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THE ROLE OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN SMART LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT
Small and medium enterprises are considered one of the most important sectors in the development of the Palestinian economy, in light of the continuous development of smart life and continuous technological intelligence in the world. This study focuses on the adaptation of small and medium enterprises to smart life in order to reach economic development and reduce the unemployment rate in Palestine.
The aim of this study is to identify the reality of small and medium companies in Palestine and to pay attention to the danger of their inability to adapt to smart life in order to reduce unemployment and economic development
This was done through the use of a simple random sample obtained from the Ministry of Economy. The sample is distributed among the cities of the West Bank. The sample size reached 150 economic projects. A questionnaire was used and the descriptive analytical method was used through the analysis using SPSS.
One of the most important findings of the study is the inability of small and medium-sized enterprises to adapt to smart life due to the occupation's restriction on the use of artificial intelligence, as the GPS service, for example, is prohibited inside the Palestinian territories, and the destruction of the economic components due to the closure between cities and dependence of the economy the Palestinian economy on the occupation economy.

Keywords:
Risk Management, Small and Medium Enterprises, Development, Smart Life

INTRODUCTION

The core definition of a smart city lies in its use of information and communication technology, as it enables you to manage the city in a more civilized, efficient, and effective manner, digital knowledge and sensors give you a more appropriate awareness of the existence of human capital in addition to increasing its effectiveness. In general, a smart city is a development whose goal is to achieve sustainable development and raise citizens' quality of life [1]. However, the restrictions imposed on the Palestinian government limit the transformation of its cities into smart cities [2]. Studies indicate that 65% of the world's population aspires to move to live in smart cities, given the difficulty of living in cities that do not have the infrastructure for communication and information technology, in addition to the problems that cannot be overlooked, such as population sprawl, traffic congestion, scarcity of resources and energy, in addition to the government's lack of strategic planning, and not allowing the import or application of any of the elements of smart cities.
The current economic situation in Palestine is one of the most complex cases in the world, due to Palestine being considered a conflict zone over the long years [3], where the Palestinian people and the Palestinian economy have constantly borne the burdens of foreign rule from the Ottoman rule, even the British, and the Jordanian administration of the West Bank and the Egyptian administration in the Gaza Strip. And the Israeli occupation since 1948 and 1967, where all these events resulted in the development of a mixture of economic legislation that serves the interest of the occupier, and this resulted in the expulsion and deportation of more than half of the Palestinians, depriving them of their lands and economic resources, and turning them into refugees scattered around the world, and after the peace process and the General Oslo Agreement 1993 and the advent of the Palestinian Authority, led by the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people[2]. The peace process resulted in a state of uncertainty among the Palestinian people. Instead of the beginning of a stage of growth and economic development and evolution with the continuous technological life in the world, the Palestinian lands were classified according to the agreement into regions, A, B, C, which helped increase Israeli control over the Palestinian economy

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and give a legitimate cover for Israeli violations This resulted in the existence of a Palestinian state without sovereignty and control over its economy[4], and the existence of an occupation that controls 90% of the land area, in addition to complete control over the economy from the movement of goods and the transit of people between and outside the Palestinian regions, and restricting technological development, which resulted in A fragmented economy that depends on external factors and on a production base and infrastructure robbed of technological development and natural and intelligent life[5].

The Palestinian economy resorted to small and medium enterprises to protect itself in the economically complex situation, as the unemployment rate in Palestine as table below show.

Table 1: Unemployment rate [2].

Year	Unemployment rate
2022	%25.9
2021	%25.3
2020	%26.2
2019	%25.7

The increase in the unemployment rate that Palestine suffered from during the successive years, small and medium enterprises had an important role in reducing its impact by employing workers and reducing the level of unemployment [6].

According to the Palestinian Statistics Center, small and medium-sized companies in Palestine accounted for 98.6% of the Palestinian economy, and workers in this sector accounted for 81% of the workforce. They focused on retail and wholesale trade and services during the period of 2020.

From here came the need to start thinking about the research problem, which is based on the fact that small and medium enterprises face many difficulties in order to reach a smart life in light of the current economic complexities in Palestine.

Previous studies

[1] The study aimed to identify the use of technology and social communication in small projects, as it concluded that the level of use of social media is high and positively affects the performance of small projects and thus helps in all operations of small projects.

[7] It aimed to identify the reality of small and medium-sized projects in one of the most important economic development and changes and requirements in the levels of technology, thus it was supportive of large projects, which is one of the most important pillars of development.

[3] This study indicates the importance of small projects in Palestine, where small projects constitute an important tributary to the Palestinian national economy, especially at the level of contribution of Small and micro enterprises to the gross domestic product. In addition to absorbing the workforce of small and micro enterprises and reducing unemployment rates, especially among the young. Small and micro projects represent an opportunity for the poor and those with limited income to provide a source of income, in addition to being considered the most important tools for economic development.

[8] This study refers to the legislative and institutional aspects as a basis for sustainable planning in the Palestinian territories. Problems in laws and procedures for dealing with disasters, and there is an absence of the regional level for the process of sustainable planning for disaster reduction.

[9] The global interest at the present time is represented in preserving life and human societies on Earth, which is one of the most important scientific trends towards which most studies and research are directed, especially in countries that are moving towards achieving sustainable development in all its aspects, especially in the insurance sector through sustainable risk management. It is noted that the rapid developments Which witnesses the world in terms of population growth and increase puts it in front of huge challenges that preserve their rights and ability for future generations to continue in a dignified life far from dependence in all its forms.

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METHODOLOGY

The study is exploratory and based on primary and secondary sources of data. In order to collect relevant data, a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches was adopted; the quantitative research design utilized questionnaires to collect primary data. The qualitative approach was used by reviewing the previous literature and collecting secondary data and information from books, journal articles, internet research, and annual reports

Research hypotheses

In this research, the focus was on three basic hypotheses related to the demographic variable through the questionnaire and answering the questions, which were briefly summarized and referred to as follows
Ho1: There is no relation between gender and smart life and development in small and medium enterprises.
Ho2: There is no relation between age and smart life and development in small and medium enterprises.
Ho3: There is no relation between qualification and smart life and development in small and medium enterprises.

RESEARCH ANALYSIS

These variables were analyzed in brief as follows:
Chi-squared test according to demographic variables, gender, age, and qualification was used.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics.

Demographic	Profile	Percentage
Gender	Male	90%
	Female	10%
Age	18-39 years	30%
	40-49 years	40%
	50 years or above	30%
Qualification	Less than secondary school	9%
	Secondary school	35%
	Bachelor's degree or higher	56%

Table 2. above shows the demographic characteristics of the study sample (gender, age, qualification)
Through the study, it was found that the ownerships of smart projects in small and medium enterprises, according to the sample, belongs to males more than females, as the percentage of males reached 90% and the percentage of females reached 10%. This is due to the fact that females work less for projects compared to males due to fear of risks.
The percentage of owners of smart projects in small and medium enterprises according to the age group from the age of 18-39 years is 30%, 40-49 years is 40%, and 50 years or above is 30%, With regard to the qualifications, the study indicates that those who hold a bachelor's degree or higher are more open to smart life and technological development within their projects by 50%, and they have continuity with the state of development, and the increase in this percentage is due to the accumulation of unemployment among university graduates, which leads them to open Smart projects that to improve their economic situation, 35% for secondary school's degree holder and 9% for who hold less than secondary school degree.

Table 3: data analysis

Variables	Chi-square	Degrees of freedom	Statistical significance	Level of significance
Gender	1.22	3	0.34	0.05
Age	10.3	14	0.6	0.05
Qualification	19.1	7	0.05	0.05

Analysis (Chi- squared test) showed that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance (0.05) between the variable of gender and smart life and development in small and medium enterprises and that the two variables are independent of each other, and we reject the alternative hypothesis, and there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance (0.05) between the age group at the level of life development on the project, and

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thus we accept the null hypothesis that says that the percentage of profit achieved by the project is not depend on age, and thus we reject the alternative hypothesis, and it was found that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance (0.05) between the qualification and entering smart life and development in the project and making profits, thus we accept the null hypothesis that says that the level of smart life within the project does not depend to the qualification, that the two variables are independent of each other, we reject the alternative hypothesis.

RESULTS

The results formed after the above-mentioned analysis process are that gender, age, and qualifications, we do not deny their importance in small and medium projects in terms of development, leading to smart life in smart projects , as age and age are sufficient to help reach smart life in projects in addition to the specialized qualifications in the field of smart life models that helps to keeps pace with development, as the largest example in Palestine is the city of Rawabi, which is the first city located in Ramallah in the West Bank to be within the developed modern model that relies on smart life in its designs and in the small and medium companies in it.

However, despite the development, the measures taken by the Israeli occupation impede the process of development and smart life practices in order to design smart cities and smart small and medium projects, due to the continuous closures and barriers on various Palestinian areas that separate Palestinian cities between each other and reduce trade exchange between different regions Which causes huge losses for owners of small and medium enterprises and hinders the development process and the high risks in projects.

In addition to the weak use of technology due to the restrictions on technology by the Israeli occupation and the weakness of the Internet in the Palestinian areas compared to the areas under full Israeli control, which does not save time and effort and increases the cost of the small project.

In addition to the problem of infrastructure and wasting time in not completing public projects related to the basis for access to adequate living and not only to smart cities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important to reach recommendations that are based on interest in small and medium enterprises and try to adapt to the existing divisions of the Palestinian territories in order to reach small and medium projects that depend on smart and technological life, as the Palestinian economy includes a large part of it small and medium enterprises, with governmental and international support for projects to reach life Smart cities and smart cities are a starting point, while providing an infrastructure that includes roads, electricity networks, and fast internet for the development of smart projects, in addition to paying attention to unemployment to keep pace with development and create job opportunities through technological development that depends on life intelligence to reduce unemployment and increase the rate of dependence on smart life.

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