

We were deprived
of studying, learning
and dreaming

We were deprived
of university
education

A great sorrow
in our hearts

33 Thousand Students

PALESTINE AHLIYA
UNIVERSITY

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International Affairs and Public Relations Department

JUNE 2024

NEWSLETTER

Continuation of Israeli violations against Palestine and higher education institutions

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Israeli Occupation Violations Against Education in Palestine

7 October 2023 - 25 June 2024

Students	West Bank			Gaza Strip		
	Martyrs	Injured	Arrested	Martyrs	Injured	Arrested
Schools	67	367	159	7556 ⁺	12093 ⁺	-
Universities	33	123 ⁺	178 ⁺	579 ⁺	1189 ⁺	Unknown

Educational staff	West Bank			Gaza Strip		
	Martyrs	Injured	Arrested	Martyrs	Injured	Arrested
Schools	1	11	101 ⁺	383	2115	Unknown
Universities	-	Unknown	7	105	1115 ⁺	Unknown

Attacks on Schools & Universities

West Bank		Gaza Strip	
Schools	Universities	Schools	Universities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (69) schools were subject to vandalism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (5) Universities were subject to repeated intrusions, vandalism and tampering with their possessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (119) Schools severely damaged in Gaza, and more than (62) Schools completely destroyed. ● (126) government schools/attacks & vandalism ● (65) UNRWA schools/attacks and vandalism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (19) Universities were severely damaged in Gaza. ● More than (31) university buildings were completely destroyed. ● Partial destruction of (55) university buildings

Since the outset of the aggression:

- (88) thousand students deprived to access to their universities.
- (620) thousand students deprived of access to their schools.
- The Israeli occupation deprives (39,000) students in Gaza of the right to sit for the first round of the Tawjihi examination.

Public Relations and the Role of Social Media in Crisis Management in Higher Education Institutions

Public relations is a vital process for managing the relationship between institutions and their audiences, whether internal or external. Its primary aim is to build a positive image of the institution and enhance mutual understanding with the public through effective, clear, and organized communication. In the context of higher education institutions, public relations play a crucial role in effectively managing crises.

Public relations are crucial in crisis management within universities and higher education institutions, requiring effective strategies to communicate with the public and stakeholders.



Jiries Abu Ghannam
President Assistant for International and
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With the rapid technological advancements and the emergence of social media platforms, these platforms have become essential tools in crisis management. This article provides an overview of how universities and higher education institutions utilize social media as a tool for crisis management as perceived by public relations.

Public relations bear significant responsibility in crisis management, which can be elucidated in three essential stages:

Before the crisis: This includes developing pre-communication plans, providing necessary information to prevent potential crises, implementing strategies for communication through social media platforms, and identifying and training the crisis management team.

During the crisis: This involves gathering and analyzing crisis information, mobilizing the crisis management team for rapid response, informing the organizational environment, employees, targeted audience, and media.

After the crisis: This includes evaluating the crisis response, extracting lessons learned, updating

plans, and documenting the actions taken.

Social media platforms excel in crisis management due to their speed in disseminating information, enabling universities to instantly communicate with both internal and external community during crises. Platforms like Instagram and Facebook can be used to post urgent updates, provide advice and guidance, thereby fostering trust between the university and community and reducing rumors. This comes as part of effective strategies for crisis management through social media, the most important of which are:

Continuous monitoring: This involves monitoring events and conversations across social media platforms, using data analysis tools to identify potential issues before they escalate.

Targeted messaging preparation: This involves providing accurate information, avoiding conflicting statements, and disseminating objective reports about ongoing events and actions taken.

Direct interaction: This includes promptly responding to inquiries and complaints, and providing psychological and material support to the university community.

An example of using social media in crisis management at Palestine Ahliya University during the global health crisis and the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) is the Public Relations Department at the university using social media to communicate with students and faculty members about preventive measures and revised course syllabi. They published explanatory videos and awareness articles, which helped reassure the university community and maintain the continuity of education. Additionally, it motivated students to shift to online learning, which in turn increased student commitment to regular participation in the e-learning process to approximately 95%.

In addition to the crisis of closures and the war on Gaza, which prevented students from reaching universities, the Public Relations Department at the university carried out a media campaign to ensure the success of the e-learning process for students in the Gaza Strip. As a result, students from the Gaza Strip were able to attend online lectures alongside their peers from other regions in the various specializations offered by the university. The university considered supporting students from the Gaza Strip and enabling them to continue their university education not only a national and humanitarian duty but also part of its social and ethical responsibility.

It is also worth noting that there are significant challenges to using social media despite their benefits. Social media can contribute to the rapid spread of rumors, which necessitates additional efforts to monitor content and respond promptly to misinformation. Furthermore, crisis management via social media requires maintaining a balance between transparency and protecting the privacy of affected individuals, handling sensitive information with care, and ensuring that privacy rights are not violated.

Proceeding to an advanced stage of crisis management involves establishing an efficient communication system to ensure the swift and accurate transmission of information during crises, followed by designating an official spokesperson for managing communications with the media and the public. The institution, in turn, collaborates and forms partnerships with local and national entities for coordination, information exchange, and support. In the event of a crisis, necessary responses are carried out, emergency plans are implemented immediately upon occurrence, and prompt actions are taken to provide essential support.”

In a subsequent stage of crisis management, the response to the crisis is evaluated after its conclusion. Lessons learned are identified, and the emergency plan is updated based on experiences. Every step taken during the crisis is documented, and the crisis management plan is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure continuous improvement.

In conclusion, public relations departments in universities and higher education institutions must recognize crucial their role in crisis management and the use and management of social media platforms, which play a vital role by providing a means for immediate and effective communication, enhancing transparency, and building trust. This requires ensuring the importance of pre-planning, continuous monitoring, and delivering targeted messages, enabling universities to effectively handle crises and achieve successful responses. However, universities should be prepared for the challenges associated with using these platforms, ensuring successful crisis management.

Activities and Events

- * The Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Anti-Corruption Commission honor the winning and participating students in the drawing competition

“Hand in Hand towards a Corruption-Free Nation 2”

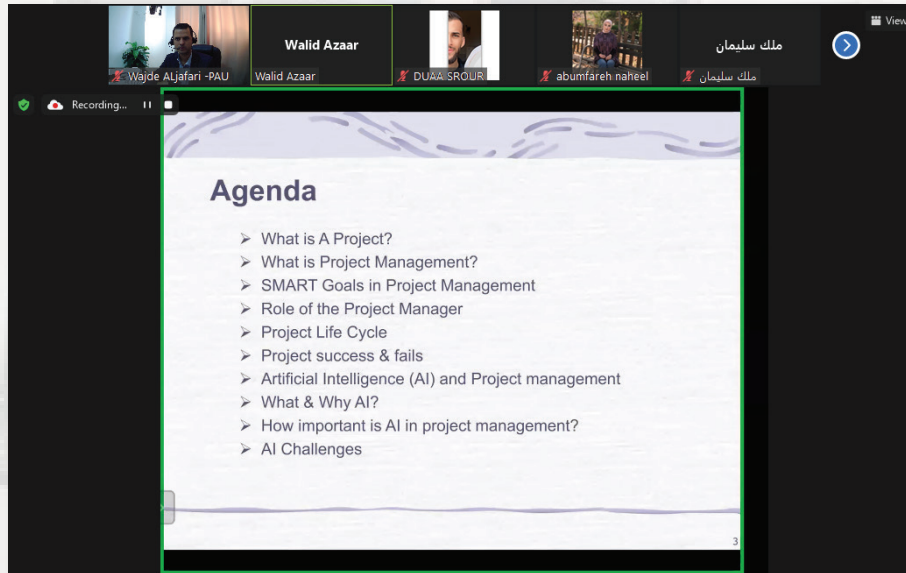
which targeted students of Palestinian higher education institutions, aiming to promote a culture of anti-corruption among them.

Palestine Ahliya University won an award for the painting by the student Israa Shrouf, and received two certificates of appreciation for the paintings by students Mujahid Abayat and Lana Al-Eidah. The winners presented an overview of the content of their artistic paintings and related them to the fight against corruption.



- * The Research Clinic at Palestine Ahliya University held a training workshop on advanced statistical analysis titled **“Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)”** targeting researchers and analysts from various disciplines.

- * Expert in project management, Mr. Walid Azar, delivered a lecture to students of the 'Introduction to Global Culture' course titled
"Project Management and Artificial Intelligence"



- * **Palestine Ahliya University hosts the Bethlehem Directorate of Education to honor the initiators in educational forums and curriculum committees.**



- * The Students of the Community Service course carry out a campaign to provide assistance, distributing food parcels and bread to needy families amidst challenging circumstances.



Scientific Research Corner

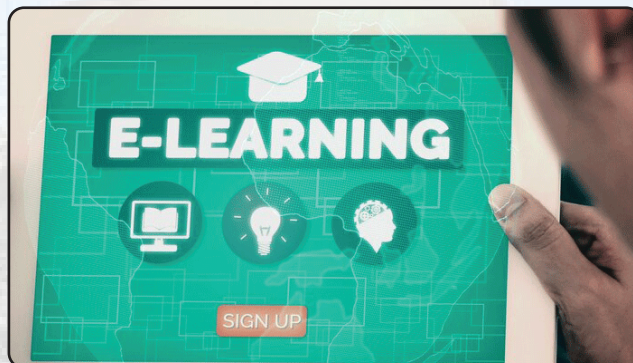
Within the strategy and goals of the Research Clinic at Palestine Ahliya University, the publications issued by the university have continued to grow. According to the updated data in the global database “SCOPUS,” the growth rates in published research have reached 93.55% compared to the same period last year. This growth has been contributed to by 53 researchers from the university throughout its history. Professors, researchers, and students from various faculties of the university have contributed to the university’s publications in multiple fields, including computer science, social sciences, engineering, health, natural sciences, and humanities.

According to the mentioned database, the publications included collaborations with researchers from local universities, primarily with researchers from Al-Quds University, An-Najah National University, and the Arab American University. Additionally, there were collaborations with researchers from Arab universities, most notably Zarqa University in Jordan and University of Science and Technology in Saudi Arabia. There was also international collaboration with Asian universities such as the University of Science, Malaysia, and Sultan Zainal Abidin University, Malaysia. According to the data, the majority of publications from Palestine Ahliya University appear as research papers in scientific journals, while the rest are distributed among papers presented at international conferences, book chapters in research books, literature reviews, research findings, and more.

It is worth mentioning that the “SCOPUS” database is the largest global platform for published research, covering more than 45,000 scientific journals issued in various specialties by major publishing companies. It is typically the recognized database in university ranking statistics.



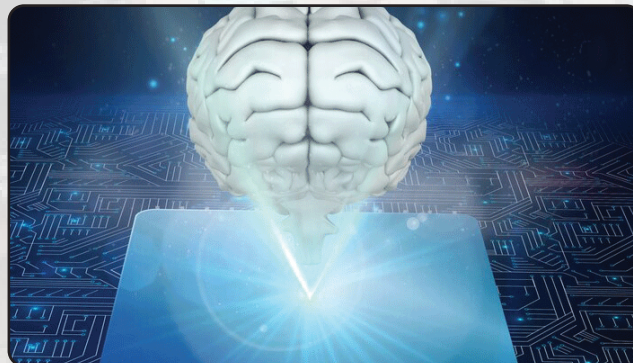
Prof. Ali Abu Marya participates in publishing a new study titled
**“Technological Protection Measures and
 Their Role in Protecting Digital Works.”**



Dr. Rawan Sijab Jubeh participates in publishing a new study titled
**“The Level of Students’ Satisfaction with Their Academic Performance in
 e-learning Through Learning Platforms.”**



Dr. Amjad Al-Khatib, Dr. Majed Al Shrouf, Dr. Mohammad Shadid, and Dr.
 Emad Al-Zeer participate in publishing a new study titled
“Social Factors Affecting Customers’ Orientation to Islamic Banks.”



Dr. Mu'taz Abu Sara and Mr. Sameh Taqatqa collaborate on publishing a new
 study titled
**“Utilizing Deep Learning Models (RNN, LSTM, CNN-LSTM, and Bi-LSTM)
 for Arabic Text Classification.”**

Palestine Ahliya University is pleased to open its doors for productive research partnerships
 with academic institutions and distinguished researchers in various fields.

You can contact us via email at: research.clinic@paluniv.edu.ps

جامعة فلسطين الأهلية



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Palestine Ahliya University



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