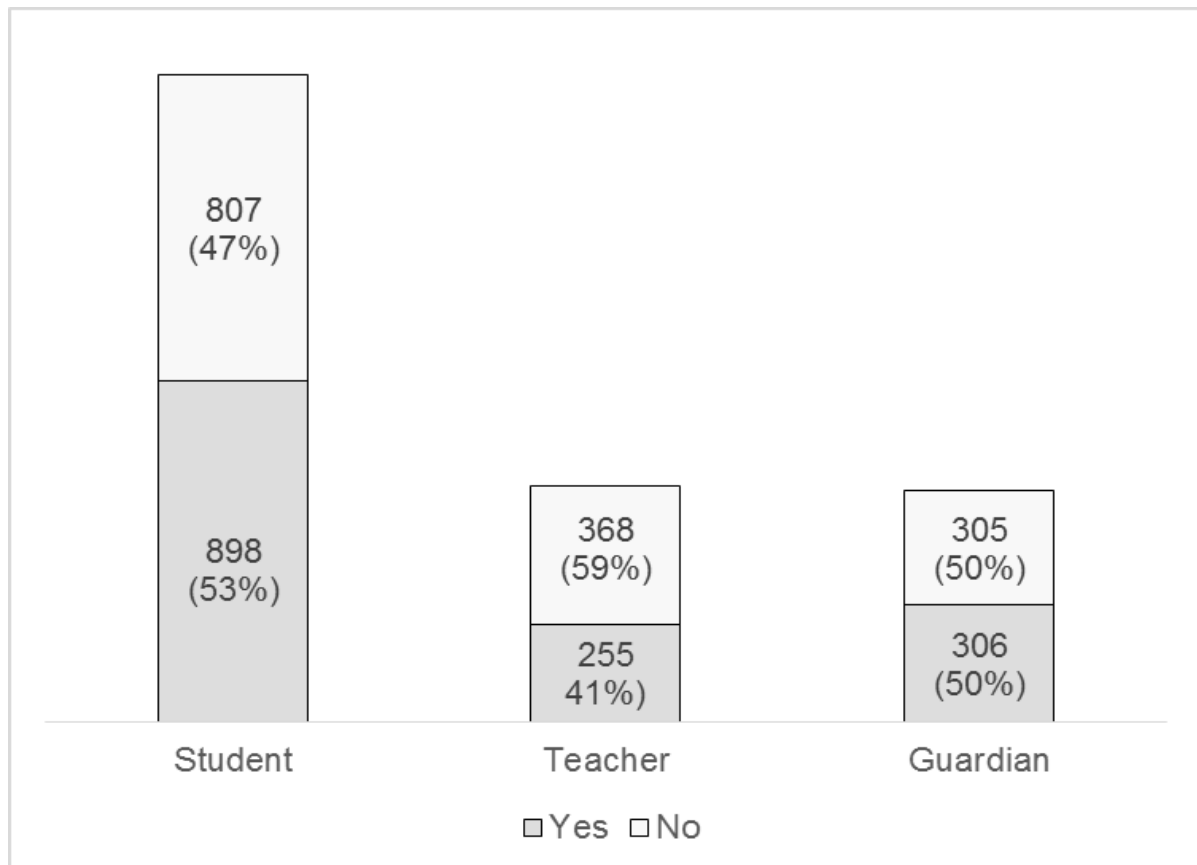


Figure 11: Political Affiliation Status of Participants

The participants who responded to the follow-up question of the political affiliation status selected the political party with which they were affiliated. The highest affiliation was with Fatah, followed by Hamas, then Popular Front for The Liberation, and the lowest was Islamic Jihad. The analysis of the collected data reveals that 45% of students were affiliated with Fatah, 38% with Hamas, 10% with the Popular Front for the Liberation, and the remaining 6% with Islamic Jihad. With regard to teachers, their political affiliation was 52% with Fatah, 23% with Hamas, 14% with the Popular Front for the Liberation, and 10% with Islamic Jihad. The guardians’ distribution was 56% with Fatah, 28% with Hamas, 6% with the Popular Front for

the Liberation, and 9% with Islamic Jihad. The summary of participants' political affiliation is illustrated in Table 20.

Political Party	Student	Teacher	Guardian
Popular Front for the Liberation	89(10%)	37(14%)	18(6%)
Islamic Jihad	55(6%)	26(10%)	28(9%)
Hamas	342(38%)	59(23%)	86(28%)
Fatah	412(45%)	133(52%)	172(56%)
Others	14(2%)	1(0%)	2(1%)
Total	912	256	306

Table 20: Political Party Affiliation

Question 2: Influential Factors of Student's Political Affiliation

Participants were asked about the factors which influenced students to be affiliated with a political party. The options given to the question (see Table 21) were "Educational Curriculum", "Teacher", or "Family".

Participant	Question
Student	What factor influenced you the most to be affiliated with a particular party?
Teacher	What factor influenced your students the most to be affiliated with a particular party?
Guardian	What factor influenced your child (ren) the most to be affiliated with a particular party?

Table 21: Influence of Political Affiliation Status

The responses of participants indicate that students are mostly influenced by the family political affiliation (see Figure 12). The analysis reveals that 67% of the participating students report that their political affiliation was attributed to family political affiliation. Three quarters (76%) of participating teachers reported that family political affiliation shaped their children's political affiliation, whereas, 78% of participating guardians responded that family contribute to shaping the political affiliation of their children. From the student perspective, the second influential factor after family political affiliation is the educational curriculum. About 20% of the participating students indicated that they believed that educational curriculum shaped their political orientation, whereas 13% of them indicated that they believed that teachers are the most influential factor for their political orientation. From the teachers' perspective, teachers are the second influential factor (14%), followed by educational curriculum (10%). About 11% of the participating guardians believed that educational curriculum and teacher have the same weight in influencing and shaping students' political affiliation. The results of the question pertinent to the age of students when they selected to be politically affiliated is presented in Table 23.

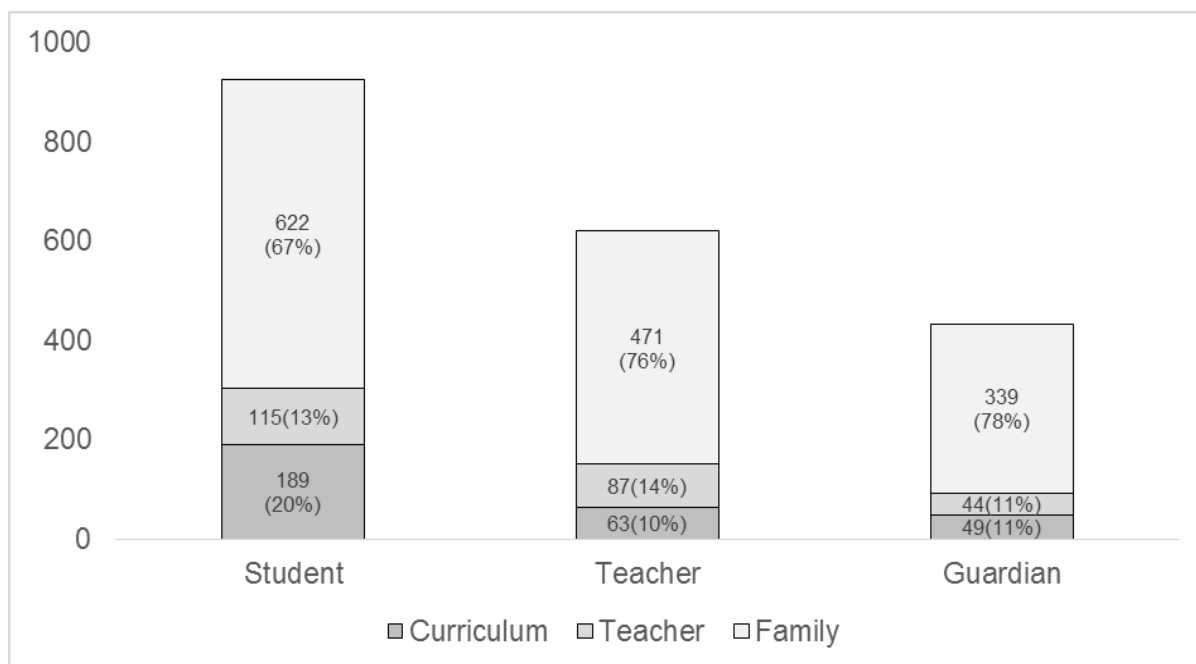


Figure 12: Influential Student Factors to be affiliated with a Political Party

Question 3: Age of students at the time of Political Affiliation

Participants were asked about the age of students when they became politically affiliated in a different way (see Table 22). The choices provided to participants were “less than 12 Years”, “12 to 15 Years”, “15 to 18 years”, “18 to 21 years”, and “more than 21 years”.

Participant	Question
Student	How old were you when you became politically affiliated?
Teacher	What is the approximate age when students start disclosing their political affiliation?
Guardian	How old was your child when s/he became politically affiliated?

Table 22: Survey Question- Age of students when they become politically affiliated

Participating students (see Table 23) disclosed the age at which they became politically affiliated. Interestingly, 59% of the participating students became politically affiliated when they were less than twelve years. However, 22% of participating students disclosed that they became politically affiliated when they were aged between 12 and 15 years. This indicates that 81% of the participating students became politically affiliated when they were 15 years or less. Over half of the participating teachers (54%) and guardians (57%) believe that students become politically affiliated when they are of age less than 15 years old. The analysis also discloses that almost one-third of participating teachers (28%) and guardians (27%) believe that the age of students when they become politically affiliated is between 15 and 18 (High School Stage).

The analysed data also reveal that the lowest percentage of participants believe that students are politically affiliated when they were of age higher than 18 years. This question led to the next question which is meant to determine whether political affiliation changes with age.

Student Age	According to the response of:		
	Student	Teacher	Guardian
Less than 12	546(59%)	138(22%)	108(28%)
From 12 to 15	202(22%)	200(32%)	112(29%)
From 15 to 18	111(12%)	175(28%)	104(27%)
From 18 to 21	50(5%)	75(12%)	41(11%)
21 Years and higher	9(1%)	33(5%)	21(5%)
Total	918	621	386

Table 23: Analysis- Age of students when they become politically affiliated

Question 4: Changing Political Affiliation by Students

The drive of this question is to understand the extent to which age may contribute to changes in political affiliation. Participants were asked the question differently to ensure that the question addressed their cognitive and social development. The participants were given two choices: “Yes” or “No” so that “Yes” indicated a change in political affiliation.

Participant	Question
Student	Did you change your political affiliation from a political party to another?
Teacher	Do students change their academic affiliation with a political party to another through the stages of study?
Guardian	Did your child change his/her political affiliation from a political party to another through the stages of study?

Table 24: Survey Question- Changing the political affiliation from one party to another

The majority of participants responded to this question. The analysis of the results indicated that students and guardians had nearly the same perspective with the majority (over 80%) of students not changing their political affiliation. Teachers believed that over half of the students (58%) change their political affiliation when they grow up (see figure 13). Participants were asked to disclose the approximate number of times that students change their political affiliation (see Table 25).

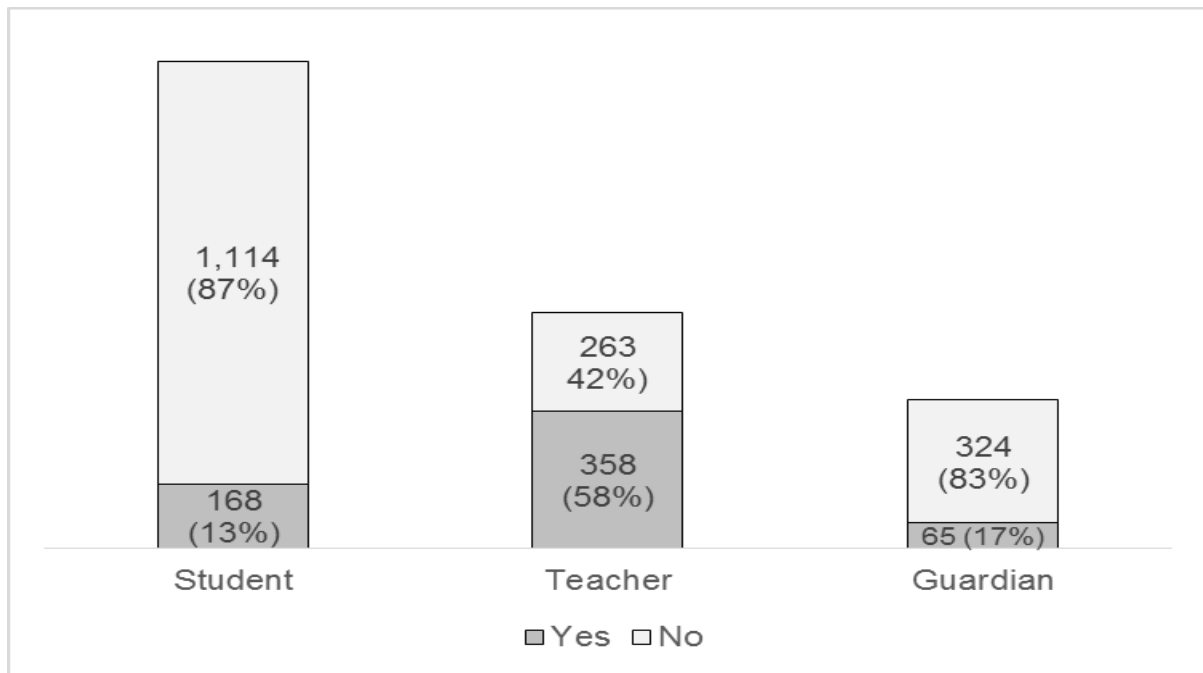


Figure 13: Analysis- Changing the political affiliation from one party to another

Question 5: Number of Times Students Change their Political Affiliation

Teachers believed that the majority of students change their political affiliation from one party to another. The participants who believed that students change their political affiliation from one political party to another were asked about the approximate number of times this change takes place. The participants were given four choices: “Once”, “Twice”, “Three Times”, and “Four Times or More”.

Participant	Question
Student	How many times did you change your political affiliation from a political party to another?
Teacher	If yes, how many times did the student change his belonging from a political party to another through your teaching to him?
Guardian	If yes, how many times did your son changed his belonging from a political party to another through the stages of study?

Table 25: Survey Question- Number of Times Students Change their political affiliation from one party to another

Three-quarters of the participating students (76%) and guardians (75%) indicated that students change their political affiliation from a political party to another once during their study stages whereas one-half of the teachers (52%) believed that students change their political affiliation once. The fourth quarter of participating students and guardians disclosed that students do change their political affiliation at least two times. Teachers revealed that almost half of their students (48%) change their political affiliation two times or more (see Table 26). In order to understand the factors contributing to changing the political affiliation with a political party

and joining another, participants were asked to identify most influential factors behind the change: educational curriculum, teacher, or family (see Table 27).

Age	Student	Teacher	Guardian
Once	127(76%)	185(52%)	52(75%)
Twice	24(14%)	112(31%)	15(22%)
Three Times	9(5%)	39(11%)	0(0%)
Four Times of More	8(5%)	23(6%)	2(3%)
Total	168	359	69

Table 26: Analysis- Number of Times Students Change their political affiliation from one party to another

Question 6: Influential Factors for Changing Political Affiliation

This question asked participants about possible factors that influenced students' decision to change his/her political affiliation from one political party to another. The participants were given three choices: "educational curriculum", "teacher", and "family" with the analysis presented in Table 28.

Participant	Question
Student	What are the reasons that make you change the membership of a political party to another?
Teacher	What are the reasons for the students to change the membership of a political party to another?
Guardian	What are the reasons for the child to change the membership of a political party to another through the stages of study?

Table 27: Survey Question- Most Influential Factor to Change Students political affiliation from one party to another

The analysis (see table 29) discloses that almost half of the participants (45% of students, 56% of teachers, and 49% of guardians) believed that the change in political affiliation was due to family orientation and political affiliation. Around one-third of participating students (33%) and guardians (28%) attributed the change to the educational curriculum and 23% of the participating students and guardians attributed the change to the influence of teachers. On the other side, teachers believed that they (29%) had a higher degree of influence on changing students' political affiliation compared to the current educational curriculum (14%).

Age	Student	Teacher	Guardian
Educational Curriculum	57(33%)	61(14%)	25(28%)
Teacher	40(23%)	124(29%)	20(23%)
Family	78(45%)	239(56%)	43(49%)
Total	175	424	88

Table 28: Analysis- Most Influential Factor to Change Students political affiliation from one party to another

4.3 DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS

This section discusses the results of correlating the political identity questions with the demographic questions. At the beginning, political affiliation is correlated with gender, location, and survey type to learn if demographic factors have shaped the political identity of students. Secondly, the political affiliation is correlated with gender, location, living area, and survey type are analysed and presented.

Table 29 shows the percentages of politically affiliated participants among male students (51% in WB and 64% in GS) and female students (44% in WB and 48% in GS). The political affiliation among teachers was distributed as follows: WB (54% for males and 44% for females) and GS (47% for males and 21% for females). On the other side, the political affiliation of guardians was distributed as follows: males (53% in WB and 56% in GS) and females (37% in WB and 51% in GS). The overall analysis disclosed that male participants were more likely to be politically affiliated than females. Overall, almost half of the participating students, teachers, and guardians were politically affiliated. In order to learn if the living area (rural, refugee camps, urban) shapes the political identity of participating students, teachers, and guardians, a correlational analysis using the living area as a demographic factor was used (see Table 30).

Gender	Location	Student	Teacher	Guardians
Male	WB	232(51%)	98(54%)	104(53%)
	GS	323(64%)	81(47%)	118(56%)
Female	WB	154(44%)	55(33%)	57(37%)
	GS	189(48%)	21(21%)	27(51%)
Overall	WB	386(48%)	153(44%)	161(46%)
	GS	512(57%)	102(37%)	145(55%)

Table 29: Impact of Gender and Location on Participants' Political Identity

The impact of gender, location, and living area on the political affiliation of participating students, teachers, and guardians is presented in Table 30 and Figure 14.

The data analysis indicates that male students who live in either rural or urban areas are more politically affiliated in GS (64% of rural and 69% of urban) compared to WB (51% in rural and 47% in urban). On the other side, female students living in rural areas of WB and GS show almost the same rates of political affiliation which were 44% and 43% respectively. Interestingly, the political affiliation among female students living in urban areas of GS was 48% which is higher than the number in WB which is 41%. Refugee camps students show higher rates of political affiliation among male and female students compared to rural and

urban except for the female students who live in urban areas in GS. Overall, almost half or higher percentage of students are politically affiliated regardless to their living area, gender, or location.

Participating teachers represent the segments of the study but in some instances the number of participants is low. The analysis reveals that teachers who live in refugee camps are politically affiliated with higher rates compared to their counterparts who live in rural and urban areas.

Analysis of data collected from guardians indicates that in most instances half of the participating group per living area, gender, and location are politically affiliated.

Gender	Location	Area	Student	Teacher	Guardian
Male	WB	Rural	135(51%)	53(62%)	61(55%)
		Refugee Camp	37(64%)	8(44%)	18(53%)
		Urban	60(47%)	37(49%)	25(49%)
	GS	Rural	14(64%)	6(86%)	13(81%)
		Refugee Camp	103(69%)	27(51%)	27(57%)
		Urban	206(61%)	48(42%)	78(53%)
Female	WB	Rural	78(44%)	23(31%)	31(36%)
		Refugee Camp	21(55%)	15(36%)	14(48%)
		Urban	55(41%)	17(32%)	12(32%)
	GS	Rural	3(43%)	2(22%)	7(54%)
		Refugee Camp	32(46%)	4(17%)	11(55%)
		Urban	154(48%)	15(22%)	9(45%)

Table 30: Impact of Gender, Location, and Living Area on Participants' Political Identity

To learn more about the distribution of participating students according to the demographic factors of location, gender, and age in relation to the political affiliation variable, the analysis is presented in Figure 14.

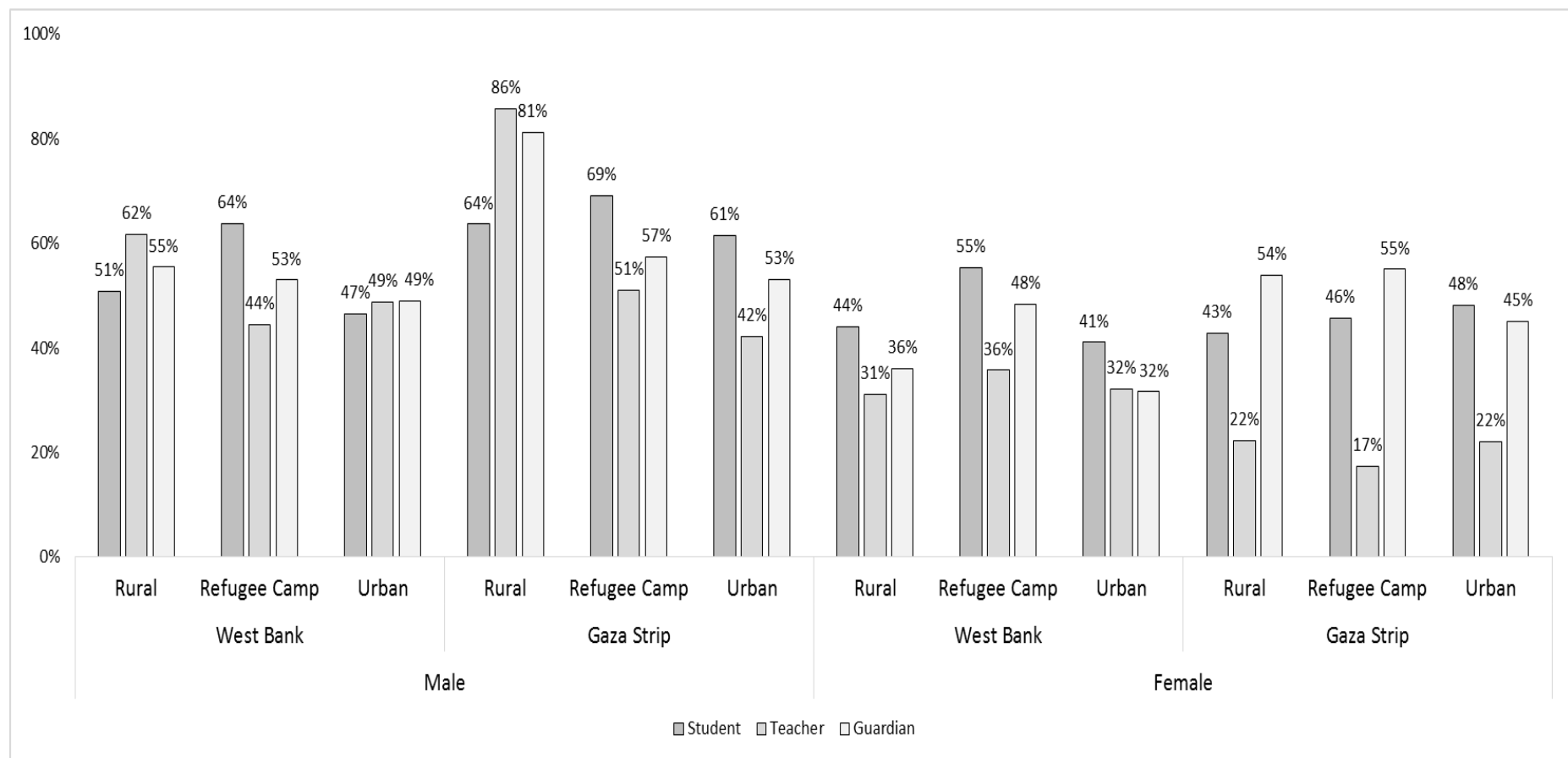


Figure 14: Impact of Gender, Location, and Living Area on Participants' Political Identity

Table 31 shows the distribution of participating students according to the demographic factors of location, gender, and age in relation to the political affiliation variable. The analysis shows that more male students of GS are politically affiliated than their counterparts in WB in all identified age groups with the highest rate being among students who were between 15 and 18 years old (i.e. High School Stage). The lowest political affiliation rates were in the age group of fewer than twelve years except for GS in which 60% of those participating students were politically affiliated. Female students of WB and GS have almost the same political affiliation rates in all age groups. Over 50% of the students in the age group 15 to 18 years old participating were politically affiliated and male students were more politically affiliated compared to females in all age groups in WB and GS.

Age Group (Years)	WB		GS	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Less than 12	3(23%)	1(13%)	15(60%)	7(32%)
12 to 15	26(37%)	36(47%)	54(55%)	40(54%)
15 to 18	102(55%)	66(46%)	155(73%)	89(49%)
18 to 21	69(54%)	40(42%)	52(57%)	31(41%)
21 or higher	32(58%)	11(44%)	47(60%)	22(49%)

Table 31: Impact of Age, Gender, and Location on Students' Political Identity

Table 32 presents the distribution of participating students, teachers, and guardians according to their educational level, gender, and location. Additional analysis per educational level, gender, and location associated with political affiliation is presented in Appendix 8.

According to the data analysis, students of GS (50% in primary, 62% in preparatory, 59% in secondary, and 54% in university) have higher rates of political affiliation than their counterparts in WB (40% in primary, 49% in preparatory, 46% in secondary, and 51% in university) in all educational stages.

More teachers holding Diploma and Bachelor degrees were politically affiliated in WB (47% in Diploma and 45% in Bachelor) compared to their counterparts in GS (40% in Diploma and 35% in Bachelor). Teachers with higher academic qualifications in GS (37% in Master's and 50% in Doctorate) exhibited higher rates compared to their counterparts in WB (33% in Master's and 43% in Doctorate).

GS guardians with academic qualifications Diploma or lower (78% Illiterate, 56% Read and Write, 61% High School or less, 53% Diploma) exhibited higher rates of political affiliation than their

counterparts in WB (0% Illiterate, 41% Read and Write, 33% High School or less, 51% Diploma). More guardians of WB with Bachelor degree or above (57% Bachelor and 71% Master's or higher) were politically affiliated as compared to their counterparts in GS (56% Bachelor and 27% in Masters or higher).

Student			Teacher			Guardian		
Education Level	WB	GS	Education Level	WB	GS	Education Level	WB	GS
Primary	21	76	Diploma	21	4	Illiterate	0	7
	40%	50%		47%	40%		0%	78%
Preparatory	125	132	Bachelor	117	63	Basic Read and Write	11	35
	49%	62%		45%	35%		41%	56%
Secondary	114	162	Master	12	21	High School or Less	41	28
	46%	59%		33%	37%		33%	61%
University	126	143	Doctorate	3	14	Diploma	28	21
	51%	54%		43%	50%		51%	53%
---			---			Bachelor	71	50
							57%	56%
---			---			Masters or Higher	10	4
							71%	27%

Table 32: Impact of Educational Level, Gender, and Location on Participants' Political Identity

In conclusion, almost 50% of the participating students, teachers, and guardians were politically affiliated regardless of the living area, location, and gender. More students, teachers, and guardians who lived in refugee camps were politically affiliated as compared to those who lived in rural and urban areas. Students and guardians have almost the same rate of political affiliation in WB and GS. Teachers' political affiliation rates according to their gender, location, and living area were less than the rates obtained from students and guardians. The approximate percentages of politically affiliated participating male students of the age group 18 to 21 in WB and GS was 50%, while this percentage is 40% among corresponding females. This percentage seems to be increasing when students grow older as the analysis shows that the percentages of male politically affiliated participating students of the age 21 or higher students in WB and GS was 60% and 50% among the corresponding female students. The analysis per educational level and location showed that more GS participating students were politically affiliated than their counterparts in WB in all the educational stages (primary, preparatory, secondary, and university). More teachers of WB holding a Diploma or Bachelor were politically affiliated than their counterparts in GS. Less Masters and Doctorate qualification holders were politically affiliated as compared to their counterparts in GS. More participating guardians from GS were politically affiliated, especially

those holding a Diploma or lower academic qualification, as compared to their counterparts in WB. Bachelor degree holders from WB and GS have the same rate of political affiliation among the participating guardians.

4.4 ANALYSIS OF CLOSED ENDED SURVEY QUESTIONS

This section presents the analysis of closed-ended survey questions from students, teachers, and guardians relating to political, sociological, and ideological statements regarding the educational system of Palestine. The survey includes 24 statements: seven political, seven sociological, and ten ideological. Participants were asked to state their agreement with the statement using a Likert scale from one to five (one indicates “Strongly Disagree”, two indicates “Disagree”, three indicates “Neutral”, four indicates “Agree”, and five indicates “Strongly Agree”).

This section contains three subsections. Each section presents the descriptive and inferential statistical analyses of the responses obtained from students, teachers, and guardians pertinent to the political, sociological, and ideological group of questions. The descriptive statistics presents the mean, standard deviation, standard error mean and percentages whereas, the inferential statistics focuses on the independent samples *t*-test, ANOVA and correlation test.

The first section discusses the results of the data obtained from the responses to the seven political statements, while the second section discusses the results obtained when analysing the seven sociological questions.

4.4.1 Analysis of Political Statements

This section discusses the results of the data obtained from the responses to the seven survey questions related to political statements. In the beginning, a descriptive statistical analysis using mean, standard deviation, standard error mean, and percentage are presented for each statement per participating group (students, teachers, and guardians) with some graphical representation indicating the level of agreement with each statement. Secondly, inferential statistical tests such as independent samples *t*-test are used to determine whether there is a significant statistical difference in mean between participants according to location and gender. An ANOVA test using

scheffe *Post-hoc* test is used to determine whether any statistically significant difference in mean exists according to the living area and academic qualification.

The seven statements presented to the participants are:

The Palestinian educational system:

1. Presents that the Palestinian political system is democratic and based on political pluralism.
2. Influenced me/my students/ my child to be politically affiliated with one of the Palestinian political parties.
3. Influenced me/my students/ my child to strengthen my attachment to the homeland.
4. Contributes to strengthening my/ my students/ my child's faith in resisting the Israeli Occupation and consolidating the rights of the Palestinian people.
5. Demonstrates the Palestinians' question and their aspirations.
6. Elucidates the rights of the Palestinians in return to the lands from which they were expelled.
7. Articulates that the Palestinian people are part of the Arab world.

Table 33 presents the analysis of data collected from 'all' the participating students, teachers, and guardians pertinent to the seven political survey questions. The analysis presents the number of participants "N", Mean "Average", Standard Deviation "SD", and Standard Error Mean "SEM". The standard deviation is calculated to show how measurements for a group are spread out from the mean and allow useful comparison among groups. A low standard deviation means that most of the numbers are very close to the mean whereas, the high standard deviation indicates that the numbers are spread out.

This analysis indicates that most responses are very close to the mean and thus support the comparison among the responses of students, teachers, and guardians. The Standard Error Mean (SEM) is also calculated to ensure the minimal effect on the mean for each statement. The SEM ranges between 0.022 and 0.046. This indicates that mean scores can be compared and the difference in mean can be studied further.

The expected average means that indicate participants' agreement with the statement is 3.5 and higher. The analysis shows that responses of participating students, teachers, and guardians to statements three, five, six, and seven are within the agreement level (mean is 3.50 or higher). However, the participating students, teachers, and guardians responses to statements one and two

indicate their disagreement. As for statement four, students agree with the statement whereas teachers and guardians do not agree with the statement.

The results for item one in the corresponding categories are shown for participating students (mean=3.34, SD=1.086, N=1,705), teachers (mean=3.40, SD=1.068, N=623), and guardians (mean=3.11, SD=0.984, N=611) in this sub-section.

Table 34 presents the number and percentage of participants who either “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” with the statement. The overall percentage of participants who either agree or disagree from students, teachers, and guardians was 49%. The lowest percentage was among guardians (41%) and the highest was among teachers (54%), while 50% of students either agree or strongly agree with the statement. The obtained results indicated that a considerable number of students, teachers, and guardians were either neutral or disagreed with the statement (see Table 34).

The additional statistical test was conducted to find out if the difference among the three groups is statistically significant. There was a statistically significant difference between groups (students, teachers, and guardians) as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F(2, 2936) = 14.160, P < 0.001$). The *Scheffe* post hoc test indicates that guardians’ agreement level differs significantly from students and teachers ($p < 0.001$), however, it suggests that the difference between student and teacher responses was not statistically significant ($p = 0.465$).

The responses to the second political statement “The Palestinian educational system influenced me/my students/ my child to be politically affiliated with one of the Palestinian political parties” is presented in this subsection. The mean, standard deviation, and number of participants are: students (mean=2.46, SD=1.223, N=1,705), teachers (mean=2.87, SD=1.121, N=623), and guardians (mean=2.38, SD=1.062, N=611). The overall percentage of participants who either agree or disagree from students, teachers, and guardians was 24% (Table 20). The lowest percentage was among guardians (19%) and the highest was among teachers (34%) while 23% of students either agree or strongly agree with the second statement. The obtained results indicate that a majority of students, teachers, and guardians disagree that the Palestinian educational system influenced me/ my students/ my child to be politically affiliated with one of the Palestinian political parties (see Table 34).

The additional statistical test is conducted to find out if the difference among the three groups is statistically significant. There was a statistically significant difference between groups (students, teachers, and guardians) as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F(2, 2936) = 34.666, P < 0.001$). The *Scheffe* post hoc test indicates that teachers' agreement level differs significantly from students and guardians ($p < 0.001$), however, it suggests that the difference between student and guardian responses was not statistically significant ($p = 0.337$).

Participant	Statistic	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
Student	N	1,705	1,705	1,704	1,705	1,705	1,705	1,705
	Mean	3.34	2.46	3.95	3.81	3.78	4.04	4.06
	SD	1.086	1.233	1.059	1.143	1.082	1.075	0.911
	SEM	0.026	0.03	0.026	0.028	0.026	0.026	0.022
Teacher	N	623	623	622	623	623	623	623
	Mean	3.40	2.87	3.61	3.48	3.58	3.69	4.08
	SD	1.068	1.121	0.928	1.148	0.985	0.986	0.757
	SEM	0.043	0.045	0.037	0.046	0.039	0.04	0.03
Guardian	N	611	611	611	611	611	610	611
	Mean	3.11	2.38	3.78	3.42	3.52	3.63	4.13
	SD	0.984	1.062	0.97	1.057	1.013	1.118	0.757
	SEM	0.04	0.043	0.039	0.043	0.041	0.045	0.031

Table 33: Analysis of Political Statements using Descriptive Statistics

Statement	Student	Teacher	Parent	Total
1. Presents that Palestinian political system is democratic and based on political pluralism.	849(50%)	337(54%)	247(41%)	1,433(49%)
2. Influenced me/my students/ my child to be politically affiliated with one of the Palestinian political parties.	390(23%)	209(34%)	113(19%)	712(24%)
3. Influenced me/my students/ my child to strengthen my attachment to homeland.	1,274(75%)	397(64%)	451(74%)	2,122(72%)
4. Contributes to strengthening my/ my students/ my child faith in resisting the Israeli Occupation and consolidating the rights of the	1,168(69%)	361(58%)	346(57%)	1,875(64%)
5. Demonstrates the Palestinians' question and their aspirations.	1,177(69%)	408(65%)	372(61%)	1,957(67%)
6. Elucidates the rights of the Palestinians in the return to the lands which they were expelled from.	1,360(80%)	428(69%)	430(71%)	2,218(76%)
7. Articulates that the Palestinian people are part of the Arab world.	1,396(82%)	533(86%)	530(87%)	2,459(84%)

Table 34: Analysis of Political Questions using Percentages of participants who either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with each statement

The responses to the fourth political statement "The Palestinian educational system contributes to strengthen my/ my students'/ my child faith of resisting the Israeli Occupation and consolidating the rights of the Palestinian people" are presented. The mean scores pertinent to participants' responses are: students (mean=3.81, SD=1.143, N=1,705), teachers (mean=3.48, SD=1.148, N=623), and guardians (mean=3.42, SD=1.075, N=611). Table 34 presents the percentage of

participants who either “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” with the statement. The overall percentage of participants who either agree or disagree from students, teachers, and guardians was 64%. The lowest percentage was among guardians (57%) and the highest was among students (69%) while 58% of teachers either agree or strongly agree with the fourth statement. The obtained results indicate that a majority of students, teachers, and guardians agree or are neutral regarding whether the Palestinian educational system contributes to ‘strengthening my/ my students/ my child faith in resisting the Israeli Occupation and consolidating the rights of the Palestinian people’ (see Table 34).

An additional statistical test was conducted to determine whether the difference among the three groups is statistically significant. There was a statistically significant difference between groups (students, teachers, and guardians) as determined by one-way *ANOVA* ($F(2, 2936) = 36.495$, $P < 0.001$). The *Scheffe* post hoc test indicates that students’ agreement level differs significantly from teachers and guardians ($p < 0.001$). However, it suggests that the difference between guardians and guardians was not statistically significant ($p = 0.683$).

The independent samples *t*-test was conducted to find out if the difference in means is statistically significant between participating students, teachers, and guardians pertinent to location (WB and GS) and gender (Male and Female). The *p*-value is presented in table 35. The difference in means is statistically significant for all cases when $p < 0.05$. The sign (+) added before the *p*-value indicates that the mean of the participating group from WB is significantly higher than the mean of the group participating from GS. In case the sign (+) is not included and $p < 0.05$, then that indicates the mean of the group participating from GS is higher than those who participate from WB. The same concept applies to gender where the sign (+) indicates that the mean for male participants is significantly higher than the mean of the participating females.

T-test results indicate that a significant statistical difference in means exists when comparing the obtained means of WB versus GS and Males versus Females for the three participating groups: students, teachers, and guardians. The *t*-test results when comparing the obtained means of participating groups of WB and GS indicates that the mean score of the participants from GS is significantly higher compared to their counterparts from WB except for the first and the seventh political statements. The mean of participating guardians of WB is significantly higher than the mean of GS guardians pertinent to the first ($p = 0.004$) and seventh ($p < 0.001$) political statements.

In other words, participating guardians of WB believe more than their counterparts of GS that the Palestinian educational system presents that Palestinian political system is democratic and based on political pluralism and it articulates that the Palestinian people are part of the Arab world.

Additionally, participating students, teachers, and guardians of GS believe more than their counterparts of WB that the Palestinian educational system influences students to strengthen their attachment to homeland, contributes to strengthening students' faith of resisting the Israeli occupation and consolidating the rights of the Palestinian people, and elucidates the rights of the Palestinians in return to the lands which they were expelled from.

In some instances, no statistically significant difference in mean between participating students, teachers, and guardians is found. The participating students ($p=0.237$) and teachers ($p=0.284$) from WB and GS have the same level of agreement that the Palestinian educational system presents that Palestinian political system is democratic and based on political pluralism. Similarly, teachers of WB and GS have the same level of agreement ($p=0.201$) that the Palestinian education system demonstrates the Palestinians' question and their aspirations. Guardians of WB and GS have the same level of agreement ($p=0.275$) that the Palestinian education system influences students to become politically affiliated with one of the Palestinian political parties.

The *t*-test related to gender is carried out to determine whether female participants share the same perception as the male participants. The analysis indicates that in most instances there was no statistically significant difference in mean between male and female participants. The analysis of *t*-tests show that participating male and female students, teachers, and guardians share the same agreement level with no significant statistical difference pertinent to two statements that the Palestinian educational system presents that Palestinian political system is democratic and based on political pluralism and elucidates the rights of the Palestinians in return to the lands which they were expelled from. On the other hand, male and female teachers and guardians only have the same agreement level with no statistical significant difference in mean that the Palestinian educational system contributes to strengthening my/ my students/ my child faith of resisting the Israeli Occupation and consolidating the rights of the Palestinian people and demonstrates the Palestinians' question and their aspirations. Further, participating male and female students and teachers share the same agreement level with no significant difference that the Palestinian educational system articulates that the Palestinian people are part of the Arab world.

In some instances, a statistically significant difference in means between male and female participants was observed. The data analysis shows that participating male students and teachers have higher mean which is statistically significant when compared to females pertinent to the statement that the Palestinian educational system influences students to become politically affiliated with one of the Palestinian political parties. Conversely, female participating students and teachers with the statistically significant difference in means compared with males believe that the Palestinian educational system influences students to strengthen their attachment to the homeland. Female students with a significant difference in mean compared to their male counterparts believe that the Palestinian educational system contributes to strengthening my/ my students/ my child faith of resisting the Israeli Occupation and consolidating the rights of the Palestinian people and demonstrates the Palestinians' question and their aspirations. Additionally, male guardians have a higher mean that is statistically significant compared to the female participants pertinent to the statement that the Palestinian education system articulates that the Palestinian people are part of the Arab world.

Statement	Location (WB and GS)			Gender (Male and Female)		
	Student	Teacher	Guardian	Student	Teacher	Guardian
P1	0.237	0.284	(+) 0.004	0.494	0.841	0.607
P2	0.000	0.000	0.275	(+) 0.002	(+) 0.037	0.563
P3	0.000	0.021	0.000	0.000	0.026	0.370
P4	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.949	0.548
P5	0.000	0.201	0.000	0.001	0.636	0.252
P6	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.082	0.994	0.442
P7	0.000	0.000	(+) 0.000	0.919	0.827	(+) 0.001

Table 35: Independent Samples t-test for Location and Gender- Political Statements figures

To sum up, the independent samples *t*-test discloses that a statistically significant difference in means between participating students, teachers, and guardians of WB and GS was evident in most instances. Conversely, the gender study indicates that fewer cases of statistically significant differences in means were observed compared to those related to location (WB and GS).

In conclusion, the analysis of the seven political statements reveals that participating students, teachers, and guardians, regardless of their gender or location, believe that the Palestinian educational system influences students to strengthen their attachment to their homeland (72%), demonstrates the Palestinians' question and their aspirations (67%), elucidates the rights of the Palestinians in the return to the lands from which they were expelled (76%), and articulates that

the Palestinian people are part of the Arab world (84%). On the other side, the Palestinian educational system does not present that Palestinian political system is democratic and based on political pluralism (51%) and does not influence students to be politically affiliated with one of the Palestinian political parties (76%). Finally, two-thirds of the students (69%) and about the same percentage of teachers (58%) and guardians (57%) believe that the Palestinian educational system contributes to strengthening students' faith of resisting the Israeli Occupation and consolidating the rights of the Palestinian people.

4.4.2 Analysis of Sociological Statements

This section discusses the results of the data obtained from the responses to the seven survey questions related to sociological statements. In the beginning, a descriptive statistical analysis using mean, standard deviation, standard error mean, and the percentage are discussed for each statement per participating group (students, teachers, and guardians) with some graphical representation indicating the level of agreement with each statement. Secondly, inferential statistical tests such as independent samples *t*-test are used to find out if there is a significant statistical difference in means between participants according to location and gender and ANOVA test using *scheffe Post-hoc* test to find out if there is any statistically significant difference in means according to participating group (students, teachers, and guardians).

The seven statements are listed below:

The Palestinian educational system:

1. Articulates that the Palestinian society is dominated by brotherhood and tolerance between Muslims and Christians.
2. Equates between mosque and church.
3. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum includes the names of the Palestinian occupied towns and villages.
4. Affirms that discrimination among students, according to the academic level or social class, leads to poor teamwork inside and outside the school.
5. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum prepares students to be adhering to the land and keeping it.

6. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights that Palestinians are supporters of the comprehensive peace.
7. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in the Israeli jails.

Table 36 presents the analysis of data collected from participating students, teachers, and guardians pertinent to the seven sociological survey questions. The analysis indicates that the mean ranges between 2.36 and 4.03 and the standard deviation ranges between 0.757 and 1.223. This analysis indicates that most responses are very close to the mean and thus support the comparison among the responses of students, teachers, and guardians. The SEM ranges between 0.022 and 0.046. This indicates that mean scores can be compared and the difference in mean can be studied further.

The expected average that indicates participants' agreement with the statement is 3.5 and higher. The analysis shows that participating students, teachers, and guardians' responses are almost within the agreement level (mean is 3.50 or higher) with the seven sociological statements except for statements three and seven. The mean of responses to the third statement of students (mean=3.34, SD=1.086, N=1,705) and guardians (mean=3.34, SD=1.086, N=1,705) is less than the accepted mean score that indicates the agreement. In other words, students and guardians expressed their disagreement with the statement that the Palestinian educational system ensures that Palestinian curriculum includes the names of the Palestinian occupied towns and villages. As for the seventh statement, the results obtained for teachers (mean=3.38, SD=1.100, N=623) and guardians (mean=3.36, SD=1.130, N=611) divulge means which are less than 3.5. This indicates that teachers and guardians disagree with the statement that the Palestinian educational system ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in the Israeli jails.

The mean scores for all other instances presented in table 36 are 3.50 or higher. This indicates that the participating students agree with most statements.

Statement	Statistic	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7
Student	N	1705	1705	1703	1705	1705	1705	1704
	Mean	4.03	3.52	3.44	3.92	4.03	3.98	3.73
	SD	.894	1.137	1.181	1.018	.979	.984	1.146
	SEM	.022	.028	.029	.025	.024	.024	.028
Teacher	N	623	622	623	623	623	623	623
	Mean	3.92	3.62	3.52	3.81	3.87	3.95	3.38
	SD	.880	1.048	.955	1.015	.867	.859	1.100
	SEM	.035	.042	.038	.041	.035	.034	.044
Guardian	N	609	604	611	610	609	611	611
	Mean	3.95	3.69	3.28	3.93	3.91	3.96	3.36
	SD	.773	.990	1.072	.916	1.037	.794	1.130
	SEM	.031	.040	.043	.037	.042	.032	.046

Table 36: Analysis of Sociological Statements using Descriptive Statistics

Table 37 presents the number and percentage of participants who either “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” with the statement. The analysis supports that statements three and seven are of low percentages of agreement. Namely, the statement that the Palestinian educational system ensures that the names of occupied towns and villages are part of curriculum corresponds to 56% overall agreement level, while the seventh statement that Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in the Israeli jails correlates to 61% overall agreement level.

Statement	Student	Teacher	Guardian	Total
1. Articulates that the Palestinian society is dominated by brotherhood and tolerance between Muslims and Christians.	1,380 (81%)	489 (78%)	507 (83%)	2,376 (81%)
2. Equates between mosque and church.	1,003 (59%)	398 (64%)	444 (73%)	1,845 (63%)
3. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum includes the names of the Palestinian occupied towns and villages.	958 (56%)	375 (60%)	308 (51%)	1,641 (56%)
4. Affirms that discrimination among students, according to the academic level or social class, leads to poor teamwork inside and outside the school.	1,276 (75%)	431 (69%)	461 (76%)	2,168 (74%)
5. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum prepares students to be adhering to the land and keeping it.	1,348 (79%)	476 (76%)	440 (72%)	2,264 (77%)
6. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights that Palestinians are supporters of the comprehensive peace.	1,270 (74%)	473 (76%)	463 (76%)	2,206 (75%)
7. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in the Israeli jails.	1,126 (66%)	345 (55%)	319 (52%)	1,790 (61%)

Table 37: Analysis of Sociological Questions using Percentages of participants who either ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with each statement

The additional statistical test was conducted to find out if the difference among the three participating groups (students, teachers, and guardians) is statistically significant. A One-Way ANOVA test was conducted and the analysis reveals that the difference in means among the three groups was statistically significant except for the sixth statement (see table 38). The analysis of responses to the sixth statement shows that the three participating groups have the following

results: students (mean=3.98, N=1,705, Percentage of agreement=74%), teachers (mean=3.95, N=623, Percentage of agreement=76%), and guardians (mean=3.96, N=611, Percentage of agreement=76%). In other words for the sixth statement, the three participating groups with no statistically significant difference believe that the Palestinian educational system ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights that Palestinians are supporters of the comprehensive peace.

The *sheffe post-hoc* test is performed to study the reasons behind the significance in the results obtained from the *ANOVA* test. The result for the first sociological statement indicated that students' agreement level differs significantly from teachers ($p = 0.036$), however, it suggests that the difference between students and guardians was not statistically significant ($p = 0.147$) as well as the difference between teachers and guardians was not statistically significant ($p = 0.884$). The signs (+) or (-) are used to inform if the mean of the first group is of higher (+) or lower (-) value. Thus, the sign (+) indicates in the first statement that participating students are of higher mean compared to teachers. The analysis of the first statement indicates that the significant difference obtained from the *ANOVA* test is attributed to the significant difference in mean between participating students and teachers. In other word, students with considerable difference in the mean as compared with teachers believe that the Palestinian educational system articulates that the Palestinian society is dominated by brotherhood and tolerance between Muslims and Christians.

The analysis of the second statement indicates that the significant difference in means that was obtained by *ANOVA* is attributed to the statistically significant difference between participating students and guardians ($p=0.003$).

The Scheffe test reveals that the statistical significance in the third statement is attributed to the statistically significant difference between students and guardians ($p= 0.009$) from one side, and teachers and guardians ($p=0.001$) from the other. In other words, guardians with statistically significant lower mean compared to the ones obtained for students and teachers' data indicate that guardians have low agreement level with the statement that the Palestinian educational system ensures that Palestinian curriculum includes the names of the Palestinian occupied towns and villages when compared with students and teachers.

Although *ANOVA* shows that there is a statistical difference in means among the three participating groups pertinent to the fourth statement, the *Scheffe* test could not identify the influential factor. In other words, the three participating groups have the same level of agreement on the statement

that the Palestinian educational system affirms that discrimination among students, according to the academic level or social class, leads to a poor teamwork inside and outside the school.

The analysis of the fifth and the seventh statements using *Scheffe* test reveals that the statistical significance is attributed to the statistically significant difference between students and teachers ($p= 0.001$ for fifth and $p<0.001$ for seventh) from one side, and students and guardians ($p=0.027$ for fifth and $p<0.001$ for seventh) from the other. In other words, students' responses with statistically significant higher mean compared to the ones obtained for teachers' and guardians' data indicate that students have higher agreement level with the statement that the Palestinian educational system ensures that Palestinian curriculum prepares students to be adhering to the land and keeping it and it ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in the Israeli jails.

ANOVA Test					Post-hoc Test		
Statement	df (Between	df	F	P-Value	Student/	Student/	Teacher/
S1	2	2,934	4.206	0.015	(+) 0.036	0.147	0.884
S2	2	2,928	6.569	0.001	0.120	(-) 0.003	0.571
S3	2	2,934	7.799	0.000	0.295	(+) 0.009	(+) 0.001
S4	2	2,936	3.071	0.047	0.075	0.944	0.099
S5	2	2,934	8.252	0.000	(+) 0.001	(+) 0.027	0.739
S6	2	2,936	0.294	0.745	0.777	0.897	0.981
S7	2	2,936	35.432	0.000	(+) 0.000	(+) 0.000	0.972

Table 38: Analysis of Sociological Questions using One-Way ANOVA

The independent samples *t*-test was conducted to find out if the difference in means is statistically significant between participating students', teachers', and guardians' responses pertinent to location (WB and GS) and gender (Male and Female). The *p*-value is presented in table 39. The difference in means is statistically significant for all cases when $p<0.05$. The sign (+) is added before the *p*-value to indicate that the mean corresponding to the participating group from WB is significantly higher than that of the group participating from GS. In case the sign (+) is not included and $p<0.05$, then the mean corresponding to the group participating from GS is higher than that pertinent to those who participated from WB. The same concept applies to gender where the sign (+) indicates that the mean for male participants is significantly higher than the mean of the participating females.

T-test results indicate that there exist significant statistical differences in mean when comparing the obtained means of WB versus GS and Males versus Females for the three participating groups:

students, teachers, and guardians. The *t*-test results when comparing the obtained means of participating groups of WB and GS indicate that the mean score of the participants from GS is significantly higher compared to their counterparts from WB except for the first and the second sociological statements. The mean of participating students of WB is significantly higher than the mean of GS guardians pertinent to the first ($p=0.016$) and second ($p<0.001$) sociological statements, whereas teachers ($p=0.001$) and guardians ($p<0.001$) of WB are of statistically higher means compared to their counterparts of GS. In other words, participating students of WB believe more than their counterparts of GS that the Palestinian educational system presents that Palestinian political system articulates that the Palestinian society is dominated by brotherhood and tolerance between Muslims and Christians and it equates between mosque and church.

On the other side, GS participating students, teachers, and guardians have higher mean values compared to their counterparts of WB in statements three, five, six, and seven. In other words, Palestinians of GS believe more than their counterparts that the Palestinian educational system ensures that Palestinian curriculum includes the names of the Palestinian occupied towns and villages, ensures that Palestinian curriculum prepares students to be adhering to the land and keeping it, ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights that Palestinians are supporters of the comprehensive peace, and ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in the Israeli jails.

Statement	Location (WB and GS)			Gender (Male and Female)		
	Student	Teacher	Guardian	Student	Teacher	Guardian
S1	(+) 0.016	0.001	0.663	0.907	0.621	0.454
S2	(+) 0.001	(+) 0.001	(+) 0.000	0.104	0.796	0.623
S3	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.812	0.722	0.076
S4	0.303	0.107	0.303	0.114	0.607	0.605
S5	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.430	0.432
S6	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.014	0.720	0.376
S7	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.029	0.854	(+) 0.002

Table 39: Independent Samples *t*-test for Location and Gender- Sociological Statements

The *t*-test associated with gender is carried out to find out if female participants share the same perception as that of male participants. The analysis indicates that in most instances there was no statistically significant difference in mean values between male and female participants. The analysis of the *t*-test shows that participating male and female students, teachers, and guardians share the same agreement level with no statistical significant difference pertinent to four statements

that the Palestinian educational system articulates that the Palestinian society is dominated by brotherhood and tolerance between Muslims and Christians, equates between mosque and church, ensures that Palestinian curriculum includes the names of the Palestinian occupied towns and villages, and affirms that discrimination among students, according to the academic level or social class, leads to a poor teamwork inside and outside the school.

The analysis of the fifth and sixth statements indicates that there is no statistical significant difference in means when comparing the values obtained from males and females of WB and GS (i.e. teachers and guardians share the same agreement level that the Palestinian educational system ensures that Palestinian curriculum prepares students to be adhering to the land and keeping it and ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights that Palestinians are supporters of the comprehensive peace).

Similarly, the independent samples *t*-test indicates that there is a significant statistical difference in means when comparing the responses of female and male students related to statements five, six, and seven. The analysis indicates that female students believe with higher agreement rates with the statements compared to males that the Palestinian educational system ensures that the Palestinian curriculum prepares students to be adhering to the land and keeping it, ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights that Palestinians are supporters of the comprehensive peace, and ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in the Israeli jails.

The independent samples *t*-test shows that the Male guardians of WB are of higher mean value to females pertinent to the seventh statement. To explain, participating male guardians believe with a higher agreement rate that the Palestinian education system ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in the Israeli jails.

To sum up, the independent samples *t*-test discloses that a statistically significant difference in means between participating students, teachers, and guardians of WB and GS was evident in most instances. Conversely, the gender study indicates that fewer cases of statistically significant differences in means were observed compared to those related to location (WB and GS).

In conclusion, the analysis of the data related to the seven sociological statements indicate that a high level of participating students, teachers, and guardians either agree or strongly agree with each statement with no statistically significant difference in means between male and female

participants. Participating students, teachers, and guardians of GS have higher agreement level with the statements compared to their counterparts of WB in most instances.

The overall percentage comprising all participants who either agree or strongly agree shows that the Palestinian educational system articulates that the Palestinian society is dominated by brotherhood and tolerance between Muslims and Christians (81%), equates between mosque and church (63%), ensures that the Palestinian curriculum includes the names of the Palestinian occupied towns and villages (56%), affirms that discrimination among students, according to the academic level or social class, leads to poor teamwork inside and outside the school (74%), ensures that Palestinian curriculum prepares students to be adhering to the land and keeping it (77%), ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights that Palestinians are supporters of the comprehensive peace (75%), ensures that the Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in the Israeli jails (61%).

The analysis of data collected from participating students, teachers, and guardians related to the ideological survey statements is presented in the next section.

4.4.3 Analysis of Ideological Statements

This section discusses the results of the data obtained from the responses to the ten survey questions related to ideological statements. In the beginning, a descriptive statistical analysis using mean, standard deviation, standard error mean, and the percentage is discussed for each statement per participating group (students, teachers, and guardians) with some graphical representation indicating the level of agreement with each statement. Secondly, inferential statistical tests such as independent samples *t*-test is used to find out if there is a significant statistical difference in means between participants according to location and gender and *ANOVA* test using *scheffe Post-hoc* test to find out if there is any statistically significant difference in means according to participating group (students, teachers, and guardians).

The ten statements are listed below:

The Palestinian educational system:

1. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum emphasises that Holy Books such as Quran, the Torah and the Gospel have the same sanctity.
2. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum distinguishes between the Dome of the Rock mosque and Al-Aqsa Mosque.
3. Contributes to increasing religious faith.
4. Promotes that the negotiations with the Israeli Occupation is the way to gain the Palestinian rights.
5. Promotes that Islam is a comprehensive life system.
6. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets.
7. Accepts that resisting the Israeli Occupation is a terrorist action.
8. Endorses in the Palestinian curriculum that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is due to religious conflict.
9. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum contributes to promoting the spiritual and emotional link between students and religious holy places of Palestine.
10. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum calls on respecting the intellectual pluralism and the national unity.

Table 27 presents the analysis of data collected from participating students, teachers, and guardians pertinent to the ten ideological survey questions. The analysis indicates that the mean ranges between 1.92 and 4.20 and the standard deviation ranges between 0.772 and 1.350. The SEM ranges between 0.021 and 0.053. This indicates that mean scores of participating students, teachers, and guardians can be compared and the difference in mean can be studied further.

The expected mean indicates participants' agreement with the statement is 3.5 or higher. The analysis shows that participating students, teachers, and guardians' responses are almost within the agreement level (mean is 3.50 or higher) in five statements whereas less than 3.50 in the remaining five statements namely:

- ❖ Ensures that Palestinian curriculum emphasises that Holy Books such as Quran, the Torah and the Gospel have the same sanctity.
- ❖ Ensures that Palestinian curriculum distinguishes between the Dome of the Rock mosque and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

- ❖ Promotes that the negotiations with the Israeli Occupation is the way to gain the Palestinian rights.
- ❖ Accepts that resisting the Israeli Occupation is a terrorist action.
- ❖ Endorses in the Palestinian curriculum that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is due to religious conflict.

To clarify, the mean scores for each of the three participating groups pertinent to first, second, fourth, seventh, and eighth that are less than 3.5 which indicates disagreement with the statement.

The lowest mean is obtained from the seventh statement data which is: students (mean=2.01, SD=1.30, N=1,705), teachers (mean=2.16, SD=1.160, N=623), and guardians (mean=1.92, SD=0.979, N=611) and the highest mean is obtained from the sixth statement data which is: students (mean=4.28, SD=0.882, N=1,705), teachers (mean=4.23, SD=0.772, N=623), and guardians (mean=4.18, SD=0.804, N=611). This analysis indicates that majority of participating students, teachers, and guardians did not agree or strongly disagree with statement seven and the majority selected either agree or strongly agree for the sixth statement. In other words, participants do not believe that the Palestinian education system accepts that resisting the Israeli Occupation is a terrorist action. Conversely, the majority of participants believe that the Palestinian educational system ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets.

For further analysis, the number and percentage of participants who either agree or strongly agree with each of the ten ideological statements is illustrated in table 40.

statement	Statistic	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	I10
Student	N	1703	1703	1705	1705	1705	1705	1704	1705	1704	1702
	Mean	3.01	3.21	3.97	3.09	4.20	4.28	2.01	3.14	3.95	3.86
	SD	1.350	1.290	1.005	1.290	.905	.882	1.132	1.300	.953	1.045
	SEM	.033	.031	.024	.031	.022	.021	.027	.031	.023	.025
Teacher	N	621	623	623	623	620	623	623	623	623	622
	Mean	3.33	3.18	3.68	3.14	3.97	4.23	2.16	2.89	3.76	3.61
	SD	1.295	1.298	.946	1.078	.907	.772	1.160	1.312	.893	.996
	SEM	.052	.052	.038	.043	.036	.031	.046	.053	.036	.040
Guardian	N	611	609	611	611	611	610	611	611	610	610
	Mean	3.23	3.39	3.79	2.96	4.02	4.18	1.92	2.64	3.81	3.57
	SD	1.126	1.186	.932	1.040	.799	.804	.979	1.202	.851	1.009
	SEM	.046	.048	.038	.042	.032	.033	.040	.049	.034	.041

Table 40: Analysis of Ideological Statements using Descriptive Statistics

The analysis of data (see Table 41) indicates that there are five statements with high agreement rates of participating students, teachers, and guardians. The percentage of the all participants who responded with agree or strongly agree in descending order is six (87%), five (83%), nine (76%), three (75%), and ten (69%). To simplify, the percentages of the participants who responded with agree or strongly agree pertinent to the Palestinian education system is: ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets (87%), promotes that Islam is a comprehensive life system (83%), ensures that Palestinian curriculum contributes to promote the spiritual and emotional link between students and religious holy places of Palestine (76%), contributes to increase religious faith (75%), and ensures that Palestinian curriculum calls on respecting the intellectual pluralism and the national unity (69%).

Table 27 also indicates that there are five statements with low agreement rates of participating students, teachers, and guardians. The percentage of all participants who responded with agree or strongly agree in ascending order is: seventh (13%), fourth (41%), eighth (41%), first (50%), and second (50%). To simplify, the percentages of the participants who responded with agree or strongly agree pertinent to the Palestinian education system is: accepts that resisting the Israeli Occupation is a terroristic action (13%), promotes that the negotiations with the Israeli Occupation is the way to gain the Palestinian rights (41%), endorses in the Palestinian curriculum that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is due to religion conflict (41%), ensures that Palestinian curriculum emphasises that Holy Books, such as Quran, the Torah and the Gospel have the same sanctity (50%), and ensures that Palestinian curriculum distinguishes between the Dome of the Rock mosque and Al-Aqsa Mosque (50%). Additional statistical tests, ANOVA and post hoc, were conducted to study if there exists statistical difference among the mean values of students, teachers, and guardians (see Table 42).

Statement	Student	Teacher	Guardian	Total
1. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum emphasises that Holy Books such as Quran, the Torah and the Gospel have the same sanctity.	767 (45%)	374 (60%)	330 (54%)	1,471 (50%)
2. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum distinguishes between the Dome of the Rock mosque and Al-Aqsa Mosque.	812 (48%)	308 (49%)	344 (56%)	1,464 (50%)
3. Contributes to increase religious faith.	1,326 (78%)	418 (67%)	472 (78%)	2,216 (75%)
4. Promotes that the negotiations with the Israeli Occupation is the way to gain the Palestinian rights.	755 (44%)	266 (43%)	194 (32%)	1,215 (41%)
5. Promotes that Islam is a comprehensive life system.	1,428 (84%)	493 (79%)	503 (83%)	2,424 (83%)
6. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets.	1,472 (86%)	550 (88%)	528 (87%)	2,550 (87%)

7. Accepts that resisting the Israeli Occupation is a terrorist action.	226 (13%)	106 (17%)	58 (10%)	390 (13%)
8. Endorses in the Palestinian curriculum that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is due to religion conflict.	768 (45%)	248 (40%)	176 (29%)	1,192 (41%)
9. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum contributes to promote the spiritual and emotional link between students and religious holy places of Palestine.	1,317 (77%)	456 (73%)	469 (77%)	2,242 (76%)
10. Ensures that Palestinian curriculum calls on respecting the intellectual pluralism and the national unity.	1,250 (73%)	408 (65%)	373 (61%)	2,031 (69%)

Table 41: Analysis of Ideological Questions using Percentages of participants who either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with each statement

ANOVA test results indicate that there exists a statistical significant difference in means among the participating students, teachers, and guardians in all the ideological statements (see Table 42). To learn more about the statistically significant difference, the *Scheffe post-hoc* test was conducted. The results indicate that students' mean is significantly higher than teachers and guardians means in statements three, five, eight, nine, and ten. This indicates that the mean values of students is higher than those of teachers and guardians pertinent to that the Palestinian educational system contributes to increase religious faith, promotes that Islam is a comprehensive life system, endorses in the Palestinian curriculum that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is due to religion conflict, ensures that Palestinian curriculum contributes to promote the spiritual and emotional link between students and religious holy places of Palestine, and ensures that Palestinian curriculum calls on respecting the intellectual pluralism and the national unity. Conversely, students mean for the first statement that the Palestinian educational system ensures that Palestinian curriculum emphasises that Holy Books such as Quran, the Torah and the Gospel have the same sanctity is less than the means obtained when analysing teachers and guardians data.

With no statistically significant difference in means between students and teachers, guardians' agreement levels were significantly lower than students and teachers related to the statement that the Palestinian educational system ensures that Palestinian curriculum distinguishes between the Dome of the Rock mosque and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The analysis of the sixth statement data, *Scheffe post-hoc* test indicates that there is no statistical difference between any two groups. In other words, participating students, teachers, and guardians showed no statistically significant difference in means related to the statement that the Palestinian education system ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets. To study the impact of demographic factors of location and gender on the groups of participants, the independent samples *t*-test is used (see Table 43).

ANOVA Test					Post-hoc Test Scheffe		
Statement	df (Between Groups)	df (Within Groups)	F	P-Value	Student/Teacher	Student/Guardian	Teacher/Guardian
I1	2	2,932	16.584	0.000	(-) 0.000	(-) 0.000	0.404
I2	2	2,932	5.330	0.005	0.847	(-) 0.013	(-) 0.014
I3	2	2,936	22.884	0.000	(+) 0.000	(+) 0.000	0.143
I4	2	2,936	3.866	0.021	0.661	0.073	(-) 0.030
I5	2	2,933	19.214	0.000	(+) 0.000	(+) 0.000	0.627
I6	2	2,935	3.248	0.039	0.442	(N) 0.048	0.612
I7	2	2,935	7.180	0.001	(-) 0.014	0.229	(+) 0.001
I8		2,936	35.382	0.000	(+) 0.000	(+) 0.000	(+) 0.004
I9	2	2,934	11.914	0.000	(+) 0.000	(+) 0.000	0.701
I10	2	2,931	25.258	0.000	(+) 0.000	(+) 0.000	0.772

Table 42: Analysis of Ideological Questions using One-Way ANOVA

The *t*-test associated with gender was carried out to find out if female participants share the same perception as male participants. The analysis indicates that in most instances, there was no statistical significant difference (i.e. $p > 0.05$) in mean values between male and female participants. The *t*-test analysis shows that participating male and female students, teachers, and guardians share the same agreement level with no statistical significant difference pertinent to two statements that the Palestinian educational system ensures that Palestinian curriculum emphasizes that Holy Books such as Quran, the Torah and the Gospel have the same sanctity and promotes that the negotiations with the Israeli Occupation is the way to gain the Palestinian rights. Both statements exhibit low averages which indicates the majority of participating students, teachers, and guardians disagree with these two statements.

The *t*-test results show that male students have higher mean value in the second statement ($P=0.008$) compared to their female counterparts. Although the overall mean value is low, male students' mean value is significantly higher than their female counterparts pertinent to the statement that the Palestinian education system ensures that Palestinian curriculum distinguishes between the Dome of the Rock mosque and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

On the other side, the mean values pertinent to statements three, five, six, nine, and ten for female participating students were significantly higher than their male counterparts (see Table 43). This indicates that the female students' agreement levels with the statements that the Palestinian

educational system contributes to increasing religious faith, promotes Islam as a comprehensive life system, ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets, ensures that Palestinian curriculum contributes to promoting the spiritual and emotional link between students and religious holy places of Palestine, and ensures that Palestinian curriculum calls on respecting the intellectual pluralism and the national unity were significantly higher than their male counterparts.

As for teachers, the only significant difference due to gender was for the eighth statement ($p < 0.001$). The overall mean for both genders was low and the significant difference did not change that participating teachers believe that the Palestinian educational system endorses in the Palestinian curriculum that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is due to religious conflict.

As for the guardians, a significant difference in mean is observed between male and female means pertinent to the third statement ($p = 0.042$). Males believe more that the Palestinian educational system contributes to increasing religious faith among students. Conversely, the mean value for females was significantly higher than males pertinent to the seventh statement. This difference should not make a change in the previous conclusion as the overall mean is very low and thus, participating guardians regardless of their gender disagree with the statement that the Palestinian educational system accepts that resisting the Israeli Occupation is a terroristic action.

Statement	Location (WB and GS)			Gender (Male and Female)		
	Student	Teacher	Guardian	Student	Teacher	Guardian
I1	(+) 0.003	(+) 0.000	(+) 0.000	0.174	0.556	0.504
I2	0.004	0.521	(+) 0.049	(+) 0.008	0.550	0.396
I3	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.560	(+) 0.042
I4	0.322	(+) 0.003	(+) 0.039	0.706	0.847	0.368
I5	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.025	0.481	0.177
I6	0.136	0.000	0.000	0.019	0.609	0.242
I7	0.052	(+) 0.021	(+) 0.000	0.095	0.072	0.004
I8	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.112	(+) 0.000	0.990
I9	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.555	0.125
I10	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.980	0.730

Table 43: Independent Samples t-test for Location and Gender- Ideological Statements

The data analysis per location (WB and GS) using the t-test reveals that there exists a statistically significant difference in means in most instances. As the agreement level on the statements one,

two, four, seven, and eight, the *t*-test results are not discussed as the *t*-test did not have any implications on the overall conclusion made earlier.

The *t*-test of the following statements indicates pertinent to education system that GS participants have significantly higher mean as compared to their counterparts in WB ($p \leq 0.001$ in most cases) except for the statement that education ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets where there has been no statistical difference between students from WB and GS.

- ❖ Contributes to increasing religious faith.
- ❖ Ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets.
- ❖ Ensures that Palestinian curriculum contributes to promoting the spiritual and emotional link between students and religious holy places of Palestine.
- ❖ Ensures that Palestinian curriculum calls on respecting the intellectual pluralism and the national unity.

Participating students, teachers, and guardians from GS have a higher agreement level that the Palestinian Education System contributes to increasing religious faith, promotes that Islam is a comprehensive life system, ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets, ensures that Palestinian curriculum contributes to promoting the spiritual and emotional link between students and religious holy places of Palestine, and ensures that Palestinian curriculum calls on respecting the intellectual pluralism and the national unity.

To sum up, the independent samples *t*-test discloses that a statistically significant difference in means between participating students, teachers, and guardians of WB and GS was evident in most instances. Conversely, the gender study indicates that fewer cases of statistically significant differences in means were observed compared to those related to location (WB and GS).

In conclusion, the analysis of the data related to the ten ideological statements indicates a high level of participating students, teachers, and guardians either agree or strongly agree with each statement with no statistically significant difference in means between male and female participants in five statements: three, five, six, nine, and ten. Participating students, teachers, and guardians of GS have higher agreement level with the statements compared to their counterparts of WB in most instances.

The overall percentage comprising all participants who either agree or strongly agree shows that the Palestinian educational system ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets (87%), Promotes that Islam is a comprehensive life system. (83%), Ensures that Palestinian curriculum contributes to promoting the spiritual and emotional link between students and religious holy places of Palestine (76%), Contributes to increasing religious faith (75%), and Ensures that Palestinian curriculum calls on respecting the intellectual pluralism and the national unity (69%).

To understand the reasons behind obtaining these results, qualitative data was collected using open-ended questions and in-depth interviews with educational and political leaders. This will be discussed in the next section.

4.4.4 Summary of Survey Closed-ended Questions

Attributes of the closed-ended survey questions are summarized as follows:

- To ensure the study is representative of all geographic areas, the participants were evenly selected from WB (51%) and GS (49%).
- The demographic profile of the study population shows that male participants constituted 58% of the respondents while female participants comprised 42%.
- Half of the respondents for this study lived in urban areas (51%).
- The educational background of the respondents' shows that 91% of teachers held Bachelor's degree or higher, half of the students completed secondary school and 40% of the guardians held Bachelor's or higher degree.
- More than three-fourths of participating teachers had at least 5 or more years of experience.
- More than one-third of the guardians who participated in the study were self-employed.
- Almost half of participating students, teachers, and guardians were politically affiliated regardless of their gender, living area or location. The highest political affiliation was noticed among students (53%), followed by guardians (50%) and teachers (41%).

- Among the participants who reported they were affiliated with political parties, the majority of them were members of Fatah, followed by Hamas, Popular Front for The Liberation, and Islamic Jihad.
- The responses of three participant groups indicated that students are strongly influenced by their family political affiliation while deciding on their political party affiliation.
- The study showed that majority of the participants disagreed that the Palestinian educational system influences their affiliation with one of the Palestinian political parties. On the other hand, participating students, teachers, and guardians of GS believed that the Palestinian educational system influences to strengthen their attachment to homeland, contributes to strengthening their faith of resisting the Israeli Occupation and consolidating the rights of the Palestinian people, and elucidates the rights of the Palestinians in return to the lands from which they were expelled.
- The analysis of political party affiliation by age shows that majority of the participating students (81%) became politically affiliated when they were less than 15 years old.
- The analysis of the results indicates that students and guardians have almost the same perspective that the majority (over 80%) of students do not change their political affiliation with a political party.
- Correlation analysis between gender and political affiliation shows that that male participant were more likely to be politically affiliated as compared to females in both geographic areas.
- The comparison of political affiliation between the two geographic areas shows that students of GS (in all education levels) had a higher rate of political affiliation compared with their counterparts in WB. On the other hand, teachers (with Diploma and Bachelor degrees) were more politically affiliated in WB compared to their counterparts in GS.
- The multivariate analysis of seven political statements confirms the following beliefs among the participants. Palestinian educational system:
 - Influences students to strengthen their attachment to homeland,
 - Demonstrates the Palestinians' question and their aspirations,

- Elucidates the rights of the Palestinians in return to the lands which they were expelled from, and
 - Articulates that the Palestinian people are part of the Arab world.
 - Does not present that Palestinian political system is democratic and based on political pluralism
 - Does not influence students to be politically affiliated with one of the Palestinian political parties, and
 - Contributes to strengthen students' faith of resisting the Israeli Occupation and consolidating the rights of the Palestinian people.
- The multivariate analysis of seven sociological statements confirms the following beliefs among the study participants. Palestinian educational system:
 - Articulates that the Palestinian society is dominated by brotherhood and tolerance between Muslims and Christians,
 - Equates between mosque and church,
 - Ensures that Palestinian curriculum includes the names of the Palestinian occupied towns and villages,
 - Affirms that discrimination among students, according to the academic level or social class, leads to poor teamwork inside and outside the school,
 - Ensures that Palestinian curriculum prepares students to be adhering to the land and keeping it,
 - Ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights that Palestinians are supporters of the comprehensive peace, and
 - Ensures that Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in the Israeli jails.
 - The multivariate analysis of the ten ideological statements confirms the following beliefs among the study participants. Palestinian educational system:

- Ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets,
- Promotes that Islam is a comprehensive life system,
- Ensures that Palestinian curriculum contributes to promoting the spiritual and emotional link between students and religious holy places of Palestine,
- Contributes to increasing religious faith, and
- Ensures that Palestinian curriculum calls on respecting the intellectual pluralism and the national unity.

4.5 ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY OPEN-ENDED QUESTION

This section presents the qualitative analysis of the open-ended question in the three administered surveys. A total of 1,098 participants (747 students, 165 teachers, and 186 guardians) responded. The responses were analysed using thematic analysis. In preparation for thematic analysis, the participating students', teachers', and guardians' responses to the open-ended question were gathered into one spreadsheet and then coded using Nvivo. The participants reported that there were several factors currently impacting education in WB and GS. The thematic analysis helped in constructing four central themes, namely: necessary factors to improve teaching and learning in WB and GS, political factors that influence education in WB and GS, necessary factors to improve education through curriculum content and quality assessment, and social conditions that influence education in WB and GS. Each of the four themes was constructed using a group of subthemes, and those subthemes were constructed using the participants' responses. Table 44 illustrates the themes and subthemes as suggested by the participants.

Theme	Student	Teacher	Guardian	Total	
Necessary factors to improve teaching and learning in WB and GS	Use Effective Teaching Methods	78	9	17	104
	Upgrade Educational System Infrastructure (Resources and IT)	70	5	4	79
	Review Staffing Process (Recruitment, PD, and Appraisal)	17	6	11	34
	Promote and Support Scientific Research	2	7	1	10
	Total	167	27	33	227
Political factors that influence education in WB and GS	Introduce Palestine Question (History, Geography and Leadership)	77	11	17	105
	Introduce the Global Perspectives on Palestine Question	10	3	2	15
	Clarify the Role of Religion in a Political Context	39	4	11	54
	Explain Methods to be used for Resisting the Israeli Occupation	16	2	2	20
	Promote Palestinian Identity (Political & National)	24	40	5	69
	Total	166	60	37	263
Necessary factors to improve education through curriculum content and quality assessment	Introduce Extra-Curricular Activities	41	5	5	51
	Revise the Assessment Strategy	15	2	1	18
	Introduce New Educational Policy	36	26	4	66
	Establish An Independent Curriculum Development and Review Body	167	9	58	234
	Focus more on Foreign Languages	11	2	2	15
	Total	270	44	70	384
Social conditions that influence education in WB and GS	Promote National unity and equality through Education	37	17	16	70
	Provide Relevant Education	83	13	26	122
	Promote Respect over Physical and Verbal Punishment	24	4	4	32
	Total	144	34	46	224
Grand Total		747	165	186	1,098

Table 44: Thematic Analysis of Survey Open-ended Question

4.5.1 Necessary factors to improve teaching and learning in WB and GS

A total of 227 participants who responded to the open-ended question emphasised the role of teachers in providing quality education in WB and GS. The participants argued that most teachers were not qualified to teach in schools. Participating students (167), teachers (27), and guardians (33) indicated that most teachers used outdated teaching methods, such as indoctrination. For instance, 78 students stated that most of the teachers ask them to memorise the content. A grade ten student pointed out that:

The curriculum has too many lessons. No time to participate in class or say anything. My Mathematics teacher always says you have to listen because if each one of you says a word, then the time will finish without learning anything. For two years, I do not understand Science and Mathematics. I do not have money for private tuitions as well. I am worried that I might fail this year because I cannot memorise all lessons.

Seventeen guardians supported what students feel about teaching practices in the WB and GS schools. They also added that the usage of the indoctrination approach does not help children to become critical thinkers and problem solvers. A guardian pointed out that for almost three decades, teachers were using the same teaching methods. A guardian from GS responded:

The time I visit my child's school, I feel nothing has changed from the time I was a student in that school, twenty-five years ago. The same teachers, the same desks, and the same buildings. With all the technological advancement in the world, teachers are still using the indoctrination. Indoctrination cannot be sufficient. Guardians have to take part in teachers' selection and appraisal. Good teachers have to stay, and unqualified teachers must leave.

About 79 participants shared that currently some schools either do not have science laboratories or they have an outdated laboratory (i.e. not maintained for a long time or not provided with the required material to function). Thirty participants reported that their school was not maintained or painted for a long time. Four guardians raised that schools do not have an automated school management system, which led to reduced communication with school teachers and administrators and thus affected children's education. Additionally, infrastructure related to equipping schools with the latest technologies was raised by 50 students, five teachers, and four guardians. Some respondents shared that their schools suffer from the shortages of student textbooks. They lacked educational resources (tools) to assist educators in conducting interactive lessons.

Ten teachers note that teaching critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving was not impossible. Most teachers' understood teaching children using teamwork, cooperative learning, discussion, debate, role-playing, and brainstorming teaching strategies. However, teachers

attributed the use of outdated teaching methods (e.g. indoctrination) to the outdated infrastructure in schools, from one side. From the other, classes were overcrowded with over forty students per class. A science teacher in GS pointed out that:

School infrastructure is not encouraging. Everything is outdated. Science labs are either closed or used as classrooms due to lack of chemicals and science materials. I could not conduct any experiment for my students due to that. Ministry expects us to teach critical thinking and creativity without providing essential resources to do that. I would say that no resources and support means no change in teaching methods.

A participating university professor added that one of the major challenges in higher education in Palestine is the funding for scientific research. He affirms that several groups of his students have come up with great ideas but could not continue their research due to funding. The university professor from WB confirmed that:

I am teaching engineering for almost 15 years. Every year students come to me with reasonable proposals for scientific research. Most of the time we change the research project to something else because of the funding allocated to scientific research. Research in higher education focuses more on theoretical concepts due to the quality of laboratories and workshops in WB and GS universities. Those laboratories and workshops are not to the international standards.

A total of 34 participants (17 students, 6 teachers, and 11 guardians) believed that some teachers lack the essential knowledge, skills, or attitudes. Some participants considered that some of the teachers were not qualified to teach because they were not specialised or did not have proper teaching methods to interact with children. Five participating guardians suggested that providing professional development for teachers may help in shaping the attitude of teachers. Three participating guardians and ten students recommended that some teachers should be terminated based on performance and attitude. Guardians and students agreed with teachers that the current school infrastructure was a severe challenge for promoting higher order thinking skills. However, five guardians believed that some teachers were not qualified. They reported that some unqualified teachers were being taught for long although guardians complained that students learned nothing from them. A guardian from GS confirmed that their feedback was not considered when appraising some teachers.

I wonder if teachers are being evaluated based on students' results and guardians' feedback. I know some teachers who are not qualified to teach and students learn nothing from them. All guardians are not happy with the school principal because he keeps protecting him. My child always cries before going to school because of that teacher, and we have no other choice. I advise the principal to listen to us and keep in the school only the good teachers.

To sum, 227 participants noted that there are four central areas to improve the teaching and to learn in WB and GS. The four areas are teachers have to use effective teaching methods, leaders have

to upgrade the educational system infrastructure regarding laboratories and technology, leaders have to revisit the staffing process in schools regarding professional development and appraisal, and leadership have to fund and support scientific research in WB and GS.

4.5.2 Political factors that influence education in WB and GS

A total of 263 participating students (166), teachers (60), and guardians (37) who responded to the open-ended question emphasised that political conditions in WB and GS influence education regarding curriculum, policies, and operations. The participants (77 students, 11 teachers, and 17 guardians) argued that the curriculum did not include content that is necessary to introduce the learners to the history, geography, traditions, and leadership of Palestine. This lack of knowledge is due to the political conditions imposed by the Israeli occupation, international donors, and the Palestinian political parties who are currently divided. A grade nine student from WB pointed out her concern with the current curriculum:

I am now 15 years old and do not know much about my country regarding history and geography. I need to know what is right and what is wrong. My teacher always tells me not ask questions outside the textbook. My friends always talk about some Palestinian villages and cities inside Israel. I do not know their names and who is currently living there.

Participating 17 guardians and 11 teachers agreed that children were not introduced to the knowledge related to the history, traditions, and geography of Palestine. One teacher in GS confirmed that the current textbook includes only the names of the cities and villages under the PNA administration but not inside Israel in response to the Oslo peace agreement. She states that:

My students keep asking me to talk about the history of Palestine before 1948. Textbooks do not say much about that. Some students asked me about some Palestinian figures like Abdulqader Alhussaini. I do not have enough information to talk to them about him. Leaders of Palestine before Yasir Arafat, are unknown to us. Students also asked me questions like: which map is correct for Palestine? Why does Israel continue occupying our country? and who will liberate us? In fact, I do not know how to respond to them. All I could tell them is to focus on their education and not to ask questions outside the textbook.

Nine guardians reported that children were not satisfied with the information they receive with regards to the political conditions in Palestine. Twelve participating parents believed that the absence of the knowledge about the history and geography of Palestine and its leadership contributed to having their children seeking answers to their answers from friends, and neighbours who were already politically oriented. A guardian from WB stated that:

It is not easy to answer all questions raised by my three children about Palestine. They always tell me that teachers avoid answering their questions about Palestinian leaders. The teachers

have to do something about this. When I was a student, the teacher explained to us why Israel occupied Palestine and how education is necessary to free ourselves.

Two guardians added that it is also equally important to understand which countries are supporting the Palestinian question. This, as per guardians, could help the students to be more aware of the impact of the political conditions worldwide. A guardian from GS stated that:

Students cannot distinguish between countries who support us or against us. I noticed some of them continue changing their point of view about some countries. For example, my son told me one day the USA is a good country and supporting us to establish our state. Within the same week, he changed his mind and said, we only can establish our country if the USA does not exist.

Moreover, 39 students, four teachers and eleven guardians believed that the role of religion in the political context of Palestine should be clarified in curriculum, policies, and operations. Four teachers noted that some teachers and guardians play a significant role in promoting political affiliation among their children. One teacher from GS stated that:

No way that we can teach without understanding our political situation. Some teachers promote their ideology through education. Islamic teachers only should talk about religion facts.

Sixteen students further expressed their dissatisfaction with education. They believed that the education does not inform them how and when to resist the Israeli occupation. A high school student from GS pointed out:

No one likes the Israeli occupation, but no one knows what to do. I need to understand how I can help my country and resist the Israeli occupation.

A considerable number of participants (24 students, 40 teachers, and five guardians) rejected the use of education as a means to promote political identity by influencing learners to become politically affiliated. Some participants considered neutralising education is necessary and should not be used to contribute to splitting the society according to their political identity. Participants agreed that the Palestinian national identity is dominated by the political identity due to the conflict between the two political parties (Fatah and Hamas). A teacher from WB stated that:

Parents should be responsible for political orientation of their children. Schools should have nothing to do with this. I would suggest that any teacher who expresses his political orientation to his students should be terminated.

To conclude, participants made 263 suggestions to improve education in Palestine. The majority of suggestions focused on improving education in Palestine by introducing the learners to the question of Palestine through education regarding history, geography, and leadership. This could stop learners from obtaining knowledge from unauthentic or ideological sources of knowledge. Secondly, the education system is suggested to promote the national identity through education

and not to address the political identity as it may contribute to splitting the society. Fifty-four participants also suggest clarifying the role of religion in the political context of Palestine and how it should be addressed in the educational curriculum. Twenty participants preferred to have the method for resisting the Israeli Occupation explained through the educational system and associated practices. The last part of the suggestions proposed that Palestinian learners be introduced to how Palestine is represented in international organisations such as the United Nations and influential governments and what Palestinians should do to represent the Palestinian society better worldwide.

4.5.3 Necessary factors to improve education through curriculum content and quality assessment

A total of 384 participating students (270), teachers (40), and guardians (70) who responded to the open-ended question emphasised the necessity of improving the quality of education through curriculum content, adequate assessment, and extra-curricular activities. The participants noted that the Palestinian curriculum does not prepare students for higher education and the workplace.

Fifty-one participating students (41), teachers (5), and guardians (5) highlighted that children are not involved in extra-curricular activities due to the massive curriculum content and the short study hours. Thus, they suggested introducing curriculum to standardise school activities, such as field trips that are of scientific, cultural, social, religious, and recreation focus, competitions and add classes of arts and music. A guardian from WB indicated that:

Teachers put so much pressure on students to do well in exams. This is not wrong. However, we need to consider their needs to enjoy their school life outside classrooms as well. Their minds should be relieved of all the time thinking of books and exams.

In addition to the extracurricular activities, eighteen participants (15 students, two teachers, and one guardian) believed that the current assessment strategy needs to be revised. They pointed out that it is an outdated strategy and only focuses on summative assessment and ignoring the formative assessment, mainly in grade twelve (*tawjihi*). A teacher and a guardian from GS noted that:

Tawjihi is a real challenge for the majority of students. Some excellent students failed the final exams because of the anxiety. What does it mean that half of grade twelve fail every year? Who is responsible for this high failure rate. Ministry should explore other options similar to leading countries.

In addition to the extracurricular activities and assessment strategy, 234 participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the curriculum content and relevance. Sixty-six participants recommended that there is a necessity to introduce a new educational policy. Fifty-eight participants (36 students, 26 teachers, and four guardians) suggested that the Palestinian national curriculum should be developed by involving all segments of the Palestinian society. This policy should indicate who should be involved in the national curriculum development and what knowledge should be introduced to students and how frequently the curriculum should be revised and who should revise it. Twenty participants (11 students, eight teachers, and one guardian) also suggested that the development and review of the curriculum should involve all segments of the society including social, political, ideological, economic, and health actors in addition to educators. Five participating teachers recommend international curriculum specialists to be consulted throughout the development process, but they should not exert any power on Palestinian curriculum developers by adding or omitting any knowledge that is agreed upon by the assigned committee. A guardian and school administrator from WB pointed that:

Textbooks are nothing more than copy paste from the curriculum of the neighbouring countries notably Jordan. We do not know who selects the lessons. Too many lessons.

A teacher from GS agreed with the guardian and added that relevant lessons are either excluded from the textbooks with no control over the UNRWA school's curriculum. The teacher from a UNRWA school in GS stated that:

I know that some lessons were excluded from the textbooks by the Israeli occupation. PNA accepted this because of the peace agreement with Israel. Israel did not exclude any lessons from their textbooks. Our textbooks should be developed, and we should not accept any interference from anyone.

A consider number of Participants (65 students, 24 teachers, and 34 guardians) noted that the current curriculum lacks lessons to promote critical thinking and problem solving, does not consider the scope and sequence where some lessons are found of higher or lower level than that of the learners, contains outdated knowledge that was proved to be inaccurate and removed from other countries' curricula, ignores the practical aspects of sciences, and does not cope with the latest technology and inventions. Thus, 234 participants suggested developing a new curriculum that is of high standards by adopting the latest worldwide development.

Furthermore, ninety-five participants (63 students, six teachers, and eleven guardians) reported that the current textbooks are too lengthy and include lots of repetitions that need to be omitted,

overlapping in knowledge, some conflicting information, and contains too many subjects that can be reduced considering depth, not breadth. Moreover, fifty-three participants recommend that the introduced lessons should be of a higher cognitive level, higher quality of content presentation, inclusive of more graphics, and digitised.

Fifteen participants (eleven students, two teachers, and two guardians) also considered that the English language textbooks were very poor and outdated. They suggested to revisiting these textbooks and consider increasing the number of lessons per week in addition to introducing other foreign languages. Five participants suggested improving the way the lessons are presented and taught. An English language teacher from WB noted that:

Teaching a second language is very important. Ministry of education selected the English language to be the second language for our children. The textbooks include outdated texts. Most teachers are not qualified to teach English. Ministry should review the English books and train the teachers.

As a final point, 386 participants believed that education in WB and GS could be improved by introducing extra-curricular activities, reviewing the assessment strategy, introducing the new educational policy, establishing a curriculum development system, establishing curriculum review system, and focusing on foreign languages. The majority of the suggestions considered that the curriculum is outdated and missing essential aspects of developing learners' higher order thinking, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and the application of the knowledge. Some participants see that the current curriculum focus on breadth not the depth of the knowledge. The curriculum lacks the relevance to the rapidly developing technology and educational content.

4.5.4 Social conditions that influence education in WB and GS

A total of 224 participating students (144), teachers (34), and guardians (46) who responded to the open-ended question emphasised that social conditions in WB and GS influence education regarding social unity and equity, relevant education, and promoting respect over physical and verbal punishment.

Seventy Participating students (37), teachers (17) and guardians (16) consider that Palestinian national unity and equality needs to be promoted through the education system regarding curriculum and daily practices. Participants suggested that this can be achieved through respecting

each other regardless of religion, political identity, academic level, gender, and economic class. A university student considered that education did not contribute to his understanding of the difference between the national and political identities. He stated that:

In school, I liked all my teachers. Some of them were Fatah and others were Hamas. I was confused whether to become Fatah or Hamas to serve Palestine more. My father told me that time you do not need to be politically oriented to serve Palestine.

Furthermore, 122 participants (83 students, 13 teachers, and 26 guardians) viewed that the education is not relevant to the needs of the Palestinian society. Education must address the Palestinian daily life, as per the 122 participants. The curriculum and pedagogy have to prepare the students to become socially active citizens who are equipped with the relevant knowledge and skills. Eighty-one participants suggested that education should address the Palestinian customs and traditions. The educational system should also promote voluntary work and internship activities that aim at improving the productivity of children. Five participants advocated introducing lessons related to health education and law. A guardian from WB noted that schools and university students should be linked with social institutions. She stated that:

I do not see why students are not participating in social activities, particularly voluntary work. Schools are not inviting us to participate in the school activities to inform them about the traditions and customs of the Palestinians in other places.

Furthermore, 32 participants (24 students, four teachers, and four guardians) noted that education does not promote the respect among students and teachers due to verbal and physical punishment. The participating students and guardians recommended that teachers have to stop using verbal and physical punishment and emphasise respecting students. Some guardians supported teachers stating that students should respect their teachers to avoid verbal and physical punishment.

To summarise, 224 suggestions were made to improve education in WB and GS. These suggestions are promoting the national unity and equality through education, providing relevant education, and promoting respect over verbal and physical punishment. The majority of suggested actions are pertinent to providing education that is relevant to Palestinians daily life. There should be a focus on Palestinian heritage and customs and promotion of the voluntary and internship culture among learners, introduce lessons and activities that focus on the social aspects of the Palestinian life, and promote respect over verbal and physical punishment within the society through education.

4.6 ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEWS

This section presents the analysis of results of the semi-structured interview data of the study. The interviews were conducted with eight Palestinian leaders: four political and four educationalists. A brief profile of the participants is displayed in Table 44.

No.	Participant	Qualification	Highest Position Held	Political Orientation
1	Educational Leader-1	Doctorate	Director of Education	Independent
2	Educational Leader-2	Doctorate	Deputy Minister	PLO
3	Educational Leader-3	Bachelor	Director General	Independent
4	Educational Leader-4	Doctorate	Deputy Minister	Islamic
5	Political Leader-1	Doctorate	Minster	PLO
6	Political Leader-2	Masters	Member of the National Council	PLO
7	Political Leader-3	Doctorate	Director of a Political Party	PLO
8	Political Leader-4	Doctorate	General Secretary	Islamic

Table 44: Profile of Participating Educational and Political Leaders

The analysis of interviews concludes with three central themes of three major powers that directly impact education in Palestine. Chief among these powers are the Israeli occupation, international governments, and Palestinian political leaders. The impact of the pressure that the three powers exert on education in Palestine is presented in this section from the perspectives of the participating political and educational leaders. Firstly, the impact of the Israeli occupation on education in Palestine is presented by considering the practices that are directly and indirectly imposed on Palestinian educational and political leaders to shape education in Palestine. Secondly, the level of influence of the international governments particularly the donating ones exert on education in Palestine to shape curriculum content, educational policies, and operations. Thirdly, the extent to which political conflicts due to ideology among Palestinian leaders which directly impact education in Palestine especially curriculum content, educational policies, and operations. Finally, a summary of the section presenting the interaction and influence that the Israeli occupation and the international governments impose on PNA to shape education especially curriculum content, educational policies, and operations to respond to the Israeli occupation and international governments desires.

4.6.1 Influences of Israeli Occupation on Education in Palestine

The eight interviewees affirmed that the central power which delayed the development of education in Palestine is the Israeli occupation. The interviewees shared the view that the Israeli

occupation paralyses education in Palestine using various strategies. The main strategies the Israeli occupation uses to barricade education in Palestine can be summarised into (1) influencing international governments to view the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from the Israeli perspective, (2) impeding PNA leaders and staff, (3) weaponising the transfer of taxes and customs to PNA collected from Palestinians by the Israeli government, and (4) balkanising the Palestinian society. These four strategies have a significant impact on education in Palestine regarding policies and practices, according to interviewees.

The first strategy, as reported by the interviewees, influences the international governments to accept the Israeli point of view regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This belief, as per the interviewees, contributed to various consequences which have influenced all Palestinian institutions including political, economic, social, and educational ones. One of the significant consequences perceived as an implication is the legitimacy of the Palestinian political leadership. For instance, PL-1, as indicated below, believes that although Hamas gained the legitimacy in 2006 based on the legislative council elections, the Israeli occupation influenced the international governments to reject this legitimacy and dictated who should represent the Palestinians internationally. PL-1 stated that:

After the 2006 elections and the victory of Hamas, Hamas claims to be the legitimacy. Hamas took over the revolutionary legitimacy in specific practices of PLO. No one is currently disputing the legitimacy of the president, but these elections have become worthy of an extended period. We believe that the PLO is the legitimate representative and its president. However, the sense of people has diminished towards this legitimacy. People are feeling that there is a space regarding leading. This space is dangerous. There is no initiative, and there is no new thinking that deals with the new challenges. We are talking about negotiation and America is the controller.

The interviewees trusted that the Israeli occupation plays a significant role in influencing the international governments to view the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from the Israeli perspective. In other words, the Israeli occupation, as per the interviewees, promotes the view that Israelis are victims who are targeted by the Palestinians. This view informs the actions taken by those international governments against the Palestinians as people, political leadership, and institutions. Thus, international governments may recognise those Palestinian leaders who are firstly recognised by the Israeli government. To clarify, in the case that a Palestinian leader does not recognise or reject the Israelis actions against Palestinians, the Israeli government believes that those international governments should impose strict conditions on Palestinians regarding funding and leadership legitimacy recognition. The interviewees observe that most Palestinian political

leaders lack the international recognition to represent the Palestinians before the international organisations (e.g., UN) in case they do not accept Israel as a state and deny Palestinians their fundamental rights of living in or returning to Palestine. According to EL-2, donating countries tied their funding with policies in favour of the Israeli occupation. EL-2 confirmed that:

Of course, education quality has declined in GS. One of the significant factors is that most donating governments do not recognise Hamas and consequently stopped funding education in GS. Therefore, donating countries stopped building new schools in GS through the PNA in Ramallah.

The interviewees noted that influencing the international governments by the Israeli occupation particularly the donating ones toward Palestinians created political division among Palestinian political parties creating economic instability and negative social transformation. This international pressure dictates that only a specific group of Palestinians should represent Palestinians internationally. Even if a particular political party wins the legislative council election, they will be internationally recognised to lead the Palestinians only if the Israeli government approves them. The interviewees have provided the example of the Islamic movement of Hamas winning in the 2006 elections and consequences imposed on the Palestinians in WB and GS. The leaders of Hamas in WB were either killed or imprisoned. On the other side, the Palestinians of GS were put under siege for years to reject Hamas legitimacy. Thus, the effect the Israeli occupation has on the international governments put the conditions for accepting Palestinian leadership by the degree of acceptance they, Palestinian leaders, gain from the Israeli government.

The second challenge which the Israeli occupation imposes on Palestinians is the level of impeding to the PNA leadership and management. The PNA team cannot freely move from one physical location to another in Palestine without getting permission from the Israeli occupation. If the Israeli occupation rejects a PNA member, then his/her work on the ground will be impossible, as highlighted by EL-1 and PL-1. Interviewees point out that even ministers seek permission to travel between WB and GS to do their job and some of them were hijacked on the Israeli checkpoints or left waiting for hours before allowing them crossing the checkpoint. These practices are observed as a way to explicitly inform those PNA staff that they are still under occupation. Moreover, such practices are implemented to impede the PNA staff including leaders.

The third challenge the Israeli occupation applies to impact education in Palestine is financial. The Israeli occupation as per the interviewees collects taxes and customs, and postoffice fees from Palestinians. This money is transferred to PNA financial accounts only when PNA meets their

expectations from all sides. The Israeli occupation restricts the transfer of this amount of money to PNA accounts by accepting some policies imposed by the Israeli government. The delay in transferring this money negatively impacted the operations of PNA by making it unable to pay salaries to staff and run the social institutions including education. The Israeli occupation weaponises the economic system of Palestine by limiting all its functions from bank business to manufacturing. The economic system of Palestine is developed to depend on the Israeli economic system entirely. The minute the Israeli occupation decides to paralyse the Palestinian economic system, the Palestinian social institutions will not last for an extended period due to lack of finance. The interviewees see that the economic system of Palestine is used as a weapon by the Israeli government to impose policies or to stop Palestinians from achieving their rights.

Fourthly, the interviewees affirmed that the Israeli occupation balkanises the Palestinian society. The Israeli occupation does this by isolating communities from each other using the separation wall, checkpoints, barriers, and siege. The interviewees also emphasised that the Israeli occupation through checkpoints and separation walls made it a daily terrifying activity for students and educators to reach their schools or universities.

Going through interviewees' responses to the social question, it was clear that they agreed that the Israeli occupation balkanises the Palestinian society. This balkanisation is one of the significant challenges to provide equal learning experiences to learners in Palestine. For example, EL-2 points out that the Israeli occupation isolates some Palestinian villages from the society. EL-2 confirmed that:

Before 1994, in GS, under the Israeli occupation, some areas were isolated from GS, including (e.g. al-Mawasi area in Khan Younis) and the only way to get access to those areas was through Red Cross for conducting Grade Twelve final exams. Al Dahniah area in Rafah had the same conditions.

The only way to write the GCHS (*tawjihi*) for the separated village students was through the use of the Red Cross cars. Educating students of a similar condition in GS and WB was a challenging task for educational leaders before 1994. The educational leaders consider that the practices imposed on Palestinians barricaded education from being advanced. For instance, EL-3, as quoted below, points out that the Israeli occupation targeted the elite Palestinians. Educating those elite Palestinians was a real challenge. Israeli occupation used to impede the process of enrolling those elite students in universities outside Palestine. EL-3 shares his view toward assisting those students to get the Israeli officers permission to allow for their study abroad. EL-3 pointed out that:

I remember how the Israelis put obstacles in front of the students who finished their undergraduate education and looked to complete their higher education. We helped them achieve their purpose. So we tried to circumvent the Israelis by finding suitable solutions that help the student to continue their master and so on. Thus, our means were bitter and painful. We aimed to make the student graduate with the highest degrees of education since there were no job opportunities in either agriculture, commerce, industry or any type of work except continuing their university education.

In addition to EL-3 experience, EL-1 and EL-2 believe that the the separation wall is used as a tool for balkanising the Palestinian society. EL-1 and EL-2 present the daily suffering of children and educators passing through the Israeli checkpoints to reach their schools. EL-1 adds that there are communities that are separated from their schools in WB. The students who are educated in these schools have to be searched daily by the Israeli soldiers terrifying students and guardians. EL-1 pointed out that:

I think that there are 49 populated communities separated from the schools, and this leads to the entry of students from the gates of the barrier to reach their schools. Passing through the gates of the Wall exposes the students to fear.

In WB, there are some schools in rural areas. Those schools were separated and located outside the separation wall. Students have to pass through the Israeli checkpoints on a daily basis when they go to school. The same applies to teachers as many of them cannot reach to their place of work, some of them refuse to work in these schools, thereby leaving only the oppressed teachers who do not have alternatives, although their academic level may be lesser than the others. In such conditions, it can be seen that the quality of education in these unsafe schools is lower than the other schools.

The impact of the separation wall on education has complicated the facilitation of the learning process. According to EL-1, university students, as well as faculty members, faced various problems. EL-1 stressed that:

Indeed, that barrier dismembered various educational communities with a substantial impact on some schools. For example, it has divided the University of Jerusalem into two parts: outside the wall and inside the wall. This has caused a state of isolation and a crisis at a thought level, from my point of view.

The separation wall has separated some rural communities in WB from the existing educational institutions. The citizens of GS suffer from the siege starting from 2006. Because it is isolated, the siege on GS isolated the citizens of GS from their counterparts of WB and the world. For example, EL-4 believes that the separation wall and the siege have significantly impacted the educational operations in WB and GS respectively. The imposed siege on GS further contributed to the inability of building new schools to reduce the rate of two shifts schools. EL-4 emphasised that:

In WB, the existence of the separation wall, the presence of many Israeli soldiers and checkpoints on the roads prevent students from reaching their schools regularly. Also, we must not forget that the siege on GS which prevented students from joining their universities aboard (which causes a big problem). Furthermore, the three Israeli attacks on GS and the siege had adverse effects on the situation in GS. The siege imposed on GS affected the structure of the

educational practices and requirements needed to schools. For example, during the first six years of the siege, we were unable to build any school.

To elaborate on the EL-4 point of view, EL-1 considers that the siege on GS contributes to more onerous conditions when compared to the separation wall. She emphasises that educating the children of GS seems to be more difficult compared to WB. EL-1 advocated that:

I see that the reality of education in GS is more difficult than in WB for the following reasons: (1) the three wars on GS led to the downfall of education each time regarding the destruction of the infrastructure of schools and Universities. (2) The Siege contributed to the fragmentation of community cohesion. I mean, individuals of the community lack a sense of security. (3) The matter is not only financial -There are two ministries of education in GS: one reports to the Hamas administration and other reports to the PNA in Ram Allah. Each Ministry follows different administration practices as well as different goals and vision. (4) The existence of divergent intellectual ideologies in GS and WB; this is another burden on GS.

From the political leaders' perspective, PL-1 agrees with EL-1 and EL-4 on the impact of the siege on GS and the separation wall in WB have on education in Palestine. He explains that this is due to the destructive practices imposed on PNA staff. The consequences of these practices contribute to impeding the efforts of PNA to establish national institutions for Palestinians. PNA has no control over the land distribution. PL-1 explained that:

There will be inflation that leads to polarisation in society. Now this polarisation between Fatah and Hamas is the result of this issue. A state where there is no rule of law for personal reasons and the most important reason is the occupation, which deprives you of having full sovereignty over your land. On the other hand, there is no sovereignty on the land and sufficient capabilities that impose the rule of law that is capable of protecting the people and not from the family nor the political movement but from the law only. This is the nature of the current society and the circumstances that it creates by creating a reality in which there is a distortion in how people take their positions. Lots of the times, you find people are forced to do things. Thus, this plays a negative role in the free choice of the youth. Are they going to please their families or the movements they follow! The students are free from this issue because the mixture in the universities does not allow families to stand out. However, in the municipal or legislative elections, he cannot get out of it.

To summarise, the Israeli occupation uses various methods to delay the development of education system in Palestine so that it can respond to social and economic needs. The Israeli occupation enacts policies and practices of Palestinian leaders using the international governments' recognition of PNA. The impact of the international governments on education in Palestine is discussed in the next section.

4.6.2 Impact of the International Governments on Education in Palestine

This section focuses on the impact the international governments have on shaping education in Palestine. Interviewees affirm that the international governments directly impact educational policies, practices, and curriculum using several methods. These methods to shape the Palestinian

social institutions including education can be summarised into three. Firstly, international governments, particularly the donors, in coordination with the Israeli occupation play a significant role in recognition of any Palestinian political leadership before international organisations (e.g. UN). Secondly, the international governments pressurise the PNA to accept the Israeli occupation's own political agendas. These three methods negatively transform education in Palestine. The impact of each method on education in Palestine is discussed from the interviewee's perspectives.

WB and GS are still under the Israeli occupation. The Palestinian economic system depends on the donations from the countries who supported the Peace Accord between the PLO and the Israeli government in 1993. The donating governments support the PNA to function and serve the Palestinians regarding sociological needs. The economic conditions are very much connected with the political conditions in Palestine. According to EL-3, salaries paid to teachers from 1967 to 1994 were meagre, but teachers accepted that due to the passion they had. EL-3 elaborates, "During our period, salaries were low but sufficient. This does not mean that these salaries satisfied all the teachers' needs". Furthermore, he disclosed that the Israeli occupation did not pay those salaries. EL-3 denied that:

No, No, No, it was not from the Israeli occupation government. Those salaries were paid from the taxes, customs and mail fees collected from Palestinians. All these fees were considered the sources of fund and provided a budget for education in Palestine before 1994. Thus, the occupation expended financially on education from this budget. This means that the Israeli occupiers did not spend on education from their budget.

The interviewees also noted that the Israeli occupation had not funded education before 1994. Due to the lack of funds allocated to educating Palestinians, the PNA inherited an outdated educational system from the Israeli occupation in 1994. All interviewees affirm that schools were in a miserable condition regarding infrastructure, technology, and staffing. The interviewees believe that PNA prioritised education and allocated funding for building new schools, equipping the schools with the required resources, and training teachers to use effective teaching methods. Thus, from 1994 to 2000, interviewees believe that the educational institution's infrastructure has been upgraded. The interviewees noted that after 2000, PNA did not allocate budget for building new schools due to the deficit in the budget. PL-1 stated that:

Since 2000, there has been a significant slowdown in infrastructure and all the aid money. The entire infrastructure was built [before 2000] with donor funds. After 2000, particularly after the budget deficit began to appear, most of the money went to counter the budget deficit and this has affected the infrastructure of education.

Furthermore, EL-4 believes that the number of students is increasing while the number of schools is steady in GS. He affirms that with over 250,000 children studying in 395 schools, most of the teachers work in two shifts. EL-4 highlighted that:

During 2013 we could build 20 schools when the relations with Egypt was improved, but due to the following political conditions of this period, we faced significant difficulties in receiving building materials and schools' requirements. These difficulties increased more and more in GS after forming the consensus government. For example, since the formulation of the consensus government, the MoE in GS did not receive any operational budgets.

Moreover, the teachers in GS have not received salaries from the PNA. This is due to lack of funds allocated to education in GS, as per EL-4. EL-4 pointed out that:

We do not receive any operational budgets from the Palestinian government, and we just depend on the income of the school cafeterias to continue our missions in addition to the support of some donating countries. We face a big problem in paying the salaries of employees, and around two-thirds of them do not receive salaries from the new government. Two years ago the Ministry of Finance in GS began paying 40% to 45% of the salary for these employees. Therefore, during two years about 8,000 employees worked without salaries at the MoE in GS which forms an additional burden on the educational process. Moreover, the ministry was not able to provide transportation for the teacher to their schools except by connecting the donor organisations to provide transportation for them.

Similarly, EL-3 considers the teachers' salary as a political issue. He believes that teachers are paid based on their political affiliation, and this has no connection with their credentials. EL-3 underlined that:

The teacher's salary is a political issue. Some people are rejected and replaced by people who are half qualified or unqualified utterly. However, Inshallah we hope that reconciliation be achieved between parties, and then we will have the qualified teacher at the right place, and the teacher with low performance takes courses and instructions to be able to implement his role successfully

For further exploration, EL-2 emphasises that the slow development of education in GS can be attributed to the rift between the two major political parties: Fatah and Hamas. He notes that donating governments stopped their fund to educational institutions in GS because the parties reject the principles of the Peace Accord between PLO and the Israeli government. EL-2 confirmed that:

Of course, education quality has declined in GS. One of the significant factors is that most donating governments do not recognise Hamas and consequently stopped funding education in GS. Therefore, donating countries stopped building new schools in GS through the PNA in Ramallah. So, the donations are currently insufficient because Hamas limited the employment opportunities in the education sector only to those who follow their ideology.

Thus, funding education in WB and GS is political. When EL-4 was asked if development projects to improve education in Palestine including curriculum development will be an easy task for

political and educational leaders in Palestine, he responded that donors would continue imposing which content should and should not be included. EL-4 emphasised that:

The conditions imposed by the donors make the PNA unable to prepare Palestinian national curricula freely. So I think the new curricula will contain many problems especially those related to solving the Palestinian political issues.

Thus from EL-4 perspectives, if donors keep linking their fund with the education system in Palestine regarding content, policies, and operations, students will never be introduced to methods for solving the political issues. Furthermore, EL-1 concludes that “The PNA suspended several projects due to the unjustifiable pressure by some donating governments”.

PL-1 agrees with EL-1 and believes that PNA should not accept conditional funds. He asserts that donors should understand that Palestinians are under the Israeli occupation which makes the life of Palestinians impossible. This problematic life is meant to have them leaving their country due to challenging economic conditions. The political coercion is translated into economic pressure on Palestinians. This pressure aims at forcing Palestinians to immigrate and leave their homeland. PL-1 underlined that:

The Palestinian people are under occupation in a period of national liberation, especially as it is an occupation of a particular type. The occupation is uprooting the Palestinian people and taking its resources. Moreover, the displacement operation that the occupation currently performing using all means in terms of drying up the sources of income, drying up the resources of people to dry the ways and conditions of life in the country so that; citizens are forced to emigrate in the process of political coercion through repression and economic coercion by fighting people in their livelihood and in what they do for living.

In short, education in Palestine entirely depends on the funds obtained from donating countries. Mostly, those donors, as seen by political and educational leaders participating in this study, exert pressure on PNA on how this money should be spent. This pressure created an untrusted environment between the educational and political leaders of Palestine from one side and the donors from the other. Political and educational leaders affirm that the pressure those donors exert only benefit the Israeli occupation and does not help the Palestinians to develop a national system that enables them to promote national values and prepare students to establish their country. The educational and political leaders asked for donations without conditions to ensure a healthy environment for improving education in Palestine.

4.6.3 Influences of the Palestinian Political Leaders on Education in Palestine

The regime that controlled Palestinians has been inconsistent over the past century. This inconsistency contributed to the shape of the current Palestinian educational system. EL-1 believes that “the most important political factor is the inconstancy in the regime as it changes over time with only different faces; those changes are mostly negative but sometimes positive”. She also considers the British administration as an occupational regime that has no right of controlling Palestinians and their institutions. She believes that the British administration existence on the Palestinian land was not legitimate. This administration that controlled Palestinians from 1918 to 1948 had imposed various policies on them. The consequences are still affecting the Palestinian educational system to date as stated by EL-1. EL-1 indicated that:

The education system was developed in Palestine under an authoritarian regime and continues to be authoritarian. The heritage of the British Mandate shows us that the British occupation did not seek to build an excellent educational system for the Palestinians and it built a purely authoritarian regime. Due to this reason, when we think of the development of the educational system in Palestine we use an authoritarian style. Unfortunately, its effects still exist.

Upon the end of the British Mandate on Palestine in 1948, the Jordanian administration took over the responsibility in WB and East Jerusalem, whereas the Egyptian administration became responsible for GS. Although the two administrations were integral parts of the League of Arab States, their legitimacy in controlling Palestinians did not contribute to developing a national Palestinian political, economic, and educational systems inside Palestine. This gap contributed to having Palestinians lacking representative national leadership from 1948 to 1967. Palestinians were implementers of all the policies and regulations imposed by the administering regimes. According to EL-1, “Palestinian decision-makers, in my point view, do not want to lose control over education as it used to be during the British administration and Jordanian and Egyptian trusteeship”.

In contrast to the statement of EL-1, EL-3 states that the Egyptian government played a significant role in establishing the education system in GS and considerably increased the number of learners. EL-3 pointed out that:

When the Egyptians came to GS in 1948, they gave attention to Education, and they considered it as a cultural and civilizational aspect. They taught students, opened schools, established tents and did about everything. Therefore, people profoundly joined educational institutions.

The interview results show that Palestinians did not have a unified leadership body to represent them and to be able to assist them in building their social institutions including the educational institutions till 1994. Although the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) was recognised by the League of Arab States in 1974 and by the United Nations in 1988 to represent Palestinians before the international organisations, it was not allowed to function inside Palestine and build the social institutions for the nation. In other words, educational leaders inside WB and GS had no direct contact with the PLO leadership from 1964 to 1994. The Israeli occupation emphasised this disconnection. The ideology of the PLO and its leadership were not permitted to be part of the educational system in WB and GS before 1994. Furthermore, the Israeli occupation silenced the Palestinian history, geography, heritage, and traditions in education.

Hence, from 1967 to 1994, the Israeli occupation which had no legitimacy but controlled all Palestinian institutions including education. Education of Palestinians was under the Israeli military administration. Israelis were controlling all parts of education in WB and GS. They decided which curriculum Palestinian children should learn, which teachers should teach, and what resources can be used. EL-1 and EL-2 consider that the Israeli government dictated what curriculum Palestinian children should study. Furthermore, the curriculum implemented from 1948 to 1994 was never reviewed and made relevant to Palestinians daily life as per EL-1 and EL-2. As expressed by EL-2 “To elaborate further, from 1967 to 1994, the Egyptian and Jordanian curricula that were implemented in GS and WB, were outdated and never reviewed since the time they were imposed on Palestinians”. EL-2 highlighted that:

Israeli military government omitted social sciences textbooks entirely or some lessons from other textbooks for security reasons. The remaining textbooks had become fragmented during the same period (1967-1994). The textbooks used were not relevant to the daily lives of the Palestinians. Of course, Egyptian heritage differs from the Palestinian heritage and the Egyptian environment is different. The Egyptian curriculum addressed the gap that arose due to the absence of a Palestinian National Education System.

During the Israeli occupation period 1967 to 1994, Israeli military administration used to control education fully. This administration cancelled some books, omitted some texts, and added new texts. The Palestinian educational administrators could not stop this as per EL-2 and EL-3. EL-3 pointed out that:

The occupation used to put obstacles which were firstly simple, but by the run of the time, those obstacles became more and more complicated. They negatively transformed the education system. Those obstacles were escalated to preventing books entirely from being distributed to students. Therefore, students were forced to study using drafts.

Thus, the Palestinian educational leaders, from 1948 to 1994, were not given the opportunity to establish a vision for education and communicate this vision with society. To simplify, education was either running without a vision or with a hidden agenda of the controlling regime.

With the increasing number of students in WB and GS and the policy of the Israeli administration to close down several schools citing security concerns, forced Palestinian educators to make most schools work on two or three shifts as per EL-1, EL-2, and EL-4. EL-2 emphasised that:

As for the double shift schools before 1994, GS had approximately 85% of the schools operating with the system (double shift) due to high population density, and there was no possibility for building new schools to operate in one shift system.

Furthermore, EL-2 views that the Israeli occupation has not implemented any professional development plan for the educators in Palestine. The PNA invested heavily in training the teachers. EL-2 stated that:

We focused on the educational and administrative cadre [employees] because, for the 27 years of the Israeli occupation (1967 to 1994), the Israeli administration had not conducted any training course for the teachers or administrators. Therefore, we focused on the human element and conducted intensive training for the academic and administrative cadre. I believe we conducted more than 13,000 training sessions during the period 1994 to 2006.

In addition to the lack of infrastructure in schools and professional development, EL-2 indicated that the PNA inherited schools that are not equipped with any technological resources. This was put as a priority by the MoE in 1994 as explained by EL-2. EL-2 emphasised that:

Following the development of infrastructure and academic staff, I was interested in introducing educational technology, since there were no computers in our schools and even in the Ministry itself. So I was keen to introduce computers to schools, and equip computer and science laboratories in most schools.

To sum up, PNA inherited an educational system that was outdated. Most schools lack the necessary infrastructure including science and technology resources. The academic and administrative staff in those schools did not receive adequate training for almost 27 years. The implemented curriculum is outdated and irrelevant. Most schools work on two or three shifts. These challenges and much more are due to socio-political context of Palestine and due to the Israeli occupation.

Moreover, EL-1 and EL-2 believe that the Israeli occupation did not end in 1994, it only transferred the administrative responsibilities of education to Palestinians. EL-1 pointed out that:

The other significant event was the formation of the PNA, the MoE and Ministry of Higher Education correctly, in 1996. The Israeli Occupation apparently ended, but it is not over yet.

The PNA became responsible for the education, and this responsibility was associated with the procedures only and was not a real liability.

To establish a single educational system for WB and GS was the first achievement of the PNA. This system was meant to introduce the same curriculum, implement the same educational policies, have the same standards, and promote the national and social values. The PNA gained its legitimacy from the PLO. This administration and for the first time functioning on the ground to establish national and social institutions. EL-2 reported that:

The plan of the MoE after 1994 was to enhance the infrastructure of schools, train academic staff, introduce educational technology, and most importantly to develop a Palestinian national curriculum. The implementation of this curriculum started in 2001, and it is continuing as of today.

The objective of the MoE was to develop a national curriculum to promote the national and social values. PL-1 and EL-1 share that Professor Ibrahim Abu Laghad was selected to develop the first Palestinian curriculum plan. This plan as per EL-1 was an exciting plan but never implemented as the former president found it secular and did not address religious aspects of the Palestinian society. EL-1 pointed out that:

There are two steps for the documentation: the plan which was prepared by Dr Ibrahim Abu-Laghad, where it was a liberal intellectual critical revolutionary plan. I am very impressed with this plan, but it was not adopted by the PNA because the leadership at that time considered it as an embodiment of the secular Enlighten liberal thought.

In agreement with EL-1, PL-1 highlighted that:

I have a comment that the curriculum is in terrible conditions even when they have tried to change it Ibrahim Abu-Laghad was in this project, may God grant him his mercy. He was a member of the committee, but later on, he revealed that what they submitted was something and what they have seen later in the curriculum was something else. Abu-Laghad said that the changes they made were a step backwards.

It was explained by EL-2 how the project of national curriculum project was carried out. EL-2 disclosed that:

As the Deputy Minister of Education, I was involved in this project. The Italians funded the Palestinian curriculum, and the Palestinian cadres [educators] in WB and GS designed the curriculum. The Italians asked us to have a copy of the curriculum, but we refused. Then the former Palestinian president, Yasser Arafat, knew about it and supported us in this regard. He instructed us to provide them with a copy only after teachers and students receive it. It was untrue that the Italians were intervening in the curriculum. The only concern raised by Italians was that we included the map of Palestine rather than including WB and GS maps. Our response was this map can be taken off only when borders between Palestine and Israel become real.

PL-1 affirms that this curriculum does not meet the minimum national requirements as it was a copy of the curriculum of the neighbouring countries. These books as per the EL-1 were developed in a hurry to make a political achievement that time. PL-1 maintained that:

I doubt that it even has a vision. Unfortunately, it is a blind imitation of what happened in the neighbouring countries, and it is an experience that is not recommended to follow.

In line with what was stated by PL-1, EL-1 stated that:

Books have been written in a hurry. At the time Dr Naeem Abu Hummus was the deputy of the ministry, books were authored to make a quick political achievement and not educational; this step made our leaders very proud where they could say that their students were learning from Palestinian books and not Jordanian or Egyptian books.

Thus, the Palestinian curriculum does not meet the expectations as stated by some of the participating educational and political leaders participating in this study (e.g. PL-1, PL-3, EL-1, EL-3, and EL-4). The curriculum was never reviewed from the year of implementation in 2001 until September 2017. The MoE was working on a new curriculum to be implemented by September 2017 for the lower primary grades and gradual implementation for the upper grades as per EL-4, he believes the newly developed curriculum still does not meet the minimum expectations of the educational leaders due to some political and economic conditions. EL-4 stated that:

I viewed the general framework of the draft of the curricula, and I have many remarks on this draft which also still does not represent many things missed in the previous curricula. Also, we might suffer from some Palestinian curricula that do not satisfy the minimum requirements of the Palestinians especially those related to the intellectual and national foundations in these curricula. The conditions imposed by the donors make the PNA unable to prepare unique Palestinian curricula freely. So I think the new curricula will contain many deficits especially those related to solving the Palestinian political issues.

Moreover, the legitimacy of the leadership in full control of education in Palestine was not evident till 1994. However, from 1994 till now, the education has been led by Palestinian political and educational leaders. External powers such as the Israeli occupation and donating countries pressure the Palestinian decision-makers to meet their agenda to fund education in Palestine.

By 2006 the legitimacy on the ground has been divided between two powers, Hamas and Fatah, by the success of the Islamic Movement of Hamas in the legislative council elections. By 2007, a rift between the two major Palestinian political movements began. This rift contributed to having two legitimacies. The first is the legitimacy of the Palestinian president based on the presidential elections of 2004 and the legitimacy of the prime minister, from the Islamic Movement of Hamas. This rift as viewed by PL-3 is detrimental and can lead to splitting WB and GS from each other. He believes that education has been dramatically impacted on the ground although the same curriculum is used. PL-3 appealed that:

The rift has the worst negative repercussions. Education remained unified in the formal sense, while what is presented to the students in the educational classes tends to be blind fanaticism,

especially in GS. This strengthens the rift and directs us to the separation between GS and WB. Also, it distinguishes between the political movements in the Palestinian political system.

PL-2 considers the appointment of educators in schools and universities to be based on their political affiliation. He affirms that qualification and experience are not the primary requirements for becoming an educator in GS and WB. PL-2 pointed out that:

Hamis controlled education in GS after the division and prevented much staff from practising their jobs, especially teachers, and the objection done by 'Ramallah' government. The arrests in WB and GS for some teachers and students. The appointments are based on the political orientations and often unprofessional. The appointments implemented at the universities and schools are based on the political orientation by the two parties of the division Fateh and Hamas and often unprofessional.

PL-1 considers that education was used as a means for Hamas to win the elections of 2006. He considers that PLO members before 2006 joined jobs with higher income and this opened the opportunities for Hamas members to shape education in WB and GS. PL-1 pointed out that:

Unfortunately, I tell you frankly that in the election that happened in 2006, Fateh was controlling all ministries. I heard that the majority of teachers voted for Hamas. The teachers who were employed by Fateh based on kinship, have voted against it. So, kinship and connections played a prominent role in the election especially when smart people did not go to the education field.

Education in Palestine from early days was not developed to preserve the Palestinian national identity. PL-3 shares that the current education system lacks the basis of introducing the national identity through education. In other words, Palestinian children are not introduced to the national norms to feel attached to Palestine and form bonds with counterparts an efficient social structure. PL-3 noted that:

Education in Palestine lacks the philosophy of constructing, promoting and preserving the Palestinian national identity. Additionally, leaders have not considered emphasising that Palestine is an integral part of the Arab nation through education.

EL-1 discloses that if the national identity cannot be promoted through education, this does not mean teachers should not introduce it through their instructions. EL-1 shared a story about her experience as a student in one of the schools in WB and how the teacher changed some lessons to introduce children to Palestinian leaders and places. EL-1 stated that:

A curriculum is a tool, but the most important aspect is its implementation on the ground. When we studied using the Jordanian curriculum, the teacher had a significant role in promoting the Palestinian national identity and altering some of the lessons, such as the (trip to Jerash) to (a trip to Sabasita) and lessons associated with the King of Jordan to a lesson on the late President Yasser Arafat and the revolution. This affected strengthening our belonging dramatically despite the use of non-Palestinian curriculum. This falls under the concept of the hidden curriculum determined by the teacher, which had a more profound effect than a real curriculum. I think that the current curriculum missed the hidden curriculum without it the Palestinian national identity will not be strengthened. There is evidence that our children are far from the Palestinian issue, and they do not have the same passion for the homeland that we had at the same age; I think it is an intentional act.

EL-2 believes that leaving the introduction of the Palestinian national identity to teachers will contribute to significant political interference. He observed that some teachers are politically affiliated, and they promote their political ideology rather than promoting the Palestinian national identity. EL-2 stressed that:

This is right, the teacher, himself/herself, is politically affiliated and believe in a particular ideology. Some teachers have significant contributions to student political affiliation. On the other hand, you cannot say that a teacher should not belong to a political party as a human. This is one of his/her rights. However, the teacher should oblige the educational curriculum which has been designed by the MoE, and he/she does not have the right to convey their ideological perspectives to students.

PL-1 considers his experience with education in Palestine as it had never introduced students to the Palestinian national identity but rather his understanding of the question of Palestine started after the birth of the PLO. His knowledge about Palestine as a homeland for Palestinians has been shaped. PL-1 argued:

You know, during the Jordanian administration of WB, it was not allowed to say that you are Palestinian. The Palestinian national identity issue came to light after 1967, and after that, the political movement which began after 1967 and it taught us a little and gave us some knowledge.

PL-2 considers that the focus of education in WB and GS should be on teaching children modern sciences in addition to promoting national identity in isolation of promoting the political parties ideologies in schools. PL-2 also believes that “Educational curriculum should focus on modern science in addition to promoting national identity and the question of Palestine. Political parties should not be present in schools for any reason”.

Moreover, education in Palestine is not used as a vehicle to preserve the Palestinian national identity. The focus of some teachers was to promote national identity using the hidden curriculum because it was not part of the curriculum. Some other teachers play a significant role in shaping students ideology and influence them to become politically affiliated. Promoting political identity over the national identity brings the attention to the reality that why national identity is missing from the Palestinian curriculum and whether students and educators distinguish between the national and political identities as per EL-4. EL-4 reported that:

As long as the PNA is still facing pressure from the Israeli occupation and the donor states interfere on the content of the curricula, I believe that we are still far from producing curricula that achieve our national goals. Therefore, we must get rid of the Israeli impact on our curricula and be able to produce national curricula which enhance the national and ethical aspects and enhances the love of the Palestinian human of other people. We do not antagonise other societies at all.

Furthermore, the political context of education in Palestine is very complicated. Several socio-political factors are connected which complicate the current situation of educating the Palestinian children. Palestinian educational leaders suffered to educate Palestinian children. The pressure exerted by the Israeli occupation on educational and political leaders throughout the past seventy years was massive. The rift between the two major political parties complicated the situation further. The pressure exerted by the donating governments to meet their agenda pressured the education system even more. Educational leaders are unable to respond to the social and national needs due to the political conditions imposed by all national and international political powers. This interference contributed to altering the curriculum content, putting pressure on teaching and learning, and imposing unacceptable educational policies. This unbearable pressure opened the door for educators to look for other means to reflect their political affiliation. At the current time and due to the absence of Palestinian national constitutions, educational leaders try to fill this gap by either avoiding introducing the national and social values to students through education or introduce them for a political ideology that is rejected by some political parties. Thus, leadership legitimacy is gained from the full spectrum of citizens who participate in the decision making and contribute to the nation's development. With the existing situation and the conflicting legitimacies to lead, educational leaders face a problem in which ideology should the education transfer to children.

4.6.4 Summary of Interview Results

The interviewees believe that education in Palestine has not been developed in the past century for various reasons. These reasons are attributed to the pressure exerted on political and educational leaders in Palestine by the Israeli occupation, international governments, especially the donating ones, and the political conflicts among Palestinian political parties' leaders. The consequences lead to negative implications on education in Palestine. The interviewees noted that education in Palestine is politicised and failed to:

- Introduce learners to history and geography of Palestine
- Construct and promote Palestinian national identity
- Conceptualise Palestinian social norms

Furthermore, there are six main factors impacting policies, curriculum, and operation of the education system in Palestine; namely the Israeli occupation, international governments, Palestinian political leaders, political system, economic system, and social system. Their impact – as per the interviewees – is either direct or not direct. Moreover, the level of such impact is found to be low, medium, or high. It is worth mentioning that all influences were found to be negative except the Palestinian social system. On the other side, the interviewees reveal that the education system in Palestine has indirectly impacted the social norms and the national identity.

Even though the social system has a positive impact on the education system, it is still considered indirect. The international governments, political system, and economic system have a low and negative impact on the education system. The Palestinian political leaders have a negative medium impact on education. The strongest, worst, and most direct of all impacts comes from the Israeli occupation.

The interviewees identify that the Israeli occupation not only directly influences the Palestinian education system but also affects all the remaining five factors which contribute to the shaping and implementation of the system. The Israeli occupation influences the international governments who in turn interfere with the education system in a manner that serves the occupation's agenda. Such governments also dictate this agenda on the Palestinian political leaders and pressurise the political system in case they want to be recognised internationally. More importantly is the international governments' control of the Palestinian economic system, where funds are released based on international policies – which are influenced by the occupation – rather than the benefits of the Palestinian people.

The Palestinian economic system is managed by the political system, which is selected by the political leaders in Palestine. Those leaders have the power to decide on fund spending as well. It is important to highlight that the occupation actively and directly influences both the political system and leaders. The Israelis not only impede the function of the Palestinian political system but also stymie the role of the Palestinian political leaders. The Israeli occupation is not satisfied with the various indirect ways they could influence the economic – and consequently the education – system in Palestine, hence they weaponised the economic system to impose their policies across the different systems in Palestine.

Being the only factor that has a positive impact on the education system – although indirectly, the social system is not left without direct interference from the occupation. The Israeli occupation imposes its agenda by segregating the Palestinian society. This society is also politicised by its political leaders, who are directly and indirectly driven by the occupation's agenda willingly or not. Apparently, the social system struggles to positively support the educators in their journey of shaping students' behaviour.

Seeking funds from international governments to support national, social, and political projects is a real challenge for the Palestinian political leaders. They not only decide on routes of spending this money but also politicises the way their education system is structured and delivered as well as impose their policies on the national identity of the Palestinian people.

All in all, the Israeli occupation has a substantial direct impact on the political, economic, and social systems in Palestine. The occupation imposes its agenda on the Palestinian political leaders and their decisions. Furthermore, the influence such occupation has on international policies also streams funding – directly or indirectly – in the most efficient ways that serve the occupation agenda. The interviewees report that the Israeli occupation barricades the Palestinian education system at all levels and stages (policies, curriculum, funding, and operation) from serving the Israelis goals of adequately shaping the Palestinian social norms and building the national identity of the Palestinian people.

4.7 INTEGRATED DATA

Data was collected through questionnaires, semi-structured and in-depth interviews for several reasons. According to Chaumba (2013), mixed methods research that is based on surveys and in-depth interviews adds three essential elements to social work research: voices of participants, comprehensive analyses of phenomena, and enhanced validity of findings. Hence, integrating quantitative and qualitative data results in a thorough exploration of the phenomena under study. For instance, the data obtained from the interviews helped to expand the understanding of the information collected from the questionnaires by asking interviewees to elaborate on the results. An inferential analysis using independent sample 't' test was conducted to compare males and females as well as WB and GS about social, political, and ideological factors that influence education in Palestine. The t-test reveals that there is a statistically significant difference between

male and female participants and participants of WB as compared to GS pertinent to the influence of the current ideological, political and social conditions on education in Palestine. Furthermore, *ANOVA* test was used to understand the extent to which the perception of students, teachers, and guardians vary. The main findings indicate that the difference in mean among the three participating groups is statistically significant which highlights the impact family and teachers have on politicising education in Palestine. Both the questionnaire and the interviews demonstrate that the Palestinian society is politicised and this politicisation is transferred to schools.

When examining both the quantitative and the qualitative data collected from all parts of the study, several findings can be extracted and meanings discovered. The primary results have been summarised below in tables 45, 46, and 47.

Research Question-1: How do the present socio-political conditions and challenges shape the educational system in WB and GS?

Quantitative Method		Qualitative Method	
Survey Political Identity	Survey Closed-Ended	Survey Open-ended	In-depth Interviews
50% of the participants are politically affiliated (53% Students, 41% teachers, 50% guardians)	<i>t</i> -test reveals that there is a statistically significant difference between male and female participants and participants of WB as compared to GS pertinent to ideological, political and social statements	Socio-political conditions politicised education regarding policies, curriculum, and operations	Socio-political conditions politicised education regarding policies, curriculum, and operations
49% of the participants are politically affiliated with Fatah (45% Students, 52% teachers, 56% guardians)	<i>ANOVA</i> test reveals that there exists significant difference among the participants (students, teachers, and guardians) pertinent to ideological, political and social statements	Financing education in Palestine is negatively impacting the quality of education	The Israeli occupation is the central power that politicised the Palestinian society and education
88% of the participants confirm that students become politically affiliated before turning 18 years (94% Students, 83% teachers, 84% guardians)	---	The absence of the Question of Palestine curriculum regarding Geography, History, and leadership contributed	International donors politicised education in Palestine

Quantitative Method		Qualitative Method	
		negatively to higher politicising education	
61% of the participants confirm that students change their political affiliation to meet the family political affiliation when they grow up (94% Students, 83% teachers, 84% guardians)	---	---	Division among the Palestinian political leaders politicised education
72% of the participants attribute the political affiliation of school students to the influence of family (76% Students, 52% teachers, 75% guardians)	---	---	----

Table 45: Integrated Results of the Study- Research Question 1

Research Question-2: What are the perceptions of Palestinian teachers, guardians, and students of the factors influencing the educational system in WB and GS?

Quantitative Method		Qualitative Method
Survey Political Identity	Survey Closed-Ended	Survey Open-ended
72% of the participants attribute the political affiliation of school students to the influence of family (76% Students, 52% teachers, 75% guardians)	<i>t</i> -test reveals that there is a statistically significant difference between male and female participants and participants of WB as compared to GS pertinent to ideological, political and social statements	Teaching and Learning methods are outdated do not prepare students for the workplace and higher education
15% of the participants attribute the political affiliation of school students to the influence of the curriculum (20% Students, 10% teachers, 11% guardians)	<i>ANOVA</i> test reveals that there exists significant difference among the participants (students, teachers, and guardians) pertinent to ideological, political and social statements	Political and Social conditions negatively impact education in Palestine
12% of the participants attribute the political affiliation of school students to the influence of the teacher (12% Students, 14% teachers, 10% guardians)	---	The curriculum does not help the Palestinians to construct and promote national identity and social norms through education

Table 46: Integrated Results of the Study- Research Question 2

Research Question-3: What are the perceptions of Palestinian political and educational leaders of the necessary conditions to develop the educational system in WB and GS?

Qualitative Method: In-depth Interviews
The curriculum does not help the Palestinians to construct and promote national identity and social norms through education
The existing pedagogical approach does not support the emancipatory education in Palestine
International donors interfere with the curriculum content, policies, and operations
Education is not a priority for political leaders in Palestine due to the high pressure exerted by the Israeli occupation, international governments, and the Palestinian political parties

Table 47: Integrated Results of the Study - Research Question 3

The analysis chapter revealed the research results. The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data was presented in seven sections namely: analysis of demographic data, analysis of political identity questions, descriptive results, analysis of the survey closed-ended questions, analysis of the survey open-ended questions, analysis of interviews, and finally the integrated data. The next chapter ,discussion, is meant to discuss the results of this study in relation to theoretical framework and emperical studies.

The motivation for conducting this study arose from the inability of political and educational leaders to establish a national educational system for the Palestinians of the WB and GS. This inability is connected with the current socio-political conditions, the challenges imposed by external powers, and the internal conflicts regarding legitimacy among Palestinian political parties. Several researchers have investigated the implications of politicising education on the culture, society, and economy (e.g., Apple 2010; Ekpiken & Ifere 2015; Freire 1970; Shelby 2003; Szkudlarek 2013). This chapter discusses the findings in comparison with the empirical studies conducted by several researchers who studied education in Palestine.

The purpose of this research study is to investigate the socio-political conditions and challenges of the current educational system in Palestine from the perception of the stakeholders and develop a national strategy for unity. This study connects the results with these theories of knowledge to develop better interpretations of current conditions in Palestine and propose a model that can assist in establishing a national educational system for the Palestinians in WB and GS. More precisely, the study addresses the following primary research questions:

- How do present socio-political conditions and challenges shape the educational systems in GS and WB?
- What are the perceptions of Palestinian teachers, parents, and students of the factors influencing educational policy in GS and WB?
- What are the perceptions of Palestinian political and educational leaders of the necessary conditions to develop educational systems in GS and WB?

To answer the above three questions, a mixed-methods design approach was used to assist the researcher in obtaining related complementary data from five-point Likert scale questionnaires, open-ended questions, and in-depth semi-structured interviews. Below is the discussion of key results per study questions such as the negative impact of complex and dynamic socio-political conditions in Palestine on education and that the main factors currently impacting education in

Palestine which are the Israeli occupation, international governments, and the Palestinian political parties. The main sections in this chapter are discussion of research questions one, two, and three.

This section is primarily dedicated to a discussion of the research findings developed from the study about the three research questions, the relevant literature, and the theoretical framework. This discussion reflects the impact of the current socio-political conditions on education in Palestine from the perspectives of 1,705 students, 623 teachers, 611 guardians, four political leaders, and four educational leaders who participated in this study. The discussion employs Freire (1970) to discuss the findings of this study in comparison with the empirical studies within the Palestinian political context. Friere (1970) is adopted for his theoretical framework in the present study, which is based on critical theory. Adopting this theory assists in going beyond the bare understanding of the impact of the problem on education to critiquing the educational system and how it operates given the politics, culture, and society. This theoretical framework aids in shaping responses to several critical questions about education in Palestine.

The pedagogical implications of the findings, recommendations for policymakers, and suggestions for further research are presented. The discussion of the most significant findings and the interpretation of the results are shown under three categories pertinent to the research questions: socio-political challenges, solutions to socio-political challenges, and issues related to educational system development and implementation.

5.1 RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

This section addresses the first research question: How do the present socio-political conditions and challenges shape the educational system in GS and WB?

The results obtained from questionnaires and interview data indicate that there are political, economic, and social factors that contribute to the inability of political and educational leaders in Palestine to develop a national educational system. The main findings related to this question were that education is politicised, funding education is politicised, and the quality of education is impacted negatively due to politicisation. These findings are consistent with the results published in the literature (e.g., Michaels 2017; Sa'adeh 2013; UN 2017). These critical factors are considered to be the primary drivers for constructing socio-political conditions in Palestine. To

respond to the first research question, this study discusses how the current socio-political conditions in Palestine shape education with regard to curriculum, policies, and operations. The discussion is linked with three main findings of the current socio-political conditions: the politicisation of education, the politicisation of funding, and the poor quality of education. Each of the three items is discussed relating it to the theoretical framework, literature review, and the researcher interpretations. As a result of examining each of the three elements, a summary is presented to conclude the primary outcome of this discussion.

5.1.1.1 Politicisation of Education in Palestine

This section discusses why and how the current socio-political conditions contribute to politicising education in WB and GS. This discussion assists in understanding the impact of politicisation on education.

The Israeli Occupation Politicises the Palestinian society. Palestine is a state that has been under occupation for almost a century. It experienced three decades under British occupation (1918-1948), followed by seven decades under Israeli occupation (1948-present). This extended period of occupation has contributed to politicising the society in Palestine (Issa 2010; Michaels 2017 & Spangler 2015). The interviewees confirmed that the occupation (British and Israeli) negatively transformed all Palestinian social systems, including the education system. The findings of this study are in agreement with the literature in regard to the negative impact of occupation on the Palestinian social system structure and its priorities. For instance, Michaels (2017) noted that in the past century, Palestinian society suffered under the occupation; the Palestinian nation was divided into small communities, and those communities were then divided into sub-communities. The Israeli occupation makes each of the sub-communities suffer differently. In other words, each of the sub-communities finds that its social conditions and needs vary from the other Palestinian sub-communities. For instance, the WB people suffer from the separation wall, whereas the GS people suffer from the siege (Michaels 2017; Spangler 2015). This suffering makes the social needs of WB and GS people vary. Participating political and educational leaders confirm that the siege imposed on GS citizens and the separation wall in WB divided the Palestinians into two groups. Those two groups, as per interviewees, can only move from WB to GS and vice versa after obtaining permission from the Israeli authorities. For example, the separation wall has contributed to separating villages and cities, restricting the movement of

Palestinians from one village to another and from one city to another. However, the people of GS struggle to travel smoothly outside GS from one side, and from the other. It is difficult for them to import goods and medicines that are required for daily life. It is evident that the practice of division imposed by the Israeli authorities shapes the Palestinian social structures, values, and priorities. Unsurprisingly, the oppressor implements a theory of oppression to divide the oppressed people using all possible means (Freire 1970, pp. 144). In line with Freire, this division in the Palestinian society imposed by the Israeli occupation was established to maintain a high level of control and dominance (ESCWA 2017).

Furthermore, the occupation has denied the Palestinians their fundamental rights of living in or returning to their homeland or travelling from one side or the other. The Israeli occupation delays the establishment of the state of Palestine. This practice contributes to suspending the establishment of social systems, including education, for the Palestinians of WB and GS. This level of oppression, as expressed by the participants, contributes to politicising the Palestinian society. It is also evident that the Israeli occupation not only imposes geographical divisions among Palestinians but also divides them ideologically (Zanotti 2012). Participants believe that the Israeli occupation has influenced international governments, particularly the donors, to accept its claim of the reasons and implications of the Israeli occupation.

Donors are politicising the Palestinian society by tying funds with policies. The abnormal and dynamic socio-political conditions in Palestine have made it difficult for the Palestinian leaders to fund education operations without the interference of the Israeli authorities and alliances. This explains why the participants in this study expressed their dissatisfaction with the interference of donors in tying their funds with policies. The findings of this study are in agreement with Qarmout (2017) that donors are using the funding of the Palestinian institutions to govern them and exert pressure on them in case they reject their interference. Amaele and Undie (2011) and Apple (2006) described the role of the nation's Political leaders in funding education. The case of Palestine is not regular and the political leaders are unable to fund all institutions including education without the support received from the donors. Hence, funding education of those nations with abnormal socio-political conditions should be examined through the perspective of Amaele and Undie (2011) and Apple (2006). Moreover, as explained by the participants, the dynamic socio-political conditions play a significant role in influencing the political affiliation of Palestinians mainly when

it is linked to funding. Ahmad (2013) and Baroud (2017) note that there are two parallel conflicts taking place concurrently: one in which ordinary Palestinians are fighting for their land, culture, and freedom of movement, and another between competing Palestinian factions fighting for hollow prestige, false sovereignty, and worthless titles. Baroud considers these two conflicts as primary drivers for politicising the Palestinian society. The data obtained from participants in this study show that the political affiliation has become daily practice in schools due to the existing rift among the Palestinian political parties.

Palestinian Political leaders are politicising the Palestinian Society. The findings of this study suggest that the society of Palestine in WB and GS is highly politicised with almost 50% of the participants being politically affiliated with one of the Palestinian political parties (e.g., Fatah, Hamas, and Jihad). This high rate of political affiliation as declared by participants was 53% among students, 41% among teachers, and 50% among guardians. The results also show that students become politically affiliated before turning 18 years old. For instance, the percentages of participants who believed that students become politically affiliated before becoming 18 years old are 93% among students, 82% among teachers, and 83% among guardians. The Palestinian political and educational leaders see these percentages of politically affiliated students, teachers, and guardians as a direct result of the Israeli occupation's interference in transforming the society and its organisations. Ahmed (2013), Quintelier (2007), and White, Bruce, and Ritchie (2000) studied the reasons for children aged less than 18 years old to be engaged in politics maintaining that young people's disengagement in politics is qualitatively evident. Their findings confirm that young people are not yet ready to understand the complexity and dynamicity of socio-political conditions and also lack of opportunities to engage in the political process until the age of 18. The findings of their studies contradict with the results obtained in this study. The reason for inviting young people to vote in official elections when they turn 18 in democratic societies is attributed to their level of maturity. In WB and GS, children are made politically affiliated at an early age, which is against the international norms for political orientation. The political affiliation of young children in Palestine could be an indicator that someone else has selected their political orientation for them at that early age.

The political leaders interviewed in this study attributed the high level of politically affiliated students to the abnormal political conditions in Palestine and the inability of leadership to construct

and promote the Palestinian national identity and social norms through education. This inability is due to the pressure imposed on the PNA by the Israeli occupation and donors. This pressure, as observed by Issa (2010), Michaels (2017), and Spangler (2015), contributes to maintain the notion that there is a lack of leadership in the occupied territories as it used to be before 1994. They also pointed out that the lack of leadership has resulted in an incompetent administration in the territories, and consequently, the political instability in WB and GS has continued. Furthermore, the Palestinian president, in his speech on 31 December 2017, emphasised that he would no longer accept to represent an administration that lacks authority (Abbas 2017). Hence, the findings of this study are in line with the literature and at the same time with the Palestinian president's point of view.

This notion of a lack of leadership created a gap in society. This gap contributed to having children seek answers to the current socio-political conditions from various politically ideologised sources of knowledge. The Palestinian political parties used this gap as an opportunity to ideologise children through formal and informal education according to participants. The participants in this study, who were educational and political leaders, added that students became politically affiliated for security reasons and representations. Michaels (2017) feels that the main reasons for politicisation can be attributed to the inability of the political leadership to address societal needs through legitimate channels. Moreover, Spangler (2015) feels that the level of stricture imposed by the Israeli occupation on Palestinian civil society is high. Additionally, Spangler believes that the impact on civil society leaders is less severe compared to the impact on politicians. This describes why and how the Israeli occupation politicises education in WB and GS by negatively transforming their social structures and activities.

Furthermore, the inability of PNA to fund social activities and institutions contributed to politicising Palestinian society (Qarmout 2017; Spangler 2015). This was noted by the participants; education is not a priority for the political leadership in Palestine due to a lack of funding. Apple (2006) argued that the role of the political leaders is to prioritise education with regard to funding from other governmental institutions. The socio-political conditions and the impact of the Israeli occupation on the Palestinian political leadership contributed to not prioritising education over other social services.

Further analysis emphasises that almost half of the participants are politically affiliated with the National Movement of Fatah (45% among students, 52% among teachers, and 56% among guardians). About 30% of the participants indicated that they are politically affiliated with the Islamic Movement of Hamas (38% among students, 23% among teachers, and 28% among guardians). Two educational leaders and one political leader consider that this is reasonable as the National Movement of Fatah accepts all Palestinians regardless of their background, beliefs, or previous records. Baroud (2017) affirms that Yasser Arafat was successful in gaining the trust of most the Palestinians in Fatah, which has continued to date. Baroud argues that the Palestinians currently lack the national leadership that they experienced with the former president, Yasser Arafat. This gap contributed to having two main legitimacies competing to secure more followers, which divided the Palestinian society and negatively impacted the dream of establishing an independent state. Arafat, who led the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), along with a generation of Palestinian nationalists, helped foster an independent Palestinian political identity and a national movement that, despite receiving Arab support, was not entirely appropriated by any particular Arab country (Baroud 2017). Thus, Baroud suggests re-establishing a national leadership body that brings all Palestinians, regardless of ideology, under one umbrella so that the Question of Palestine will come back to its position on Arab leaders' agendas. Unifying the oppressed people under national leadership is essential to implement a theory of revolutionary action as proposed by Freire (1970, p. 141).

Concepts such as unity, organisation, and struggle are immediately labelled as dangerous. In fact, of course, these concepts are dangerous—to the oppressors—for their realization is necessary to actions of liberation.

Hence, for the Hamas-Fatah unity to indeed become a symbol of national unity, the priorities would have to change entirely so that the interests of all Palestinians would once more become paramount and be considered above the interests of a faction or two seeking limited legitimacy, fake sovereignty, and American handouts (Baroud 2017). Further results indicate that students changed their political orientation twice, three times, or even four or more times. Family political orientation was the major contributor to students changing their political affiliation, followed by their teachers and then their educational curriculum. The percentages of participants who attributed the reason for the change being due to the family was as follows: 45% of students, 56% of teachers, and 49% of guardians. The reasons for changing their political affiliation is an imitation of family members, peers, neighbours, teachers, or public figures according to political and educational

leaders. This, as per the educational leaders, reflects the power of the political parties in shaping Palestinian society. In other words, most social conflicts are escalated to political disputes and vice versa. Moreover, this situation, as per the political leaders, would create a social division in the long run. Teachers indeed influenced almost 23% of those students to change their political orientation, and the students did.

Participants also confirm that the high percentage of students who are politically affiliated with the Islamic Movement of Hamas is connected with the level of teacher's political orientation, summer camps, and informal education activities have on children. The political and educational leaders believe that most of those students change their political affiliation to meet the family political affiliation when they grow up. The questionnaire results also confirm that some students change their political affiliation when they grow up. The percentages of those who believe students change their political affiliation at least one time are 13% among students, 58% among teachers, and 17% among guardians. The results confirm that students and guardians of GS are considerably higher in political affiliation compared with their counterparts of WB. The change of the political affiliation, as per political and educational leaders, is directly correlated with the immaturity of children from one side. From the other, the Palestinian political parties efforts to secure more followers and supporters.

Families have become politicised and they indoctrinate their children. The findings of this study indicate that the majority of participants (students, teachers, guardians, political leaders, and educational leaders) attribute the acquisition of political affiliation at an early age (less than 18 years) to the family's political orientation. Surprisingly, the percentage of participants who stated that family political orientation is the primary driver for student political affiliation in Palestine was 67% among students, 76% among teachers, and 78% among guardians. The teachers and guardians had almost the same agreement level concerning that student becoming politically affiliated at an early age (less than 18 years), and the major contributor to this political affiliation is the political orientation of the student's family. Jennings, Stoker, and Bowers (2009) conclude that children are more likely to adopt their parents' political orientation if the family is highly politicised and if the parents provide consistent cues over time. Hence, it can be deduced that the primary source of children's political affiliations in Palestine is the family's political orientation, which reflects how the Palestinian society is highly politicised. Political leaders who participated

in this study emphasised that the Palestinians understand that one's political affiliation is the selection of a political party during any official elections (e.g., legislative council and presidential elections). In other words, the political affiliation of a student does not mean that he/she is officially registered in a political party and attending its strategic meetings, but that student only votes for that political party. Educational leaders disagree with the definition of the political leaders and note that the Palestinians are targeted by the Israeli occupation based on their political affiliation. Hence, they will never disclose their political affiliation unless confidentiality is maintained. Educational leaders also add that majority of students come to schools with political views and orientations, which supports that the society is politicised and that this politicisation is transferred to schools through families.

Teachers ideologise their students. In addition to the family role in politicising education, participating political and educational leaders report that teachers played a significant role in shaping the students' political orientations and influenced them to be associated with a political party meeting the teacher's ideology. Two of the educational leaders interviewed shared their personal experiences stating that some teachers influenced the majority of students, shaped their ideology, and made them loyal to a specific political party. Furthermore, political and educational leaders confirmed that teachers could influence students' political orientation. They said that the educational curriculum does not promote a particular ideology over others, but some teachers do. The four participating educational leaders affirmed that the current curriculum was not designed to introduce students to any political ideology. It is therefore evident that educators use a hidden curriculum to influence learners politically as per the interviewees.

Education is politicised by all the above. Several researchers report that education in Palestine cannot be discussed in isolation from politics (e.g., Hovsepian, 2008; Jabr 2003; Michaels 2017; Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2017). The Palestinian society has become highly politicised, and this politicisation has been transferred to schools through various methods. These methods can be attributed to the Israeli occupation on one side and the conflict among the Palestinian political parties on the other. These findings are in line with the literature (Michaels 2017; Tapper & Kroll-Zeldin, 2015). The Israeli occupation and its alliances support the politicisation of the Palestinian society. This discussion also underlines how the Palestinians lack a national leadership body that brings all Palestinians under one umbrella. As such, they would be able to officially reflect their

struggle through sound political and social systems that could be established to nationalise education in Palestine.

5.1.1.2 Politicisation of Funding

The political and educational leaders who participated in this study note that donating countries politicised their funds. This politicisation directly impacts education in WB and GS. The discussion explores why and how the politicisation of funds impacted education in WB and GS.

Absence of an independent Palestinian economic system. According to the World Bank (2017), the Palestinian territories are marked by high vulnerability. For almost a decade, the population has seen poverty rates that have fluctuated between a quarter and a third of families living below the national poverty line. In GS, the poverty rate has reached almost 40% as thousands of families struggle to recover after the most recent outbreak of violence. The unemployment rate in Palestine is 27% (18% in WB and 42% in GS, also reported in UN 2017) with 58% of the 15-to-29-year-old Palestinians' being unemployed. The report also discloses that the female labour force participation is low (20%) compared to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) average of 26%. To add to that, the report points out that there has been a deficit of 14% (about the U.S. \$200 million) in the 2016 budget due to a significant drop in donor support. Hutton and Hutton (2018) consider that the Israeli occupation has significantly impacted the labour market and economy, with high rates of unemployment being related to restrictions in imports, exports, and labour mobility.

The UN (2017) reports that the shortage of infrastructure has impacted the quality of education. Classrooms now have an average of 38.9 students in public schools and 39.3 in UNRWA schools. Moreover, 61.7% of government schools and 70.4% of UNRWA schools currently operate on a double shift system, limiting student access to the classroom to only four hours per day. The internal political division means that public education services in GS do not have a regular budget for running costs, and budget shortfalls have left many teachers unpaid for months. As a result, there is a growing risk that the high level of educational attainment cannot be sustained. Veronese et al. (2018) emphasise that teachers in conflict areas are not only at risk of poverty, but

also have to deal with the consequences of the conflict in their own lives. These consequences are negatively correlated with the quality of education. In other words, the more complicated the consequences, the lower the quality of education that children receive.

The Israeli occupation politicising the Transfer of Taxes collected from the Palestinians to PNA.

The Israeli occupation plays a major role in politicising the economic system in Palestine. For instance, Youngs and Smith (2007) report that the PNA struggles to receive the taxes that are collected from the Palestinian citizens by the Israeli government. This practice contributes directly and negatively impacts the operations of the Palestinian social institutions who would not be given access to the money unless they accept some of the Israeli policies. Youngs & Smith (2007) report that:

Israel agreed to unfreeze a first tranche of tax revenues belonging to the Palestinian Authority, with the remainder of the estimated \$500-\$700 million to be transferred within six months if the PA shows progress towards disarming militias.

Hence, the rift between the Palestinian political parties is widened by the US supported Israeli occupation. Friere (1970, p. 144) points out that the oppressor will use all means to divide the oppressed community in smaller communities to practice more power. He also adds that in order for the oppressor to sustain its power, some of the oppressed people will be selected to play the role of leadership for the oppressed group through implementing the oppressor's agenda.

All the actions of the dominant class manifest its need to divide in order to facilitate the preservation of the oppressor state. Its interference in the unions, favouring certain "representatives" of the dominated classes (who actually represent the oppressor, not their own comrades); its promotion of individuals who reveal leadership capacity and could signify a threat if they were not "softened up" in this way; its distribution of benefits to some and penalties to others: all these are ways of dividing in order to preserve the system which favours the elite.

The donors tie their funding with policies. The political and educational leaders point out that donating countries started building schools in WB and GS in 1994. The Minister of Planning, who participated in this study, affirms that by 2000, PNA experienced a deficit in the budget. This deficit in the budget negatively affected the plan of building new schools or upgrading school infrastructures in WB and GS. All projects pertinent to educational development were suspended till the deficit was ended. Unfortunately, the deficit continues to this date. As per the minister, education has not become a priority, and operational costs are only put into action, whereas other projects are either suspended or postponed. One of the participating educational leaders shared her experience with some donating countries politicising their funding of education. She shared that PNA suspended those projects due to political demands. The educational leader, Deputy Minister

of Education in GS from 2006 to 2016, agrees that from 2006, they have not been able to build schools due to the inability of the government to secure the raw material and the funds for new schools. He states that, in 2013, when the relationship between the Egyptian and GS governments improved, 20 schools were built. He also points out that the rift had adverse effects on funding education in GS schools. This is also in line with Al Wehaidy (2013).

For instance, Qarmout (2017) studied how donors influence public policies in contexts where local governments lack international recognition and legitimacy. He reported that the socioeconomic reality of GS under Hamas and the impact of international donors' funded recovery and reconstructions schemes negatively impacted the functions of all PNA institutions in GS. Participants believed that the donors directly sustained the division among the Palestinians. Education was one of the most impacted sectors in WB and GS (UN 2017). Veronese et al. (2018) adds that the Palestinian teachers expressed their concerns regarding the international funding of education and emphasised that this funding increases their sense of isolation and security. Hence, international funding of education as perceived by the Palestinians is politicised and contributes to isolation and insecurity.

The Palestinian political parties channel financing education to their followers.

Progressing from low salaries before 1994 to reasonable salaries between 1994 and 2006 contributed to the considerable improvement in the education of Palestinians. However, GS teachers, starting from 2006, were hired or terminated based on their political affiliation, as per the interviewees. By 2006, political conditions experienced a massive change in Palestine as per the political and educational leaders. One significant contributor to the current internal conflicts among the political parties was the rift between the two major political parties in Palestine: Fatah and Hamas. Zanotti (2012) believes that since June 2007, these U.S. policy priorities have crystallised around the factional and geographical split between the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority (PA) in the WB and Hamas in the GS. This political conflict was then escalated to militant acts, which consequently contributed to dividing the Palestinians under two governments: one in WB, under Fatah, and the other in GS, under Hamas. Michaels (2017) believes that the Israeli occupation imposed policies to maintain the rift between the Palestinian political parties (Fatah and Hamas) through a series of practices. This complex ideological and geographical rift questioned the legitimacy of the leadership in Palestine. In other words, which leadership has the

right to represent the Palestinians and build up social institutions? Almost all donating countries rejected Hamas, and the Israeli government imposed a siege on the Palestinians in GS from 2007 to date to complicate the life of GS people. The rejection of Hamas government resulted on financial consequences. Interviewees pointed out that the Israeli government made it difficult for Palestinian citizens when selecting their future leaders since only those approved by the Israeli occupation would be internationally recognised.

The four political leaders participating in this study believe that the appointment of teachers and administrators in schools is based on their political affiliation, not their credentials. Ma'an News Agency (2012) and O'Connor (2015) also reported that several teachers were terminated due to having an opposite political affiliation in WB and GS. The court ruled that all teachers should be reinstated to their former jobs, overturning a decision by the PNA's Ministry of Education. Furthermore, one of the political leaders and one of the educational leaders attributed the winning of Hamas in the 2006 legislative council election to Hamas followers who played a major role in shaping students' ideologies in schools. They also believed that Fatah affiliated members did not want to work in education before 2006, due to low salaries and jobs in other sectors were available with high salaries and more power. They also believed that inappropriate actions committed by some Fatah leaders contributed to having some Fatah supporters to vote for Hamas members in the legislative council elections of 2006. They also agreed that Fatah learned their lesson. To maintain legitimacy, they have to control education and to prevent other political parties from taking it over.

The Palestinians currently suffer from the existence of two legitimate powers based just on elections: presidential and legislative. Considering the rift between the two major political parties, they could not establish a reconciliation till the date because of the pressure imposed on the two parties by external powers such as the Israeli occupation, donating countries from one side, and the supporters of Hamas from the other. Friere (1970, p. 145) points out that the central problem is this: How can the oppressed, as divided, unauthentic beings, participate in developing the pedagogy of their liberation? Only as they discover themselves to be "hosts" of the oppressor can they contribute to the midwifery of their liberating pedagogy. Hence, no wonder why the Israeli occupation works hard to sustain this rift among the Palestinian political parties geographically and ideologically.

“But almost always, during the initial stage of the struggle, the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or “sub-oppressors.” The very structure of their thought has been conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete, existential situation by which they were shaped. Their ideal is to be men; but for them, to be men is to be oppressors. This is their model of humanity”.

Participants believed that the existing political parties do not have a common denominator by which to define state official knowledge. This could be the starting point to begin the dialogue among Palestinians and their leaders to agree on the official knowledge that is deemed essential for establishing a national educational system.

Moreover, interviewees confirm that most GS teachers have not received regular salaries since 2007. They added that some of the teachers have not received salaries for the past six months and the others received a half pay every three months. Three educational leaders and the political leaders shared that due to lack of salary consistency in GS, the quality of education has significantly declined. The findings of the study are in agreement with Veronese et al. (2018) that education quality will be declined if teachers are not well paid and get the social, economic, and political recognition. The reason behind this deterioration is attributed to unqualified teachers who are either fresh graduates or politically affiliated. Teachers’ salaries as per educational leaders are highly politicised. Teachers are paid to promote a specific ideology. The UN (2017) report discusses the quality of recruited teachers and their impact on educational practices. The report links the decline in education with the quality of teachers in GS after 2007. The report further discloses that the MoE is facing difficulties in recruiting new teachers and paying their salaries. It consequently faces a shortage of 800 teachers and administrative staff and a deficit of \$300,000 each month for salaries. This has resulted in congested schools and limited hours of instruction with the average being around four hours daily.

Apple (2006) stressed that funding education is the responsibility of the ruling political administration. In Palestine, funding education has been inconsistent for decades. The funds that political and educational leaders receive are usually associated with the existing socio-political conditions. As per the political and educational leaders who participated in this study, funding education in Palestine has been politicised and cannot be discussed without associating it with the political conditions. For instance, leaders have shared that they inherited an outdated educational system from the Israeli occupation in 1994. The infrastructure of schools contains elements that prevent the education system from running smoothly, such as old buildings that were

not maintained for decades. Those schools were found to lack the required science laboratory or technology structure. The UN (2017, p. 26) reports that the infrastructure and quality of education have deteriorated throughout the past ten years.

“The infrastructure and the quality of learning in non-UNRWA schools have deteriorated significantly over the past ten years. Also, many schools were damaged or destroyed during successive rounds of hostilities, further increasing the pressure on educational facilities. During the 2014 hostilities, 547 educational facilities, including 259 schools, 274 kindergartens, and 14 tertiary education institutions were damaged or destroyed, affecting 350,000 students. To date, most of the affected schools have been repaired. However, 181 kindergartens and 11 higher education institutions are yet to be repaired due to lack of funds”.

Over 70% of schools used to run with two to three shifts daily. The average class size was over 40 students per class. Teachers were not involved in any professional development or training sessions for decades. To add, salaries were nominal. An educational leader who administrated education in GS from 1974 to 1994 pointed out that salaries were very low to the extent of barely satisfying human needs. Those salaries, as per the educational leader, were part of the taxes, customs, and post fees paid by Palestinian citizens. No budget was allocated for educating the Palestinians in WB in GS in the Israeli government budget. Veronse et al. (2018) add that teachers working in public schools are paid less than their counterparts in the private sector and Israeli schools which negatively affected the social recognition of the teachers. Those financial conditions were a prioritisation determining the project choices, timelines, and funds to be spent on each project. The educational leader, who administered education from 1994 to 2006 as a deputy minister of education, notes that the political leadership advised the educational leaders to report their priorities to develop a national educational system. The educational leader remarked that they reported several prorities includng building schools to reduce the two and three shifts schools, implementing teacher professional development programs, introducing science laboratories into schools, establishing educational technology infrastructure in the ministry of education, as well as in the schools, and developing a national curriculum that reflects the Question of Palestine and Palestinian rights and aspirations.

Furthermore, students, teachers, and guardians agreed and suggested that education should be funded to meet the society's needs. They considered that schools are part of the high demand to establish institutions of adequate infrastructure with modern technology introduced. They also emphasised the necessity of building science and technology laboratories in schools. For example, Veronese *et al.* (2018) note that the lack of laboratories in the Palestinian private and public schools

made teachers uncertain and unsatisfactory. Furthermore, with more focus on staffing schools, participants suggested that the recruitment, professional development, and appraisal process should be revisited according to the educational practices. Finally, participants indicated that funds allocated for scientific research should be increased. Those three areas cited by the participants, if funded adequately, would ensure quality educational practices.

To summarise, for decades, education funding in Palestine was classified as a challenging mission for political and educational leaders; thus, establishing a national educational system financed by Palestinians that can be independent of political conditions cannot be achieved easily (Maharmeh 2017). Most donating countries fund educational projects with political conditions imposed by the Israeli occupation on Palestinians or donors (Esman 2017; Ramahi 2015; Qarmout 2017). The PNA suspended several projects due to the high political involvement of donors in decision-making within the Palestinian educational system.

5.1.1.3 Quality of Education in WB and GS

This section discusses the results related to the quality of education in WB and GS. The results in this section are divided into two main areas. The first one presents the currency and relevance of education in WB and GS, whereas the second part discusses the impact that education has on constructing and promoting social norms and national identity.

Relevance and up to date education in WB and GS.

Conflicting reports on the quality of education in Palestine exist. For example, Aliqtisadi (2017) reported that the quality of education is the best in the region based on the Davos Index but the sociopolitical conditions contributed to omitting it from the annual report of 2016. Furthermore, Nasir-Tucktuck, Baker & Love (2017) reported that education has improved after the Right of Education for all initiative of 2000, particularly students with disabilities. Aliqtisadi (2017) reported that:

The name of Palestine was not included in Davos Education Index Report due to the instable and unsafe socio-political conditions. However, the quality of education in Palestine is of high quality and so close to the top 140 countries world-wide.

Affounneh (2014) and Maharmeh (2017) disagree with Aliqtisadi (2017) and question the reliability of the report. Maharmeh believes that education in Palestine is of low quality due to various

reasons. These reasons are attributed to the Israeli occupation, donors, and Palestinian leaders. He emphasises that the Palestinian curriculum cannot prepare students well to understand their social, economic, and political conditions. This curriculum content as reported by Maharmeh is controlled by the conditions imposed by the Israeli occupation and donors. Maharmeh argues:

We occupy the lowest illiteracy rates (3%) in the Arab region and the world, and the highest percentage of learners in the region and the world (96%). If we assume that the international organisations support that the high level of education contributes to development and liberation, the Palestinian situation, although it has advanced levels of education, according to those reports, has seen neither development nor liberation. Thus, these numbers call us to doubt either the correctness of the proposition or the validity of the statistics. In both cases, the prophecy of a "learned society" in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip remains a question.

The same observations were reported through survey open-ended questions by 77 students, eleven teachers, and 17 guardians who expressed their dissatisfaction with the curriculum, stating that it does not introduce the children to the socio-political conditions of Palestine in terms of history, geography, heritage, traditions, and leadership. Ma'an (2018) reports that the Israeli occupation omits any content related to the Question of Palestine from the Palestinian textbooks. The continuous interference by the Israeli occupation on what content should be taught to the Palestinian children contributed significantly to having children seeking knowledge from inauthentic sources. Interviewees, further, advised political and educational leaders to maintain a national educational system and apply strict actions toward teachers who express their political orientation explicitly in schools. Political and educational leaders feel that the educational system in Palestine should be national and not designed to serve a single political ideology or a tool used by the Israeli occupation and its alliances to shape the Palestinian social, economic, and political systems (Maharmeh 2017).

Furthermore, students, teachers, and guardians proposed 263 (out of 1,098) suggestions to improve the educational system from the political perspective in Palestine, considering the shape of education in Palestine to be due to the current socio-political conditions and a single political identity. The participants highlighted five significant areas that the current Palestinian educational system does not address due to the political context of Palestine. These five areas that participants identified for introduction to the education process include the following: (1) introducing the Palestine question (History, Geography, and Leadership), (2) introducing the global perspectives on Palestine question, (3) clarifying the role of religion in a political context, (4) explaining methods to be used for resisting the Israeli occupation, and (5) promoting Palestinian identity

(Political & National). These findings are in line with the findings of Maharmef (2017). Ma'an (2018) agrees with the findings and reported that this lack of knowledge associated with the five areas above are due to the Israeli occupation interference in omitting any content that is meant to nationalise education in Palestine. The Israeli occupation, as per Ma'an, cancelled some textbooks and omitted any text related to geography, history, heritage, and traditions of Palestinians from the textbooks. Maharmef (2017) concludes that currently, education in Palestine cannot be used as a means for emancipation from the Israeli occupation and its alliances. This study touches upon how the Israeli occupation (the oppressor) acts to keep the Palestinians (the oppressed) under its domination. For the oppressed people to liberate themselves, Freire (1970) argues that the oppressed people should have a 'theory of action' consisting of four main components. The first component is cooperation, which stems from the communion of the people and the leader based on dialogue and communication (as opposed to the monologues and propaganda of the oppressor). The second component is the 'unity of liberation' (as opposed to the divisiveness of the oppressed people). The third component deals with the organisation (as opposed to manipulation) – which is made possible by the authority that people vest in the leader ("through delegation or sympathetic adherence") in their striving for liberation. Finally, cultural synthesis takes place when leaders and people become co-authors of the actions to transform their reality. To respond to the theory of action, leaders and people should contribute to the construction and promotion of the Palestinian nation reality.

Furthermore, the interviewees in this study support the concept of theory of action as they believe that the above five major areas are of great conflict among the Palestinian political parties. Thus, there is a necessity to address them through education. This way, students will not seek any information pertinent to them from ideologised sources of information such as political parties, friends, teachers, social media, or family members. Affouneh (2014) and Mabovula (2010) believe that building consensus and understanding difference through dialogue is at the heart of nurturing a culture of communication and participation among all social partners. Habermas (1985) supports that the consensus among social partners is essential to produce the official knowledge that is agreed upon by the majority. This official knowledge can then be transferred to generations through formal and informal education means. This approach places effective communication at the basis of political democracy. Habermas describes the "public sphere" as a discursive space in which citizens participate and act through dialogue and debate. In his discursive aspects of the

public sphere, he argues for a procedural model of democracy, and believes that in order to encourage public participation and broaden or strengthen democracy; politics must be viewed as a public conversation governed by legitimating procedures and reason (Mabovula 2010). Hence, Palestinians should be given the opportunity to express their needs and aspirations to reach consensus on what is considered to be the official knowledge for the nation and then incorporate this knowledge into curriculum content and pedagogy. Goleman (2000) presents six types of leadership styles. He argues that the coaching leaders are usually capable of developing people for the future. Fullan (2001) agrees with Goleman and confirms that coaching leaders play a significant role in the culture of change. Hence, Palestinian leaders can play a major role in establishing a system that enables the Palestinians to communicate with each other and construct their official knowledge and culture.

Impact of education on constructing and promoting national identity and social norms.

To avoid any challenges when developing future Palestinian curriculum, the lessons learned can be thoroughly studied. The development of the Palestinian national curriculum project to address Palestinian national identity and social norms was started in 1996. Professor Ibrahim Abu-Laghad led this project. Susser (2010) confirms that after the Oslo Peace Accords, a curriculum committee headed by the renowned American-educated Palestinian professor Ibrahim Abu Lughod drew up a plan of reform for Palestinian education which emphasised critical thought and the fostering of free-thinking citizens of a democratic policy. The Ministry of Education, however, made it clear from the outset that it would not be receptive to such free thinking on matters pertaining to religion, because of the public reaction it could be expected to provoke. Professor Abu-Lughod in 1996 submitted a roadmap plan for the political and educational leaders of Palestine to establish a national curriculum to replace the Jordanian and Egyptian curricula. As per one political leader and one educational leader, this plan was of high quality and represented a secular ideology. This plan, as per the two leaders, was rejected by the political leadership at the time, as it did not reflect the Palestinian national norms as religious ones. The political leader indicated that professor Abu-Lughod had told him that the curriculum that was developed is not what he had proposed to the political leadership. The Italian government funded the national curriculum project. As per some educational and political leaders, the Italian government exerted pressure on political and educational leaders to apply specific measures on the produced curricula before implementation.

The educational leader, the Deputy Minister between 1994 and 2006, shared that the political leadership rejected their request for reviewing textbooks before implementation. He stated that just a few suggestions were considered, such as which Palestinian map to include in the curriculum.

Participating students, teachers, and guardians suggested 222 actions in order to improve Palestinian societal values and structure throughout education. Participants believed that considering the existing political conditions and the context of Palestine, the national educational system should promote national unity and equality within the Palestinian society. Participants affirmed that students and teachers should receive the same resources and attention that the Palestinian educational and political leaders do. Political conditions should not impact educational policies and practices (Cunningham 2017). For instance, Amaele and Undie (2011) assert that the interference of political leaders in education has negatively impacted the educational quality in Nigeria. Thus, they call for a change of attitude on the nation's leadership to contribute to developing quality education. Thus, the role of leaders in Palestine is to ensure the knowledge taught to students represents the official knowledge of the nation. Friere (1970, p. 141) emphasises the importance of unity and organisation the oppressed people need to liberate themselves.

Accordingly, the oppressors halt by any method (including violence) any action which in even incipient fashion could awaken the oppressed to the need for unity. Concepts such as unity, organization, and struggle are immediately labelled as dangerous. In fact, of course, these concepts are dangerous—to the oppressors—for their realization is necessary to actions of liberation.

To learn more about the relevance of the curriculum to the Palestinian socio-political conditions, the participants were asked to express their experiences. Accordingly, the participants noted that the educational system does not provide relevant knowledge to the Palestinian children. This education, from participants' perspective, does not prepare children for higher education and the workplace. According to Maharmeh (2017) the education is of low quality and does not prepare students for the workplace as evidenced by the high unemployment rate which might be an indicator for the irrelevancy of education. Therefore, the findings of this study are in agreement with Maharmeh as the participating educational and political leaders affirmed that the current education system does not prepare students well for higher education and the workplace. Participants also emphasised that education does not ensure that students construct, and promote those social norms according to political leaders. Saldana (2013) states that the school is the agent responsible for socialising groups of children and young people on specific skills and values in a

society. As the most stable and formal socialising agent, the school is expected to both train the individual for practical occupations and skills and to provide the individual with basic societal values, like loyalty to country, and politeness. Participants also noted that education in Palestine does not encourage voluntary work and internships to improve social responsibility and engagement. Bekkers (2005) notes that there is a strong positive relationship between socialisation and volunteering.

Michaels (2017) noted that the establishment of a social foundation conducive to peace between Israel and GS/WB first requires an understanding of the complex social factors that undergird the conflict. These social factors persist beneath more salient reasons for the dispute (such as historical tensions and land rights) and include problems with the Palestinian leadership (worsened in part by Israeli intervention). Other factors include economic inequalities between Israel and Palestine, depleted social services within the occupied territories, geographic constraints that create dense urban clusters prone to social volatility, and psychological factors that exacerbate inflexible patterns of interaction in both the Israeli and Palestinian contexts.

To complete the socialisation process, education should be used as a vehicle to do so (Kumar 2011; University of Minnesota 2010; Williams 1972). Educational and political leaders shared that the education system, in regards to content, policies, and practices, is not coping with the societal needs of Palestine and most of the time offers an outdated content. The content mostly does not promote the social and national norms. This gap usually opens the doors for individual interpretations of the content. Political and educational leaders observed that education is currently a tool for politicisation rather than nationalisation and socialisation. Thus, revising the policies, content, and practices will construct and promote the desired social norms for the sake of sustainability.

To elaborate, education contributes to the socialisation process by constructing and promoting the social norms regarding unity, equity, and justice, which are partially missing according to the participants. The education outcomes are not aligned with the social expectations regarding social norms and needs. Extra-curricular activities, such as voluntary work, are not relevant for promoting social values. Spangler (2015) voiced that Palestinian national rights are denied as non-Jews. Spangler also adds that their sense of ethnicity does not permit them to forget either their claims to a Palestinian identity or their ties to Palestinian land.

The UN report (2017) pertinent to the human, social, economic, environment, health, education, and political situations disclosed disastrous results. The report pointed out that since the dramatic events of 2006-2007, GS has been closed, isolated and divided from WB. Life in GS has been an unending crisis ever since. The report discloses that life in GS will be impossible by 2020 if these socio-political conditions continue. The report also presents some data on the population of GS. Since 2012, the population of GS has increased by 400,000, reaching two million people by the end of 2016. GS's population is projected to further increase to 2.2 million by 2020 and 3.1 million by 2030. The report states that by 2020, the health and education services provided to the citizens of GS will significantly decline due to shortages of staff and facilities of at least 5%.

Summary of Research Question One

This section discussed why and how the socio-political conditions in Palestine have shaped education in WB and GS. The results of this discussion highlight that the socio-political conditions in Palestine are complex and dynamic. The findings of this study are in agreement with the literature and the theoretical framework regarding having the oppressor control the education of the oppressed regarding content, policies, and operations. The main points of the discussion highlight that Palestinian society throughout the past century suffered under the occupation from dividing the Palestinian nation into small communities, and those communities were then divided into sub-communities (Michaels 2017). The Israeli occupation ensured to have each subcommittee suffer differently from others. For instance, a group may suffer from the separation wall whereas, the other group suffers from the siege and so on (Michaels 2017; Spangler 2015). The purpose of dividing the Palestinian nation into smaller groups was established for the higher level of control on those small groups.

Until 2006, the division was external pressure exerted on Palestinians by the Israeli occupation and its alliances. By 2007, to add to the external pressure to further divide the nation, a rift between the Palestinian political leaders divided the nation ideologically, socially, and economically. The consequences of this rift established a mistrust notion among Palestinians in establishing national norms that reflect their struggle. To bring those subcommittees back to the original status would require a just treatment of the Palestinian socio-political conditions from the global perspectives and human rights. Therefore, the only way for Palestinians to re-establish their nation is to end the Israeli occupation.

As a result, the politicisation of Palestinian society had become so severe that students were becoming politically affiliated at an early age (less than 18 years old) to satisfy the expectations of family and political parties. Due to the absence of a national educational system in Palestine, students' ideologies are constructed and shaped according to the existing political context and conditions. The surprising rift among the Palestinian political parties in 2007 to either nationalise or Islamise the Question of Palestine shaped the education system to respond to political causes either through formal or informal education. Teachers, in some instances, imposed their political ideologies on students using various means.

5.2 RESEARCH QUESTION TWO

This section discusses the responses to the second research question. Question two is: What are the perceptions of Palestinian teachers, guardians, and students regarding the factors influencing the educational system in GS and WB?

The main factors influencing the educational system in GS and WB were reported by participating students, teachers, and guardians through responding to the questionnaire questions regarding socio-political conditions, family political orientation, and teacher, curriculum, infrastructure, technology, and social activities. In addition to the factors highlighted by the participating students, teachers, and guardians, political and educational leaders participated in this study and added the international governments, particularly the donating ones and Palestinian leadership represented by PLO and PNA. This section discusses why these factors are seen by participants as the main factors that influence education in Palestine.

According to several researchers, Palestinian families consider education as the most significant investment in human capital and chief priority to build the deserved Palestinian state (Badran 1980; Hovsepian 2008; Jabr 2003; Ma'an 2018; Murray 2008; Peretz 1990; Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2008). This commitment from the Palestinian society dictates the necessity to consider their point of view regarding the current socio-political conditions that shape education in Palestine. For the detailed discussion, main factors reported are discussed. These factors are the educational curriculum quality and relevance, teaching and learning methods, and socialisation through education.

5.2.1.1 Educational Curriculum Quality and Relevance

Participating students, teachers, and guardians noted that the current curriculum is outdated and does not prepare the students for the workplace and higher education. Those responses were collected through the open-ended questions with the primary focus on why and how the current curriculum contributed negatively to preparing students for the workplace and higher education. Educational and political leaders who participated in this study agreed with the responses and explained why the curriculum had not met the expectations as viewed by the participating students, teachers, and guardians.

Furthermore, the curriculum delivered in the schools of WB and GS has been the subject of extensive study for about two decades (e.g., Brown 2003; Hovsepian 2008; Jabr 2003; Jayousi & Oteer 2017; Mazawi 2011; Murray 2008, Nicolai 2007; Pardo 2017; Pina 2005; Ramahi 2015; Santisteban 2002;). Much of the interest has focused on the new Palestinian curriculum and its associated textbooks, which have been gradually presented from 2001 and revised in 2016 (Pardo 2017). The studies vary considerably regarding their authorship, scope, and focus. Those studies of different aspects of the new curriculum have been commenced, some of which emphasise on possible bias in the contents, in particular, the potential of the curriculum to promote incitement to hatred against Jews, Judaism, and Israel. Others studied the extent to which the curriculum enables students to construct and promote the Palestinian national identity and social norms in addition to the level of rigour that the curriculum prepares them for the workplace and higher education. The Palestinian curriculum has attracted comment from recognised academic institutes around the world and groups and individuals representing a wide range of political beliefs (Avenstrup, Webb & Hashweh 2006). Some of the studies discuss the impact of the curriculum on essential concepts such as democracy and national identity, while in others the focus is narrower, perhaps on the teaching of a particular subject at a specific phase in the education system.

Participating students, teachers, and guardians proposed 386 suggestions to upgrade education through curriculum quality improvement. Thus, enhancing education in Palestine would require close attention to the curriculum as per 35% of the suggestions received from participating students, teachers, and guardians. These suggestions included but were not limited to introducing extracurricular activities, reviewing the assessment strategies, introducing a new educational

policy, establishing a curriculum development system, establishing a curriculum review system, and focusing on foreign languages.

The majority of the responses affirmed that the curriculum is outdated and is missing essential aspects that would help to develop learners' higher order thinking skills, critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity, on the one hand, and the application of knowledge, on the other. Some participants noted that the current curriculum focuses on breadth but not on depth. The findings of this study are in agreement with the findings of Jabr (2003) who noted that the Palestinian schools do not teach critical thinking skills efficiently and consistently. She also pointed out several factors that impede the teaching of critical thinking in Palestinian schools including the following: (a) Teachers lack training in critical thinking abilities, (b) The classroom environment does not enhance thinking skills, (c) Most questions that are posed to students only require the recall of information, (d) Pupils are not given enough wait time to answer thoughtful questions, and (e) Pupils are not trained to regulate their learning processes. Furthermore, Fattash (2010) concluded that the curriculum does not promote the students' critical thinking skills, nor does it encourage the students to develop their learning strategies and independence in learning. Dajani (2016) also noted that the implementation of visible thinking routines was a challenge for both the learners and the teachers in Palestine. For the learners, the challenges were their limited abilities to express themselves, and for the teachers, the challenge was the extra effort that they needed to exert because it was their first experience with implementing such routines. The findings of this study are in line with Dajani (2016), Fattash (2010), and Jabr (2003). Hence, Palestinian students are not consistently introduced to lessons that require higher-order thinking skills. The findings of this study and the literature attribute this gap to several factors, such as teacher training, availability of resources, curriculum content quality, learners' readiness, and curriculum content relevance to Palestinians' daily lives.

The participants pointed out that the Palestinian curriculum lacks the relevance to the rapidly-developing technology and educational content. Political and educational leaders who participated in this study also believed that the current curriculum is not relevant and is mostly outdated. The participating students, teachers, guardians, political leaders, and educational leaders reported that the introduction of the latest technology to schools is a huge gap due to various reasons. Some of these are the funding, teachers' readiness, and curriculum quality. El Shawa (2011) studied the

relevance of the Palestinian textbooks from the cultural perspective. Her findings disclose that there is no special focus on providing Palestinian youth with phrases and proper expressions to talk about and introduce their Palestinian issue to the world. Fattash (2010) noted that the texts in the English language are relevant to the learners' cultural background. The findings of this study are in line with El Shawa (2011) but in contradiction with the responses obtained from the participants in this study. This contradiction is attributed to the way researchers approached the definition of the Palestinian culture. For instance, Fattash believes that the texts are suitable for the age group of learners, whereas this study and El Shawa propose that the understanding of the Palestinian culture refers to the awareness of the socio-political conditions in Palestine.

Further analysis to learn if curriculum addresses the main principles of the Palestinian nation was conducted. The results of the agreement level indicated that the education system, as per participants: (1) ensures that Palestinian curriculum promotes the faith in Allah, angels and the prophets (87%), (2) promotes that Islam is a comprehensive life system (83%), (3) ensures that Palestinian curriculum contributes to promoting the spiritual and emotional link between students and religious holy places of Palestine (76%), and (4) contributes to increasing religious faith (75%). In other words, participants believe that the Palestinian educational curriculum is designed to promote the religious values of the Palestinian society. El Shawa (2011) trusts that the current English language textbook lacks Islamic topics. This aspect of the Palestinian society, religion, is not addressed in English language textbooks, but well established in other subjects as per the participants in this study. This emphasis is expected in a religious society in Palestine. Political and educational leaders consider that the lessons of modern science must be increased and religious teachings should be reduced to give families the responsibility of shaping their children's religious beliefs, and not to leave this to schools.

One of the findings also noted that 69% of the participants see that the Palestinian educational system ensures that Palestinian curriculum calls on respecting the intellectual pluralism and national unity. Two educational and one political leader shared that teachers could influence students more than the curriculum states. Thus, if a teacher is politically affiliated and aimed to promote his ideology, nothing would stop him/her currently. The hidden curriculum is a concept that is used to promote ideology in children. Alsubaie (2015) notes that in many curricular issues are the results of hidden assumptions and expectations that are not formally communicated,

established, or conveyed within the learning environment. Thus, awareness of hidden curricular issues becomes a consideration, which has negative and positive influences. Nouri and Sajjadi (2014) emphasise that hidden curriculum can negatively transform the social norms and influence the students to follow their teacher's orientation. As per Nouri and Sajjadi, this could lead to empower a group of people in the society to dehumanise the other groups. They highlight that:

The term hidden implies a hider or some groups that intentionally conceals. Concealment, in turn, suggests a form of subterfuge in order to achieve some gains. Hence, the hidden curriculum is often believed to serve the interests of the power elite that the school, unwittingly, is thought to serve.

Hence, hidden curriculum that promotes national values and social norms are necessary in the context of Palestine. The risk here is that the society is politicised and this politicisation is transferred to schools through various means, one of which is the teachers. Two interviewees have explicitly witnessed some teachers are influencing their students ideologically. The two interviewees believed that they were successful and students have become politicised.

To summarise, the Palestinian curriculum includes outdated content, and the first revision was conducted after almost 15 years of implementation. The curriculum did not include primary elements that are required to prepare Palestinian youth to build up a state in Palestine. Education also failed to enable learners and educators to construct and promote national identity and social norms through education. This was concluded as the participants reported that the current textbooks did not introduce learners to the question of Palestine in terms of geography, history, heritage, and leadership. In addition, the curriculum failed to present the socio-political conditions of Palestine in the textbooks, such as Palestine is an occupied state and there are legitimate methods of resisting this occupation. Additionally, participants believe that one political party should not dictate the Palestinian curriculum over others, and Palestinian political leaders should not accept any interference from the Israeli occupation and donors to include or exclude specific content that deems necessary to express the suffering of Palestinians. It was also anticipated that an extrapolation of the significant findings would identify strengths and weakness in contemporary curriculum delivery, demonstrate the need for further studies, and provide general indicators to the future development of the Palestinian curriculum. The findings of this study wish to focus on the lessons to be learned for future curriculum development, rather than on the legitimacy of the arguments presented for and against the incitement charge in the studies under consideration.

5.2.1.2 Teaching and Learning Practices

Interviewees disclosed an overwhelming sense of dissatisfaction with educational outcomes. Most of this was reflected in deteriorating levels of student performance in both primary and secondary sectors (Ramahi 2015; UN 2017; UNECIF 2011). Participants in this study provided 227 suggestions constituting 21% of total recommendations made by participants—to improve education in Palestine through improving teaching and learning practices. These suggestions can be classified as: using effective teaching methods, upgrading the educational system infrastructure (resources and technology), reviewing the staffing process (recruitment, teacher professional development, and annual appraisal), and promoting and supporting scientific research. The same points were pointed by Pacetti (2008). Pacetti (2008) reports that:

The high demand of education has some negative effects: schools are overcrowded, some schools have a two-shift system and others are housed in unsuitable buildings. The ratio of students to teachers is most of the time very high especially in GS (up to 40). The quality of education is low due to the absence of sufficiently qualified teachers (50% of them are undergraduate), the absence of modern schools facilities (space, library books, maps, models, reference materials, science tools, etc.) as well as of modern teaching and learning aids, an inadequate system to evaluate student achievement, the absence of extracurricular activities (especially in villages). Teachers' training activities are provided by the MoEHE but are very theoretical and focused on improving teaching with old methodologies. Teachers' motivation is very low due to low salary, the absence of incentives, the burden of administrative and bureaucratic work without adequate preparation. Above all, the occupation and the unstable conditions are affecting the entire society.

Ramahi (2015) agree with the points highlighted by Pacetti. Moreover, Ramahi's (2015) adds that education in Palestine does not prepare Palestinians to lead their communities well. She attributes this to the quality of education they receive. Koneru (2016) highlighted five facts about education in Palestine which are linked with the quality of education received by the Palestinian children. One of these five points is that the poor infrastructure and lack of funding are major barriers to quality education in Palestine. The results obtained from analysing the participants' responses are in line with the findings of Ramahi and Koneru. Furthermore, Yarrow et al. (2014) argue that the quality of education and student performance provided to children are connected with the quality of teaching in schools. They recommended MoEHE to establish a program for leveraging student learning in several schools in WB and GS by establishing teacher professional development programs and improving school leadership. Yarrow et al. (2014, p.5) note that:

Based on these findings, the team calls for a renewed focus on teachers, instructional practice and monitoring of student learning outcomes in the upcoming Education Sector Development Plan. Specifically, assistance to low-performing schools could include support programs anchored on nearby schools that serve similar students with higher results. Peer learning

programs could support lower-performing classrooms to improve, while additional support can be provided through training programs, school management and the teacher supervisors. These recommendations are similar to those in the companion report from the MoEHE.

In addition to school leadership, Veronese *et al.* (2018) conclude that the quality of education is also connected with the teacher wellbeing. For instance, Veronese *et al.* (2018) report that the Palestinian teachers are unsatisfied with the social recognition they receive despite the complicated financial conditions they experience. Ramahi (2015), further, criticises the quality and relevance of the Palestinian curriculum that is delivered to the students due to teachers' qualification and readiness. She suggests providing teachers with sufficient training on how to teach the oppressed children and guide them to emancipate themselves from the Israeli occupation. Ramahi (2015, p. 4) highlights that:

There is an overall sense among Palestinians that youth are being increasingly disenfranchised from their learning and growth. The critical stage in the intellectual and social formation of children and youth, when education might foster critical thinking and social awareness, is being squandered by a national curriculum ill-suited to the needs of a subjugated people. In its place, top-down transmission forms of teaching reinforce the development of passive, obedient adults stripped of human agency and the capacity to change the means of their oppressive conditions.

Ramahi views of the role of the teacher as extracted from Freire (1970). Freire sees a powerful connection between the style of pedagogy (teaching) used in school and the way the larger society operates. Schools can teach students to be passive, to accept things the way they are, and to defer to distant authority, or schools can teach students to be active, to ask why things are as they are, and to demand change when it is needed. In his most famous book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire describes the extraordinary importance of dialogue not only for schools but also for the role education can play in creating a more democratic society for schools, teachers, and students to live in.

Goe and Stickler (2008) attribute student success to the quality of teaching. Akiri (2013) agrees with Goe and Stickler and adds that effective teachers produce better performing students. Teacher quality is the most important school-based factor in influencing student achievement as compared to class size, curriculum and facilities. However, the participants in this study believed that the Palestinian children are educated using obsolete teaching methods, such as indoctrination. These methods of teaching do not focus on the required skills, such as higher-order thinking skills, problem-solving, creativity, and critical thinking. Participants believed that teachers should be encouraged to use creative teaching methods, such as teamwork, cooperative learning, discussion, debate, role-playing, and brainstorming. Moreover, the adopted teaching methods would dictate

the application of textbooks' knowledge, not just memorisation. According to Papak, Vujičić and Ivković (2017) the students who are enabled to develop critical thinking contributes to the formation of an independent, active, creative, and responsible individuals, who can find means to reach goals based on their own aspirations. This way the student will be able to link any new knowledge with previously learned knowledge, assess their values, and thereby build their own distinctive learning schemes, taking up an active role in teaching. In the case of Palestine building student critical thinking is essential to prepare Palestinian youth for the future state building mandate. Hence, teachers are expected to encourage high-quality work with the possibility of finding solutions to different situations, to allow students to express their needs, to include as many senses as possible, to actively and independently demonstrate content, to use acquired knowledge, to correct their errors, and to develop their dispositions and tendencies (Papak, Vujičić and Ivković 2017).

Participants also pointed out that most schools in WB and GS lack the required infrastructure in terms of technology and science laboratories, in addition to building conditions. The challenges pertinent to the quality of school infrastructure in WB and GS which were reported by Pacetti (2008) and Veronese *et al.* (2018) have not yet improved. Veronese *et al.* (2018) add that the lack of resources disrupt the educational life of both teachers and students. This indicates that students, teachers, and guardians are still concerned with the quality of school infrastructure particularly in terms of resources and facilities. The participants also reported that due to the lack of schools, most schools work in two shifts. This usually impacts the number of schooling hours and the quality of learning. Participants attribute the fact that most classes are for indoctrination to the lack of supporting resources in terms of laboratories, equipment, and tools. Some participants reported that their schools have not been maintained or painted for a long time. Guardians pointed out that schools do not have an automated school management system, which has led to poor communication with schoolteachers and administrators and thus affected the children's education. Some respondents shared that their schools suffer from shortages of student textbooks.

Participants reported that the staffing process is not carried out effectively in terms of recruitment, teacher professional development, and annual appraisal. The participants believed that some teachers lack the essential knowledge, skills, or attitudes required in the academic institutions. Some participants considered that some of the teachers are not qualified to teach because they are

either not specialised or do not have sound teaching methods to interact with children. Participants believed that providing professional development for teachers may help in shaping the attitude of those teachers. Furthermore, some participants recommended that some teachers should be terminated based on performance and attitude. Ramahi (2015) and Veronese *et al.* (2018) reported that there should be a fundamental transformation required for the nature of teaching in Palestine to meet the social, economic, and political expectations.

Promote and Support Scientific Research: Participants reported that no funds were allocated to support researchers within higher education or for educators and university professors.

To summarise, participants believed that teaching and learning are not meeting their expectations regarding the used teaching methods, utilisation of resources including technology, staffing schools with highly qualified staff who are passionate about their career and providing them with the relevant professional development, and a dedicated budget for promoting scientific research. Staffing should not be based on political affiliation, but rather on credentials and skills. Ramahi (2015) and Veronese *et al.* (2018) believe that the focus by nearly all Palestinians on developing teacher capacity reflects the significance of human resources for facilitating educational change. This was true for both formal and informal educational provisions. A fundamental transformation was said to be required of teaching implicitly calling for changes in teacher attitudes and values to move from authoritarianism to democratic principles.

5.2.1.3 Socialisation through Education

This section explores how education in Palestine is employed to complete the socialisation process from the Marxist perspective. Kumar (2011) and Williams (1972) believe that education should be the primary method of transferring human culture from one generation to another. Political and educational leaders who participated in this study reported that education in Palestine is not currently mature enough to complete the socialisation process and reflect the struggle of Palestinians over the past century due to various factors, such as the Israeli occupation, the rift among the Palestinian political parties, and the absence of an independent economic system. The findings of this study are in line with Fannoun (2008), UN (2017), and World Bank (2017) in this regard. Furthermore, Qarmout (2017) points out that the Palestinian administration was never given the opportunity to develop an independent economic system to fund the social activities and

projects. This analysis, further, measures the level of social expectations and the actual outcomes of education in Palestine. For example, some participants reported that almost half (49%) of the participants believe that the Palestinian educational system promotes the Palestinian political system and is democratic and based on political pluralism. About 76% of the participants confirmed that the Palestinian educational system is not the vehicle behind the school students' political affiliation. Moreover, the educational and political leaders agreed that the education system in Palestine is not developed to cater for political identity or ideology. A UN (2017) report stated that the critical issues separating the factions have remained unchanged over the years, and there are continuing ideological differences. The results also show that the educational system contributes to strengthening the faith of students in resisting the Israeli occupation accepted by 72% participating students, teachers, and guardians. This rate is too high as per the one political and three educational leaders. The interviewees believe that education in Palestine does not do this explicitly. However, some teachers may do. Furthermore, one political and one educational leaders believe that the high percentage represents what participants wish to see not what it is currently doing.

Furthermore, 64% of the participants believe that education contributes to strengthening the faith of students in resisting the Israeli occupation. Twenty participants (16 students, two teachers, and two guardians) confirm that education in Palestine does not introduce the learners to methods to be used in resisting the Israeli occupation. The results were discussed with interviewees to understand the reason behind the contradicting results. One political and two educational leaders confirm that education in terms of curriculum content and policies does not introduce the learners to any methods that can be used by students in resisting the Israeli occupation. However, they believe that participating students, teachers, and guardians are hopeful to see education doing so.

Sixty-seven percent of the participants agreed that the educational system in Palestine demonstrates the Palestinians' question their aspirations, and 76% of participants believed that the educational system elucidates the rights of the Palestinians in return to the lands which they were expelled from. The political and educational leaders shared that these percentages are high and represent what participants would like to see in the educational system not what currently exists.

Expectedly about 84% of the participants agreed that the educational system articulates that the Palestinian people are part of the Arab world. The political and educational leaders agreed with

this percentage and attributed this to the notion of the educational system when it was implementing the Jordanian and Egyptian curricula. Furthermore, participants believed that the existing curricula is a copy base of the neighbouring countries and would reflect the same beliefs.

PSR (2016) noted that about 66% (71% in the Gaza Strip and 63% in the West Bank) said that if the current confrontations develop into an armed intifada, such a development would serve Palestinian national interests in ways that negotiations could not. This is an indication that almost 34% of the participants in the PSR agreed that negotiation can be an option for the Palestinians. PSR and this study findings are so close as 41% of the participants in this study believed that the education system supports that negotiating is the way to emancipate themselves and only 13% of the participants agreed that education in Palestine promotes that resisting the Israeli occupation is not a terroristic action. When participants were asked if the Palestinian curriculum endorses that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is due to religion conflict, 59% of the participants disagreed. In other words, the participants considered that the educational system does not claim that the dispute with the Israeli government is due to religion, and the negotiation between the PNA and the Israeli government is not introduced as the way to gain Palestinians' rights in addition to rejecting that resisting the Israeli occupation is a terroristic act. It seems that these three areas are left to students to find out. Usually, the answer to these questions is addressed by political parties according to their ideology and beliefs.

In summary education is an essential vehicle for transforming society (Olaniyan and Okemakinde 2008; Ramahi 2015). Three-quarters of the participating students, teachers, and guardians shared that the Palestinian educational system ensures that the Palestinian curriculum emphasises that Palestinians are supporters of the comprehensive peace. Political and educational leaders believed that the mission of education is to promote that the Palestinians' education system should (1) articulate that Palestinian society is dominated by brotherhood and tolerance between Muslims and Christians (81%), (2) equate mosques and churches (63%), (3) ensure that the Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in Israeli jail (61%), (4) ensure that the Palestinian curriculum includes the names of the Palestinian occupied towns and villages (56%), (5) ensure that the Palestinian curriculum prepares students to adhere to the land and maintain it (77%), and (6) affirm that discrimination among students according to their academic level or social class leads to poor teamwork inside and outside the school (74%). However, those the percentages

addressing including the names of the Palestinian towns and villages in curriculum content as well as ensure that the Palestinian curriculum highlights the suffering of captives in Israeli jail are not part of the education system, as per interviewees. Three political leaders and four educational leaders affirm that the Palestinian curriculum developers cannot include this knowledge and if it added, the Israeli occupation and donors will reject it. This according to interviewees a result of Oslo Peace accord. Hence, the knowledge included in the Palestinian textbooks will not provide the learners sufficient information related to geography, history, and leadership figures according to interviewees.

Summary of Research Question Two

Participating students, teachers, and guardians note that the most influencing factors in educating children are the relevance and quality of curriculum content, teaching and learning, and social involvement. The discussion concludes that the curriculum includes outdated content that is not relevant to the socio-political conditions of Palestine. It is also found that the staffing in schools is based on political affiliation, not on credentials and skills. The social representatives are not currently playing a significant role in education policy, curriculum, and operations.

5.3 RESEARCH QUESTION THREE

In oppressed societies, teachers cannot be passive (Freire & Macedo 2000). Halabi (2017) agrees with Freire and Macedo and emphasised that the teachers cannot have the two opinions with respect to the impact that socio-political conditions in Palestine have on the student daily life. For instance, in Palestine, Veronese *et al.* (2018) reported that teachers lack security which contributed to unhealthy, uncomfortable, and dysfunctional physical environments. Teachers' wellbeing in addition to the relationship between teachers and students are strongly correlated with the socio-political conditions.

What are the perceptions of Palestinian political and educational leaders of the necessary conditions to develop the educational system in GS and WB?

This section focuses on the perception of Palestinian political and educational leaders of the necessary conditions to develop a national educational system in WB and GS. Thus, the political, economic, cultural, and social contexts are carefully analysed. The political context of education

in Palestine is very complicated as per the interviewees. This complexity is a result of the various socio-political conditions that are very intricate, and therefore hinder the development of a national educational system in Palestine. For this reason, the political and educational leaders of Palestine face extreme pressure by several internal and external powers that have hidden agendas. These agendas are mostly conflicting and do not prioritise education in WB and GS. Jabr (2003) and Safadi (2014) argue that this diversity poses a challenge for educational and political leaders who wish to establish a quality educational system that provides an inclusive curriculum to fit a diverse Palestinian society. In other words, a curriculum that is based on social justice (i.e. pedagogy for liberation). Thus, this section discusses suggestions provided by the interviewees for developing a national educational system. The proposed system should have a mission not only to offer high-quality education, but also to be used as a mean for constructing and promoting a national identity and social norms.

Interviewees affirmed that education in Palestine is highly politicised. Jabr (2003) and Safadi (2014) emphasise that Palestinian society in WB and GS is highly-politicised due to diverse ideologies. This politicisation of education in Palestine is complex and dynamic according to the political conditions in the world. Interviewees shared that the main contributing factors that are currently politicising education in Palestine are the Israeli occupation, international governments, and the Palestinian political parties. Each of them has its agenda to impact education in WB and GS. Those agendas are mostly conflicting and have continued to shape education in Palestine for almost 70 years. The Israeli occupation and international governments do not accept this educational system to construct and promote the national identity and social norms. The Palestinian political parties compete for ideologised education so that Palestinians can view the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from their ideological perspective (e.g., Islamic or secular). The discussion presents why the current educational system does not meet their expectations and how it could be improved.

To elaborate, the Israeli occupation influences international governments to adopt its point of view of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This influence contributed to having international governments react negatively to constructing and promoting the Palestinian national identity and social norms through education. Interviewees explained how the Israeli occupation barricades the development of a Palestinian national educational system in WB and GS. They added that the Israeli occupation

uses various direct and indirect strategies to impose policies on political and educational leaders of Palestine. Those policies contributed significantly to negatively transforming education in Palestine. The findings of this study indicate that the Israeli occupation stymies Palestinian political leaders before international organisations regardless of political orientation. This practice of stymieing Palestinian political leaders contributed to imposing more policies on international governments and Palestinian political leaders. Interviewees observed that the Israeli occupation uses the Palestinian political leaders' legitimacy to represent Palestinians before international organisations to influence international governments, particularly the donating ones, to stop funding the PNA if political leaders do not accept specific Israeli policies. Michaels (2017) criticises the interference of the Israeli occupation in altering the political and social settings of the Palestinian society through supporting some political liberation movements over others. The Israeli occupation made it very difficult for Palestinian political leaders to establish sustainable political, economic, and social systems. Michaels (2017) considers the way the Palestinian political leaders are not given the opportunity to lead and develop the required methods will never solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Michaels supports that the Israeli occupation and international governments should assist the PNA to function and establish all necessary systems. To improve education in Palestine, interviewees shared some essential actions that need to take place.

Stop Politicising Education. Interviewees note that the socio-political conditions are directly impacting education in Palestine. Interviewees understood the complexity of the existing socio-political conditions in Palestine and, thus, proposed actions that could be implemented within the same context. The main suggestions to establish a rigorous national educational system in Palestine were as follows: (1) develop a national curriculum, (2) enhance teaching and learning, (3) explore other sources of funding, and (4) prioritise education.

5.3.1.1 Establish a National Curriculum

Interviewees shared that the current curriculum has been funded by a donating government that has imposed specific measures on the Palestinian curriculum developers and decision makers (implemented until August 2017). Those actions drifted the curriculum away from its original mission of establishing a national educational system and toward developing a non-national educational system. Interviewees noted that the existing curriculum includes outdated content and

has never been revised since it was released for the first time in 2000. Murray (2008) interviewed curriculum developers while Santisteban (2002) conducted document analyses. Both of them discuss the history of the Palestinian educational system as well as the initiative behind establishing the Palestinian national curriculum in 1996. Murray (2008) and Santisteban (2002) agree with the viewpoints of Brown (2001) that political transitions and economic realities in Palestine have negatively affected both Palestinian education and the national identity. Some researchers contend that the cognitive development of Palestinian children has been oppressed by the long-lasting Israeli occupation which produced generations of youth who lack knowledge, skills, and proper attitudes (Affouneh 2007; Halstead & Affouneh 2006; Jabr 2003). Indeed, the many years of isolation and separation techniques used by Israel through military barriers, confiscation of lands and demolition of homes led to the partitioning of Palestinian areas and difficulties in commuting from one place to another. Santisteban (2002) and Murray (2008) concluded that politics played an imperative role in devaluing the education of Palestinian children.

To summarise, this proposed national curriculum as per interviewees should be rigorous and (1) introduce the learners to up-to-date knowledge, (2) focus on the depth of knowledge not breadth, (3) include content that can promote higher order thinking skills, critical thinking, problem solving, & creativity, (4) introduce digitized curriculum, (5) consider revising the assessment strategy, (6) improve the quality of foreign language content and delivery, (7) introduce relevant extra-curricular activities to motivate learners and engage them in school activities, (8) enable learners and educators to construct and promote national identity and social norms through education, (9) introduce learners and educators to comprehensive curriculum addressing the history, geography, and leadership of Palestine, (10) describe the role of religion in the political context of Palestine, (11) describe methods for resisting the Israeli occupation through education, and (12) emphasize the perspectives of global organisations and governments.

The pressure exerted by the Israeli occupation on educational and political leaders throughout the past seventy years was massive. The rift between the two major political parties complicated the situation further. The pressure exerted by the donating governments to meet their agenda pressured the education system even more. Educational leaders are unable to respond to social and national needs due to the political conditions imposed by all domestic and international political powers.

This interference contributed to altering the curriculum content, putting pressure on teaching and learning, and imposing unacceptable educational policies. This unbearable pressure opened the door for educators to look for other means to reflect their political affiliation. At the current time, due to the absence of Palestinian national constitutions, educational leaders try to fill this gap either by avoiding introducing civic and social values to students through education or presenting them with a political ideology that is rejected by some political parties. Thus, leadership legitimacy is gained from the full spectrum of citizens who participate in the decision making and contribute to the nation's development. With the existing situation and the conflicting legitimacies to lead, educational leaders face the problem of which ideology the educational system should transfer to children.

5.3.1.2 Enhance the Teaching and Learning.

The second factor for improving education in Palestine is by improving the teaching methods, upgrading the infrastructure, staffing, and promoting and supporting scientific research. Participants consider the teaching methods outdated and focus on indoctrination and memorisation. Respondents believed that there is a necessity to apply interactive teaching and learning methods that would motivate students to be engaged and become critical thinkers, problem solvers, and to be creative. Such teaching methods should include teamwork, cooperative learning, debates, discussions, and brainstorming. The effective teaching methods, along with the latest technology and educational tools, would improve the educational level from the participants' perspective. Staffing is another dimension where participants consider recruiting qualified teachers would improve the education; also, it would provide them with professional development sessions and annual appraisal for promotions and holding continuity in case of reliability.

Participants also shared that upon the victory of the Islamic movement of Hamas in the legislative elections of 2006 several donations were suspended and tied to policies dictating the recognition of the Israel state, which was not accepted by Hamas. This rejection contributed to the suspension of funding education, particularly in GS. Interviewees witnessed that over 70% of the current schools in GS are run with two shifts due to the lack of funds to build new schools. The two shifts schools negatively impact the quality of learning as students spend, at most, four to five hours daily in schools as compared to six to seven in other countries. Interviewees also reported on the

three wars in GS (2006, 2011, and 2014). The results of these wars on education was massive. Several schools and universities were entirely or partially destroyed. Those schools and universities continue to be unbuilt to date. In addition to buildings destroyed, several educators and students were killed during the attacks on GS. Interviewees explained the impact of those wars on the quality of education in GS.

Interviewees presented information about the Israeli occupation as a Balkanizing process. They shared that WB is wholly separated from GS. Palestinians who need to travel from WB to GS and vice-versa should seek permission from the Israeli occupation, including the PNA staff (e.g., a prime minister, ministers). The movement between WB cities and villages is a serious challenge due to the physical obstacles, including the Israeli barrier and checkpoints, as well as bureaucratic constraints such as permit requirements (Hutton & Hutton 2018). Interviewees shared that the separation wall and the checkpoints have negatively transformed education in WB as well. To add, GS has been under siege from 2007 to the present. This siege has contributed to it being extremely difficult to get in or out GS, especially for students who are studying abroad.

5.3.1.3 Explore other Sources of Funding.

Palestinian educators have tried for years to reflect the struggle of their people in subjects, such as history, geography, and social studies. Unfortunately, international donors who fund the education of Palestinians in the occupied territories and refugee camps intervene in developing the Palestinian national curriculum by imposing specific measurements on what subjects or lessons to include (Mazawi 2011; Murray 2008). Veronese *et al.* (2018) noted that the Palestinian teachers are unsatisfied of funding education through international donors as this dictates the content and operations to be connected with policies. Many researchers argue that these interventions reveal a hidden agenda behind these donations and, at the same time, question the purpose behind them (Hovsepian 2008; Mazawi 2011; Murray 2008; Santiseban 2002). To elaborate, interviewees claimed that the discussion of the findings should consider that WB and GS are still under Israeli occupation regardless of the peace accord between Palestinians and Israelis. This occupation made the mission of educating Palestinian children a severe challenge to political and educational leaders of Palestine in WB and GS. Interviewees said that the establishment of a rigorous educational system would require considering the Palestinian context regarding the political, economic, and

social conditions. Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2017) affirms that education in Palestine is a tool for oppression primarily and precisely because it is used to prevent social and political transformation, emancipation, and liberation. Thus, the political leaders relied heavily on international agencies and donors to contribute to the building of the institution, which, in turn, resulted in a great deal of intervention in the affairs and decision-making of Palestinian leaders.

5.3.1.4 Prioritise Education by Leadership.

The fourth axis of this thematic analysis focuses on the role of promoting socialisation through education in Palestine. Veronese *et al.* (2018) report that the teachers' wellbeing, socially, economically, and politically, should be prioritised to ensure better quality. Furthermore, the majority of participants suggested providing learners with a relevant knowledge base that could help them in their daily lives and prepare them well for higher education and workplace. UN (2017) also reported that education in Palestine is not producing students for the workplace. In addition to the economic and social dimensions of education, Ramahi (2015) argue that the education of its current form and strategy lack the component of emancipatory education. The participants in this study believe that the education system needs to focus more on promoting the national unity and equality and encourage respect for verbal and physical punishment. The findings are in agreement with Ramahi (2015) that education in Palestine should be Palestinised so that learning contributes to national development. Participants further support developing students socially to appreciate the voluntary and internship work as suggested by the participants. Bacter and Marc (2016) conclude that voluntary work is beneficial to society and individuals. They found that the benefits of the voluntary activities are many such as altruism, self-satisfaction and the need for involvement, as well as professional development, and equip students with the experience required for the workplace. Hence, the recommendation made by the participants in this study are a key factor for improving the quality of learners and social engagement.

To conclude, improving education in Palestine requires close attention throughout the development and implementation to ensure the applicability and sustainability of the Palestinian education system. Hence, political and educational leaders need to work hand by hand to prioritise education and align its outcomes with the social, economic, and political needs to prepare for the state establishment.

6 CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

The conclusion chapter contains nine sections. The first section concludes the study, while the second highlights the limitations of this study. The third section proposes a strategy of emancipatory education based on Freire (1970). The fourth section presents the main implications of the study results. The fifth section provides recommendations for educational and political leaders, whereas the sixth provides recommendations for further research in the same topic. The last three sections highlight the contribution of this study to theory and practice with a final word to respond to the research problem statement.

6.1 CONCLUSION

Education plays a crucial role in transforming human society and in building peaceful communities in a rapidly changing world. The progress of any country depends on the ability to develop, accumulate and sustain its human capital to support the economic growth. It is widely understood that the current political system in Palestine, coupled with external powers and internal conflicts, has led to the creation of a highly politicised society. The contemporary political and educational leaders have failed to establish a national educational system that supports the social, political, and economical growth of Palestine. This inability is particularly notable in WB and GS. Information on the complex relationships among social, political, and economic factors in influencing education in Palestine is scant. Hence, there is an urgency to understand how the social and political conditions, external powers and internal conflicts influence each other and the educational system.

The primary purpose of this study is to investigate the underlying social, political, and economic forces influencing education and the challenges political and educational leaders face to establish a national educational system in WB and GS. The study attempted to connect the analysis results with theories of knowledge to draw better interpretations of the current conditions in Palestine and propose a model that can assist in establishing a national educational system for the Palestinians in WB and GS.

For this study, a sample of 2,947 respondents (1,705 Students, 623 Teachers, 611 Parents, four Political leaders and four Educational leaders) were randomly selected from WB and GS and

interviewed using five-point Likert scale questionnaires with open-ended questions. First, a survey was developed and conducted to gather their perception on how socio-political conditions affect education with students, teachers, and guardians. In the second round, interviews were organised and conducted to get an in-depth understanding of how political and educational leaders influence education in the country. Before administering the survey, validity and reliability tests were made on the questions through the pilot survey, and the feedback was used to improve the survey questions.

Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design was used to analyse the survey responses, and thematic analysis was developed based on the responses obtained from interviews discussions using NVivo.

The study employed a theoretical framework that was developed after a thorough review of relevant literature on the complicated relationship among social, political and economic factors in influencing the national education system in Palestine. The study analysed survey results and interview discussions pertinent to the following research questions:

- How do the present sociopolitical conditions and challenges shape the educational system in WB and GS?
- What are the perceptions of Palestinian teachers, parents, and students of the factors influencing the educational policy in WB and GS?
- What are the perceptions of Palestinian political and educational leaders of the conditions necessary to developing the educational system in WB and GS?

6.1.1 The contemporary socio-political conditions and challenges in shaping the educational system in GS and WB:

One of the most important findings that emerged from this study is that the present political, economic, and social factors contribute to the inability of political and educational leaders in Palestine to develop a national educational system. The findings are consistent with the results of the previous studies (e.g., Michaels 2017; Ramahi 2015; Sa'adeh 2013; UN 2017). The study concludes that the current socio-political conditions have led to the politicisation of education, the politicisation of funds, and poor-quality education.

Conforming with similar studies in the past, the result indicates that Palestinian society is highly politicised, and this politicisation has been reflected in schools in various ways. The analysis of the political orientation of the study population shows that almost half of the participants are politically affiliated with one of the Palestinian political parties (e.g., Fatah, Hamas, and Jihad). This political affiliation was distributed as 53% among students, 41% among teachers, and 50% among guardians. It was further evident that even students become politically affiliated before turning 18 years old, and this was a common perception among 93% of students, 82% of teachers, and 83% of guardians.

The political leaders interviewed in this study attributed the high level of student political affiliation to the inability of the Palestinian leadership to construct and promote national identity and social norms through education. A lack of strong leadership has created a gap in the society that has resulted in incapable administration in the territories, and consequently, the political instability in WB and GS has continued. This gap contributed to having learners seeking answers to their socio-political conditions from various politically ideological sources of knowledge. This is believed to be the outcome of a century-old British and Israeli occupation that negatively transformed the social structure.

This study also explored how the politicisation of funds impacted education in WB and GS. It is expected that countries who are not self-sufficient regarding the economy and cannot generate a budget will be vulnerable to the ideology of external forces. The analysis of political and educational leaders' responses in the previous section indicated that donors had politicised their funds. Donating countries have been building schools in WB and GS since 1994. One of the educational leaders in the study mentioned that PNA suspended the funds allocated to build schools due to political demands.

One of the respondents who was a high ranking official (a Deputy Minister of Education in GS from 2006 to 2016), reported that they were not able to build schools since 2006 due to the inability of the government to secure the raw materials and funding. He stated that in 2013, when the relationship between the Egyptian and GS governments was good, 20 schools were built.

In 2006, Palestine went through a significant rift between two political parties—namely, Fatah and Hamas—as orchestrated by Israelis. This has eventually led to the establishment of two governments, one in WB run under Fatah and the other in GS run under Hamas. This has been the

dominant cause of the current never-ending internal conflicts between the two political leaders. The rift also contributed to terminate or appoint educators based on their political affiliation, as per the interviewees. The political and educational leaders who participated in this study confirmed that funding education in Palestine has been politicised and cannot be discussed without associating it with the political conditions. Thus, the politicisation of funds has been a significant impediment to establishing a national educational system in Palestine, independent of political conditions.

The analysis of participants' responses in the previous section showed that Palestine is characterised by poor quality of education, and the curriculum does not promote the country's social and national norms. Students, teachers, and guardians suggest that the following five significant areas have to be introduced in order to improve the current educational system in Palestine: (1) introducing Palestine Question (History, Geography, and Leadership), (2) introducing the Global Perspectives on Palestine Question, (3) clarifying the Role of Religion in a Political Context, (4) explaining Methods to be used for resisting the Israeli occupation, and (5) promoting Palestinian Identity (Political & National). The participants firmly believed that these five major areas are of great conflict among the Palestinian political parties. Thus, there is a need to address them through education so that students do not seek any information on these from ideological sources such as political parties, friends, teachers, social media, or family members. The participants further recommend that the educational policies and practices in Palestine should stand independent of political conditions.

6.1.2 Factors influencing the educational system in GS and WB from Palestinian teachers, guardians, and students' perspectives:

The teachers, guardians, and students participating in this study identified three major factors that influence the education system in WB and GS: the relevance and quality of curriculum content, teaching and learning, and social involvement. The respondents believed that the current curriculum is outdated and does not prepare students for the workplace and higher education. The curriculum is missing essential aspects for developing learners' higher-order thinking, problem-solving, and creativity, including the application of knowledge. They suggested revising the curriculum by introducing extra-curricular activities, reviewing the assessment strategies, introducing the new educational policy, establishing a curriculum development & review system,

and focusing on foreign languages. The political and educational leaders also confirm that the current curriculum is not up-to-date with the rapidly-developing technology and educational content.

The participants believe that current teaching and learning is not meeting their expectations regarding teaching methods. Some of these concerns include: utilisation of resources (i.e. technology), staffing schools with highly qualified teachers who are passionate about their career, and a dedicated budget for promoting scientific research. The participants provided suggestions on how to improve education in Palestine through four main subthemes: teaching and learning theme (use effective teaching methods, upgrading the educational system infrastructure (resources and IT); reviewing the staffing process (recruitment, teacher professional development, & annual appraisal), and promoting and supporting scientific research.

Social Involvement was another major factor influencing the educational system in WB and GS. The participants suggested promoting national unity and equality by providing relevant education and promoting respect over verbal and physical punishment. Focusing on Palestinian heritage and customs and promoting the culture among learners can contribute positively to building a national unity.

About 84% of the participants agreed that the educational system articulates that the Palestinian people are part of the Arab world. The results show that 64% of the participants believed the educational system contributes to strengthening the faith of students in resisting the Israeli occupation and consolidating the rights of the Palestinian people.

6.1.3 The necessary conditions to develop the educational system in GS and WB from the Palestinian political and educational leaders' perspectives:

Chapter 5 discusses the perceptions of political and educational leaders on the necessity of developing educational system in WB and GS in connection with theoretical framework and literature reviews. The role of education in the development and transformation of economic, social, and political systems has been carefully analysed.

A critical analysis of participants' responses to this study indicates that education has become a highly politicised social institution in Palestine. The main factors contributing to this are the Israeli

occupation, international governments, and the Palestinian political parties. As depicted in figure 15, the Israeli occupation has been the driving force in politicising education. Through established intermediaries (political – PNA, economic, and social systems), the occupation has impacted political leaders, and international governments have interfered and politicised the education to influence the social norms and national identity of Palestinians negatively. The analysis results reveal that the Israeli occupation has made it very difficult for Palestinian political leaders to establish sustainable political, economic, and social systems. It was indicated that the Israeli occupation uses various direct and indirect strategies to impose policies on political and educational leaders. As a result, the leaders are incredibly pressured by several internal and external powers that function according to their hidden agendas with the intention of shaping education to meet those agendas. These policies have negatively transformed education in Palestine.

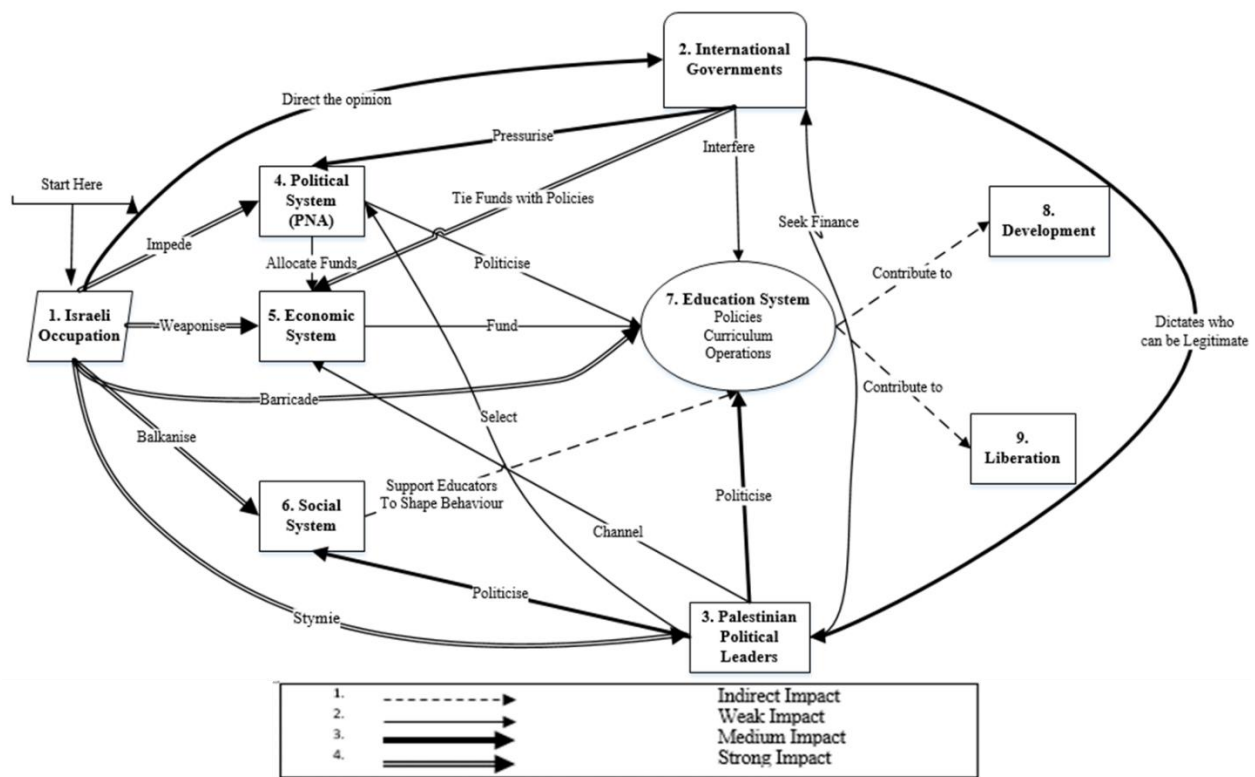


Figure 15: Education in Highly Politicised Societies Educational Model

Cognizant of how the socio-political conditions have been impacting education in WB and GS, the political and educational leaders interviewed in this study call for the establishment of a rigorous national educational system with the following suggestions: (1) develop a national

curriculum, (2) enhance teaching and learning, (3) explore other sources of funding, and (4) prioritise education.

6.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study explored the impact of the socio-political conditions in Palestine on education from the perception of students, teachers, guardians, political leaders, and educational leaders in WB and GS. Despite the potency, the findings of this study have to be thought of with some caution, as such an empirical attempt is rare and unique in the present research setting. However, in international business research, the full range of the field and various exogenous factors may inherently affect the results. This also warrants future research attention to determine how these can be incorporated and considered in a conceptual model. This study investigated a limited subset of a large group of behavioural and contextual aspects of importing firms. Therefore, problems arise in what should be included and what should be excluded. With these concerns in mind, the following essential issues in any attempt of generalisation of the findings would need to be verified carefully:

- The findings rely on respondents' self-reported cross-sectional data, rather than longitudinal data. This may not reflect changing situations and the series of related phenomena between socio-political conditions in Palestine and the perception of the stakeholders over time. The cross-sectional data may be affected by the respondent's predisposition of any events that have happened in the past or by the mental position of the period of the filling in the questionnaire or responding to the interview questions.
- The data have been collected from WB and GS. Palestinians who live in Jerusalem and Israel were not part of this study. This facilitated data collection and controlling diversity but also limited the generalisability of the findings to WB and GS.
- The data have been collected from public and UNRWA schools in WB and GS. Students who study in private schools were not part of this study. This facilitated data collection and controlling diversity but also limited the generalisability of the findings to WB and GS.
- Due to the fear from the Israeli occupation to see their responses, the data was collected from the majority of the participating students, teachers, and guardians at home. The

participants' were ensured that their responses would be maintained with a high level of confidentiality, and the filled questionnaires were directly filled to the system so that assistant researchers would not pass any Israeli checkpoint carrying those questionnaires. This strategy was a sole with two sides. From one side, the presence of the parents, in some instances, influenced students' responses on some survey items. From the other, it minimised the peer influence.

- The interviewees were provided with documents explaining the study and their rights as participants, however, some interviewees limited the interview time to fifteen minutes whereas others went beyond the one-hour by providing more information. The big difference in the time may have influenced the interpretation of the data as some participants only provided general information whereas, others provided detailed information.

While acknowledging such limitations, this research exhibits an adequate comprehension of the impact of politicising education in Palestine. Accordingly, the study authenticates the obtained results. This also highlights how Palestinians strive to build their national educational system.

6.3 STRATEGY OF THE EMANCIPATORY EDUCATION BASED ON FREIRE (1970)

The purpose of this section is to develop a theory of revolutionary action for the oppressed people to help them liberate themselves through education. Without a revolutionary theory, there cannot be a revolutionary movement (Linnen 1902). As the findings of the study highlighted, the Israeli occupation uses various methods to sustain the oppression, this section presents a theory for mitigating the effect of the Israeli occupation oppression. The usual means of oppression as per Freire (1970) is through a theory of oppressive actions that is based on conquest, divide and rule, manipulation, and cultural invasion of the oppressed. To mitigate the effect of the oppression actions by the oppressed, Freire confirms that the oppressed should develop a theory of revolutionary action based on cooperation, unity for liberation, organisation, and cultural synthesis. Table 48 displays each dimension of the theory of oppressive action and the corresponding action by the theory of revolutionary action.

Theory of Oppressive Action	Theory of Revolutionary Action
Conquest	Cooperation
Divide and Rule	Unity for Liberation
Manipulation	Organisation
Cultural Invasion	Cultural Synthesis

Table 48: Theory of Revolutionary Action as opposed to Theory of Oppressive Action

The theory of oppressive action is mainly based on anti-dialogical principles. Those principles contribute to sustaining the oppression through the conquest of the oppressed. Freire believes that the oppressor uses all possible means to eliminate the oppressed one of which is the media (e.g. Television). The study found that the Israeli occupation influenced the international governments to accept its point of view of the reasons and possible solutions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These findings imply that the Palestinians should mitigate this risk using all possible means as well. According to Freire, cooperation is the best way to mitigate the effect of the conquest. The cooperation, according to Freire, occurs only among the oppressed who are involved in the praxis of liberation. This involvement as noted by Freire should be through dialogue among the oppressed to achieve authentic adherence because no one can reveal the world. The oppressed must involve trust in themselves and their revolutionary leaders. Freire, further, trusts that successful cooperation must involve the belief of leaders in the potential of the people. This belief highlights that the people are capable of participating in the pursuit of liberation and the revolutionary leaders must involve humility and the capacity of love. As this study highlighted that the Palestinians currently suffer from the division among the Palestinian political parties that resulted in the necessity of reestablishing the foundation for involving the Palestinians in a dialogue to agree on the nation's official knowledge and principles. Palestinian leaders must overcome their ideological perspective to dialogue with others who have a conflicting ideology for liberation and development.

The second dimension of the anti-dialogical principles is divide and rule. Freire notes that the oppressor divides the oppressed into groups and subgroups to maintain a higher level of control and oppression. The division of the oppressed, as per Freire, contributes to social conflicts among the oppressed. The results of this study are in line with Freire as it was reported that the Israeli occupation divided the Palestinians geographically and ideologically to maintain a higher level of

control. The study found that the Israeli occupation used various methods to maintain the conflict among the Palestinian political parties. The social division, as per Freire, that the people of the society are no longer having social norms that all accept as a result of the secondary socialisation. The education in Palestine cannot be empowered to construct and promote social norms due to this division and absence of united leadership and agreed nation's priorities. To overcome the consequences of the oppressor, Freire believes that the leaders of the oppressed must dedicate themselves to an untiring effort for unity among the oppressed - and unity of the leaders with the oppressed - to achieve liberation". According to Freire, the unity of the leadership comes from communication with the people. Leadership and people should be transparent to the extent that a right individual shall not sundering the false unity of the divided self. This only happens when a person begins to integrate as essential part of the unity process. Freire Further describes that the revolutionary process must be cultural action (not slogans or myths or mechanistic action which are all divisive action. The methods to achieve unity will depend on historical and existential experience that is merely based on the transparency of the leadership to clarify to the oppressed the objective situation which binds them to the oppressor.

The third dimension of the revolutionary action theory is the organisation. Freire notes that the oppressor will continue manipulating the oppressed and keep them busy trying to organise their priorities. The study found that the Israeli occupation influences the international governments particularly the donors to tie their fund with policies. This influence contributed to having the donors pressurising the Palestinian leaders to accept some policies that are not in alignment with their priorities. For instance, the study found that the donor stopped funding the upgrading of the school's infrastructure and only accepted to fund the operations in some parts of WB and GS based on political demands. The manipulation of the Palestinian society dictates the social, political, and economic division among the Palestinians. Freire believes that organisation is a highly educational process in which leaders and people together experience true authority and freedom, which they then seek to establish in society by transforming the reality which mediates them. The organisation of the oppressed should contribute to witness results from cooperation and liberation, exhibiting certain traits that do not vary historically:

- consistency between words and actions
- boldness urging witnesses to confront existence as continually at risk

- radicalisation leading witnesses and those who receive them to action
- courage to love transforming the world into a place with increasing liberation of humankind
- faith in the people

Furthermore, Friere confirms that organisation requires authority that cannot be authoritarian but rather based on freedom. The organisation is not directly linked to unity, but is a natural development of that unity, according to Friere.

Fourthly, according to the revolutionary action, cultural invasion used by the oppressor must be mitigated by the oppressor through cultural synthesis. Freire notes that the oppressors impose their worldview, inhibiting creativity of the invaded. This invasion can be overt or camouflaged. The oppressor makes the oppressed feel that they are incapable of liberating themselves due to the superiority of the oppressor. This feeling among the oppressed contributes to having the oppressed accepting the domination actions of the oppressor. To mitigate this, revolutionary leaders must initiate “Cultural Revolution” before actual change can take place through dialogue with and among the oppressed. Cultural synthesis can be a means of action for confronting culture itself, as the preserver of the very structures by which it was formed. In cultural synthesis, it is possible to resolve the contradiction between the worldview of the leaders and that of people, to the enrichment of both and resulting in the liberation of human beings.

The distinction between cultural invasion and cultural synthesis:

- invasion: actors draw a thematic basis for their actions from their values and ideology
- synthesis: actors coming from another world only seek to learn from the people, not to impose anything upon them

Cultural synthesis does not deny the differences between the two views--it is based on these differences, and it does deny the invasion of one by the other but affirms the undeniable support each gives to the other. Cultural synthesis serves the ends of the organisation; organisation serves the ends of liberation.

Palestinian society, as described earlier, has been subject to manipulation and geographical and ideological division. This division contributed to the development of various cultures among the Palestinians inside and outside Palestine. For instance, the Palestinians inside Palestine became disconnected from each other, which made the suffering of each group very different from another group. Furthermore, their priorities became different. For example, the Israeli Arabs who live within the geographic area of Israel have developed a culture that is different from the Palestinians who live in WB or GS. The Arabic language used by Israeli Arabs has negatively impacted them, and a considerable number of them serve in the Israeli army against the Palestinians of WB and GS. Israeli Arabs have developed their own culture and priorities to survive within the context of Israel. On the other side, the Palestinians who live in WB and GS have also developed their cultures based on their geographical location as well as the historical administration of Jordan and Egypt. For instance, the WB Palestinians are close to Jordanian culture, which promotes a kingdom kind of administration whereas the Palestinians of GS have developed a culture that seems to be closer to the Egyptian administration and the republic's way of administering systems. The Jordanian and Egyptian cultures are different, and these two cultures are emphasised not only through education (curriculum and exams) but also through the mechanism of administration. Furthermore, the Palestinians in refugee camps have developed a culture that is different from those of rural and urban citizens. Though living in the refugee camps is a real challenge for Palestinians, they have produced a social system that allows them to mitigate difficulties and prioritise their needs.

Urban and rural Palestinians have prioritised emancipating themselves from Israeli occupation and administration, consequently easing the move from one city or village to another. However, the refugee camp citizens usually present the necessity of a return to their homes inside of Israel. Those differences show how the Israeli occupation segments the current Palestinian society, making it challenging to survive and express the struggle to generations that have different priorities. Hence, it is time for a cultural synthesis to bring the Palestinians from the various segments to dialogue and establish for the entire nation their priorities and ways of achieving those priorities.

In summary, the Israeli occupation uses all possible means to continue in power and impose further domination actions on the Palestinians. To mitigate these actions, the Palestinian leaders have to develop a theory of revolutionary action based on dialogical principles. The principles are

cooperation, unity for liberation, organisation, and cultural synthesis. The Palestinian leaders should use all possible means internally and externally to communicate with the people and express their struggle to the world. The critical pedagogy theory of Freire considers the role of revolutionary leaders to be crucial in being wise and have the capacity to love others.

6.4 IMPLICATIONS

The main findings of this study are that the education in Palestine is politicised, funding of education is politicised, and the quality of education is not contributing to liberation and development.

Firstly, literature and the findings of this study are in line with Freire (1970) regarding the development of the oppressed society by not allowing them to use education as a means of emancipation. The extended period of the Israeli occupation led to controlling almost all aspects of education in Palestine directly through aggressive actions against the Palestinians or indirectly through its alliances mainly the donors. Hence, the existence of the Israeli occupation has led to politicising the Palestinian society and dividing it geographically and ideologically. Due to this division among the Palestinians, leaders are unable to establish the desired social and national institutions particularly the education system. The interference imposed by the Israeli occupation contributed to shaping the educational curriculum, policies, and operations and about the same time, it sustained the use of outdated curriculum content, educational policies, and practices. The outcome of this oppression through dividing the Palestinians into small communities geographically and then dividing those small communities into smaller ones ideologically makes it very challenging to reach consensus among the Palestinians on the national official knowledge. In other words, the consensus cannot be achieved among Palestinian political parties on the Palestinian official knowledge that must be transferred to children in schools that deem necessary to complete the socialisation process under the Israeli occupation.

Secondly, international donors fund education in Palestine as other social institutions. Those donors mostly link their funding with politics. These conditions overtime complicate the socio-political conditions further and contribute to more concessions from PNA to secure the minimal operational financing from donors. The impact of these concessions on education is significant

and add to effacing the Palestinian national identity through education. The donors, directly and indirectly, have complicated the social, economic, and political settings in Palestine. This complication delays the establishment of an independent state for the Palestinians that distances itself from the conditioned funding. Consequently, it will be possible to support educational leaders to prepare the future Palestinian leaders through a rigorous education system that is nationally developed, funded, and administered.

Thirdly, the politicisation of education, as well as the politicisation of funding education in Palestine, contributed to providing learners with outdated knowledge or sometimes irrelevant to their socio-political conditions. In other words, the education in Palestine with the current complex conditions cannot help the Palestinians to emancipate themselves from the Israeli occupation. Learners and teachers cannot discuss explicitly their daily struggle from one side, and from the other teachers cannot explain to learners the means of resistance and emancipation.

Based on the study's findings and previous discussions, the following pedagogical implications have been outlined:

- I. **Depoliticisation:** The results of the study highlighted that the Palestinian society is politicised. The roots of this politicisation as per the findings are the Israeli occupation, international governments, and the Palestinian political parties. The study also found that this politicisation is transferred to schools through families, curriculum, and teachers. This study appears to support the argument for a change to depoliticise education in Palestine.
- II. **Official Knowledge:** The study found that the current Palestinian curriculum lacks the official knowledge of the Palestinian nation regarding geography, history, civics, traditions, and leadership. On the face of it, this would suggest that official knowledge of the Palestinian nation concerning history, geography, civics, traditions, customs, captives, martyrs, and leadership of Palestine may be an essential factor to be included in the Palestinian curriculum.
- III. **Learning Outcomes:** The study highlighted that education in Palestine experienced a failure in producing leaders, economists, and sociologists that are required to plan and implement methods of resistance against the Israeli occupation

practices. Education does not provide the future Palestinians leaders. However, political parties are more involved in dictating the future political leaders of the Palestinian nation. This creates a gap between the society and the representatives of political parties. There is employment of unqualified teachers in the areas where there are many checkpoints. The study appears to support the argument for a change in the necessity of revising the MOEHE vision, mission, and goals to meet the expectations of the nation.

- IV. **Professional Development:** The findings of the study highlight that the teachers are mostly using outdated pedagogical approaches mainly indoctrination. Those outdated approaches contributed to negatively impacted the critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and higher order thinking skills of the Palestinian children. Palestinians through education and ultimately establish the independent state of Palestine. The study appears to support the argument for a change in the teacher professional development program to equip educators with the necessary pedagogical skills that are required to promote the higher order thinking skills.
- V. **Emancipatory Education:** The study reported that the educators are mostly using the Banking Education concept of Freire. This type of education does not help the oppressed to emancipate themselves. Having a paralysed education system by the Israeli occupation and its alliances contributed to having an education system that cannot be used as a means for freedom and emancipation. The Israeli occupation and its alliances negatively impacted curriculum, policies, and operations concerning education. Shifting children's priority from education to emancipate themselves and their nation from the Israeli occupation by critiquing the socio-political conditions to only obtaining certificates based on the knowledge they memorise. Paulo Freire condemns banking model of education, which implies the learners' receiving knowledge passively as empty vessels from the teacher, who is supposed to be store-house of knowledge, in the traditional teacher-centred classroom. This approach cannot support that the educator and the learners are equal producers of knowledge. The current education practices, policies, and curriculum do not reflect the Palestinians daily struggle in the curriculum. On the face of it, this would suggest that political and educational leaders may be an

important factor in adopting the emancipatory education principles of Freire (1970).

- VI. **Financial System:** The study concluded that the Palestinians do not have an independent economic system that is capable of financing education in Palestine. The inability of establishing an economic system that is independent of the Israeli occupation and its alliances negatively impacting the operations of schools. This inability as noted will continue seeking fund from donors who will keep their interference in education regarding curriculum, policies, and operations. Interference of donors in education particularly curriculum content, educational policies, and operations. Adding and omitting texts to meet the Israeli occupation and the donors' desires contributes to offering irrelevant and outdated curriculum to be taught in the Palestinian schools. This study offers suggestive evidence for exploring other sources of funding to neutralise education in Palestine.
- VII. **Infrastructure:** The study noted that education infrastructure is outdated and obsolete at best. Most schools lack modern science and technology laboratories and resources. Furthermore, the study reported the high student to teacher ration with almost 70% of schools run in two shifts. This contributed to having schools run over its main capacity. In addition to the above, the study reported that the study time for students is approximately four hours daily which is less than their counterparts in other countries. On the face of it, this would suggest that political leaders may be an important factor in prioritising the upgrade of the education infrastructure and equipping schools with the necessary science and technology resources.
- VIII. **Social Involvement:** The study concluded that educational and political leaders do not involve societal partners in the development, implementation, and evaluation of educational curriculum, policies, and operations. Furthermore, students, teachers, and guardians reported that social partners are not contributing to designing and implementing social activities that aim at enhancing students' community engagement and social commitment through internship and social activities. If the tentative conclusions of this study are confirmed by political and educational, then there will be a case for establishing the partnership with social

institutions to participate in education policies, curriculum, operations, and activities.

- IX. **Strategic Goals:** The study found that the political and educational leaders in Palestine focus more on operational issues rather than strategic goals. The results also noted that middle management is not involved in strategic planning or education. Furthermore, the results indicated that general education does not prepare students well for higher education and workplace. The study appears to support the argument for a change in the educational programs currently offered for school and university students to include more vocational and applied for technology programs.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following is a list of recommendations that can be useful for educators and policy-makers to depoliticise education in WB and GS. The recommendations include both a set of short- and long-term suggestions.

Palestiniase Education in WB and GS: The Israeli occupation, international governments, and the Palestinian political parties contribute, directly or indirectly, to depalestiniase education in WB and GS. The depalestiniasation of education regarding curriculum content, educational policies, and operations contribute significantly to produce generations of Palestinians who are politicised at an early age (less than 18 years old) and favour their political agenda over the societal expectations. Hence, it is recommended to establish an independent national team with a primary target to Palestiniase education especially curriculum content, educational policies, and operations. This team could be elected or selected by the society leaders and based on evidence of knowledge, experience, loyalty and reputation.

Explore other Sources of Funding: This study concluded that the current funding practices have negatively impacted education in Palestine. To continue with the same funding practices will complicate the educational practices further and invite more interference from the international donors who condition their funding with policies. Thus, it is recommended that the political and educational leaders should explore other sources of financing. Those new sources of funding,

national or international, should be neutral and do not have any agenda to impose specific measures on educational leaders in Palestine. The way anticipated funding is received and spent should be managed by an independent body that reflects all Palestinians regardless of their ideology or political orientation. Political leaders should ensure that the secured fund is not economically, politically or socially conditioned. At the same time, they also need to ensure that this fund is not channelled to politicise education.

Develop and Implement A Theory of Action According to Freire: The complex socio-political conditions in Palestine contribute considerably to politicising the society, and this politicisation has transferred to education through various channels. Those channels are imposed through either economic, political, or social system. Based on Freire, the Oppressed people should develop and implement a Theory of Action to change their conditions. This theory should focus on uniting the nation under an empowered leadership by the Palestinian people.

Establish A National Research Committee: The study concluded that the Israeli occupation and its alliances publish many studies to influence the people internationally to view the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from the Israeli perspective. It is recommended to establish a national research committee to report to the world the unjust practices imposed by the Israeli occupation on the Palestinians inside as well as outside Palestine. This committee should aim at unmasking the aggressive Israeli practices to dominate Palestinian geographically and ideologically through silencing their heritage and traditions particularly through education.

Establish A National Committee to Report to the World the Israeli Daily Attacks on Education: The study found that the Israeli occupation and its alliances use all possible means to alter the Palestinians image before the world. Education is one of the Palestinian sectors that are always attacked. For instance, the curriculum war that was established by the Israelis and their alliances focused on undermining the Palestinian curriculum accusing that it promotes hatred and anti-Semitism. Strong evidence never supported these false claims. However, all the Israeli sectors and its alliances spread those claims internationally through social media, TVs, newspapers, white papers, books, and journal articles. The Palestinians with the limited resources could not encounter such type of attack. Hence, this study recommends that PLO should establish a national reporting committee to reveal the reasons behind these constant attacks on education and explain to the

world how education in Palestine functions, from one side. From the other, this committee should magnify the Israeli practices against education in Palestine.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations for further studies can be proposed.

First, a limitation of this study was a focus on the Palestinians who live in WB and GS, which limits in part information about education across Palestine. More studies in relation to the education provided to the Palestinians who live in Jerusalem and Isreal are needed to provide a broader picture of education in Palestine. This includes more specific research from education policy, curriculum, teaching and learning, teacher professional development, school infrastructure, technology, and readiness for higher education and workplace. Researching these areas using Freire (1970) theory likely provides critically evaluated evidence-based approaches in planning and developing educational materials and strategies in Palestine. Those findings can provide useful information for developing effective education for Palestine.

Second, there is no systematic evaluation of education in the Palestinian schools in relation to depoliticisation. It is recommended to conduct research studies to evaluate programmes and interventions should look for effectiveness in terms of meeting the needs of the society and inform their choices for developing a depoliticised education system that distances itself from the conflicting ideologies and agendas. These studies should explicitly highlight any trail to politicise education and propose solutions to ensure such trails will not occur in future.

Third, the study concluded that the learners lack higher order thinking skills due to the focus on the content and delivery on the breadth rather than the depth of knowledge. It is recommended to study how the socio-political conditions and politicisation have influenced the content and delivery in relation to higher order thinking skills, problem-solving, and creativity.

Fourth, the study concluded that the majority of students in WB and GS become politically affiliated at an early age. It is recommended to conduct a longitudinal study to measure the impact of the political affiliation at an early age on the economy, national identity and social norms. The results of these studies should inform the decision makers in Palestine to stop politicising education

and focus more on constructing and promoting national identity and social norms through education.

Fifth, over 70% of the Palestinian schools according to UN (2017) run with two shifts. A few studies were conducted to measure the performance of the two shift schooling system as compared to the single shift system within and outside Palestine. The learning gap should be studied and highlighted in national and international publications to draw the attention to the high number of the two-shift schools and their impact on children's cognitive, psychological, social, and moral development.

Sixth, This study highlighted that the Palestinians in WB and GS are exposed to various educational systems (e.g. Public, Private, and UNARWA). Each of these educational systems has its curriculum, policies, and practices. There are no studies that were conducted to compare and contrast the student cognitive, psychological, social, and moral development among the various systems.

6.7 CONTRIBUTION TO THE THEORY

Freire's (1970) theory has been developed to describe how elites use education in a nondemocratic society as a means to maintain their power and undermine the oppressed people expressing their struggle using formal and informal education. However, it only worked well in homogeneous societies where the oppressor and the oppressed have the same religion, history, traditions, and sometimes priorities (e.g. Ramhi 2015). Based on that, the examination of Freire's theory where the oppressor is of a different nation and with a mission to uproot the indigenous people from their land and overtake all their resources while denying them their fundamental rights to live in or return to their land. Freire's critical pedagogy does not respond to such cases. At the same time, no other theory can describe the emancipatory education better than Freire (e.g. Ramhi 2015). Hence, this study contributed to add a new dimension to the critical pedagogy theory that is worth to conduct more research on. This dimension can highlight the necessity of considering occupied territories where the oppressed and the oppressor cannot live in one state mainly when the oppressor uses historical, social, national, economic, political, and religious reasons to maintain their oppression. In the case of Palestine, for instance, the oppressor's primary mission is to claim

a Jewish state on the land of the oppressed people. The claimed state is primarily based on religion where people of a different religion are treated as a minority by the oppressor and have limited power to manage their institutions, including education. This analysis indicates that the two different groups of people can only live in two independent states. Each state needs to have full control over its primary resources and institutions, particularly education.

Finally, this study described why and how Freire (1970) is applicable and what limitations it has in describing the impact of the historical, social, political, and economic conditions on education. However, this study is not the first that examined the critical pedagogy theory of Freire in the Palestinian context. Conversely, this study went beyond the typical examination of the applicability of Freire's critical theory to the Palestinian context to highlight new limitations that need to be addressed. This limitation is necessary in describing the critical pedagogy in areas with chronic conflicts fully. Furthermore, the adoption of the mixed methods research approach added much to the way knowledge can be generated in areas of chronic conflicts. In the next section, the contribution of this study to the methodology is addressed.

6.8 CONTRIBUTION TO PRACTICE

This study contributes to the methodology by applying a mixed method approach to examine Freire (1970) in chronic socio-political conditions. This contributed to exploring the research problem from the perception of the primary stakeholders of education in Palestine (students, guardians, and teachers), and then shared the quantitative results with the political and educational leaders to understand their perception of the distinct statement of the problem. Freire's critical pedagogy theory has been used either explicitly or implicitly by a few Palestinian researchers using qualitative analysis collected through interviewees (e.g., Affouneh 2007, 2014; Maharmeh 2017; Ramahi 2015; Silwadi & Mayo 2014). There is no single-study education in Palestine based on Freire using the mixed methods approach. The value added by implementing the mixed methods was how it influenced the interview questions and responses. Furthermore, it was highlighted by interviewees that the quantitative data sometimes added to their knowledge, as they thought the reality was different, whereas they found the quantitative results, in some instances, an accurate reflection of the reality; thus, requiring further exploration and discussion. The sampling method, stratified random sampling, and the high number of valid responses (approximately 3,000

participants) contributed to a high level of confidence in the results and supported the generalisation of the findings.

In addition to the sampling method and valid responses, the study went beyond descriptive statistics, to inferential statistics (e.g., t-test and ANOVA). The purpose of using inferential statistics was to measure the level of confidence that the difference among the participating groups was not due to chance. For instance, the usage of the independent samples t-test has added a dimension to the study by determining the significance level between participants according to their gender (males and females) and location (WB and GS). Furthermore, the ANOVA test informed the researcher on the significance level of the difference among the three participating groups (students, guardians, and teachers) in both WB and GS. These statistical tests that measure the extent to which participant groups have/do not have the same perception of the phenomena based on demographic factors could not be found in other studies in the context of Palestine.

In addition to the quantitative analysis tests, the study explored how open-ended survey questions can be analysed and reported according to Saladan (2013). The analysis of 1,098 responses from participants (students, guardians, and teachers) emphasised the necessity of integrating quantitative and qualitative data. The thematic analysis used to report the open-ended responses of the participants (students, guardians, and teachers) has added a dimension to the study by considering the qualitative feedback collected from around 1,098 participants and could not be found in other studies. The open-ended responses enriched the qualitative analysis and assisted in better interpretation of the quantitative data. The semi-structured analysed quantitative and qualitative data of the open-ended survey question enriched the qualitative analysis section. This contributed more to asking a specific question pertinent to particular data evidence. The interviewees found in most instances clarify their perception, beliefs, or expectations, from one side. From the other, the data added a new dimension for them to explore further.

Finally, the study contributes to the methodology by adopting the mixed methods approach which was an unusual method of exploring the socio-political context impact on education. Further, the use of inferential statistical tests supported the generalisation of the findings from one side, and from the other measured the significance level of the differences among the participating groups. The analysis of the open-ended survey question is another addition to studying by adding qualitative data to the study from 1,098 participants. Interviews based on data collected from

primary stakeholders of education in Palestine added a new dimension and supported the informed decision making.

6.9 FINAL WORD

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the socio-political conditions and challenges of the current educational system in Palestine from the perception of the stakeholders and develop a national strategy for unity based of the critical pedagogy of Freire (1970). The study found that Friere has a limitation when considering a dimension where the oppressor and the oppressed are of different historical, national, religious, social, political, and economic priorities. The study also found that there is an evident dearth of studies on Palestine that explore the impact of the socio-political conditions of Palestine on education. Hence, the study highlights the necessity of supporting researchers to conduct such studies. The use of mixed methods supports the depth and breadth of knowledge and the generation of an integrated form of findings that promote informed decision-making. The findings of the study highlight the negative impact that the Israeli occupation, international governments, and Palestinian political division have on education in Palestine regarding policies, curriculum, and operations.

At the conclusion of this study, there have been some shocking results that inform me that the challenges that I went through 25 years ago still exist, with even additional challenges for schools and university students.

- I. School infrastructure is still an issue. School buildings are old and lack the basic resources and necessary maintenance.
- II. Teachers are still underpaid and, in some instances, recruited or terminated based on their political orientation to serve a political agenda for a political leadership.
- III. The teacher professional development programs that were conducted with the teachers did not work well as a significant number of participating students, guardians, and political leaders believed that teachers continued to indoctrinate children and that there was a lack of teaching methods focused on critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

- IV. The Palestinian society has become highly politicised (50% of the participating students, teachers, and guardians). This politicisation has transferred from families to schools according to the political and educational leaders who participated in the study. This politicisation is viewed as a result of the continuation of the Israeli occupation and the conflicting ideologies in Palestine.
- V. Children are politicised at an early age (less than 18 years). Majority (88%) of the students are politically affiliated according to the participating students, teachers, and guardians. This level of politicisation leads to having the younger generations more politically affiliated and favouring their political identity over their national duties and responsibilities.
- VI. The two-shift school system is still used in over 70% of schools, limiting student access to schools for only four hours a day in addition to an average of 40 students per class that barely fits 25.
- VII. The schools lack the availability of automated systems related to school management and learning management. The absence of these systems resulted in poor communication with parents and students.
- VIII. The quality of the curriculum content in terms of currency and relevance does not exist with regard to history, geography, civics, traditions, and leadership.
- IX. Funding education has become fully politicised and mostly depends on donations from international governments, the UN, or charity organisations with regard to content, operation, and infrastructure.
- X. Education is not a priority for the political leadership. This was concluded because PNA suspended several projects, such as building new schools from 2000 to date to respond to the deficit in the budget. From that date, the deficit is not closed and the projects were put on hold, waiting for donors. At this moment, PNA is barely capable of financing the operations of schools based on its political agenda.
- XI. Emancipatory education is not implemented due to the dynamic and complex socio-political conditions in Palestine and the internal and external pressures on educational

leaders of Palestine to include texts in the curriculum that do not reflect the daily experiences of the learners.

The study also reported that the emancipatory education in Palestine does not exist. Hence, this study recommends that researchers of critical pedagogy explore the ways to establish emancipatory education in Palestine and propose action theories for emancipating the Palestinians.

As a final recommendation to depoliticise education in Palestine, the following practical ideas are proposed:

- I. Have all Palestinian segments reconcile regardless of their political orientation and form a leadership body that includes all those segments to dialogue and plan for the future of the nation from one side. From the other, produce the official knowledge that is deemed necessary for state development and liberation.
- II. Ensure that education funding, curriculum, and staffing are administered by an independent body that proves to be loyal to Palestinians and free of ideological impact.
- III. Stop political affiliation among children under 18 years old in formal and informal education. At the same time, ensure that teachers do not explicitly disclose their political orientation with the students in schools. Political affiliation should only be left to individuals and in higher education institutions. Families should not be allowed to continue influencing the political orientation of their children.

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Appendix 1: BUiD Ethical Form



إلى من يهمه الأمر

يسرنا في إدارة الجامعة البريطانية في دبي تعاونكم مع الباحث / احمد محمود الزجل المسجل في برنامج الدكتوراة في إنجاز أطروحته في تخصص التربية (القيادة والإدارة) الموسومة " دراسة نقدية للتعليم في فلسطين: تحليل التحديات الناتجة من تسييس التعليم " وتطبيق أدوات الدراسة .

شاكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم



State of Palestine
Ministry of Education & Higher Education
General Directorate of Educational planning

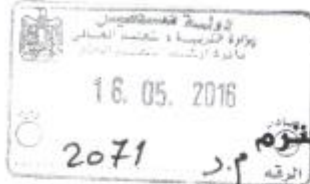


دولة فلسطين
وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي
الإدارة العامة للتخطيط التربوي

الرقم: و.ت.ع ذكره داخلية ()

التاريخ: 2016/05/16

الموافق: 9 شعبان، 1437 هـ



المحترم
المحترم
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السيد/ مدير التربية والتعليم - غرب غزة
السيد/ مدير التربية والتعليم - شمال غزة
السيد/ مدير التربية والتعليم - شرق غزة
السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،،

الموضوع / تسهيل مهمة بحث

نهديكم أطيب التحيات، ونتمنى لكم موفور الصحة والعافية، ويخصوص الموضوع أعلاه،

يرجى تسهيل مهمة الباحث/ أحمد محمود الرحل والذي يجري بحثاً بعنوان:

"دراسة نقدية للتعليم في فلسطين: تحليل التحديات الناتجة من تسييس التعليم"

في تطبيق أدوات البحث على عينة من الطلبة والمعلمين بمديريتك الموقرة، وذلك استكمالاً لمتطلبات الحصول على

درجة الدكتوراة تخصص القيادة والإدارة بالجامعة البريطانية في دبي، وذلك حسب الأصول.

ونفضلوا بقبول فائق للاسراء،،،

أ.رشيد محمد أبو جحجوح

نائب مدير عام التخطيط التربوي



نسخة:

- السيد/ وكيل وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي
 - السيد/ وكيل الوزارة لمساعد للشؤون التعليمية
 - السيد/ وكيل الوزارة لمساعد للشؤون للتعليم العالي
 - الملف
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Email: info@mohe.ps

Appendix 3: Data Collection Approval- MoEHE in Palestine-2

State of palestine
Ministry of Education & Higher Education
Directorate of Education\ North Gaza



دولة فلسطين
وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي
مديرية التربية والتعليم / شمال غزة

قسم التخطيط والمعلومات
الرقم : م ت ش غ / ٩ / ١٢
التاريخ: ١٦ / ٥ / ٢٠١٦ م
الموافق الاثنين ٩ شعبان ١٤٣٧ هـ

المحترمون!!!

السادة / مديرو المدارس المعنية ومديراتها

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،،،

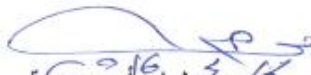
الموضوع / تسهيل مهمة

نهدىكم أطيب التحيات، وبالإشارة إلى الموضوع أعلاه يرجى تسهيل مهمة
الطالب: احمد محمود الرحل والذي يجري بحثاً بعنوان:

(دراسة نقدية للتعليم في فلسطين تحليل التحديات الناتجة من تسييس التعليم)

في تطبيق أدوات الدراسة، على عينة من المعلمين و الطلبة بمدرستكم، وذلك استكمالاً لمتطلبات
الحصول على درجة الدكتوراة تخصص القيادة والريادة بالجامعة البريطانية في دبي،
وذلك حسب الأصول.

وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام،،،



محمود كحسان أبو حصيرة
مدير التربية والتعليم



وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي
مديرية التربية والتعليم / شمال غزة
قسم التخطيط والمعلومات
نعيم أمين خضر

رئيس قسم التخطيط والمعلومات

Appendix 4: Data Collection Approval- MoEHE in Palestine-3

State of Palestine Ministry of Education & Higher Education Directorate of Education /west Gaza		دولة فلسطين وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي مديرية التربية والتعليم / غرب غزة قسم التخطيط والمعلومات التاريخ: 2015 / 5 / 16 م الموافق: 9 شعبان 1437 هـ
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السادة / مديري ومديرات المدارس المعنية
المحترمون،
السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.

الموضوع: تسهيل مهمة

نهدىكم عاطر التحيات، ونتمنى لكم موفور الصحة والعافية، بخصوص الموضوع أعلاه نرجو من سيادتكم تسهيل مهمة الباحث/ د. أحمد محمود الرحل ، والذي يجرى بحثاً بعنوان:

"دراسة نقدية للتعليم في فلسطين : تحليل التحديات الناتجة من تسييس التعليم"

في تطبيق أدوات البحث على عينة من الطلبة والمعلمين ، وذلك استكمالاً لمتطلبات الحصول على درجة الدكتوراه تخصص القيادة والإدارة بالجامعة البريطانية في دبي ، علماً بأن المعلومات والبيانات التي سيتم الحصول عليها ستستخدم لأغراض البحث العلمي فقط ، وذلك حسب الأصول.

ولكم منا فائق الاحترام والتقدير،،

مدير التربية والتعليم
أ. فتحي علي رضوان



m.bakri

West Gaza - Tel : (+ 9708 2865209 + 2829206) Fax (+ 9708 2865300)

WWW.facebook.com/dirwest

غرب غزة - هاتف : (+ 9708 2865209 + 2829206) فاكس (+ 9708 2865300)

Email: dirwest@moh.gov.ps

Appendix 5: Student Consent Form

الجامعة
البريطانية في
دبي



The
British University
in Dubai

الموضوع: مشاركة ابنكم/ ابنتكم في بحث خاص برسالة دكتوراة في التربية

السيد ولي أمر الطالب /..... المحترم/ة

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،،،

يقوم الباحث/ أحمد محمود الرحل بعمل دراسة لنيل درجة الدكتوراة في التربية من الجامعة البريطانية في دبي والموسومة بعنوان " دراسة نقدية للتعليم في فلسطين: تحليل التحديات الناتجة من تسييس التعليم علما " بأن هذا النوع من الدراسات يلقى اهتماما " بين المخططين وصانعي السياسة التعليمية ومتخذي القرار في المجتمع الفلسطيني على المستويين الأكاديمي والتطبيقي بوزارة التربية والتعليم . لذا نرجو التكرم بالموافقة على مشاركة ابنكم / ابنتكم في الرد على اسئلة الاستبانة الخاصة بالبحث.

علما بأن معلومات المشاركين ستكون سرية ولا داعي لذكر اسم الطالب ببيانات الدراسة لا تستخدم إلا في أغراض البحث العلمي وأن للمشارك في البحث الحق في الإنسحاب من المشاركة في أي وقت.

شكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم معنا،،،

إدارة الجامعة



اسم ولي أمر الطالب :

التوقيع :

التاريخ:



الموضوع المشاركة في دراسة بحثية

أعزائي أولياء الأمور المربين الأفاضل :

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

يقوم الباحث أحمد محمود محمد الرجل بعمل دراسة لنيل درجة الدكتوراه في القيادة والإدارة بعنوان دراسة نقدية للتعليم في فلسطين: تحليل التحديات الناتجة من تسييس التعليم. وحيث أن هذه الدراسة من الدراسات التي تلقى اهتماماً كبيراً بين المخططين وصانعي السياسة التعليمية ومتخذي القرار في المجتمع الفلسطيني على المستويين الأكاديمي والتطبيقي في وزارة التربية والتعليم . في حال رغبتكم في المشاركة بالدراسة فيرجى العلم بأن معلومات المشاركين ستكون سرية ولا داعي لذكر الاسم وأن هذه المعلومات سوف تستخدم فقط في البحث العلمي. كما ويحق للمشارك في البحث الإنسحاب من المشاركة في أي وقت.

_____ أُرغب بالمشاركة

_____ لا أُرغب بالمشاركة

أشكر لكم حسن تعاونكم

الباحث

أحمد محمود الرجل

Appendix 7: Political and Educational Leaders Consent Form

Dear Respondent,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Please read the following statements and confirm your agreement of participation in this study.

- I confirm that I have read and understand the Participant Information Sheet dated
- All the questions that I have about the research have been satisfactorily answered.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving any reason.
- I understand that in case I do not reply my consent and proceed with interview session, impliedly I have fully agreed to participate in the study .

☐ I agree to participate

☐ I do not wish to participate

Participant's Initials/ Signature: _____

Name of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 8: Distribution of Participants according to their educational level, gender, and location pertinent to political affiliation

Student				Teacher				Guardian			
	GSM	GSF	GS		GSM	GSF	GS		GSM	GSF	GS
Primary	49	26	76	Diploma	4	0	4	Illiterate	6	1	7
	55%	42%	50%		50%	0%	40%		75%	0%	78%
Preparatory	82	50	132	Bachelor	46	17	63	Basic Read and Write	32	3	35
	63%	62%	62%		45%	22%	35%		56%	50%	56%
Secondary	102	60	162	Master	19	2	21	High School or Less	20	8	28
	79%	42%	59%		49%	11%	37%		59%	67%	61%
University	12	53	143	Doctorate	12	2	14	Diploma	14	7	21
	57%	48%	54%		50%	50%	50%		58%	44%	53%
---				---				Bachelor	42	8	50
									58%	44%	56%
---				---				Masters or Higher	4	0	4
									27%	0%	27%

Student				Teacher				Guardian			
	WBM	WBF	WB		WBM	WBF	WB		WBM	WBF	WB
Primary	10	11	21	Diploma	9	12	21	Illiterate	0	0	0
	33%	48%	40%		43%	50%	47%		0%	0%	0%
Preparatory	58	67	125	Bachelor	76	41	117	Basic Read and Write	6	5	11
	46%	52%	49%		58%	31%	45%		50%	33%	41%
Secondary	79	35	114	Master	11	1	12	High School or Less	26	15	41
	54%	34%	46%		44%	9%	33%		38%	26%	33%
University	85	41	126	Doctorate	2	1	3	Diploma	17	11	28
	56%	43%	51%		50%	33%	43%		55%	46%	51%
---				---				Bachelor	47	24	71
									64%	46%	57%
---				---				Masters or Higher	8	2	10
									80%	50%	71%

Appendix 9: Interview Transcription- Educational Leader 1

(S=Interviewee, female; Ph.D., Educational Leader, 55 minutes; I=interviewer)
(//=overlap)

- I: Good morning.
- S: Good morning.
- I: Do you mind if this interview is videotaped?
- S: Not at all.
- I: Thank you very much! As shared with you via email, would you like further information about the purpose of the study or the researcher?
- S: Yes, please tell me more about your academic credentials? And what is your current work? And why did you choose this study?
- I: Thanks a lot! My education took place in Palestine until high school. I obtained my Bachelor's degree in Mathematics from Jordan. I have two Masters Degrees; the first degree is in Computer Science (Systems Analysis and Design) and the second one is in Education (International Management and Educational Policy) from the UAE. In terms of my work, I began working as a teacher of Mathematics and Academic Coordinator, then, progressed as Deputy Director of the school, and finally became the School Principal. Currently, I am working at a college as the Head of Institutional Research & Analysis Department. The reason for choosing the study is to close a research gap pertinent to education in Palestine, especially considering the existing socio-political conditions.
- S: Thank you, please go ahead with your questions.
- I: Thank you! As you are now introduced to the research topic, could you please introduce yourself and point out how you can assist in achieving the purpose of this study?
- S: My Ph.D. topic is similar to this study. In fact, your study complements what I started within 2007 by studying the challenges that Palestinian students face in their daily lives. I wrote a book titled "Education under Occupation" which explains the main challenges mentioned above. Please read this book, which was published by UNESCO as this will enhance your study. There are two studies on the reality of education in Palestine. Recently I presented a report to the Prime Minister on the reality of education and the mechanism of education development in Palestine.
- I: I will certainly read this book. ! In fact, this study has three main research questions. The interview questions will be linked to these questions and as part of the interview, I will share with you some preliminary results collected from students, teachers, and guardians to have your feedback. The questions are: How do the present socio-political conditions and challenges shape the educational system in GS and the West Bank? What are the Palestinian teachers', parents' and students' perceptions of the factors influencing the educational system in GS and the West Bank? What are the Palestinian political and educational leaders' perceptions of the necessary conditions to develop the educational system in GS and the West Bank?
- S: oh...Several political, social and economic factors contributed to the development of the current educational system. In fact, they all form a cycle. (1)The most important political factor is the inconstancy in the regime as it changed over time with only different names; these changes were almost negative and sometimes positive. (2)The Palestinian education, in the past, experienced negligence; whether from the British administration prior to 1948 or Jordanian regime for the West Bank and the Egyptian regime for Gaza from 1948 to 1967 in addition to Israeli Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza from 1967 to 1994.//

//To elaborate further, from 1967 to 1994, the Egyptian and Jordanian curricula that were followed in GS and the West Bank, were outdated and never reviewed since the time they were imposed on Palestinians.

The curricula did not introduce Palestinian students to national and civilian Palestinian issues, values and ethics. The history of Palestine was not among the subjects that students studied in schools as they were mandated to study the Jordanian and Egyptian history as well as the history of the Arab world.

But from my point of view, this is the dark side of the subject. This pressure has pushed society towards education and education has become symbolic of high value for Palestinians (education of all types: systematic and non-

systematic). Everyone is now scrambling towards education as education has become a tool of hope, as well as a tool of resistance and a tool for survival. These are the two views which I have come across.

The other significant event was the formation of the Palestinian Authority, the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education specifically, in 1996. The Israeli Occupation apparently ended, but it is not over yet. The Palestinian Authority became responsible for the education and this responsibility was associated with the procedures only and was not a real liability.

Many developmental plans were established that were supported by foreign funding agencies. These funding agencies influenced and exerted a lot of pressure on the education system of Palestine to direct this fund to be spent on the schools infrastructure like school buildings and teaching methods such as integrative education and collaborative learning rather than building a Palestinian national educational system//

//The Palestinian National Authority suspended several projects due to the unjustifiable pressure by some donating governments. Palestinian decision-makers, in my point view, do not want to lose control over education as it used to be during the British administration and Jordanian and Egyptian trusteeship.//

//Because of all the issues discussed above, the current educational system has become a means for only producing certificates for Palestinians rather than focusing on the quality of educational outcomes.

- I: There was a curriculum called Mizrahi which had similarities with the Egyptian and Jordanian curricula. What do you know about it?
- S: This curriculum is followed only in Jerusalem schools, and according to some divisions on the ground, it is followed in other Palestinian schools; this type of education follows the Israeli Occupation ideology.
- I: Are there some educational policies affecting education in Palestine that can be attributed to the British Mandate era?
- S: Education system was developed in Palestine under an authoritarian regime and still continues to be authoritarian. The heritage of the British Mandate shows us that the British occupation did not seek to build a good educational system for the Palestinians and it built a purely authoritarian regime. Due to this reason, when we think of the development of the educational system in Palestine we use an authoritarian style. Unfortunately, its effects still exist.
- I: Do you mean the management and leadership system used in the past is the reason for the current state we are now in?
- S: From my point of view, the existing system is an authoritarian system and it must be freed.
- I: You recently published an article titled "A new mechanism for the development of education in Palestine". Did you see a necessity to reconstruct a political leadership model that is capable of building a new educational system in Palestine?
- S: I would like you to reflect on and ask whether education should impact politics or vice versa. I hope to see education having an impact on the political conditions in Palestine and not vice versa. It is necessary that education should shape our life; not politics. Education must establish all the political, social and economic conditions.
- I: Literature shows that over 1,500 teachers were terminated in GS immediately after the Palestinian political rift in 2007 among the political parties. From your point of view, does the political orientation of an educator play a role in the Palestinian educational system? If so, to what extent?
- S: With regards to the period you are referring to, indeed, officials in the political leadership employ people who are loyal to them in all decision-making positions, and this is not in a relative or absolute way where there are some efficiencies in the positions of sovereignty.
- I: What impact does the separation wall in the West Bank have on education? Do you consider it as one of the socio-political factors that have affected education in Palestine?
- S: Of course, if you refer to my book (Education under Occupation), there is a story of a school in Hebron and the impact of the separation wall (*barrier*) on education. Certainly, that barrier dismembered various educational communities with a strong impact on some schools. It has divided the University of Jerusalem into two parts: outside the wall and inside the wall and has caused a state of isolation and a crisis at a thought level, from my point of view.

I have to say that education should lead to openness and not isolationism. In addition to its act of dismembering the University of Jerusalem, the barrier isolated some areas between schools and the population. Moreover, I think that there are 49 populated communities separated from the schools, and this leads to the entry of students from the gates of the barrier to reach their schools. Passing through the gates of the Wall exposes the students to fear. Secondly, this is a violation of their right to a safe access to schools. Thirdly, they are harmed by the Israeli soldiers. The same applies to teachers as many of them can't reach to their place of work, some of them refuse to work in these schools, thereby leaving only the oppressed teachers who do not have alternatives, although their academic level may be lesser than the others. In such conditions, it can be seen that the quality of education in these unsafe schools is lower than the other schools.

- I: Are there any research studies to confirm this and show that the quality of education is lower?
- S: Of course, I would advise you to visit the page of the Ministry of Education website where under the Department of Studies there are reports on studies detailing the effects of the separation wall as well as the Israeli occupation on education. There is an old book in 2004 by Susan Nicolai where she talks about education in Palestine in that period. I would also recommend you to read it as it covers that era.
- I: Can you compare the effect on education between the separation wall in West Bank and the siege on GS?
- S: Yes, taking into consideration that the siege is more difficult than the separation wall.
- I: What is your comment on the fact that a student can reach the school safely in GS, however, there is a shortage of learning resources and teachers in the school due to lack of funding, while a student in the West Bank is not able to reach the school easily?
- S: I see that the reality of education in GS is more difficult than in the West Bank for the following reasons: (1) the three wars on GS led to the downfall of education each time in terms of the destruction of the infrastructure of schools and Universities. (2) The Siege contributed to the fragmentation of community cohesion. I mean, individuals of the community lack a sense of security. (3) The matter is not financial -There are two ministries of education in GS: one reports to the Hamas administration and other reports to the Palestinian National Authority in Ram Allah. Each Ministry follows different administration practices as well as different goals and vision. (4) The existence of divergent intellectual ideologies in GS and the West Bank; this is another burden on GS.
- I: What is the ideology that the current education system avoids and does not talk about that educational and political leaders also view as a crime?
- S: The Palestinian curricula don't reject any ideologies or political parties, I don't see things like this in the Palestinian curricula. Also, there was no intention by curricula developers to address the political parties in the Palestinian curricula. If we want to talk about the curricula, it is supposed to discuss and talk about Palestine in terms of geography, history, and the civil and national education that is not explicitly addressed in the curricula.
- I: Sure! My study is not meant to evaluate the ideologies but rather see the extent to which they impact education. I would like to know whether the numerous ideologies in Palestine contributed to enriching the education or led to split and discrimination within education.
- S: Yes, these ideologies have affected education in Palestine. For example, in GS, the coeducation between boys and girls has been prevented and girls are required to wear al-hijab at an early age.
- I: Do you mean the nature of the regime in GS imposed a specific ideology on students?
- S: Certainly, there is a political governor who has ruled and imposed these rules.
- I: Did the tribalism and family infrastructure contribute to form the current Palestinian educational system?
- S: Certainly; for example, there is pressure from some academics to open schools in some suburbs and villages, but they face rejection from the community. Even the opening of Universities has faced rejection. Sometimes some communities refuse to let their children join schools in nearby villages or to let their children learn in other villages. This community infrastructure exists, but its impact is often negative. We find that the community is present in some procedural matters such as adding an additional class or closing an existing class rather than the development of education.

- I: When I studied in the schools of GS until 1993, there were schools on double shifts (morning and evening). Is this system available until now? Was this a product of immigration in 1967 where the infrastructure remained as it was before 1967 and the flow of refugees had been treated on double shifts?
- S: To the best of my knowledge, there were some schools with three shifts in GS in 1994. In the West Bank, the number of schools with two shifts no longer exists. In Gaza, the system of three shifts has come to an end, while many schools continue with the system of two shifts. There are some factors that contribute to the continuation with this system: the community infrastructure in the GS, population density, the increasing births at the age of schools, wars on Gaza and the destruction of some schools. To my knowledge, the agency oversees 55% of the schools in GS. Also, financial resources have been reduced to support education in the GS, and thus there are no new schools. I prefer the trend towards private schools or governmental schools, and with the existence of two ministries, the issue will be more difficult. Despite that, in the recent period, there were many financial aids to GS, but these aids were not developmental but a relief from all over the world, especially from the Arab world. There is a conflict between authorities on who is responsible for building new schools in GS (the government of Gaza or the West Bank).
- I: Do you believe that the consequences of the rift contributed to having political parties approaching donors directly to gain legitimacy?
- S: Yes, that's right.
- I: The Ministry of education has appointed Dr. Ibraheem Abu laghad to establish the Palestinian National Education System. Have you seen his proposal?
- S: Yes, I have.
- I: As you know, the Italian government had supported the Ministry of Education for the development of the first Palestinian national curriculum. Some researchers claim that the Israeli Occupation exerted pressure on the donors to review the curriculums before being approved. What is your knowledge of this event? Were the textbooks sent to the Israeli Occupation prior to implementation for approval purposes? If yes, have they changed some text or graphs? If yes, have the proposed amendments were approved by the Palestinian National Authority?
- S: There are two steps for the documentation: the plan which was prepared by Dr. Abu-Laghad, where it was a liberal intellectual critical revolutionary plan. I am very impressed with this plan, but it was not adopted by the Palestinian National Authority because the leadership at that time considered it as an embodiment of the secular Enlighten liberal thought. Other broad lines have been done for the curriculum, and it is available on the Ministry's website; these lines were the introduction to the balance between the preservation and freedom, as well as the things become unclear, and books have been authored in a hurry; hence, the design of books was the next stage//
- //Books have been written in a hurry. At the time Dr. Naeem Abu Hummus was the deputy of the ministry, books were authored to make a quick political achievement and not educational; this step made our leaders very proud where they could say that their students were learning from Palestinian books and not Jordanian or Egyptian books. At that time, it was a great achievement, and we thank them for the great efforts. Regarding the suitability of curriculums to the peace process, there was a global campaign led by Hillary Clinton at the time, and this campaign alleged that this curriculum incited against Israel, although the Palestinian educators had another point of view. I would like to add a point, I do not know if you want to hear that the curricula were not incited, but it was very moderate.
- Apparently, there was a focus on demonstrating the nationalism and patriotism largely. For example, in the curriculum of mathematics, you will find mathematical problems like adding two Palestinian flags with three flags to total 5 Palestinian flags. You will also find the colors of the Palestinian flag and al Kufiyah and many national references in the textbooks, and this is a formal perspective. Indeed, there is a global attack on the religious books for some existing verses calling for al-Jihad. You need to know that the books of Palestine have not explicitly mentioned the borders of Palestine and this has been disguised to the degree that a Palestinian himself does not know the borders of Palestine. Also, the books of Palestine have not explicitly mentioned that Israel is an occupying power, and thus what has been taken on the curriculum by the Palestinian researchers that they have just mentioned some Israeli settlements in the Palestinian curriculum//
- //When I worked in the Ministry of Education, I was assigned to respond to the allegations of the Commission which was chaired by Hillary Clinton, and I found the best way is to make the world to see what is available in the Israeli curriculums from incitement against Palestinians.

- I: I would like to share with you some of the results that have been collected from the sample of the study participants. And I would like your opinion on these results and its explanation. There are 11% of the teachers in GS having a diploma.
- S: The selected sample results may vary depending on the sample rate and it may be better for you to go back to the statistics certified by the Ministry of Education regarding the demographic factors.
- I: There was a question for the teachers in Gaza: Do they belong to political parties? I found 41% of them belong to political parties. Does this ratio reflect the reality?
- S: I think that in the last ten years, the communities have lost their confidence in the Palestinian organizations; this rate appears normal and takes into account the fact that many teachers become indifferent to the organizations leading to the announcement of their political affiliations, because of the dissatisfaction with these organizations.
- I: What do you think about the fact that 30% of the employees belong to Hamas? Does it have a political leadership indication? Do we expect the same percentage of the Fatah movement in the West to be there?
- S: I expected the ratio to be higher than 30% in GS, I think the ratio is not less than 60%, and this is what leads us to wonder if the sample individuals get their salaries paid by the authority in Gaza or the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank. Because in the case of someone receiving his salary from the Palestinian Authority, it is safe for him to not declare their area of belonging considering what might entail.
- I: When teachers were asked for their opinion about the most important factors that influence the political affiliation of the students, the results were as follows: 80% households, 13% teacher, and 7% curriculum. What do you think?
- S: The ratios are believable.
- I: What do you think of the fact that 33% of the teachers say that political affiliation starts among the children before the age of 12 years?
- S: This is a high rate and explains that the Palestinian family is the focus of political framing.
- I: What is your opinion on the former deputy of the Ministry of Education's statement that educational facilities have become established on the basis of ideology, for example, kindergartens, sports clubs and summer camps, and etc.?
- S: Yes, there are some schools following its departments in the ideology. Some of them are religious schools established by Hamas in the West Bank and Gaza. I do not think that Fateh movement worked the same thing because they are tied to the audiences and they do not have a specific intellectual ideology.
- I: There was a question for the teachers asking whether students change their political affiliation. The result showed 73% of the teachers believed that the students have changed their political affiliation, and 35% of the students said that they changed their political affiliation once.
- S: This is normal.
- I: And the factors that affected the change of their political affiliation was: 69% family, 18% teacher, and 13% curriculum. What do you think of this?
- S: I do not think that that the curriculum has an area for the thought, not at the level of the parties or ideologies nor characteristics and values. I think that the curriculum does not have a significant role in the changing the political affiliation. Yes, the family has a larger role because the Palestinian families have a paternal orientation. So, the family has the largest role and when he becomes a young man, he affects his peers, hence, he decides about the belonging.
- I: 53% of the teachers agree that the curriculum leaves an area of intellectual pluralism.
- S: I do not think so because dealing with statistical surveys in the Arab world do not reflect the truth. Thank you for added qualitative aspect through interviews.
- I: 69% of the teachers say that the curriculum promotes patriotism among students; what do you think?

- S: A curriculum is a tool, but the most important aspect is its implementation on the ground. When we studied using the Jordanian curriculum, the teacher had a big role in promoting the Palestinian national identity and altering some of the lessons, such as the (trip to Jerash) to (a trip to Sabasita) and lessons associated with the King of Jordan was its transformation to a lesson on the late President Yasser Arafat and the revolution. This had an effect on strengthening our belonging dramatically despite the use of non-Palestinian curriculum. This falls under the concept of the hidden curriculum determined by the teacher, which had a more profound effect than a real curriculum. I think that the current curriculum missed the hidden curriculum without taking it into consideration and it did not strengthen the Palestinian national identity. There is evidence that our children are far from the Palestinian issue, and they don't have the same passion for the homeland that we had it at the same age; I think that this is intentional.
- I: 78% of the teachers say that the Palestinian curriculum shows the aspirations and ambitions of the Palestinians.
- S: (Laughter), I think that the Palestinian curriculum is completely incapable of reversing the Palestinian reality, and it is a weak curriculum unable to express the past and present and to build for the future, unfortunately (remember it on my tongue).
- I: 78% of the teachers believe that they have an important role in snatching national rights from the occupation.
- S: This is what the teachers hoped for, the situation may be different, and the best answer is to see the studies of analyzing the content that has worked for the Palestinian curriculum. The theoretical books are different of what happens on the ground.
- I: 36% of the teachers believe that negotiations are the solution for Palestinian national rights.
- S: Indeed, the Palestinian authority must not be accused of injustice because this curriculum was designed at the time of the negotiation, and there is no logic in talking about the resistance at that time. The curriculum calls for peace. Now I can say that the curriculums call for the surrender because the peace process has failed.
- I: There are open-ended responses to share with you from teacher perspectives in order to improve education in Palestine.
- The methods of improving the Palestinian educational system .
 - The exclusion of political activities for the school events.
 - A commitment to neutrality in teaching.
 - The politicization of the home and community and not in the school.
 - A teacher mustn't belong to any political party.
 - The criminalization of the monopoly of political organization on the development of the curriculum individually.

Following the modern developments of the curriculum. What do you think?

- S: Following the modern developments of the curriculum is important, but neutralizing the political affiliation of the teacher is difficult and it is important not to reflect his political affiliation to his students. The abolition of political activities - I am against this because the school is a part of the social entity, and the students must learn the democracy which is contriving the religions.
- I: Thank you very much
- S: I would be very interested in looking at the results of this research, and I do not have any reservation at any point raised in this interview.
- I: Thank you very much, with my pleasure.

Appendix 10: Interview Transcription- Educational Leader 2

(A=Interviewee, male; Ph.D., Educational Leader, 60 minutes; I=interviewer)

(//=overlap)

I: Good morning.

A: Good morning.

I: Would you mind if this interview is being videotaped?

A: Not at all.

I: Thank you very much for accepting my invitation to participate in this study.

A: You are most welcome!

I: Further to the information pertinent to this study that was shared with you earlier, do you have any questions at all?

A: It is clear!

I: Thank you! As you have now been introduced to the research topic, could you please introduce yourself and point out how you can assist in achieving the purpose of this study?

A: I served as the Deputy Minister of Education from 1994 to 2006 and contributed to the development and implementation of educational policies during this period. I am also very interested in research studies concerning education in Palestine. At the educational level, I hold a Ph.D. in Education.

I Thank you for providing this information. In fact, this study has three main research questions. The interview questions will be linked to these questions and as part of the interview, I will share with you some preliminary results collected from students, teachers, and guardians for your feedback. The questions are: How do the present socio-political conditions and challenges shape the educational system in GS and the West Bank? What are the Palestinian teachers', parents' and students' perceptions of the factors influencing the educational system in GS and the West Bank? What are the Palestinian political and educational leaders' perceptions of the necessary conditions to develop the educational system in GS and the West Bank?

A: Let's discuss the first question: How do the present socio-political conditions and challenges shape the educational system in GS and the West Bank? I would like to talk about the factors which affected the Palestinian educational system during the Egyptian administration from the year 1948 to 1967. During this period the educational system followed the Egyptian curriculum which was implemented in GS. The textbooks used were not relevant to the daily lives of the Palestinians. Of course, Egyptian heritage differs from the Palestinian heritage and the Egyptian environment is different. The Egyptian curriculum addressed the gap that arose due to the absence of a Palestinian National Education System. At about the same time, Palestinians of West Bank were educated using Jordanian curriculum and the curriculum of Jordan too did not meet the expectations of Palestinians. However, on the other hand, the Jordanian environment is fairly similar to the Palestinian environment. The Egyptian and Jordanian curricula continued to be followed during the period 1967 to 1994 with the Israeli military government omitting some textbooks for security reasons and canceling some books entirely. The Egyptian curriculum was similar to the one implemented in Egypt with different implementation practices.

They omitted social sciences textbooks or some lessons. These books had become fragmented during the same period (1967-1994), very similar to what happened in GS, where the Israelis canceled the curriculum that was related to the Palestinian Question and society.

The Palestinian National Authority began its operations in 1994 and its main focus was the development of a national educational system. However, several problems were encountered since the Palestinian National Authority inherited an outdated schooling system from the Israeli Occupation. Most schools lacked the basic infrastructure such as furniture, science laboratories, computers, and supporting resources in addition to the fact that several schools were teaching double shifts.

The Ministry of Education established a priority to build a number of new schools that would be equipped with all required facilities and resources on the one hand and to reduce the number of double-shift schools, on the other hand. At the same time, all those schools that required maintenance were to be retained and the required learning resources including science laboratories and Information Technology infrastructure were to be established.

I: Was the double shift system introduced due to the number of refugees after 1967?

- A: After 1967, the period of occupation, there were too many issues that affected the educational system. To begin with, the first intifada, which began in 1987, the Israelis began to close down schools and Universities under the pretext that they affected the security. So, a large number of schools and Universities were closed down either completely or for certain periods of time. The closing down of some schools led to resistance by the Palestinians and they began teaching students in mosques, homes and private institutions. The closing down of these schools heavily affected the generation of 1987 – 1994 since education was as such deteriorating largely and the quality of education became unsatisfactory. As I took over as the Deputy Minister of Education, I began with:
- a) Attention to infrastructure. We focused on the educational and administrative cadre because, since the 27-year occupation from 1967 to 1994, the Jews had not conducted any training and active courses for the teachers or administrators. Therefore, we focused on the human element and did intensive courses for the academic and administrative cadre. I believe we conducted more than 13,000 thirteen thousand training sessions during the period 1994 to 2006 during my work in the Ministry of Education.
 - b) Attention to education technology: Following the development of infrastructure and academic staff, I was interested in education technology, since there were no computers in our schools and even in the Ministry itself. So I was interested in introducing computers in schools, and equipping computer and scientific laboratories in most schools.
- As for the double shift schools before 1994, GS had approximately 85% of the schools operating with the system (double shift) due to high population density and there was no possibility for building new schools to operate in one shift system. The plan of the Ministry of Education after 1994 was to enhance the infrastructure of schools, train academic staff, introduce educational technology, and most importantly to develop a Palestinian national curriculum. The implementation of this curriculum started in 2001 and it is continuing as of today.
- I: Literature suggests that education in Palestine is politicized (e.g. the Palestinian national curriculum project was funded and observed by the Italian government and then was reviewed by the Israeli government and the implementation took place only after their approval); what is your view on this?
- A: As the Deputy Minister of Education, I was involved in this project. The Palestinian curriculum was funded by the Italians and the Palestinian cadres in the West Bank and designed by GS. The Italians asked us to have a copy of the curriculum, but we refused. Then the former Palestinian president, Yasir Arafat, knew about it and supported us in this regard. He instructed us to provide them with a copy only after it is received by teachers and students. It was untrue that the Italians were intervening in the curriculum. The only concern raised by Italians was that we included the map of Palestine rather than including West Bank and GS maps. Our response was this map can be taken off only when borders between Palestine and Israel become real.
- I: Literature shows that the Israeli government criticised some texts in the curriculum and they were changed accordingly. Is this real?
- A: This is correct. Israeli government rejected some texts in our curriculum. I know a research center in New York that published some articles claiming that the curriculum promoted incitement to hatred of Jews. These articles were submitted to the Europeans. Consequently, Europeans formed a Committee to study and report their findings. The outcomes of this investigation were that the claims of the Israeli government were not true and Palestinian curriculum did not promote incitement of hatred towards anyone.
- I: Excuse me, what is the name of this center?
- A: Sorry! I am afraid I have forgotten the name that it is a Zionist center in New York.
- I: Is it Kareena center?
- A: Could be; I have completely forgotten its name, but this center issued several articles against the Palestinian curriculum and we immediately responded.
- I: You stated that you started with four priorities: the infrastructure, academic staff, education techniques, and establishing a national curriculum. What are the achievements?
- A: Yes, we developed and implemented our first national curriculum in 2001 and this curriculum is being followed until this day. By 2017, it is believed that curriculum should have been revised and linked with society requirements because there are major changes in the world. As far as I know, the Ministry of Education is now going to develop a new curriculum. Up to my knowledge, the primary stage textbooks are now ready for implementation. Also, the Ministry is going to digitize the textbooks and develop a special curriculum for the vocational education because it is underperforming in Palestine and the rates of enrolment in this type of education are 2% to 3%, in GS.

- I: You raised an important point regarding the development of new curriculum documents and textbooks. In GS, in 2015, the Ministry of Education taught a book to Grade Nine students about Hamas Ideology. What is your point of view on this?
- A: This was only implemented in GS. You know after Hamas took control of GS in 2007, they recruited 54,000 employees and the majority of them were politically affiliated with Hamas. The notion during that time was that if you wish to have a job, you must get a recommendation from the prince (Ame.er) of a nearby Mosque. Therefore, they imposed their beliefs on education to support their ideology.
- I: Were twenty-four thousand absorbed?
- A: No, the number is fifty-four thousand, from 2007 to 2016.
- I: But those employees are not only in the sector of education. Is it true?
- A: Yes, not only in education but in all government institutions. They began with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and then moved to the important centers of public administration. In some instances, senior officials who were not politically affiliated with Hamas were pressured to retire or apply for transfer to another sector. The transferring process of Directors of schools contributed for the purpose of revitalization and teachers were also affected by the same. An enormous number of teachers resigned due to the unjustifiable transfer in addition to many teachers who left their jobs because of the instructions from Ram Allah. Thus, Hamas played an important role in ensuring that senior officials were politically affiliated with Hamas.
- I: Did this impact education and contribute to politicised education?
- A: Of course, education quality has declined in GS. One of the major factors is that most donating governments do not recognize Hamas and consequently stopped funding education in GS. Therefore, donating countries stopped building new schools in GS through the Palestinian National Authority in Ramallah. So, the donations are currently insufficient nowadays because Hamas limited the employment opportunities in the education sector only to those who follow their ideology.
- I: In fact, this is part of what I am trying to study.
- A: I understand that.
- I: Is this only for general education or did Universities also experience the same issue?
- A: Only schools; Hamas does not have any control over Universities. Hamas has the Gaza Islamic University and the ideology of Gaza Islamic University is Islamic and all its cadres, chairmen, the educational staff, and the Board of Trustees belong to the Muslim Brotherhood. But we have other universities: Al-Azhar University and its orientations with the PLO, and Al-Aqsa University, a government University, not civil which is now controlled by Hamas, and there is a conflict between the government in Ramallah and Hamas in Gaza regarding this University until now.
- I: Does this mean that higher education is ideologically based?
- A: As mentioned earlier, when I was the Deputy of the Ministry, our idea was not to politicize the education. When I left the Ministry, I advised Hamas not to politicize education and that this would be a big crime if committed. But, they have politicized everything especially the education and health, and they thought that we belong to Fateh more than Hamas. When Ismail Haniyeh, the prime minister of Gaza government visited the Ministry, he found that Hamas cadres were present in the Ministry and formed more than 30% of the employees. This means that they had no problem with the Ministry of Education.
- I: What is the situation of new curricula after the intervention of ideological factor from your point of view?
- A: I would like to state that we have tons of ideologies in the Palestinian societies, (e.g, Popular Front and the Democratic Front and Islamic Jihad, Hamas, and Fateh). If the curriculums adopt include all these ideologies, it will end up a failure and the political parties would be responsible for teaching children to be socially responsible citizens rather than having them politically oriented. Palestinian Liberation Organization, as a leading body of the Palestinians, should integrate all walks of ideologies and ensure that political actions do not alter the education system.
- I: These movements Islamic Jihad and Hamas refused to become part of the PLO or they have conditions for joining.
- A: Hamas has its specific conditions for joining the PLO. Hamas emphasizes that they can join only if their Charter is adopted to represent the state of Palestine instead of the PLO. Also, it has the intention to have a larger representation rate (at least 40%) in the PLO, and these conditions have been rejected by the PLO. I think Hamas wants to control the PLO similar to the manner it took over GS, and this is their style.

- I: Do political conditions (rift among Palestinian political parties) affect education in Palestine?
- A: Whenever Fateh and Hamas close to reconciliation, Hamas rejects and adds more conditions. This contributed to having unacceptable circumstances in GS. Hamas administration does not seem to be honest, in my opinion, GS has been taken as a hostage from 2007 to date. In addition to that, Hamas leaders are now in senior positions including Minister Position as opposed to being in lower positions previously (before 2007). Hamas administration imposed high tax rates on citizens without considering the consequences. Hamas leaders are leading decent lives as they get funds from various resources including the taxes collected from citizens. Their aim is not to build a national state but rather to initiate an Islamic Caliphate with GS as the starting point, and then expand to include all Muslim countries. Hamas ideology is largely extremist and apparently, Hamas does not want the reconciliation while trying to convince people that Fateh movement is the one who rejected it. From my point of view, Hamas leaders gained their positions and they will never step back as they consider this as a major achievement in the history of Hamas. For example, they took over GS and purchased the majority of GS lands and distributed the majority of government lands to their followers under the pretext of paying their dues. At this point, we can say that all public institutions have become affiliated with their political ideology.
- I: What has the Declaration of Independence got to do with education?
- A: True, to the, I have no documents on the Declaration of Independence! But the Declaration of Independence, as you may know, aims to establish a Palestinian homeland for Palestinians based on values such as freedom. The independence and the establishment of the state are concentrated on the four axes, the curriculums which emerge from the Palestinian creed, local, Arab, and world axis.
- I: What impact does the separation wall have on education in Palestine?
- A: In West Bank, there are some schools in rural areas that are very far. Those schools were separated and located outside the separation wall. Students have to pass through the Israeli checkpoints on a daily basis when they go to school. In fact, I do not know the exact number.
- Before 1994, In GS, under Israeli occupation, some areas had been isolated from GS, including (e.g. al-Mawasi area in Khan Younis) and the only way to get access to that area was through Red Cross for conducting Grade Twelve final exams. Als Dahniah area in Rafah had the same conditions. Also, there were too many obstacles to conduct Grade twelve final exams for that captive in the Israeli Occupation.
- I: I would like to share with you some of the preliminary data obtained for your comments and feedback.
- A: Sure!
- I: The proportion of the males sample told that there were 58% of the males for students and teachers.
- A: Up to formal figures of the percentage of males to females in the teaching position is 50% each. This could be attributed to data collection where you targeted male schools more than female schools.
- I: When teachers were asked about their political identity, 41% of them were politically affiliated?
- A: In my opinion, there are two kinds of teachers who belong to the parties, some of them are officially politically affiliated and active inside the political party while the others are just supporting this political party without being officially registered.
- I: The analysis of the collected data indicates that students become politically affiliated due to: 70% said the family, 18% said the teacher, and 7% said the educational curriculum.
- A: The curriculum has no relationship with political affiliation at all, but I believe that the family plays a significant role in influencing their children. Thus, children of a Hamas father usually becomes affiliated with Hamas and the same for Fatah. After that, the role of the school plays an important role where the child has been influenced by his friends; in fact, this is much less than the family. To emphasize, the curriculum has no role in this.
- I: What about extra-curricular activities and informal education? Does it have any impact (e.g. summer camps)?
- A: Sure! Camps have become very popular nowadays and children less than 15 years of age are engaged in this kind of activities. The main purpose of these activities is to prepare children ideologically to become politically affiliated with a specific agenda. They work on the ideology of the kids from their childhood and kindergarten and then inside the mosques and schools. They use various ways to influence Palestinian children. There are some teachers who are very bold, and they neglect the lessons and work to influence the children to become politically affiliated with Hamas by brainwashing them.

- I: The results of this study show that the curriculum shows that the Palestinian regime believes in democracy and political pluralism, and 49% either agree or strongly agree with this statement.
- A: The percentage of 49% is due to the participants' beliefs and has no connection to curriculum and this is due to the jurisdiction of the State. The state authority should decide if there is a political plurality or not, and not Education.
- I: But 49% said that there was political pluralism caused by the educational curriculum for the students.
- A: The curriculum was not exposed to specific ideologies, but the curriculum, in general, does not talk about Hamas, the resistance, and the Fatah movement and this happens in the festivals and is not presented in the curricula.
- I: My question to the respondents was whether the curriculum showed that the negotiations are the way you can get Palestinian rights. 36% of the teachers answered that they strongly agreed with this.
- A: Are these teachers from Gaza?
- I: Yes, they are from Gaza.
- A: The majority of these teachers belong to Fatah because Hamas' teachers don't believe in negotiations.
- I: This means that the curriculum reflects a certain ideology.
- A: Yes, it reflects the ideology of Fatah and this question is politicized because you know that even the other political parties now agree that the negotiations are absurd.
- I: Does the religious dimension clearly exist in the Palestinian curriculum?
- A: The religious dimension is present among all the Palestinian political parties//
- I: The voice is unclear//
- A: // as I was a committee member for curriculum development, we agreed that curriculum should not introduce any political ideologies such that that the resistance is terroristic action. This means curriculum which reflects the ideology of one political party is inaccurate. As mentioned earlier, our curriculum was evaluated and they reported that our curricula do not invite anybody.
- I: What could improve education in Palestine, from your point of view?
- A: Perfect, this is in line with educational directions being followed.
- I: The second opinion is that the teacher has a significant impact on the students and their political affiliation to a political party.
- A: This is right, the teacher himself is dialogized and some of them play a role in influencing students. Some teachers have significant contributions to student political affiliation//
- I: //The voice is unclear//
- A: // on the other hand, you can't say that a teacher shouldn't belong to a political party as a human as he should have the right to have an orientation. This informs why the majority of teachers are politically affiliated with your study. But the teacher should oblige the educational curriculum which has been designed by the Ministry of Education and he/she does not have the right to convey his own ideological perspectives to students.
- I Thank you! It would be highly appreciated if you nominate someone who is knowledgeable about education in Palestine and will accept to be interviewed.
- A: I doubt that the seniors in the Ministry of Education who are politically affiliated with Hamas will accept participating in such studies.
- I: Sorry! I meant an influential decision-making Palestinian educational or political leader.
- A: As you know, the persons from our generation left the Ministry. But I would strongly advise you to meet with the previous Minister of Education named as he has knowledge of the curricula and he played an important role in the development of educational policies from 1994 to 2006.
- I: Do you mind sharing with me his contact details?

- A: Not at all! I will give you his mobile and you can talk to him. You will be happy to know that he is a kind person and will welcome this type of studies.
- I: I appreciate your great efforts for making this interview very informative.
- A: Thanks for considering me for this study.
- I: Thanks again
- A: Good bye

Appendix 11: Interview Transcription- Educational Leader 3

(J=Interviewee, male; Ph.D., Educational Leader, 45 minutes; I= Interviewer)

- I: Good morning.
- J: Good morning, you're welcome.
- I: It is great for me to meet you, as one of the educational leaders in the Arab world. May Allah bless you.
- J: This was previously. Now we grew up and became quite aged.
- I: But your efforts are still running, May Allah protect you.
- J: Our hope is on the young people whom we educated and will lead the future. You're the next generation leaders.
- I: May Allah protect and bless you. Surely we'll not forget your favor, Professor.
- J: May Allah preserve you.
- I: Thanks, Sir. I've begun preparing my Ph.D., which is a critical study of the Palestinian educational system. I have explored the Palestinian educational history and the main socio-political conditions that led this system to its current status today.
- J: Yes... Yes
- I: And to know the aspects that affected the politicization of this educational system which made some of the political factors become very clear in the Palestinian educational system. I will share with you some figures that I came up with through the questionnaires. According to your experience, could you please give me an idea about the history of education in Palestine?
- J: The fiftieth – sixtieth years.
- I: Yes, please.
- J: If you need us to talk about the political aspects, I remember during the period of the British Mandate we were obtaining a professional education. The number of students formed just 20% of the population.
- When the Egyptians came to the GS in 1948, they gave attention to Education and they considered it as a cultural and civilizational aspect. They taught students, opened schools, established tents and did about everything. Therefore, people highly joined educational institutions.
- The educational status remained to progress from 1948 to 1967. In 1957 we were occupied by the Israeli military which tried to put obstacles in front of the educational system. This just remained 4 months and from 1957 to 1967 the educational system was dominated by Egyptians; the curriculum and exams. Therefore, almost all the curriculum was Egyptian except History and Geography which contained the Palestinian arts and history.
- In 1967, the insolent Israeli occupation came and during the 27 years put obstacles on education. The director of education was Mr. Bashir Al-Rayes and then followed by Mr. Ramiz Fakhra.
- From 1978 to 1994 I became the director general of education. The occupation usually put obstacles which were firstly simple but by the run of time became more and more complex and it negatively affected the education system. These obstacles included preventing books completely from entering schools. Therefore, students were forced to learn and write in drafts. We tried with the UNRWA and the UNICEF in addition to the UNESCO to have the books entered. It started to enter bit by bit three years after the arrival of the occupation. Israel insisted to read each book before saying this is an accepted book and this is rejected and this needed to change some words in it. However, we continued our way despite all these obstacles and our Palestinian people achieved almost the second or the first rank of all the Arab education.
- A: When did they achieve the second level?
- J: It was from 1975 to 1992.
- I: Yes... Yes

J: Students in Beirut, Egypt or in Iraq don't spend their full time on education since they have other works with their fathers. In contrast, in the West Bank, and in Gaza we don't have job opportunities, therefore, we concentrated on education which was our main target. We constructed universities during 1978 – 1979. Before that date, we didn't have universities and we learned in Turkey, West Bank, Egypt, Spain, and Germany. Now we have universities such as the Islamic university, Al-Azhar University, and Al-Aqsa university and I'm so proud of having these three universities which contain 100,000 students annually, in addition to the private or national universities such as the University of Ummah, Al-Quds Open University, and the universities that can accommodate students who have not been accepted by public universities.

I: Mr. Mohamed, what was your educational philosophy as the Director General of Education during the period from 1978 to 1994? What was the educational philosophy for dealing with the presence of Israeli occupation, restrictions and some obstacles also imposed by the Egyptian side, in addition to some obstacles by the United Nations in financing some social or educational development programs and projects?

J: Education was our target and my goal as it was also the goal of my colleagues who are educational supervisors. We aimed to educate the students as much as possible. You can say that we studied at universities, at the educational centers, aboard, and inside the occupied land. In both UNRWA or in the governmental institutions we accepted missions from aboard. For example, I remember how the Israelis tried to put obstacles in front of the students who finished their undergraduate education and looked to complete their higher education. We helped them achieve their purpose. So we tried to circumvent the Israelis by finding suitable solutions that help the student to continue their master and so on. Thus, our means were bitter and difficult. We aimed to make the student graduate with the highest degrees of education since there were no job opportunities in either agriculture, commerce, industry or any type of work except continuing their university education.

A: This means.... Sorry, I interrupted you, please continue.

J: I can proudly say that the number of educated girls increased. I mean during my period when we had 10.000 students attending to achieve their high school degree, the number of females was more than males. It formed about 5% or 3%. In addition, today we have 34.000 students and the females are more than males. This is my proudness and I am very pleased that the girl and the boy are receiving distinctive education and they are interested in making their way to education.

I: Oh Sir... We know that the educational system needs several factors for being successful. This was achieved during your administration period that was characterized by high-quality education. How did you know the level of the quality of the educational programs? You just mentioned that you won the second level of the Arab education. Was there any particular initiative or scale to ensure the quality of the educational outputs in the GS, especially, we will next talk about the first intifada and its effects on the quality of the educational outputs and on the administrative matters?

J: The education directorate had an administration that was responsible for the curricula and books which form the completion of education. We used to select the high-quality teacher who does not rely only on writing but achieves the lesson's goals whether the course was English, Arabic, mathematics or any book or curriculum by other means.

We varied the educational topics: We must teach the pre-Islamic literature at the first secondary level. At the third secondary level we teach the Abbasid and Turkish literature, then the arts of speech. Therefore, we had many means such as the books and other means of the curriculum. The supervisors used to go to schools to ensure that students receive a good education.

By the way, we turned to implement educational courses in both governmental and UNRWA schools. So the teacher in addition to his certificate acquires more culture during his educational experience which he/she acquired within one or two years. In addition, he obtained the interesting and good approach to teaching. Moreover, when the supervisor checks the student's level he evaluates them by writing on their books well, excellent, needs to study and so on. This shows how the education contained all aspects; the curriculum, book, administration and the educational management. This lead to having a successful student. By the way, the student who has finished his high school with the Egyptian curriculum took the average of 70% or 80%, the majority took 80%. But today we see that the student takes 90% and 99%. It is not possible that these students are excellent at this level. Therefore, our former students graduated and became doctors, engineers, and special teachers.

- I: One of the challenges is that students of the scientific section are forced to join science and mathematics. This negatively affected students who desired to study medicine abroad or inside Egypt itself. Did the Directorate of education contribute in determining science and mathematics just for students of the scientific section?
- J: No... We took care of this point since we didn't determine only science, arts, mathematics or biology, but we considered that the student took generally chemistry, biology, and physics. The Egyptians tried with us to implement a scientific biology system, a scientific chemistry system or a scientific physics system, but we made the scientific section contain all these branches. Therefore, students of the scientific section studied all of them without any obstacles. In addition, students of the literary section were studying without any obstacles. We succeeded in this and we were able to graduate this generation in several specializations.
- I: My appreciated Sir... Regarding the salaries of the employees and the incentives that were given to them, especially when we talk about the schools that don't follow UNRWA or relates to the United Nations, how did you deal with the employees?
- J: During our period salaries were cheap and suitable. This doesn't mean it satisfies the human's needs as much as possible, but I can say it wasn't too much, however, the teacher was satisfied with this salary.
- I: Sir where did you receive these salary amounts? From the government of occupation or the Egyptian government?
- J: No, No, No, it was from the Israeli occupation government. Then it was clear to me that they took taxes, customs and mail fees. All these fees are considered sources of expenses and provided a budget for education. Thus, the occupation expended financially on education from this budget. This means that the Israeli occupiers didn't spend on us from their pockets.
- I: Sir, was there any coordination between the West Bank and Gaza between 1978 and 1994, did you meet each other periodically or annually, and did you discuss some curricula, some principles and some general concepts of the Palestinian education in general?
- J: The adopted curriculum in the West Bank was the Jordanian curriculum, and our curriculum in Gaza was almost the Egyptian curriculum, but we met sometimes during meetings, intensive courses or in visits. We used to ask them about the books adopted in the West Bank and they asked us about our books. Were they printed in both Gaza and the West Bank? I can say that the educational levels adopted in the West Bank followed Jordan and in Gaza, it followed Egypt. They were not so much different because all the educational levels at the Arab world, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, or Syria were almost similar. Therefore, we continued adopting almost the same books...
- I: Did the absence of Palestine Geography and History from the Curriculum affect the structure of the Palestinian society.
- J: Look... the curriculum of the third secondary level included the Palestinian issue but the Jews prevented using this book because it talked about the Palestinian issue. They consider it as a reproach against them or as a stab in their issue and hurts them. We took the chapters that didn't include the Palestinian issue, and sometimes we used to teach the students about the Palestinian issue secretly without letting the Israelis know. For example, the book of Abu Alqasim Alshabi "If the people ever wanted to live, the fate must respond". This book was prevented. Another book for Shawqi contained a poem which was also prevented, but we replaced it with another poem, so the literature was continued. Therefore, we were trying to avoid political cases in the Arab books.
- I: May Allah award you the best health Sir, you are an encyclopedia. May Allah preserve you?
- J: God bless you.
- I: There are many challenges I have been aware of such as the lack of buildings in the GS, especially before 1994. You were forced to solve this problem by adding two or three shifts in some schools. How did you manage to do this great effort?
- J: Yes, it was a great effort. I can say that the number of the evening classes were much lower than today. Students were about 250.000 at the governmental and UNRWA schools. Today the number became 500.000 students. Therefore, the authority wasn't able to establish enough schools, so you see that the schools today, not all, contain two shifts because it is required to educate all students. However, we could teach all of them. The number of students at the evening shift was more than today.

- I: During some meetings with researchers from the West Bank they mentioned that the evening shift had vanished in the West Bank.
- J: Now, I know the educational our policy adopted but my memory sometimes doesn't help me. It's all documented and recorded in my published book.
- I: Yes, in shaa Allah. My dear Sir, when the Palestinian authority took responsibility did they continue what you started? Did they take what you built and continued it? Or they took another direction different from what the education administration achieved in GS?
- J: It almost was the same policy, but in the educational curriculum they established a curricula department. I advised them and told them that it is incorrect to make a change from x to z during one year. I suggested to implement these changes in two or three years so that students will be able to acclimate to it, but unfortunately, they refused to work on this base. Abu Ammar agreed on changing it through levels. Therefore, today these curricula have been almost changed. The curriculum became Palestinian and at the West Bank it was also changed, especially after 20 or 30 years the curricula at all the world changed and took a new approach.
- I: From your point of view what should be done by the ministry of education to improve the Palestinian educational system?
- J: Really, I thank them for what they did during the past 20 years. Education continued developing more and more until it reached its final stage. I could say as what the parents say not as what the responsible people say, the quantity of information that the students learn is much more than it should be. It should be less so that they are able to cover it all. In addition, science and mathematics are also too much and so is the English language syllabus. All the other matters are well and covered.
- I: I met with some of the educational leaders in Gaza, they complain that teachers do not get a salary and many of them are accustomed to being absent from work. How do you advise them to solve this problem?
- J: The teacher's salary is a political issue. There are people who are rejected and replaced by people who are half qualified or unqualified completely. But in shaa Allah we hope that reconciliation be achieved between parties and then we will have the suitable teacher at the suitable place and the unsuitable teacher takes courses and instructions to be able to implement his role successfully.
- I: Some research sir indicated that almost 1500 teachers at Gaza terminated their services because of the political affiliation as well as at the West Bank. Do you think that the current situation which is based on the political orientation, began to affect the educational system?
- J: There is no doubt that it began to influence the educational system because the teacher who was working in his job in both West Bank or in Gaza and then stopped his work, he was replaced with a new teacher who was not enough qualified. This means that the absence of teachers from here and there undoubtedly had affected the educational process.
- I: when we made a questionnaire on the teachers and parents in both Gaza and the West Bank, we found a variation in the rates between Gaza and the West Bank. For example, 30% of the teachers in Gaza say that we belong to Hamas, we found that the same percentage of teachers at the West Bank say that they belong to Fateh. This is similar to the students too. When we ask does the curriculum or the Palestinian educational system affect the political orientation? We found that 70% of the families have a political orientation and in the West Bank approximately 80% of the families. We also found that almost 50% of students are politically influenced. Thus they have been politically influenced 12 years ago.
- J: I say that the curriculum remains the same curriculum and courses in both the West Bank or in Gaza, whether they are learned by Fateh or Hamas. Therefore, there is no relation between the concept of the teacher and what he teaches the curriculum. You can say that there is no impact except a little religious effect, but 90% of the curricula whether English language, Arabic, History, Geography, science, physics or Are not affected by the political or religious orientation. I consider the teacher remains a teacher whether he was Fateh or Hamas.
- I: Deputy of education ministry at Gaza said that Ministry is now about to issue new curricula and it didn't consult any educators in the field of education in the GS. How does this affect the structure of the Palestinian community especially when these curricula meet specific desires?

- J: I know that during the past ten years there was an agreement on the curriculum at Gaza and the West Bank. Today since they became separated and ignore each other's opinions, I believe that this is not fair or appropriate. The suitable thing is that the deputy minister at Gaza must have been consulted and contributed to the planning and development of the new curriculum. Even the teachers at Gaza should have a mature opinion on the curriculum. If the deputy of education in Gaza stated that they are working on it now without any involvement of teachers this is not appropriate.
- I: One of the obstacles during the period of occupation was detaining many teachers and students. I knew that you were doing exams for detained students at the prison. How did you face all these obstacles successfully?
- J: The occupation focused on students. Any student who does anything contrary to the occupier policy gets detained, in addition, they detained teachers. In fact, during the past 18 years of my work, we provided exams for the regular student outside, and few students were detained. At the prisons of Beersheba, Negev, and Magdal. The Egyptian ruler who was the deputy of the Egyptian education ministry played a role in supervising the exams. He worked in both inside and outside the prison. Thanks to God that they all took certificates in prison and were successful.
- I: Sir. From your point of view who are the most Palestinian educational characters who affected structuring the Palestinian educational system?
- J: In which educational system?
- I: In Palestine, the Palestinian educational system which you are one of its famous figures.
- J: I could say that my special generation included 6 supervisors only, 6 supervisors. Today as I was informed there are 191 supervisors. The old supervisors such as Beshir Al-Rayes, Ramez Fakhra, Hassan Al-Nakhal, Hilmi Amal, Ibrahim Steak and Mohammed Al-Jedi, all of them as Hilmi Abu Ramadan played an effective role in serving education during the first five years of occupation since 1967 to 1972. They had an active role, they were supervising schools, curriculum, and books, and they do their job. Furthermore, I can say that later we had instead of 6 supervisors more than 20 supervisors, and each area supervisor became responsible for 20 schools. Those area supervisors played an active role. They assisted me in fulfilling my views of education and they developed the education system which continued successfully, thanks to Allah.
- I: All praise is due to Allah, thank you so much, my teacher, I highly appreciate you and I'm so proud to meet you today. You are so great for me.
- J: Thanks, I wish you the best, may Allah bless you.
- I: May Allah preserve you.
- J: I hope you achieve your doctorate certificate and become a good future figure.
- I: Thanks, God bless you, Sir.
- J: By the way, your city Beit Lahia contains many famous figures who are proud of me.
- I: We are all so proud of you. Thanks a lot.

Appendix 12: Interview Transcription- Educational Leader 4

(T=Interviewee, male; Ph.D., Educational Leader, 55 minutes; I= Interviewer)

I: I would like to thank you, doctor, for making this interview. I hope it will add good information to this research.

T: This is our duty.

I: The research concentrates on studying the real status of education in Palestine and the effects of the political and social factors on developing the current Palestinian educational system. The research concentrates on three essential questions. Let us begin with the first one. I have collected data from the students and the teacher, which I will provide you with later after taking your view on its reality.

T: Surly, the political factors had a high degree of effect. Palestine is an occupied land and the number of refugees, whether inside Palestine or aboard, is becoming very great.

When we talk about the Palestinian curricula, we must take into consideration that Palestine is still under Israeli occupation and the Palestinian people are still suffering deeply because of this occupation, which is assaulting the Palestinian's human rights. The national orientation is to gain their independence, freedom, and rights like other people in the world. This curriculum must enhance this issue of still being under occupation, and we must have a role in terminating this occupation according to international procedures.

The international institutions must stand with the Palestinian people to achieve their independence and rights and stop these repeated and continued violations of human rights. The Palestinian curriculum highlights these cases for students. Also, it enhances the hometowns and villages from where the Palestinian people emigrated, such as Acre, Jaffa, Haifa, and the other Palestinian areas occupied in 1948. The Palestinian curriculum enhances all these things in several lessons to connect the Palestinian student with the places from where his grandfathers emigrated. At the same time, the Palestinian curriculum highlights democracy, human rights, international organisations and the international declarations, despite the fact that Palestine is not an independent state. Also, the Palestinians are eager to see the international organisations of the UN play their part in ending this occupation and helping people gain their rights.

Socially, it should be taken into consideration that some of the Palestinians are inside Palestine, some on the West Bank, some in the GS, some in the occupied areas of 1948, and some displaced abroad. The Palestinian curriculum considers all of them. Moreover, it stresses the hope that the Palestinian people would return to the land they were dismissed from one day. Therefore, it tries to unite the Palestinian people through different lessons that the students learn. At the same time, it shows that Palestine is a land of peace and looks to have strong relations with the Arab and Islamic states. It also enhances the Palestinian, religious, and social values in students' minds, and it promotes the culture of preserving these values and the respect for group and individual freedoms. Moreover, it encourages them to participate in any social or volunteer works that serve the Palestinian society and all societies. Therefore, we clearly find that the Palestinian curriculum is built on a social basis and enhances the national unity, so the political and social factors affect the current curricula.

I: Sir, there are some important periods in the history of the Palestinian people, such as the end of the Ottoman period, the British mandate, the period of the Israeli occupation that started in 1948, establishing the Palestinian liberation organization, the immigration of many Palestinians in 1967, the First Intifada, the Oslo agreement, the Second Intifada, and finally, the division crisis that happened in the GS in 2007. These important political events occurred, and I would like to listen to your point of view on how they affected the Palestinian educational system, whether in the GS or the West Bank?

T: Unfortunately, the Palestinian government is still unable to talk about these periods. They might mention the Ottoman or the British periods, but when we talk about the Israeli side, the Oslo agreement, or other essential issues that should be included in the curricula, the Palestinian government unfortunately is not able to highlight these cases. Therefore, we find that

some studied books do not indicate these issues because these curricula were invented before the division events. The curricula includes not only the studied books, but also, all the experiences obtained by students through activities either related to the lesson or not.

The period of the Israeli occupation and the beginning period of the Palestinian self-rule authority witnessed a revival in the educational system, but the events of the division had a negative impact on it. Before the arrival of the Palestinian authority, the GS followed the Egyptian system and the West Bank followed the Jordanian system, but during the period of Palestinian authority, we had a united curriculum for both Gaza and the West Bank. During the period of division, we maintained and kept on these curricula approximately, but several activities and relations between Gaza and the West Bank were absent and unavailable. This caused a highly negative impact on the educational system in addition to the siege imposed on Gaza which affected the structure of the educational status and requirements needed to schools. For example, during the first six years of the siege, we were not able to build any school. During 2013, we could have built 20 schools when the relations with Egypt was improved, but due to the later political conditions of this period, we faced big difficulties in receiving building materials and school requirements. These difficulties increased more and more in the GS after forming the consensus government. For example, since the formulation of the consensus government, the ministry of education in Gaza did not receive any operational budgets.

In the GS, we have 395 schools which contain about 250,000 students. We do not receive any operational budgets from the Palestinian government and we just depend on the income of the school's cafeterias to continue our missions in addition to the support of some donor countries. We face a big problem in providing the salaries of employees, and two-thirds of them do not receive salaries from the new government. Two years ago, the Ministry of Finance in Gaza began providing 40% to 45% of the salary of these employees. Therefore, for two years, about 8000 employees worked without salaries at the Ministry of Education in GS, which forms an additional burden on the educational process. Moreover, the ministry was not able to provide transportation for teachers to their schools, except by connecting them with donor organisations to provide transportation for them. This all had a negative impact on the educational process and didn't provide a suitable atmosphere or good environment for education. The division and the formulation of the new government added a big negative impact on education. The curriculum does not refer to these issues officially, even what is related to the Israeli occupation, because it is supported by the donor countries, and there are particular agreements with the Palestinian authority that prevent them from mentioning these issues. Therefore, teachers use some special study notes in the curriculum, such as the national education for students of grades 8, 9, and 10 and some cases introduced by learning cards, which are unessential in the curriculum. The Israeli attack on Gaza in 2008 and the three attacks in general destroyed several schools, school furniture, and school equipment. Moreover, it killed children, students, teachers, and many of the teaching and administrative staff. All these and their psychological effects had a negative impact on the educational process in GS. In the West Bank, the existence of the separation wall and the presence of many Israeli soldiers and checkpoints on the roads prevented students from reaching their schools regularly. Moreover, we must not forget that the siege on Gaza prevented students from joining their universities abroad, which caused a big problem. The results of the Israeli attacks and the siege had clear effects on the situation in Gaza. Furthermore, the electricity cut and the lack of existing capabilities negatively affected the educational process in Gaza more than the West Bank. At the same time, the West Bank was also highly affected by the Israeli occupation.

I: While reviewing the Palestinian curriculum, we found that the Italian government funded this project and required to have a copy of it be given to the Israeli occupation authorities, who modified it according to the Oslo peace deal. Did you hear about this?

T: Actually, I was not at the Ministry of Education while preparing the school books. Therefore, I am not sure of that, but I can say that the curricula mentions the Israeli occupation clearly and its daily violations against the Palestinians. Thus, I can indicate that we are not satisfied with the way this curriculum deals with political issues and the occupation. The Palestinian Authority may have a specific view, but we, as Palestinian people and responsible for the educational process, see that this

case should not be as such. The historical realities must be presented to the Palestinian students without hiding any issue because this generation must know everything related to this side. The methodology of freedom and returning of all Palestinian refugees in the world to their homeland must be taught to them. This is the desire of the students, so if it is not contained in the curriculum, it should be represented through other school activities.

I: Since the design of the Palestinian curriculum project in 1994 to the beginning of the implementation of the Palestinian curriculum in 2000 and until today in 2016, there have been about 16 years, and these curricula were not modified. I have heard that there is a project for developing these curricula; is this true, sir?

T: Yes, we began to develop it, but I think this process is in more control than the previous time. I viewed the general framework and draft of the curricula, and I have many remarks on this draft, which still doesn't represent many things missed in the previous curricula. Also, we might suffer from some Palestinian curriculum that doesn't satisfy the minimum requirements of the Palestinians, especially those related to the intellectual and national foundations of these curricula. The conditions imposed by the donors make the Palestinian authority unable to prepare special Palestinian curricula freely. So I think the new curricula will contain many problems, especially those related to solving the Palestinians' political issues.

I: Sir, allow me to introduce a sample of some results which I received from a quick questionnaire given to 130 teachers in Gaza, 320 students on the West Bank, and 250 students in the GS. I would like to listen to your opinion on these numbers. The students in Gaza and on the West Bank were asked whether they belonged to a political organisation and to which organisation they belonged. 52% of the students on the West Bank said Yes, and 50% of the students in Gaza said Yes. 54% of the students on the West Bank and 48% in Gaza belong to or support Fateh. 40% of the students in Gaza and 20% on the West Bank belong to or support Hamas. Do these statistics indicate anything to you?

T: Actually, the statistics regarding the West Bank indicate that the student is not able to express his political orientation freely due to the big difficulties which he faces. However, here in Gaza, the Palestinian student was able to express his political orientation freely. At the West Bank, the conditions of the strict practices against the political organisations caused the citizens to get frightened, and this also is reflected on the students at schools. Therefore, these statistics do not represent the reality of the West Bank. Also, the students of that age are not able to express specific things that might cause negative effects on him. I'd like to present something else. Look to the elections of Beir Zet university which represents the orientation of the Palestinian people and in which Hamas won the election a few months ago. This shows the real general political orientation at the West Bank. I believe that the date you have received these results is affected with some factors because the students of that age are not able to express their political opinions in complete freedom. Also, some students who have won in the elections of Beir Zet university were kidnapped after the elections directly, and this was repeated during the previous years.

I: We asked the students in both Gaza and the West Bank about the most effective factor that led them to love belonging to a political organisation. Eighty-one percent at the West Bank and 65% at Gaza responded "our family," and this represented the majority. Also, 10% at the West Bank and 12% at Gaza responded "the teacher"; 10% at the West Bank and 22% at Gaza said "the curriculum."

T: First of all, the curriculum of the West Bank is the same as in Gaza, but the treatment of the teachers might be different. Therefore, in Gaza, the curriculum may have a higher impact on students.

I: In grade 11, the national education module is added in the GS but not in the West Bank. What is the role of this curriculum? Was there a gap in the Palestinian curriculum that needed to be modified by adding this module?

T: It is not in grade 11, but grades 8, 9, and 10. It is a real gap, as I mentioned previously, that the Palestinian Authority is not able to issue real national educational curricula. Therefore, during the previous periods, we discussed issuing drafts by some educational supervisors and providing them unofficially to students. There was an actual step in Gaza in this case, and some enrichment materials were prepared for the national education during the past years, but when the consensus government

was formed, we stopped issuing these books in the GS because we considered that this case was now the responsibility of the new government, and we are committed to the curricula that are approved by this government.

I: Here in Gaza, we had 32% of students belonging to political organisations before being 12 years old, and in the West Bank, we had 74%. This shows a wide variation, but if we see the percentage of students under 15 years old, we notice a little variation. We found that 80% in the West Bank had political orientations before being 15 years old, 50% of whom are male. In addition, in Gaza, we found that there were 63%. Does this affect the enrollment of students at schools, and does it disturb the continuity of the educational process?

T: No, this disclaims some opinions that say that Gaza politicises the educational process in the primary stage. Children who are under 12 years were unaffected politically at schools, because there is no impact on them at this stage. However students of the intermediate stages are not only affected by school, but they also might be affected by institutions outside the school, and this increases the political discrimination at this age.

I: We also implemented a questionnaire on the teachers in Gaza. The percentages indicated by teachers on this question especially were similar to the students' views; 130 teachers said that 30% of students under 12 years are affected politically, but the students said it was 32%. Students said that students under 15 years who were affected politically were 63% and teachers said they were 58%. Therefore, the percentages were close between the teachers and students' views in the GS on this question.

T: I also approve this percentage, and I say that students of the smallest stages are not affected at school; otherwise, you would have much higher percentages. However, at the earlier stages, students might be affected by other institutions that are related to specific political orientations. Therefore, we could say that at our schools, there are no political orientations, which disclaims some views that allegedly claim that the educational process in the GS is being politicalized affecting students; the statistics we reached clearly prove this.

I: We asked students if the curricula are open to accepting the intellectual pluralism. The percentages were too close between students in Gaza and the West Bank. 50% in Gaza and 43% in the West Bank, in addition to 52% of the teachers, agreed that the curriculum supports the political pluralism. This indicates that the curriculum accepts the intellectual pluralism.

T: Yes, this is found in the curriculum. The curriculum indicates clearly that Palestine is a democratic state, and it enhances that. Therefore, it does not include clear orientations for specific organizations and students are free to express their thoughts in this case.

I: This question was insured by another one. We asked students if the curriculum had affected on following new organization. The percentage of the students said yes were 5% in the West Bank and 19% in Gaza. This ensures the previous information.

T: Yes, this means that the curricula do not affect students' orientation.

I: Yes, it does not.

T: In addition, the curricula are united in both Gaza and the West Bank.

I: We asked another question about the role of curriculum on enhancing the belief of resisting the occupation until achieving the rights of the Palestinian people. The statistics showed that 49% of students at the West Bank and 78% at Gaza and 74% of the teacher answered yes.

T: The intellectual frame of the curricula indicated that Palestine is an occupied state and still under the Israeli occupation which violates the human rights. Therefore, some lessons should teach students how to terminate and end this occupation. The international society must have a role in achieving this. Thus, the curricula will direct students to achieve liberation and get freedom.

I: Sir, when we also asked if the curricula indicate that negotiations are the best approach to achieve Palestinian rights, The answers showed that 43% of the students on the West Bank, 52% of the students in Gaza, and 36% of the Gaza teachers said "Yes."

T: I know the age of the students you asked. We have a clear experience from the negotiations that occurred during the past 20 years, which came to nothing. I do not know how you reached the percentages of students.[Note: the meaning of this sentence is not clear.]

I: We selected equal samples from the preparatory, secondary, and university stages, and we selected a small sample from the primary stage.

T: They might be affected by the policy of the Palestinian Authority, which continues negotiations away from the issue of resistance. In the GS, the difficult situation in which the students live affects them. For example, students who are six years old have witnessed three Israeli wars on Gaza. These wars were not easy. They demolished people's houses around them. Therefore, this had a real impact on them.

I: In addition, we asked a question about the current Palestinian educational curriculum. Does it represent the problems of the Palestinians and their aspirations? 58% of the students on the West Bank and 71% in Gaza and 69% of the teachers in Gaza said "Yes." I always notice a convergence between the views of students and teachers in Gaza.

T: It ultimately depends on the way the teacher deals with the curriculum. The teacher might enrich the curriculum, and if he finds some gaps, he is expected to solve it on the spot. Therefore, the curriculum is not only what the book contains, but the teacher also has a role in enhancing some issues, such as the attitudes of the Palestinian people, through several activities that could be implemented whether inside or outside school.

I: We asked about the right of return and sticking to the land. When we asked whether the educational curriculum enhances the right of return, 55% of the students in the West Bank, 88% at Gaza, and 84% of the teachers said yes. According to the issue of preserving the land, 64% of the students in the West Bank and 85% in Gaza and 84% of the teachers agreed that it enhances this issue.

T: This means that the percentage in Gaza is much higher.

I: Yes, it's much higher.

T: I think this is due to the treatment of teachers toward the curriculum because the curriculum is the same for both Gaza and the West Bank.

I: Is it related to the percentage of refugees, which is much more in Gaza than the West Bank?

T: This might be true. It depends on the selected sample and the percentage of refugees in it. I don't know if they study at governmental or UNRWA schools. But it is clear that the methodology of the teachers is different from one place to another.

I: Sir, we also asked if the Palestinians love just peace. The percentage was 62% in the West Bank, 83% in Gaza, and 79% for the teachers.

T: I believe the important point is that the essential Palestinian curriculum indicated clearly that the Palestinians love just peace and work to create international understanding and cooperation based on justice, equality, freedom, dignity, and human rights. Therefore, the curricula enhance this issue, and the percentage in Gaza clearly reflects this.

I: Another question was, "Does the educational curriculum consider the resistance acts as terrorism?" The percentages were in the West Bank 7%, in Gaza 16%, and among teachers 22%.

T: The percentages in this case are small whether here or there. The curriculum doesn't clearly discuss that, but it clarifies that the Palestinian people will someday gain their rights and liberation and return to their homeland.

I: Sir, from your point of view, what are the essential factors that should be achieved to develop the education in Gaza and the West Bank? What are the foundations of developing the educational system to be independent and able to produce creative and intellectual people according to international laws?

T: Since the Palestinian authority is still facing pressure from the Israeli occupation and the donor states interfere on the content of the curricula, I believe that we are still far from producing curricula that achieve our national goals. Therefore, we must get rid of the Israeli impact on our curricula and be able to produce national curricula which enhance the national and ethical aspects and enhances the love of the Palestinian human of other people. We don't antagonize other societies at all. Our only enemy is the Israeli occupation which occupies our land and violates our rights every hour and every second. We need the assistance of experts in rebuilding the infrastructural requirements of schools and build new schools to reduce the pressure of the two shifting periods at the same school in addition to the large numbers of students in the same class. The infrastructure of schools need to be provided with equipment and techniques necessary to develop the educational process. The Palestinian teacher needs to improve his materials to be able to develop the educational process. I believe that we have experts who can benefit from the foreign experiences in developing the Palestinian curriculum. The curriculum should focus on the student and on the activities that motivate the student in educational process. Therefore, I believe that we are able to achieve this, but we only suffer from the occupation, which affects the objectives of the educational process, and on the other hand, the Palestinian authority is forced to follow the donors' conditions for producing curricula and printing textbooks.

I: When we asked the students in the West Bank about the most important methods for improving and developing the Palestinian educational process, they all indicated that the Palestinian issue is clearly absent from the curriculum. In addition, they complained about the old teaching methods, which depend on prompting, and the curriculum is far from the current reality. E-learning is very poor, and there are no advanced devices. They also talked about exempting education from any fees and politicization.

T: These suggestions are very important. The infrastructure of the educational process and its requirements of buildings, devices, equipment, computers, and others are in a difficult condition, especially in the GS, which has been suffering from the siege for 10 years. Therefore, we are even sometimes not able to provide furniture for the students in schools. Moreover, developing the teaching strategies requires tools, equipment, and large costs that are not available. We also have a problem about the old Palestinian curriculum, which needs to be developed. I previously indicated that the producer of the curricula is still affected by the restrictions imposed by the Israeli occupiers and we need to end their control on our Palestinian curriculum. Therefore, what is mentioned by many students previously is actually true.

I: The teachers mentioned three things to improve education in general. The first thing is to neutralize education from politics, and then to form committees from all factions to supervise and develop a Palestinian curriculum and not to dominate any parties on it. Is there a clear and specific methodology to produce the Palestinian curricula that takes into consideration the social, tribal, and family dimensions, as well as the ideological dimensions?

T: I think not; we might face this problem even in the new curricula. Some textbooks have been produced without observing the general curricula framework. The general curricula framework document was issued by a team that consisted of six persons. This document wasn't provided to the Palestinian society through a referendum to provide their opinions. This had to include the different educational institutions, high educational institutions, community institutions, and the Palestinian citizens. They didn't see this document, which represents the fundamental basics for issuing all curricula that we need to develop. Unfortunately, the ministry started to issue some textbooks for students from grade one to four now. Even the authors of these books have not seen clearly the framework document. Therefore, the problem might continue in the future because one part is still dominating on this issue without cooperating with the Palestinian society or at least accepting suggestions on the

Palestinian curriculum and on the framework document itself, which is essential for future Palestinian curricula. I personally believe that the next Palestinian curriculum will not be better than the current curriculum.

I: Sir, many recent published studies confirmed that many employees are terminated according to their orientation or ideological beliefs. A study published in 2013 indicated that more than 1500 teachers in Gaza after the division events were terminated from service due to their orientation.

T: Unfortunately, not just in 2013 but even after the division, hundreds or thousands of teachers lost their salaries due to their orientation. In addition, many of them even don't have political orientations. We have a large number of teachers who do not receive salaries. Therefore, this caused a big problem for us, but at the same time, I assure that no teacher employed by the authorities of Gaza lost his salary due to his orientation. In addition, the same process was implemented in the West Bank, and many teachers were dismissed from their jobs due to their orientation or some unjust reports. Many of them went to the courts, some of them returned to their jobs, and some are still dismissed. There are several problems in this case.

I: In a previous interview with a Palestinian educational leader, he indicated that now, in the GS, there are two educational authorities. Some people are still getting their salaries from the Palestinian Authority, and others are not getting their salaries from the Authority but from the government of Gaza.

T: Yes, this is true. Unfortunately, the formulated consensus Government dealt with the previous condition in the West Bank as legitimate and dealt with the same condition in the GS during the previous period as illegal. Therefore, all those who have been employed during the period of the division in the West Bank have been approved, and all those in Gaza have not been approved. Thus, they do not receive salaries from the Ramallah government. The ministry of education in Gaza has about 8000 teachers who do not receive salaries from the Ramallah government, so the ministry of finance in Gaza began providing a part of their salaries to continue the educational process in the GS. Therefore, we have a big problem in Gaza because 8000 teachers do not receive salaries from the current government in Ramallah; however, 4000 teachers receive salaries from Ramallah government because they were appointed before the period of division.

I: My Sir, some research also indicates the issue of politicalizing education by the educational leaders in Gaza who belong to a specific resistant organisation.

T: I will give you a real example from the Ministry of Education in Gaza. I am the Deputy of the Ministry and I have 12 Assistant Deputies and Director Generals. Half of them do not belong to the Islamic organisation, but they belong to Fateh and still practice their jobs. Some other people left their jobs after the division events, but the rest are remaining in their jobs. Some of those who belong to Fateh were upgraded from being a director to being a director general during the period of Hamas government.

I: Thank you so much, Sir, for this valued information you provided. May Allah bless you.

T: Thanks, may Allah bless you too. I wish you all the best.

Appendix 13: Interview Transcription- Political Leader 1

(S=Interviewee, male; Ph.D., Political Leader, 55 minutes; I=Interviewer)

I: I would like to sincerely thank you for taking part in this study and may God bless you wishing that this study will add something to our people here in Palestine and the Arab nations.

I would like to start the interview by asking you to tell us something about yourself so that I can add it in the research.

S: Yes, I am an Associate Professor of Economics teaching part-time in Beir Zait University from time to time. Currently, I am working in Economics at the Institute of Economic Studies, MAS, which is a nonprofit Palestinian public institute.

I: Dr., are there any political positions you took over?

S: Yes. I was one of the founders of Bekdar institution when the Palestinian Authority first came. I used to be an assistant undersecretary in the Ministry of Economics. Then I left the authority at the end of 1995 and moved to the private sector working as a manager for a bank. After that, I used to be the director general of the Palestinian Trade Center then I took over the management of Diamond Institute of Palestinian Economic Studies, MAS, from 2004 till 2007.

Since 2007, I took over the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Planning and in the first ministry were formed by Salam Fayyad and after almost two years, I went back to the institute working academically. I was director of the Institute of Policy and I continued to be so until the year of 2013. I concluded my term at the institute in the field of research.

I: Mash Allah! May God bless you and benefit us with your knowledge.

S: Bless you too.

I: Doctor, I would like to share something with you on the screen now. You will see some of our research results. Our research was a joint project between Gaza and the West Bank, with 3,000 participants.

We made sure that the sample contained both genders, males and females. Of the West Bank participants, 51% were male, and 49% were female, and in Gaza, 58% of the participants were male and 42% female. We considered the demographic factors as well; therefore, our sample contained approximately 30% participants from villages, both from the West Bank and Gaza, 20% from camps, and the rest, approximately 50%, were from the cities.

S: Is this a normally stratified sample?

I: Almost; we consider it a regular stratified sample. We also took into account the different classes of society. Students from primary school represented 12%, 27% of students were from middle school, 31% from secondary school, and 30% of students were from universities. The same thing is with teachers since we took teachers in universities or holders of master's or bachelor's degrees in schools. We also considered the parents' status; we took almost 2% uneducated, 15% who know how to read and write but don't have certificates, about 28% with secondary education or less, 16% with diplomas, 35% with bachelor's, and 5% of parents who had master's or higher degrees.

So, as what you can see, the numbers are 1705 students, 623 teachers, and 611 parents. We took care of different age groups, whether students, parents, or teachers. We also considered that teachers should have a variety of graduates from the natural sciences or humanities. The result was 84 teachers from universities, in addition to 202 secondary school teachers, and so on their age distribution.

I will take you directly to the critical results; the important results were about the political questions for what we asked students. Are you a member of a political party or not? Surprisingly, 53% of students, 41% of teachers, and about 50% of parents are politically affiliated. Of course, the title of the research followed it is an education in highly politicised societies.

So, doctor, do you see, according to the questions I shared with you, if you remember, is the Palestinian society a politicised society from your point of view? Do the numbers show that? Alternatively, are these numbers, according to the political leadership in Palestine, considered to be normal?

S: At the beginning, there must be a declaration in your research about the political context that should be taken into consideration. The Palestinian people are under occupation in a period of national liberation, especially as it is an occupation of a particular type. The occupation is uprooting the Palestinian people and taking the country's resources. Moreover, the displacement operation that the occupation is currently performing is using all means in terms of drying up the sources of income, the resources of the people to dry, and the ways and conditions of life in the country, such that citizens are forced to emigrate in the process of political coercion through repression and economic coercion of the armed forces in their livelihood and in what they do for a living.

Thus, it is normal that the people are politicised in the sense that they are politicized nationally. This means that they are following politics because they are living it daily or almost every day in the form of small and limited clashes that sometimes turn into significant and wide-ranging confrontations, and this forces people to be politicised.

This is what I have to object to in this result. This means that these numbers are impossible to make accurate. I know that it refers to the question of the percentage of those belonging to any political community or party. For example, in Germany, which is a country based on parties, the percentage of parties does not exceed 2% to 3%.

The situation is no different in the whole world because the parties are the elite, and the rest are followers. You are talking about people who have an affiliation meaning that they support a particular party. They mean a tendency for a particular party, but you do not mean that it is not reasonable. People who are willing to belong to a party and be an active member of the party and are organised in cells, in groups, and in areas, are very few. Even Fateh which is a movement that has always been very popular with all the people and considered all the people who are not affiliated with the other parties. When we enter the prison, if you belong to Hamas or any other party, they leave you, but if you do not follow any party, they consider you belong to Fateh because it is considered as a collective movement for all Palestinian people.

I: I will show you the second form and I am pleased with your note to this result. We asked the students if you like to belong to a political party and then we followed it with a second question if you want to be politically affiliated at any time you belong politically. Then we asked the question in a second indirect way to make sure that he belonged. However, we asked the parents and the teachers directly, are you a member of a political party? We asked them directly, but we also asked them what their affiliation was, and we had these results.

We had 45% of the students who had their affiliation for Fateh, 52% of the teachers and 56% of the parents were from the people who said that we are politically affiliated. Please note that 1705 students became 912.

S: The rest of the students did not reply.

I: The rest of them did not reply or does not belong to a political party. So, 912 of the students belong to a political party and they form 50% of the students who are divided as the next; 45% belong to Fateh, 38% belong to Hamas, 6% belong to jihad Islamic, etc. as what you can see in front of you.

S: You can say that this is an electoral rule; meaning that the people who elect a party support this trend or party, but do not necessarily belong to it. You need to pay attention to the issue of "belonging" here because it does not exist, even in ancient people. You should determine that the electoral rule is if I asked him who you are going to choose for election. Moreover, I ask him whether he attends party meetings or not. In this case, he may answer that he attends festivals only. Thus, you have to soften the issue of belonging, that is to say, bias or support.

I: Excellent, doctor.

S: Because anyone may show and tell you that, this is hard to be.

I: The figures that were important to me very much were when we asked them, "Your love for a particular party or movement was based on what? Was it based on the curriculum of the Palestinians, through your love for the teacher, and your affiliation to the teacher is your constituents that formed this political affiliation and political support or the effect of your family?"

The results were robust; 67% of the students said that their family affects them in the first place. The family is what we become. 76% of teachers said that we always influence students through the curriculum, but the teacher is much less than the family. 78% of the parents said that we determine the direction of our son in political matters or political affiliation.

S: It is clear that this is true to follow somehow what their parents and big brothers are heading.

I: Does this, in your opinion, affect the basic structure of the Palestinian society? For example, if the Palestinian society became divided into families belonging to specific parties, and other families of other parties, and so on, will this become a possible danger to the future of Palestinian society in the long term?

S: No. However, this is just a backward or initial case for the beginning of life where parties are present. There was disruption for a long time because of the elections being based on relatives' lists. So, when the elections were performed based on relatives' lists, it caused many problems because the parties were divided on different lists and several lists came out from the same party. Why did this happen? Because there is the issue of competition between the families in the small villages and in the cities between the centers of power within the movement itself.

For example, in Nablus, you find that prominent families like Shakaa and El Masri do not follow any rules. If the party nominates them, they win and everything is fine, but if it did not nominate them, they go to the election and still win. For example, Ghassan Shakaa, from Nablus, entered the list and he was the one who won from Fateh. This situation reflects a young life for the parties and a political life full of distortion, and because of this, parties are evil, and they divide people and cause problems among them.

If you notice that people have named these parties or movements, Fateh or Hamas are not different from each other. When you ask them, "Are you parties?" they say, "No, we are movements." If you ask them what the difference between party and movement is, no one can precisely answer you, and this shows that even people are not mature in their affiliations. They are built based on family relations, friendships, interests or opportunism in many areas, or protection if party protection strengthens the family. Most of the times, this protection for small parties comes for favors. Therefore, they find shelter among their families, when the family is the last defense line. Therefore, if they were under attack, the small party will not be able to protect them, so the significant movement will provide them protection.

There will be an inflation that leads to polarisation in society. Now, this polarisation between Fatah and Hamas is the result. A state where there is no rule of law for personal reasons, and the most important reason is the occupation, which deprive you from having full sovereignty over your land. On the other hand, there is no sovereignty on the land and sufficient capabilities that impose the rule of law that is capable of protecting the people and not from the family nor the political movement but from the law only. This is the nature of the current society and the circumstances that it creates by creating a reality in which there is a distortion in how people take their positions. Lots of the times, you find people are forced to do things. Thus, this plays a negative role on the free choice for the youth. Are they going to please their families or the movements they follow! The students are free from this issue because the mixture in the universities does not allow families to stand out. But in the municipal or legislative elections, he cannot get out of it.

I: Dr. even some universities have a definite trend toward a particular party or movement. In Gaza, for example, Al-Azhar University was founded on the principles of Fatah while the Islamic University was based on the principles of Hamas, and they continued this approach.

I am looking to the future of Palestine, asking myself whether it will indeed enshrine the concept that society is not a single body. Will it foster a cohesive society, so that everyone feels safe? We know that the challenges of the occupation exist, but do you think that the political leadership, the educational system or the Palestinian community structure are coherent to a degree that these political issues deviate from building the entire community in a balanced manner?

S: This phenomenon exists even in developed countries. Parties build institutions and safety nets and adopt institutions to provide specific services: health services, educational services, and services for the disabled. This is part of the message of political movements. They have to reach the people and provide services to people to earn their votes. Even the ballot box shows the people are standing together. This competition is not the problem. The problem is that we are in a stage of national liberation, and we need each other, so it is wrong, at this stage, to compete for the service of people! On the other hand, what came to us in this competition is that we enter into conflicts with each other, forgetting that we have a common enemy to fight against. We need to have common denominators, which combine us to move together and be one hand and in one trench in order to achieve the ultimate goal that the people are expecting from us, which is the political goal.

People have daily necessary needs, especially under these difficult circumstances. They need jobs, education, food, water, and electricity in some areas. So, it will be great if the political forces competed to help them reach their rights when unfortunately, the government cannot guarantee justice and fairness to provide all these services.

This needs suitable people to help and support other people. For example, if there is a village that needs water, they should do all their best to provide it. The political forces should compete with each other on how to help and serve their people, not lead them to division and fights based on the political base of the forces that support it. This will become an intervention inside battles and differences and problems that drain energies in the wrong place.

I: Political polarisation reached its peak, which means that almost more than 50% of students under the age of 15, according to the parents and teachers, are politicised. When students enter classes at school, each one of them is known to belong to Hamas, Fateh, etc. A few days ago, I was watching videos of a graduation ceremony in a village in the GS and I found that the students, in a school, not a university, were wearing Hamas clothes while others were wearing Fateh, etc. It seems that political polarization has reached the primary stages, Dr.

S: This is clear in the mobilization in this field of political elites of the same parties, or sometimes this comes as a result of the parents' effect on their kids. The parents encourage them, and this in my mind is wrong. Children should be given a period till they are mature enough to choose consciously and not traditionally by following their parents or older siblings. If we want to create society where people think before the decision is made and vote, this is what I think is a useful method not force the students in political fight they cannot handle.

I: But this is what is happening now as what the figures show.

S: This is unfortunately true. Each movement wants to prove its condition and show its muscles since it has nothing but the voices and support of people. I understand that in the course of the electoral battles there is mobilisation but not at every wedding, at every festival, and in every demonstration, especially in matters that have nothing to do with resisting the occupation. The depletion of resources is even competing between those who have a higher voice and those who have a broader audience.

I: I will ask you questions if you like short answers, because there are lots of data; if you are interested in taking a look at it, I am sure that it will add much information.

In your opinion, as a policy doctor in Palestine, does the education in Palestine meet your expectation?

S: Unfortunately, no. I believe that education has declined in terms of quality and its ability to produce human forces who can think in a right way and who have an independent and well-prepared personality for practical life.

I: Well done! Your opinion fits perfectly with the teachers and parents who gave essential tips. They said that the Palestinian curriculum is not qualified or suitable for kids. As you can notice, I had 21% of the notes. We got a 1098 note from people who said that we have problems in the process of teaching, in addition to about 227 notes from people who said that the current means of teaching are traditional methods.

I: I beg your pardon, doctor. I took too long of your time.

S: No, do not say that. It is just that the power went off, and the battery went out.

I: There is no problem. I will share the screen with you again, doctor. As I mentioned before, we had 1100 notes, and I have 227 notes, which are 21% of the notes, that say that the methods of teaching that are used in Palestinian society are traditional and do not lead the students to any creative thinking. You've just mentioned that most of the teachers are not evaluated and do not have field training so that they can improve their abilities; even the method of appointment is not excellent.

We have a problem of 1% of notes saying that the educational system does not benefit from scientific research. In addition to that, our students do not study Palestinian history, the geography of Palestine, the Palestinian leaders, or the ruling systems in Palestine. They gave us ways to resist the occupation peacefully or non-peacefully, meaning that there is no trend to highlight our national identity through the curriculum.

I have 6% of the 1100 observations. I have 35% of the observations, and 17% of them note that the problem is that the curriculum is not reviewed regarding many things that did not happen in Palestine in general. There are many observations; for example, why do we study the history of European civilisation and not the history of Palestine? Twenty percent of the people asked why the Palestinian curriculum does not call for national unity and equality; 11% of the observations show that the education is not related to what happens every day to us, as Palestinians. It does not reflect our suffering as Palestinians. The system of education, according to the notes, needs some reviews. Do you have any comments, doctor?

S: No. You are right. I have a comment that the curriculum is in a tragic condition, even when they have tried to change it a bit and Ibrahim Abu Laghad was in this project too; may God grant him mercy.

I: May God grant him mercy.

S: He was in the committee, but later on, it was revealed, according to what he has said, that what they have changed was something and what they have seen later in the curriculum was something else. They said that the changes that happened to the curriculum is a step backward when they wanted to improve it.

The most dangerous thing was in hiring the teachers. There are two reasons in the federal employment that have become disastrous, especially in the beginning. The profession of teacher has been weakened to the point that the profession is no longer able to attract talent or attract people who are distinguished, such as what happens in developed countries. This is because they know that the future of the country depends on them. Their income is much better than that of the university teachers, especially in primary education. This will make improvements if the results are right because after the students graduate from schools, they will head to university where they need to rely on themselves.

However, in the beginning, he must be more dependent on the teacher; otherwise, if he learns from the street and the TV, his personality, scientifically, will not have the right dose in education. Proper education will make him capable of thinking and analysing with an independent opinion and a well-built character.

Here comes the role of school. I remember that, when I was a kid in school, our teacher had been a role model for all the students. He was a hero, who was followed by the students, and he was the one with more influence. However, this doesn't exist today, and the teaching profession has become the last option for people who cannot find work in the private sector or the government.

I: A career for those who does not have one?

S: Unfortunately. This comes with an underdeveloped curriculum and with human forces whose level is below the middle. What do you think the outcome will be? Not to mention that the ministers of education all the time talk about how many schools equipped with computers they have built. In other words, the infrastructure has taken a big leap forward. For example, there are functional desks and tables, instead of the old ones. The laboratories contain new computers. There is now water and electricity in schools. The infrastructure has improved a lot, but the part that has to do with the curriculum has remained the same, and teachers have become less efficient than they should be.

I: Regarding infrastructure, 7% of the observations were on the infrastructure; the majority of the schools have problems in technology and related matters. Also, from the observations in lots of schools, the students complain about the laboratories, the technological infrastructure, stadiums, and services in general.

S: That is true. I will tell you why. Tell me, when did you start your research?

I: This year, sir. About four or five months ago.

S: Since 2000, there has been a significant slowdown in infrastructure and all aid money. All infrastructure was built with donor funds. After 2000, when the budget deficit began to appear, most of the money went to fill the budget deficit, and this has affected the infrastructure, especially during the last five or six years. Until 2011, the donor countries were trying to put an end to the budget deficit, including the budget for development.

From 2012 on, the deficit did not wholly close; therefore, the government did not pay the capital expenditure in the budget, so the expenses became very limited. The donors are forced to put their money in the budget for the coming expenses; therefore, only little remains, and this is reflected in the current situation right now. Do you remember when the authority in Gaza was a waste? You were walking down the streets feeling that there were no roads. Now, Gaza has been built the right way; the West Bank as well. However, the water and the electricity are both still dangerous. When I was a kid, before 1967, the desk that I studied on at school is the same that my son and grandchild have studied on up until 1994. It has been almost 30 years and these desks are worn out, but luckily, all this has improved now. However, they still complain about technology because, as you know, it moves quickly.

At first, the interest was in the desks, boards, chairs, and windows of the schools, then it moved to the computers, and now, they are complaining that there is no internet available at the schools. There are no programs that make education and teaching modern. They need internet because all students have smart phones, but when they go to school, they do not expect services of this kind. The students who have services at home complain about this issue.

I: It is right? There are lots of observations about technology in general. I agree with you because these days, technology has entered all houses and institutions, so this may be a part of their expectations.

Dr., during your tenure as Minister of Planning, were you coming up with plans to promote education in Palestine and use it as the basic community structure, along with the economic system and the financial system in Palestine?

S: The vision of development that has subsided in all of Palestine was to make sure that the future of Palestine depends on human capital. It is the locomotive which is going to carry the Palestinian economy and the Palestinian society for the coming decades. This is the right choice because our resources are limited and there is no other choice. This, of course, was a clash in the fulfilment because it needed good education and excellent health services.

What happened is that in the light of the budget situation, we put the plan in March, 2004. We worked on a conference in cooperation with ESCWA and the Authority adopted it, and when I was in the ministry, I suggested the same vision without any changing, and it was adopted, but still, there is little change to improve it. Even the national policy agenda laid down by

Dr. Rami in the same year had the same content. What has happened now is that the general budget is hard to change. It is not logical that security takes up to 40% of the budget. On the other hand, education, health, and social services take only 30% or 35% of the budget. Therefore, as we mentioned before, teaching is becoming a less attractive profession for people seeking a career.

Teachers need a good salary so that they can show off their abilities and give all they have to their career. People have started to see themselves outside the field of education because they do not consider it as decent work. There has been lots of talk on this issue, but there is no change. What controls the budget? It is the number of employees because 60% goes to paying salaries and about 10% or 15% goes to social transfers outside the subject, meaning it goes to poor people. From 10% to 15% goes to other expenses. Therefore, there is no margin left. You can say that the only margin for the government is development expenditure. You say that we do not need roads, electricity or water; rather improve education and technology by providing computer laboratories and IDSL network in schools. However, this has shrunk a lot because the authority needs money to pay for the salaries.

I: We have discussed the figures and noticed clearly that the society is politicalised. Nevertheless, do you think of a particular faction that controls education in Palestine more than other factions, sir?

S: Unfortunately, I tell you frankly that in the election that happened in 2006, Fateh was controlling all ministries. I heard that the majority of teachers voted for Hamas. The teachers who were employed by Fateh based on kinship have voted against it. Thus, kinship and connections played a significant role in the election specially when smart people did not go to education field.

I: Does the curriculum reflect the vision of a particular faction?

S: I doubt that it even has a vision. Unfortunately, it is a blind imitation of what happened in the neighbouring countries, and it is an experience that is not recommended to follow.

I: Is political Islam, in your opinion, involved in the formulation of national goals of education?

S: When Hamas took over the education field, they made necessary changes. They eliminated PE classes and turned them to religion classes. This increased the number of teachers as a result; they needed hundreds of extra teachers. Because of this, they needed to change many things, but the period was not enough to enable them to do all the changes that they wanted.

However, you know! They have an experience. Muslim brotherhood was always taking over the ministry of Awqaf and the ministry of education in Jordan. That was their alliance with the Jordanian regime. It was like this: the Muslim brotherhood protects the Jordanian regime and has nothing to do with it except to defend it. In return, the regime allows them to take over these two ministries. During elections, teachers and imams of mosques occupied the parliament because they used education to recruit. When they decided that they were moving politically, they found the audience in which they invested.

I: Are we talking about Hamas during the period of division, Sir?

S: No. I just want to hand you the government over. Hamas was always interested in organising the teachers since they knew it much better. Fateh do not want this because they do not like the teaching sector since they have everything else. They were doing better jobs in the other ministries. Hamas's plan and strategy depended mainly on teachers. For them, teachers were their fundamental assets. In fact, teachers have brought many voices for Hamas and made a broad base for them among the community. See the university students now! Hamas is active with the students of schools and universities, and because of the teachers, they choose to work in a systematic way.

I: That is the goal of my study, sir. Has the political polarisation really begun to fall to the primary levels?

S: No. They are aware of this subject, and of course, they were saying we do not want policy nor authority at least in Jordan because I used to study in the Jordanian University. I noticed how they work in the University of Jordan and how they work in the country.

For them, it meant full reconciliation with the regime, complete reconciliation and alliance, and we were like a leftist group at the University of Jordan. When we did a national activity, they would ruin it, and the regime is at rest, but at night, it would do some arrests. Especially on Earth day, which is a national day, they have ruined it for us. They were recruiting people for Afghanistan, considering that Palestine is not a priority, and the struggle for the homeland is not a struggle, and the testimony for the land is not a testimony.

Their ideas, of course, had two dimensions and they changed them after they were isolated, but that is what they were, their tactic of education and communication with people. This is very important for every political movement, but they have used religion to reach people, mobilise people, and intimidate people when necessary. Why religion? Because religion is a dominant force, and a simple issue for people.

I: An underlying issue for them.

S: Yes. Rooted; meaning if they were in a hurry, they would let people swear on the holy Quran. They want to sit down and explain a political program for the old women and what is the use of elections! If you want to enter election, then swear on the holy Quran that you want to choose this candidate over that one. Frankly, this is the most significant crime against society. This is corruption and it cannot happen. Religion is not for exploitation; neither are mosques or schools for exploitation.

I: This is my goal in my research: to explain how education is separate from these political things, whether it means different streams, movements of liberation..., etc.

Is education a tool to build a society or fragment a society? Now, according to the figures, it is used to disperse the community, to work for groups in the society, rather than dedicate itself to national unity.

S: Unfortunately, this is what is happening practically. The polarisation is so great, especially of the younger generation. We keep stuffing the head of the little boy with this is Halal and this is Haram, and make a little girl of five years old wear a hijab, telling them you should do this and do that. This is not good at all.

I: Sir, could you recommend some reforms to neutralise education in terms of the current political differences?

S: Honestly, I believe that it is necessary to separate religion entirely from the state and the government. Religion must not be the source of raising people, the source of education, the source of the curriculum, and the source of laws. All this does is cause stagnation.

The curriculum must help the students with critical thinking and not taking things for granted. The curriculum is supposed to be good, and teachers must make a promise to keep their party affiliation to themselves. They should not be allowed to practice party political propaganda, particularly in primary and secondary schools. Because at universities, the students are a bit mature to know and distinguish and think for themselves while those little kids at schools should only be given proper education that makes them think and analyze. They should be taught something about country love, how to love work, the system, and to fight against their enemy. They should learn that their affiliation to their country comes in the priority.

This way, the national cause will be adequately studied. It is allowed that in matters that open the way Fatah is being taught, the problem is that Fateh has a mixture and there are people in it who are more backward than some people in Hamas regarding the way they think, and for the religion issue, they have problems in understanding it.

Abu Ammar, may God grant his soul mercy, is secular in every sense of the word. He lived with people to show them equality, respect, to know the value of national unity, the value of harmony, and equality between people. This means that the

curriculum, along with teachers, must be removed from the ideology. It is not allowed to use the school as a propaganda platform for a political movement or for a trend, even if it is wrapped in a religious envelope.

I: Sir, in your opinion, is there a central Palestinian leadership? Alternatively, is it necessary to rebuild the system of leadership in the Palestinian society so that the entire society will bow to this leadership in a balanced manner?

S: Now, this division is the backbreaker, and after it, comes the legitimacy. This means if you look at the revolutionary law after Yasser Arafat, it became weak. After the 2006 elections and the victory of Hamas, Hamas claimed to be the legitimacy. Hamas took the revolutionary legitimacy in specific practices the same way as the other factions, but they quickly took the elections and won, and took the legitimacy of elections. No one is talking about the legitimacy of the president, but these elections have become worthy of an extended period.

We believe that the PLO is the legitimate representative, along with its president; however, the sense of people has diminished toward this legitimacy. People are feeling that there is a space regarding leading. This space is dangerous. There is no initiative and there is no new thinking that deals with the new challenges. We are talking about negotiation and America is the controller.

I: Is there any effort to build a unified leadership that takes into account the national cause.

S: No, there is none and there is not enough effort for unity because unity is essential since this is an Israeli conspiracy. The issue is not about Fateh and Hamas but about the whole Palestinian issue. The expulsion of the GS from the national project, in this way, will make Israel at ease for about 10-15 years from now. This will solve their biggest fears, which is the demographic dimension. They are currently satisfied, especially with the changes that are taking place in the region.

I: What are the results of the Palestinian division in education in Palestine? Your presence mentioned previously that education has been used as a route of division.

S: Education created a room for new forces, aspiring to win the elections, and it had an important role. It is the one which has brought up great generations and created schools. This polarisation gave Hamas a more substantial weight of the size that it needed to take. Based on its national balance, the national balance of Hamas that we know was until 1987.

I: It did not exist. It came after 1987.

S: It was not existing at all in the battlefield since it was not one of its priorities. It was busy casing problems here and there. It started with burning the Red Crescent and distributing propaganda to fighters in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

I do not doubt that Sheikh Ahmed Yassin had a vision and a desire for transformation, which saved the movement from the state of isolation that it was passing through. However, what made it successful in the elections were the mistakes of the national movement and the mistakes of Fatah. It was also as a result of what Israel did. The strikes by Israel on the peace process, the establishment of the PA, the attacks on its institutions, and the arrest of its activists are likely what made them win the elections in 2016. This is what led to the split, of course.

I: You mean 2006.

S: Yes, 2006. The subject, in my opinion, has a subjective aspect. Even the authority did not work correctly. There were serious mistakes, like letting corrupt people hold positions, the waste of public funds, random employment, and an unfair distribution of development work inside the country. There was also the setback of Oslo, where Fatah had invested a great deal, and the mistakes we talked about previously, which were fatal.

There were three members of Fateh competing with one member, meaning that they dispersed their votes. Hamas did not get the votes of the people; it got fewer votes. Fateh got more votes, but the voices were distributed over more than deputy and the result was absurd.

Anyway, let me just shorten the talk. The truth is that the division is usually the responsibility that is sought by the father of the child. Hamas is the one who started the division; they are aware that they made a mistake and that this mistake needs to be fixed. They passed through challenging circumstances and could have imposed on them the unity, but Fateh did not exploit it correctly. Why is that? Maybe because Abu Mazen was betting on the reconciliation. If it came true, then he would be at ease from the sides of America and Israel. However, those two did not give you a thing, how come you are betting on them!

There was a mistake in the assessment, and therefore, the circumstances when Hamas was in a state of profound regression, especially after the end of the Brotherhood rule in Egypt. Their situation was over.

I: Critical points, sir. I wish to continue with you until dawn. May God protect you.

Through the observations given to us by the participants in the questionnaire, they said that the Palestinian curriculum does not present the Palestinian issue, the history of Palestine, its geography, or any images of its important historical leadership. When I searched and followed the history of education in Palestine before 1918, from the days of the Ottomans to the days of the British to the days of rule within the League of Arab States to rule the occupation to the current government, before 1994 or before 1963 or before 1964, which is the PLO, I found out that the Palestinians did not have a clear, unified leadership.

Therefore, even some historians say that under the British occupation, the British government used to highlight the Jewish leaders or the Zionists, but did not highlight any Palestinian leadership, meaning that there was not any Palestinian leadership during the period.

S: They would arrest them, then banish them.

I: Yes. In your opinion, does the Palestinian curriculum represent Palestine or represent the history of Palestine? Talk about its geography? Is this allowed? Moreover, is it a part of the future?

S: I want you to pardon me because it has been a long time ago since I looked at the new curriculum and my kids have graduated a long time ago from civil school and it taught its curriculum in English. However, I doubt that for one day, they thought of improving the curriculum, even just a little bit.

You know, in the Jordan period, you were not allowed to say that you were a Palestinian. The Palestinian identity issue came to light after 1967. The political movement which began after 1967 taught us a little and gave us some knowledge. The Israelis did not do a thing to the curriculum. They just found the curriculum lagging behind, so they erased some words here and some phrases there and left it as it was. They removed a booklet called "National Education," which was practically a work of fiction about Palestine. If you want a curriculum expert, I am ready to talk to some of my friends and engage you.

I: That would be amazing!

S: Do not worry.

I: Thanks, sir.

What ideology do you think the current education system avoids and criminalizes those who will be exposed to it in Palestine?

S: In my opinion, the subject of armed struggle; I imagine that it was removed entirely. The subject of Arab nationalism; I doubt that there is anything about it left in the curriculum. And, of course, the issue of socialism and Marxism; they do not exist in the curriculum. These issues were always talked about in the Arab countries, except at certain stages.

The idea of socialism is taught differently from what Marx said and was not taught correctly even in the curricula of the universities. Most of the professors, who studied abroad, came from liberal American schools that have not any idea about the socialist thought.

I: By the way, Sir, the framework that I used is the scientific theory, which is the Marxist theory. These are seven political paragraphs. When we asked the participants, almost 1,400 people responded to us with the approval or disapproval of the 3,000 people. Is the political system in the Palestinian curriculum democratic and based on political pluralism?

50% of them said yes, and 24% agreed that the curriculum or the political system strengthens the affiliation of political parties; 72% said that it strengthens belonging to the homeland; 64% said that it enhances the importance of resisting occupation and promoting the rights of the Palestinian people, clarifying the Palestinian cause and their aspirations; 67% explained the right of return; 76% explained that the Palestinian people are part of the Arab world.

I have seven political phrases, seven social phrases, and ten ideological phrases, and if you have time, Sir, I would like to show them to you quickly.

S: These are expected answers. However, you have to go deep into these issues if it was true. First, is the Palestinian political system democratic or not? Well, frankly, there is democracy but not as what it should be. Democracy is not that if there is an election and people start to make propaganda. In the Arab countries, there is no doubt that we are advancing. There is no doubt that we have a democracy in the elections. However, we have journalists; if they criticise something, they must pay the price of their words.

There is an excellent censorship of the media, meaning, freedom of speech is available, but no one is treated with respect so that he cannot get out of line or bad things are going to happen. It is not true that there is democracy; in other words, you can say that it is just a formal democracy.

However, the second issue, regarding patriotism. You asked whether the Palestinian issue is studied correctly; I doubt that. What is being taught strengthens the belonging to the homeland emotionally, which is a natural thing. But, has this social affiliation relationship with daily practice? What is its relation to combating corruption, combating error, combating domination, combating discrimination between one and one, respecting efficiency, putting the right person in the right place, and belonging to the homeland? Political affiliation... What is political affiliation?

I: Will you excuse me; I had a problem in the internet connection.

S: No problem.

I: I took a lot of your time, sir, and I am so sorry for that.

S: No. Do not worry.

I: In the social phrases, almost all the reactions were perfect. The Palestinian educational system proved that there is brotherhood between Muslims and Christians, and 81% confirm that. 63% showed equality between the mosque and the church. Only 56% confirmed that the Palestinian curriculum contains the names of Palestinian cities and villages, which was forced to be evacuated, and this is shown in the red colour if you can see.

Many participants were advising, "Why not add the names of the Palestinian cities and villages where people were displaced?" The results in numbers were as follows. Do not distinguish between students according to the academic level; 74% agreed: the curriculum contains that the students mean belonging to the land. They defend the Palestinian land and love it (77%). The curriculum confirms that the Palestinians are lovers of comprehensive peace (75%), and the Palestinian curricula exposed the tragedy of prisoners in Israeli prisons (61%). Here, there were many tips on why they do not give more considerable weight in the Palestinian curriculum for prisoners and martyrs. That was regarding the social aspects. Regarding the ideological aspects, there were almost five.

S: Certainly these answers reflect the reality, but emotionally. If we had to discuss the "belonging to the land" issue, who would refuse to bring Israeli goods into his home! Meaning that most of the time, the answers to lots of things are emotional.

We assume that they are good people who want to see these kinds of things become a reality, but in fact, what happens in reality differs.

I: But it is close to reality, sir. You feel that it is close to reality.

S: But emotional. The answers are overcome by emotions. When people go to the grocery shop and find goods with the Israeli label on them, why do they buy them?

I: True, and sometimes even when there is a national alternative.

S: And in the presence of an alternative. Even if there is no alternative, why would they buy an avocado, for example, when they can dispense with it? Talking about boycotting, there are lots of things, actually, that citizens can dispense with if they have patriotism and a sense of belonging to their country.

Believe me, I worked a lot on the democracy thing before. I founded the Center for Peace and Democracy in 1992, and we said that we need the target group for us to be teachers because teachers are the sealers of national thought and opinion. One of our programs was that we decided to teach people the Declaration of Independence, which was not well known to people at that time although it is an essential historical document full of all the values that need to be taught at all the schools.

We could not enter the public schools to teach the Declaration of Independence. Why? Because they say that maybe someone will come and say that he wants to teach Alka'da ideology or any other ideology I cannot stop him. They did not know that the imbalance in the schools is within the teachers whom they brought! They will now teach the boys wrong thoughts—wrong ideology, anyway.

I: There are ten quick ideological points; I will present them to you. The Palestinian education system ensured that the curricula were equal to the heavenly books. 50% agreed, but most of them said that they focused on the aspects of the Quran more than other religions and other heavenly books.

50% also said that the Palestinian curriculum says that the Dome of the Rock mosque is the same as Al-Aqsa mosque. 75% say that the curriculum increased their faith in religions in general. 41% were saying that our curriculum or educational system in the country says that the resistance of the occupation is through negotiations. 83% believe that the Islamic religion is a comprehensive life system. 87% say that the Palestinian curriculum deepens the faith in God Almighty, the angels, and the books. 13% believe that the resistance to occupation is a terrorist act. 41% believe that the Palestinian curriculum attributes differences with the Jews. 76% believe that the Palestinian curriculum contributes to the promotion of the...

S: The soul and emotions.

I: Yes, the soul and emotions for the holy places in Palestine. 69% say that the curriculum increases the respect for political and national pluralism. These were almost all the results for the ideas that exist in general. Do you have any observations, Sir?

S: Honestly, these results need someone who is familiar with the curriculum more than I am. From the answers, I can notice that they are emotional answers. However, it is clear that the curriculum is burdened with religious thought in a negative way and not a positive way. However, in any case, let me see someone who had studied the curriculum and made researches on it.

I: I would be grateful.

S: From your review of someone who wrote on the subject, I can connect you to him/her.

I: I met a researcher, who wrote in the same subject previously, if you know her, and we talked about Dr. Ibrahim Abu Lubad; may God grant his soul mercy. I read so much of his writings. Also, we tried to meet Dr. Naim Abu Hummus before, but we could not manage to meet him. If there is a way we can meet him, then this would be very wonderful.

S: Naim is the one who ruined the world. He is my friend, and we were together at the University of Jordan. He is interested in the construction of schools and homes, and his entire audience voted for Hamas at that time.

I: I cannot find suitable words to thank you for this valuable information that meant a lot to me, sir.

I: No, on the contrary, it is not that valuable information. If there are any other observations you would like to offer, I am ready to listen.

S: Good job. The research seems to be informative. Did you conduct it there or here?

I: We assigned researchers from the Palestinian Statistics Authority, and we paid them, but they were amazing. They did their best to help us.

S: There is no doubt that they are professional.

I: I am the head of the analysis and research department in the Higher Colleges of Technology in the UAE. Of 50% of the students of higher education we have in the 17 college branches, I am in the senior management.

S: Good job.

I: I am responsible for institutional research and statistical analysis, so I have been working on these statistical issues for a while.

S: Good job

I: May God bless you. I have done in-depth analyses, so I am sure that when I say that 50% of the sample is satisfied, there are no differences between the partial groups as males and females. If you notice in the Mena Nova of test hock, T-Test, there are in-depth statistics analyses. Before we reach any generalisation, I must enter it previously to make sure of how things are going. I wanted my research to be rooted so that my people and my country would benefit from it.

S: If God will. Moreover, I will see one or two of the people who can help you and connect you to them.

I: Almost a month from now.

S: I will try to make it ready during these two days.

I: That would be great, Sir.

S: I will try to see someone from the teacher's creativity institution. They were working on the teachers, and they tried to develop a school interest in critical thinking and co-education, which means the modern methods of education. They can help you in matters that has to do with curriculum much better than I can.

I: That would be great. I am so grateful for all the efforts you make to help me.

S: I will bring you some of their names and let them contact you.

I: May God bless your efforts, and thank you again. Good night.

S: If you need anything else, I will be ready to help.

I: I am so glad and proud of you, Sir.

S: Thank you.

I: May God protect you and grant you His blessings.

S: Good night.

I: Good night.

Appendix 14: Interview Transcription- Political Leader 2

(SA=Interviewee, male; A political leader, 25 minutes; I= Ahmed "interviewer")

- I: Peace be with you, Sir. I thank you very much for accepting this interview with me about my study, which focuses on the reality of education in Palestine in the light of the changes that have taken place in the Palestinian society and affected its educational system. I hope the results of my study will be useful and fulfilling the ambitions of our people.
- SA: Amin
- I: Firstly, could you please tell us about yourself?
- SA: My name is Saleh Abu Nasser, I live in GS and I hold a master degree in management. I'm a member of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and responsible of it at the GS, a member of the Palestinian National Council, a member of the Union of Arab Parliamentarians and a member of the Board of Trustees of Al-Azhar University in Gaza.
- I: May Allah bless you, and allow us to begin our interview, please.
- SA: You welcome
- I: From your point of view, does the education in Palestine meet your aspirations as a political leader? and how is that?
- SA: In fact, the education in Palestine doesn't meet the required aspirations yet. It doesn't enhance the affiliation to the homeland and the Palestinian issue, despite that universities and schools were the torch and fuel for the first intifada of 1987 and the second intifada in 2000, and the recent intifada in Jerusalem. The largest number of martyrs, wounded and detainees are university and school students. Education needs to increase more the affiliation with the homeland and to the political, social and economic issues away from the unorganized politicization because we are still in the stage of the national liberation.
- I: From your point of view is the education politicized? Is it controlled by specific factions? Who is controlling? What is the dominant ideology?
- SA: Yes, education in Palestine is largely politicized. who controls education in schools and universities with more than 95% is the religious side (Hamas) and the national side (Fateh). The remaining part is related to other factions, especially the left. The controlling ideology in some universities is the Islamic ideology which is represented by Hamas, such as (the Islamic University). According to the National side such as Fatah movement (Al-Azhar University). In addition, there is a weak presence of other factions, especially the left.
- I: Do you think that the political Islam participated in formulating the national and social objectives of education? Why?
- SA: Yes, in some universities such as the Islamic University, it contributes significantly in formulating the national and social objectives of education, as well as in the schools of the GS where male and female students are separated. In addition, male teachers are appointed for male students and female teachers are appointed for female students in the GS. This is because of the controlling of Hamas on the GS since 2007. It is less at the West Bank.
- I: What are the required reforms that should be made to neutralize education from the current political differences?
- SA:
- 1- The organizations mustn't intervene in formulating the curricula in universities as well as in schools.
 - 2- The content of the curricula should be scientific and enhances the belonging to the land and its issues away from any party's programs.
 - 3- Issuing curricula that are appropriate to the Palestinian situation and should consider that the current phase is the national liberation phase.
 - 4- Integrating the theoretical and practical education according to the Palestinian situation.
 - 5- Knowing the requirements of the market and to promote it in the curriculum.
- I: From your point of view, what are the results of the Palestinian division of education in Palestine? Is the division enhanced by using education?
- SA:

- 1- Hamas controlled education in Gaza after the division and prevented much staff from practicing their jobs, especially teachers, and the objection done by Ramallah government.
- 2- The arrests in the West Bank and Gaza for some teachers and students.
- 3- The appointments are based on the organizational orientations and often unprofessional.
- 4- The appointments implemented at the universities and schools are based on the organizational orientation by the two parties of the division Fateh and Hamas and often unprofessional.

I: Does the Palestinian curriculum represent the Palestinian issue, the history of Palestine, its geographic and leaders?

SA: After the arrival of the Palestinian Authority in 1994, a major change was made in the curricula, especially at the primary and preparatory schools, as well as universities. They added geography and history, as well as political science departments in the universities. In addition, they added some modifications related to the Palestinian issue, the history of Palestine, the leaders of Palestine, prisoners and the development of the Palestinian issue.

I: What is the ideology that the current education system avoids and does not mention and criminalizes who mentions it?

SA:

- 1- The current education system avoids dealing with direct hostility sometimes with Zionism and occupation, especially in Jerusalem and a little bit fewer in the West Bank and Gaza.
- 2- It avoids addressing extremist Islamic movements and deprives those who are exposed to them, especially after the regional developments and the emergence of extremist Islamic movements.
- 3- In addition, the educational system avoids addressing the Arab political situations because it is an Arab internal affair and we must be neutral about these issues.

I: Does the education in Palestine represent the reality and serves the Palestinian society?

SA: The Education in Palestine still does not reflect the reality, does not serve the Palestinian society and doesn't provide the market needs of specializations. In addition, it doesn't represent as required various national issues, especially the right of return, self-determination and achieving the Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. This needs to be enhanced especially at the primary and intermediate stages.

I: What are the most important plans of the political leaders to promote education in Palestine? Is neutralizing education from politics within these plans?

SA: From my point of view,

- 1- The curricula should be Palestinian in its scientific content and appropriate to the Palestinian political, economic and social situation.
- 2- The employment in education should be in both universities and schools based on efficiency, professionalism and away from political orientations.
- 3- The educational system should match the requirements of the Palestinian labor market in terms of specializations and follow-up practical developments, research and advanced technology.
- 4- Neutralizing education from the political parties and promoting learning the issues of the country and its people. This will provide more freedom and expression of opinion towards the issues of our homeland.

Appendix 15: Interview Transcription- Political Leader 3

(R= Interviewee, male; A political leader, 25 minutes; A= Ahmed "interviewer")

- I: Peace be with you, Sir. I thank you very much for accepting this interview with me about my study, which focuses on the reality of education in Palestine in the light of the changes that have taken place in the Palestinian society and affected its educational system. I hope the results of my study will be useful and fulfilling the ambitions of our people.
- R: Amin
- I: Firstly, could you please tell us about yourself?
- R: I participated in the Palestinian National activities since 1975, and joined the Popular Front in 1977. I worked in the political guidance, syndicates, and partisan work. I also worked in ideological, media and diplomatic missions. A member of the Central Ideological Department of the Front. I worked as the Director of the Popular Front offices in Havana (Cuba) and Managua (Nicaragua) from 1988 to 1992. I also joined the University of Damascus in 1992 to 1993. I joined the University of Sana'a in 1993 until the end of 1994. I was appointed as a consultant of President Yasser Arafat for higher education since 1993. I established the Department of Sociology at Al-Aqsa University in 1995 and became its president for seven years. I achieved the "Professorship" degree in sociology in 2009. I am still interested in the intellectual and political work. In addition, I am seeking to establish a political party called "Wataniya" which means the "Nationalists" and aims to end the political division between the Palestinian brothers.
- I: May Allah bless you, and allow us to begin our interview, please.
- R: You welcome
- I: From your point of view,
- I: This is a part of the results. It contained social and ideological results and some advice provided by students, teachers, and parents to improve education in Palestine. Does education in Palestine meet your aspirations as political leaders? and how is that?
- R: I think that the curriculum is positive in general. It contains the latest sciences and its physical and moral achievements. However, it does not have a critical approach. It still depends on the indoctrination approach, which does not enhance the critical creative thinking. Therefore, I believe that education in Palestine lacks a general national educational philosophy that preserves the Palestinian national identity as an integral part of its Arab national environment. Moreover, our education does not promote the concepts of democracy and human rights which are considered as a noble human right and a type of thoughts that support freedom.
- I: Is education in Palestine politicized? Is it controlled by a specific faction? Who is controlling? What is the dominant ideology?
- R: I think that it is often politicized. When Hamas formed the tenth government, it tried to change the curriculum in order to respond it to its Islamic political thought. In addition, it focused on its leading figures and martyrs in particular. Our education is dominated by a religious ideology. However, we are not against religion as much as it should focus on the scientific dimension and achievements of the world. This means to adopt the new science and education for people away from nervous ideology and to enhance the national identity according to the Declaration of National Independence issued by the National Council in 1988.
- I: Is the political Islam involved in formulating the national and social education goals? why?

- R. The participation of political Islam was very weak, but after 2006 when Hamas won the legislative elections and formed the tenth government, it tried to re-examine the goals of education and to give it the religious dimension. It didn't succeed completely and its participation remained weak, especially after losing its government role after the coup in 2007. These events exiled it from the official Palestinian political system, despite its attempts and slogans to improve that it is legitimate according to the results of the elections in 2006.
- I. What reforms should be made to neutralize education from the current political differences?
- R. From my point of view,
- Formulating a comprehensive and an inclusive Palestinian educational philosophy that aims to promote the independent Palestinian national identity.
 - Promoting and preserving the students' freedoms as a human right.
 - The need of respecting human rights.
 - The educational process should be democratic in order to be learned and taught at the same time.
 - The curricula must support the principles of the national partnership and promote teamwork and voluntary actions among our people.
- I. What are the results of the Palestinian division of education in Palestine? Is education being used as a tool to promote the division?
- R. The division has the worst negative repercussions. Education remained unified in the formal sense, while what is presented to the students in the educational classes tends to be partisan fanaticism, especially in the GS. This strengthens the division and directs us to the separation between Gaza and the West Bank. In addition, it distinguishes between the political movements in the Palestinian political system.
- I. Does the Palestinian curriculum present the Palestinian history, geography, and its leaders?
- R. The curriculum contains several defects while dealing with the history and geography of Palestine and its leaders. This needs a serious reconsideration to respect our heritage and history, especially since there are two maps of Palestine. One of them is the historical area of 27 thousand km². The other is the political map that is limited to the 1967 borders and which the official political leadership desires to be the state of Palestine. This distorts the thought of our students and makes them confused about which Palestine we are talking about.
- I. What is the ideology that the current education system avoids and does not mention and criminalizes those who are exposed to it?
- R. The ideology of racial discrimination which promotes the concepts of terrorism and violence with its inhuman forms. The educational system seeks to make the values of tolerance, and social and human solidarity the basis of education, despite of many negative observations on both the performance and methodology.
- I. Does the education in Palestine represent the reality and serves the Palestinian society?
- R. It just represents a very little percentage. The main evidence of this is the quality of university graduates who have no work and created an unemployed crowd. The outputs of education must be associated with the needs of the

community first, and its political, economic and social conditions. Unfortunately, our education does not take these elements into consideration.

- I. What are the most important plans of the political leaders to promote education in Palestine? Is neutralizing education from politics within these plans?
- R. Since years ago the leaders talked about the automation of education and introducing technology. They also talked about new approaches, but so far they have not achieved what they are proposing. I do not think that neutralizing education far from politics is possible.

This is confirmed by the latest acts against employees who were turned to retirement as a result of the Fatah-Hamas dispute. The official and legitimate authority refuses to pay salaries to teachers. In addition, Hamas in Gaza appointed its followers and those who are close to it. The evidence on this is what is so called "the practice exam" which is a test of religion and Islamic jurisprudence and it is not related to the specialty of the graduate.

Appendix 16: Interview Transcription- Political Leader 4

(AR=Interviewee, male; Ph.D., A political leader, 20 minutes; I= Interviewer)

- I: Peace be with you, Sir. I thank you very much for accepting this interview with me about my study, which focuses on the reality of education in Palestine in the light of the changes that have taken place in the Palestinian society and affected its educational system. I hope the results of my study will be useful and fulfilling the ambitions of our people.
- AR: Amin
- I: Firstly, could you please tell us about yourself?
- AR: I am Dr. Abdel Rahman. I was born in 1961. I live in Nusairat camp in the middle of GS. I received a Ph.D. in Holy Quran and its Sciences. I am also holding the below positions:
- Member of the Palestinian Legislative Council for the Change and Reform Mass.
 - Chairman of the Education Committee in the Palestinian Legislative Council.
 - Head of Dar Al-Quran and Sunnah.
 - Member of the Board of Directors of the Palestine Scholars Association.
 - Founder and Chairman of the Center for Science and Culture.
 - Dean of the Faculty of the fundamentals of religion at the Islamic University.
- I: May Allah bless you, and allow us to begin our interview, please.
- AR: You welcome
- I: From your point of view, does education in Palestine meet your aspirations as political leaders? How?
- AR: Education and its methods don't meet our aspirations because we are controlled in our curriculum by the agreements with the occupation. We are not free to choose what we insert in our curricula and what we teach our students to somehow. The brothers in Ramallah were working alone in putting the curriculum without letting the specialists in the southern and the northern governorates contribute in putting the curriculum.
- I: Is education in Palestine politicized? Is it controlled by one party? Who is it? And what is the controlled ideology?
- AR: There is no doubt that Fateh controls the Ministry of education and this affects education and its curriculum in a way or another. Pure scientific curricula are objective and are not politicized on the other hand, what has to do with the humanitarian section like; National Education, Islamic Studies, Geography, and history, etc. are controlled by the programs of Palestine's liberation Organization which is controlled by Fateh.
- I: Is the political Islam involved in formulating the national and social education goals? Why?
- AR: Political Islam has no role in shaping the social and national goals of education because the owners of the Islamic political thought are excluded from participating in formulating the goals and developing the curricula that meet and achieve these goals.
- I: What reforms should be made to neutralize education from the current political differences?
- AR: All Palestinians must contribute in forming the goals of education and improving the curriculum taking in consideration the religion, values, and morals of the Palestinian people and that it is a conservative Muslim people and with a national cause. Our country is occupied and resistant against the occupation is our legitimate right and that Palestine is not Gaza and the West Bank but it is historical Palestine.
- I: What are the results of the Palestinian division of the education in Palestine? Is division using education used as a tool?
- AR: There is no doubt that division has affected education through isolation of the authority in Ramallah to manage the educational wheel and develop the curriculum and neglect of GS from the most basic rights of the Palestinian people in the southern provinces of the active participation and contacting with them.
- I: Does the Palestinian Curriculum present the Palestinian cause, the Palestinian history and geography and its leaders?

- AR: To somehow; it presents only what the agreements permit and what the international society allows which supports the authority and the educational curriculum in it. There are topics that can't be talked about in the curriculum because it is considered to be an incitement to violence and it is considered to be terrorism.
- I: What is the ideology that the current educational system avoids does not mention and criminalizes who is exposed to it?
- AR: The Islamic Ideology is that Islam is the source of morals, basics, and valuables. The educational system makes sure to present the Palestinian people as free, democrat and not fanatic people. For example, some of the Islamic characters have been removed from the new curriculums like Khaled Ben El Waleed and Salah El Deen El Ayobi and they neglected important topics like resistant.
- I: Does education in Palestine reflect reality and serve the Palestinian society?
- AR: Yes to somehow in the scientific things that other people share. As for the special case of the Palestinian People cause and how they are considered to be living in an occupied county, presenting their cause to the world, the massacres committed against them and the talk about their right of return; all these basic things are not the main subject in education.
- I: What are the most important plans for the political leaders to promote education in Palestine? Is neutralizing education from politics within the plans?
- AR: A scientific committee should be formed from the various orientations of the Palestinian people. This committee should seek to promote education away from the antagonisms and parties in order to serve the Palestinian people. Education should be neutralized from factions and parties. Education serves all the Palestinian people in all their orientations it even serves those who have no political party or orientation. It is necessary to be free from external pressures in setting the goals of education to serve the Palestinian people and their just cause.
- I: I appreciate your great efforts for making this interview very informative.
- AR: Thanks for considering me for this study.
- I: Thanks again
- AR: Goodbye