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Faculty of Graduate Studies**

Contemporary Public Relations Program

**MOTIVES BEHIND EFFECTIVE RISK
COMMUNICATION: THE PALESTINIAN CIVIL
DEFENSE AWARENESS MESSAGES AS A MODEL**

by

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Motives behind effective risk communication: the Palestinian Civil Defense awareness messages as a model

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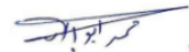
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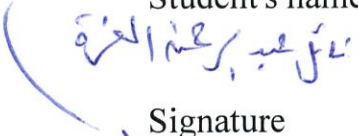
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Dedication

To the one who left his childhood to support his brothers and sons... my dear father

To a soul who comforted her children at night and left life early... my loving mother

To whom I lived with the best days of my childhood... my brothers and sisters

For whom my happiness is never complete without, my wife and children

To my organization... which I am proud to belong to

To everyone who supported me to complete this study

I dedicate this humble work

Acknowledgment

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I am thankful to all who supported me during this journey. Last but not least, I thank God for the blessings and for granting me the patience and strength to achieve this accomplishment.

Abstract

This study examined the concept of public awareness and its impact on building attitudes and creating a positive incentive for a behavioral intention towards the most common risks in Palestinian society. It is the first to investigate the understanding of the Palestinian public, who receive awareness messages, in terms of the degree of attention, persuasion, and motivation towards a behavioral intention. The main goal is to create more precautionous public and evaluate the impact of public awareness messages.

The researcher followed quantitative, qualitative, and quasi-experiment approaches by distributing a questionnaire to a random, stratified, and representative sample of 1514 Palestinians from the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip in the period from 17-6-2021 to 28-6-2021. Furthermore, a controlled social experiment or Quasi-experiment displayed two awareness messages; each represents a separate route according to the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM). The theory builds a persuasive model when people are exposed to a form of communication, processing it at high or low levels based on several factors (motivation, ability, degree of involvement, and need for cognition (NFC)). In line with the experiment, the researcher exposed 799 randomly chosen Palestinians to an awareness message (in a text form) about how electrical contact occurs, and another 714 Palestinians from the sample to an awareness message in the form of a picture bearing the civil defense logo and containing visual effects of the risk of electrical contact. Additionally, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with Public Relations (PR) officers and media practitioners in Palestinian Civil Defense (PCD) to determine how they formulate civil defense messages and what channels they employ to deliver those messages.

The researcher reached a set of results based on theoretical approaches and statistical tests appropriate for this type of study, stating that: 65% of Palestinians prefer risk messages to be in the form of a picture with visual effects rather than messages in the form of text. The researcher also found that only 4.5% of Palestinians have a high need for cognition, or “critical thinker,” who prefer research and scrutiny of messages. While for the demographic variables (except for the sex variable), results revealed no significant difference at the levels of attention, persuasion, and behavioral intention among respondents. Moreover, to understand the obstacles to persuasion in the

Palestinian society, the researcher employed the theory of Optimistic Bias (represented by the factors of ability and age), as determinates to the level of intensity people feel towards risk, leading to less level of persuasion when exposed to awareness messages of PCD. Finally, the researcher found that risk perception was higher among females and the elderly, which aligns with the findings of this study, where behavioral intention to act according to PCD messages is higher among females. In addition, the level of attention is significant and higher among the elderly for the same reasons.

List of Abbreviation

ANOVA	-	One-way analysis of variance
CERC	-	Connection Emergency Risk Communication
EJ	-	East Jerusalem
ELM	-	Elaboration Likelihood Model
GS	-	Gaza Strip
MI	-	Ministry of interior
NFC	-	Need For Cognation
NOAA	-	National Naval Officers Association's
NSF	-	National Security Forces
OB	-	Optimistic bias
PCCR	-	Prodromal Crises breakout Chronic Resolution
PCD	-	Palestinian Civil Defense
PCP	-	Palestine Civil Police
PCPO	-	Palestinian Center for Public Opinion
PR	-	Public relation
SMN	-	Social Media Network
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
WB	-	West Bank

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Chapter I

GENERAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Introduction

In recent years, the frequency and intensity of natural disasters have increased. According to the National Naval Officers Associations (NOAA) emergencies and disasters, social media platforms are often the first and the most frequent places to visit to gain information and establish situational awareness (Austin et al. 2012; Jin et al. 2014; Lindsay, 2011). Situational awareness refers to the knowledge of an emergency. Ideally, people should have access to reliable information that helps them understand the situation and what is required to cope with the event (Acar and Muraki, 2011; Hui et al. 2012). Government agencies and emergency managers aim to maintain and increase situational awareness by gathering and monitoring information, sending warnings, providing resources, and performing operations.

Annually, the Palestinian community is exposed to casualty and property losses due to a series of risks that are realized either by natural or human factors, such as negligence and lack of precaution, According to the Palestinian Civil Defense annual report for 2020, electrical fires were the main cause of fires in 450 facilities (including residential houses, factories and workshops). This places electrical fires as the third main cause of fires in Palestine, following negligent and arson fires. The report also indicated that five to eight people die annually as a result of electrical fires, and more than 150 people suffer various injuries caused by such fires. Additionally, most of the victims of these fires are children, elderly and disabled people, with mobility issues, limiting their ability to escape from accidents, making them also victims of the decisions of people who fall under their responsibility. Nowadays, the world is witnessing development in several sectors, all of which involve risks in one way or another, and the likelihood of achieving those rises and decreases based on the degrees of awareness of risks and compliance

with the laws and instructions issued by the competent authorities that work in emergencies, disasters, and crises.

Some of the laws that form the legal framework for civil defense state that programs and message awareness content should educate the public on dealing with risks and influence the behavior of individuals and organizations to adopt the concepts of safety and prevention. Aiming at reducing the levels of risks and their reflection on the reduction of human victims or physical damages (Civil Defense Law) No. (3) of 1998 Article (11) Article (12).

The Palestinian Civil Defense Authority (PCD) is one of the institutions working to produce educational and awareness content, with various tools that include videos, posters, campaigns, seminars, workshops, interviews on the media, field training, and more. The PCD's ultimate goal is to convey awareness messages to the public, change their attitudes and behaviors towards risk mitigation, and prepare them to respond to crises and disasters to reduce losses.

In this study, the researcher will investigate the motives behind the amount of conscious thought or scrutiny that Palestinians apply to PCD awareness messages. Secondly, he will look into the message design Palestinians prefer (i.e., a picture or a text). Thirdly, the researcher will control the effect both have on their levels of attention, persuasion by the message, and behavioral intent to take positive action in line with the PCD's message. Finally, he will consider other confounding variables that may intervene in these three levels; mainly, age and gender, as factors pertaining to self-perception of ability and vulnerability to risk.

The study is based on two main models; The Elaboration-Likelihood Model (ELM), which is one of the central models in persuasive psychology developed by Betty and

Cassio in 1986, and the Optimistic Bias model (coined by Weinstein (1980)) in which people believe that they are less likely than others to be exposed to risk.

To achieve the objectives of this study and address its problem for a better understanding of how to improve the impact of awareness-building messages of the PCD, the researcher followed a descriptive survey approach for a representative sample of 1514 Palestinians across 16 districts (including East Jerusalem) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It aimed to border the impact of awareness-raising messages representation of the PCD on Palestinians' attitudes towards specific risk messages.

Additionally, the researcher conducted personal interviews with public relations practitioners in the PCD to obtain a more comprehensive view of how the law enforcement organization responds to and operates within the Palestinian society's risk awareness needs and deficiencies.

The third tool of a "macro" quasi-experiment was applied on the society level by treating two groups with different messages (a picture and a text) and checking the three primary levels mentioned above across these messages as an indicator of risk-mitigation behaviors.

1.2 Study Terminology

Palestinian security forces

Idiomatically: They are the Palestinian military, police, and security formations that fall under three security forces: the National Security Forces, the General Intelligence, and the Internal Security Forces (Palestinian National Information Center, 2021).

Language: A term often used to describe legal organizations of paramilitary forces or internal security formations. In the legal context of many countries, the term may denote

different types of police and military units operating or the role using the force of non-traditional agencies (such as the gendarmerie) in providing internal, external, and public security (Cock & Nathan, 1989).

Procedure: The Palestinian security forces report to the Minister of Interior and assume responsibility for internal security in Palestinian society following the law. They constitute four agencies: police, civil defense, preventive security, and customs police (Ministry of Interior, 2021).

- ***Potential risks***

Idiomatically: A list of risks that are highly realized in Palestinian society. They include natural and industrial disasters and various accidents and crimes that threaten the Palestinian community and civil peace. Other activities comprise practices of violence, terrorism, and extremism within the borders of the Palestinian state (Palestinian National Information Center, 2021).

Language: The act of keeping peace within the borders of a sovereign state or other autonomous region and generally done by upholding national law and addressing internal security risks. The responsibility for internal security ranges from the police, civil protection agencies, and paramilitary forces, also in exceptional cases, the task is entrusted to armed forces (National Archives Catalogue, 2021).

Procedure: The set of risks that the public relations department addresses the Palestinian public about in the internal security services. The PR aims to educate the public about dealing with and reducing the degrees of their exposure to risk through sending awareness messages.

Rumor

Language: Information or ideas transmitted by people not based on a reliable source to testify to its authenticity or promoting news that lacks the truth. This information occupies widespread attention to spread chaos and misleading public opinion (Sabry, 2012).

Procedure: Rumors are of the phenomena that intensified and increased in Palestinian society with the development of social media. It affects public opinion, especially in cases of crises and emergencies. The internal security forces work to combat and confront through the intensive media activity implemented by the public relations department and the security services of the Ministry of the Interior.

Community Awareness

Idiomatically: It is the process of disseminating and societal educational and preventive measures to reduce various societal risks and challenges (Khater, 2015).

Language: It is the sharing of everyday awareness in the community of a series of problems facing communities daily. It is an advanced stage of the individuals' understanding of phenomena that surround them and constitutes a source of threat to their lives, safety, health, and environment (Sendie Framework, 2015-2030).

Procedure: One of the public relations objectives in the Ministry of Interior's (MI) security services seek to stabilize Palestinian society, spread civil peace, and reduce the damage caused by nature or human activity.

1.3 The Palestinian Ministry of Interior

Idiomatically: Is a sovereign national institution, with moral and social responsibility besides civil and security duties, which contributes to developing a free and democratic

society in an independent, sovereign Palestinian state. It does so by providing security and safety, imposing the rule of law, and establishing a stable security structure that enjoys respect and support at the national, regional, and international levels (Ministry of Interior, 2021).

- **Civil Defense**

Idiomatically: Civil defense means a set of necessary measures to protect civilians and their property, ensure the safety of transportation of all kinds, ensure the regular functioning of public utilities, and protect public and private buildings, facilities, and institutions, whether from the dangers of air raids or other acts of war, also from the threats of natural disasters, fires, marine rescue, or any other risks (Civil Defense Law No. 3 of 1998).

Procedure: It is one of the security services affiliated to the Ministry of Interior that carries out an awareness-raising activity intending to reduce risks resulting from nature, such as natural disasters, or resulting from human activity, such as factory and facility fires or various accidents.

- **Persuasion**

Idiomatically: Persuasion is a process to change attitudes or behaviors of a person (or a group) toward a particular event, idea, thing, or other person or persons. It implies written or spoken words that convey information, feelings, inference, or a combination thereof. Persuasion is also a tool often used to pursue personal gains, such as election advertising, business negotiations, or others (Gass et al. 2010).

Procedure: The communication process conducted by civil defense crews through awareness messages aims to convince the public about the importance of awareness of

the dangers surrounding them to increase the safety cycle and take the necessary precautions to avoid human and material losses.

- **Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)**

Idiomatically: It is a general theory of attitude change. The ELM provides an organizing framework for persuasion that applies to various sources, messages, recipients, and context variables (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). The basic tenet of the ELM is the presence of two routes to persuasion: the central and peripheral routes. These are anchored at two opposite points on a continuum, representing the likelihood of cognitive effort being expended on processing a message (Schumann et al. 2011). According to the theory, they aim to provide "a general framework for organizing, adjusting, classifying, and understanding the basic processes underlying the effectiveness of persuasive communication" (Schumann et al. 2011).

Procedure: The current study employed the ELM theory to understand the motives behind the amount of conscious thought or scrutiny that Palestinians apply to PCD awareness messages and their influence on persuasion and behavioral intent.

- **Quasi-experiment:**

Idiomatically: A quasi-experiment is an empirical interventional study used to estimate the causal impact of an intervention on a target population without random assignment. Quasi-experimental research shares similarities with the traditional experimental design or randomized controlled trial, but it specifically lacks the element of random selection to treatment or control. Instead, quasi-experimental designs typically allow the researcher to control the assignment to the treatment condition but using some criterion other than random assignment (Dinardo, 2008).

Procedure: It is an organized experiment conducted by the researcher by designing two awareness messages for two representative samples of the Palestinian society to find out which of the messages have the effect of building a more positive behavioral intention in line with PCD's goals.

- **Central route processing:**

Idiomatically: In the likelihood-weight model, this route is used when the message's recipient has the motivation and the ability to think about the message and its subject. When people process information centrally, the cognitive responses, or explanations, will be more relevant to the information to arrive at logical situations supported by it. This route is characterized by the fact that attitudes change tends to persist for a more extended period than attitudes based on persuasion in the peripheral route (Petty et al. 1986).

Procedure: The text preference over the picture as a message design when presented with both options.

- **Peripheral route processing:**

Idiomatically: peripheral or marginal. The route is used when the recipient of the message has little or no interest in its subject matter or has a weakness in the ability to process the message because it is at the end of a continuous series of detail so that the message recipient does not carefully examine the information and is likely to rely on general impressions. People rely on inferences (mental shortcuts) when processing information using the peripheral route to reduce mental effort (Cialdini, 1984).

Procedure: The picture preference over the text as a message design when presented with both options.

- **Behavioral intention**

Idiomatically: The degree “to which a person has formulated conscious plans to perform or not perform some specified future behavior” (Warshaw & Davis, 1985, p.214). They characterize Fishbein and Ajzen's original concept of behavioral intention as behavioral expectation.

Procedure: It is the third stage in which the researcher links awareness messages with the degree of attention and level of persuasion and creating the behavioral intention of the recipients of public awareness messages from the possible risks surrounding them.

1.4 Importance of the Study

The importance of this study comes as a diagnosis of persuasive messages that may or may not affect the attitude of the Palestinian citizen, which all institutions working in the field of public awareness should consider.

This study tested the assumptions of the Elaboration likelihood Model with a breakdown of the central model variables represented in (1) motivation to listen/read and (2) ability to comprehend. Then, the researcher measured their level of contribution to shaping their attitudes and behavior, which was not executed by any of the previous studies that employed the ELM model and that - in general - expressed them as a single unit.

Not to mention, the experimental approach incorporated into the survey sought to pinpoint causality rather than correlation between variables. Most of the studies that used this model adopted content analysis as a research tool or used the model as a guide to formulate their websites and messages to the public. This study, however, links public relations activities (through content creation) with the concepts of “public

awareness” that face complex challenges. Most importantly, the inherited prevailing lifestyles and miss beliefs people hold about themselves, which, according to the optimistic bias model - believe that they are less vulnerable to risks than others based on their young age and physical strength.

Also, the study explored the efforts made by the civil protection mechanisms in awareness-raising communication processes with the public. In addition, to their relevance to the responsibility of preserving human life as an essential value for the performance of organizations working in disaster and crisis control.

Taking into consideration the necessity of public awareness to handling disasters and crises, the completion of this study provides all awareness-oriented organizations or beneficiaries (e.g., Meteorology, Police, the Ministry of Health, the Red Crescent, the Environmental Quality Authority, the Ministry of Agriculture) with a factual representation of awareness-raising messages design. A design that integrates smoothly with the Palestinian cognitive processing analyses concluded in this study. In addition, a deeper investigation of the factors that shape this cognitive processing was considered when formulating messages to the Palestinian public to enhance message-to-audience targeting and segmentation.

1.5 The problem of the Study

Civil defense teams communicate with the Palestinian public on a daily basis. In normal circumstances, this process is done through three main channels: (1) media and social media platforms, (2) community training and awareness programs, (3) and campaigns for inspecting the requirements and application of safety standards in economic and residential facilities (Civil Defense Annual Report, 2019).

And the communication operations increase in emergencies when the civil defense raises the levels of preparedness to face some recurring dangers such as winter risks or high-temperature waves to warn citizens of the risks of these conditions. The main goal of these activities is to make recipients aware of the need to build an attitude towards risks to preserve human life and provide protection for their property (Annual Report, 2019).

There is still no specific guideline of the “most” influential messages that public relations practitioners should design to achieve public awareness and risk mitigation with all these efforts and activities. The practical problem is that the public doesn’t react incoherence to different PCD messages; for instance, farmers don’t act according to statements about getting rid of inflammable leftovers of trees, particularly in summer.

Therefore, this study speculates and attempts to see how the public tends to accept particular messages and overlook others, and the effect of their ability to comprehend the message and their lack of motivation to “listen” to PCD messages on the persuasion attempt. In other words, public relations in awareness-building institutions will have the basis for maximizing the influence of their messages by importing the “newly” suggested design by this study into the proper processing routes of Palestinian society.

In line with this, the study problem is to **investigate the motives behind the amount of conscious thought or scrutiny that Palestinians apply to PCD awareness messages.**

1.6 Objectives of the Study

Through this study, the researcher aims to analyze the most effective representation of awareness-oriented messages that the PCD should adopt to change the attitude (and hopefully the behavior in later stages of schema development) of the Palestinian citizen

towards risks, in addition to directing related organizations to produce messages that have more impact on the persuasion of audience. Finally, to put community awareness in a systematic framework to disaster and crisis management.

More specifically, this study will investigate if Palestinian attitudes formed through central route processing better predict their behavioral intent than those formed through peripheral route processing suggested by ELM. Further to the role of the level of education in inciting Palestinians to engage in central route processing. Other exciting aspects this study tackles are the level of involvement and relevance with the issue as predictors of Palestinians level of engagement in central route processing. Individualistic elements will also be examined; mainly, the role of need for cognition (NFC), general mood factors, and preference. Finally, the study will observe if Palestinians' optimistic bias influences the estimates of their odds of risk exposure and if there is a significant difference in the route choice attributed to demographic factors.

1.7 Questions of the Study

It must be emphasized that the importance of civil defense is to protect lives and property from grave dangers, which may occur from time to time due to some human errors and some neglect of either safety measures or not taking instructions seriously.

Accordingly, the central question of this study is: **“what are the motives behind the amount of conscious thought or scrutiny that a receiver applies to a message?”**

The following sub-questions should be addressed to answer the question as mentioned above:

1. Are Palestinian attitudes formed through central route processing better predict their behavioral intent than those formed through peripheral route processing?

2. To what extent does the level of education entice Palestinians to engage in central route processing?
3. To what extent does the level of involvement with the issue motivate Palestinians to engage in central route processing?
4. What is the percentage of Palestinians' with a high need for cognition (NFC), and what does it mean?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the general mood of Palestinians and their tendency to take the peripheral route of processing?
6. To what degree do Palestinians' optimistic bias influences the estimates of their odds of risk exposure?
7. Is there a significant difference in the choice of route attributed to demographic factors?

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature related to the current study. It is considered the capstone of this research, upon which the researcher carved out the study topic and questions and determined the appropriate tools and construction of methodology and theoretical framework.

The researcher reviewed previous studies that highlighted the “narrow topic” of the current study about community awareness messages. The studies were as follows:

- The study of Zhan Xu et al. (2019) titled “*Understanding public opinion in different disaster stages: a case study of Hurricane Irma.*”

It is a research paper prepared to examine public opinion on social networking sites (mainly Twitter) as it is one of the most consumed social networks, as a source for news, in disasters and crises. Zhan Xu and his colleagues analyzed 3.5 million tweets during the Irma disaster. The tweets were categorized according to the life stages of the disaster using the (Finks model of 1986¹), which classified the disaster into four stages: prodromal (beginning), acute, chronic, and termination. Results revealed that reliance on the media varies according to the different stages of the disaster life cycle.

It was found that the tweets in the first phase focused on early warning and lessons learned from the previous Hurricane Harvey. In contrast, most tweets were recorded in the acute phase and concentrated on people and animals' safety. While on the chronic stage, the tweets were tinged with anxiety about the lives of people and animals, heroic attitudes, positive behaviors, or some destructive behaviors such as theft and robbery.

As for the termination phase or stage, the tweets focused on the scientific aspects of

¹ The study used the four-stage model of crises and disasters according to their impact, the first phase (pre-crisis), the second (acute) phase of the crisis, the third phase (chronic) continuation of the crisis, and the fourth phase (termination) to begin the reconstruction phase.

climate change and the government's policies to face the crisis within intense discussions. This study is considered essential for emergency management officials to meet the needs of the public effectively in the stages of crisis and on time.

The study also indicated the need to pay attention to the first stage of the life of the crisis, which requires publishing important information about preparing for an impending crisis, how to evacuate, and where to shelter to make it clear for people how to protect themselves. In particular, people tend to reduce uncertainty and starve for confidence gains in dealing with complex situations (Zhan Xu et al. 2019).

- The study of Zhu et al. (2010) titled “*Information source and valence: How information credibility influences earthquake risk perception.*”

A field study was conducted on 243 adults who reside in areas (exposed to the risk of earthquakes) intending to investigate the relationship between the credibility of the information, its valence, and its impact on perceptions about earthquake risks.

The study provided four pieces of information from equal sources to the participants to test whether they remember one piece of information. Some results showed a significant effect of credibility on the perception of earthquake risks - high credibility sources of information shaped “real” perceptions of risk and behavior towards it, whereas negative and amplified news negatively influenced peoples’ behavior towards earthquake risks.

The results were interpreted based on the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), Accessibility Diagnosticity Model², and other cognitive theories and their general impact on improving communication in times of risk about earthquake messages. As a result, the study concluded with the importance of highlighting the effects of the

² A model of communication during disaster.

credibility of information, the valence of its sources on reducing vulnerability on individuals and society, and improving communication and information management in the environment surrounded by threats and risks in times of crisis and emergency.

- The study of Herovic et al. (2019) titled “*Challenges and opportunities for pre-crisis emergency risk communication: lessons learned from the earthquake community.*”

A field study of 21 interviews with seismologists worldwide about the challenges they face when communicating with the public during the pre-crisis phase of the earthquake. That is, in connection with the emergency risk communication model developed by the United States of America through the (CERC) program.

Herovic et al. (2019) indicated that scientific and technical communication with the community about earthquake risks effectively urges people to respond to messages than conveying information in simple terms. It also emphasized the need to establish the communication discourse on the dominant culture and employ it in communication campaigns about awareness during periods of calm and stability. The messages can also be more comprehensive to find solutions to awareness problems for most of the risks faced by society.

The study concluded with a communication model that helps the spokespersons clarify and correct any messages viewed by the community as unclear messages and improve communication messages during risks to ensure the continuity of the effectiveness of messages during the lifecycle of an earthquake.

- The study of Elisabeth et al. (2018) titled “*Efficacy and authority of the message sender during emergency evacuations: a mixed-methods study.*”

It is a field study conducted on 46 residents of coastal areas prone to hurricanes in New York City to investigate the failure of residents to evacuate before the storm hits. Two studies were analyzed to understand the evacuation decision-making process by residents of the New York coast and surrounding areas. Researchers have developed 34 upcoming storm warning messages to measure the population's response to these messages with the evacuation decision.

The study relied on the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) in processing persuasive messages based on motivation and the effects of emotional state that affect information processing in actual storms.

The study goal was to determine how message content and source affect evacuation behavior before the storm hit and make recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of communication strategies by local governments and emergency departments. The study results revealed the following: Six cases were excluded (one of them is under 18 years old, a person will depend on the decision of his wife and daughter, a shopkeeper who is not a resident of the targeted area). As a result, twelve of the participants will evacuate before the storm based on direct messages, while three people will evacuate during the storm, twenty-five people will remain in their homes. Surprisingly, according to the study, few of the sampled members were affected by their decision to evacuate based on the messages of the traditional authorities (e.g., the governor, the emergency department). Instead, discussions took place between family members and friends.

- The study of Arru et al. (2018) titled “*Population Behaviors in Crisis Situations - A Study of Behavioral Factors in the PPI Ineos Emergency Response Exercise.*”

It is a field study conducted during a simulation of a public safety exercise on the residents of Verdun, France, intending to measure individual reactions of people participating in the joint population exercise when the crisis occurred (in the risks of chemical incidents). Arru et al. (2018) used face-to-face interviews and surveys to identify different behavioral factors during emergencies and crises to complete this study.

The study's goal was to check the compatibility of early warning systems and respond to them during simulation exercises. It concluded that all participants felt anxious, regardless of age, social group, or profession, and most of them responded to the instructions and recommendations that must be adhered to during the exercise. Nevertheless, the study revealed the variation in behavior during warning sirens as if the warning was not taken seriously. For instance, more than 43.0% said that people's response was perfect, while 15.0% said they had carried out previous exercises and that 2.5% had gone through authentic experiences. Finally, 62.0% assured that they will carry out the activities for their perceptions of risks and that the training is necessary to raise awareness of the population.

- The study of Kim et al. (2018), titled “*The effects of narrative messages on optimistic bias in South Korea: a focus on controllability, collectivism, and risk perception in a massive fire crisis.*”

It is a comparative study between the impact of narrative and non-narrative of massive fire crisis on perceptions of risk and optimistic bias in Korean society. The analysis

assumed that the public is more involved when receiving narrative messages than statistical information and reduces the level of optimistic bias to increase their vulnerability. As a result, people usually believe that they are less likely than others to be injured or be at risk.

Kim et al. (2018) conducted a test on a sample of 208 Korean citizens, 105 Males, 103 Females from 18 to 60 years, divided randomly into two groups. The first group was given a narrative story of a major fire incident, and the second group was assigned a news report containing data and statistical figures for the same incident. Then, participants were asked about their ability to control, perceptions of risk, and optimistic bias.

This study showed that most of those who read the narrative messages tended to have similar risks, while the second group who read the statistical newsletters showed that the level of similar exposure to risk was shallow. In addition, people with limited capabilities showed a lower optimistic bias than those with control capacity on the treatment side.

- The study of Amini et al., (2020) titled “*Earthquake and safety school drills to safe school-resilient communities: A continuous attempt for promoting community-based disaster risk management in Iran.*”

A field study was conducted in Iran to measure the effectiveness of the national program for safety training and earthquake risk prevention on school students and the surrounding neighborhoods.

The study traced the forms of annual exercises carried out by the International Institute of Earthquake Engineering in schools from 1996 until 2018 and the effect of these drills

on building the capacity and resilience of society on how to deal with earthquake risks. One thousand people participated in 1996, while the number of participants in the year 2018 reached 13,788.

The study concluded that the exercises and drills enhance public awareness and are very useful in building resilient societies and increasing preparedness in Iran and other countries prone to earthquake risk. It also works on engaging communities in disaster risk reduction behavior by being aware of the environment in which they live. Furthermore, it creates high degrees of responsibility for them to change and improve their conditions, and as a result, reducing risk levels. Finally, it emphasized schools' role as a leading institution at local levels in societies of different social and economic natures.

- The study of Beckett et al, (2014), titled *“Implementing an Injury Prevention Briefing to aid delivery of key fire safety messages in UK children’s centers.”*

A qualitative study nested within a multi-center randomized controlled trial on child care centers in the UK aimed to translate a practical guide to procedures (Injury Prevention Briefing) (IPB) based on increased training and practical engagement among the participants supervising child care programs in British centers. Beckett et al., (2014) used the interview tool with key employees in 24 community centers supported by the initial training and the facilities needed to complete this study.

The study concluded that there is a need to integrate scientific views and evidence in awareness and education messages and enhance it through training and continuous facilitation.

The study's results came as follows: 83.0% of the participants considered the tool (IPB) simple, straightforward, raises awareness, stimulates discussion, and plays a fundamental role in changing and modifying behavior. Fifteen centers suggested minor amendments to the format and content. The majority of centers (75.0%) considered three factors that affected community centers: organizational change, provision of resources, and severe engagement in workgroups.

2.1 Commenting on Previous Studies

The main goal of reviewing the above-articulated studies and references from different parts of the world was to form a complete picture of disaster management and communication concepts during a crisis. Also, the literature review pinpointed two major theories that dealt with the motives behind the amount of conscious thought or scrutiny that people worldwide apply to awareness messages and the degree to which they were convinced and persuaded by them. The first was the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), and the second was optimistic bias, which the researcher will go into more details in the theoretical framework hereunder. Below are the points where the current study crosses with previous references. The researcher will highlight common grounds and differences upon which he carved out the statement of the problem of the present study.

The first study of Zhan Xu et al. (2019) on social media networks (SMN) agreed with the current research in using social media in the communication processes. But it was limited to the Twitter platform only and did not include all Media tools to publish awareness messages. In another context, Zhu et al. (2010) also employed the ELM model as the present study to direct their empirical analysis of the reliability of

information and its impact on building a perception of earthquake risks. However, their study was based on the importance of direct communication (word of mouth), but the current research focuses on the visual element when delivering the message through different channels. The same applies to Elisabeth et al. (2018) in their study of the effectiveness and authority of the message source in cases of an emergency evacuation, where they also employed the ELM model to understand how to convince the public of emergency evacuation before the crisis occurred. But, the current study expanded the focus to cover levels of engagement, motivation, ability to persuade, and building positive behavioral intention for the message recipient.

Herovic et al. (2019) study about the opportunities and challenges of pre-crisis communications was consistent with the researcher's analysis of the importance of awareness communications to warn and alert about expected crises. Nevertheless, Herovic et al. (2019) study relied on in-depth interviews with seismologists, while the current study relied on a cross-sectional survey.

The fifth study of Arru et al. (2018) was about understanding the behavior of the public in emergencies through virtual drills, thus relied upon on-field interviews. In addition, it monitored people's behavior at a specific time during a practical scenario, while the current study focused on predicting positive behavior that depends on attention and persuasion contained in public awareness messages. In another context, Kim et al. (2018) dealt with the effect of narrative messages on the optimistic bias and the impact of narrative and non-narrative statements on the risk perception of message recipients, which imitates the current study. In addition, both studies conducted a test on two public samples (an experimental setting). However, Kim et al. (2018) did their experiment to measure the effect of narrative and non-narrative on risk perception, and the current

study employed the ELM model to measure the degree of persuasion by comparing the central and peripheral routes of processing.

Amini et al. (2020) dealt with earthquake safety through school exercises and population neighborhoods in the school site. It focused on public awareness through the participation of the population in activities with school students. Part of the public awareness process differed with the present study in the absence of messages to persuade the public to join these exercises, as it dealt with a risk that may be specific to the masses whose areas of residence are vulnerable to earthquakes.

Finally, Beckett et al. (2014) focused on preparing a guide for awareness messages about fire dangers in childhood centers in Britain. The current study agreed with this study in the very concepts of engaging in continuous exercises to improve the ability of workers in childhood centers to deal with fires and turn these exercises into a procedural guide. Nonetheless, Beckett et al. (2014) study followed a qualitative approach by conducting experiments over periods. However, the current research follows a quantitative approach with a direct social experiment to test the effects of picture or text awareness messages on persuasion and behavior.

2.2 Interview results in Relation to Previous Studies

The results of personal interviews conducted with members of the civil defense community communication and outreach team indicated that the team very much relies on the training programs they received during their years of service. The different training opportunities received in various Arab countries or developed countries such as Japan, the United States or European countries, are relied upon extensively and the teams apply methods and techniques learned during these programs to their daily work

in communicating with the community. The Civil Defense implements dozens of exercises and simulations for the Palestinian community, whether evacuation training programs in public and private institutions and they also work on building the capacities of crisis teams in those institutions.

The results of the interviews also pointed out that the communication and outreach team received training on the use of social media mechanisms in terms of preparing appropriate content for different social media platforms, especially communication in times of crisis. The team meets regularly to brainstorm the best awareness content to be published via the different social media outlets. They also evaluate social media content performance through assessing 'reach' indicators, number of views as well as other indicators.

The results also indicated that the communication team, to some extent, relies on opinion polls in designing awareness messages, but this could be enhanced for more sufficient end results. Results noted that the team barely relies on studies, research, or scientific articles in developing the awareness content, and they do not apply models or theories related to communication processes, and in most cases, they apply methods and techniques they learned in the various trainings they received, whether through local or international courses.

Chapter III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

Theories are formulated to explain, predict, and understand phenomena and, in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of critical bounding assumptions. The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. It introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists (Abend, 2008).

In this chapter, the researcher presented an overview of public relations and the most important international and academic definitions of this field in various sectors. The researcher also addressed public relations departments in the Palestinian security forces affiliated with the Ministry of the Interior. Furthermore, he presented a summary of the definition of civil defense in Palestine, including the legal framework that regulates its work with an overview of its role in the field of public awareness. Later in this chapter, the researcher shed light on the mission of the PR Department and its media and communication tools used in public awareness programs.

Finally, he elaborated on the theories employed in this study, explained the independent and dependent variables in the conceptual framework, and presented a related variable model with suggested hypotheses to be tested.

3.1 The Concept of Public Relations

It is the continuous and planned task of the administration through which the various organizations seek to gain the understanding, sympathy, trust, and support of the internal and external masses. Therefore, it is responsible for maintaining the organizations' continuity by observing public opinion to ensure compatibility with the organization's policies or the establishment and its activities. Finally, it promotes

creative cooperation and effective performance of common interests of organizations and their audiences, using planned mass media (Al-Sharaa, 2009).

In terms of the verbal construction of the concept “*Public Relation*,” the term “*Relation*” means the process of connections and ties that exist between the organization and the masses dealing with it. At the same time, the term “*public*” means every group, audience, or segment of society that the organization has a relationship with, such as the public of workers or clients, suppliers, consumers, financiers, students, or other private, governmental bodies and agencies (Al-Sharaa, 2009).

Among the definitions of public relations is the description of public relations in the Oxford Dictionary: Public relations is the art based on scientific foundations to search for the most appropriate and successful methods of mutual interaction between the organization and its internal and external audiences to achieve its goals while observing social values and standards.

Public relations has a role that is not limited to introducing the activities of the agency but extends to receiving information from the public, to work through this information on developing the apparatus, and it also has a role in meeting the desires and needs of the internal public from different aspects and creating a positive mental picture of the institution among the external public (Zidan, 2008).

3.2 Risk communication:

Risk communication takes place in a variety of forms, ranging from warning labels on consumer products to interactions among governmental officials, industry representatives, the media, and members of the public on such highly charged situations, ethylene dibromide (EDB) contamination of food, Three Mile Island,

cigarette smoking, asbestos in school buildings, and Chernobyl. Experience has shown that risk communication efforts are a source of frustration for both risk communicators and for the intended recipients of the information. Government officials, industry representatives, and scientists note that laypeople frequently do not understand highly technical risk information and that individual biases and limitations may lead to distorted and inaccurate perceptions of many risk problems. Representatives of citizen groups and individual citizens are often equally frustrated, perceiving risk communicators and risk assessment experts to be uninterested in their concerns and unwilling to take immediate and direct actions to solve seemingly straightforward health, safety, and environmental problems. In this context, the media often plays the role of transmitter and translator of information between risk communicators and the public. But the media has been criticized for exaggerating risks and for emphasizing drama over scientific facts. (Covello et al., 1986).

3.3 PR in the Security Services of the Palestinian MI

According to their tasks, the Palestinian security services are divided into National Security Forces (NSF), Palestinian General Intelligence (PGI), and Internal Security Forces (ISF) (The Palestinian National Information Center, 2015). These bodies work to maintain security and order to provide a safe environment for the citizens and residents in the Palestinian territories and have the status of judicial control to enforce the law as one of the roles of the executive authority, as a component of the three state authorities (Law of Service in the Palestinian Security Forces, 2005).

The ISFs are under the Ministry of the Interior Civil Police, Civil Defense, Preventive Security, and Customs Police (Law of Service in the Palestinian Security Forces, 2005).

3.4 Palestinian Civil Defense

Civil defense means the set of necessary measures to protect civilians and their property, ensure the safety of all types of transportation, guarantee the regular functioning of public facilities, and protect public and private buildings, facilities, and institutions, whether from dangers of airstrikes and other warfare actions or the risks of natural disasters, fires, maritime rescue, or any other dangers (Law No. 3, 1998).

3.5 The Palestinian Civil Defense: Historical Background

During the years of occupation, before the Oslo Accord, the municipalities took over the establishment of firefighting teams with limited capabilities, equipment and training until 1994, after which they handed over headquarters, equipment and vehicles to the General Directorate of Civil Defense. In 1998, Civil Defense Law No. 3 was adopted, to regulate the work of civil defense. In the year 2000, the second Intifada broke out and the occupation forces targeted most of the infrastructure of the Palestinian security services until the year 2006. Many buildings and facilities of the Palestinian Civil Defense were severely damaged, limiting its further development.

In 2007, the Palestinian Ministry of Interior launched the sectoral plan for building and developing the Palestinian security forces and allocated a budget to build the capabilities of the civil defense so that it could carry out its responsibilities, including raising the Palestinian public's awareness and educating citizens of potential dangers and risks.

The Department of Public Relations and Media was established in 2009 with a basic website launched and distribution of awareness-raising material such as brochures and

magazines fit to that period of time. With the introduction of social media in the year 2013 and it becoming part of the daily life of the Palestinian society, the department moved towards utilizing and creating diverse content to suit the development. Media outlets began to allocate spaces for civil defense and media and public relations officials to talk about risks and risk mitigations. (Major Khaled Taha, Deputy Director of Public Relations)

Legal framework

The work of the Palestinian Civil Defense is regulated by Law No. 3 of 1998, containing 31 articles, and this law provides the formation of a supreme council to administer the state in emergencies headed by the Minister of Interior, and the membership of 32 members representing the public sector, the private sector of utility companies, trade unions, experts and volunteers (Article 3 Law No. 3, 1998).

Article 5 of the law also stipulates the following civil defense responsibilities:

- All civil defense work, including preparing projects and work plans, supervising their implementation, procuring the necessary tools and missions, studying the latest civil defense methods, and disseminating their education among the public.
- Take the necessary measures with the relevant committees to deal with disasters and emergencies in the cases decided by the President of the National Authority.
- It is about educating citizens about the work of civil defense, cooperating with its teams, and distributing flyers and advertisements related to its position in times of peace and war.

3.6 PR in the PCD

One of eleven central departments working in this institution implements the Civil Defense Law in three main directions. Firstly, covering news of accidents dealt with by civil defense crew of an extensive nature through media statements on various media outlets, including the institution's communication tools, and managing modern media relations that take into consideration the professional aspects of the organized media work environment (PCD Structure, 2015).

Secondly, it aims at building and developing relations between civil defense and stakeholders (e.g., government sector, private sector, non-governmental organizations, grassroots actors, influencers, and individuals) by organizing awareness campaigns, workshops, and conferences. Finally, producing informational and promotional materials to target audiences according to its various divisions (PCD Code of Conduct, 2016).

3.7 Objectives of PR in the PCD

There are several objectives of the PR department in the PCD, which are (PCD Code of Conduct 2016):

- Raising citizens' awareness of potential risks and building their capabilities to be more flexible alert in dealing with accidents to protect lives, private property, public property, the environment, and preserving the historical and cultural heritage of the Palestinian people (Sector Strategic Plan 2018-2021).
- To present a modern picture of civil defense work as experts in awareness, risk assessment, and handling various accidents.

- To build strategic relationships with organizations working in emergencies and media organizations.
- To build a network of supporters and volunteers to contribute to implementing a series of programs and events within the concept of civil protection.
- To make the public aware of potential risks to their lives and properties.

Public awareness and building community awareness of potential risks

The Palestinian environment and its lifestyle are exposed to eight main risks, arising from natural factors or man-made. Recurrence and vulnerability are the variables in the order of priority for these risks. Arranged ascendingly in the Comprehensive National Plan for Disaster Response (2019) as follows:

1. The Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories. Civil defense teams dealt with 46 cases of agricultural crop fires due to the occupation forces' assault on Palestinian property in the West Bank in 2020 (Annual Report, 2020).
2. The dangers of the winter season and the resulting accidents include closing streets due to the accumulation of water or the fall of trees, service columns, or billboards due to heavy rain and wind speed (Local Emergency Plan, 2020).
3. Snowstorms cause damage to the agricultural sector, disrupt roads, transportation, and essential services such as electricity and the Internet, and pose a threat to the conduct of public life (Local Emergency Plan, 2020).
4. Structure Fires due to electrical contact, negligence, intentional fires, and child tampering. The most common causes of fires (Civil Defense Strategy, 2018-2021)
5. Forest fires, crops, and wildfires (Annual Reports, 2015-2020).
6. Traffic accidents, traffic safety, and the increasing number of victims (Annual Police Report, 2019; Civil Defense Annual Report, 2019).

7. Earthquakes, considering Palestine is vulnerable to this type of risk according to its geographical location and historical record (Center for Earth Sciences and Seismic Engineering, 2009).
8. Infectious Diseases and Epidemics (Public Health Law No. 20, 2004).

3.8 Messages and Direct Communication

In addition to public relations, two central departments are working in civil defense to deliver civil defense messages:

The Community Training Department

A specialized department that works on preparing training programs:

- to build the capacity of the public on how to deal with accidents and respond to them in a fast and orderly manner,
- to break down barriers of fear for how to use safety and various response tools, and to organize simulation exercises in public institutions, facilities, or populated centers.

Approximately 400,000 beneficiaries (number decreased during COVID-19 to 60,000) receive this training annually, mainly for schools and universities, private sector employees from companies, factories, government ministries, security services, and homemakers. In addition, this administration communicates with community groups directly by organizing nearly 1,800 courses and training workshops for different groups (Annual Report, 2019).

3.9 Safety and Prevention Department

It is a specialized department that communicates with the public under Civil Defense Law No. 3 of 1998 to implement safety and prevention requirements, such as automatic

extinguishing systems, early warning, evacuation systems, safety in elevators, and other conditions that must be met in buildings, depending on the nature of the building's occupancy and the degree of hazard.

This administration works with public relations on the proper communication methods with the audience to persuade the target groups to implement these laws without a judiciary. In addition, this administration carries out nearly 55,000 field trips to grant work permits following the application of safety standards and to ensure that these facilities continue to operate within acceptable and low-risk limits (Annual Report 2019).

According to the annual reports issued by the Palestinian Civil Defense, the annual accident rate is approximately 16,000 thousand accidents, including 10,000 fire accidents and 6,000 rescue accidents. Fire incidents vary between forest fires, wildfires, crops, house fires, commercial and industrial establishments, and vehicle fires. The percentage of forest fires, wild and crops is 45.0% of all fires, and neglect is the highest cause of fires at 65%.

As for rescue, accidents vary between opening closed streets, removing flying objects, removing stranded people, traffic accidents, and evacuating people from buildings.

Incidents of opening closed streets and removing flying objects constituted 42.0% of all rescue incidents, followed by traffic accidents and the evacuation of stranded people from different buildings and structures at 21.0%.

Central Operations Reports also indicate a significant decrease in the number of casualties resulting from fires of structures. Plus, a substantial boost in terms of treatment, whether through direct intervention by well-trained people or through the

availability of automatic extinguishing and early warning systems installed in various facilities.

3.10 Tools of Communication with the Palestinian Community

The Public Relations Department communicates with the community through the following media tools:

1. **Social Media Platforms:** Facebook page verified with 180,000 followers and an account on Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and TikTok channels.
2. **SMS Bulks:** a bulk with 3 million text messages sent to subscribers of mobile phone networks to warn them of specific risks directly.
3. **TV And Radio Interviews:** are conducted by official and specialized speakers to clarify the civil defense positions.
4. **Accident Simulation Scenarios:** PCD annually organizes approximately 20 joint exercises with the police, emergency services, municipalities, and security forces to develop systems for responding to major events.
5. **Public Awareness Campaigns:** PCD organizes, on various occasions, public awareness campaigns in cities, villages, and camps for public awareness through which leaflets and posters are distributed to reach the different groups of society to integrate them with the various civil defense issues.³

3.11 Theories of the Study

Based on the thorough literature review of the topic and related variables, the researcher found that the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) and Optimistic Bias Theory are the

³ PCD website: www.pcd.ps.

frameworks necessary to understand and answer the questions of the current study and for linking the different factors of intended phenomena to be investigated.

The researcher employed a theory and a model to gauge the dynamics behind the levels of attention, persuasion, and behavioral intent activated by PCD's awareness messages. The first is the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), aimed at understanding the factors that constitute Palestinians' choice of elaboration (i.e., central or peripheral route). The second is the Optimistic Bias Theory, investigating the extent to which Palestinians believe they are vulnerable to risk.

The researcher presents below these theoretical frameworks in more detail:

3.12 Elaboration Likelihood Model

The Elaboration Likelihood Model is a general model of attitude change. It provides an organizing framework for persuasion that is argued to apply to the various source, message, recipient, and context variables (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). First, initiated by the scientist Edward Alworth Ross, one of the founders of sociology in the United States of America in 1908 CE and a researcher in social Discipline. The model appeared in the work of psychologists Jordan and Allport in the study of attitudes and persuasion as a central focus of social psychology in 1935, describing attitudes as a fundamental concept in contemporary psychology.

The basic tenet of the ELM is the presence of two routes to persuasion: the central and peripheral routes. These are anchored at two opposite points on a continuum, representing the likelihood of cognitive effort expending on processing a message. According to the ELM model, they aim to provide "a general framework for organizing, adjusting, classifying, and understanding the basic processes underlying the

effectiveness of persuasive communication” (Schumann et al. 2011, p. 15). Using a processing route over another depends on peoples’ motivation (i.e., how much they want to elaborate on the message) and ability (i.e., the degree to which they can absorb and understand the message). When motivation and ability are high, a receiver can engage in central route processing (Kitchen, 2014).

- **Central route:** In the ELM model, this route is used when the message's recipient has the motivation and the ability to think about the message and its subject. When people process information “centrally,” the cognitive responses, or explanations, will be more relevant to the information to arrive at logical situations supported by the information. This route is characterized by the fact that attitudes change tend to persist for a more extended period than attitudes based on persuasion in the peripheral route (Kerr, 2014).
- **Peripheral route:** The route is used when the recipient of the message has little or no interest in its subject matter or has a weakness in the ability to process the message. Mainly because it is at the end of a continuous series of detail, the message recipient does not carefully examine the information and is likely to rely on general impressions (i.e., inference and source credibility). Therefore, people rely on inferences (mental shortcuts) when processing data using the peripheral route to reduce mental efforts (Cialdini, 1984).

Model Assumptions

Central route processors are more valid and permanent than peripheral route processors. Alternatively, “attitudes formed through central route processing tend to be better predictors of a receiver’s behavior than those formed through peripheral route

processing” (LaBelle & Waldeck, 2020, p. 95). Furthermore, the model suggests that positions formed across the central route rather than the peripheral route are more vital and difficult to change. Meaning, when the central route is taken (including elaborate thinking in which all information is carefully analyzed), problem situations become more stable and less prone to counter-persuasion, while the peripheral pathway (which includes the low path) is followed by detailed reasoning based on inference and shortcuts to create a position) the short-term position change is likely to happen.

Based on that, the first hypothesis of this study is:

1. Palestinian Attitudes Formed Through Central Route Processing are Significantly Different (at The Rate of $\alpha = .05$) In Predicting Behavioral Intent Than Those Formed Through Peripheral Route Processing.

The model predicts that when a person encounters a form of communication, recipients can process it with different levels of detail (low degree or high degree), where factors of motivation and ability intervene to lead to the preferred level of processing. The factors that lead to different levels of elaboration are:

Personal involvement

The higher the person is involved with the issue, the more likely they will engage in central route processing. Accordingly, the research will examine if

2. Housewives, In Particular, Are Significantly (at the Rate Of $\alpha = .05$) More Motivated to Engage in Central Route Processing than Working People.

This hypothesis will lead to the second hypothesis, which is

- 3. Females Feel More Personally Responsible (at The Rate Of $A = .05$) than Males for the Action Required to Fight Electrical Contact, and Therefore Will be More Motivated To Engage in it.**

Depending on you

According to ELM, if the message suggests, “We depend on you” (and you alone) will likely boost the feeling of engagement. Therefore, the researcher hypothesizes that:

- 4. Palestinians are Significantly (at The Rate of $A = .05$) More Likely to Engage with The Picture Because it “Speaks to them” By Using the Word “حياتك” or “Your Life” than the Text; That is More General and Does Not Emphasize “The You” Factor.**

Relevance and number of arguments

The model suggests that six to nine arguments are more effective in enticing a positive behavior toward electrical contact, and a longer list of ideas is less effective to people who perceive the issue as irrelevant. In this sense, the researcher hypothesizes that

- 5. Less Involved Palestinians (Mainly Males and Working) and Were Presented with the Text (that Included a Long List of Arguments) are Less Likely to Change their Behavior Positively.**

Need for Cognition (NFC)

The theory suggests that some receivers have the “predisposition to effortful cognitive activities,” or as referred to by LaBelle & Waldeck (2020, p. 96), as the need for cognition. In line with this, the researcher hypothesizes the following:

6. Palestinians Who were Encountered with A Picture and Choose the Text as their Preferred Message are More Likely to Change their Behavior in Line with PCD's Messages.

In the same sense, the theory suggests that those with lower NFC are generally more likely to rely on peripheral route processing. Therefore, the researcher investigated if:

7. Palestinians Who were Encountered with the Text (at Low Attention Level) and at The Same Time Chose The Picture as their Preferred Message are Less Likely to Change their Behavior in Line with PCD's Messages.

General Mood

In addition, the model indicates that receivers with a more positive mood will be more likely to engage in peripheral route processing than those in a bad general mood. Hence, the researcher hypothesis the following:

8. Palestinians with a More Positive General Mood are Significantly (at the Rate of $A = .05$) More Likely to Choose the Picture if The Two Options were Presented.

Why does the processing route that an audience uses matter? Simply put, attitudes formed through peripheral route processing tend to be temporary and less stable over time than those constructed using peripheral route processing. Thus, when a persuader wants quick, one-time compliance (e.g., where to go to lunch), peripheral route source and message cues should help produce this outcome. But when the goal is long-term, permanent change (e.g., where to go to college), a persuasive source should aim to trigger central route processing. **Thus, these model analyses can help guide the design**

of strategic, persuasive messages once you have identified the overall objective for your communication.

3.14 ELM Criticism

Given the age of the theory, after three decades, in addition to the communications revolution, it is necessary to question the validity and appropriateness of the model.

Undoubtedly, the primary reason for the continued use of the ELM is the enormous amount of literature, with more than 125 articles and chapters in the advertising and marketing literature since 1981 (Schumann et al., 2012).

The model is most often used by advertising researchers when studying attitudinal change, which is assumed to be the process by which externally generated persuasion occurs. Any of the following three reasons can perhaps explain this strong literature support:

1. First, the model is well-constructed and clearly and articulates the persuasion process.
2. Second, the model is so descriptive that it can accommodate several different outcomes and can be used as support in many situations.
3. Finally, the model is so well cited in new research that its inclusion is expected, anticipated, and often required by journal editors and reviewers alike, representing one of marketing communication's sacred and most-cited models (Pasadeos et al. 2008).

3.15 Issues Concerning the ELM

Throughout its 30-year history, the ELM has been central to consumer behavior studies and has been referred to as one of the most influential models in marketing communication research (Szczepanski, 2006). Yet, despite its popularity, the ELM has also received significant criticism in the literature. In particular, four primary research areas have emerged surrounding the ELM:

1. the descriptive nature of the model;
2. continuum questions;
3. the issue of multi-channel processing; and
4. the analysis of the different variables which mediate elaboration likelihood.

In addition to the following facts:

- The mediating variables of effect, involvement, and cognitive responses have received the most attention in the literature (Kitchen, 2013).
- The ELM model was developed during the mass-media marketing communication days of the 1980s. Thus, the media environment and the way consumers process advertisements they are exposed to may well have changed, possibly dramatically (Kitchen, 2010, 2013).
- Recent studies have emphasized an online component whose inputs seem to affect persuasion (Hershberger, Karson 2003).

3.16 Optimistic Bias Theory

It is a bias that makes people think that they are less likely than others to face an adverse event. Four factors make a person biased toward optimism:

1. their desired end state,
2. cognitive mechanisms,
3. the information they have about themselves versus others,
4. and mood (Shepperd, 2002).

Many explanations for the optimistic bias come from the goals people want and outcomes they wish to see. People tend to view their risks as less than others because they believe that this is what other people want to see. These explanations include self-enhancement, self-presentation, and perceived control (Terry, 2002).

The optimistic bias is measured: by asking people to estimate their odds of exposure to risks and comparing this with people of the same sex and age. Control ability, age, and sex are among the variables that most influence self-esteem for the optimistic bias. Therefore, the researcher investigated:

9. If There is A Significant Correlation (at the Rate of $\alpha = .05$) Between Behavioral Intent Towards Risk and Age, Educational Level, Sex, and Income.

The researcher added the educational level and income variables to reinforce the perceived control factor of peoples' self-perception of their vulnerability to risk.

In addition to the theory and model paradoxes above, the researcher, by applying the experimental design in this study, investigated:

10. If there is a significant difference (at the rate of $\alpha = .05$) in behavioral intent attributed to message design.

3.17 Conceptual Framework

The theory and model above suggest several independent and dependent variables that this study investigated, as follows:

Table 1 Independent and dependent variables

Description		Variable	Level of analysis in the model
Route processing	Central Peripheral	Moderator	First
Optimistic Bias	Age	Independent	Second
Level of involvement	Sex	Independent	
Need for cognition		Independent	
General mood		Independent	
Level of attention		Mediator	Third
Level of persuasion		Mediator	
Level of behavioral intent		Dependent	

To sum up, the research will answer the following groups of sub-hypothesis, as presented in the variable model hereunder:

- **The first level of analysis: The Variable Model is significantly (at the rate of $\alpha = .05$) different between the central and peripheral processing route.**
- **The second level of analysis: Are there significant correlations (at the rate of $\alpha = .05$) between Optimistic Bias variables (OB_n) and levels of attention, persuasion, and behavioral intent.**
- **The third level of analysis**
 - **H₁**: Is there a significant correlation (at the rate of $\alpha = .05$) between the level of attention and persuasion?

- **H₂**: Is there a significant correlation (at the rate of $\alpha = .05$) between the level of persuasion and behavioral intent?
- **H₃**: Is there a significant direct and indirect effect (at the rate of $\alpha = .05$) of the level of attention to behavioral intent?

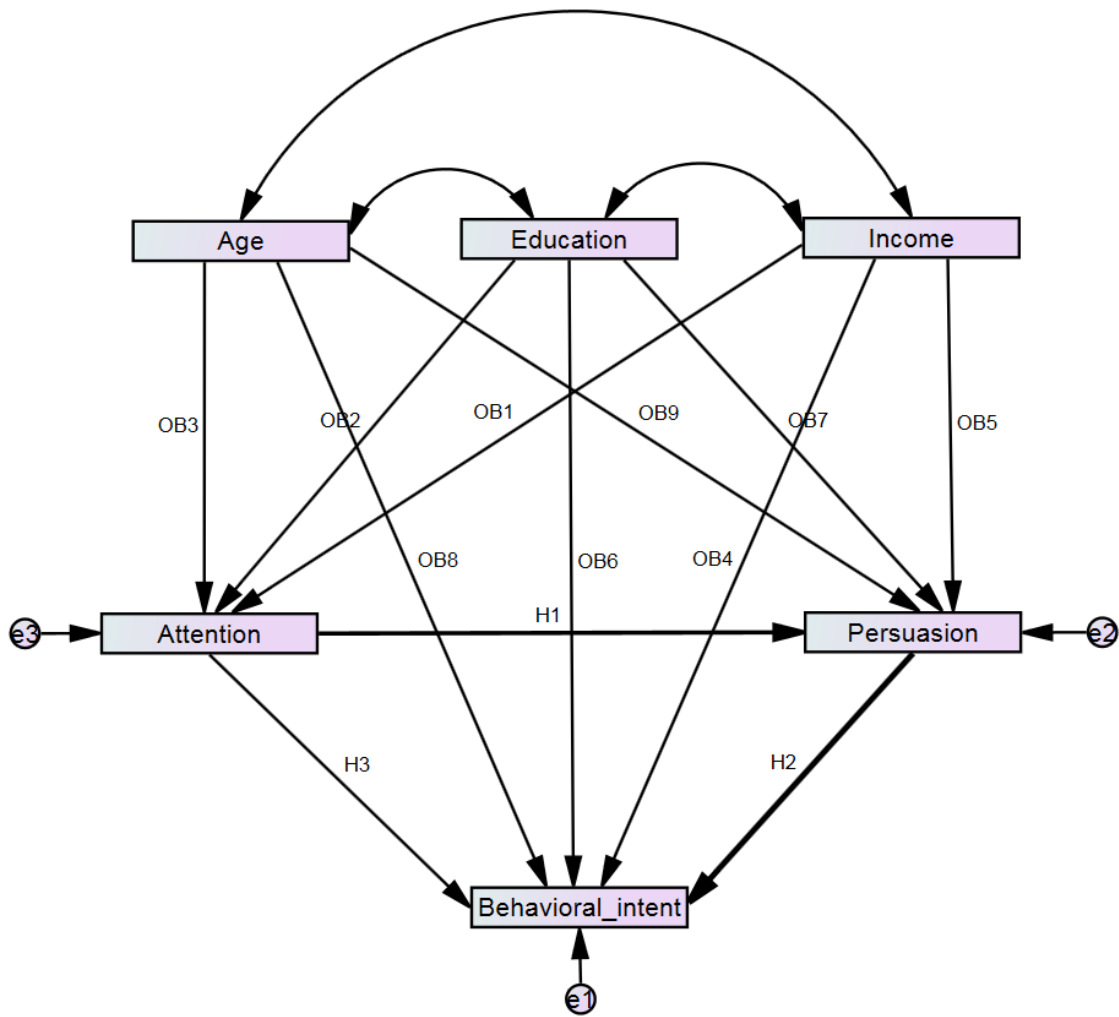


Figure 1 Variable Model

Chapter IV

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

4.1 Research Design

The researcher aims to analyze the most effective representation of awareness-oriented messages that the PCD should adopt to change the attitude (and hopefully the behavior in later stages of schema development) of the Palestinian citizen towards risks, in addition to directing related organizations to produce messages that have more impact on the persuasion of audience.

A triangulation set of theories and models were used to answer the study questions. Hence, a qualitative; and a quantitative cross-sectional research method was used; a cross-sectional study measures “the outcome and the exposure at the same time among a group of people at a specific point in time” (Setia, 2016, p. 260). This type of researches is usually used to identify the correlation between variables (Christeen & Johnson, 2008).

A quantitative research method is known as “a systematic investigation of a specific case by collecting and analyzing numeral or quantifiable data to predict future changes” (Apuke, 2017, p. 43). At the same time, a qualitative research method is “designed to collect non-numerical data, such as text, audio, or videos, to understand the concepts, mechanisms, and opinions regarding a particular topic” (Aspers, 2019; p. 142).

4.2 Descriptive Method

The method has three important branches: the descriptive survey approach, the correlational approach, and the development and growth studies approach. In this study, the researcher used a mix of a descriptive survey approach and a correlational approach. These approaches rely on different research tools such as surveys, interviews, and

experiments (Thomlison, 2001). The researcher chose surveys and personal interviews in line with the literature review and goals of the current study.

Qualitative method

The researcher used a qualitative research tool (i.e., the personal interview) to understand better the processes and principles of public relations practitioners at the PCD standing on the other side of the tunnel in this study. Therefore, the qualitative approach is considered the most capable of reaching accurate results by allowing the sample members to disclose their opinion through personal interviews, observations, and open questions (Patton, 2005). In addition, this method gave sufficient ability to identify the points of view through the interaction between the researcher and the sample community.

Experimental method

The researcher determined the various conditions related to the study problem by experimenting with different groups (i.e., treatment and control groups):

1. representing awareness messages to the control group according to the central route in the form of a text that includes accurate and specific scientific information, and peripheral route, in the form of a picture and brief excerpts that contains visual effects to the treatment group.

By adjusting for essential study variables to test for causal relationships, the researcher could link the independent variables with the dependent variables through mediators and moderators, as mentioned in the previous chapter.

4.3 Instrumentation

The researcher chose the survey and a personal interview to answer the present study's questions and test hypotheses. This section discusses in detail each instrument.

4.4 Survey

A questionnaire was used to collect primary data from the study population and draw up the relationship between the variables (Sukamolson, 2007). Thereby, a representative survey was designed based on theories and previous studies.

All of the questions were closed-ended questions, in which the researcher used the symmetric 5-Likert scale to measure the items of each section, in which "1" represents "lowest value" and "5" for "highest value."

Questionnaire questions

The questionnaire contained a set of dimensions necessary to achieve the objectives of the study, as follows:

1. *"To what extent did the researcher feel that the respondents had carefully read the awareness message?"*
 - a. *Objective:* to know the degree of involvement in understanding and analyzing the message. The researcher used a closed question from 1-5 where one is "not interested," and five is "very interested."
2. *"To what extent might this awareness message persuaded you of the risk of electrical contact?"*
 - a. *Objective:* The researcher used a closed question from 1-5 where one is "not persuaded," and five is "very persuaded."

3. *“To what extent do you think you are motivated or unmotivated to research more about the topic of electrical contact?”*
 - a. *Objective:* The researcher used a closed question from 1-5 where one is “not motivated,” and five is “very motivated.”
4. *“If you were exposed to the following two messages from the Palestinian Civil Defense, which talk about the same topic, which of them will interest you more?”*
 - a. *Objective:* This variable represents, in a way or another, the level of information processing the respondent more likely adapts with.
5. *“Why did you choose this message and preferred it over the other message?”*
 - a. *Objective:* The researcher used an open question to see the reasons behind their choice of a message design over another. This questions led for a better understanding of the motives behind their choice. Then, the researcher had to recode their answers and represent them for further description and analysis.
6. The last section included demographic variables, including sex, age, marital status, income, education level, and place of residence.
 - a. *Objective:* The goal of this section was to examine the presence or absence of statistically significant differences and correlation between variables of the study attributed to these variables.

To sum up, the researcher designed two awareness messages:

1. a picture containing a visual element with information about the risk of electrical contact, as follows:



2. and a text that explains how electrical contact occurs, as follows:



These messages aimed to realize differences of levels of attention and persuasion to the risk of electrical contact between both designs and to border the effect of these variables on respondents' behavioral intention in line with PCPO's awareness goals.

4.5 Sample Design

The researcher requested assistance from the Palestinian Center for Public Opinion (PCPO) to provide the possibility of conducting a comprehensive opinion poll or

Omnibus Poll on the part of the center's social responsibility to serve purposeful scientific research.

The study sample consisted of a random sample of 1514 people representing population models from (West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem) aged 18 years and over, and the sample was distributed across 16 governorates.

The center proposed the following sample design to collect the data for the study:

1. a stratified sample was chosen according to governorate population size,
2. then another stratified sample within each governorate was taken across rural and urban areas, and refugee camps,
3. then a random sample of 194 polling centers within these regions was chosen.

The survey took place between June 01 - 28, 2021, with a margin of error of ($\pm 2.06\%$) at a confidence level of (95.0%).

Sample characteristics

- The percentage of females who participated in this study was (48.2%), while the percentage of males was (51.8%).
- The distribution of the sample pertaining to the residential area was as follows: (52.4%) from urban, (34.4%) from rural, and (13.2%) from camps.
- The average age of the sample was 35.1 years, while the average education was 12.2 years.
- The average number of family members was six members.
- As for the social status of the sample members, their percentage was as follows: (66.6%) married, (28.8) single, and (4.14) other.
- In addition, the survey respondents were (99.3%) Muslims and (0.7%) Christians, as follows:

Table 2 Summary of Demographics

Variable	Items	Percentage	Frequency
Sex	Male	51.8	785
	Female	48.2	729
Place of residence	City	52.4	794
	Village	34.4	521
	Camp	13.1	199
Marital status	Single	28.4	430
	Married	66.1	1001
	Divorced	1.7	26
	Widowed	2.7	41
	Refused to answer	1.1	16
Governorate	Jenin	10.7	99
	Tubas	2.5	23
	Tulkarem	6.5	60
	Nablus	12.9	119
	Qalqilya	4.0	37
	Salfit	2.4	22
	Ramallah and Al-Bireh	12.1	112
	Jericho	2.3	21
	Jerusalem	15.6	144
	Bethlehem	7.3	67
	Hebron	23.7	219
	North Gaza	19.6	116
	Gaza	34.5	204
	Dier al Balah	14.4	85
	Rafah	11.7	69
Khan Yunis	19.8	117	
Highest educational degree	Secondary or less	51.3	778
	College	22.2	337
	University degree or higher	24.9	377
	Refused to answer	.14	22
Occupation	Employed	28.1	426
	Unemployed	14.2	215
	Home-carer	25.3	383
	Student / trainee	12.7	192
	Retired	2.7	41

The sample was distributed to the different governorates in a manner commensurate with the population size of each governorate and based on the estimates issued by the Palestinian Statistics Center on December 31, 2016. They are as follows:

4.6 Data Collection

Representative samples were selected through the Palestinian Center for Public Opinion (PCPO) in Palestine. One of the leading Palestinian research institutions, established in 1994 as a private shareholding company in Bethlehem. They have over 27 years of experience with administrative and field teams that have qualified them to complete opinion research in all descriptions for various institutions, especially the media, government, and civil society organizations.⁴

4.7 Data Analysis

The collected data from the survey; was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 24 (SPSS 24) to analyze the data. The main statistical tests used in this study are as follows:

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Mean, Median, and Frequencies.
- **T-test;** used to test the significane correlation between a continuous variable (usually it is the dependent variable) and a discrete variable (two categories/ groups) (usually it is the independent variable) (SPSS, 2020).
- **One-Way Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA);** to test the correlation between a continuous variable (usually it is the dependent variable) and a discrete variable (three categories/ groups and more) (usually it is the independent variable) (SPSS, 2020).
- **Tukey Post Hoc Test:** it is an integral part of the ANOVA test and is primarily used to determine the statistically significant results among the groups (Frost, 2020).

⁴ PCPO official website, <http://www.pcpo.org>.

- **Pearson Correlation Coefficient** is used to test the correlation between two continuous variables (three categories/groups and more) (SPSS, 2020).
- **Alpha-Cronbach**; is a statistical test to measure the internal consistency and the instrument reliability (Taber, 2018, p. 1275).
- **Bivariate Regression**; is a linear equation that illustrates the relationship between a dependent and independent variable (Murray, 2019).
- **Multiple Regression**; to predict the contribution value of each variable to the total variance explained (SPSS, 2020).
- **Path Analysis** :is a form of multiple regression statistical analysis that is used to evaluate causal models by examining the relationships between a dependent variable and two or more independent variables. By using this method, one can estimate both the magnitude and significance of causal connections between variables. (Crossman, 2019).

4.8 Personal Interviews

Personal interviews are considered one of the essential tools for qualitative research, in which open questions prepared in advance are presented to the respondents. Then, through dialogue, interaction, and inspiring other questions, the research could answer all questions around the research problem and be familiar with the issue sufficiently and clearly. Another critical aspect of the personal interview is the gestures and looks that show the researcher the views of the interviewees and the extent of their interest in the research topic (Valenzuela & Shrivastava, 2002).

Interviews sample

As mentioned above, a personal interview is an efficient instrument that falls under qualitative research tools; used to attain detailed information, opinions, and understand the interviewees' experience or perspective (Showkat, 2017, p. 1). The central guiding questions for the interviews were as following:

1. **First interlocutor:** general information PCD public relations.
2. **Second interlocutor:** public awareness and risk communication.
3. **Third interlocutor:** efficiency and effectiveness.

The researcher conducted personal interviews with PCD public relations officers. The interview included:

1. *Lieutenant-Colonel* Mustafa Niaz, Director of the Community Training Department,
2. *Major* Khaled Taha, Deputy Director of Public Relations,
3. and *Captain* Abdel-Wadood Al-Najjar, Head of the Public Awareness Department.

4.9 The Scope of the Study

Spatial scope

- Survey Spatial Limitations

The study was limited to Palestinians residing in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem.

- In-depth interview Spatial Limitations

The spatial limit for the interviews was the General Directorate of Civil Defense, the Department of Community Training, and the Department of Public Relations and Media, in Al-Bireh Al-Sharayet

Temporal scope

The cross-sectional data was conducted from June 01, 2021 until June 28, 2021.

Chapter V

FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The researcher presents the study's findings below into multiple dimensions: a descriptive analysis of 1514 Palestinian respondents. The main variables of analysis are “Attention to the message,” “Level of Persuasion,” “Behavioral Intent,” “Route of processing,” and other related factors. Then, a more profound analysis followed them according to the control variable of presenting awareness messages to respondents as a picture (for 715 respondents) or as a text (for 799 respondents). Added to that, the researcher tests for any significant differences and correlations attributed to demographic factors. Finally, the section ends with a more thorough regression analysis of Behavioral intent as a dependent variable and persuasion and attention as independent variables, segmented in line with the control variable.

5.2 General Findings

The results revealed that 65.0% of the study sample took the peripheral route to persuasion (i.e., they chose the picture), and only 35.0% preferred the central route (i.e., they chose the text).

The percentage of NFCs in Palestine is 4.5%, which are defined with great attention to messages and prefer the central route of processing to elaborate on messages by PCD.

The level of attention among Palestinians to messages of PCD (whether they were presented with a picture or a text) was 3.5 out of 5, meaning that Palestinians barely gave attention to the message. The graph hereunder presents these results in more depth:

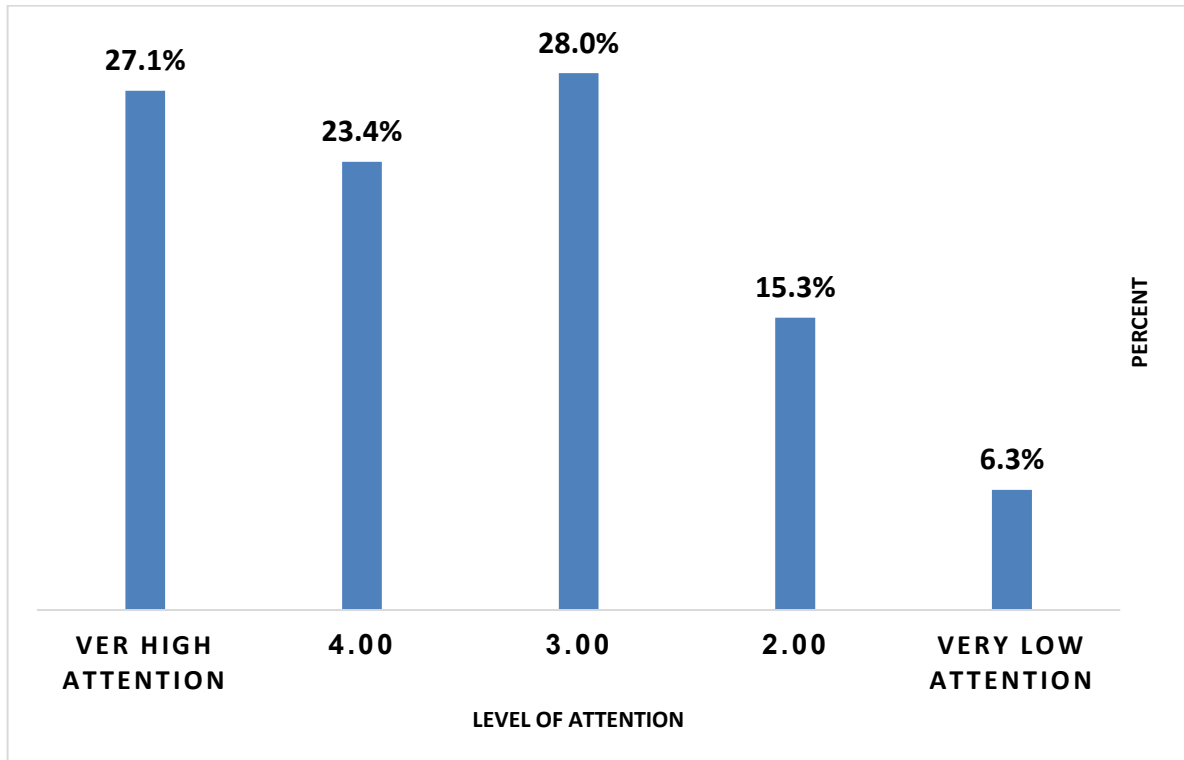


Figure 2 The level of attention among Palestinians to messages of PCD

The level of persuasion among Palestinians to messages of PCD (whether they were presented with a picture or a text) was 3.5 out 5, meaning that Palestinians were somewhat persuaded by the message itself. For example, as shown in the graph below:

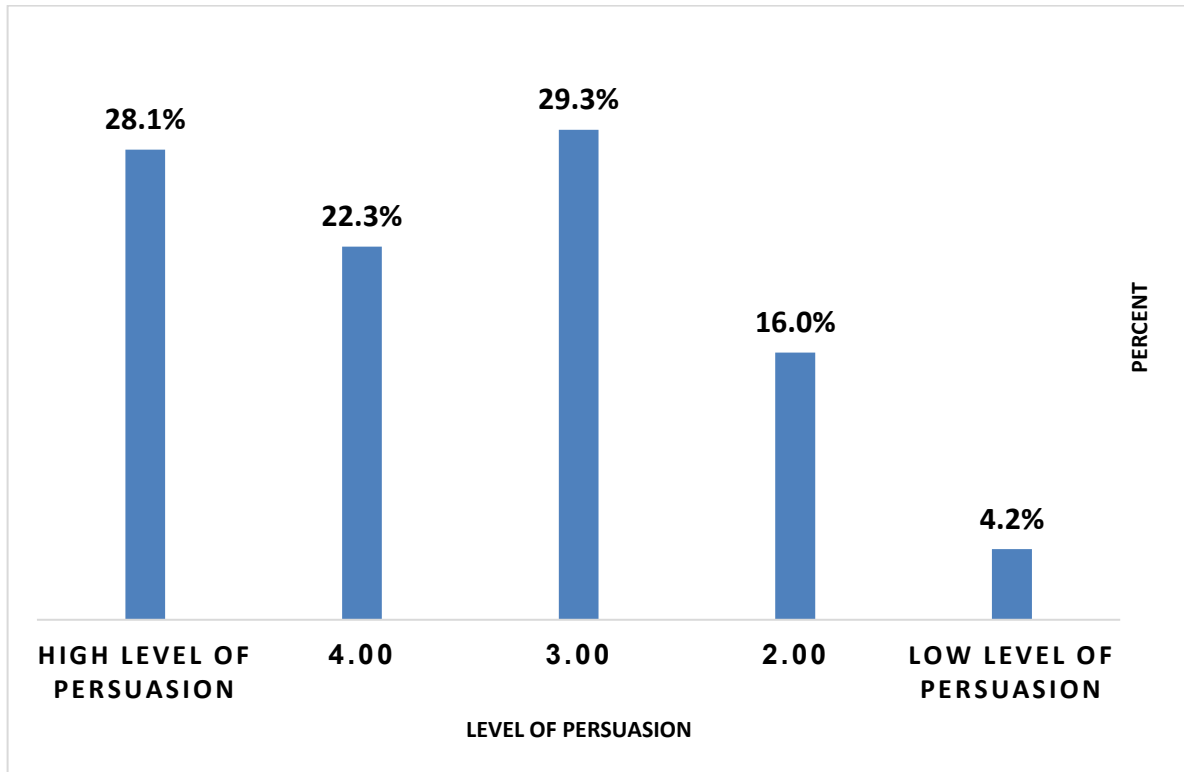


Figure 3 The level of persuasion among Palestinians to messages of PCD

The formulation of behavioral intent among Palestinians in line with messages of PCD (whether they were presented with a picture or a text) was 3.1 out 5, meaning that Palestinians were neutral in the degree of their behavioral intent to pursue a positive change. As evident below:

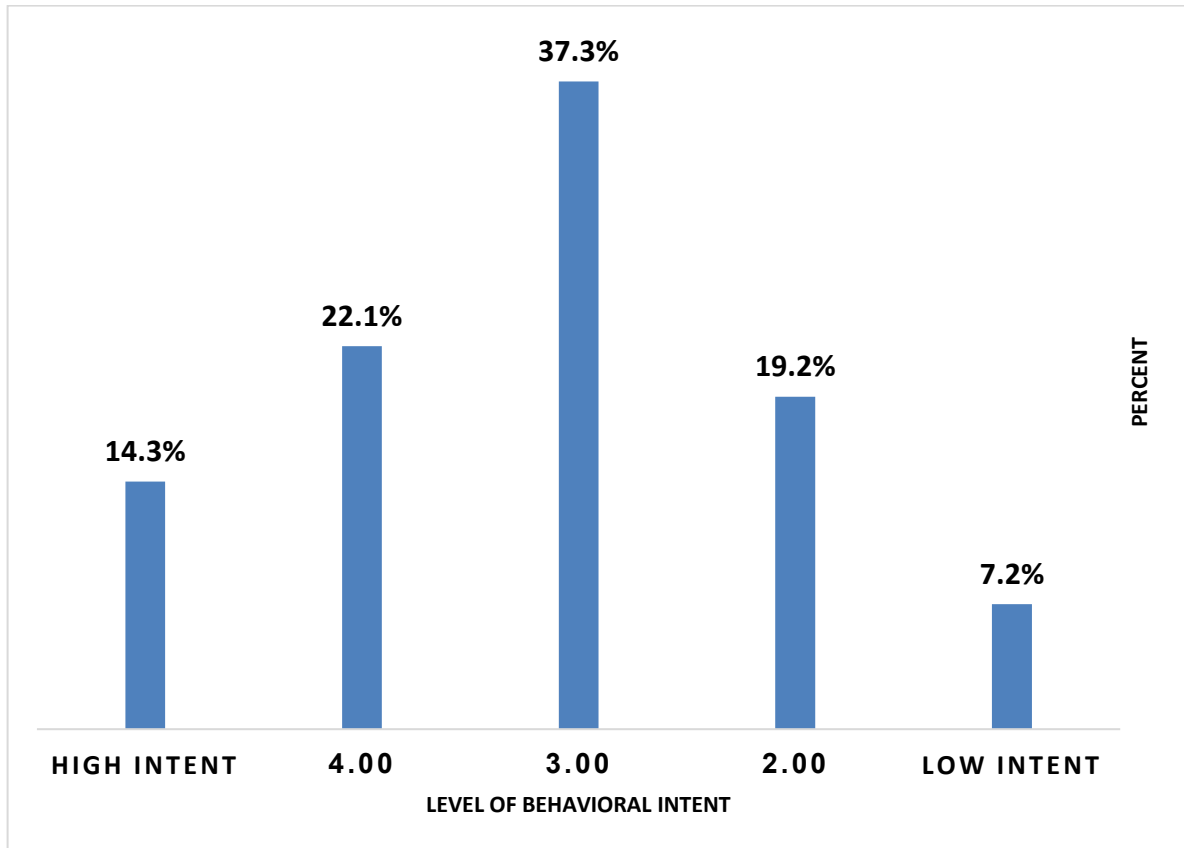


Figure 4 The level of behavioral intent among Palestinians to messages of PCD

5.3 Reasons for Preference

When asking the respondents why they chose the text over the picture as a “shape” of the awareness message, the answers were presented below. Considering that a majority of 20.9% did not give a specific reason for the preference, 20.4% were interested in reading the topic, and 19.4% found it more comprehensive.

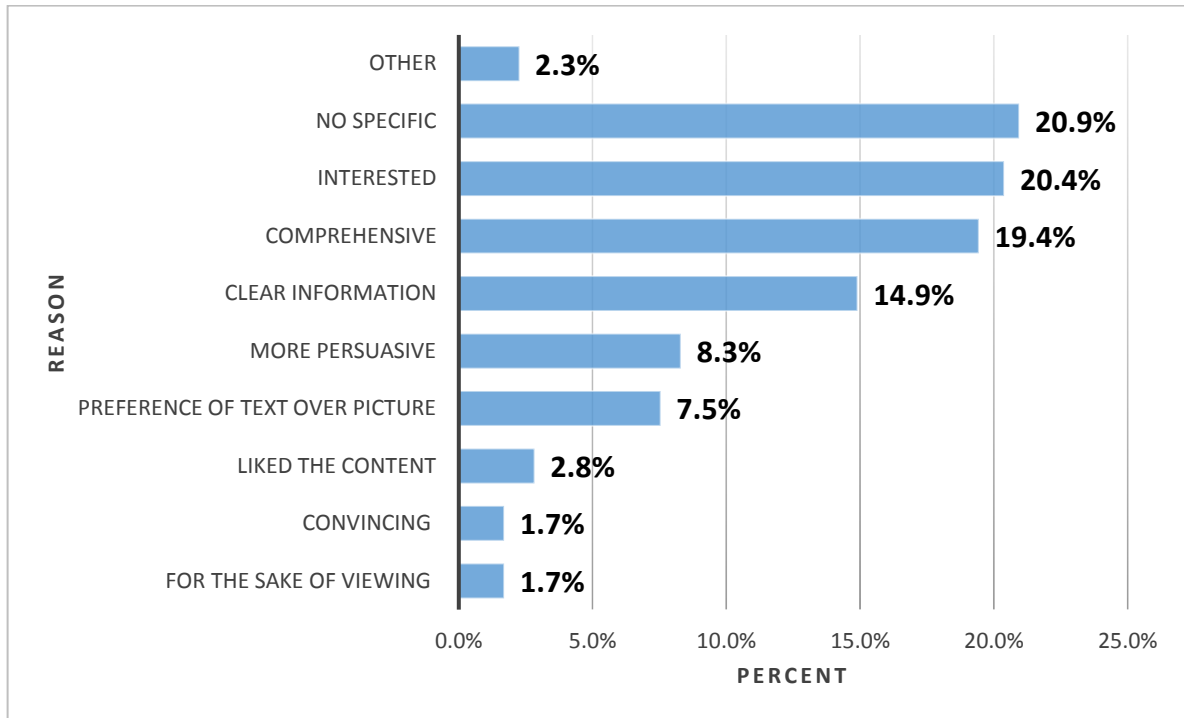


Figure 5 Reasons for choosing the text over the picture

Other respondents preferred the picture over the text for the following reasons:

The results show that Palestinians who preferred the picture over the text found the information “more clear,” with a majority of 20.4%, followed by 15.6% who provided no specific reasoning of their choice, and 14.7% liked the content.

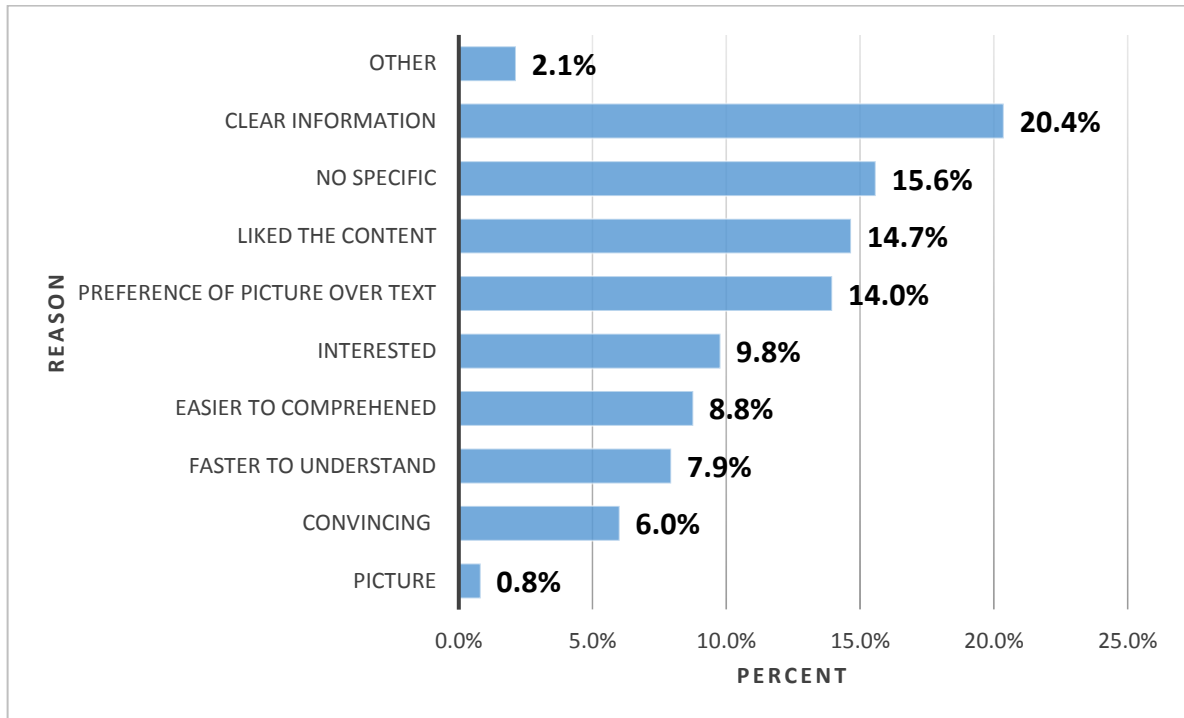


Figure 6 Reasons for choosing the picture over the text

H₀: There is no significant difference at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinians' preferences of peripheral route or central route, attributed to the control variable.

The Chi-Square test determines whether there is an association between categorical variables (whether the variables are independent or correlated). Thus, this test is also known as the Chi-Square Test of Association. Since both variables (preference and control variable) are categorical, and one of the variables is independent (control variable) and the other is dependent (preference), the researcher found that the chi-square test is suitable to test this hypothesis.

The Chi-Square test results revealed no significant difference $X^2(1, 1514) = 0.69, p. > 0.05$ at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinians' preferences of peripheral route or central route, attributed to the control variable.

Nevertheless, the researcher decided to dig deeper into the analysis of preference, by sub-grouping the analysis mentioned above, according to the level of attention⁵. The results found that there is no significant difference $X^2 (1, 1514) = 1.1, p. > 0.05$ concerning the average level of attention, but there was significant for the other two levels, as follows:

Low level of attention: $X^2 (1, 1514) = 19.6, p. < 0.05$

High level of attention: $X^2 (1, 1514) = 5.6, p. < 0.05$

Represented as follow:

Table 3 Crosstabulation of Level of Attention and Preference

		Preferences		
		Text	Picture	
Level of attention	Low attention	Text	23.5%	76.5%
		Picture	47.7%	52.3%
	High attention	Text	38.4%	61.6%
		Picture	30.2%	69.8%

H₀: There is no significant difference at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinians'

- **attention to awareness message of PCD attributed to control variable**
- **level of persuasion to awareness message of PCD attributed to control variable**
- **formulation of intent to behave in line with the awareness message of PCD attributed to control variable**

⁵ Taking into consideration, that the variable of attention was recoded (where from 1 to 2 = 1 "low attention", 3 = 2 "average attention", and 4 to 5 = 3 "high attention").

To answer these assumptions, the researcher used the t-test, which is used to measure the significance of the differences of the uncorrelated and correlated averages of equal and unequal samples), and the difference between the size of the two samples provided that they are close, examining the extent of homogeneity between the two samples, and finally the extent of the moderation of the frequency distribution for each of the two study samples (that is, free from outliers or random values) (Qassas, 2014).

Moreover, the researcher used the t-test because the independent variable consists of two levels, and the dependent variable is continuous, which is a prerequisite to using this test.

The results of the t-test revealed that:

- There is a significant difference $t(1512) = -6.9, p. < 0.05$ at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinian's attention to awareness message of PCD attributed to control variable. The difference in the level of attention favored those who were presented with a picture compared to those who were presented with a text. The mean values were 3.72 and 3.29, respectively. As evident in the graph below:

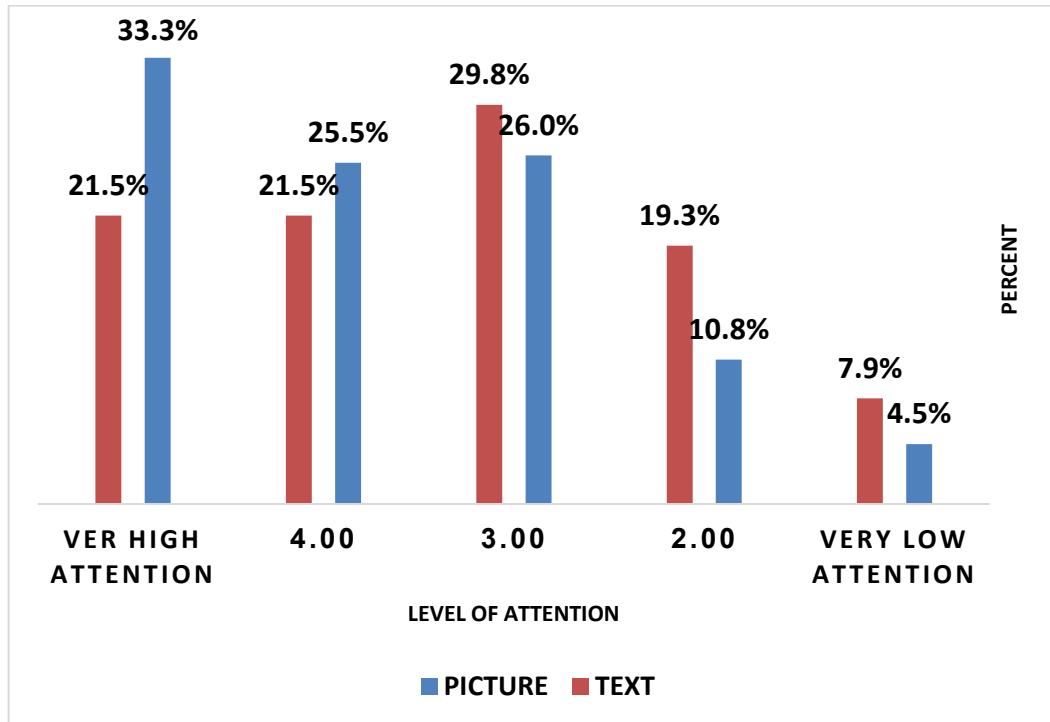


Figure 7 Palestinian's level of attention attributed to control variable

- There is a significant difference $t(1512) = -6.0$, $p < 0.05$ at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinian's level of persuasion to awareness message of PCD attributed to control variable. The difference in the level of persuasion was in favor of those presented with a picture compared to those presented with a text. The mean values were 3.73 and 3.37, respectively.

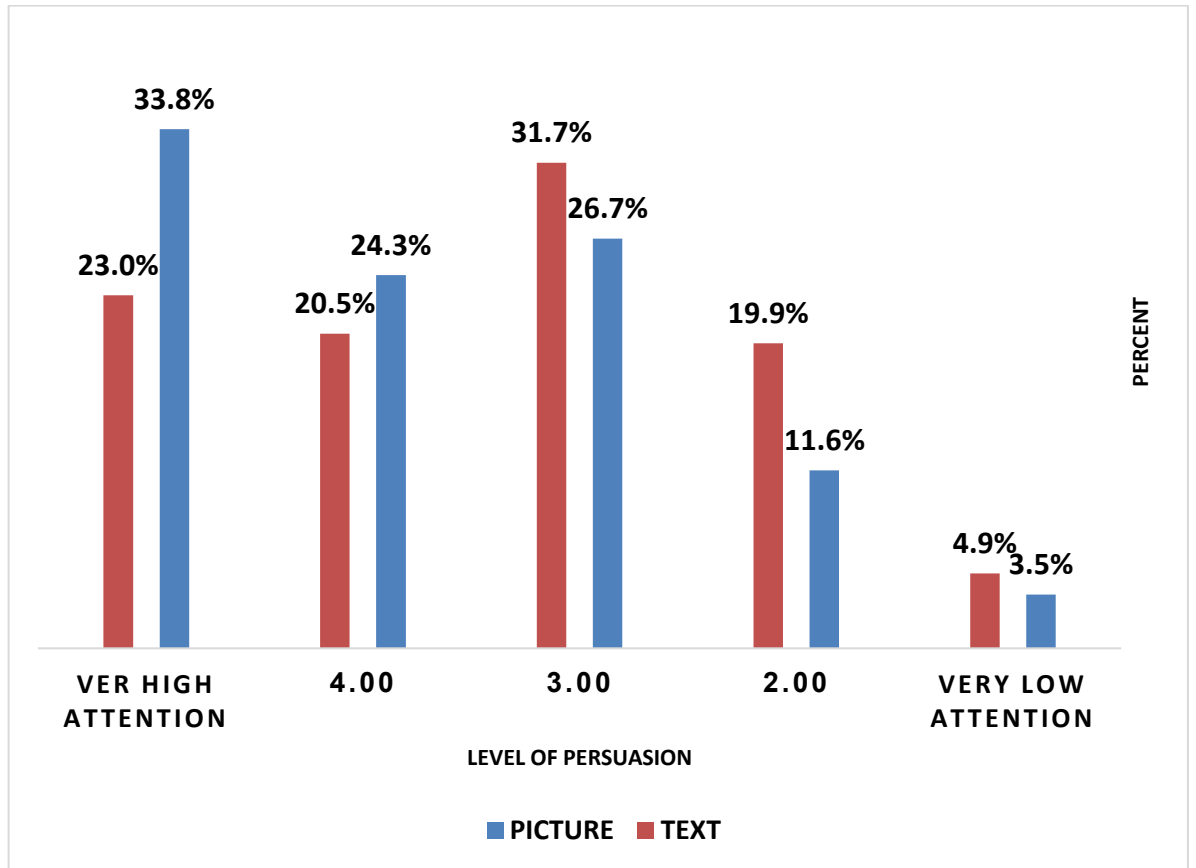


Figure 8 Palestinian's level of persuasion attributed to control variable

- There is no significant difference $t(1512) = -0.93$, $p. > 0.05$ at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinians formulation of intent to behave in line with the awareness message of PCD attributed to the control variable.

In line with the study question, the researcher investigated below a significant difference between behavioral intent attributed to route processing. The results of the t-test revealed a significant difference $t(1512) = 2.6$, $p. < 0.05$ in favor of those who followed the central route with a mean value of 3.3 over the peripheral route, with a mean value of 3.1.

5.4 Optimistic Bias - Sex

Ability - Educational level

H₀: There is no significant difference at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinian's

- **attention to awareness message of PCD attributed to the level of education**
- **level of persuasion to awareness message of PCD attributed to the level of education**
- **formulation of intent to behave in line with the awareness message of PCD attributed to the level of education**
- **route of processing information attributed to the level of education**

To answer these hypotheses, the researcher used Analysis of variance (ANOVA): It is a unique mathematical operation that examines the variance of the population to find out the extent to which the averages of the community are equal. The test divides the total differences for a set of experimental observations into several parts to identify the source of the difference between them, and to use it, the samples must be random and independent, and the normal distribution of the communities of these samples, in addition to the equal variance of the communities from which the independent random samples were taken (Al-Qassas, 2014).

Additionally, the independent variables in these hypotheses consist of more than two levels, and the dependent variable is continuous, which is also a prerequisite to use this test.

The results of the ANOVA test revealed the following:

- There is no significant difference $F(8, 1505) = .1.3, p = 0.25$ of attention to awareness messages of PCD attributed to the level of education

- There is a significant difference $F(8, 1505) = .1.9, p = 0.04$ in the level of persuasion by awareness message of PCD attributed to the level of education. As a second step, Tukey's Honest Significant Difference test was used to investigate where the differences exist. The results revealed that the level of persuasion by PCD messages was higher among educated Palestinians (i.e., University degree) than less educated respondents, as shown in the mean values hereunder:

Table 4 Level of persuasion attributed to educational level

Educational level	Mean value
Part of primary school or less	3.34
Finished primary school	3.47
Finished high school	3.48
Part of high school	3.50
Completed community or vocational college	3.64
Completed University or more	3.71

- There is a significant difference $F(8, 1505) = .1.9, p = 0.05$ in the formulation of intent to behave in line with the awareness message of PCD attributed to the level of education. As a second step, Tukey's Honest Significant Difference test was used to investigate where the differences exist. The results revealed that the formulation of intent to behave in line with the awareness message of PCD attributed to the level of education was higher among educated Palestinians (i.e., University degree) than less educated respondents as shown in the mean values hereunder:

Table 5 Level of behavioral intent attributed to educational level

Educational level	Mean value
Part of primary school or less	3.05
Finished primary school	3.10
Finished high school	3.19
Part of high school	3.08
Completed community or vocational college	3.21
Completed University or more	3.30

To test for the fourth hypothesis, the researcher used Chi-square because both variables are categorical, and the results were as follows:

There is no significant difference $X^2 (1, 1514) = 6.8, p > .05$ at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinians route of processing information attributed to educational level.

5.5 Ability - Household Income

H₀: There is no significant difference at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinian's

- **attention to awareness message of PCD attributed to household income**
- **level of persuasion to awareness message of PCD attributed to household income**
- **formulation of intent to behave in line with the awareness message of PCD attributed to household income**
- **route of processing information**

The researcher used Analysis of variance (ANOVA) to answer these hypotheses for the same reasons above.

The results of the ANOVA test revealed the following:

- There is a significant difference $F(4, 1509) = 2.3, p = 0.05$ in the level of attention to awareness message of PCD attributed to household income. Therefore, as a second step, Tukey's Honest Significant Difference test was used to investigate where the differences exist. The results revealed that the level of attention to PCD messages was higher among people with low income (i.e., 2500 NIS and less) than people with higher income (i.e., 4001 NIS and more, and 2501 – 4000 NIS), as shown in the table below:

Table 6 Level of attention attributed to household income

Household Income	Mean value
Less than 2500 NIS	3.59
2501 – 4000 NIS	3.41
More than 4000 NIS	3.43

- There is a significant difference $F(4, 1509) = 4.7, p = 0.00$ in the level of persuasion by awareness message of PCD attributed to household income. Therefore, as a second step, Tukey's Honest Significant Difference test was used to investigate where the differences exist. The results revealed that the level of persuasion by PCD messages was higher among people with low income (i.e., 2500 NIS and less) than people with higher income (i.e., 4001 NIS and more, and 2501 – 4000 NIS), as shown in the table below:

Table 7 Level of persuasion attributed to household income

Household Income	Mean value
Less than 2500 NIS	3.69
2501 – 4000 NIS	3.44
More than 4000 NIS	3.44

- There is a significant difference $F(4, 1509) = 26.5, p = 0.00$ in the formulation of intent to behave in line with the awareness message of PCD attributed to household income. As a second step, Tukey's Honest Significant Difference test was used to investigate where the differences exist. The results revealed that the level of persuasion by PCD messages was higher among people with low income (i.e., 2500 NIS and less) than people with higher income (i.e., 4001 NIS and more, and 2501 – 4000 NIS), as shown in the table below:

Table 8 Level of behavioral intent attributed to household income

Household Income	Mean value
Less than 2500 NIS	3.49
2501 – 4000 NIS	3.00
More than 4000 NIS	2.99

To test for the fourth hypothesis, the researcher used Chi-square because both variables are categorical, and the results were as follows:

- There is a significant difference $X^2(1, 1514) = 10.3, p < .05$ at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinians route of processing information attributed to household income, and the differences were in favor of Palestinians with higher salaries

(i.e., 2501 – 4000, and more than 4000) who preferred Pictures over Text with a percentage of 66.7% and 65.2% respectively, in comparison to those with lower income with a smaller percentage of 57.3% having the same preference.

5.6 Involvement - Marital Status

H₀: There is no significant difference at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinian's

- **attention to awareness message of PCD attributed to Marital status**
- **level of persuasion to awareness message of PCD attributed to Marital status**
- **formulation of intent to behave in line with the awareness message of PCD attributed to Marital status**
- **route of processing information**

The researcher used Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to answer these hypotheses for the same reasons above.

The results of the ANOVA test revealed the following:

- There is no significant difference $F(5, 1508) = 0.6, p = 0.71$ of attention to awareness message of PCD attributed to Marital status
- There is no significant difference $F(5, 1508) = 0.4, p = 0.83$ of the level of persuasion to awareness message of PCD attributed to Marital status
- There is no significant difference $F(5, 1508) = 2.4, p = 0.03$ of formulation of intent to behave in line with the awareness message of PCD attributed to Marital status.

To test for the fourth hypothesis, the researcher used Chi-square because both variables are categorical, and the results were as follows:

- There is no significant difference $X^2 (1, 1514) = 8.1, p > .05$ at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinians route of processing information attributed to marital status.

Involvement and Optimistic Bias - Job Status

H₀: There is no significant difference at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinian's

- **attention to awareness message of PCD attributed to Job-status**
- **level of persuasion to awareness message of PCD attributed to Job-status**
- **formulation of intent to behave in line with the awareness message of PCD attributed to Job-status**
- **route of processing information**

The researcher used Analysis of variance (ANOVA) to answer these hypotheses for the same reasons above.

The results of the ANOVA test revealed the following:

- There is a significant difference $F (8, 1505) = 1.9, p = 0.04$ in the level of attention to awareness message of PCD attributed to job status. As a second step, Tukey's Honest Significant Difference test was used to investigate where the differences exist. The results revealed that the level of attention to PCD messages was higher among unemployed workers (whether looking for a job or not) and lowest among homemakers, as shown in the table below:

Table 9 Level of attention attributed to profesion

Job Status	Mean value
Housewife / not working outside the house	3.39
Working Part-time	3.42
Retired or disabled	3.49
Working Full-time	3.49
Unemployed - not looking for work	3.53
Student or apprentice	3.55
Unemployed - looking for a job	3.75

- There is no significant difference $F(8, 1505) = 1.33, p = 0.22$ in the level of persuasion to awareness message of PCD attributed to Job status.
- There is a significant difference $F(8, 1505) = 3.0, p = 0.00$ in the formulation of intent to behave in line with the awareness message of PCD attributed to Job status. As a second step, Tukey's Honest Significant Difference test was used to investigate where the differences exist. The results revealed that the formulation of intent to behave in line with the awareness message of PCD was higher among retired and disabled and unemployed Palestinians and lowest among full-time workers and students. As shown in the table below:

Table 10 Level of behavioral intent attributed to profesion

Job Status	Mean value
Housewife / not working outside the house	3.18
Working Part-time	3.13
Retired or disabled	3.44
Working full time	3.09
Unemployed - not looking for work	3.35
Student or apprentice	3.13
Unemployed - looking for a job	3.38

To test for the fourth hypothesis, the researcher used Chi-square because both variables are categorical, and the results were as follows:

- There is no significant difference $X^2 (1, 1514) = .04, p > .05$ at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinians route of processing information attributed to job status.

Involvement and Optimistic Bias - Age

H₀: There is no significant correlation at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ between Palestinians'

- **attention to awareness message of PCD and Age**

- **level of persuasion to awareness message of PCD and Age**
- **formulation of intent to behave in line with the awareness message of PCD and Age**
- **route of processing information and age**

The results of the Pearson correlation revealed the following:

- There is a significant correlation, $r(1507) = -.06$, $p < .05$ between Palestinians attention to awareness message of PCD and Age. In addition, the correlation is very negative and weak.
- There is no significant correlation $r(1507) = -.04$, $p > .05$ between Palestinians level of persuasion and Age.
- There is a significant correlation $r(1507) = -.05$, $p < .05$ between Palestinians behavioral intent and age. In addition, the correlation is very negative and weak.

To test for the fourth hypothesis, the researcher used Chi-square because both variables are categorical, and the results were as follows:

- There is no significant difference $X^2 (1, 1514) = 0.4$, $p > .05$ at the rate of $\alpha = 0.05$ for Palestinians route of processing information attributed to age⁶.

5.7 Mood

The Chi-square results revealed a significant difference $X^2 (1, 1514) = 23.4$, $p < .05$ in the relationship between the general mood of Palestinians and their tendency to take the peripheral route of processing. Where the better the mood of the Palestinian, the more he or she tended to choose the central route over the peripheral route. In addition, the

⁶ Taking into consideration that the age variable was recoded to durations, as stated in the methodology.

more “neutral” the mood was, the more Palestinians were willing to take the peripheral route. Finally, there was no significant difference with those who were in a bad mood, since that both percentages were very close, as shown in the graph hereunder:

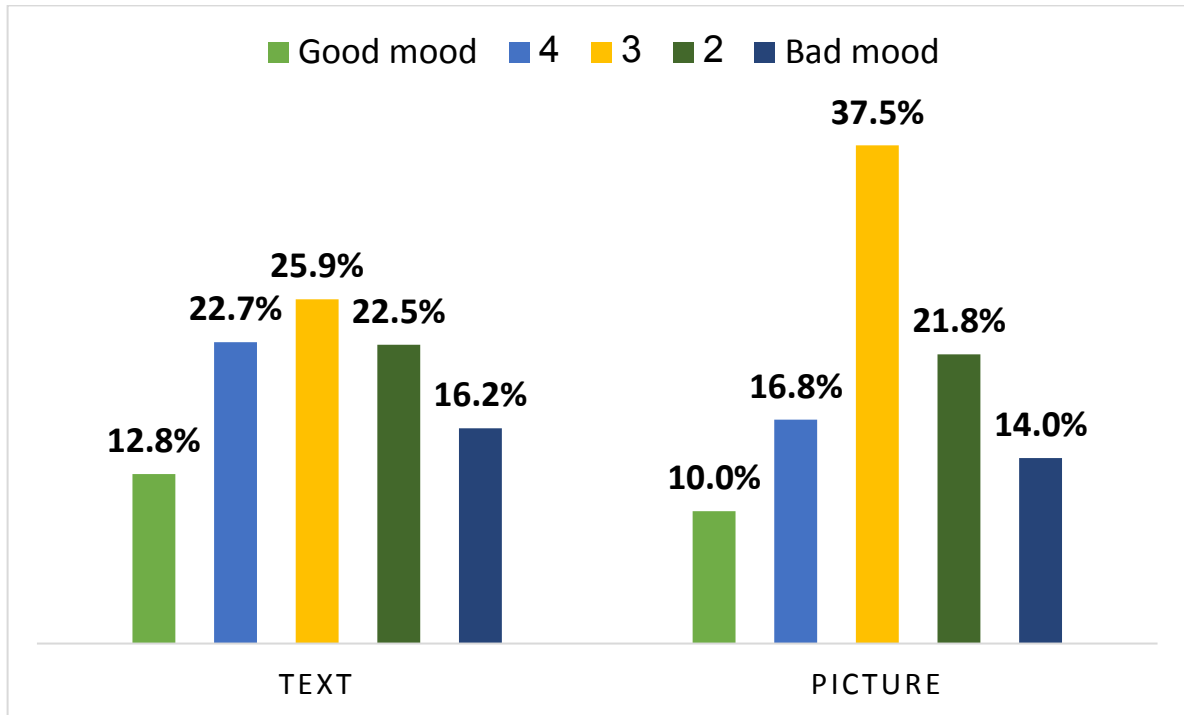


Figure 9 General mood of Palestinians and their tendency to choose processing route

5.8 Models Comparison

The results of the path analysis showed that there is a significant difference ($p < .05$) between the two models. The first model represents critical thinkers or central route processing, and the second model represents the peripheral route.

The results were as follows:

Regression Weights (Central Route)

Table 11 Path analysis for Central Route

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Attention	<---	Income	.008	.003	2.908	.004
Persuasion	<---	Attention	.589	.034	17.107	***
Behavioral_intent	<---	Attention	.181	.030	6.130	***
Behavioral_intent	<---	Persuasion	.291	.044	6.627	***

Regression Weights (Peripheral Route)

Table 12 Path analysis for Peripheral Route

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Persuasion	<---	Attention	.669	.022	30.317	***
Behavioral_intent	<---	Attention	.181	.030	6.130	***
Behavioral_intent	<---	Income	-.005	.001	-5.114	***

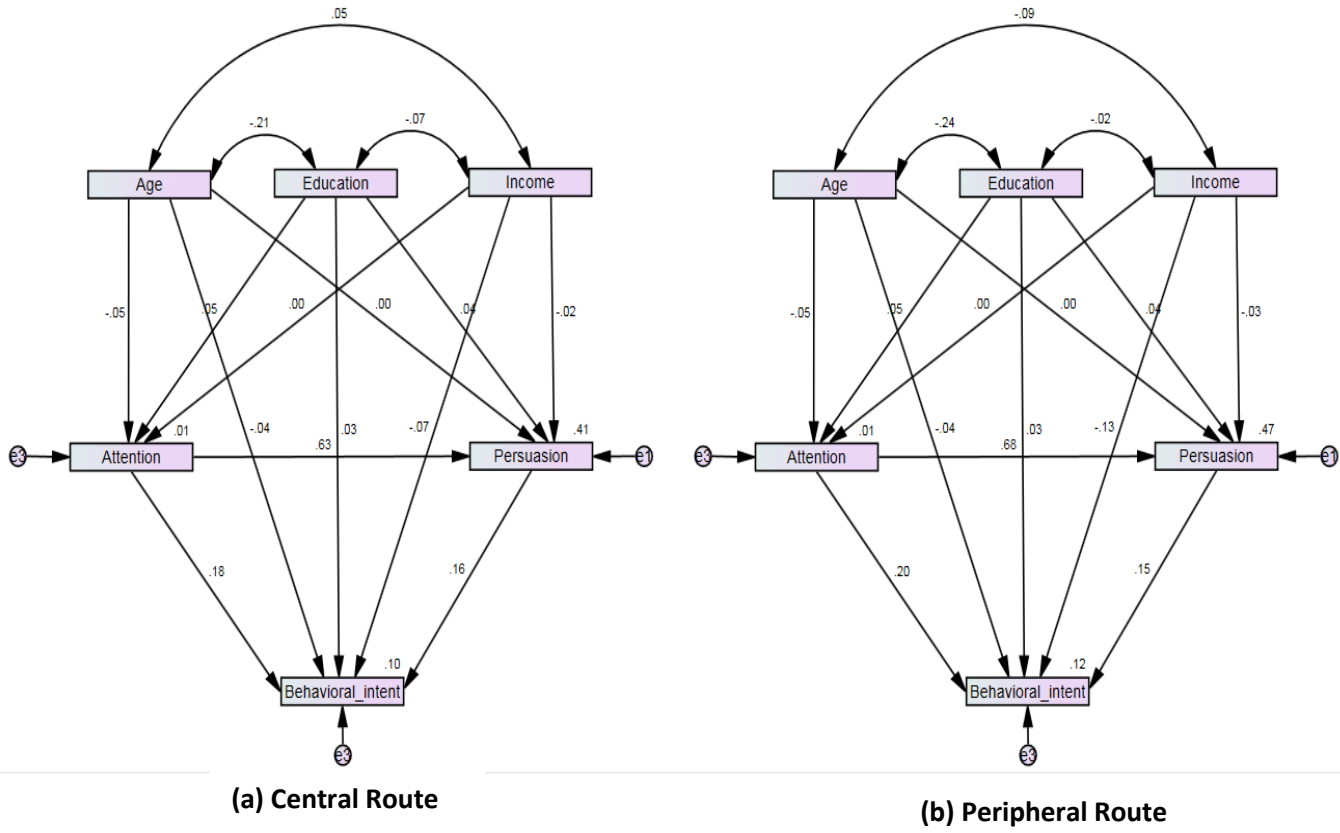


Figure 10 Path Analysis for routes

5.9 Methodological Limitations

The researcher did not give much attention to the previous knowledge respondents hold toward electrical contact. Instead, he assumed that the level of education was a good indicator of this factor. Furthermore, the study was limited to one risk (i.e., electrical contact) to inoculate them from adopting a defensive status. An additional limitation is the use of text and a picture as the visual element in the experiment, yet PCD messages also include voice and video.

Chapter VI

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the most critical results reached by this study in light of the questions, objectives, literature, and theoretical framework. As follows:

The researcher conducted an in-depth study discussing the issue of public awareness messages issued by the civil defense to test the success of the messages, to guide those who receive these messages through the treatment variable; either high according to the central path or low processing according to the peripheral path. To this end, the researcher designed two messages to raise awareness of the risk of electrical contact - which is considered the most common in Palestinian society. Following the peripheral path, a message was displayed as a picture and a text (representing the central route). According to this study, which employed the Elaboration Likelihood model and its variables with attention, persuasion, and directing the behavioral intention, the researcher put forward the following:

6.2 Route Processing and Behavioral Intent

65% of Palestinians, when asked about their preferences of message design (i.e., a text or a picture) for PCD awareness messages, they chose the picture, and only 35% of them preferred the text.

Crosstabulations for the attention variable revealed that 76.5% of respondents were exposed to text switched to the picture when both options were presented. While only 23.5% of respondents exposed to text still chose the text when both options were available.

As for predicting the positive behavioral intentions of the Palestinian community, the results of the tests did not find any statistical significance on the formation of behavioral

intentions attributed to the control variable. Social media mainly imposes itself on the form and content of awareness messages, and the public's tendency to choose visual content of awareness messages indicates the fit of this content with what communication tools require in the digital world. This goes with Hochman's (2014) view of visual ontology that "the ways current social media platforms and aggregators organize and categorize social media pictures" manifest unique modes of knowledge production. Accordingly, the PCD should understand the public's tendencies and social media requirements.

6.3 Predictors of Central Route Processing

Educational ability

The researcher examined the extent to which the level of education entices Palestinians to engage in central route processing. In other words, the researcher tested for the effect of education on the degree of engagement and high processing of messages. The results revealed that the more educated the Palestinian, the more likely he or she will be persuaded by PCD's messages and act accordingly (behavioral intent), whether presented with a picture or a text. What is more interesting is that there was no correlation between the level of education and processing route as supposed by the ELM model, which means that the ability of the Palestinian to elaborate on any message is not connected to their educational level. This might be due to their previous knowledge of PCD messages regarding electrical contact. Also, it means that the PCD managed to present the Palestinians with a flat, cognitively digestible message within the different strata of educational levels.

Level of involvement

The results revealed that women are more inclined to take a positive behavior and take the central route to processing information when it comes to the risk of electrical contact. These results emphasize the assumption of the theory of optimistic bias that female feel more vulnerable to risk than males due to their lack of ability to respond to the incident. Especially among housewives.

Need for Cognition

A small percentage of the Palestinians, 4.5%, can be considered persons with a high need for cognition. For example, they preferred the text message after the picture message was displayed, indicating their need for detail and scrutiny for more information and evidence. At the same time, they decided to dig further into details (high behavioral intent). Although this percentage is small in Palestinian society, they can be considered influential in their social environment, and the Civil Defense must, when designing its awareness messages, take into account the presence of these people who are looking for more evidence and proof. This goes in line with the concentric-circle theory of Robertson (1967), in which influence moves from one circle to another, starting with great thinkers and ending with the politically inert.

General mood

The results showed that people tend to choose the high processing according to the central route whenever the general mood is positive. However, people in a neutral mood preferred the peripheral route, and those with a bad mood had no significant difference in their level of elaboration. This contradicts the theory that the more positive mood, the

more people tend to choose the peripheral route and that the negative mood is more likely to choose the central route. The paradox with the hypothesis suggests that the context of risk moderates the relationship between mood and level of elaboration.

6.4 Optimistic Bias Effect on the Perception of Risk Exposure

The study results showed no statistical correlation between the level of persuasion and age, regardless of the message design (i.e., picture or text). Instead, the results showed a weak and inverse relationship between age and levels of attention and behavioral intent. This indicates that the older the person feels, the more likely they will elaborate more on the message because of their belief of inability to respond to risk, as stated by the optimistic bias theory.

6.5 Recommendations

Based on the discussion and results of the study. The researcher recommends to Awareness experts considering the following to design effective strategic communication messaging:

1. To carry a prominent logo as a reliable source for the Palestinian public.
2. It should be designed to contain short information and inferences.
3. It should include some details as well.
4. It should add “for more details, visit our website/hyperlink.”
5. Civil defense messages remain general and not directed towards a specific audience.
6. Designing civil defense messages to include all the risks faced by society.

7. It should contain aspects of motivation or legal penalties to push people for more detail, leading to a positive behavioral intention towards risks.
8. The message should be appropriate for modern communication tools such as smartphone applications and social media.
9. It should boost people's involvement in awareness issues.
10. To emphasize the concept of individuality in awareness messages (e.g., may pose a threat to your life)
11. Institutions that work in the field of awareness, such as health, environment, or utility companies such as electricity, should consider the results of this study as it contains essential information about the nature of the Palestinian public and its knowledge of the level of treatment for dangerous communications.
12. To increase awareness messages at different educational levels and integrate risk management in academic frameworks and educational curriculum.
13. To strengthen the public relations and media departments in educational institutions so that they can design strategic communication messages.
14. To increase research and opinion polls related to risk communication so that decision-makers can build their decisions according to correct scientific data.
15. To intensify capacity building training, especially for Females, based on the study results, which indicated that females had a behavioral intention to adopt the requirements to prevent the occurrence of electrical contact.
16. Repetition of awareness messages to remind communities of awareness issues.

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اليوم: تاريخ المقابلة وقت المقابلة من الساعة إلى قبل البدء في طرح الاسئلة اود موافقتكم على السماح بتسجيل هذه المقابلة صوتيا لنتمكن من تفرغها بهدف توثيق و نقل محتواها ومضمونها بدقة ؟
بيانات عامة

	الاسم
	الموقع الوظيفي والرتبة
	الجهاز
	عدد سنوات الخدمة
	العمر
	المؤهل العلمي
	الاسم:

اسئلة المقابلة

المحور الاول: ادارة العلاقات العامة والإعلام

السؤال الأول: أرجو ان تحدثنا في البداية عن نشأة وتطور ادارة العلاقات العامة والإعلام في جهازكم وعن

هيكلية هذه الإدارة والاقسام التي تشرفون على ادائها؟

السؤال الثاني: ما هي الاهداف التي تسعون الى تحقيقها وكيف ترتبط باهداف الجهاز والاطار القانوني الذي

ينظم عمل جهازكم بشكل عام؟

السؤال الثالث: ماهي مصادر المعلومات الكمية (مسوحات ميدانية ، دراسات، احصائيات، استطلاعات للرأي

(الداخلية والخارجية) التي تستند عليها العلاقات العامة والإعلام لفهم وتحليل وتفسير طبيعة الحوادث واسبابها

التي يتعرض لها المجتمع الفلسطيني.

السؤال الرابع: هل تأخذ قيادة الجهاز هذه التفسيرات والتحليلات والمعلومات بالاعتبار في سياساتها او تعليماتها و قراراتها؟ هل تقدمها لجهات عليا وكيف تتلقون التغذية الراجعة حول هذا الموضوع؟؟

المحور الثاني: التوعية الجماهيرية وادوات الاتصال وقياس تأثيراتها

السؤال الخامس: هل تقوم ادارة العلاقات العامة والإعلام بصورة دورية بدراسة وتحليل متعمق لطبيعية رسائل التوعية الموجهة للمجتمع الفلسطيني .

كيف تطورت رسائل التوعية لديكم وما هي الابعاد التي ساعدت على هذا التطور؟

السؤال السادس: ما هي الظروف التي تنشط فيها العلاقات العامة وعلى ماذا تعتمد بذلك؟

السؤال السابع: هل يتم اخذ المتغيرات المكانية والديمغرافية في صياغة رسائل التوعية الجماهيرية؟ مع ذكر

امثلة لذلك

السؤال الثامن: ما هي اكثر الرسائل التي يتفاعل معها متابعي مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بكم؟

المحور الثالث: الكفاءة والفاعلية

السؤال التاسع: هل يتولى مسؤولية العلاقات العامة ضباط اكفاء ومؤهلين اكاديميا ومهنيا ويتمتعون باستقلالية

ومرجعيات محددة في اداء اعمالهم؟ يرجى ذكر المؤهل والتدريب للفريق؟

السؤال العاشر: ما حجم الموازنة السنوية التي يتم تخصيصها لادارة العلاقات العامة والإعلام في جهازكم،

كالايجور والرواتب ،موازنة لحالات الطوارئ ، مصاريف تشغيلية فواتير اتصالات ومواصلات؟ وكيف يتم

تخصيص هذه الموازنة؟ وهل لديكم اي مصادر تمويل خارجي من مؤسسات القطاع الخاص ضمن مسؤوليتهم

المجتمعية لتمويل ورعاية انشطتكم وفعاليتكم؟ ذكر امثلة ان امكن.

السؤال الحادي عشر: مع التطور المتسارع في وسائل الاتصال الاجتماعي كيف تواكبون هذا التطور وما هي

المعايير التي تختارون فيها اشخاص لشغل وظائف في العلاقات العامة والاعلام في جهازكم؟

هل هناك اي ملاحظات او اضافات تود ادراجها في نهاية هذه المقابلة؟

اليوم والتاريخ ساعة انتهاء المقابلة

Questionnaire

سأقوم بعرض رسالة توعوية تتعلق بالمخاطر في المنزل؟ الرجاء الاطلاع عليها.

للباحث: أعطِ المستجوب الجهاز ليطلع على الرسالة

للباحث: لا تقرأها له، دعه لوحده

تعباً من قِبَل الباحث: إلى أي مدى شعرت أن المبحوث قام بقراءة الرسالة أعلاه بتمعن من 1 إلى 5، حيث أن (1) تعني أنه لم يهتم و(5) تعني أنه قرأها بتمعن شديد؟



التماس الكهربائي هو عبارة عن عطل أو خلل ناتج عن تلامس سلكين من الكهرباء مختلفي الشحنة واحد سالب والآخر موجب ينتج عنه قصور في الدارة الكهربائية وتدفق للتيار الكهربائي خارج المسار ينتج عنه شرارة كهربائية بحرارة عالية مستمرة تكون سببا في ارتفاع درجة حرارة الخلفة الأسلاك والمفاتيح الكهربائية حتى تصل إلى درجة التوبان بعدها تصل تلك الحرارة إلى درجة الاشتعال مع توفر العوامل المساعدة بوصول الحرارة إلى الأثاث القريب والملاصق للأسلاك الكهربائية يبدأ الحريق وينتشر في أرجاء المنزل. وتعتبر التوصيلات الرديئة والعشوائية وغير ملائمة للأجهزة الكهربائية والأحمال الزائدة الصادرة عن الأجهزة الكهربائية المتصلة بالمفاتيح سببا رئيسيا لحدوث التماس الكهربائي.

سأقوم بعرض رسالة توعوية تتعلق بالمخاطر في المنزل؟ الرجاء الاطلاع عليها.

للباحث: أعطِ المستجوب الجهاز ليطلع على الرسالة

للباحث: لا تقرأها له، دعه لوحده

تعباً من قِبَل الباحث: إلى أي مدى شعرت أن المبحوث قام بقراءة الرسالة أعلاه بتمعن من 1 إلى 5، حيث أن (1) تعني أنه لم يهتم و(5) تعني أنه قرأها بتمعن شديد؟



إلى أي مدى قد تكون هذه الرسالة سبباً في إقناعك بخطورة التماس الكهربائي؟
من (1) إلى (5) بحيث أن (1) لم تقتنع بتاتاً و (5) اقتنعت بدرجة كبيرة.

(1) لم أقتنع بتاتاً

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5) أفتنعت بدرجة كبيرة

إلى أي مدى تعتقد بأنك محفز أو غير محفز للبحث أكثر عن موضوع التماس الكهربائي لتجنب حدوثه في منزلك؟

من (1) إلى (5) بحيث أن (1) تعني أنك لا تكثر بتاتاً و (5) أنك متحفز جداً للبحث عن الموضوع؟

(1) لا أكثر بتاتاً

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5) متحفز جداً

لو تعرضت للرسالتين الآتيتين من الدفاع المدني الفلسطيني، التي تتحدثان عن نفس الموضوع، أي منها سيثير اهتمامك بشكل أكبر؟

للباحث: أعطِ المستجوب الجهاز ليطلع على الرسالتين
للباحث: لا تقرأها له، دعه لوحده



التماس الكهربائي هو عبارة عن عطل أو خلل ناتج عن تلامس سلكين من الكهربياء مختلفي الشحنة واحد سالب والآخر موجب ينتج عنه قصور في الدارة الكهربائية وتدفق للتيار الكهربائي خارج المسار ينتج عنه شرارة كهربائية بدرجة عالية مستمرة تكون سببا في ارتفاع درجة حرارة الحلفة الأسلاك والمفاتيح الكهربائية حتى تصل إلى درجة الذوبان بعدها تصل تلك الحرارة إلى درجة الاشتعال مع توفر العوامل المساعدة بوصول الحرارة إلى الأثاث القريب والملاصق للأسلاك الكهربائية يبدأ الحريق وينتشر في أرجاء المنزل. وتعتبر التوصيلات الرديئة والعشوائية والغير ملائمة للأجهزة الكهربائية والأحمال الزائدة الصادرة عن الأجهزة الكهربائية المتصلة بالمفاتيح سببا رئيسيا للحدوث التماس الكهربائي.



لماذا اخترت هذه الرسالة وفضلتها عن الرسالة الاخرى؟ أي، لماذا أثارت اهتمامك بشكل أكبر؟

اليك سلماً يمثل "سلم الحياة". لنفترض ان قمة السلم تمثل الامكانية الافضل في حياتك والادنى تمثل اسوء الاحتمالات الممكنة في حياتك.

عالي

4

3

2

واطي

لا أعرف (لا تقرأ)

رفض الإجابة (لا تقرأ)

المحافظة

- | | | | |
|------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| 4. بيت لحم | 3. رام الله | 2. نابلس | 1. جنين |
| 8. طولكرم | 7. أريحا | 6. الخليل | 5. القدس |
| | 11. سلفيت | 10. قلقيلية | 9. طوباس |

هل تسكن في:

- | | | |
|----------------|----------|---------|
| 3. مخيم لاجئين | 2. مدينة | 1. قرية |
|----------------|----------|---------|

العمر: _____ عاماً.

الجنس:

- | | |
|---------|--------|
| 2. انثى | 1. ذكر |
|---------|--------|

ما هو تحصيلك العلمي؟

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2. أنهى المرحلة الابتدائية | 1. جزء من المرحلة الابتدائية أو أقل |
| 4. أنهى المرحلة الثانوية | 3. جزء من المرحلة الثانوية |
| 6. أنهى كلية مجتمع أو مهني | 5. جزء كلية مجتمع أو مهني |
| 8. لا أعرف (لا تقرأ) | 7. أنهى الجامعة أو أكثر |
| | 9. رفض الإجابة (لا تقرأ) |

ملخص الدراسة

بحثت هذه الدراسة مفهوم الوعي المجتمعي وأثره في بناء المواقف وخلق حافظ إيجابي لنية سلوكية تجاه المخاطر الأكثر شيوعاً في المجتمع الفلسطيني.

وتعتبر هذه الدراسة هي الأولى في بحث (فهم الجمهور الفلسطيني ، الذي يتلقى رسائل التوعوية ، من حيث درجة الانتباه ، والإقناع ، والدافع نحو نية سلوكية، بهدف خلق المزيد من الحذر لدى الجمهور وتقييم تأثير رسائل التوعية المجتمعية.

اتبع الباحث المنهج الكمي والنوعي وشبه التجريبي، من خلال توزيع استبانة على عينة عشوائية طبقية تمثيلية قوامها 1514 فلسطينياً من الضفة الغربية (بما فيها القدس الشرقية) وقطاع غزة، في الفترة من 2021-6-17 إلى 2021-6-28 كما أجرى الباحث تجربة اجتماعية مضبوطة متمثلة بعرض رسالتي توعية على المستطلعين ؛ يمثل كل منها مساراً منفصلاً وفقاً لنموذج احتمال التفصيل (ELM). حيث تبني النظرية نموذجاً للاقناع عندما يتعرض الناس لشكل من أشكال الاتصال ، ومعالجته على مستويات اما عالية أو منخفضة، تحددتها العوامل التالية :الدافع ، والقدرة ، ودرجة الانخراط ، والحاجة إلى الإدراك (NFC)). وقد تمثلت التجربة على النحو التالي:

تعريض (799) فلسطينياً تم اختيارهم عشوائياً لرسالة توعوية (في شكل نصي) حول كيفية حدوث التماس الكهربائي، و(714) فلسطينياً تعرضوا الى رسالة توعوية على شكل صورة تحمل شعار الدفاع المدني، بتأثيرات بصرية لخطر التماس الكهربائي.

بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، أجرى الباحث مقابلات معمقة مع ضباط العلاقات العامة في الدفاع المدني الفلسطيني لتحديد كيفية صياغة رسائل التوعية المجتمعية والقنوات التي يستخدمونها لإيصال تلك الرسائل.

توصل الباحث إلى مجموعة من النتائج مبنية على مناهج نظرية واختبارات إحصائية مناسبة لهذا النوع من الدراسة ، تفيد بأن 65% من الفلسطينيين يفضلون رسائل المخاطر أن تكون على شكل صورة ذات تأثيرات بصرية بدلاً من رسائل في شكل نص. . كما وجد الباحث أن 4.5% فقط من الفلسطينيين لديهم حاجة عالية للإدراك ، أو "المفكر النقدي" ، الذين يفضلون البحث والتدقيق في الرسائل. أما بالنسبة للمتغيرات الديموغرافية (ماعدا متغير الجنس) فلم تظهر النتائج فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية على مستوى الانتباه والإقناع والنية السلوكية بين المبحوثين. علاوة على ذلك ، لفهم معوقات الإقناع في المجتمع الفلسطيني ، استخدم الباحث نظرية الانحياز المتفائل المتمثلة في عوامل (القدرة والعمر) ، اللذان يحددان مستوى الحذر الذي يشعر بها الناس تجاه المخاطر ، والذي يؤدي إلى مستوى أقل في الإقناع عند التعرض لرسائل الدفاع المدني التوعوية. وأخيراً ، وجد الباحث أن إدراك المخاطر كان أعلى بين الإناث وكبار السن ، وهو ما يتوافق مع نتائج هذه الدراسة ، حيث كانت النية السلوكية للتصرف وفقاً لرسائل الدفاع المدني أعلى بين الإناث. بالإضافة إلى أن مستوى الاهتمام كبير وأعلى بين كبار السن للأسباب نفسها.