



**An-Najah National University**  
**Faculty of Graduate Studies**

**OBSTACLES TO THE APPLICATION OF SYSTEMS  
THEORY IN PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENTS  
AT PALESTINIAN UNIVERSITIES**

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**This Thesis is Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
of Master in Public Relations and communication program, Faculty of Graduate  
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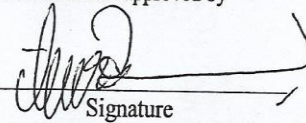
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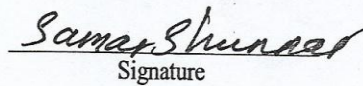
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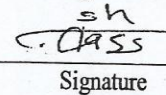
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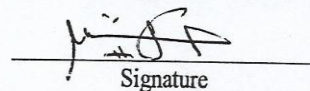
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II

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this academic effort

To my hardworking and caring mother who stayed up late for me,

To my beloved father, Professor Tariq Alhaj, who invested in us and supported us,

To my dear sisters who helped and supported me,

And to the young ones in this world, Yasma and Osama.

## **Acknowledgments**

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## Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that I submitted the thesis entitled:

### **OBSTACLES TO THE APPLICATION OF SYSTEMS THEORY IN PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENTS AT PALESTINIAN UNIVERSITIES**

I declare that the work provided in this thesis, unless otherwise referenced, is the researcher's own work, and has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree or qualification.

Student's Name: *Mohammad Tareq Alhaj*

Signature: 

Date: *23.7.2023*

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# **OBSTACLES TO THE APPLICATION OF SYSTEMS THEORY IN PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENTS AT PALESTINIAN UNIVERSITIES**

**By**

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**Abstract**

This study aimed to identify the obstacles to the application of Systems Theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities from the point of view of its employees, through a questionnaire designed for this purpose. The data was analyzed statistically using the SPSS program, the arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the values reported by the respondents to assess and know the degree of obstacles in the application of systems theory. The effect of the variables related to their characteristics such as gender, specialty, years of experience, number of courses, job title and type of university on the degree of approval chosen by the sample members was also studied.

The study has concluded that financial obstacles were ranked first, followed by administrative, social, and human obstacles. One of the main recommendations is the necessity of allocating financial resources within the budgets to establish administrative systems that serve the university's objectives. Additionally, there should be a greater focus on feedback received from public relations staff in Palestinian universities.

**Keywords:** System theory, obstacles, public relations departments, Palestinian universities.

## **Chapter one**

### **The general framework of the study**

The first chapter: general framework of the study

#### **1.1 Introduction to the study**

Systems theory appeared at the end of the sixties of the last century to explain the complex behaviors and relationships between the components of the system, and how these relationships adapt effectively in the ecosystem of which they are a part. And its emergence in public relations began at the end of the eighties of the last century as one of the modern administrative theories in the work of public relations. Its premise is that organizations are essential units that work together and communicate to attain their desired outcomes.(Al Jarjani, 1992)

According to systems theory, the work of public relations revolves around a set of key elements. One of these is the idea that public relations professionals serve as boundary-spanning tools, playing a critical role both inside and outside of the organization.(Aqeeli & Al Mumani, 2013)

To understand the external public, effective and open communication must be maintained with the public, and their groups must be joined to understand their perspectives. As a result, communication and interaction with the public serve as the basic pattern through which organizations seek to develop their work and adapt to their internal and external environment.(Qanawi, 2008)

In this context, public relations employees must act as representatives of the organization's point of view during interactions with the public. At the same time, they must also represent the public's perspective during meetings with management. This approach enables public relations departments to obtain feedback, helping them to understand the environment in which they operate and create a state of balance between the internal and external environments.

The relationships that public relations employees in Palestinian universities establish with the public are unique, as they provide valuable information to university management about the public's perspective on specific issues and the values they hold,

as well as how they will react to any decisions the universities may make. As a result, these inputs can be used in the process of making administrative decisions. (Qanawi, 2008)

Furthermore, public relations employees in Palestinian universities can also help identify problems and propose suitable solutions proactively before they become complex and difficult to solve. Therefore, any obstacles that hinder the work of public relations departments in universities will be a source of concern for their employees. Hence, environmental scanning plays a crucial role in their work, as these employees collect information and data to serve the institution and also disseminate information to the public.(Al Azzawi, 2020)

The primary objective of systems theory is to establish a state of equilibrium between the internal and external forces that provide advantageous outcomes for the organization. In this regard, the practice of public relations is viewed as a critical element in maintaining the stability and coherence of the organization's systems. Through its strategic communication efforts, public relations serve to mitigate potential disruptions and foster harmonious relationships with various stakeholders, including employees, customers, investors, and the general public. Ultimately, the effective management of these relationships contributes to the long-term success and sustainability of the organization. As a result, public relations occupy a unique and sensitive position in identifying public opinion and comprehending their perspectives. The staff in public relations departments play an essential role as the link between the organization and its environment. They collect information from the internal and external public to use in making vital decisions. As (Al Zyadneh, 2015) quoted (Hazleton, 1992),public relations departments achieve this balance through two methods:

1. maintaining a state of balance and interconnectedness between the organization and its publics.
2. monitoring and tracking the internal and external environment to help the organization adapt or respond.

Thus, the novelty in this study lies in addressing a topic that have not been thoroughly investigated in the existing literature in Palestine, which is related to the systems theory

and the obstacles to its application in public relations departments in Palestinian universities.

## **1.2 Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

### **- The concept of systems theory**

Although there are multiple definitions of systems theory, they intersect in their fundamentals. It can be said that systems theory is a method for discovering the interactive relationships between system components and the approaches taken to solve institutional problems through purposeful decision-making.

Systems theory can also be defined as the relationship between individuals and other elements of the system's components within clear relationships expressed in the organizational structure of the institution.

Based on that, systems theory includes the following elements:(Al Jaban, 2001)

1. The internal and external environment.
2. The organizational structure within the institution.
3. The human element.
4. Those who interact with the institution

### **- The concept of the “system”**

There are various definitions of a system.(Aqeeli & Al Mumani, 2013) defined it as an organization composed of elements that interact with each other to achieve a specific goal. These elements are interrelated through mutual and integrative relationships, and they interact with each other in a way that affects and is affected by their internal and external environment.

(AL Sarn, 2004) defined a system as a collection of resources necessary to provide a product or service, which is influenced by its surrounding environment and, in turn, affects the desired objectives.

A system is an entity that contains a set of essential elements to carry out the daily activities of the institution, and through it, the other surrounding institutions can be identified.(AL Suwat, Sanady, & AL sharif, 2020)

The researcher posits that a system can be conceptualized as a collection of internal elements that interact with both internal and external factors to form a comprehensive impression of the institution's activity within their environment. This interplay between internal and external elements allows for a deeper understanding of the various factors that shape the institution's operations, and provides insight into how it is perceived by those within and outside of the organization.

### **- The characteristics of a system**

A system possesses a set of characteristics, including:(AL Suwat, Sanady, & AL sharif, 2020)

1. Organization: which refers to the arrangement of the system's components.
2. Interaction: which is a continuous process of the mutual relationships between the system's basic components and elements.
3. Interdependence: which means that the system's elements and components rely on each other.
4. Integration: which is viewing the components of the system as a single unit, where each component complements the other.

(AL Suwat, Sanady, & AL sharif, 2020) discussed the characteristics of systems theory in management, which are as follows:

1. Interdependence between sub-systems.
2. Integration and inclusiveness between the components of the system.
3. Synergy: to ensure that the system's performance impact is clear and rapid.

These characteristics apply to all types of institutions, whether productive or service-oriented, including universities. A university is a system that has its limited objectives and has inputs and outputs to serve society through public relations departments that address the feedback related to its graduates, reputation, and activities.

Based on this, the elements of a system consist of:

1. Inputs: consisting of material and non-material elements, as well as human resources that make up the main components of providing the service or product.
2. Transformation processes: through which the product or service is formulated in terms of form and substance to become ready as outputs of the system. This requires the necessary funding to do so, in addition to the availability and proper use of management elements.
3. Outputs: are the result of the transformation process within the system.
4. Feedback: which is the process of obtaining information from the external environment to ensure the safety of the previous elements' performance.

The elements of the systems theory can be viewed as five components, rather than four, which are(Huwida, 2012)

1. Inputs: a combination of capital, labor, raw materials, and technology that are intertwined.
2. Transformation: the process of efficiently mixing the inputs.
3. Outputs: the product of the transformed inputs.
4. Feedback: the evaluation of what has been accomplished.
5. Internal and external environment: everything that surrounds the work environment of the organization, both inside and outside.

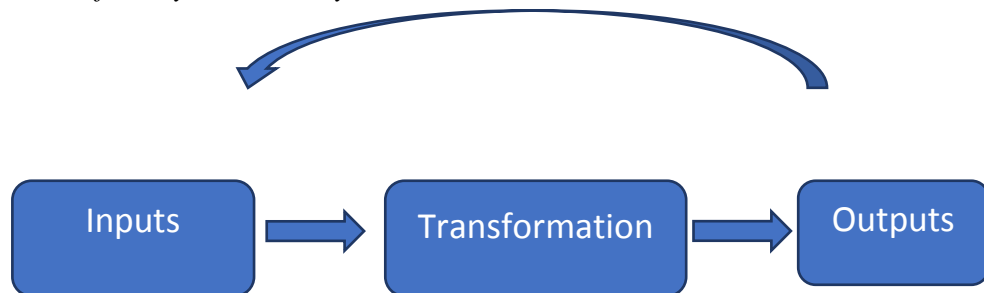
The researcher believes that the transformation element is simply the proper processing of system inputs quickly and at a low cost, so as not to affect the quality of the results. This stage is what determines the quality of the outputs. Additionally, collecting information from the internal and external environment in a proper manner helps to correct errors and improve accuracy.

The elements of system theory can be formulated as the following:

Feedback

**Figure1:**

*The elements of the systems theory*



(Source: from the researcher's work)

### **- Types of Systems in Management**

Management concepts can be broadly classified into two types of systems, according to Al-Suwat et al. (2020). The first are general systems, which are focused on government institutions and relate to psychology and sociology. The second are specific systems, which concentrate on organizational structures, communication methods, job titles, orders, instructions, and feedback. Akeel and Al-Saran (2013) have identified one of the divisions of systems theory as open systems, which rely on the concept of constant interaction with their surroundings to benefit from feedback and influence their external environment.

One of the advantages of open systems is that they force managers to deal with the organization as a whole and interact with the external environment, providing decision-makers with information to make accurate administrative decisions. However, open systems have also faced criticism for their simplicity, difficulty in distinguishing what is beneficial or harmful to the system, the abstract view of phenomena, and the challenge of determining the relationship between the internal and external environment of the system. Open systems are characterized by responsiveness and interaction with the external environment, focus on feedback, adaptation to surrounding conditions, and maintenance of balance and stability. In contrast, closed systems are self-contained and do not interact with their external environment, ignoring any external factors. Closed systems are not flexible and operate within a narrow scope, do not have a feedback mechanism, and do not pay attention to balance and stability.

Closed systems are characterized by being confined within limits that limit their flexibility and interaction with the environment, meaning that they operate independently and isolated from the environment. The nature of the system itself does not allow for interaction with the environment, so these boundaries isolate the influences coming from the environment from that system.(Zeitoun, 2001)

### **- Evaluation of the systems theory**

Advantages of the systems theory in management: (AL Suwat, Sanady, & AL sharif, 2020)

1. It helps in studying and analyzing the complex functions of organizations.
2. It is considered more probabilistic than deterministic.
3. Its concept also suits new institutions.
4. It paves the way for interactive relationships among all elements of management including planning, organizing, directing, and controlling.

Disadvantages of the systems theory in management:(AL Suwat, Sanady, & AL sharif, 2020)

1. Ambiguity and relative abstraction.
2. Difficulty in applying it to large institutions.
3. It does not specify the tools and techniques for managers; thus, it is not considered part of descriptive administrative theories.
4. It does not specify the nature of the reciprocal and interactive relationships within the institution.

Each theory has positive and negative aspects, and the positive aspects can be viewed as follows:(Shahab, 2014)

1. Providing appropriate tools for studying and analyzing the overall situation of organizations in a comprehensive manner.
2. Taking into account all the factors that affect organizations.

3. Viewing organizations in their external and internal environment, as the organization is an open system, not a closed one.
4. Stimulating all components of the system to interact with the external environment, which helps to identify any problem related to any component of the organization.
5. Helping in the development of the organization.

The negative aspects are represented by:(Shahab, 2014)

1. Preconceptions may not be accurate, and a positive view of the work of organizations is not necessarily always achieved.
2. There are organizations that suffer from problems in some of their components and yet continue to operate continuously.

### **1.3 Systems Theory and Organizational Development**

The system theory is based on understanding the different situations related to the organization and analyzing them realistically and objectively, comparing them to the surrounding environment, and making appropriate decisions accordingly. Public relations play an important role in this by identifying the different positions towards the institution, whether from within or outside, and collaborating with other departments. The system theory focuses on the idea that the organization is made up of complementary elements, and that the surrounding environment is important for feedback. All of this calls for organizational development that is in line with new developments and challenges.(Aqeeli & Al Mumani, 2013)

Organizational development is an essential need for humans to adapt to the changes in the organization's environment, in addition to creating a state of satisfaction with the organization's outcomes.

#### **- Types of Organizational Development**

The organizational development is divided into the following types:

First of all, according on the criterion:

1. Physical Development: Includes technical and technological development.

2. Moral Development: Includes development in social relationships.
3. Rapid Development: Occurs according to the situation and circumstance.
4. Slow Development: Occurs gradually.

Secondly, according to the level, organizational development can be classified as follows:(Shahab, 2014)

1. Organizational-level development: which is a comprehensive change affecting all components of the organization.
2. Departmental-level development: which is a change that affects specific parts of the organization.
3. Individual-level development: which is a change that affects the individual themselves.

#### **- Models of Organizational Development**

There are several types of organizational development models, including (Mansour & Al Khafaji, 2010)

##### 1. Model of Value:

This model is based on the idea of change, a comprehensive view of the system in all its dimensions, and development. To achieve this idea, this model focuses on the need to identify the different individuals and entities in the organization and involve everyone in diagnosing the problem and developing plans and strategies.

The model also emphasizes the need to set goals, mobilize the audience to provide material and human resources, measure performance, and bring about change to achieve added value.

##### 2. Model of Stages

To bring about development, the following stages must be passed through:

1. Estimating the organization's need for change. The need for change may be due to external factors or internal factors.

2. Consulting with experts in the field, and the relationship between experts and employees in the organization should be good to facilitate their work.
3. Diagnosing the problem by collecting data and information about the organization.
4. Developing appropriate programs to solve problems and bring about change.
5. Monitoring and tracking results.(R. Brown & Don, 2006)

### 3. Model of Planning

Planning is one of the most important elements of the management process, and is used to bring about organizational change. This model refers to several steps that start with stages of surveying opinions to obtain information and identify existing problems, passing through stages of building trust among employees, diagnosing the problem, identifying objectives, implementation, and improving the existing situation.(Huczynski & Buchanan, 2007)

#### **- Organizational Environment**

The environment is one of the most important aspects that the system theory focuses on, as it has a significant impact on the work of organizations, including universities, especially since the main element in universities is the human element and its related social systems. This element determines the direction of universities and therefore the role of their public relations departments. The environment is an important source of information and serves as the input of the system, and it also forces universities to diversify and develop their procedures, systems, and performance methods.(Aqeeli & Al Mumani, 2013)

#### **Elements of the environment:**

The environment consists of the internal environment, the external environment, the dynamic environment and the stable environment.(AL Atabi, 2003)

1. The internal environment: It consists of the resources within the universities, such as human resources and their loyalty, belonging, and dedication to work, as well as the board of trustees, top management, work rules and regulations, systems, and instructions.

2. The external environment: It consists of the external factors outside the scope of the universities and includes:
  - a. The general environment: which includes social, educational, cultural, political, economic, legal, technological, and ethical forces.
  - b. The specific environment: which directly affects universities and includes students and their needs for logistical materials and services, competing universities, government ministries and other institutions, and unions.
3. The dynamic environment: It is one that constantly changes for various reasons, including competition between universities, technological development, market demand, and pressure forces.
4. The stable environment: It is characterized by relative stability and slowness in change, meaning that changes in it are slow due to the lack of competition, absence of pressure forces, and a desire for conventionality.

Regarding Palestinian universities, competition among them has led to a significant change in the specializations they offer, with differences between universities in the speed of change. Moreover, market demands have required them to think about introducing new specializations, which has increased the effort and development of public relations methods within them.

#### - **Characteristics of an Organization**

All organizations share common characteristics in terms of size, shape, and complexity.

In terms of size: this is expressed by the number of employees. In Palestine, there are large universities alongside small universities.

In terms of shape: organizations take the hierarchical shape, and this shape is not characterized by stability for reasons including:

A) Number of employees

B) Number of managerial levels

C) Span of management. Here, the organization can either have a large number of managerial levels, which is known as a tall organization, or a small number of managerial levels, which is known as a flat organization. Universities are an example of a flat organization, as academic titles are limited to professor, associate professor, assistant professor, lecturer, and instructor.

### **- University Responsibility**

The role of universities is not limited to education only, and the role of public relations is not limited to activating this role. Universities also have an economic, social, educational, and ethical role, and to achieve these goals, financial, technical, and administrative support must be provided to public relations.

#### 1. Social role:

The university functions as a social framework focused on establishing connections between the institution and its staff, as well as fostering interactions among employees, all within well-defined structures and guidelines. It explored administrative theories, highlighting that social organization essentially embodies a cohesive arrangement of human endeavors, blending financial, intellectual, and material assets within an effective framework. This arrangement aids in surmounting challenges, resolving issues, and ultimately fulfilling individual needs while engaging with the external environment. (Tawfiq, 1995)

#### **The theory is based on:**

1. The basic resources, which are divided into financial, human, intellectual, and material resources.
2. The activities, which involve transforming the resources into a product or service through a set of vital and distinctive activities while maintaining supervision and control.
3. The bond of organization, which aims to unite and maintain the organization.
4. The organization chart, which distinguishes the organization from others and includes a set of characteristics such as the name, symbol, and values.

## 2. The functional role:

The university is seen as having a set of functions that must be carried out. It builds purposeful relationships and communicates through public relations departments with the university's stakeholders to convince them to join the university, whether as academic or administrative staff or students. Convincing is considered one of the most important tasks carried out by public relations departments.

And the persuasion theory requires the following main elements:(Al-Maghribi, 1993)

1. The readiness of the receiver to accept the process of change.
2. The readiness of the receiver to accept the message.
3. The strength of the message.

To succeed in these elements, the following must be available:

1. The source of the message: The more powerful the person who issues the message, the stronger the recipient's acceptance of it.
2. The message itself: The content of the message has an impact on the reader's psyche.
3. The target of the message: It may be aimed at adults, youth, athletes, etc.
4. The medium: Is it sent through social media or radio and TV programs, for example?
5. The context: Refers to the way the message was organized to understand its content, context, and circumstances in which it was written.

### **1.4 Systems Theory in Public Relations**

According to the concepts of systems theory, public relations departments in universities are considered a partial organizational structure within the overall organizational structure of the university and are linked to both the internal and external community environment. Depending on the prevailing type of system, public relations departments may be an open system or a closed system. Public relations departments may operate within an open system, but the overall university system may not give

these departments the opportunity to carry out their activities, and instead, they are viewed as a subordinate system that receives orders and instructions.(Shibah, 2005)

According to this, the relationship of public relations departments with the environment is determined by the following tasks.(Al-Jamal & Khairat, 2005)

1. Monitoring and observing the surrounding environment to identify the challenges facing the institution.
2. Collecting and interpreting information to understand the public's opinion towards the institution.
3. Providing proposals to decision-makers to deal with the surrounding circumstances and challenges facing the institution.

This confirms that the role of public relations is to gather information, which represents the inputs, analyze it, which represents the processing, and provide advice, which represents the outputs. Furthermore, the feedback falls within the core of public relations work, as it is concerned with the internal and external environment.

#### **The Basic Concepts in Systems Theory in Public Relations:**

1. Crisis: The occurrence of an actual problem, administrative or organizational disease that affects the organization, requiring a decisive change in the organization's situation, either recovery or failure and the end of the organization.
2. Consensus: The healthy and stable situation of the organization.

#### **- How does the Systems Theory work in Public Relations**

Public relations work to connect the internal and external environment of the organization, which is the focus of the systems theory that works as follows:

1. The concepts of crisis and consensus or success are the common denominator among all types of communication, regardless of the field, and it is certain that human interactions on a personal and professional level and interactions between organizational elements fall into a part of the scale driven either towards crisis or consensus.

2. Public relations practitioners are the gatekeepers of the feedback that the organization needs to achieve success. The responsibility of public relations practitioners is to evaluate current conditions and respond to surrounding conditions in order to move and direct the organization towards success among its elements and to steer it away from crises by modifying or completely changing the environment, which elevates it to the stage of internal and external harmony and consensus.
3. Public relations must control existing internal and external conflicts and deal with the demands and needs of the organization and the customers benefiting from the services provided, whatever their nature.
4. Public relations provides a clear technique for working derived from the organization's overall vision and the language it speaks in addition to being alert to the occurring faults and attempting to identify the places that require change and, therefore, dealing with them in a participatory manner to achieve balance and respond to internal and external demands for change, as well as focusing on feedback from the surrounding environment, which is one of the most important elements of the organization's success in public relations.

The best model used by public relations in organizations is the Two-way symmetrical model. This interactive model, in which the relationship is mutually interactive between the organization and stakeholders, is the best to use in public relations systems because it responds to demands and achieves interests for both parties. It not only works to achieve interests but also focuses on feedback for those who benefit from the services provided.

### **1.5 Definition of Public Relations**

There are multiple definitions for public relations, as it is a function within the administrative functions of an organization that has its own plans aimed at improving the organization's image to the public with high efficiency (Al Serfi, 2006)

It is practiced in all public and private institutions, as well as organizations, associations, universities, and any entity regardless of its size, purpose, or nature of work, to improve and strengthen relationships with the external community, as well as

to enhance relationships among employees and administrative bodies within the organization.(Al-A'laq & Rababa'a, 2009)

Others have emphasized that public relations are efforts made to gain the trust of citizens and to establish a genuine positive image of the organization, rather than defending its positions.(Ajwa, 2001)

According to Pride, public relations are a set of communications made to strengthen the relationship between the organization and the external environment, as well as relationships among the organization, its employees, investors, and stakeholders from both the public and private sectors.(Pride & Ferrell, 2010)

From the different definitions of public relations, it is observed that it is an administrative work that is concerned with citizens within clear plans, to gain their trust and loyalty, while also focusing on the internal environment of the organization. Based on this, public relations can also be defined as a planned administrative function with a continuous character, aimed at creating a clear and positive mental image of the organization, both for the external community and employees.

#### **- Characteristics of Public Relations**

Public relations have a set of characteristics, including:(Abu Qahf, 2001)

1. Focus on communication and engagement with citizens.
2. The use of credible advertising and media.
3. The use of all means of communication and engagement.
4. Establishing plans based on scientific research and studies.
5. Continuous performance evaluation.
6. Continuation of work even if the organization achieves its goals.

#### **- Characteristics of a successful public relations practitioner**

In order for a public relations employee to be successful and distinguished, they must possess a set of qualities, including:(Ajwa, 2001)

### 1. Adaptability

As a public relations professional interacts with the public and external environment, it is essential to adapt to changes and circumstances.

### 2. Culture

To be an exceptional public relations employee, one must have a high level of culture and collect information about everyone and be able to communicate effectively with the public.

### 3. Knowledge

We live in a time characterized by rapid change, and the public relations professional must be aware of all information in its various forms, able to analyze and understand it, because information contributes to achieving the goal successfully.

### 4. Relationships

Establishing broad relationships with the public is one of the most important characteristics of success, and the successful employee is the one who uses these relationships to serve the institution.

### 5. Endurance

It is essential for a public relations employee to endure difficulties, problems, and criticism.

### 6. Truthfulness

A public relations professional should always tell the truth and convey the image as it is, thus building decisions on a solid foundation without deceit.

## **- Foundations of Public Relations**

Among the most important foundations of public relations are:

1. Sincere dissemination of facts
2. Collaborative work with various administrative bodies within the organization

3. Continuous communication with the public
4. Using all means of communication and interaction, both traditional and modern.(Abu Qahf, 2001)

#### **- Objectives of Public Relations**

5. Public relations have a set of objectives, which may sometimes vary depending on the nature of the organization's work, but in general, the following objectives can be mentioned:
6. Convey a positive image of the organization.
7. Enhance the reputation of the organization among citizens.
8. Attract citizens to the organization and convince them of the benefits it provides.
9. Communicate with various media and create a state of participation with them.
10. Strengthen relationships and maintain their continuity with official and unofficial institutions, including civil society organizations and unions.

#### **- Principles of Public Relations**

Public relations have a set of principles that can improve the image of the institution in front of the public. These principles include:(Al Serfi, 2006)

1. Respect: Respect for the individual and their rights, and listening to their opinions, is a fundamental motivator for them to fulfill their duties towards the institution and in front of the public.(Al Serfi, 2006)
2. Social Responsibility: Institutions operate within an open system and have a responsibility to communicate with the surrounding environment as they are affected by it. Social responsibility is a commitment to increase positive impact and reduce negative impact towards society, by meeting the needs of different communities, developing individual care, providing a comfortable work environment, and protecting the environment, among other things.(Pride & Ferrell, 2010)

3. Commitment to the values and ethics of society: The philosophy of public relations should be built on honesty, respect, and equality in order to gain the trust of the public.(Khadir, 1998)
4. Disclosure and transparency: It is important for public relations to be truthful and transparent with the public and not follow a policy of concealment that may harm the interests of the institution, especially in front of competitors.
5. Conducting scientific research and studies: In order to objectively identify the public's reaction towards the institution, it is important to conduct research and studies that are free from bias.(Al Serfi, 2006)
6. Caring for the internal environment: The organization can't improve its image and gain the trust of the public without taking care of the various aspects of the internal environment, especially employees, as the comfort and satisfaction of employees have a positive impact on their performance and the way they interact with the public.(Hajab & Wahbi, 2006)

#### **- Marketing Activities for Public Relations**

In addition to the various activities carried out by public relations, the marketing aspect cannot be neglected, as marketing for an institution is no less important than marketing for an individual. The most important marketing activities carried out by public relations are:

1. Issuing publications

Through the use of various and advanced media.

2. Communicating and coordinating with various media

public relations become the representative of the institution and acts as a mediator between the public and the institution.

3. Organizing events

Whether inside the institution such as seminars, conferences, exhibitions and competitions, or outside the institution such as sponsoring cultural, sports, and artistic events.

#### 4. Strengthening relationships with the local community

This is done after studying the community's tendencies and aspirations and knowing its perspective on the institution. Strengthening relationships is not only with the local community, but also with government institutions, civil society organizations, and other private sector institutions.

#### 5. Enhancing relationships within the organization itself

Focusing on the human element within the organization is the cornerstone of carrying out the marketing activities mentioned above, and this is done in several ways, including:

- A. Preparing employees to accept change and development, as such ideas may initially face discomfort.(Al Azzawi, 2020)
- B. Involving employees in the formulation of strategies and policies.
- C. Training employees.
- D. Providing logistical services to employees.
- E. Activating the reward system

#### **- The tasks of public relations**

Public relations have many tasks that can be classified into tasks related to media, tasks related to advertising and tasks related to promotion.

##### 1. Tasks related to media:

The tasks related to media in public relations involve the use of various communication channels for the dissemination of news or promotional advertisements. Media is a social tool for communication and interaction with the public, and it is an important tool in public relations for communicating with the public and providing them with information

about the activities, policies, and future plans of the institution, in order to create a positive image. Media is also used to receive feedback from the public about the information that is being published, in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in the tools and content being used.(Al-A'laq & Rababa'a, 2009)

## 2. Tasks related to advertising:

Advertising is a means to try to influence the public's behavior towards the institution and the services it offers. Although the concept of advertising overlaps with the concept of media, there are many differences between them, such as:

### A. Objectives:

Public relations aim for informing and educating, while advertising has political, social, or ideological objectives.

### B. Implementation:

Public relations is an administrative function carried out by employees, while advertising is performed by specialized agencies.

### C. Time and Cost:

Public relations activities require more time and cost than advertising.

### D. Communication:

Public relations communication is centered around the targeted audience, while advertising communicates with all parties and entities.

## 3. Tasks related to advertising:

Advertising is a directed method aimed at influencing the behavior of the public and attracting their attention to a specific topic, and it may not adhere to ethics. This is in contrast to public relations, which aims to create a positive attitude towards the organization.(Al-Bakri, 2015)

## **- Responsibilities and Tasks of Public Relations Departments**

Public relations have a set of responsibilities and tasks that are assigned to the employees in these departments to ensure the work is carried out with high professionalism and integration. Some of the important responsibilities include:

1. Improving the image of the institution among the internal and external communities.
2. Developing necessary plans to contribute to achieving the institution's goals.

In addition to these responsibilities, there are a set of tasks, including:(Abu Qahf, 2001)

1. Evaluating feedback and studying it to understand the audience's response to the institution's work.
2. Providing advice to senior management on decisions that lead to the development of public relations work.
3. Communicating with the public and portraying a positive image of the institution in an engaging and appropriate manner.

## **- Problems of public relations**

There are many of problems that face the work of public relations, including:(Abu Qahf, 2001)

1. Negative mental image about public relations:

Some societies or individuals have a negative view of public relations, considering those who work in it as dishonest and untruthful in conveying the image of the institution. However, today this view has changed due to the tangible role of public relations in serving the community and the activities it carries out. This requires additional effort from the workers in the field of public relations to establish a positive image and change the negative perception.

2. Professionalism:

Working in public relations requires a high degree of professionalism, which is what distinguishes employees individually. However, the perception of public relations

departments in general is not always the same, as some view these departments in some institutions as unprofessional and working only for the benefit of the institution.

### 3. Skills:

Working in public relations requires a high degree of skill, which each employee must possess individually. However, the perception of public relations departments in some institutions is not always viewed as professional, as some may see them as working solely for the benefit of the organization without possessing the necessary skills.

### 4. Professional ethics:

Professional ethics are one of the most important components of success in public relations. Therefore, we may find individuals who practice public relations without being educated or specialized, but rather as amateurs.

### 5. Ignoring senior management:

If senior management does not respond to the desires of the public and refuses to communicate with them, this can pose a problem for the functioning of public relations.

## 2.2 Concept of University

The word "university" derives from Latin and means "community of teachers and scholars." The term "university" is derived from the word "meeting," as it focuses on setting goals for knowledge, research, and education. A university is an institution that focuses on knowledge and education, and the development of mental, intellectual, behavioral, and research skills, as well as the shaping of personality. At the end of the study, the university awards academic degrees of various levels to its graduates (Al Attar, 2020)

The university is an educational institution that attracts students after they have completed the years of study stipulated in the educational system of the country and have succeeded in the General Secondary Education, as it is called in Palestine, and the university is considered the highest institution in the educational system of the state. It is also a higher education and scientific research institution that awards academic degrees to its graduates.(Rwajbeh, 2008)

Universities have been known since ancient times in Greece, Persia, India, and Egypt. In the modern sense, the University of Al Quaraouiyine in Fez, Morocco is considered the first university in the world, founded in the 9th century, followed by the Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, which was founded by the Fatimids. The University of Bologna is one of the oldest universities in the modern sense of higher education. The oldest institution of higher education in history is the University of Constantinople.

### **-Universities in Palestine**

Universities in Palestine are relatively new institutions. The beginnings date back to 1955 when intermediate community colleges appeared, with a study period of two years, and they grant their graduates a medium diploma. They were managed by the government or the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). In 1970, the establishment of universities began with the efforts of Palestinians, and they developed with the arrival of the Palestinian Authority in 1994.

Higher education institutions in Palestine are classified by law into government, public, private, and UNRWA institutions. Public institutions are the most numerous. The Higher Education Council and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education oversee higher education institutions (sometimes the Ministry of Higher Education is separate from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education). They are the entities that provide funding for government higher education institutions and partial funding for non-governmental higher education institutions.

### **The following is an explanation of these types of institutions:**

1. Governmental higher education institutions: overseen by the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education and managed and funded by the Palestinian Authority.
2. Public higher education institutions: consisting of non-profit universities and community colleges, most of which were established before the arrival of the Palestinian Authority. They are not owned by the state but rather by non-governmental organizations and local charities. Their sources of funding are student tuition, donations, and partial government funding.

3. Private higher education institutions: consisting of for-profit universities and community colleges, owned by individuals or organizations and charities. They are funded by their owners, charities, and individuals in addition to student tuition fees.
4. UNRWA: Higher education institutions that grant bachelor's and intermediate diplomas, their funding and management come from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).

Based on the above, the researcher believes that all higher education institutions in Palestine are distributed according to their management into governmental, public, private, and UNRWA. They are classified into universities, colleges, community colleges, and polytechnics.

### **- The Organizational Structure of the University**

Generally, the organizational structure of any institution consists of job titles and duties performed by employees, in addition to supervision and oversight of work, and coordination among all components of the organizational structure including departments and divisions, to achieve the institution's objectives.

#### **2.2.1.1 Definition of Organizational Structure**

There are multiple definitions for organizational structure, but Max Weber defined it as a collection of bureaucratic systems, regulations, and laws that give individuals the right to issue orders to others in a way that achieves efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, the organizational structure is a system in which the constituent departments and administrations are determined and organized for work, so that the administrative levels are in the form of a hierarchy to organize the flow of orders and instructions, and monitor performance and feedback.

(KENTON, 2023) defines the organizational structure as a system that determines the method of directing activities to achieve the goals of the institution. These activities include the foundation, rules, roles, authorities, and responsibilities.

Although management scholars do not agree on a unified definition of organizational structure, they agree on its general concept, which is expressed through the way work is conducted in the institution by defining the flow of orders and instructions in a

functional and hierarchical communication sequence, and the relationship of each function to the other. In general, the organizational structure is a diagram illustrating the components of the functions within the institution and the forms of downward and upward communication.

### **Importance of Organizational Structure:**

Every educational or non-educational institution has an organizational structure due to its importance, which are:

1. Clarifying the administrative levels within the institution
2. Determining the responsibilities
3. Determining the flow of orders and instructions
4. Determining the communication method
5. Determining the relationships between different administrative levels
6. Determining the administrative and functional titles
7. Determining the authorities.

### **- Types of Organizational Structure**

The type of organizational structure is determined by the goals, nature of work, and size of the institution. Therefore, there is no single organizational structure for all institutions. Each type has its own advantages and disadvantages, and these types are:

1. Hierarchical structure: One of the most common types of organizational structures, typically used by small organizations, characterized by simplicity and ease, in which authority is defined in a hierarchical form and power is centralized at the top of the pyramid.
2. Grid structure: A structure that has a small number of executive managers to oversee the company's operations, whether internal or external.
3. Flat structure: A structure that does not have many managerial levels, giving managers greater freedom to make quick decisions.

4. Functional structure: A structure in which organization is based on function, characterized by difficulty in decision-making despite ease of exchanging expertise.
5. The Mechanistic Structure: In this type of organizational structure, the functional hierarchy is vertically extended, meaning that there are multiple levels of management. It is usually used when external factors are stable and routine work does not change despite repetition. It is characterized by high control, multiple layers of functional hierarchy, formality, and centralization, but is criticized for its slowness and lack of flexibility.
6. The Organic (Dynamic): In this structure, each manager is responsible for a larger number of employees. It is usually used in the case of rapid changes in external factors and a desire to provide a distinctive service. The levels of management are few, and the functional hierarchy is also small. It is characterized by flexibility, decentralization, and speed in decision-making, but is criticized for being low in control. (Source: <https://iqtesaduna.com>)

#### **- Characteristics of Organizational Structure**

Every organizational structure has its own unique characteristics, and some of the most important ones in general include:

##### 1. Clarity:

The administrative hierarchy should be clear and made available to everyone so that each employee knows their rights, responsibilities, and methods of communication and contact.

##### 2. Flexibility:

A good organizational structure is one that is flexible and allows for modification and change to suit changing circumstances and conditions.

##### 3. Unity of decision-making:

The structure should clearly indicate the person responsible for making decisions concerning their employees, as multiple sources of decision-making can lead to confusion and disarray.

4. Proportionality:

The organizational structure should be proportionate to the objectives, size, needs, and nature of the institution.

5. Ease of communication:

A good organizational structure should facilitate easy communication and flow of information, whether between employees or between different departments.

6. Division of work and specialization:

The organizational structure should specify the functions and the specialized person for each job.

7. Balance: A balanced distribution of authority and responsibilities should be established for each employee.

**- Organizational Structure Principles**

It is impossible to build an organizational structure without principles, and the most important of these principles are:

1. Defining rights and duties: Each employee should know their rights and duties, so that every employee is fully aware of the work they perform.
2. Reducing vertical administrative levels: In general, reducing the vertical administrative levels is preferred to ensure speed in accomplishing work, although this principle may not be suitable for some institutions.
3. Clarity of goals: The goals of the institution must be clear and expressed in the organizational structure.
4. Job description: The organizational structure must include a job description for the work.
5. Unifying specializations: The organizational structure must include unifying specializations to facilitate direct exchange of experience.

6. Division of labor: The organizational structure must include the main activities of the institution and the branches related to each activity.
7. Administrative positions: A specific number of subordinates should be assigned to each manager according to the nature and size of the institution, so that work can be controlled.
8. Functional hierarchy: Compliance with the functional hierarchy should be maintained and violations should not be allowed in terms of communication and interaction.

**The characteristics of the organizational structure are also:**

1. Integration: meaning that the tasks should integrate with each other without overlap or duplication.
2. Adaptation: when preparing the organizational structure, the variables related to the external and internal environment and the methods of adapting to these variables must be taken into consideration.
3. Specialization: where the organizational structure includes the division of tasks and responsibilities among employees according to their specialization and the department in which they work to ensure accuracy and speed in achievement and to reduce time and cost.
4. Activities: arranging the activities according to their importance and necessity.
5. Economy: Refers to reducing costs to complete tasks without affecting the quality.
6. Control: This is to ensure that work is progressing as intended and to receive feedback to correct errors.
7. Centralization and decentralization: Centralization means concentrating authority in one entity in the organization. This approach has its negative aspects, such as bureaucracy in decision-making, but it is effective in terms of control.

Decentralization means distributing authority and not concentrating it in one entity, which speeds up decision-making but reduces control.

8. **Work organizing:** This is done by establishing clear rules, systems, and instructions to control the work. This is done in large organizations for easy regulation and control. However, formal adherence to work may reduce the speed of decision-making and kill the spirit of creativity.
9. **Adaptation:** The organizational structure should provide flexibility and speed of adaptation to changes and not be rigid.
10. **Accuracy:** Refers to precisely and carefully defining the components of the organizational structure.
11. **Compatibility:** Organizational structures should be compatible with the internal environment of the institution.

According to (Najar, 2018), the principles of organizational structure are as follows:

1. **Division of work by responsibility:** Each person's responsibility for a particular task is defined.
2. **Division of work by function:** The work is divided according to function and type of work.
3. **Adaptation:** The organization must adapt smoothly and flexibly to surrounding variables.
4. **Unity of purpose:** All efforts must be focused on achieving the organization's overall goal.
5. **Authority and responsibility:** Each person responsible must have corresponding authorities, as there are no responsibilities without authorities.
6. **Communication:** A direct supervisor should be designated for each employee to facilitate communication and prevent overstepping.

### **2.2.1.2 Components of Organizational Structure**

According to (Mintzberg , 2009), the organizational structure consists of:

1. Top management: at the top of the organizational hierarchy, responsible for setting the overall strategies and goals of the organization.
2. Middle management: in the middle of the organizational hierarchy, serving as a link between top management and operational management and translating the organization's goals into executable plans.
3. Operational management: at the base of the organizational hierarchy, responsible for the day-to-day execution of the organization's work.
4. Consultants: their tasks involve providing advice and consultation without any executive role in the work.
5. Logistics supplies: departments within the organization whose function is to facilitate the work of other departments, such as public relations and secretarial work.

#### **literature Review:**

As the practice of public relations has become more complex in recent years, practitioners have turned to systems theory as a theoretical framework for understanding and managing the complex relationships that exist between organizations and their stakeholders. While the application of systems theory has been found to be effective in enhancing organizational reputation and promoting long-term sustainability, there are certain obstacles that may impede its successful implementation in public relations departments. In the case of Palestinian universities, the application of systems theory in public relations departments may face unique challenges from the perspective of their employees. This literature review aims to critically examine the existing research on the obstacles to the application of systems theory in public relations departments at Palestinian universities from the perspective of their employees. Through synthesizing and analyzing the relevant literature, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that may hinder the successful application of systems theory in this context and identify potential avenues for future research.

- (Greenwood & Hinings, 2022), titled "Understanding Organizational Structures" addressed the problems arising from creating an incorrect organizational structure, the importance of aligning the organizational structure with the plans drawn for the organization, and the most important key elements of the organizational structure and its types. One of the most important findings was that each type of organizational structure has a set of advantages, including that employees develop in their field of specialization and become more efficient, in addition to a set of disadvantages, including that employees tend to resist change and it is difficult to promote the concept of multi-functional work.
- (Montaser, 2022), titled "Modern trends in using digital networks in public relations: a comparative analytical review", aimed to describe the Arab and foreign research trends in the field of public relations using social networks during the period from 2015 to the first half of 2021. This was done using the historical and comparative methods between Arab and foreign studies. The study's main results include understanding the rapid changes in the field of social networks and recommending the development of a scientific vision to help society and its organizations to benefit from social networks and reduce their negative effects.
- (Al-Saeed, 2022), titled "Evaluating Practitioners' Perception of Public Relations Education Outcomes According to Job Market Needs," aimed to evaluate public relations practitioners' perception of the suitability of media colleges' outputs with job market requirements. The researcher used a descriptive method, and the study's population consisted of public relations employees in both the private and public sectors. The researcher chose interviews as a data collection tool from a sample of 30 employees. The study's most important findings indicate that some companies deal with high professionalism, while others limit their work to disseminating press releases. Additionally, there are no organizational centers that manage public relations companies' work. The study's main recommendations include emphasizing the importance of Arabic and English languages, which are a primary requirement for the job market, and providing practical training during university studies.
- (Al-Shakhanbeh, 2020), titled "The communicative function and its Role in the Effectiveness of Public Relations in Human Rights Centers in Jordan: A Survey Study", aimed to identify the role of the communication function, through media and

non-media communication channels, in activating the work of public relations departments in human rights centers in Jordan. The survey method and a questionnaire were used to collect data from public relations practitioners in 15 human rights centers in Jordan. The study found that most public relations practitioners are administratively affiliated with other departments and that there is no independent public relations department. Additionally, electronic journalism is the most effective media channel in activating public relations work. The study recommends that public relations practitioners work on activating non-electronic media channels and separating public relations from other departments.

- (Al Hayt & Abdel Aal, 2017), entitled "The Impact of Organizational Conflict Management Strategies and Empowerment Culture on Elements of Administrative Creativity," aimed to investigate the effect of organizational conflict management strategies (collaboration, competition, avoidance) and empowerment culture (enhancing technical and administrative empowerment culture) on the elements of administrative creativity (agility, flexibility, problem sensitivity, authenticity, and analytical ability). To achieve this goal, the descriptive analytical approach was used, and a questionnaire was distributed to a random sample of 100 employees from the Jordanian Telecommunications Company (Orange), including managers, department heads, and section chiefs. One of the key findings was that the enhancement of administrative and technical empowerment culture was high, and one of the main recommendations was to promote an empowerment culture at all administrative levels and for managers to recognize the importance of implementing organizational conflict management strategies.
- (Abdel Sadek, 2015), titled "Public Relations Practices in Arab Governmental Institutions" was applied to a sample of Egyptian and Bahraini institutions. The researcher used a questionnaire as a tool to collect information and analyzed the data statistically using SPSS software. The study's most important findings were that public relations use modern communication methods, prioritize achieving high popularity, and recommended relying on informal communication and publishing truthful news.
- (Al-Saadi, 2013), titled "The Role of Public Relations in Achieving Job Satisfaction for Employees in Al-Rai and Kuwait Times Newspapers" aimed to identify the

factors that affect job satisfaction, and the descriptive analytical approach was used. The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 235 employees. The study's most important findings were that internal communication is essential for some institutions, while external communication is essential for others, and the most important recommendations are the need for public relations to rely on renewed research to determine priorities for the public.

- (Draghme, 2011), titled "The Role of Public Relations Departments in Palestinian Universities in Building Relationships with Student Community: A Comparative Survey". The study aimed to investigate the role of public relations departments in three Palestinian universities (Al-Najah, Birzeit, and Islamic) in building relationships with the student community, and to evaluate their performance. The researcher distributed a survey to 800 individuals from the study community and used descriptive and analytical methods to analyze the data with SPSS software. The study found that the public relations departments in Palestinian universities fall short in attracting high school students and building a positive image, and recommended using various media, including television, to disseminate announcements and involve university students in activities.
- (Jouda, 2011), titled "A Proposed Model for Developing the Performance of the Public Relations Department in the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers". The study aimed to propose a model for improving the performance of the public relations department in the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers and to assess its current state. The researcher used a questionnaire to collect data from 100 administrative employees in the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, as well as 22 ministries and 11 non-ministerial government agencies. The data were analyzed using SPSS software. The study found deficiencies in the work of the public relations department and recommended activating it.
- (Al Hadid, 2010), titled "The Status of Public Relations in Jordanian Universities" is an evaluative study from the perspective of university students, in which the author evaluated students' satisfaction with the activities and services provided by the University of Jordan. The study population included undergraduate, master's, and doctoral students, totaling 26,569 students, and the sample consisted of 1,097 students. The researcher used a questionnaire as a data collection tool, and the

analytical descriptive method was used for data analysis. One of the most important findings of the study was that the services provided by the Public Relations Department were rated as low, and the study recommended the establishment of a public relations unit in all colleges of the university.

- (Abu Saleem, 2006), titled "The Extent of Achieving the Objectives of Public Relations Management in Technical Colleges in Gaza Governorate from the Perspective of Employees" used a questionnaire as a tool for data collection, distributed to a random sample of 143 employees. The researcher used a descriptive analytical method, and the most important findings of the study were the existence of a shortage in the qualifications of public relations employees and recommended the necessity of holding training courses for employees.
- (Khalifi, Ghanem, & Khlalfeh , 2018), titled "Obstacles to the Practice of Public Relations in the Algerian Public Institution", is a field study conducted at the Electricity and Gas Distribution Company in the eastern province of Um El Bouaghi, as part of an unpublished master's thesis at the Arabi Ben Mhidi University in Um El Bouaghi, Algeria. The study aimed to identify the administrative and material obstacles facing the work of public relations at the Electricity and Gas Distribution Company, through the use of a questionnaire distributed to a random sample of 56 employees. The study used the descriptive analytical method, and found that there are administrative obstacles resulting from the absence of training courses, and material obstacles, the most important of which is the lack of budget allocation for public relations. The study recommended the qualification of public relations employees and providing the necessary funds to carry out the required tasks.

### **Comment on literature review**

Studies have varied in addressing the topic of systems theory as well as public relations, with some intersecting in certain aspects and differing in others. One point of intersection is related to the elements of systems theory, which was also addressed by this study. While electronic journalism was the focus of Al-Shakhanbah's study (2022), it intersected with Draghme's study (2011) and Al-Hadid and Badr's study (2010) regarding the decline of public relations services and the shortage of independent public

relations departments. Likewise, Salim's study (2006) intersected with Hanafi and Ganem's study (2018) regarding the lack of qualifications for public relations employees and the absence of training courses, in addition to material obstacles.

As for Al-Hayt and Al-Aal's study (2017), it showed a high empowerment culture in public relations departments, which intersected with Abdelsadek's study (2015) that public relations use modern communication methods.

What distinguishes this study is that it links the work of public relations with systems theory and intersects with some studies such as Drachma's study (2011) and Al-Saeed's study (2011) regarding the work of public relations in Palestinian universities in general.

### **Conceptual Framework**

System theory, obstacles, public relations departments, Palestinian universities.

- **Systems theory** is a general approach to discovering relationships and patterns of interactions within all systems. It is based on general concepts of holism, integration, and problem-solving methods through perception and comprehension of the impact of decisions on the entire system of the problem and its impact on the interactive relationships between the components of the system or the external environment with which the organization interacts (Al Jaban, 2001)
- **Obstacles are the challenges and barriers** that hinder the efficient and effective achievement of goals, and can be seen as the cause of the gap between the expected level of achievement and the actual achievement, or as a deviation in performance from a pre-determined standard (Darweesh, 2005).
- **Public relations** is the activity of any institution, organization, company, or government in building productive and healthy relationships between itself and the targeted audience, in order to determine its policies according to the surrounding circumstances and to explain these policies to society (Sudqi, 2020)
- **Palestinian universities:** the universities those were studied

An-Najah National University

Palestine Technical University – Kadoorie

Al Istiqlal University

Arab American University

Birzeit University

Hebron University

Palestine Polytechnic University

Al-Quds Open University

Al-Quds University

Bethlehem University

Palestine Ahliya University

Al Zaytona University

### **1.6 Problem of the study and its questions**

Palestinian universities face numerous challenges due to technological and technical developments and the market's need for new specializations that keep up with these developments. Public relations departments in these universities must intensify their work in several aspects, including the application of systems theory. However, the application of this theory faces a set of obstacles that require scientific study, and here lies the problem, which can be formulated in the following main question.(Issa, 2017)

What are the obstacles to applying the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities?

#### **And from it arise the following questions**

1. What are the administrative obstacles facing the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities?

2. What are the financial obstacles facing the application of system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities?
3. What are the social obstacles facing the application of system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities?
4. What are the human obstacles facing the application of system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities?
5. What are the methods to overcome the obstacles facing the application of system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities?

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

The importance of this study stems from its exploration of an important topic in the administrative thinking of public relations, which is the theory of systems. This theory plays a crucial role in the work of institutions, especially in the public relations departments of Palestinian universities, which are responsible for connecting the university's internal and external environment, understanding public reactions, analyzing information, and providing feedback to assist university management in making right decisions.

And this study is important because it sheds light on the obstacles facing the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments of Palestinian universities from the perspective of those who work in them. Its significant for both scientific and practical reasons.

From a scientific perspective, it aims to contribute to existing knowledge by examining the barriers to applying system theory in public relations departments at Palestinian universities. By identifying the study's problem and proposing solutions, the research seeks to add new insights to this specialized area. In addition to its scientific value, the study also holds practical importance. Its results and recommendations can be used to address the obstacles it uncovers, offering a potential pathway to improve the application of system theory in Palestinian university public relations departments.

## **1.8 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are to identify the obstacles to the implementation of systems theory in the public relations departments of Palestinian universities from the perspective of their employees. The main objective branches into the following sub-objectives:

- Identify the administrative obstacles facing the implementation of systems theory in the public relations departments of Palestinian universities.
- Identify the financial obstacles facing the implementation of systems theory in the public relations departments of Palestinian universities.
- Identify the social obstacles facing the implementation of systems theory in the public relations departments of Palestinian universities.
- Identify the human obstacles facing the implementation of systems theory in the public relations departments of Palestinian universities.
- Identify the methods related to addressing the obstacles to the implementation of systems theory in the public relations departments of Palestinian universities

Research boundaries:

1. Spatial boundaries: Public Relations Departments in Palestinian universities in West Bank.
2. Demographic boundaries: Employees in Public Relations Departments.
3. Temporal boundaries: 2022-2023.

## **1.9 Research limitations**

Challenges in accessing certain Palestinian universities.

Most of the study sample responded, while some refrained from answering

Excluding Palestinian universities in Gaza Strip

## **Chapter 2**

### **Methodology**

#### **Methodology of the study**

To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher applied the quantitative methodology as it is suitable for the purposes of the study. This methodology focuses on describing the phenomenon as it is, analyzing it, and linking it to other phenomena. Data was collected from relevant sources related to the study's topic and analyzed accordingly.

#### **Research boundaries:**

1. Spatial boundaries: Public Relations Departments in Palestinian universities in West Bank.
2. Demographic boundaries: Employees in Public Relations Departments.
3. Temporal boundaries: 2022-2023.

#### **Research tool**

A questionnaire was designed to measure the obstacles to the application of the systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities. The questionnaire consisted of (26) items distributed over four areas: administrative obstacles with (10) items, financial obstacles with (5) items, social obstacles with (6) items, and human obstacles with (5) items. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each item by placing a check mark (×) to indicate the extent to which the content of the item was appropriate. The options were as follows: (4 = strongly agree; 3 = agree; 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree) based on the four-point Likert scale.

#### **The validity of the tool:**

The researcher verified the content validity of the questionnaire by presenting the initial draft to five experts in the field of management, measurement, and evaluation at An-Najah National University to ensure the suitability of the questionnaire items for the target population of the study. The experts agreed on the items with an agreement rate of 85%, which can be relied on to conduct the study.

### Study population and sample:

The study population consists of employees in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, who total 70 employees. The questionnaire was sent to all of them, and 60 valid questionnaires were returned for analysis. Therefore, the study sample consisted of 60 male and female employees, distributed as shown in Table (1).

**Table 1:**

*Distribution of the Study Sample According to Study Variables*

| Variable Name       | Variable Parts                             | The Number | %    |
|---------------------|--|------------|------|
| gender              | male                                       | 28         | 47.1 |
|                     | female                                     | 32         | 52.9 |
|                     | total                                      | 60         | 100  |
| Specialization      | Public relations + international relations | 30         | 50   |
|                     | administration + Media                     | 18         | 29.6 |
|                     | other                                      | 12         | 20.4 |
|                     | total                                      | 60         | 100  |
| Years of Experience | 1-4  | 9          | 14.7 |
|                     | 5-9  | 26         | 44.1 |
|                     | 10 or more                                 | 25         | 41.2 |
|                     | total                                      | 60         | 100  |
| training courses    | nothing                                    | 20         | 32.4 |
|                     | 1-2  | 23         | 38.2 |
|                     | 3-4  | 12         | 20.6 |
|                     | 5 or more                                  | 5          | 8.8  |
|                     | total                                      | 60         | 100  |
| Job title           | Director/Deputy Director                   | 14         | 23.5 |
|                     | Public relations/international relations   | 28         | 47.1 |
|                     | other                                      | 18         | 29.4 |
|                     | total                                      | 60         | 100  |
| the university      | government                                 | 14         | 23.5 |
|                     | General                                    | 21         | 35.3 |
|                     | Private Universities                       | 25         | 41.2 |
|                     | total                                      | 60         | 100  |

Source: Conducted by the researcher, Field study 2023

**Tool stability:**

The stability coefficients for the internal consistency of the domains ranged between (0.79-0.93), and the overall reliability of the instrument was (0.97) in Cronbach's alpha. As for Pearson's correlation coefficient, the values ranged from (0.74-0.84), and the overall reliability of the instrument was (0.89). It should be noted that these values are above the minimum acceptable level of 60%, as shown in Table (2).

**Table 2:**

*Stability Coefficients for each Domain of the Tool and for the Tool as a Whole.*

| <b>Domain Number</b> | <b>The Field</b>         | <b>The Number Of Paragraphs</b> | <b>Stability Coefficients Internal Consistency (Cronbach's Alpha)</b> |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 5                    | Administrative obstacles | 10                              | 0.91  |
| 2                    | financial obstacles      | 5                               | 0.92  |
| 3                    | social obstacles         | 6                               | 0.79  |
| 4                    | human obstacles          | 5                               | 0.87  |
|                      | paragraphs as a whole    | 26                              | 0.97  |

Source: Conducted by the researcher, Field study 2023

Standard deviation:

category length= highest degree

$$\text{category length} = \frac{\text{highest degree}}{\text{lowest degree}} = \frac{4 - 1}{4} = \frac{3}{4} = 0.75$$

**Table3:**

*Standard deviation for Determining Obstacles to Applying System Theory in Public Relations Departments in Palestinian Universities for Each Field of Study.*

| <b>Level</b> | <b>Arithmetic Mean</b>     |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| wolyrev      | From 1.00 - less than 1.75 |
| woL          | From 1.75 - less than 2.50 |
| hgiH         | From 2.50 - less than 3.25 |
| hgihyrev     | From 3.25 - less than 4.00 |

Study variables

### **Firstly: Independent Variables**

1. Gender: with two categories (male, female).
2. Major: with three levels (public relations + international relations, management + media, other).
3. Experience: with three levels (1-4, 5-9, 10 or more).
4. Training courses: with four levels (none, 1-2, 3-4, 5 or more).
5. Job title: with three levels (manager and deputy manager, international relations and public relations, other).
6. University: with three levels (governmental, public, private).

### **Second: Dependent Variables**

1. Obstacles to the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, represented by the arithmetic mean of the perception of the study sample of these obstacles.
2. Obstacles to the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, in each field of the tool, represented by the arithmetic mean of the study sample's estimates of the items of each field of obstacles.

## Chapter 3

### Data Analysis and Findings

The researcher used the mean and standard deviation of the values reported to evaluate and determine the degree of obstacles in applying the system theory. The impact of relevant variables, including gender, specialization, years of experience, number of training courses, job title, and university type, on the degree of agreement selected by the sample members was also studied. Paired sample t-test was used to determine the statistical significance of differences between the arithmetic means of the estimates of the study participants.

#### Data analysis

##### 1-1 Obstacles to the Application of Systems Theory in Public Relations Departments in Palestinian Universities

To identify the obstacles to the application of systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities, the means and standard deviations were calculated to evaluate the perceptions of the study sample on the items in the selected domains. Table (4) shows the results.

**Table4:**

*Evaluation of the study sample on obstacles to the application of systems theory.*

| Domain number | Field                    | Arithmetic mean | Standard Deviation | Rank | Level |
|---------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------|-------|
| 1             | Administrative obstacles | 2.7706          | .58957             | 2    | high  |
| 2             | Financial obstacles      | 3.0176          | .67576             | 1    | high  |
| 3             | Social obstacles         | 2.7402          | .52254             | 3    | high  |
| 4             | Human obstacles          | 2.1882          | .68214             | 4    | low   |
|               | Total                    | 2.6991          | .52047             |      | high  |

The minimum score (1) and the maximum score (4). Source: Conducted by the researcher, Field study 2023.

From table (4), it can be observed that financial obstacles were high with an average of (3.107), followed by administrative obstacles and social obstacles with averages of (2.77) and (2.74) respectively. On the other hand, human obstacles were low with an average of (2.18), while all obstacles had a high average of (2.69).

The reason for this is the lack of financial resources for Palestinian universities and the suspension of the support allocated to them by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education. The low level of human obstacles confirms that the public relations departments in Palestinian universities have qualified human resources. This result is consistent with what was found by (Draghmeh, 2011).

1-2 Data Analysis in the areas of obstacles to the application of systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities, according to the study's domains:

To assess the perceptions of the study sample on the items of each domain of obstacles to the application of systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities, according to the variables of gender, experience, training courses, job title, and the university in which they work, the means and standard deviations were calculated, as shown in Table (5).

From Table (5) in appendix B, we notice the existence of apparent differences between the arithmetic means of the estimates of the study sample on the paragraphs of each field of the obstacles to applying the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities. According to the aforementioned variables, the arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated for the estimates of the study sample on each paragraph of each field of the obstacles to applying the systems theory. This will be further studied when testing the hypotheses. The following provides an overview of this.

## The First Domain (Administrative obstacles)

**Table 6:**

*Estimated Values of the Study Sample Individuals on the Items of the Administrative obstacles Domain.*

| Paragraph Number | Paragraph   | Arithmetic Mean | Standard Deviation | Rank | The level |
|------------------|---|-----------------|--------------------|------|-----------|
| 1                | Not implementing decentralization at work   | 2.7941          | 0.97792            | 4    | hgih      |
| 2                | Lack of loyalty to the organization but to the individual in charge                   | 2.4706          | 0.96091            | 10   | low       |
| 3                | instructions are given in the form of orders  | 2.7941          | 1.00843            | 4    | hgih      |
| 4                | The lack of involvement of public relations employees in the decision-making process. | 2.5588          | 1.05               | 9    | hgih      |
| 5                | The lack of clarity in goals when applying the Systems Theory.                        | 2.7059          | 0.71898            | 7    | hgih      |
| 6                | Lack of seriousness from top management in applying the systems theory.               | 2.7059          | 0.79884            | 7    | hgih      |
| 7                | Bureaucracy hinders the implementation of systems theory.                             | 3               | 0.7785             | 2    | hgih      |
| 8                | lack of processing information from the internal environment.                         | 2.8529          | 0.92548            | 3    | hgih      |
| 9                | lack of processing information from the external environment                          | 2.7941          | 0.80827            | 4    | hgih      |
| 10               | Lack of regular evaluation of the outcomes of public relations work.                  | 3.0294          | 0.79717            | 1    | hgih      |

The minimum score (1) and the maximum score (4). Source: Conducted by the researcher, Field study 2023.

From Table (6), we notice that the Arithmetic mean for the items in the area of administrative obstacles ranged between (3.0294) and (2.4706), with a level ranging between (high) and (low). Item (1), which stated the lack of periodic evaluation of the results of public relations work, ranked first with an average of (3.0294) at a high level. This is due to the lack of attention to the evaluation process for the outputs of public relations work. Meanwhile, item (2), which stated the lack of loyalty to the institution but to the direct supervisor, ranked last with an average of (2.4706), due to the

subordination to the direct supervisor and working to satisfy them at the expense of the institution in general.

### **The Second Domain (Financial obstacles)**

**Table 7:**

*Estimations of the study sample on the items of the domain of financial obstacles.*

| <b>Paragraph Number</b> | <b>hpargaraP</b>  | <b>Arithmetic mean</b> | <b>Standard deviation</b> | <b>Rank level</b> |
|-------------------------|---|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1                       | Lack of financial resources to implement the systems theory.                | 2.9412                 | 0.85071                   | 5 hgih            |
| 2                       | Lack of financial resources for employee training.                          | 3.0294                 | 0.83431                   | 3 hgih            |
| 3                       | Lack of financial resources to support events outside the university.       | 3.0882                 | 0.75348                   | 1 hgih            |
| 4                       | Lack of financial resources to conduct studies on the external environment. | 3.0588                 | 0.77621                   | 2 hgih            |
| 5                       | Lack of financial resources to carry out activities within the university.  | 2.9706                 | 0.7582                    | 4 hgih            |

The minimum score (1) and the maximum score (4). Source: Conducted by the researcher, Field study 2023.

From Table (7), it can be observed that the mean scores for the items in the domain of financial obstacles ranged from (3.0882) to (2.9412) at a high level. The item (3) which stated "the lack of financial allocations for events outside the university" ranked first with a mean score of (3.0882) at a high level due to the high cost of external events. On the other hand, the item (1) which stated "the lack of financial allocations for the application of the system theory" ranked last with a mean score of (2.9412) also at a high level due to the cessation of government support for Palestinian universities and the decline of external support for them.

### The third domain (social obstacles)

**Table 8:**

*Estimated scores of the study sample on the items of the social obstacles.*

| Paragraph Number | Paragraph   | Arithmetic Mean | Standard Deviation | Rank | level |
|------------------|---|-----------------|--------------------|------|-------|
| 1                | Weak awareness of the importance of applying the systems theory.                  | 2.9706          | 0.57658            | 1    | high  |
| 2                | Lack of responsiveness by the top management in the university to change demands. | 2.8529          | 0.78363            | 2    | high  |
| 3                | Weak of social motivation in applying the systems theory.                         | 2.6765          | 0.72699            | 5    | high  |
| 4                | Lack of desire to move away from traditional management.                          | 2.7059          | 0.67552            | 4    | high  |
| 5                | Doubt in the credibility of information about the university.                     | 2.4412          | 1.07847            | 6    | low   |
| 6                | Lack of communication with the public to receive feedback.                        | 2.7941          | 0.88006            | 3    | high  |

The minimum score (1) and the maximum score (4). Source: Conducted by the researcher, Field study 2023.

Table (8) demonstrates that the mean values for the items pertaining to the domain of social impediments ranged from (2.9706) to (2.4412). Notably, item (1) which highlighted “Weak awareness of the importance of applying the systems theory” ranked highest with a mean value of (2.9706) at a high level. This result reflects the insufficient integration of system theory as a pivotal concept among the public relations practitioners working in Palestinian universities. Conversely, item (5) which denoted "Doubt in the credibility of information about the university " was positioned last with a mean value of (2.4412) at a low level, mainly attributed to the lack of trust in the information disseminated by the public relations departments of Palestinian universities.

## The fourth domain (human obstacles)

**Table 9:**

*Estimates of the study sample on the items of the human obstacles.*

| Paragraph Number | Paragraph  | Arithmetic Mean | Standard Deviation | Rank | level |
|------------------|--|-----------------|--------------------|------|-------|
| 1                | There are no specialized cadres in the field of advertising.                           | 2.4412          | 0.74635            | 1    | low   |
| 2                | There are no specialized cadres in the field of media.                                 | 2.1471          | 0.95766            | 3    | low   |
| 3                | There are no specialized cadres in the field of news editing and journalistic writing. | 2.0588          | 0.81431            | 4    | low   |
| 4                | There are no specialized cadres in the field of Publications design.                   | 2               | 0.7785             | 5    | low   |
| 5                | There are no specialized cadres in the field of data processing.                       | 2.2941          | 0.83591            | 2    | low   |

The minimum score (1) and the maximum score (4). Source: Conducted by the researcher, Field study 2023.

Table (9) demonstrates that the mean values for the items pertaining to the domain of human impediments ranged from (2.4412) to (2.0) at a low level, item (1) which stated "there are no specialized cadres in the field of advertising" ranked highest with a mean value of (2.4412) at a low level, mainly attributed to the lack of interest in such specializations. Moreover, even if such specializations exist, many holders of these degrees tend to seek employment abroad where job opportunities are more abundant, and the financial returns are higher. Conversely, item (4) which denoted " There are no specialized cadres in the field of Publications design " was positioned last with a mean value of (2.0) at a similarly low level due to the absence of such specializations in Palestinian universities.

### Hypotheses of the study

This study is based on testing the following main hypothesis: "There are no statistically significant differences at a significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the arithmetic means of the estimations of the study sample individuals on each item of the obstacles to the application of system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variables: gender, specialization, experience, number of training courses, job title, and the university in which the employee works."

**there are the following sub-hypotheses emerge:**

H01: There are no statistically significant differences at the ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) level of significance between the mean scores of the study sample's estimates of the items related to administrative obstacles attributed to the variables of gender, major, experience, number of training courses, job title, and university of employment.

H02: There are no statistically significant differences at a significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the arithmetic means of the study sample's estimates on the items of financial obstacles attributed to the variable: gender, specialization, experience, number of training courses, job title, and university where the employee works.

H03: There are no statistically significant differences at the statistical significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the arithmetic means of the sample individuals' estimates on the items of the social obstacles field attributed to the variable: gender, specialization, experience, number of training courses, job title, and the university where the employee works.

H04: There are no statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the arithmetic means of the sample's estimations of the items related to human obstacles, attributed to the following variables: gender, specialization, experience, number of training courses, job title, and university of employment."

**Testing the main hypothesis:**

To answer this question and verify the main hypothesis, the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the estimates of the study sample on the paragraphs of the obstacles to the application of the system theory in the public relations circles in Palestinian universities were calculated, attributed to the variables: gender, specialization, experience, number of courses, job title, and the university where the employee works. Table (5) shows this.

**Table 10:**

*shows the t-test between the estimates of the study sample individuals for the obstacles of applying the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities and the group of independent variables.*

| <b>Variables</b>    | <b>t</b> | <b>df.</b> | <b>Sig (2- tailed)</b> |
|---------------------|----------|------------|------------------------|
| Gender              | -10.544  | 33         | *0.000                 |
| specialization      | -5.653   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| Years of experience | -2.821   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| Training courses    | -9.167   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| Job title           | -4.009   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| university type     | -3.926   | 33         | *0.000                 |

• Significant at a level of 0.05

Source: Conducted by the researcher, Field study 2023.

The table (10) shows:

- There are statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the gender variable, where the statistical significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). This indicates the rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the gender variable, which stated "there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the gender variable," and accepting the alternative hypothesis that states "there are statistically significant differences at the confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the gender variable." It can be seen from Table

(5) that the mean estimate for females was higher than that for males. This is due to the fact that females may be more affected by these obstacles than males, due to their nature and their relationship to work.

- There are statistically significant differences at a significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of specialty, where the significance value was (0.000), which is less than the significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). This indicates the rejection of the null hypothesis related to the specialty variable, which stated "There are no statistically significant differences at a significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the specialty variable," and accepting the alternative hypothesis that states "There are statistically significant differences at a confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the specialty variable." It is evident from Table (5) that the mean estimate for the specialty of public relations and international relations was higher than that of other specialties. This is due to the attention given to the public relations specialty during hiring, as this specialty is closest to the nature of the work, and thus those individuals are more knowledgeable and aware of these obstacles.
- There are statistically significant differences at a significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles of applying the systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of years of experience, where the significance value was (0.000), which is less than the significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). This indicates the rejection of the null hypothesis related to the variable of years of experience, which states: "There are no statistically significant differences at a significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles of applying the systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of years of experience," and accepting the alternative hypothesis which states "There are statistically significant differences at a

confidence level of ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles of applying the systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of years of experience." As shown in table (5), the mean for individuals with 1-4 years of experience was higher than those with more than 10 years of experience. This is because individuals with less experience are more vulnerable to the obstacles they face in their work compared to those with more experience.

- There is a statistically significant difference at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study sample individuals on paragraphs that hinder the application of the system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of the number of training courses, where the value of statistical significance (0.000) was less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the variable of the number of training courses, and stating: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study sample individuals on paragraphs that hinder the application of the system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of the number of training courses", and accepting the alternative hypothesis that states "there are statistically significant differences at the confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study sample individuals on paragraphs that hinder the application of the system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of the number of training courses". It is shown from Table (5) that the mean for 3-4 courses was higher than 5 or more courses, because the more training courses an employee takes, the more knowledge they have about obstacles and can identify them better.
- There are statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the arithmetic means of the study sample individuals' estimates on the hindrances to implementing system theory in public relations departments at Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of job title. The statistical significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the job title

variable. The alternative hypothesis was accepted, which states that "there are statistically significant differences at a confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the arithmetic means of the study sample individuals' estimates on the hindrances to implementing system theory in public relations departments at Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of job title." Table 5 shows that the arithmetic mean for the job titles of manager and deputy manager was higher than other job titles, which can be attributed to the fact that managers and deputy managers have a greater knowledge of the work of public relations departments.

- There is a statistically significant difference at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study participants on paragraphs hindering the application of system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities, which is attributed to the variable of the university where the employee works. The statistical significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating the rejection of the null hypothesis and stating: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study participants on paragraphs hindering the application of system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of the university where the employee works," and accepting the alternative hypothesis that states: "There are statistically significant differences at the confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study participants on paragraphs hindering the application of system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of the university where the employee works." It is apparent from Table (5) that the mean for private universities was higher than that for public and non-profit universities. This is due to the fact that private universities are more interested in public relations departments than public and government universities, and therefore employees in private universities are more capable of identifying these obstacles than those in other universities.

Sub-hypotheses:

The first domain: Administrative obstacles

The relationship between administrative obstacles from the perspective of the researchers in the obstacles to the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities and the total independent variables will be studied. Table (11) shows this.

**Table 11 :**

*t-test between administrative obstacles and the sum of independent variables.*

| <b>Variables</b>    | <b>T</b> | <b>df.</b> | <b>Sig (2- tailed)</b> |
|---------------------|----------|------------|------------------------|
| Gender              | -9.831   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| specialization      | -5.673   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| Years of experience | -3.419   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| Training courses    | -9.177   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| Job title           | -4.099   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| university type     | -4.024   | 33         | *0.000                 |

• Significant at a level of 0.05

Source: Conducted by the researcher, Field study 2023.

It appears from table number (11)

- There are statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the paragraphs obstructing the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of gender, where the significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ); indicating rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the gender variable and stating: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on paragraphs obstructing the application of the systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the gender variable." The alternative hypothesis is accepted, which states: "There are statistically significant differences at the confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on paragraphs obstructing the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the gender

variable." It is evident from Table (5) that the mean score for females was higher than males and this is as previously mentioned.

- There are statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of the systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of specialization, where the value of statistical significance was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ); indicating the rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the variable of specialization, which stated: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of the systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of specialization," and accepting the alternative hypothesis which states "There are statistically significant differences at the confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of the systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of specialization." It is evident from Table (5) that the mean score for the specialization of public relations and international relations was higher than that of media and administration, as previously mentioned.
- There were statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study participants on the obstacles to applying the system theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of years of experience. The statistical significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ); indicating the rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the years of experience variable, which stated: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study participants on the obstacles to applying the system theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of years of experience." The alternative hypothesis was accepted, which stated: "There are statistically significant differences at the level of confidence ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study participants on the obstacles to applying the system

theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of years." As shown in Table (5), the mean for the experience of 10 years or more was greater than that of 1-4 years, as previously mentioned.

- There were statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample individuals on the impediment paragraphs of applying the system theory in public relations circles in Palestinian universities, which are attributed to the variable of the number of training courses. The statistical significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the variable of the number of training courses, and stating that "there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample individuals on the impediment paragraphs of applying the system theory in public relations circles in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of the number of training courses", and accepting the alternative hypothesis which states "there are statistically significant differences at a confidence level of ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample individuals on the impediment paragraphs of applying the system theory in public relations circles in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of the number of training courses". It is shown from Table (5) that the mean of the courses from 3-4 courses was higher than 5 courses or more, as previously mentioned.
- There were statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample individuals on the obstacle's paragraphs related to the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, which were attributed to the job title variable, where the statistical significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). This indicates the rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the job title variable and stated that "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample individuals on the obstacles paragraphs related to the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the job title variable", and accepting the alternative hypothesis which states that "there are statistically significant differences at the

confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample individuals on the obstacles paragraphs related to the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the job title variable". As shown in Table (5), the mean score of the manager and deputy manager job titles was higher than that of the public relations and international relations job titles, as mentioned previously.

- There were statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the study sample's estimates on the paragraphs obstructing the application of systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of the university where the employee works. The statistical significance value was (0.000), which is lower than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ); indicating rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the variable of the university where the employee works, stating: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the study sample's estimates on the paragraphs obstructing the application of systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of the university where the employee works". The alternative hypothesis stating "there are statistically significant differences at the confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the means of the study sample's estimates on the paragraphs obstructing the application of systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of the university where the employee works" is accepted. As shown in Table (5), the mean of private universities was higher than that of public and government universities, as previously mentioned.

### **The second domain: Financial obstacles**

The relationship between financial obstacles, from the perspective of researchers, in applying the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities and the total independent variables will be studied, and Table (12) shows that.

It appears from table number (12) in appendix E.

- There is a statistically significant difference at a significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study participants on the obstacles to applying the system theory in public relations departments at Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of gender, where the significance value was (0.000), which is less than the statistical significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating rejection of the null hypothesis and stating that: "There is no statistically significant difference at a significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study participants on the obstacles to applying the system theory in public relations departments at Palestinian universities attributed to the gender variable." The alternative hypothesis is accepted, which states that "There is a statistically significant difference at a confidence level of ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study participants on the obstacles to applying the system theory in public relations departments at Palestinian universities, attributed to the gender variable." The table (5) shows that the mean estimate for females was higher than males, as previously mentioned.
- There were statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample on the items of obstacles to applying the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of specialization, where the significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). This indicates the rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the variable of specialization, which stated: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample on the items of obstacles to applying the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of specialization," and accepting the alternative hypothesis which states: "There are statistically significant differences at the confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample on the items of obstacles to applying the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of specialization." It is evident from Table (5) that the mean score for the specialization of media and administration was higher than other specializations, as previously mentioned.

- There were statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of years of experience, where the significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). This indicates the rejection of the null hypothesis related to the variable of years of experience, which stated: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of years of experience," and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis which states: "There are statistically significant differences at a confidence level of ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of years of experience." It appears from Table (5) that the mean for experience of 1-4 years was higher than that of 10 years or more, as previously mentioned.
- There are statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the arithmetic means of the estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities, attributable to the variable of number of training courses. The statistical significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating the rejection of the null hypothesis related to the variable of number of training courses, and stated that: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the arithmetic means of the estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities attributable to the variable of number of training courses." The alternative hypothesis was accepted, which stated that "There are statistically significant differences at the confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the arithmetic means of the estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities attributable to the variable of number of training courses." As shown in table (5), the

arithmetic mean of the number of training courses of 3-4 courses was greater than that of no courses, as previously mentioned.

- There are statistically significant differences at a significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample's estimates on the hindering paragraphs of the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities, attributed to the job title variable. The statistical significance value was (0.000), which is less than the significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the job title variable, and stating that "there are no statistically significant differences at a significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample's estimates on the hindering paragraphs of the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities attributed to the job title variable." The alternative hypothesis, which states that "there are statistically significant differences at a confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample's estimates on the hindering paragraphs of the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities attributed to the job title variable," was accepted. As shown in table (5), the mean score for other job titles was higher than that of the director and deputy director, as well as public and international relations, which was previously mentioned.
- There are statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study sample on obstacles to the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributable to the variable of the university where the employee works. The value of the statistical significance was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the university variable and stating: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study sample on obstacles to the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributable to the variable of the university where the employee works", and accepting the alternative hypothesis which states: "There are statistically significant differences at the level of confidence ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study sample on obstacles to

the application of the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributable to the variable of the university where the employee works". As shown in Table (5), the mean for private universities was higher than that of government universities, as previously mentioned.

### **The third domain: social obstacles**

The relationship between social obstacles as perceived by researchers and the obstacles to implementing systems theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities and the total independent variables will be studied. Table (13) shows this.

It appears from table number (13) in appendix E.

- There is a statistically significant difference at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of system theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of gender, where the significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). This indicates rejection of the null hypothesis related to the gender variable, which stated: "There is no statistically significant difference at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of system theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities attributed to the gender variable". The alternative hypothesis was accepted, which stated: "There is a statistically significant difference at the level of confidence ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of system theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities attributed to the gender variable". As shown in Table (5), the mean of females was higher than that of males, as previously mentioned.
- There is a statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on obstacles to the application of system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of specialization. The significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). This indicates the rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the variable of specialization, which stated: "There are no statistically significant differences at the

level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on obstacles to the application of system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of specialization." The alternative hypothesis is accepted, which states: "There are statistically significant differences at a confidence level of ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on obstacles to the application of system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of specialization." It is evident from Table (5) that the mean for the public relations and international relations specializations was higher than other specializations, as previously mentioned.

- There is a statistically significant difference at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study sample individuals on the paragraphs that hinder the application of system theory in public relations circles in Palestinian universities, attributable to the variable of years of experience, where the significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ); indicating the rejection of the null hypothesis and stating: "There is no statistically significant difference at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study sample individuals on the paragraphs that hinder the application of system theory in public relations circles in Palestinian universities attributable to the variable of years of experience," and accepting the alternative hypothesis that says "there is a statistically significant difference at a confidence level of ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study sample individuals on the paragraphs that hinder the application of system theory in public relations circles in Palestinian universities attributable to the variable of years of experience." As it appears from table number (5), the average of years of experience from 5-9 years was greater than 10 or more years, as previously mentioned.
- There is a statistically significant difference at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample's estimates on the obstacles to applying the system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of the number of training courses. The statistical significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating rejection of the null hypothesis related to the variable of the number of training courses and stating: "There are no statistically

significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample's estimates on the obstacles to applying the system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of the number of training courses," and accepting the alternative hypothesis that states "there are statistically significant differences at the confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean scores of the study sample's estimates on the obstacles to applying the system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of the number of training courses." As shown in Table (5), the mean for the number of training courses from 3-4 courses was higher than 5 courses or more, as previously mentioned.

- There are statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample individuals on obstacles to the application of systems theory in public relations circles at Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of job title. The significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the job title variable, and stated that "there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample individuals on obstacles to the application of systems theory in public relations circles at Palestinian universities attributed to the job title variable". The alternative hypothesis was accepted, which stated that "there are statistically significant differences at the confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample individuals on obstacles to the application of systems theory in public relations circles at Palestinian universities attributed to the job title variable". As shown in Table 5, the mean for the job titles of manager and deputy manager was greater than that of public relations and international relations, which was explained previously.
- There were statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the arithmetic means of the study sample's estimates on the obstacles paragraphs to applying the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of the university where the employee works. The statistical significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating rejection of the

first null hypothesis related to the university variable where the employee works, and stated: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the arithmetic means of the study sample's estimates on the obstacles paragraphs to applying the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of the university where the employee works," and accepting the alternative hypothesis which states "There are statistically significant differences at the confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the arithmetic means of the study sample's estimates on the obstacles paragraphs to applying the systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of the university where the employee works." As shown in Table (5), the arithmetic mean for private universities was higher than that for public universities, which is attributed as previously mentioned.

#### **The fourth domain: human obstacles:**

The relationship between human obstacles from the researchers' point of view in the impediments to the application of systems theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities and the total independent variables will be studied, and table number (14) shows that.

It appears from table number (14) in appendix E.

- There are statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of system theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of gender, where the significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ); indicating rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the gender variable and stating that "there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the application of system theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the gender variable," and accepting the alternative hypothesis that "there are statistically significant differences at the confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to the

application of system theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the gender variable." The table (5) shows that the mean score for females was higher than males, as previously mentioned.

- There were statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the study sample's estimates on the obstacles to the application of systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of specialty. The statistical significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the specialty variable, which stated: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the study sample's estimates on the obstacles to the application of systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of specialty." The alternative hypothesis was accepted, which stated: "There are statistically significant differences at a confidence level of ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the means of the study sample's estimates on the obstacles to the application of systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of specialty." As shown in Table (5), the mean of the specialty of Public Relations and International Relations was higher than that of Media and Administration specialties, as well as other specialties, as previously mentioned.
- There is no statistically significant difference at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to applying the systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of years of experience. The statistical significance value was (0.438), which is higher than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating the acceptance of the null hypothesis related to the variable of years of experience. The statement reads: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample on the obstacles to applying the systems theory in the public relations departments at Palestinian universities attributed to the variable of years of experience". The table number (5) shows that the average for those with experience of 5-9 years was higher than those with 10 or more years of experience, as previously mentioned.

- The presence of statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample individuals on the obstacles to applying the system theory in the public relations circles at Palestinian universities, is attributed to the variable of the number of training courses, where the significance value was (0.000), which is less than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ); indicating the rejection of the first null hypothesis related to the variable of the number of training courses, and stating that "there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample individuals on the obstacles to applying the system theory in the public relations circles at Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of the number of training courses", and accepting the alternative hypothesis which states that "there are statistically significant differences at the level of confidence ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample individuals on the obstacles to applying the system theory in the public relations circles at Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of the number of training courses". It is evident from Table (5) that the mean for the number of courses from 3-4 was higher than 5 courses or more, as previously mentioned.
- There is no statistically significant difference at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample individuals on the hindering paragraphs of the application of system theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the job title variable, where the significance value was (0.440), which is higher than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ); indicating the acceptance of the null hypothesis related to the job title variable, which states: "There is no statistically significant difference at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample individuals on the hindering paragraphs of the application of system theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the job title variable", and rejecting the alternative hypothesis that states: "There is a statistically significant difference at the confidence level ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) between the mean estimates of the study sample individuals on the hindering paragraphs of the application of system theory in the public relations departments in Palestinian universities, attributed to the job title variable". It is shown from table number (5) that the mean of other job titles was

higher than that of the public relations and international relations job titles, and this is attributed as mentioned previously.

- There are no statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study sample individuals on the hindering paragraphs of applying the theory of systems in the public relations circles in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of the university in which the employee works. The statistical significance value was (0.931), which is greater than the level of statistical significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), indicating acceptance of the first null hypothesis related to the variable of the university in which the employee works, and stating: "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the estimates of the study sample individuals on hindering paragraphs of applying the theory of systems in the public relations circles in Palestinian universities, attributed to the variable of the university in which the employee works." As shown in Table (5), the mean in private universities was greater than in public and government universities, and this is attributed as previously mentioned.

Methods related to Confronting obstacles to the implementation of system theory in public relations departments in Palestinian universities

Employees in public relations departments at Palestinian universities were asked for their perspectives on how to confronting and avoid obstacles to the implementation of system theory in public relations departments. The responses were analyzed and presented in Table 15.

From table (15)in appendix E, we can see that seeking the assistance of experts to raise awareness about the importance of applying the system theory, training public relations employees on the elements of the system theory, and reformatting administrative procedures were the most appropriate solutions for applying the system theory in public relations departments according to the employees' perspective. This is because employees need training by experts specialized in this theory, and administrative procedures should be restructured when applying the system theory. Following this, using all means of communication and rebuilding the organizational structure were the next most suitable solutions, as it is necessary to increase the use of social media to

apply this theory and increase knowledge and benefits of its application, as well as reconstructing the organizational structure of these departments to match the application of this theory.

In third place was increasing financial support to apply the system theory, in order to conduct introductory workshops on applying this theory and increasing the budget of these departments to perform their work in the best possible manner. Finally, issuing mandatory instructions to apply the system theory came in last place.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Discussion and Recommendations**

#### **The results**

- 1- Financial obstacles were the highest followed by administrative and social obstacles, while human obstacles were low.
- 2- The selection of hypotheses showed statistically significant differences between obstacles in general and administrative, financial, and social obstacles with the independent variables, indicating the presence of these obstacles within public relations departments and the characteristics of the sample individuals.
- 3- The selection of hypotheses showed statistically significant differences between human obstacles and gender, specialization, and number of courses, while there were no statistically significant differences with variables of years of experience, job title, and the university the employee works for.
- 4- The cessation of government financial support for Palestinian universities has affected their public relations activities.
- 5- The presence of non-specialized employees has affected public relations activities.
- 6- Weak monitoring of public relations work has affected its evaluation.
- 7- The best solutions from the perspective of public relations employees to avoid obstacles to the application of systems theory in public relations are to restructure administrative procedures, train public relations employees on the application of systems theory, and seek the assistance of experts to raise awareness of the importance of applying systems theory.

#### **The recommendations**

- 1- Avoiding financial, administrative, and social obstacles to applying systems theory in the work of public relations in Palestinian universities in an integrated manner.
- 2- Seeking other sources of funding besides government support to enable public relations departments to carry out their work.

- 3- Focusing on specialization during the recruitment process for public relations departments.
- 4- Encouraging public relations staff to monitor their work to measure its impact on the internal and external community of the university.
- 5- Increasing the training of public relations staff through the use of experts to raise awareness of the importance of applying systems theory.
- 6- Revising administrative procedures within public relations departments to be in line with the application of systems theory.

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## Appendices

### ملحق أ: الاستبانة

جامعة النجاح الوطنية

كلية الدراسات العليا

السيدة/ة. موظف العلاقات العامة المحترم/ة.

يقوم الباحث بإجراء دراسة ميدانية حول معوقات تطبيق نظرية النظم في دوائر العلاقات العامة في الجامعات الفلسطينية وذلك استكمالاً لنيل شهادة الماجستير في العلاقات العامة، نرجو منكم التكرم بالإجابة على أسئلة الاستبانة والتي ستستخدم لأغراض البحث العلمي فقط.

مع الاحترام

الباحث: محمد طارق الحاج

الجزء الأول: معلومات عامة

فيما يلي مجموعة من الأسئلة للتكرم بالإجابة عليها بوضع إشارة X أما الإجابة التي تراها مناسبة

1 التخصص علاقات عامة وإعلام ادارة اعمال تسويق غير ذلك

2 سنوات الخبرة: 1-3 سنوات 4-7 سنوات 8-11 سنوات 12 سنة فأكثر

3 الدورات التدريبية: 1-3 دورات 4-7 دورات 8 دورات فأكثر

الجزء الثاني:

فيما يلي مجموعة من الاسئلة المتعلقة بمعوقات تطبيق نظرية النظم في دوائر العلاقات العامة في الجامعات الفلسطينية، للتكرم بوضع إشارة X امام الإجابة التي تراها مناسبة

| المحول الاول: المعوقات الادارية |  |            |       |       |       |            |
|---------------------------------|--|------------|-------|-------|-------|------------|
| الرقم                           | السؤال   | موافق بشدة | موافق | محايد | معارض | معارض بشدة |
| 1                               | عدم تطبيق اللامركزية في العمل                          |            |       |       |       |            |
| 3                               | عدم الولاء للمؤسسة بل للمسؤول                          |            |       |       |       |            |
| 4                               | تكون التوجيهات على شكل أوامر                           |            |       |       |       |            |
| 6                               | عدم مشاركة موظفي العلاقات العامة في عملية اتخاذ القرار |            |       |       |       |            |
| 7                               | عدم وضوح الاهداف في تطبيق نظرية النظم                  |            |       |       |       |            |
| 8                               | عدم جدية الادارة العليا في تطبيق نظرية النظم           |            |       |       |       |            |
| 9                               | البيروقراطية تعيق تطبيق نظرية النظم                    |            |       |       |       |            |
|                                 | عدم معالجة المعلومات الواردة من البيئة الداخلية        |            |       |       |       |            |
|                                 | عدم معالجة المعلومات الواردة من البيئة الخارجية        |            |       |       |       |            |
|                                 | عدم التقييم الدوري لنتائج مخرجات عمل العلاقات العامة   |            |       |       |       |            |

| المحول الثاني: معوقات مالية |  |            |       |       |       |            |
|-----------------------------|--|------------|-------|-------|-------|------------|
| الرقم                       | السؤال                                       | موافق بشدة | موافق | محايد | معارض | معارض بشدة |
| 10                          | عدم توفر المخصصات المالية لتطبيق نظرية النظم |            |       |       |       |            |
| 11                          | عدم توفر المخصصات المالية لتدريب الموظفين    |            |       |       |       |            |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |    |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|----|
|  |  |  |  |  | عدم توفر المخصصات المالية لرعاية الفعاليات خارج الجامعة    | 12 |
|  |  |  |  |  | عدم توفر المخصصات المالية لإجراء دراسات عن البيئة الخارجية | 13 |
|  |  |  |  |  | عدم توفر المخصصات المالية للقيام بأنشطة داخل الجامعة       | 14 |

| المحور الثالث: معوقات اجتماعية |       |       |       |            |   |       |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|------------|---|-------|
| معارض بشدة                     | معارض | محايد | موافق | موافق بشدة | السؤال  | الرقم |
|                                |       |       |       |            | ضعف الوعي بأهمية تطبيق نظرية النظم                  | 15    |
|                                |       |       |       |            | عدم تفاعل الادارة العليا في الجامعة لمطالب التغيير  | 16    |
|                                |       |       |       |            | ضعف التحفيز المعنوي والاجتماعي في تطبيق نظرية النظم | 17    |
|                                |       |       |       |            | عدم الرغبة في الابتعاد عن الادارة التقليدية         | 18    |
|                                |       |       |       |            | التشكيك في صدق المعلومات عن الجامعة                 | 19    |
|                                |       |       |       |            | عدم التواصل مع الجمهور للحصول على التغذية الراجعة   |       |

| المحور الرابع: معوقات بشرية |       |       |       |            |   |       |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|------------|---|-------|
| معارض بشدة                  | معارض | محايد | موافق | موافق بشدة | السؤال  | الرقم |
|                             |       |       |       |            | لا يوجد كوادر متخصصة في مجال الإعلان              | 20    |
|                             |       |       |       |            | لا يوجد كوادر متخصصة في مجال الإعلام              | 21    |
|                             |       |       |       |            | لا يوجد كوادر متخصصة في مجال تحرير الأخبار وكتابة | 22    |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |    |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|----|
|  |  |  |  |  | التقارير الصحفية                             |    |
|  |  |  |  |  | لا يوجد كوادر متخصصة في مجال تصميم المطبوعات | 23 |
|  |  |  |  |  | لا يوجد كوادر مختصة في معالجه البيانات       |    |

الجزء الثالث: في ما يلي مجموعه من الاسئلة تتعلق بسبل مواجهة معوقات تطبيق نظرية النظم، للتكرم الإجابة عليها بوضع إشارة X امام الإجابة المناسبة

| الرقم | السؤال  | مع | ضد |
|-------|---|----|----|
| 1     | اصدار تعليمات ملزمة لتطبيق نظرية النظم                  |    |    |
| 2     | الاستعانة بخبراء لنشر الوعي بأهمية تطبيق نظرية النظم    |    |    |
| 3     | استخدام جميع وسائل التواصل والاتصال                     |    |    |
| 4     | زيادة الدعم المالي لتطبيق نظرية النظم                   |    |    |
| 5     | تدريب موظفي العلاقات العامة على تطبيق عناصر نظرية النظم |    |    |
| 6     | إعادة بناء الهيكل التنظيمي                              |    |    |
| 7     | إعادة صياغة الاجراءات الادارية                          |    |    |

## Appendix B: Table

**Table 5:**

*Estimates of sample individuals on items in each field of the obstacles to the application of systems theory in public relations circles in Palestinian universities, according to study variables.*

| Variable                   | category                      |                    | Administrative field | Financial field | Social field | Human field | Total    |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------|----------|
| <b>Gender</b>              | male                          | Arithmetic mean    | 2.7063               | 2.775           | 2.6875       | 2.0375      | 2.5865   |
|                            |                               | Standard deviation | 0.52848              | 0.52599         | 0.49768      | 0.51235     | 0.042401 |
|                            | female                        | Arithmetic mean    | 2.8278               | 3.2333          | 2.787        | 2.3222      | 2.7991   |
|                            |                               | Standard deviation | 0.6488               | 0.73324         | 0.55367      | 0.79451     | 0.5871   |
| <b>specialization</b>      | PR and International Relation | Arithmetic mean    | 2.9353               | 3.0235          | 2.7745       | 2.2824      | 2.7896   |
|                            |                               | Standard deviation | 0.68369              | 0.7579          | 0.62065      | 0.78121     | 0.63928  |
|                            | Administration and media      | Arithmetic mean    | 2.56                 | 3.28            | 2.7167       | 1.98        | 2.6231   |
|                            |                               | Standard deviation | 0.34059              | 0.64773         | 0.46514      | 0.53707     | 0.35007  |
|                            | other                         | Arithmetic mean    | 2.6714               | 2.6286          | 2.6905       | 2.2571      | 2.5879   |
|                            |                               | Standard deviation | 0.57363              | 0.243           | 0.37796      | 0.62944     | 0.41109  |
| <b>years of experience</b> | 1-4                           | Arithmetic mean    | 2.74                 | 3.24            | 2.7333       | 2.16        | 2.7231   |
|                            |                               | Standard deviation | 0.35071              | 0.51769         | 0.27889      | 0.08944     | 0.16853  |
|                            | 5-9                           | Arithmetic mean    | 2.6733               | 3.16            | 2.7889       | 2.28        | 2.7179   |
|                            |                               | Standard deviation | 0.51335              | 0.74143         | 0.62826      | 0.54929     | 0.48773  |
|                            | 10 or more                    | Arithmetic mean    | 2.8857               | 2.7857          | 2.6905       | 2.1         | 2.6703   |
|                            |                               | Standard deviation | 0.73155              | 0.62            | 0.48858      | 0.91399     | 0.64899  |
| <b>Training courses</b>    | nothing                       | Arithmetic mean    | 2.6                  | 2.8909          | 2.5455       | 2.0545      | 2.5385   |
|                            |                               | Standard deviation | 0.57096              | 0.73953         | 0.57296      | 0.76989     | 0.57125  |
|                            | 1-2                           | Arithmetic mean    | 2.8308               | 2.9385          | 2.7308       | 2.3077      | 2.7278   |
|                            |                               | Standard deviation | 0.59914              | 0.6131          | 0.51162      | 0.51391     | 0.44452  |
|                            | 3-4                           | Arithmetic mean    | 3.1857               | 3.6286          | 3.1667       | 2.5429      | 3.1429   |
|                            |                               | Standard deviation | 0.45251              | 0.42314         | 0.34694      | 0.68034     | 0.3299   |
| 5 or more                  | Arithmetic mean               | 2.1667             | 2.4                  | 2.5             | 1.3333       | 2.1282      |          |

|                        |                               |                    |         |         |         |         |         |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| <b>Job title</b>       |                               | Standard deviation | 0.05774 | 0       | 0       | 0.11547 | 0.02221 |
|                        | ytypeD/rotceriD               | Arithmetic mean    | 3.1875  | 3.2     | 3.125   | 2.275   | 3       |
|                        |                               | Standard deviation | 0.18851 | 0.52372 | 0.35355 | 0.46522 | 0.1873  |
|                        | PR and International Relation | Arithmetic mean    | 2.4938  | 2.775   | 2.4792  | 2.025   | 2.4543  |
|                        |                               | Standard deviation | 0.59718 | 0.79289 | 0.53359 | 0.76898 | 0.59786 |
|                        | other                         | Arithmetic mean    | 2.88    | 3.26    | 2.85    | 2.38    | 2.85    |
| Standard deviation     |                               | 0.59029            | 0.46236 | 0.40407 | 0.67626 | 0.39742 |         |
| <b>university type</b> | Gtnemrevoal                   | Arithmetic mean    | 2.67    | 2.575   | 2.6458  | 1.775   | 2.476   |
|                        |                               | Standard deviation | 0.65629 | 0.49497 | 0.63893 | 0.31053 | 0.51022 |
|                        | lareneG                       | Arithmetic mean    | 2.5667  | 2.9167  | 2.75    | 2.0667  | 2.5701  |
|                        |                               | Standard deviation | 0.55814 | 0.7744  | 0.60511 | 0.54828 | 0.5606  |
|                        | Private                       | Arithmetic mean    | 3       | 3.3571  | 2.7857  | 2.5286  | 2.9286  |
|                        |                               | Standard deviation | 0.53493 | 0.51547 | 0.39456 | 0.79462 | 0.42559 |

Source: Conducted by the researcher, Field study 2023.

**Table 12:**

*shows the t-test between financial obstacles and the total independent variables.*

| <b>Variables</b>    | <b>T</b> | <b>df.</b> | <b>Sig (2- tailed)</b> |
|---------------------|----------|------------|------------------------|
| Gender              | -12.551  | 33         | *0.000                 |
| specialization      | -6.798   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| Years of experience | -3.968   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| Training courses    | -10.244  | 33         | *0.000                 |
| Job title           | -5.766   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| university type     | -6.393   | 33         | *0.000                 |

• Significant at a level of 0.05

Source: Conducted by the researcher, Field study 2023.

**Table 13:**

shows the t-test between social obstacles and the sum of independent variables.

| <b>Variables</b>    | <b>T</b> | <b>df.</b> | <b>Sig (2- tailed)</b> |
|---------------------|----------|------------|------------------------|
| Gender              | -10.205  | 33         | *0.000                 |
| specialization      | -6.131   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| Years of experience | -3.068   | 33         | *0.004                 |
| Training courses    | -10.031  | 33         | *0.000                 |
| Job title           | -4.109   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| university type     | -3.623   | 33         | *0.001                 |

• Significant at a level of 0.05

Source: Conducted by the researcher, Field study 2023.

**Table 14:**

*showing t-test between human obstacles and the sum of independent variables.*

| <b>Variables</b>    | <b>T</b> | <b>df.</b> | <b>Sig (2- tailed)</b> |
|---------------------|----------|------------|------------------------|
| Gender              | -5.062   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| specialization      | -2.599   | 33         | *0.014                 |
| Years of experience | 0.438    | 33         | 0.438                  |
| Training courses    | -5.484   | 33         | *0.000                 |
| Job title           | -0.781   | 33         | 0.44                   |
| university type     | -0.088   | 33         | 0.931                  |

• Significant at a level of 0.05

Source: Conducted by the researcher, Field study 2023.

**Table 15:**

*Methods for Confronting Obstacles to Applying Systems Theory in Public Relations Circles in Palestinian Universities.*

| <b>The question</b>  | <b>% Along with</b> | <b>% Against</b> |
|--|---------------------|------------------|
| Issuing mandatory instructions for applying the system theory.   | 79.4                | 20.6             |
| Seeking the assistance of experts to raise awareness about the importance of applying the system theory. | 91.2                | 8.8              |
| Using all means of communication and contact.  | 88.2                | 11.8             |
| Increasing financial support for applying the system theory.   | 85.3                | 14.7             |
| Training the public relations staff on the application of the elements of the system theory.             | 91.2                | 8.8              |
| Rebuilding the organizational structure.   | 88.2                | 11.8             |
| Re-formulating the administrative procedures   | 91.2                | 8.2              |



جامعة النجاح الوطنية  
كلية الدراسات العليا

معوقات تطبيق نظرية النظم في دوائر العلاقات العامة في الجامعات الفلسطينية

إعداد  
محمد طارق الحاج

إشراف  
د. عامر قاسم  
د. سمر الشنار

قدمت هذه الرسالة استكمالاً لمتطلبات الحصول على درجة الماجستير في برنامج العلاقات العامة في كلية الدراسات العليا في جامعة النجاح الوطنية نابلس - فلسطين.

2023

# معوقات تطبيق نظرية النظم في أقسام العلاقات العامة في الجامعات الفلسطينية من وجهة نظر موظفيها

إعداد

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إشراف

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د. سمر الشنار

## الملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على معوقات تطبيق "نظرية النظم" في دوائر العلاقات العامة في الجامعات الفلسطينية من وجهة نظر العاملين فيها، ولتحقيق هذا الهدف استخدم الباحث المنهج الكمي وتم جمع البيانات من موظفي دوائر العلاقات العامة في الجامعات الفلسطينية الحكومية، الأهلية والخاصة، والبالغ عددهم 70 موظفاً، وذلك من خلال استبانة صممت لهذا الغرض. تم تحليل البيانات إحصائياً باستخدام برنامج SPSS وذلك باستخدام الوسط الحسابي والانحراف المعياري للقيم التي أوردتها المـ ستجيبون لأداة البحث لتقييم ومعرفة درجة المعوقات في تطبيق "نظرية النظم". كما تم دراسة أثر المتغيرات ذات العلاقة بخصائصهم المتمثلة بالجنس، التخصص، سنوات الخبرة، عدد الدورات، المسمى الوظيفي ونوع الجامعة على درجة الموافقة التي اختارها أفراد العينة، كما استخدم اختبار T-Test لمعرفة الدلالة الإحصائية للفروق بين الأوساط الحسابية لتقديرات أفراد عينة الدراسة.

توصلت الدراسة إلى أن المعوقات المالية كانت في المرتبة الأولى تليها المعوقات الإدارية، الاجتماعية والبشرية. ومن أهم التوصيات ضرورة تخصيص موارد مالية ضمن الموازنات لبناء نظم إدارية تخدم أهداف الجامعة، والتركيز أكثر على التغذية الراجعة من قبل موظفي العلاقات العامة في الجامعات الفلسطينية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** نظرية النظم، المعوقات، أقسام العلاقات العامة، الجامعات الفلسطينية.