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**Beyond the Occupation: Palestinian Youth and the Struggle for  
Political Change**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** This paper seeks to understand the meaning of the Palestinian Youth Movement (PYM) apart from its symbolism of political change, the democratization process and citizenship beyond the prism of occupation. Emphasizing the post-2007 eras of split political and geographical topographies in the Palestinian territories, this study may be expected to analyze, among others, the following research questions: To what extent did and/or does the student youth movement develop democratic agendas or/and reconciliation within and among Palestine's factions? **Methodology:** The research design used was largely exploratory, in which two major techniques of data collection were utilized: semi-structured interviews and post-analysis of social media content. The present research has made it possible to decompose the factors instrumental in raising the youth participation in the movement, their political change strategies, and visions of the Palestinian cause. **Main Results:** The paper has evidenced that youths' movement is indispensable in the manifestation of democracy, equality, and political change in Palestinian territory. This paper explores the obedience that the Palestinian

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generation has maintained to non-violent struggle in the form of demonstration, strike, and civil disobedience. It also focuses on the role of youths in the shaping of democratic practices and their role in proffering political reconciliation in the region. **Conclusions:** These findings highlight the role and engagement of Palestinian youth in political change and processes of democratization; it shows the role of students and the youth movements for democracy, reconciliation, and non-violent struggle for change more than just liberation from occupation. It further reiterates the assertion that Palestinian youth continue holding the mission for change, justice, and liberation. **Recommendations:** Therefore, it is recommended that the backing of the youth must be increased, the horizontal cooperation and establishment of the youth organizations promoted, as well as the inclusions of democratic and non-violent resistance education in the educational establishments for increasing the efficacy of the PYM.

**Keywords:** Palestinian Youth Movement, Political Change, Democratization, National Reconciliation, Nonviolent Movement.

## ما بعد الاحتلال: الشباب الفلسطيني والنضال من أجل التغيير السياسي

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### ملخص

**الهدف:** يهدف هذا البحث إلى فهم معنى حركة الشباب الفلسطينية، بعيداً عن رمزيتهما للتغيير السياسي وعملية التحول الديمقراطي والمواطنة خارج منظور الاحتلال. مع التركيز على حقبة ما بعد عام 2007 من الانقسام السياسي والجغرافي في الأراضي الفلسطينية، يمكن توقع أن تحلل هذه الدراسة، من بين أمور أخرى، الأسئلة البحثية التالية: إلى أي مدى طورت حركة الشباب الطلابية أجندات ديمقراطية و/أو المصالحة داخل الفصائل الفلسطينية وفيما بينها؟ **المنهجية:** كان تصميم البحث المستخدم استكشافياً إلى حد كبير، حيث تم استخدام تقنيتين رئيسيتين لجمع البيانات: المقابلات شبه المنظمة والتحليل اللاحق لمحتوى وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. لقد جعل البحث الحالي من الممكن تحليل العوامل التي ساهمت في زيادة مشاركة الشباب في الحركة، واستراتيجياتهم للتغيير السياسي، ورؤاهم للقضية الفلسطينية. **النتائج الرئيسية:** أثبتت الورقة أن حركة الشباب لا غنى عنها في إظهار الديمقراطية والمساواة والتغيير السياسي في الأراضي الفلسطينية. تستكشف هذه الورقة مدى تطويع الجيل الفلسطيني للنضال اللاعنفي في شكل المظاهرات والإضرابات والعصيان المدني. كما تركز على دور الشباب في تشكيل الممارسات الديمقراطية ودورهم في تقديم المصالحة السياسية في المنطقة. **الخلاصة:** تسلط هذه النتائج الضوء على دور الشباب الفلسطيني ومشاركته في التغيير السياسي وعمليات التحول الديمقراطي؛ كما تظهر دور الطلاب والحركات الشبابية من أجل الديمقراطية والمصالحة والنضال اللاعنفي من أجل التغيير أكثر من مجرد التحرر من الاحتلال. كما تؤكد على أن الشباب الفلسطيني يواصل حمل مهمة التغيير والعدالة والتحرر. **التوصيات:** لذلك، يوصى بزيادة دعم الشباب، وتعزيز التعاون الأفقي وتأسيس المنظمات الشبابية، فضلاً عن إدراج التعليم الديمقراطي والمقاومة اللاعنفية في المؤسسات التعليمية لزيادة فعالية حركة الشباب الفلسطينية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الحركة الشبابية الفلسطينية، التغيير السياسي، التحول الديمقراطي، المصالحة الوطنية، الحركة اللاعنفية.

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## **Introduction**

It has been found that young Palestinians have an important contribution towards future society development in the unfavourable conditions. He as the bearers of struggle for development change have to tolerate the unanswerable questions along with the actually existing frustration and uncertainty. This is because; social economic inequalities; unemployment and neglect of the system also cause alienation. but still hope to live better bitch occupation raises this rate of hopelessness and therefore it leads to massive poverty, unemployment and disappointment. The way in which the Palestinian youth have been able to emerge as victors despite facing these sorts of atrocities ensures that they are located in the centre of the revolution for societal change as well as the quest for freedom and justice.

Hence, in a structurally and militarily weak context that is still occupied and colonized and that has inherent flaws in its politics and military, it is young Palestinians who keep being the champions of change and resistance our world so desperately calls for. Theirs is the melodrama of activism and ascendance against difficulties of society – of unequal distributions of income and wealth, of unemployment, alienation, and political quiescence. This has led to feeling of estrangement but it also provides the motivator for more to be done for forthcoming generations. The occupation is another element that makes their fight for freedom impossible and ensures the perpetuity of poverty and frustration. Even amid these constrains, more than half of Palestinian population still have a hope – this is the segment of the population which is the youth, and they still motivate changes in the societies.

However, there is no one shared view of youth contained within every community because there are a number of factors which spring from biological, psychological, and sociological sources. There is no just biological occurrence and it has a tendency to occur positively correlated with ages till chronological age besides being a socially, politically and culturally defined process; particularly, it has some relations with references to economic, social-cultural, political conditions of the particular country (Bell et al., 2021). Speaking of young people whole they

contradict earlier said things and every product interested: behaviours, politics, Intellectuality, desire for rebellion for independence and productivism. They are a set of people who are very significant and powerful in empowering more societies.

It is important to show that adolescents are by nature rebellious and that use of the authoritative power is ineffective when controlling adolescent behavior (Lee & Crofts, 2015). They are colorful, active, essentially conscious, empowering, authoritative, free, disinterested, and contingent and do not require to use coercion as it might be at times very explicit and focused. They are very much conscious of the changes occurring in the environmental conditions and are receptive to new innovations or ideas that may be imbibed as compared to beliefs. Helpful qualities mean the genuineness and the will of change from the part of the Youth Segment to achieve change in the context in which they are located although these qualities did not allow create or at least to lead some absolutely national social projects to create or at least lead the right vector.

The fundamental thesis of the given paper is that PYM is one of the major groups which assist in the democratization phenomena, national reconciliation and the passive resistance against occupation. The study follows and illustrates the process through which PYM is crucial for political change and democracy for Palestine in utilizing qualitative data from interview and social minting. It is interested in the actions of the movement in order to engage student election, equality struggle for gender, some political changes, and generally the part of the youth in the entire future of the country irrespective of the occupation.

### **Emerging Social Movement**

Karl Marx viewed social movements as responses to capitalism's inherent inequalities, fostering radicalism and revolutionary tendencies. Max Weber emphasized charismatic leadership, societal values, and power redistribution under social pressure. Literature ties youth movements to social protests, noting diverse geographical and structural contexts. Social movements differ from political parties or interest groups by their fluid nature and indirect political engagement. They emerge from injustice,

exclusion, and despair, evolving through stages from emergence to potential decline, driven by collective identity and direct participation in addressing societal challenges.

Given the complexity and depth of the topic, for more comprehensive insights into the evolution, characteristics, and impact of social movements, including their stages of development and the role of youth within these movements, further exploration of the sources mentioned, such as Breuilly (2011), Morris & Herring (1984), Elia (2017), and others, is recommended. This will provide a fuller understanding of the diverse and dynamic nature of social movements across different contexts.

For social movements to succeed, internal and external networking is vital, enabling coordination among diverse organizations. These movements aim to effect societal change, either by challenging or upholding the status quo, leveraging resources to turn grievances into action. Success hinges on developing leadership, collective identity, and broadening external alliances, essential for mobilizing resources and addressing community-level issues effectively. (Andretta et al., 2015).

The Arab Spring's youth participation was influenced by various factors, including middle-class growth, expanded higher education, limited job markets, corruption, nepotism, unemployment, and the role of technology and new media. These elements fostered a collective consciousness among young Arabs, driving them towards unified visions of a free society. State dictatorship, societal constraints, and economic monopolies further fueled political awareness, with youth leveraging globalization and media for revolutionary pursuits (Arampatzi et al., 2018).

The Palestinian Youth Movement (PYM) comprises activists, university students, and members from youth, sports, and cultural centers across diverse locales. It embodies a mix of individual initiatives, small groups, and young leaders navigating the challenges of a fragmented Palestinian geography. There is no better evidence of this than what was shown by the study of Qadomi, A. N., Shaker, J., & Draghma, Y. (2013) The highest degree of contribution of student affairs departments was in the field of national-social activity, with a percentage of (58.01%),

followed by the field of sports activity, with a percentage of (53.40%), followed by the field of artistic activity, with a percentage of (51.25%), and finally the field of cultural activity, with a percentage of (50.20%).

This movement, often seen as Palestinian youth gatherings, advocates for independent political initiatives distinct from the policies of Fatah and Hamas, focusing on democratic transformation, national reconciliation, popular resistance, and societal issues including gender and democratization. (Kovacheva et al., 2017).

The Palestinian youth movement, reflecting dissatisfaction with current conditions, seeks change through sustained engagement with adversaries. Achieving significant unity across political lines, it focuses on ending internal divisions, revitalizing the Palestinian National Council, opposing normalization with Israel, and supporting international efforts for boycotts, sanctions, and divestment. (Al-Fattafa, 2013).

Many student and youth movement activists in Palestinian universities believe that university students are a major component of the Palestinian Youth Parliament, established in 2008 by the Sharek Youth Forum. (Yousef & Labdeh, 2016) The goal was to empower youth voices and involvement in community affairs. Establishment of the youth parliaments also made it possible to elect astute leaders across the entire Palestine. Since it is the youth, especially the young men and women that needed to be reached and stood for the rights of the prisoners as well as sustainable development and good governance also sensitised and visualised for the integrity and transparency and anti-corruption needed. Further structuring and organizing the participation of youth in the field resistance against the occupation also cemented the identification of youth with their land and gained them more support from the international community through projects and advocacy in the forums of the right to agricultural products.

Though through mature and broadened as the, however it was not an easy task for many years due to absence of required resources, divisions, disputes and conflicts between members of the association and also unfavorable working environment from both core and non-core sectors. But it does not deny the fact that the movement still managed to

demonstrate its potential and the need for proactive action as there is always a need to learn how to fight for justice, freedom, and equality using new opportunities and methods. The youth movement developed as a response to these challenges: It also sought to systemize the work at the grassroots level, and attempt direct contact with the population in local communities, and to some degree, unite other social movements and international organizations which could help its cause, better its leverage.

Such an effective grass roots organization like the international solidarity movement could also be the founding of many local groups and projects concentrating on the socio-economic development of the Palestinian people in the fields of education, health, environment, etc. The youth movement allowed working directly with the communities because the youth movement was trusted and the people united under the movement banner despite long existing political differences amongst the Palestinians. Besides, these endeavors demonstrated to people that change is possible and provided them with better alternatives to politically lame institutions that did not benefit the people.(Awad, 2021)

An action plan that (PYM) employed was to engage the aid of the new media and technology in propagating awareness for and raising support from the international society. Youth from the Palestinian Territory were able to maintain an audience from multiple continents and via multiple social media platforms and blogging and forum sites and present their situation and relate it to the emotions and plight of a broader global community in a manner that called into question the more constructed and hegemonically enshrined narratives that have continued to depoliticize their presence. This strategy not only increased the visibility of the movement but also made people build global networks and national and international mobilization of other social movements, NGOs, and human rights organizations that share the above-mentioned ideals.(Vatikiotis & Yörük, 2016)

Hence, it may be, in turn, finally substantially asserted that (PYM) has contributed significantly in the social and political empowerment of Palestine, even though it has been subjected to several challenges and hardships. Despite its criticisms and limitations, the movement has seen,



and is still seeing, slight changes towards change and greater transformations through people's involvement in actions, community work, and the strategic use of new media and technology to mobilize more people, the creation of a new generation of activists to fight for justice and equality for future generations of Palestinians. Further transformation of tactics and strategies together with innovations, and also further creation of cooperation with similar other peaceful mass social movements and international organizations, undoubtedly is one of the most important conditions for the sustainable and efficient long run development of the youth's movement (Gawerc, 2017).

### **Literature Review**

The literature review delves into the significant impact of the Arab Spring on Palestinian youth movements, highlighting their strategic mobilization and engagement within the complex socio-political landscape of Palestine. Ibrahim Natil's article serves as a pivotal reference, offering a comprehensive analysis of how these movements have navigated the challenges of Israeli occupation, political divisions between Fatah and Hamas, and the absence of unified leadership (Natil, 2017b).

Central to the discussion is the concept of participatory democracy, as defined by Aragones and Hagler (2018), which Palestinian youth movements have adopted to address the limitations of representative democracy. This approach underscores the importance of directly engaging citizens, particularly the youth, in the political process to ensure a more direct expression of public will and greater political accountability. In the Palestinian context, participatory democracy is not only a governance mechanism but also a form of resistance and empowerment against occupation and internal divisions.

The roots of Palestinian youth activism stretch back to resistance against British rule, evolving through key moments like the First Intifada and the Oslo Accords. This period saw the rise of grassroots movements and a shift towards broader social engagement. Innovations in tactics, especially the use of social media, were notably inspired by the Second Intifada and the Arab Spring. Despite facing obstacles like political

division and socio-economic challenges, these movements have remained resilient, continuously advocating for self-determination, democracy, and social justice, underlining the significant role of youth in driving change.

Currently facing numerous obstacles, including the harsh realities of Israeli occupation, internal political divisions, economic challenges, and restrictions on freedoms, Palestinian youth movements have showcased incredible resilience and innovation, particularly in harnessing digital platforms for activism amidst surveillance and accessibility hurdles. This comprehensive analysis underscores their central role in advocating for Palestinian rights, emphasizing their strategic use of participatory democracy and digital advocacy to navigate and confront these challenges, marking a significant contribution to the ongoing quest for self-determination, democratic governance, and social equity.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is based on multiple theoretical frameworks, incorporating The participatory democracy model in a Palestinian context (Soliman et al., 2022) and Freire's theory (Critical Conscious) as the primary driver of how they choose to express their political and social struggle.

The participatory democracy model emphasizes active engagement and direct involvement of citizens in the decision-making processes that affect their lives, communities, and societies at large. Unlike traditional representative democracy, where citizens primarily engage in the democratic process by voting for representatives, participatory democracy involves citizens more directly in various stages of policy-making, including agenda setting, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation. This model seeks to deepen democratic engagement by fostering a more informed, empowered, and involved citizenry

For Freire, oppression amounted to a dehumanization process for both the oppressed and the oppressor. Freire (2000) determined that people needed to think critically about oppressive realities and challenge inequitable social conditions to reclaim their humanity. "The process whereby people achieve an illuminating awareness both of the socioeconomic and cultural circumstances that shape their lives and their

capacity to transform that reality” Moreover, opportunities for self-determination and control over one’s life contribute to health, wellness, and quality of life (Prilleltensky et al. 2001). To date, there has been significant and innovative scholarship and reformulation of critical consciousness to prevent or ameliorate inequitable conditions that cause social and health disparities (Diemer et al. 2014).

Critical consciousness has important scholarly and practice implications. However, Freire did not provide a conceptual model of CC, and thus, many scholars spanning the education, community psychology, social work, public health, and social science fields have adopted, interpreted, applied, and expanded CC in various directions (Green 2009; Thomas et al. 2014).

Some researchers conceptualize CC as a unidimensional construct with critical reflection as the single component (Mustakova-Possardt 1998; Watts et al. 1998), a purely cognitive state that derives from the critical analysis of sociopolitical inequity.

The intellectual analyses of the sociopolitical and cultural environment permit the identification of oppression and inquiry about its existence (Freire 2000; Watts and Abdul-Adil 1998). This critical awareness incorporates perspectives of relationships between self and society and requires a metacognitive experience in that one must think about their thoughts, be aware of the existence of consciousness, and be mindful of its ever-evolving process (Houser and Overton 2001).

The theory of criticism stems from two sides of a conflict (injustice and the oppressed), where marginalized groups in society are exposed to social injustice, inequality, and others, but it is noticeable that the theory, and even most researchers who applied it to Latin societies in dictatorial regimes, or minorities in Western democratic societies such as the situation of blacks in the United States and Palestinian youth as well, “American system or risk the idea of incompetence, risk or questioning their allegiance. Unlike many immigrants from other nationalities, most Palestinians could not hide their political identity to become “Americans” in this sense” (Mokadi & Yousef, 2019).

Both sides of the conflict indeed belong to the same society, while in the Palestinian cause, the injustice inflicted on the Palestinian people is another (nation) Israel is a violent colonial power, it represents a major contradiction to the Palestinian existence and its political identity

Nor did the theory take into account the historical dimension of the conflict, nor did the theory address the regional or even international dimension of repression, or even the foreign policy of the existing authority.

Action has been conceptualized as “an individual’s objective ability or potency to act given structural constraints” (Campbell and MacPhail 2002, p. 333). Freire (1973, p. 66) also noted that “while no one liberates himself by his efforts alone, neither is he liberated by others,” emphasizing the need for individual and collective action to transform the reality of the socioeconomic and cultural circumstances that create and perpetuate social injustice.

### **Objectives of the study**

1. Investigate the equilibrium in addressing issues and tasks related to student democratization, national reconciliation, and popular resistance within the (PYM) and explore how these elements can be integrated into a national strategy.
2. Assess the election experience among Palestinian university students, involving all student blocs, while considering the failure of the Palestinian political leadership to reach a consensus on holding national presidential and legislative elections.
3. Examine the various youth initiatives proposed to heal the internal Palestinian rift and identify the reasons behind their lack of success and inability to resolve this issue.
4. Evaluate the role of the youth movement in resisting occupation and the strategies it employed, taking advantage of international support and public opinion in favor of Palestinians, particularly in their adoption of peaceful popular resistance and its tools.

5. Investigate the significance of investing in non-political, soft aspects within Palestinian society and promoting activities that contribute to reinforcing Palestinian identity and culture amidst negative internal political engagement and the lack of a national strategy to address both political and non-political aspects.

### **Research Methodology**

The study employs a descriptive and analytical approach, utilizing data from primary and secondary sources, such as books, journals, conference papers, and interviews with student leaders across the political spectrum. Additionally, the research re-analyzes the findings and conclusions of previous literature, including references and books authored by experts in youth affairs and the student movement. Critical observations are obtained from field activists involved in popular resistance and student movement activists, who were contacted through personal and telephone interviews, as well as online communication.

### **Research Goals and Research Questions**

In the evolving political landscape of the Palestinian territories, marked by significant mobilizations and shifts since the early 2000s, Palestinian youth movement leaders have been pivotal in driving social and political transformations. Inspired by Paulo Freire's conceptualization of critical consciousness, which emphasizes the importance of critical reflection, political efficacy (critical motivation), and critical action, this research aims to explore the development of a new political consciousness among Palestinian youth. This consciousness is crucial for navigating and contributing to the complex dynamics of resistance and activism, with a specific focus on how Palestinian youth leaders embody Freire's components of critical consciousness in their efforts towards participatory democracy and self-determination.

The research objectives are designed to delve into the lived experiences of Palestinian youth leaders, underpinned by Freire's framework, to understand their contributions towards fostering a participatory democratic ethos from the grassroots level:

To conduct a phenomenological analysis on the evolution of Palestinian youth leaders' consciousness, aligning with Freire's critical consciousness components, within the context of ongoing political struggle.

To examine how Palestinian youth leaders' political consciousness, nurtured through critical reflection and motivation, functions within their collective pursuit of self-determination and statehood.

To investigate the development of leadership and political consciousness in localized community contexts, emphasizing the role of critical action in enhancing participatory democratic practices.

To explore the lived experiences and community dynamics of Palestinian youth leaders through the lens of Freire's critical consciousness, as they navigate and contribute to the mechanisms of participatory democracy.

### **Research Questions**

Guided by Freire's conceptualization, the research questions focus on the application of critical consciousness among Palestinian youth movement leaders:

#### **Primary Research Question (PRQ):**

How do Palestinian youth movement leaders embody Freire's critical consciousness components in their lived experiences of exercising participatory democracy?

#### **Secondary Research Questions (SRQs):**

SRQ 1: How does the political consciousness of Palestinian youth leaders, developed through critical reflection and motivation, function within their pursuit of self-determination and statehood?

SRQ 2: How does leadership within communities foster political consciousness and critical action for participatory democracy practices?

SRQ 3: How do Palestinian youth leaders utilize their community dynamics and personal energy, in line with Freire's critical consciousness, to advocate for participatory democracy?

### **Conceptual Context**

This study integrates Freire's critical consciousness with key concepts relevant to the Palestinian struggle, such as participatory democracy, leadership, ethics, and the common good. The methodological approach is grounded in phenomenology, providing a rich framework for understanding the lived experiences of Palestinian youth leaders in their quest for autonomy and self-determination.

### **Methods and Techniques**

Following the principles outlined by Maxwell (1996) and Barreto (2009), the study employs a methodological approach that encompasses data collection and analysis through defined procedures and instruments, with a focus on embodying Freire's critical consciousness in the research process.

### **Data Collection**

Data collection combines semi-structured interviews and theoretical-documentary reviews related to the themes of leadership, political consciousness, and participatory democracy. The interview questions are crafted to explore the application of Freire's critical consciousness components among Palestinian youth leaders, with sample questions including:

How do you engage in critical reflection within the Palestinian youth movement? (Leadership)

In what ways do ethics and critical motivation influence leadership in the movement? (Leadership)

How is political consciousness developed and acted upon among Palestinian youth? (Political consciousness)

How does this consciousness translate into critical action and participatory practices? (Political consciousness)

What does participatory democracy, informed by critical consciousness, mean to Palestinian communities? (Participatory democracy)

The selection of interviewees includes Palestinian youth leaders who embody Freire's principles through their knowledge, leadership experience, ethical contributions, and willingness to participate in the study, ensuring a diverse representation of genders and ages within the movement.

This integration of Freire's critical consciousness into the study of Palestinian youth movement leaders provides a nuanced framework for understanding their role in fostering participatory democracy and political change, reflecting a deep commitment to social justice and empowerment.

### **Data Analysis**

In aligning the data analysis process with the context of Palestinian youth movement leaders, the study follows the phenomenological method outlined by Moustakas, integrating Paulo Freire's concept of critical consciousness. This approach involves several nuanced steps:

**The Epoché:** This foundational process aids researchers in acknowledging and setting aside biases and preconceptions, a critical step in ensuring an open, unbiased exploration of Palestinian youth leaders' experiences. The Epoché is applied both at the research's outset and throughout its course, necessitating a Researcher's Subjectivity Declaration. This declaration covers personal views on key concepts such as justice, resistance, leadership, and political consciousness within the Palestinian context. Furthermore, a Dialectical Exercise of Awareness is incorporated, inspired by the principle of serenity and the Socratic method of self-examination, ensuring the researcher maintains an analytical distance and avoids reinforcing biases when participants' narratives echo prior assumptions.



**The Phenomenological Reduction:** Through this process, themes emerge from the data (e.g., interview transcripts), organized into horizons that directly respond to the secondary research questions. This step involves visual representations to complement thematic descriptions, illustrating how Palestinian youth leaders navigate and contribute to their movement's goals.

**The Eidetic Reduction (Imaginative Reduction):** Here, the data is analyzed through universal phenomenological categories—intentionality, intersubjectivity, corporality, and temporality—to uncover the essence of experiences within the Palestinian youth movement. Each category aids in understanding different facets of these experiences:

Intentionality reveals the motivations organizing subjective experiences.

Inter-subjectivity uncovers the relational dynamics within the movement.

Corporality connects to the physical and emotional engagement in activism.

Temporality explores how experiences of time influence activism and consciousness.

This analytical phase is guided by the secondary research questions, crafting in-depth interpretations that reveal how Palestinian youth leaders' experiences inform their engagement with participatory democracy and resistance movements.

**The Phenomenological Synthesis:** This final step integrates all individual analyses to understand the collective essence of the experiences. It supports the creation of a theoretical framework for transformative leadership within the context of participatory democracy among Palestinian youth leaders. This synthesis includes:

Integration of interviews according to each secondary research question, with visual summaries illustrating leaders' experiences and insights.

Theoretical contrasting for validity, juxtaposing interview findings with existing literature on participatory democracy, leadership, and resistance within the Palestinian context.

Creation of a theoretical phenomenological approach, responding to the primary research question and elucidating the essence of community leadership experiences in fostering democratic participatory models.

This adapted methodology, rooted in phenomenology and enriched by Freire's critical consciousness, offers a profound exploration of the roles, experiences, and contributions of Palestinian youth movement leaders towards achieving social and political transformation.

**Youth Activism; Palestinian Context:** The unique role of Palestinian youth in shaping their society and determining its future is multifaceted and profoundly impactful. Palestinian youth have been at the forefront of social and political movements, driving change and innovation within their communities against the backdrop of a protracted conflict. Their contributions can be highlighted in several key areas:

**Political Activism and Mobilization:** Palestinian youth have played a crucial role in political mobilization, participating in protests, demonstrations, and various forms of resistance against occupation. Their activism is not only a reaction to the immediate challenges of occupation but also a broader struggle for national identity, rights, and self-determination (Abu Samra, 2020).

**Educational, Social and Cultural Innovation:** Youth are central in promoting social and cultural innovation, utilizing art, music, and digital media to express their identities, aspirations, and resistances. These cultural expressions serve as tools for both internal solidarity and international awareness, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose.

Despite facing significant barriers to education, Palestinian youth have shown remarkable resilience and dedication to advancing their educational pursuits. They contribute to society by building their professional capacities, engaging in community education initiatives, and advocating

for the importance of education as a tool for empowerment and social change.

**International Advocacy and Representation:** Palestinian youth have effectively used international platforms to advocate for their cause, bringing global attention to the Palestinian struggle through diplomacy, international forums, and social media campaigns. Their efforts have helped to internationalize the Palestinian issue, garnering support and solidarity from communities and movements worldwide (Al-Hroub, 2023).

**Community Development and Humanitarian Efforts and Peace-building Initiatives:** In the face of economic challenges and humanitarian crises, Palestinian youth have been instrumental in community development efforts, participating in and organizing humanitarian aid, social services, and development projects. Their work addresses immediate community needs while fostering a spirit of resilience and self-reliance.

Some Palestinian youth are involved in peace-building initiatives and dialogue programs, seeking to build bridges and promote understanding both within Palestinian society and between Palestinians and Israelis. These efforts, though often contentious and challenging, highlight the youth's role in seeking sustainable and just solutions to the conflict (Yousef, 2022).

**Critical Consciousness and Societal Transformation:** Drawing on Paulo Freire's concept of critical consciousness, Palestinian youth are increasingly engaged in critical reflection about their socio-political realities, advocating for democratic participation, social justice, and equality. Their critical engagement is a powerful force for societal transformation, challenging both internal and external structures of oppression (Kornbluh et al., 2020).

In essence, Palestinian youth are not merely passive recipients of their socio-political context but active agents of change, shaping their society's present and future through a combination of resistance, innovation, and constructive engagement. Their unique role underscores the importance of

supporting youth empowerment and participation as central to the broader struggle for freedom, justice, and self-determination in Palestine.

Palestinian youth activism has been on the rise in recent years, despite initial perceptions of political alienation and fragmentation among the "Oslo generation" of young Palestinians born around the time of the Oslo Accords of 1993 (Jones, 2021) Palestinian youth have shown a willingness to confront the Palestinian Authority openly and have mobilized in innovative ways, harnessing social media to their advantage (Fox & Qabaha, 2021; Kelsch, 2022).

Young Palestinians have also been vocal about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with many calling for a resolution that addresses the discrimination and displacement experienced by Palestinians (Høigilt et al., 2013). In recent years, Palestinians have accused Israel of trying to expel them from their homes in order to cement control over the city (Buettner, 2020), and far-right Jewish Israelis have used social media to organize attacks on Palestinian citizens of Israel (Adalah, 2019)

"About 90% of the Arab society in Israel live in Arab localities and the rest in Arab neighborhoods in mixed or Jewish cities, according to a study by Givat Haviva (2017) Most Jews live in Jewish localities and only 22% in mixed localities. Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip live from an Israeli perspective, beyond the walls." (Schwartz, 2021)

Despite the challenges they face, Palestinian youth have continued to fight for their liberation and the rights of their communities . They have shown incredible ingenuity and resilience in the face of repression, and their activism has strengthened Palestinian civil society and mobilization (Kelsch, 2022) Between 2011 and 2013, a rising tide of Palestinian youth-led activism and protests surged in the Palestinian Territories and inside Israel, inspired by the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions. It started on social media networks, where groups of young Palestinians shared their own great expectations online, calling on their peers to join them in their Palestinian revolution against the division of the two main Palestinian political parties, Fatah in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza. On March 15, 2011, in various sites in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and even inside

Israel, young Palestinians took to the streets with a core demand, never embraced so publicly before, by vast numbers of youth: “The people want...” (Dwonch, 2017). Despite the bleak political background and contextual constraints, young Americans have been inspired to engage in activism, with 52% believing that democracy is "in trouble" or "failing" (Pace et al., 2022). Social, political, and cultural contexts heavily influence educational decision-making, and multiculturalism asserts this notion (Cozart et al., 2016). The civil rights movement in the United States was a struggle for social justice mainly during the 1950s and 1960s for Black Americans to gain equal rights under the law (Fischbach, 2018). Social media platforms have been used to spread fake news, hate speech, and misinformation, which could influence audiences unable to distinguish truth from fact or news from propaganda. This "infodemic" puts democracy at risk (Brooks & Carnahan, 2020).

### **The Path to Grassroots Democratization**

The critique regarding the need for a nuanced examination of the intertwining of social movements in Palestine with political powers is addressed by recent developments and analyses of Palestinian social movements. The diversity and dynamism within these movements, particularly feminist and environmental activism, as well as broader social justice causes, underscore the complexity of their interactions with political entities and the broader struggle for Palestinian rights.

Recent massive protests against Israel's military actions in Gaza have highlighted an unprecedented global wave of solidarity with Palestine, indicating the deepening inter-sectionality of Palestinian liberation with global social justice movements, such as Black Lives Matter (BLM) and feminist movements. These movements recognize the Palestinian struggle as integral to their fight against systemic injustices, colonialism, and oppression, highlighting the interconnectedness of struggles across borders (Abu Awad, 2015).

The emergence of the Palestinian feminist movement Tal'at represents a significant shift towards redefining liberation and centering feminist discourse within the national emancipation agenda. This movement has

mobilized Palestinian women across diverse geographies under a political and feminist banner, challenging gender-based violence and advocating for the emancipation of all Palestinians as integral to the liberation of Palestine. This marks a transformative approach to feminism in the Palestinian context, situating the fight against gender-based oppression within the broader anti-colonial struggle (Saba, 2023).

Moreover, discussions within Palestinian feminist circles have expanded to encompass a wide range of issues, from national liberation to social and political rights, and from conservative to secular feminist discourses. These debates reflect the complex interplay of social, political, and cultural factors shaping the feminist movement in Palestine, acknowledging the diversity of experiences and perspectives among Palestinian women and the need for an inclusive approach to liberation that addresses multiple forms of oppression (Khatib, 2022).

These developments illustrate the evolving landscape of Palestinian social movements, which, while influenced by political powers, are increasingly asserting their autonomy and reimagining the pathways to liberation and justice. The nuanced examination of these dynamics reveals the critical role of grassroots activism, intersectional solidarity, and feminist engagement in shaping the future of Palestinian society and its struggle for rights and dignity. In her recent thesis on the Islamic student movement, Dalal Bajes utilized Chickering's theory of student development (Long, 2012), highlighting the university's direct contribution to enhancing students' skills, managing emotions, fostering relationships, and eventually establishing a collective identity and setting life goals. This process leads to the development of community and trade union awareness, as well as self and partisan capabilities. Before examining the central role of the student movement in democratizing Palestinian student and political life, the researcher outlines the following key characteristics of the Palestinian student movement in the West Bank and Gaza Strip:

1. The establishment of student councils in Palestinian universities in the 1970s was primarily in response to the Israeli occupation, rather than conflicts between students and university administrations. Despite this,

efforts persisted to connect the national struggle against occupation and its policies of exclusion and displacement with the democratization of student life. This led to the emergence of the problematic contradiction between national politics and the non-political demands of the student movement (Zelkovitz, 2014).

2. The Arab Uprisings ‘acted as a galvanising force [which] provided some Palestinians in the diaspora with new ways of connecting politically to the Arab world, and of connecting events in the Arab world to the Palestinian cause’ (Gabiham & Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2017, p. 743; see also Salih et al., 2017). The diverse student blocs primarily extend from the Palestinian political movements, factions, and organizations that existed in the Palestinian diaspora before the Oslo Accords were signed. Some student activists believe that various student movements, regardless of their Islamic, national, or leftist affiliations, are incapable of making independent decisions in general student affairs without political leaders' input. Consequently, some student movement leaders and symbols question the credibility of discussing an effective Palestinian student movement separate from organizations, factions, and parties (Abudheir, 2016).
3. The Palestinian student movement experienced political and organizational fragmentation and calcification following the Oslo Accords due to new interests and contradictions on the Palestinian scene. Student movements and mass structures, in general, were marked by stagnation, rhetoric, sloganeering, romanticism, and utopian thinking detached from reality, as well as fragmentation and division. This occurred as the construction of the National Authority's institutions came at the expense of popular organizations and trade unions, and the National Authority and political parties worked to contain these social movements (Meari & Duhou, 2020).
4. The participation of Palestinian female students in student activities within universities remained limited and did not reflect their numbers and size. This participation was primarily formal and superficial. Analyzing the percentage of female students' representation in student councils can indicate the extent of gender integration in the educational

process in universities. Despite the challenges and obstacles faced by the Palestinian student movement, it has demonstrated resilience and adaptability. In times of crisis or heightened political tensions, student movements have united to address common issues and concerns, transcending ideological and factional divides. This unity has been instrumental in strengthening the Palestinian national identity and promoting a sense of solidarity among students. (Kostenko et al., 2016).

5. Despite the challenges and obstacles faced by the Palestinian student movement, it has demonstrated resilience and adaptability. In times of crisis or heightened political tensions, student movements have united to address common issues and concerns, transcending ideological and factional divides. This unity has been instrumental in strengthening the Palestinian national identity and promoting a sense of solidarity among students.(Salih et al., 2017).
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7. Additionally, the deeper impact of the Palestinian students' movements extends to various social and community initiatives. These activities encompass issues like; advocating for social justice in terms of environment, educating poor children as well as defending rights of those with disabilities. Through these measures, a culture of volunteerism has been established among young Palestinians.

However, Palestinian universities face different challenges that prevent them from nurturing democracy through youth movement. They include reluctance to admit mistakes within student organizations, domination of political elite over student movement, weak political culture and external interference in university life.



## **Democratizing Palestinian Higher Education: Strategies for Progress**

Palestinian universities, despite the role played by student councils in enhancing democracy, face a lot of problems that impede the full development of youth movement. It is necessary to introduce methods that can create more democratic atmosphere not only within universities but also across the whole society (Benstead, 2015).

To enhance understanding of Palestinian societal questions, it is important to encourage critical thinking and dialogues between learners. This means fostering open conversations and constructive criticism among students through debate clubs and workshops.

In order for the students to participate effectively in the democratic process, they need to be given comprehensive political education. Through taking up courses and attending seminars on political science, history and contemporary issues, they are equipped with knowledge necessary for decision making.

Elected student councils and political parties should be transparent and accountable to the people. Transparency helps build trust, while accountability ensures that these organs are answerable for their actions. Furthermore, clear guidelines, and oversight mechanisms towards openness and transparency demystify and hold these bodies to account. Participation in elected student councils and political parties must prioritize inclusion to foster democracy and social unity. Similarly, all social, economic, and cultural presence must be adequately represented to express a diversified opinion. Finally, a culture of tolerance and respect among students should be nurtured. This means encouraging intercultural projects or presentations and high school students conflict-related training and peer reviews.

Countering external interference from security services and political parties is crucial to protecting the autonomy of the student councils. Enforcing boundaries and striving for impartiality and independence enables university life to be protected. With the help of overcoming these obstacles and ensuring that the outlined strategies are put into practice, Palestinian universities can create a more democratic space that empowers

the student movement and promotes the general development of Palestinian society.

To conclude, the Palestinian student movement has been instrumental in molding the political and social environment in the Palestinian territories. Although it has been met with several hardships and failures, the movement has always been a venue for democratic principles, national togetherness, and communal activities. The Palestinian student movement should be a lead and advocate for other student movements in the region and internationally seeking democracy and social change.

### **Shaping National Healing**

Palestinian young people have really felt the impact of the political split between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Because of this, they've been trying to make a difference by getting involved in various initiatives and activities to help end this division. Some have taken sides in the conflict, others have stayed neutral, and some have been looking for ways to push both Fatah and Hamas to sit down and work things out to put an end to the division.

One cool initiative was the "Fifth of March" youth group, which used social media to call for an end to the division and the release of political prisoners. They also pushed both Fatah and Hamas to start talks to reorganize the Palestinian political scene and get the institutions of the Palestinian Liberation Organization up and running.

Many researchers, studies, and polls have indicated that the political division is one of the main wellsprings of threat and instability for Palestinians, particularly for the youth. The Sharek Youth Forum, for instance, observed that the division was a significant subject of discussion among youngsters in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A few activists accept that youth developments can lay the basis for a broader mass development to end the division.

A 2011 poll by the Sharek Youth Forum revealed that 50% of Palestinian youth accepted the obligation regarding the division lay with Palestinian factions, organizations, and parties, while 24% attributed the

blame to Fatah and Hamas alone. At the point when it came to potential solutions, 48% of Palestinian youth saw shaping a national unity government as the primary choice, while 22% recommended overcoming the lack of confidence by organizing legislative and presidential elections without the requirement for a national coalition government. Additionally, the poll showed a developing distrust of political parties among Palestinian youth (Natil, 2017a).

To resolve these issues, Palestinian youth should continue to push for a finish to the division and reconciliation between factions. By advocating for political solidarity and pursuing inclusive representation, they can assist with connecting the divide and make a safer and prosperous future for all Palestinians.

Continuing their endeavors, Palestinian youth can use various strategies to amplify their voices and influence the political landscape. A portion of these strategies might include:

1. **Participate in popular movements:** By coordinating and participating in protests, marches and demonstrations, young Palestinians can raise awareness about issues that concern them, including political divisions and the need for national reconciliation.
2. **Use social media:** Social media platforms can be a powerful tool for Palestinian youth to highlight issues, coordinate opportunities, and generate a sense of solidarity among their friends, both in Palestine and abroad. international scale.
3. **Form coalitions:** By combining their efforts with other like-minded people and organizations, Palestinian youth can form a united front to lead change and demand an end to division.
4. **Advocate for inclusive representation:** Palestinian youth should encourage and support the inclusion of young people in political decision-making processes, both within political parties and at the national level.
5. **Participate in exchange and peacebuilding initiatives:** Palestinian youth can participate in speeches and peacebuilding efforts with

different factions and organizations, thereby fostering a culture of ownership, tolerance and of cooperation.

6. Empower young leaders: By providing education, training and mentoring opportunities, Palestinian youth can empower themselves and their friends to become effective leaders and agents of change.
7. Collaborating with international youth organizations: By connecting with youth organizations and networks worldwide, Palestinian youth can share their experiences, learn from others, and strengthen their global support base. (PYM) which issued a declaration centering the struggle for Palestine in the broader struggle against neocolonial forms of domination (Palestinian Youth Movement, 2012a), while the PYM-USA has been sharing with the struggle of Black and Indigenous people across Ferguson (Palestinian Youth Movement – U.S.A, 2014) and Standing Rock (Palestinian Youth Movement – U.S.A, 2016), and joined hands with Colectivo Zapatista (Quintanilla & Moghannam, 2015), and the Kumeyaay and Yaqui Nations (Palestinian Youth Movement – U.S.A, 2018) in protesting against the presence of the US-Mexican border. Meanwhile, sharing a collective narrative around ‘indignity and dispossession due to colonial power’ and ‘intersectional narratives and analysis’ constitute major catalysts for the involvement of non-Palestinian college students in pro-Palestinian initiatives in college campuses in the US in organizations such as Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), Group Movimiento Estudiantil ChicanX de Aztlán (MEChA), and Black Student Alliance (Hill et al., 2018, p. 249).

By employing these strategies, Palestinian youth can continue to play a vital role in the pursuit of national reconciliation and contribute to the democratic development of their society. Their active participation and unwavering commitment to change can serve as an inspiration to others and help build a better future for Palestinians.

Simultaneously, the confidence of young people in civil society organizations and institutions serving the youth sector has grown, with approximately 67% of young people expressing trust in these entities. In

contrast, only around 16% placed their confidence in government institutions focused on youth services, such as the Ministry of Youth and Sports Affairs. Some argue that these figures make sense, as civil society organizations are more representative of youth interests and rights, particularly given the encroachment of executive authority in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as human rights violations there.

To address this issue, some party leaders have suggested several steps to improve their image among the youth: 1) Collaborative efforts between youth and political organizations to address their concerns; 2) Reinforcing internal democratic practices within existing parties and updating their visions, programs, and structures; and 3) Removing barriers that prevent youth from participating in leadership roles and decision-making processes within political parties. Many young people have called for greater empowerment within party frameworks to bring about the necessary changes, particularly since a large portion of them hold both Fatah and Hamas responsible for the ongoing divisions.

The (PYM), which began with the slogan "The people want to end the division" and called for the election of a "new national council," sought to unify the Palestinians (Burton, 2017). By signing reconciliation agreements in Cairo and Doha, the youth movement committed to pressuring both major parties to implement these accords on the ground. This placed significant pressure on the divided factions from the Palestinian public, which had been marginalized due to the division's consequences and the dominance of partisan politics in Palestinian political action. Activists believe that the youth have reclaimed their role in initiating popular action, aiming to participate in shaping the destiny of the Palestinian community and restoring the Palestinian cause to the people. However, there are concerns that the 2011 Cairo reconciliation agreement might suffer the same fate as previous agreements, given the narrow partisan polarization within the Palestinian national situation.

The reconciliation agreement does not signal the end of the youth's role. Instead, they must continue to pressure both leaderships to turn the agreement into a reality. Grassroots movements are the only guarantee for the successful implementation of the agreement on the ground, given the

numerous challenges and obstacles it faces. The political division has had a detrimental impact on the Palestinian cause, with international support diminishing. Thus, the initial successes of the (PYM) can be seen in persuading or even compelling Fatah and Hamas leaders to negotiate and sign a reconciliation agreement. The next step is to ensure its implementation on the ground.

Numerous youth movements aimed to end the division and strengthen national unity through various on-the-ground activities. Groups such as the popular movement, March Youth, June Five Youth, Gaza Youth Toward Change, Call Campaign Al-Watan, Youth Coalition to End the Division (or the May 15 Coalition), Secretariat of Student Frameworks, Youth Unions, Civil Organizations Network, Palestine Youth Parliament Union, and Prisoners Supporters Organization, all sought to end the division (Marshall, 2019).

### **The Power of Nonviolent Movement**

The terms "popular resistance," "civil resistance," "peaceful resistance," and "nonviolent resistance" share similarities in content and methods of resistance, despite some differences in application, which depend on the cultural, social, and national contexts of each country. The overlap stems from several crucial factors. The first factor concerns the nature of the adversary or enemy faced in a popular revolution, such as a national dictatorial regime or an external enemy or settler occupier. The second factor relates to the general definition of resistance within a specific cultural/social environment, religious/philosophical perspective, and general concepts of violence and non-violence. The third factor highlights various global experiences in national liberation and independence, social/political change prospects in different world regions, especially in third-world countries and Eastern Europe, and the means and tools utilized to effect structural change.

“PYM thinking seeks to disentangle the imaginary of justice from the enduring constraints of colonialism through the insights of radical critique, while potentially contributing to the development of critical theory through their situated and committed praxis.”(Erakat, 2019)

The forms of confrontation with the occupying adversary or dictator in the field vary from one country to another and one location to another, depending on the nature of the opponent or enemy and the capabilities and capacities of the popular movement. However, in general, multiple peaceful struggle forms can be discussed, most of which have been embodied in the popular Palestinian field movement diaries, with youth playing a central role:

Symbolic resistance involves using signs, symbols, attire, and participation in national events to bolster national sentiment. Palestinian youth, led by activists like Omar Mansour, have prominently utilized these methods in protesting against the Israeli occupation, particularly in demonstrations against the wall and settlements, employing flags, banners, and other expressive elements..(Johansson & Vinthagen, 2015)

1. Accumulative resistance is about maintaining the movement's performance, transferring protests to the popular movement, and encouraging others to continue the struggle against the adversary. Youth have been proactive and initiating in leading resistance actions, organizing events, and deepening the popular uprising's progress within Palestinian society (Zelkovitz, 2014).
2. Offensive resistance involves organizing on-the-ground activities to frustrate the opponent and drive them to despair. By intensifying demonstrations, strikes, and other direct activities that rally support, youth have transferred popular resistance activities to areas in contact with the occupation, particularly near the wall and settlements. They have also worked with farmers and organized field tours to villages and areas beyond the wall, connecting popular resistance to steadfastness on the ground (Hassouna, 2016).
3. Defensive resistance aims to protect people and uphold the ethics of resistance and universal human values, particularly concerning violence, killing, and property destruction. This type of resistance seeks to neutralize the opponent's destructive power and prevent them from using extensive violence. Activists highlight the role of youth in understanding the Israeli mindset and the capabilities of the

occupation army, working to provoke goodwill in local and international communities and elevate peaceful, non-violent resistance capable of neutralizing the Israeli army's abilities (Hessbruegge, 2017).

4. Positive and constructive resistance focuses on finding alternatives at the legal or institutional level, serving the people, and detaching them from the colonizer or dictatorial regime's structures over time. The youth movement has participated in campaigns to boycott Israeli goods and enhance the presence of national products in Palestinian markets, positively engaging with the campaign to boycott Israel and withdraw investments. Educated youth in friction areas have been proactive in documenting Israeli violations, managing development processes, writing periodic reports, and addressing local and international media (Allan, 2019).

### **Mobilizing Grassroots Strategies for Successful Popular Resistance**

Effective field leadership, led by youth, is crucial for resistance. It requires a clear vision, close engagement with the community, creative thinking, and meeting people's needs while reducing dependence on the occupation. Successful resistance, as seen in Bil'in, involves institutionalizing efforts through local committees. Abdullah Abu Rahma, coordinator of the popular campaign against the wall in Bil'in, highlights this approach. (Sánchez & Sellick, 2016), confirms this, noting that when Israeli bulldozers began to level the village's lands, the youth formed a popular committee that included all forces, factions, and institutions in the village. They began organizing semi-demonstrations and marches at the sites of the wall and land confiscation. Abu Rahma also highlighted the innovative and creative means used by popular resistance activists in confronting the wall, soldiers, and settlers, characterized by collective work and a clear division of labor between media, field responsibilities, and guard duties (Belhassen et al., 2014).

Young popular resistance activists in several locations have adopted a grassroots strategy to mobilize institutions, civil society organizations, popular committees, local councils, trade unions, women's unions, and



youth and students to participate in the general popular struggle for liberation. As a result, student committees were formed in schools and universities, as well as youth work committees, women's committees, committees for media and satellite channel engagement, issuing statements, holding press conferences, and legal committees comprising local, Palestinian, and international lawyers to address human rights and legal issues in Israeli courts.(Natil, 2017a)

Moving forward, it is crucial for the international community to recognize and support the efforts of young Palestinian activists in their pursuit of justice, freedom, and self-determination. By standing in solidarity with the Palestinian people and their struggle, the global community can help to create a more just and equitable future for all.

### **Conclusion and final remarks**

In summary, after the establishment of a Palestinian entity in 1993 through the Oslo Accords, numerous ministries, governmental institutions, and non-governmental organizations emerged that focused on the issues and concerns of Palestinian youth. The youth were tasked with resisting the occupation while also promoting democracy, institutionalization of political life, and humanizing development. The youth movement achieved significant successes in promoting university democracy, but there were challenges with interference from security services and the lack of separation between public and private. The youth also played a crucial role in peaceful popular resistance against the wall and settlements, but there were shortcomings such as the absence of national political will and a lack of consensus among political parties. Although the youth movement made some progress in advocating for reconciliation and ending division between Fatah and Hamas, they were unable to develop a clear strategy to achieve this goal within the available capabilities and objective conditions of the national situation.

In conclusion, this discussion has highlighted the role of Palestinian youth in the popular resistance movement against occupation. Young activists have played a crucial part in organizing and executing various forms of peaceful resistance, despite facing numerous challenges and

setbacks. They have demonstrated creativity, perseverance, and a deep commitment to their cause, while advocating for unity and collaboration among various factions and institutions.

The international community must recognize and support the efforts of these young activists in their pursuit of justice, freedom, and self-determination. By standing in solidarity with the Palestinian people and their struggle, we can contribute to the creation of a more just and equitable future for all. The resilience and courage of the Palestinian youth in their peaceful struggle serve as a testament to the power of civil popular resistance in challenging oppression and promoting social change.

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**Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate:** All participants provided informed consent prior to their inclusion in this study.

**Availability of Data and Materials:** The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. The authors will ensure compliance with any restrictions related to privacy and ethical considerations.

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