The Role of Sarcastic Media in the Formation of the Palestinian Public Opinion; Case Study of "Mesh.hek" Facebook Page

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ABSTRACT

The formation of the Palestinian public opinion is a unique process in which wide number of players and factors including the Israeli are taking part in. Historically, media has been one of the most important factors in the formation of the Palestinian opinion. Palestinians have been using media since the beginning of the Israeli – Arab conflict to gain the international support and unite the Palestinians over the idea of freedom and independence. The recent growth of Internet and technologies turned Social Network Sites (SNS) to be one of the most important factors that can affect and influence the Palestinian public opinion.

Although Sarcastic media has been used since the beginning of the conflict through the traditional media channels, it took more importance and influence over Palestinians as social network sites become widely used in Palestine. In 2006, The Palestinian internal conflict took place and opened a wide door for activists and institutions to use sarcasm through social networks as a weapon that can influenced people and deliver political messages.

The present study focuses on the role of sarcastic media in the formation of the public opinion towards the political issues in Palestine taking a Facebook page called "Mesh.hek" as a case study. Mesh.hek has been selected for the study due to its wide follow among Palestinians as a sarcastic page, the unknown administration of the page and the contents that it shares.

Few Palestinians wrote about the formation of the Palestinian Public Opinion and the role of media in this process but no one conducted any research or article related with

the sarcastic media in Palestine and its influence over the Palestinian public opinion. One the other hand, the lack of researches in this field gives the study additional importance, another fact that makes it valuable is using the English language in conducting it.

The study is based on tow testing theories; Uses and Gratification Theory and the Agenda Setting Theory. Furthermore, the quantitative methodology has been carried out in this study as the researcher created an online questionnaire that includes 49 questions and filled out by 500 participants from the followers of the Facebook page of "Mesh.hek".

The main findings and results of this study can be summarized in several points which include the high level of influence that sarcastic media has over the Palestinian public opinion, the low level of freedom of express in Palestine and the political agenda that Mesh.hek works accord which mainly depends on supporting the Palestinian resistance and attacks the corruption in the economic in a way that highly influences the Palestinian public opinion.

Keywords: Sarcastic Media, Social Media, Mesh.hek, Uses and Gratification theory, Agenda Setting Theory, Palestinian − Israeli Conflict, Palestinian Internal Conflict, Hamas, Fatah, Palestinian Authority, Palestinian Liberation Organization.

ÖZ

Filistin kamuoyunun oluşumu birçok oyuncu ve Israil İşgali'ni içeren faktörlerin rol aldığı özgün bir süreçtir. Tarihsel açıdan, medya Filistin kamuoyunun oluşmuna etki eden en önemli faktörlerden biri olmuştur. Filistinliler İsrail-Arap çatışmasının başlangıcından bu yana, uluslararası destek kazanmak ve Filistinlileri özgürlük ve bağımsızlık fikri etrafında toplamak için medyayı kullandı. Internet ve teknoloji alanlarında son zamanlarda meydana gelmiş gelişim Sosyal Medya Ağlarını, Filistin kamuoyunu etkileyen en önemli faktörler haline getirmiştir.

Çatışmanın başlangıcından beri geleneksel medya kanalları aracığılıyla kinayeli kavramlar kullanılmasına rağmen, sosyal medya ağlarının kullanımının yaygınlaşmasıyla bu iğnelemelerin Filistinliler üzerindeki önemi ve etkisi artmıştır. 2006'da Filistin'de gerçekleşen iç çatışma aktivistler ve kuruluşların sosyal medyayı iğnelemeler yaparak, insanları etkilemek ve politik mesajlar vermek için kullanmalarına imkan sağlamıştır.

Bu çalışmada, "Mesh.hek" adlı bir Facebook sayfası vaka çalışması olarak alınarak, Filistin'deki siyasi konulara yönelik kamuoyunun oluşturulmasında sarkastik (iğneleyici) (alaycı) medyanın rolü üzerinde duruluyor. Çalışmada Mesh.hek'in kullanılmasının sebepleri sarkastik bir site olarak birçok Filistinli tarafından takip edilmesi, sayfada paylaşılan içerikler ve yönetiminin bilinmiyor olmasıdır.

Birkaç Filistinli, Filistin kamuoyunun oluşumu ve bunun üzerinde medyanın oynadığı rol ile ilgili birtakım şeyler yazmıştır fakat kimse sarkastik medyanın Filistin kamuoyu üzerindeki etkisiyle ilgili bir araştırma gerçekleştirmemiş ve

makale yazmamıştır. Buna ek olarak, bu konuda araştırma olmaması bu çalışamanın önemini artırıyor; bu çalışmayı İngilizce kullanarak yürütmek çalışmayı değerli kılıyor.

Kullanımlar ve Doyumlar Teorisi ve Gündem Belirleme Teorisi olmak üzere iki test teorisi baz alınarak yürütülmüştür. Buna ek olarak, çalışmanın nicel metodolojisi araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanan 49 soruluk anket kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Hazırlanan anket Facebook sayfası "Mesh.hek" in 500 takipçisi tarafından doldurulmuştur.

Çalışmanın ana bulguları ve sonuçları, birkaç noktayla özetlenebilir. Bu noktalar arasında sarkastik medyanın Filistin kamuoyu üzerindeki yüksek düzeydeki etkisi, Filistindeki ifade özgürlüğünün azlığı yer almaktadır. Bunlara ek olarak, Mesh.hek in Filistin direncini destekleyici ve ekonomideki yozlaşmaya saldıran ve bunu yaparak Filistin kamuoyu üzerinde çok fazla etki yaratan bir siyasi gündem izlediği de ana bulgular arasındadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sarkastik Medya, Sosyal Medya, Mesh.hek, Memnuniyet teorisi, Gündem Belirleme Teorisi, Filistin-Israil çatışması, Filistin iç çatışması, Hamas, Fatah, Filistin hakimiyeti, Filistin Özgürlük Organizasyonu.

DEDICATION

To the spirits of the Palestinian Martyrs:

Faheem Dawabsha

Basel Al- Araj

Baha Alyan

Odai Al-Jamal

Ghassan Al- Jamal

Motaz Washaha

To my family in Palestine, to my love Rufina Gelmedinova, to my comrades and friends.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGUERS

LIST OF SYMPOLS

xv

AST   Agenda Setting Theory

PA   Palestinian Authority

PLO   Palestinian Liberation Organization

SNS   Social Network Sites

UGT   Uses and Gratification Theory

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The introduction chapter will cover the background of the research study, the motivations to conduct it and the aims of conducting it. Moreover, the introduction will clarify the significance and limitation of the study and selects different questions to be answered throughout the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Sarcasm has a very deep roots in history as a way and tool that has been used in literature and communication. Sarcasm exists in the very early books including the religious books like the Bible, Morris (2011) mentioned in his study named "Biblical Sarcasm" several examples about sarcasm in the Bible book. The use of Sarcasm appeared later on in the literature and continued until now a day (Morris, 2011).

Cambridge dictionary (1995) defined sarcasm as "the use of remarks that clearly mean the opposite of what they say, made in order to hurt someone's feelings or to criticize something in a humorous way" (Cambrige University, 1995). Aldan (2014) defined sarcasm as "A tongue of which the user speaks of something the complete opposite of what the user means. It often has the best comedic value" (Aldan, 2004). In general sarcasm occurs when the literal meaning gives different meaning from what the speaker really wants to say, this often happens when the speaker wants to mock on the receiver with an intention to hurt or amuse (Huang, Gino, & Galinsky, 2015). More definitions and ideas of sarcasm will be discussed in chapter 2.

Although very little books and studies have been written about sarcasm and the use of it in media, sarcasm has been used in all kinds and tools of media since the very beginning. This use has been started with Books, Novels, Newspapers, Radio, Television and recently in social network sites. The wide use of sarcasm in the modern media like the social network sites including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and You Tube back to many factors which will be discussed in chapter 2, these factors helped in developing the use of sarcasm until it becomes one of the new phenomena which has deep roots and connection with the social movements and the open world of internet through social network sites (Forslid & Wiken, 2015, p. 5).

The rapid increase in the development of the computer and internet and its role in our life left a deep influence over media and the use of it, things have changed rapidly and the old media channels become traditional as new waves of development and inventions took place. Social network sites can be described as the soul of the modern life, the followers of the statistics related with the number of Facebook users as an example can easily notice the huge role that such network can play in our life. News, chat, live videos, photos, applications and many other wide kinds of facilities can be done throughout these networks. People find their way of shaping and organizing social movements through Social Network sites, the wide use, speed and also privacy issues are playing the biggest role of turning people from the old traditional ways of protest and express their opinion to the electronic path, this can clearly found in the Arab Spring in which media has been one of the most important factors of it where activists were using SNS to shape the public opinion and invite people to streets (Gerbaudo, 2012).

Many researches have been done in the recent years to study the relation between social network sites and the Social Movements that leaded the Arab Spring, sarcastic media was part of the story as activists launched sarcastic pages that target the regimes in a way that impresses it and shows the truth of its action in a simple way that allow all receivers regardless of their different educational levels to understand and interact with the situation. Several benefits behind using sarcastic media can be obtaining in such cases specially when members of the community still afraid of showing their opinion so they find sarcastic media as an option to interact and same time avoiding these fears of being chased by the regimes (Howard, et al., 2011).

Palestine is an Arab country which is located in the center of the Arab world connecting the Arab countries in Asia with those in Africa, the unique geographic place and the religious and historical importance made Palestine one of the most complicated political case in the current time and a station of wars historically. Following the collapse of the Ottoman empire Britain put hands over the Palestinian lands (Saleh M. M., 2015). Many treaties have been signed through the history about Palestine starting from the Ottoman empire to the British colony then within the Palestinian Israeli conflict, these treaties never helped to find a final solution for the Palestinian - Israeli conflict. Israelis claim that they have a historical right on the Palestinian lands, for this, they leaded the 1948 war against Arab countries. As a result of this war Israel took the control over several cities and millions of Palestinians became refugees out of their cities and villages. The story didn't stop here, it was just the beginning of a continuous conflict that leaded to complete control over the Palestinian lands following the war of 1967 (Shindler, 2009). Up to 1993, when the Palestinians signed the Oslo accords with Israel as the first peace

treaty between them, the Palestinian public opinion had no claims but freeing the occupied land. Following that date, different principles that shape the Palestinian public opinion started to emerge including the path which supports the peace and negotiations and the one which supports the military struggle as the only way to free the land.

PLO, the Palestinian Liberation Organization which includes different movements has been established to represent Palestinians in the international arena, Fatah is the main party within this organization which signed the Oslo accords. The organization which has constitution that clearly defined it as the legitimate and only body which has the right to represent Palestinians and decide their future through the negotiation with Israel (Brahmeh, 2014). PLO earned several benefits after signing Oslo accords, the creation of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the return of the Palestinian fighters to the occupied land in addition to an international recognition of this authority were the main benefits (Kelman, 2007).

The end of 1980s witnessed the establishment of the Islamic resistance movement of Hamas. Hamas which launched its first actions against Israel stood against Oslo accords describing it as a step toward ending the Palestinian case, this opinion of Hamas has been translated to actions as Hamas military wings attacked Israel claiming that freeing the historical lands of Palestine using the military struggle is the only possible option. The different between the strategies and principals of Hamas and Fatah divided the Palestinians public opinion into two approaches (Shlaim, 2005). Hamas got stronger and leaded the Palestinian second intifada in 2000 before it joined the parliamentary elections of 2006. The election results signed the beginning point of the Palestinian division which we currently have between Hamas

as a power that control Gaza Strip and Fatah which is leaded by president Mahmoud Abbas and takes Ramallah city in the West Bank as center of the Authority (Aljazeera, 2011). The years of the Palestinian division gave the Palestinian community less hope and bring to arena different opinions and continuous political conflict that turned to military conflict between Fatah and Hamas (Abou Jalal, 2016).

Cairo, Doha, Mecca and Gaza witnessed meetings and deals between both sides to end the division, these meetings used to end with an agreement to shape a unity government where failing was the destiny of all of it. The division and the less hope of solving it made the Palestinians without any options but shaping social movements to make pressure over both sides to reach a solution. These social movements found their way through social network sites in which people and pages used sarcasm to protest against the current situation.

"Mesh.hek" is famous political sarcastic page in Palestine, the Facebook page which has been launched in 2013 faced several blocks from Facebook administration due to Israeli requests in which the Israeli security department claims that the page is a tool that call for violence and encourage it. Although there is a continuous attempt from the Palestinian police to find out who is controlling Mesh.hek, the admin still anonymous and a free. As no official and clear information is available about the page, the researcher used the information inside the page in addition to those provided by the admin who accepted to answer our questions and use it throughout the research study. In addition to the page on Facebook and the additional Facebook alternative pages there is an Instagram account which shares exactly the same posts which are shared on Facebook.

In the section "About", the admin described the page as an Idea that will never die, the idea that they explain later by stating that Mesh.hek is the first Palestinian sarcastic page that will criticize all people, institutions, authorities, events and community issues (Mesh.hek , 2017).

The followers of this page can easily notices the message within the posts of the page, the page is supporting any action against Israel and deeply criticize the negotiations and the cooperation between the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli government (Mesh.hek , 2017).

Mesh.hek which is followed by more than 270000 users in Facebook and less numbers on Instagram has been listed and classified several times by several Palestinian institutions among the most effective and active pages in Palestine. In their last annual report "Social Studio" classified Mesh.hek on the list of the most effective political and community pages (Social Media Report , 2016)

1.2 Motivates for the Study

Several reasons motivated the researcher to choose this study, starting from the desire to accept the challenge of writing a research about a topic that has little resources to the dangers that the writer might face from the authorities.

The importance of media in general and social networks sites in our life attracted me to find a topic within this field, the unique situation that Mesh.hek made since 2013 and its influence over me leaded me to think about the limits of this influence over the others and the community itself. One more reason was the incredible and smart way of managing the page leaving no way to reach any information about the admins of it. Moreover, their ability to follow all the events and actions and deliver it in a

sarcastic way. The researcher conducted this research to find out the role of sarcasm in shaping the Palestinian Public Opinion toward the political issues. This research will be the first of its kind in Palestine and this made me more motivated to conduct it and do similar and deep researches in future in the same field. In addition to the previous mentioned reasons, the researcher who has a political background as he graduated from the department of International Relations was looking for a topic that contains both politics and media.

1.3 Aims of the Study

The study presents a full image of the sarcastic media and its role in shaping the public opinion in Palestine, the study has an aim in which the influence of sarcastic media will be measured and tested through a questionnaire answered by followers of the page.

This study will create a base for the coming studies since there is a lack of similar studies. Moreover, it will provide scientific results and analysis regarding the sarcastic media, making the public opinion in Palestine and Mesh.hek. Several aims from this study need to be obtained including:

- Provide a historical background about sarcastic media and its use through literature.

- Analyze the use of sarcastic media in social networks site in Palestine.

- Explain the history and the present of the Palestinian issue.

- Find out the factor that create, shape and effect the Palestinian public opinion.

- Measuring the limits of influence that sarcastic media can plays, and the reasons behind the use of sarcastic media.

- Give a general view about Mesh.hek and measure its role.

- Provide scientific results that can test and measure the limit of influence of Mesh.hek over Palestinians and their opinions toward the political issues.

1.4 Research Questions

Answers to the below research questions will be searched and answered through this study:

RQ. 1 What is the level of interaction and use of social network sites in Palestine?

RQ. 2 What are the limits of influence that sarcastic media used through social network sites can play to drive the public opinion in Palestine?

RQ. 3 How social network sites can shape social movements and take the historical role that the Palestinian political parties were playing before?

RQ. 4 Do Palestinians enjoy high level of freedom of express?

RQ. 5 Is the current Palestinian political situation gives media more space to affect and influence Palestinian public opinion?

RQ. 6 What is the level of interaction with the shared materials on Mesh.hek?

RQ. 7 How Palestinian people see and evaluate Mesh.hek limits of influence?

RQ. 8 What are the aims and agenda of Mesh.hek?

RQ. 9 What are the reasons behind keeping the admins of Mesh.hek unknown?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The revolution of technology and the rapid increase in the use of internet in our life made people depend more in the modern technology so modern media tools, the use of sarcastic media continue to exists in the modern media with wider use comparing with its amount of use in the traditional media. The spread of social network sites and the wide use of it in all over the world made social media one of the most important tools to create and shape the public opinion toward any case. People rely on social network sites to share news, information, knowledge and interact. The free and easy access to social networks sites increased the percentage of use much more than the old traditional tools of communication.

The research is important due to the lack of similar specialized studies in Palestine, this study will benefit readers and future researchers. The study is expected to present a full analysis of making the public opinion in Palestine and the role of sarcastic media in this process. Moreover, this research will present a full study of Mesh.hek and its influence over the Palestinian community.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

This research studies the Facebook page of "Mesh.hek", Mesh.hek is one of the most famous sarcastic pages in Palestine, the administrators of this page describes it as "Mesh.hek is an idea and the idea will never die" (Mesh.hek , 2017). The page criticizes and discuss community and political issues and concentrates on the corruption cases and the security cooperation between PA and Israel, the study will examine and measure the influence of the page in shaping the Palestinian public opinion towards the political issues throughout an online questionnaire that will be

answered by followers of the page. The study was conducted at Eastern Mediterranean University in the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the researcher compiles relevant literatures related to the study. These literatures provide a considerable background and discussions about all the subjects and sides of the study in which the researcher divides the chapter into several parts. The chapter starts with the definition of Sarcasm and its history while the second part concentrates on the use of sarcasm in media. The chapter covers a historical background of the Palestinian- Israeli conflict before it deeply discusses the process of shaping the Palestinian public opinion. The researcher also highlights the use of social network sites in Palestine. Later on, the writer covers all the sides related with the study case of Mesh.hek and moved ahead with delivering a review about the social movement then the theories that the researcher tested in the study.

2.1 Sarcasm and Sarcastic Media

In this section, the researcher is discussing several definitions of sarcasm, the similarity and differences between sarcasm and irony and finally, the use of sarcasm through the social network sites.

2.1.1 Sarcasm

Although there are many different definitions of sarcasm there is a core and main definition states that sarcasm is the use of words or remarks that give an opposite meaning either for the purpose of hurting the other or to criticize (Aldan, 2004). Sarcasm according to Aldan means "the use of remarks that clearly mean the opposite of what they say, made in order to hurt someone's feelings or to criticize

11

something in a humorous way" (Aldan, 2004). These general definitions keep the idea in a dark stage where sarcasm definition still wide enough to be understood in different ways specially with the existence of similar concepts and tools. Huang, Gino and Galinsky went ahead to explain the situations in which sarcasm is used. They agreed that the source of sarcasm use it with an intention of hurt or amuse the receiver. Moreover, they are among those writers who searched deeply in the difference between sarcasm and irony (Huang, Gino, & Galinsky, 2015).

2.1.2 Sarcasm and Irony

In the linguistic usage a barely difference can be found between the concepts of sarcasm and irony, there is a very close meaning of sarcasm and irony, this different depends in most cases on the way of communication (Rawel, 2007).

The common shared meaning between irony and sarcasm can be defined as both concepts mean the opposite of what is actually said while the main difference is that Irony has no intention of hurt the receiver but sarcasm is used for the purpose of hurting the receiver (Rawel, 2007). Sarcasm generally involve insult that aims to put someone down, e.g., "this is my smart friend, who failed all his courses" (Filatova, 2012).

Irony can be classified into two types: verbal and situational. The verbal one is the type which can be defined as "saying the opposite of what you mean" (Knoblock, 2016). The situational type describes an irony situation, e.g., a sign of no smoking in a cigarette company (Florslid & Wiken, 2015).

2.1.3 Sarcasm in the Social Network Sites

Sarcasm mostly understood as an aggressive version of irony that raise when the amount of ridicules increased (Knoblock, 2016). Romm (2016), talked about the difference of sarcasm that we experience in real life and mostly face to face and the online sarcasm that starts to appear and widely use throughout the social media networks, he argued while he was defending the traditional ways of sarcasm that sarcasm that a person to person sarcasm can be through the way of looking, moving the eyebrow, moving the face or raising the voice…etc. But through social network sites, we have a limited tools of txt and photo that might be not understandable for the receiver (Romm, 2016).

The increasing importance of internet and social network sites in or life and the development of its usage in the recent years made it natural that all real life aspects are reflected in the social media, this reflection including sarcasm opened the way for creative types and development depending on the facilities and wide applications. This leaded Romm (2016) to come up with the result that social media has changed the way of sarcasm exactly like the change which occurred as a result of the development of social network sites and the growing importance that it has into life (American Technion Society, 2017).

Although the most usage of sarcasm throughout the social network sites has an aim of entertainment and fun, still sarcasm has wide use through social network sites for political purpose including elections, war, shaping or creating the public opinion according to specific agenda and the time of crises in all its kind. Natalia Knoblock (2016), delivered a research titled as "Sarcasm and Irony as a Political Weapon: Social Networking in the Time of Crisis". Knoblock used the Ukrainian political

crises as a case study for her research in which she come up with the result that sarcasm played a considerable role in the crisis time as it was one of the main tool and weapon within the social media competition to create a national public opinion against the war and to gain the international sympathy with the issue (Knoblock, 2016).

2.2 The Palestinian – Israeli Conflict

This part will deliver a brief history of the Palestinian – Israeli conflict starting from the roots of the case in the nineteenth century until June 2017.

2.2.1 1882- 1948 Period

The Palestinian issue has a historical root back to the British mandate period which took place over the historical lands of Palestine until 1948 (Khalidi, 1997). In 1947, the United Nations announced a special resolution which states a partition plan for Palestine and open the door to declare the independence of the state of Israel in the same year (Hajjar & Beinin, 2014) .

The Palestinian – Israeli conflict got serious level following the independence declaration of Israel, several Arab countries joined the war turning the conflict into Arabs - Israeli conflict, this conflict witnessed waves of violence which still taking place until nowadays (Pressman, 2005). The idea behind the establishment of the state of Israel has an old root back to the nineteenth century when the Jews were suffering from the bad sphere in the European countries. The situation in which they were living forced them to start thinking of creating a homeland in which they can live in peace (Brad, 2012). The Zionist movement took the first step toward their aim when they sent the first wave of Jewish migrants to Palestine in 1882 (Hajjar & Beinin, 2014). At the end of nineteenth century the movement hold their first

meeting in Basel declaring their official aims to establish their state over the Palestinian lands (Philo & Berry, 2011). In that period, there was a slogan taking a place among Jew stating the aim of "We need a land without people for a people without land" (Brownfeld, 1998).

The Palestinian land in that period were under the control of the weak Ottoman Empire, this made it easier for the Zionist movement to send more immigrants to Palestine in a preparation to their state creation project (Tessler, 1994). Jews adopted the choice of creating their homeland in Palestine due to religious and historical rights as they officially stated (Brad, 2012).

In November of 1917, the British minister of foreign affairs Mr. Lord Balfour announced the famous declaration which contained an official promise from the British government to help in establishing a state for Jews over the Palestinian land (Khalidi, 1997), this promise was an introduction to turn the Middle East into a continuous conflict until nowadays. The area witnessed several international treaties which divided it into mandates areas, some under the British mandate like Jordan and Palestine while others like Syria and Lebanon were under the French mandate(Smith, 2017).

All the conditions were leading the world represented with the League of Nations to accept the British and French mandate over the lands of the Ottoman Empire. During the period of the British mandate in Palestine huge numbers of Jews immigrated from all over the world to the Palestinian lands (Philo & Berry, 2011). The number of Jews who built and lived into a restricted settlements increased in a rapid way that draw the attention and worries of the Palestinians, this opened the way for a daily

clash between Palestinians and Jews (Metzer, 2007). Statistics according to Beinin and Hajjar (2014) states that the number of Jews in 1946 equal third of whole number of the population in Palestine. Arabs according to these statistics were 1,269,000 while Jews were 608,000. (Hajjar & Beinin, 2014). This reality in addition to several reasons including the ending process of mandate system in most countries following the second world war and the international position toward the case of Palestine forced the United Nations to design a partition plan in which three sides will share the control over the Palestinian lands including Arabs, Jews and the international community (Khalidi, 1997).

Rapid changes occurred and the first Arab- Israeli war was just a matter of time after the United Nations partition plan. Palestinians took the streets protesting the international decisions claiming that Palestine for Palestinians and refusing the exist of Jews and the authority of the international trusteeship over Jerusalem. The war was the second step which left thousands of victims in both sides and around million Palestinian refugees who escaped to the neighbor countries seeking safety (Bachi, 1977). Israel won the war and declared the independence in May 1948 (Philo & Berry, 2011, pp. 30-34). The war which mostly known as 1948-war was the first but not the last, this war is the mark of what is known among Palestinians and Arabs as "AL-Nakba" which mean the catastrophe (Nofal, 1998).

2.2.2 PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization)

Following the Arabs defeat in 1948, there was a huge efforts done through the international community and the United Nations to find peace and settlement for the conflict (Brad, 2012). Most of these efforts faced a complete fail while other attempts gained limited success in settling the conflict temporary.

The Palestinian until that period were in need for an official representative which can lead their case in the international arena, although there were some officials who were leading a civil government, those officials can be more described as a tool in the hands off the Arab leaders specially Jordan and Egypt (Khalidi, 1997). The responsibility of the Palestinians lands which were out of the Israeli control in that period were divided between the Jordanian and Egyptians, where the West Bank and Jerusalem were under the Jordanians overview the western part including Gaza strip were managed by the Egyptians.

Several conferences and meeting were held discussing the need of creating a Palestinian political body which can lead Palestinians, among these conferences there were two important gathering in Jerusalem and Nablus (Nofal, 1998). These conferences had to face a strong position of the Arab countries, some countries were against this effort while others agreed and supported but in same time worked to control this body even before it born (Brad, 2012).

The real steps toward finding a political Palestinian body started in early of 1960s. In 1964, PLO (The Palestinians Liberation Organization) was founded following a rapid efforts done through the Arab countries and the Palestinians in which Mr. Ahmad Alshoqairy become the first leader of the new born Palestinian organization (Brahmeh, 2014). The journey of Palestinian self –determination has just started and the struggle to gain freedom and independence has to pass the problem of the Arabs attempts to control the Palestinian decision and opinion (Brahmeh, 2014). The shape of the Palestinian national movement raise following the establishment of PLO, several Palestinian parties were launched sharing a common aim of struggling against Israel using and depending on the military resistance. During that period

there were several but not serious Palestinian military operations against Israel, that period marked the political growth of the Palestinians in a way that gave the Israeli side the time and sphere to prepare for a second war.

2.2.3 Six Days War - 1967

The second main war between Arabs and Israel took place in 1967. The war which mostly known as "the Six Days War" ended up with a new defeat for the Arab armies marking huge changes on issue. The results of the war were more than hard over Arabs, they lost the control over the rest of the Palestinian lands including Gaza, West Bank and Jerusalem. Moreover, several parts of the Arab neighbor countries were occupied including the Lebanese farms of Shebaa, the Syrian heights of Golan and the Egyptian Sinai (Spiegel, 1985). In addition to the loss of the land there were a new wave of Palestinian refugees shaped around 330,000 (Saleh, 2012, p. 82).

The United Nations payed several attempts to solve the case and stop any military activity after 1967 war, a decision of 242 was taken among the Security Council stating that Israel should withdraw from the occupied territories and bring back the situation as it was before the war (Shamir, 2012). Israel gave up very limited parts of the occupied lands. Six years later, The War of Yom Kippur 1973 occurred, the war of 1973 marked a change in the equation as Arabs signed their first victory over Israel and forced them to sign a peace treaty of Camp David late in 1979 (Shamir, 2012).

2.2.4 The Palestinian National Movement and the Way to Oslo 1993

The international community represented by the United Nations recognized PLO as the sole legitimate body to officially represent all Palestinian inside and outside Palestine in 1974 through the resolution of 3210 (Katzman, 2002). The Palestinian

parties found their way to join the organization which has been launched to act as an umbrella that represent all Palestinian parties. The main party which took the leadership from the beginning until nowadays is Fatah, other parties were mostly leftist including the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and some other small parties (PLO, 2017). Palestinians launched their first military actions against Israel from their bases in Jordan.

The historical relations between Palestinians and Jordanians in addition to the long shared borders made the best choice to establish the Palestinian military bases over the Jordanian lands (Khalidi, 1997). The very warm relations didn't last for longs as the Jordanian authorities become afraid from the power of the Palestinians and their activities among the Jordanian community, Moreover, several military clashes occurred between the Palestinian fighters and the Jordanian army and police leaded to bloody conflict in the city of Jarash known as Black September (Singh, 2016).

Beirut was the second base on the Palestinian revolution journey, the case wasn't too much different from Jordan. PLO become stronger and its military branches are more organized and trained now. The civil war occurred and the number of victim among Palestinian and Lebanese were increasing day by day, this forced the Palestinians to defend themselves until they become part of this war. Lebanon had no power in that time to take a similar action like Jordan. On the other hand, Israel wasn't happy with the growing power of PLO on the northern borders, they prepare for a military intervention which last several years (Hudson, 1997).

In accordance to the dramatic changes within Lebanon there was a popular movement in the Palestinian lands that leaded to the first intifada in 1987. PLO situation in Lebanon was in its worst days as Palestinian leadership found no chance to stay after the fall of the efforts to stop the Israeli siege and intervention that costed Lebanon and Palestinians huge numbers of victims (Hudson, 1997). Tunisia was the following base which didn't last for long as PLO signed the Oslo accords in 1993 which state in its main principles the recognition of PLO from Israel and the recognition of Israel from PLO marking the beginning of the peace process starting with a self-Palestinian rule over Jericho and Gaza (Hudson, 1997).

Following Oslo accords, the Palestinian authority (PA) has been established to manage the Palestinian institutions. The recent born authority faced many difficulties in its early days as it has to end any military actions against Israel as part of Oslo accords. This duty brought new challenge for PA as they faced the recent created Islamic movement of Hamas which was one of the main actors of the first intifada and also the main body to reject the recent signed peace treaty. PA arrested the leaders of Hamas and banned any military actions, that was difficult as the Palestinian community itself was supporting the activities of Hamas against Israel (Tamimi, 2007).

In 2000, the Israeli prime minister Sharon made a visit to Al-Aqsa mosque in a step that burn the Palestinian streets and erupted the intifada once again (Tamimi, 2007). This intifada continued until 2005 leaving more than 4000 Palestinian victims and few hundreds in the Israeli side (Saleh M. , 2012, p. 126).

2.2.5 The Conflict between Hamas and Fatah

Fatah is the main leading party in PLO and the Palestinian authority, the secular national party which was founded in the late of 1950s among group of students was the first to join PLO, and among the first groups which launched military actions against Israel (Jamal, 2005).

Hamas on the other side of the division is an Islamic movement which raise the aim of freeing Palestine using the military struggle (Abu Amer, Hamas : A historical and Political Background, 1993), the late establishment of Hamas didn't stop the party from spreading in high speed among Palestinians until it becomes one of the main political bodies. Hamas declared its establishment in 1987 as a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine (Tamimi, 2007).

There are several difference between Hamas and Fatah in term of aims and strategies, Hams aims to establish a state within the historical borders before 1947 division plan while Fatah aims to establish an independent state within the occupied lands of 1967. Fatah which gave up the military struggle has adopted the peaceful way of negotiations to gain the Palestinian rights in a time that Hamas still raising and using the arm resistance by developing Al-Qassam Brigades (Gunning, 2009).

Although there were many parties in the Palestinian arena there was kind of cooperation among these parties as they were all under the umbrella of PLO. The situation has started to change within the first intifada as the reputation of Hamas took place among Palestinians in a rapid way. The competition of the brothers turned into conflicts of opinions regarding the Oslo accords and reached its maximum level of military clashes in the summer of 2007 (Gunning, 2009). Hamas joined the

legislative elections for the first time in 2006 and won it against Fatah (Abou Jalal, 2016). The military clashes which took place in Gaza 2007 left hundreds of victims and divided Palestinians into two different sides. The division which still taking place until now witnessed several attempts to end it but all ended with either disagreement or fail. Hamas is controlling Gaze while the Palestinian authority controlling West Bank (Levs, 2014).

2.3 Shaping the Palestinian Public Opinion: Factors and Players

The Palestinian aims has been changing over time. In each period of struggle weather it was against the British, the Israeli or within the Palestinian community there was a different aims and goals. These aims have been shaped to draw the Palestinian public opinion raising the roles of different factors and players. So, how the Palestinian aims changed over time and what are the factors and players that played a rule in this changes?

The study of public opinion has deep roots back in history in which the concept "Public Opinion" witnessed many changes in term of definition and use. The roots of the modern concept of public opinion back to ancient Greece and later on to the democratic theories (Beniger & Herbast, 1990).

There are wide number of definitions that represent the public opinion concept, they are all related to the common meaning which states that public opinion is the collective individual opinions and attitudes toward a specific case, person and institution (Speier, 1950). Many writers delivered valuable books and studies about the public opinion, its theories, history and its relations with political spheres. Dewey and Lippmann are among the famous writers who studied the public opinion.

Lippmann delivered one of the most famous books about the public opinion titled "Public Opinion" in 1922. In the recent years, public opinion concept connected with the democratic process in the democratic countries (Moy & Bosch, 2013). In the following sections, the researcher covers the change of the Palestinian public opinion in accords with the historical stages of the Palestinian − Israeli conflict and the Palestinian internal conflict.

2.3.1 Before the Establishment of PLO

Most Palestinians were working in agriculture until the med of last century, although families in general were thinking how to earn their life there was a high care of educations. Schools have been established in big villages and the cites, colleges and universities were established by Palestinians before the neighbor countries and the Palestinians teachers were working in the Arab gulf countries (Al- Ghadiry, 2006).

The lack of political activities shows the less interest in politics in the early years of last century, few people in city centers were known for their political interest throughout their written articles in the newspapers while some others were using mosques to raise the awareness of the political situation in Palestine (Shindler, 2009). The main players that were shaping the Palestinian opinion toward the political issues were Mosques, community leaders and media through newspapers which were available in that time. In 1911, the newspaper called "Palestine" was launched with a main principle of standing against the Zionism but didn't last for long as it was shut on 1914 by the Ottoman administration in that period (Shofany, 1998).

The political activities and interests increased through 1930s and 1940s as the Zionism claims raised and the Jews immigration to Palestine reached its highest levels, old players and factors remained same but this period witnessed two

23

noticeable changes; One is the influence of the Arabs opinion and positions in shaping the Palestinian opinion specially with the Arab sympathy toward the Palestinian issue and Second, the beginning of organizing the political activities through groups similar to parties , these changes help to establish the Arab Higher Committee for Palestine in 1946 (Al- Ghadiry, 2006).

Literature and media channels especially the newspapers were the main tools that shaped the Palestinian political opinions and translated the power of this opinion which raise the aim of freedom through the military actions. This situation continued until the establishment of PLO and the creation of the parties.

2.3.2 The Palestinian Existence in Lebanon

End of 1970s up to the end of 1980s, Lebanon was the center of the Palestinian revolution. Palestinians moved to Lebanon from their bases in Jordan following clashes with the Jordanian army (Singh, 2016). All the Palestinian parties in that time were adopting the arm resistance representing the public opinion of the Palestinians in that time. In addition to the old tools of media, Arabs as an external factor and mosques were participating in shaping the Palestinian public opinion toward the political issues, the main player in that time was the political parties (Saleh M. , 2012).

As the researcher concentrating on the sarcastic media role in shaping the Palestinian public opinion we have to mention that all the literatures and media products were delivering a serious and direct messages that target the emotions and ideas of the Palestinians without any kind of sarcasm.

Many famous names and characters were highly influence the Palestinian public opinion including Ghassan Kanafani, Naji al-Ali, Kamal Nasir and Mahmoud Darwish. Throughout studying that period, we find that there was a core relation between the beginning of sarcasm use in Palestine and the political conditions, this result comes from relating the first waves of sarcasm either in the art of Naji Al-ali or in the articles of the Palestinians writers with the first declaration about peace plans with Israel, this sarcastic works were basically attacking the leadership of PLO stating the rejection of any peace process with Israel (Shalhat, 2012).

Naji Al-Ali is a famous Palestinian artist who is mostly known for his positions against the PLO leadership and Israel (El- Khory, 2013). Naji created the character of Handala, a little boy turning his back to the world marking a sign of resistance. Three books contained more than 40.000 cartoons were published by Naji before he was shot in London in 1987. Palestinians until nowadays are using the cartoons of Naji either to describe the current situation or to show their rejection to it. In that period Naji's cartoons were real reflection of the Palestinian and Arab public opinion, New York Times wrote: "If you want to know what the Arabs think of the U.S., look at Naji Al-Ali's cartoons." (El- Khory, 2013).

In one of his famous sarcastic cartoon Naji imagined a discussion between two Arab Men as following "If Israel attacks Syria we must attack. Another man replies: What do you mean we must attack; attack who?!?!" (El- Khory, 2013). Naji was representing a generation of Palestinians who are against any political project that doesn't guarantee the freedom of Palestine. Kanafani was another affective character in that period before he passed after Israel exploded his car, Kanafani left several books and novels which contain many sarcastic examples but more important a

political message. Antoine Shalhat (2012) described Kanafani as a school of Arab Literature (Shalhat, 2012).

After studying the examples of Kanafani and Al-Ali we find the beginning steps of using sarcasm to influence and deliver a political message that effect and shaped the Palestinian public opinion in that period, one more result that we reached is that the use of sarcasm has been started with the beginning of talking and discussing the chances of building a peace process with Israel.

2.3.3 The First Intifada

The Palestinians first uprising (Intifada) which took place in 1987 marked the first popular resistance within the borders of West Bank and Gaza, this protests were different from all old styles of Palestinian struggle which was mainly concentrated out of Palestine. It wasn't just the type of struggle but also the main players of this struggle as new parties have been launched in a way that not just confused Israel but also the leadership of PLO (Tamimi, 2007).

A series events sparked the situation and turned into intifada after years of peaceful internal while the serious conflict was concentrating in Lebanon. The uprising took place after the killing of 7 Palestinian workers by the Israeli army (Efaw, 2006). As the Israel army and security departments were fighting against the Palestinian fighters in Lebanon they were aware that Palestinians within the occupied lands were suffering and the situation will not remain same peaceful as it was. The first signs came after declaring the establishment of the Islamic Jihad Organization as the first Islamic organization to fight against Israel (Barsky, 2002). Palestinians find their way to join the Islamic Jihad reflecting their desire to join an internal struggle first and second, investing in a new alternative after the long years depending on the

national and left parties without any touchable results on the internal situation (Tamimi, 2007).

PLO parties were busy in the internal conflicts in the hosting country of Lebanon, the sphere of cooperation and unity among PLO parties started to disappear as Fatah dominate all PLO institutions and become a single decision maker. While big group within Fatah took their decision to support the uprising, others were looking for a peaceful path to start a negotiation with Israel. Finally, a deal was reached and signed in Oslo (Brahmeh, 2014).

The role of sarcasm was the less among all periods within the Intifada, a continuous daily news of military operations killed all the chances of sarcastic media to took place, there were several Palestinians Radio stations, newspapers and magazines that spread the news and encourage Palestinians to occupy the streets and extend the Intifada giving all the importance to the political message. These media tools were important enough that forced the Israeli army to arrest any Palestinian who found guilty for having and using these tools especially the magazines that belong to the political parties (Tamimi, 2007).

2.3.4 Oslo Accords

In 1993, Israel and Palestinians represented by PLO under the leadership of Yasser Arafat signed the deal of principles mostly known as Oslo accords, the deal which contained a formal recognition of Israel from PLO faced a division in the Palestine opinion weather to support or reject it (Hadar, 1994). Palestinians divided into two camps, the camp that supported the deal include Fatah and other small leftist parties while the rejection camp included the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Islamic Jihad and Hamas (Omer & Bauck, 2013). The political conflict

among parties turned into a media conflict in which each side was promoting his position from the deal. This division and the media conflict opened the door for sarcasm as a weapon to face the reality through media, but still until that time the use of sarcasm in media wasn't strong enough as traditional media was taking place.

Supporters of the deal argue that there was no other chance but signing the deal as PLO were forced to leave Jordan and Lebanon and found no other place to use as a base while those who rejected the deal stated that the deal doesn't give all the rights to Palestinians, Moreover, it ended the Palestinian military struggle (PFLP, 2017).

2.3.5 The Second Intifada

The conflict among Palestinians continued, Fatah which was dominating the Palestinian authority banned all military actions against Israel applying the principles of Oslo, among those steps that Fatah took to guarantee and secure the deal they arrested Hamas and the Islamic Jihad members and stopped several media institutions that promote materials against the deal and the politics of Fatah (Omer & Bauck, 2013).

The policies that Fatah applied couldn't stop the second uprising when the Israeli Prime Minister entered Al-Aqsa Mosque and caused several protests that turned within days to the second Intifada. The second Intifada was different from the first one as Palestinians used armed resistance including explosions inside the Israeli cities (Brahmeh, 2014).

Palestinian authority started a serious cooperation with Israel to stop the second intifada following the death of the historical Palestinian leader and president Yasser Arafat. Palestinians elected Mahmoud Abbas to lead PLO in 2005 (Brown, 2008).

Hamas joined the legislative elections in the following year, although it's not a member of PLO, the result of the elections was shocking as Hamas won the elections and formed the government that didn't last for long (Smith B. , 2012).

In this period two main factors raised the use of sarcasm in media, first, the political division within the Palestinians community and second is the revolution in using the internet and social media networks. Since the Division Palestinians didn't hold any presidential or parliamentary elections and the absence of election stopped the main tool to measure the public opinion and opened the door for Media, interest groups, protests and straw polls.

2.4 The Use of Sarcasm in Social Network Sites in Palestine

In this part the researcher will deliver a general overview about social network sites in Palestine and the use of sarcasm through it.

2.4.1 Social Networks Sites

The term social network sites related to the new modern media type which depend on electronic connection, it can be defined as the web sites that give users the ability to articulate a network of connections among people with whom they want to share information, status, photos, news and all other types of content that can be shared (Steinfield, Ellison, Lampe, & Vitak, 2012).

The beginning of SNS was with (SixDegrees.com), the web that was launched in 1997 (boyd & Ellison, 2008). Although there were several webs that used some of SNS features like AIM and Classmates.com before founding (SixDegrees.com), the web SixDegrees.com was the first to contain many features and to get millions of users until closing the web in 2000 (Hampton, Goulet, Rainie, & Purcell, 2011).

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are the leading sites nowadays. Facebook which has been founded in 2004 by student of Harvard University Mark Zuckerberg is in the top of social network sites (Hampton, Goulet, Rainie, & Purcell, 2011).

2.4.2 The Use of Sarcasm Through Social Network Sites in Palestine

The use of social media in the Arab world took its importance after its role in the Arab Spring. The efforts that Arab governments payed to control the traditional media tools and institutions failed in front of the modern social network sites. The role of social network sites was the highest in Egypt and Tunisia (Badoura, 2014). The Arab world experienced a revolution of free expression, a rapid increasing number of users joined the social network sites and engaged into political topics raising their opinion in the free sphere away from the governmental sensor and control, the number of Arab users reached 100 million in 2015 (Ghannam, 2011).

The statistics from Palestine show a wide engagement into social networks. 52% of Palestinians are connected to the internet and one among three Palestinians is using SNS in a close percentage to 35%. The statistics done by the Palestinians social studio found that Palestinians use social network sites and electronic websites as a main source of news while other traditional tools are secondary sources. According to the same study 58% Palestinians believe that SNS have a positive influence over the Palestinians community (Social Media Report , 2016).

The report of the social network sites in Palestine prepared by the social studio (2016) classified the reasons of using SNS, 82% are using SNS to connect with friends while 4% use it to spend their free time. The statistics also show that other reasons of use can contain the need to get news and updates, watch videos, keep pace with development. Facebook is top on the list in term of number of users in Palestine

as 59% among users of social network sites prefer it while 28% prefer Instagram (Social Media Report , 2016).

The recent years witnessed the appearance and development of sarcasm through social media, Palestinians use sarcasm for several reasons and aims. The Palestinian Information Center published a report about the sarcastic media consist of several interviews with Palestinian activists on social media. The report related the development of sarcastic media to the wide use of SNS in Palestine, Moreover, it described sarcastic media in Palestine as an alternative for the official and traditional media (The Palestinain Information Center, 2017). Asmaa AL ghoul (2013) wrote about the sarcastic media in Gaza, Asmaa stated that sarcastic media helps avoiding the authority's censorship, Asmaa added that the heavy censorship couldn't stop activists to publish their sarcastic works into social media (Al Ghoul, 2013).

Tawfeq Al haj is a sarcastic writer from Gaza, Al haj spent 35 years in writing sarcastic works, the beginning was with several newspapers but in 2011, al haj opened his first account on social network sites and started to publish his works through it. Al haj claimed that the effect of sarcastic media is stronger than the bullet and the governments are afraid of these works, he added that this was the reason that took him to prison in August 2011 where he faced bad conditions (Al Ghoul, 2013).

The situation in the West Bank where the Palestinian authority ruling is not better than Gaza where Hamas rules. Palestinian Information Center stated that people are attracted to the comedian works where information and news are delivered and criticized in a sarcastic way, Abdullah Shatat is a Palestinian activist who use sarcasm in his posts weather its videos, photos or written texts, in his interview with

the Palestinian Information Center Abdullah said that sarcastic media is an effective tool that can influence the receiver, he also claimed that political sarcasm can influence the regime itself (The Palestinain Information Center, 2017).

There are wide number of pages, activists and groups that deliver political and community issues in sarcastic way. Some of those activists have been arrested either by the Israeli army or the Palestinian authority in Gaza and West Bank, the Annual social media report prepared by the Social Studio (2016) stated that 17 social media activists have been arrested by the Palestinian Authority in West Bank while 23 activists have been arrested by the Israeli forces and 9 by the security forces in Gaza. The report claimed that "the division between the West Bank and Gaza Strip remains one of the most important reasons for oppressing freedom of speech and expression in social media" (Social Media Report , 2016, p. 96). Alaa Abu Diab, Ali Qaraqe and Akram Alsorany are among the current famous sarcastic activists who share their works through social media networks and have huge number of followers.

2.5 Mesh.hek

In this part of the literature review the researcher will discuss all the sides related with the case study of Mesh.hek including general overview, level of interaction with it and the level of its influence over the Palestinian public opinion.

2.5.1 Overview

Mesh.hek is Palestinian Facebook page which mostly known for its sarcastic style. The page which has been launched in October 2013 witnessed several blocks and was totally closed in December 2015 but the admins continued their activities using the alternative page which was launched in January 2014, it has to be mentioned here

that Mesh.hek has accounts on Instagram and Twitter where same posts of Facebook page are published (Mesh.hek , 2017).

There is a lack of information about the page due to the lack researches and reports about it. The fear might be one of the biggest reasons behind this shortage of information, to cover this shortage the researcher used information provided by the page admin. Mesh.hek is a sarcastic popular concept which means "not in this way" , it also means "is it not like this" , the admins of this page chose this name to represent their rejection and critics to the current political situation. (Mesh.hek , 2017). The admins and the followers of the page call the page as (Haj Mesh.hek), they basically describe the page as (Haj) which means the old man who has long and wide experiences in life. The page use a cartoon logo consists of old man picture in all their designs.

The page which describe itself as an idea that will never die uses sarcasm to attack and criticize the Palestinians authority (Mesh.hek, 2017). Although, we can find comedian posts and political posts that attack Israel and Arab leaders, the highest percentage of its activities and posts are targeting the Palestinian authority and their relations with Israel. The page which has more than 275000 (Mesh.hek, 2017) followers is posting mainly about politics and the corruption of Palestinian officials in addition to social and entertainment topics.

2.5.2 The Management of Mesh.hek

The page is managed by unknown admins who have been successful in keeping their identities unknown until now. Palestinian authority security forces spokesman Adnan Al-Damiri wrote in his Facebook account and announced several times that Mesh.hek is a tool that gives free service to Israel by creating problems among the

Palestinians community and to break the trust between the community and the leadership, he also accused members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine to be the managers of the page (Qudus, 2016) . In the other side, supporters of the page see that its describing the reality of the Palestinians situation and targeting the corruption and raise the awareness of Palestinians towards the political issues in a way that supports the resistance and attacks the negotiation path.

Attacking the page by the Palestinian officials increased its followers, the page announced several times that group of users are reporting the page from time to time in attempt to close it but all these attempts failed. In October 2016, Facebook closed Mesh.hek page and other Palestinians pages claiming that the closed pages were supporting violence and terrorism but in the same day the admins of the page activate the alternative page (Qudus, 2016).

The Palestinians authority claims that Palestinian activists living in Turkey are the owners of the page but still there is no official prove or announcement about it (Qudus, 2016) .The page which described as the first and largest sarcastic Palestinian page has more than quarter millions of followers on Facebook (Mesh.hek, 2017).

According to the social media report 2016, Mesh.hek posted for 4635 times in 2016 with an average interaction of 1187 for each post (Social Media Report, 2016, p. 59).

2.5.3 The Sarcastic Contents of Mesh.hek

In Egypt, the use of sarcastic media has a big influence over the Egyptian community and the Egyptian public opinion. The famous Egyptian sarcastic show which was presented by Basem Yousef described to be one of the influenced tools that shaped the Egyptian public opinion within the revolution (Lee & Kermelioties, 2015).

Basem described sarcasm as an effective weapon. The importance of the show and the level of influence it was leaving over the audience forced the Egyptian authorities to stop the show and threaten Yousef in a way that he was pushed to leave the country. Those who seek to change or build the public opinion have to face the authorities, as Basem did in Egypt, other did the same in Iran, Syria and other countries and faced similar conditions (Lee & Kermelioties, 2015).

These experiences influenced the Palestinian activists to use the sarcastic weapon in their struggle of change and spread the awareness within the Palestinian community, what makes it more complicated in Palestine is standing against the Palestinian authority and the Israel authority. The fears of getting arrested forced the admins to hide their identities. This fear can be understood as Israel find any Palestinian who use social network sites to promote violence and hate of Israel guilty and must be arrested.

Adnan Abu Amer, a Palestinian writer described the Palestinian and Israeli activities on social network sites as a war, in his article titled as "Palestinians, Israelis face off on Facebook" Abu Amer explained the role that Facebook activists and pages play in the conflict, once in encouraging users to engage in the events of the uprising and second into the competition of wining the international opinion (Abu Amer, Palestinians, Israelis face offon Facebook, 2016). The previous mentioned article makes it more clear to understand the rule that a page like Mesh.hek can play in shaping the Palestinian public opinion. The research will study the level of influence that mesh.hek plays in shaping the Palestinians opinion toward the political issues.

The contents that Mesh.hek shared are vary, including posts that criticize the Palestinian authorities in West Bank and Gaza, posts that attacks Israel and encourage Palestinians to resist, posts criticize community issues, news posts and entertainment posts. The vary of posts might play big role in attracting people to follow the page.

In 2016, Mesh.hek posted for 4635 times with a daily average close to 13 posts per day and an average of interaction of 1187 for each post (Social Media Report , 2016, p. 59). The page is mostly known for criticizing the Palestinian Authority and their relations specially in term of security with Israel. The page has no limits or red lines in this terms as it targets the Palestinian leaders including the president Mahmoud Abbas, a group of other leaders who occupy a sensitive position within the Palestinian authority are among the most figures that been criticized and attacked through the posts of the page including Mahmoud Al Habash; president advisor, Majid Faraj; head of the Palestinian Intelligent Police and Adnan Aldamiri; Palestinian Forces Spokesman (Mesh.hek, 2017).

The posts contain comics, texts and videos that attack and criticize the Palestinian Authority and its leaders, these sarcastic posts attack the corruption of the leaders, the political path, the policies that affect the freedom of express, the acts against Gaza Strip and the security cooperation with Israel. The following picture is an example of these posts:

ترامب لعباس : أصفق لقواتك الأمنية التي تحافظ على التنسيق الأمني وتعمل بشكل مشترك مع "إسرائيل" لمحاربة "الإرهاب" .

أنا أصلا دمي ده بجري فيه كور حمرا وكور بيضا ، وتنسيق أمني

Figure 1: Comic from Mesh.hek page on Facebook (published in 4th May.2017)

The pervious comic contains a picture of president Abbas with president Trump, In the top of the comic Trump thanked Abbas for the efforts of the Palestinian forces in stopping the popular military operations against Israel, in the bottom of the comic Abbas is replying in sarcastic way that his blood contains white cells, red cells and security cooperation. The previous comic is an example of the page posts that criticize the security cooperation between the Palestinian forces and the Israeli

forces. Mesh.hek also criticize and attacks Israel in its posts, moreover, the page encourages the followers to take actions and resist Israel in any possible way.

Israel is suffering from Palestinian use of social network sites to promote violence, this statement was proved as Israel requested Facebook to close specific Palestinian pages and accounts claiming that posts of these pages and accounts encourage Palestinians to take an action against Israeli people and army. Aylet Shaked, the Israeli Minister of Justice thanked Facebook for answering the Israeli calls to close pages, accounts and delete contents that promote violence, Shaked stated that violence against Israel increases as the internet incitement increase (The Palestinain Information Center, 2017).

The posts that can be classified against Israel including comics about Israeli leaders and soldiers, calls for revenge from Israel, updating the news of resistance, support the Palestinian prisoners, criticize the peaceful path and share about events from the Palestinian struggle memory. This lead us to the result that Mesh.hek has a political message that it tries to promote through its sarcastic page summarized by supporting the resistance and promote all kind of struggle against Israel.

Mesh.hek contents also include posts and comics that criticize community problems far from politics like the unemployment. Other contents criticize the international community as it stands in the Israeli side and finally, entertaining comics that covers Palestinian customs and traditions.

2.6 Social Movements

Social movements can be defined as a group of people or organization that come together for a common cause, those members weather they are people or organizations act and build a collective action in which they aim to change, prevent or support a social goal (Smelser, Turner, & Killian, 2015).

Social Movements can occur both in the individual level or in society level, it's based on the factors of whom it will to change and the level of the required change (Diani, 1992). In early of 1960s, David Aberle classified the types of social movements into four sections that include alternative, revolutionary, reformative and redemptive. An example of alternative type can be the campaign of calling for not using phones while driving within a specific community. The redemptive related to religious movement, best example to be mentioned here is the movement of spreading Christianity in the world. The third type is the reformative type in which movements aims to change some of the aspects of how the community functions while the revolutionary type occurs when the groups call for total change in the political system (Polletta & Jasper, 2001).

The recent raise of social movements as an effective tool of change within communities brought it to an importance stage within social and political life. Social Movements can success or fail but the recent rapid increase and growth of technology helped it to be more efficient (Smelser, Turner, & Killian, 2015). Internet, especially the social network sites including Facebook and twitter have opened a wide space for freedom of expression shaping a gate and source of many social movements, Arab Spring is the best example to be mentioned (Lopes, 2014).

The Palestinian history is rich in term of social movements which were mostly revolutionary. The existence of parties and the situations that Palestinians passed through decreased the efficiency of social movements, this situation started to change after signing the Oslo accords. First wave of social movements were those who call for changing the deal or reform it in a way that guarantee the Palestinian rights (Abu Alian, 2015). The streets were the place of social movements actions before the internet and the growth of technologies specially the SNS took palace. Mesh.hek can be classified as a tool that promote and call for changes in a way that make it part and source of social movements in the same time. The page called Palestinians for many social movements either against Israel or against the Palestinian authority decisions, Mesh.hek is representing the Palestinian community rejection of all kind of security cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians authority, in addition to other several political causes Mesh.hek stood and promoted for several civil cases like the strike of teachers to raise their salaries and the campaign targeting the drivers of public transportation. This actions which Mesh.hek created, organized or help in term of promote put the page and their unknown owners under the lights of both Palestinians and Israel authorities but same time it increased its followers and supporters although it faced several attempts to close it (Mesh.hek , 2017). The success of the social movements in Palestine withdraw big parts of importance from the parties and give more trust and faith to the social movements, the role of parties has decreased while the social movements increased, the first and most important example that can be mentioned is BDS (The Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions Movement), this movement has been emerged in 2005 as a call that gathers the efforts against Israel "Apartheid". The movement gained wide support in Palestine and in the international level and achieved success in all sides (Backman, 2013).

The increasing influence of Mesh.hek developed the fears of investing the freedom of expression through social network sites to create or promote the social movements against the Palestinian and Israeli authorities, this result is the translations of the Palestinian authority attempts to delete the page and find its mangers in accordance with the Israeli efforts to close the Palestinian Facebook pages which promote violence and terrorism according to their opinion (Abu Amer, Palestinians, Israelis face offon Facebook , 2016).

2.7 The Theories Related to This Study

The present study tested and applied tow media theories, these theories are presented in details in the following sections.

2.7.1 Use and Gratification Theory (UG)

The Uses and Gratification Theory (UG) is the theory which depends on the idea of "what do people do with media" (Katz, 1959). Bumgarner (2007) defined UG theory as a theory which describe how media users use it to fulfil and gratify their wants and needs, moreover, it studies what increase the motivation of media users toward their behaviors and the life style that they are choosing and finally what are the consequences result from their use of SNS (Bumgarner, 2007) . Therefore, the UG theory aims to figure out the reasons of the users and audiences decision to use a specific media medium (Ananzeh, Darwesh, & Hijab, 2009).

UG theory can be differentiate from other theories as it studies the audience usage of media, where users choose what they want far from being "A sheep-like mass of receivers' messages" (Hanson, 2011).The users normally choose the medium which guarantee satisfaction for them, therefore, the theory treats users as smart to fulfil their needs in term of choosing the medium and choosing the specific behaviors they

want to come with through the same medium, in other words the theory states the real reason behind the decision of user in term of choosing the medium and the way to use it in a way that fulfil his satisfaction (Joinson, 2008).

Although the UG theory have been studied and applied over all media channels including Radio, TV, Magazines and all other traditional channels, the more importance and attention of researchers is given to the theory to be studied and connected with modern media channels specially the SNS. Ray Born stated that UG theory better to be studied with modern media that use internet as a high level of interaction among users is available (Bryant & Zillman, 2002)

The recent years made the social networks occupying the top of media channels, the growth of internet and technologies related to it provides people with more attracting channels of connection and interaction among people. The new space of interaction and freedom of express and sharing that SNS allow more than any other traditional media maid SNS in top preferred and selected channels for users, this truth linked the UG theory with the current study (Dainton & Zelley, 2015).

The present study shows how activists are preferring the SNS channel more than traditional platforms, those activists and users found out that SNS channels and their applications can fulfill their need and motivations and deliver them enough satisfaction. SNS platforms allow them to share opinions, photos, videos, and all other kind of interaction with other users in a free space, the platforms are different so users also can choose the suitable one according to their need, as one prefer Instagram other one use Facebook more as he or she find it gratify and fulfill their needs of connecting with family and friends for instance (Cummings, 2008). The

admins of Mesh.hek are using Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, they built their decision of choosing to use these platforms for several reason which can be the wide use of it among Palestinians and also the term of privacy that these platforms applying as they want to keep high level of security to their accounts to guarantee being unknown. In the other side, followers of Mesh.hek and those who are interacting with the updates of it choose to do so because what the page is posting about and the way it posts using sarcasm is fitting the need and wishes of followers.

2.7.2 Agenda Setting Theory (AST)

In 1922, Walter Lippmann published a book titled "The Public Opinion", one of the main ideas in the book states that "media helps the audiences to formulate mental images about the events that happen around them" (Hassuona, 2015). In 1968, a study was conducted about the voters in the American election, Donald Shaw and McCombs who conducted this study found out that relations were built between the topics of what media treated as important and what topics were important according to voters (Hanson, 2011). The study of Shaw and McCombs was the first to defined and named the Agenda Setting Theory which has been studied since then in too many studies and researches (Freeland, 2012).

The theory according to Hanson and Freeland assumes that media means to highlight specific topics so audience see that these topics are more important than the other topics which media ignored or gives it less importance, therefore audience will be more affected and interacted with those topics, this assumption basically tell us that media sort out the agenda of what to know and think about (Freeland, 2012). The theory and its use in researches developed and other definition and statement regarding the theory came out, one of these definitions is that the theory states that

"media does not give people the chance to think, but it tells them what to think about" (Baran & Davis, 1994, p. 320). AST basic role is to reshape the events into new form that drive the audienc attention to the topic that they should think about according to agenda that media source want (Freeland, 2012), it also act in a way that shape audience opinion toward specific issue by delivering contents that convice them (Hassuona, 2015).

The researcher in this study chose this theory seeking to know the ability of Mesh.hek as a saracastic media tool which use the space of SNS in setting the agenda of its followers. Mesh.hek political posts are all supporting the resistance in all its kids against israel , moreover, its posts are also targeting the corruption among the Palestinian Authority and attack any kind of cooperation between the Palestinian Authority and Israel. The dayli events provide the page with new topics that can be delivered to its followers in a saracastic way, the rapid growth of the page either in term of followers number, level of interacts with its posts or the reputation of it in the palestinian community helps their manger to gaain support for the agenda they are promoting for eithr in short run influnce or in the lon run. Basically the admins function is selecting certain topics, filtering the contents and give the audience the post and updates that contrupute in setting their agenda.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The third chapter of the study highlights the quantitative methodology and its structures which the researcher used to conduct the study, moreover the chapter contains several titles in which the researcher aimed to explain the research context, population, sample, analysis and data collection.

3.1 Research Methodology

The first idea that we adopted as the decision was taken to conduct the research about this topic is that the methodology of the research will use both quantitative and qualitative in which a questionnaire and interviews will be used. Later on, the researcher faced the reality as most of those whom were asked to interview refused while the rest accepted with a condition of not mentioning their names. The researcher found himself forced to use only the quantitative research due to the previous reason.

The quantitative methodology is different from the qualitative methodology as it basically uses numbers and depends on statistical percentages and figures while qualitative in the other side relay on verbal data (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott, & Davidson, 2002). Through quantitative research, numerical data can be transformed into a useful statistic that can be used to quantify behaviors, opinions and attitudes, moreover it gives results from any small or large sample of population, one more fact is that the quantitative data collection methods which include different forms of

surveys, telephone and face to face interview, systematic observation …etc., are structured more than the qualitative method (Wyse, 2012). Mesh.hek Page on Facebook has 279.620 followers (number of followers was checked in second of June, 2017). The researcher chose the questionnaire survey technique from the quantitative research methodology in order to gather the required information from the followers of the page on Facebook by publishing the online survey link on Facebook. The questionnaire was published in July 2017.

3.2 Research Design

The researcher used the quantitative methodology for the present study, a questionnaire was used as a data collection tool. The questionnaire was prepared online and published to Mesh.hek page so the followers of Mesh.hek can get into the online survey and answer it.

According to the previous statement, the present study is a case study. Case study research method can be defined as an "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used." (Yin, 1984, p. 23). The method of case study enables researchers to explore and test the real-life phenomenon using a limited number of events, individuals or conditions. In other words, the case study method uses a limited number or size of the temporary phenomenon to test and investigate it to come up with results that can be valid for the whale phenomenon (Zainal, 2007).

3.3 Data Collection Method

In this study, a quantitative survey was applied to find out the answer of the research questions. The survey can be described and classified as one of the most important

measurement tool in the applied researches, it can deliver reliable and accurate results in short period of time even if the number of individual or events is big (Glasow, 2005).

The low cost, privacy of respondent and short time needed to collect the required data are advantages that encourage researchers to use survey (Wyse, 2012). The survey link was published on Mesh.hek page on Facebook with an explanation about the content of the online survey and the criteria that respondent must have to answer the questionnaire in addition to the request of answering all the questions. Answering the questionnaire takes 15-20 minutes. The filled questionnaires were analyzed using the computer program Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

An online questionnaire which consist 49 closed - ended questions is the data collection instrument for this study. The questions within the questionnaire were divided in several sections based on the studied theories of Uses and Gratification and the Agenda setting theory.

The first section of the questionnaire includes 6 multiple choices which basically ask general questions about personal information of the participants. In the second section, the researcher questions concentrate on the usage of Facebook, this section includes 7 multiple choices. The second section consists of 4 questions about the use and interaction with social network sites especially Facebook.

The third section which trying to get results related with sarcastic media, Palestinian public opinion and the freedom of express is divided into three parts, the first part consists of 8 multiple choices that can be answered by choosing among (Always,

Sometimes, Rarely, Never). The second part has only 1 question related with situations of arrest and threat by authorities, it can be answered by choosing Yes or No. The third part consists of 10 points using the five-point Likert Scale questions of (strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree), in this part the researcher try to get answers related with the research questions.

The last section is divided into three parts, the first part includes 6 multiple choices related with the interaction with Mesh.hek shared posts, the impression of its followers and the level of influence over follower's political opinion. The second part includes 9 points using the five-point Likert Scale questions of (strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree), regarding the political agenda of Mesh.hek, the mangers of the page and the future of the page. In the third part, the researcher seeks to get a general evaluation with an answers of (Satisfied, no specific feeling, Dissatisfied) for 4 of the general issues related with the study, these issues include the role of social media and sarcastic media in the formation of Palestinian public opinion, the performance of Mesh.hek and finally the freedom of express in Palestine.

3.5 Population and Sample Size

In this study, the researcher targets a population consisting of 279.620 followers (number of followers was checked in second of June, 2017). The previous number includes all Facebook users who follow Mesh.hek page. Using a margin of error of 5% and a confidence level of 95% the required sample size is 384 respondents. The questionnaire was posted on Mesh.hek page on Facebook and was answered by 500 participants. The opinion and data which was collected from the sample will give the results that will reflect the whole population.

3.6 Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

The questionnaire which was published in July 2017 was answered by 500 respondents. The first step was conducting a pilot study among 50 participants, a number that equal to 10% of whale sample size. The 50 participants were chosen as similar as possible to the target population, those participants are Palestinians students at Eastern Mediterranean University who are not following Mesh.hek but aware and follower of other sarcastic pages and accounts in Palestine. After the pilot study, few corrections and changes over the questionnaire were made including a request to answer all the questions. Moreover, the section related to Mesh.hek Facebook page has been added to the questionnaire.

The ready questionnaire was designed and created online through survey monkey web site. One link to access the survey was created and published on Mesh.hek Facebook page by its admin according to our request. The survey was closed to respond when the number of participants reached 500.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of Data Collection Instrument

A pilot study was conducted to determin the vlidity of the study as the researcher mentioned in the previous section.

In this study, the researcher used Cronbach Alpha to test the reliability of the survey questions. The reliability means that operations related with a specific research like the collection data procedures can be repeated and gives the same results. As Alpha coefficient is closer to 1 the reliability is high, in this study Cronbach's Alpha is 0.824 which is concidered acceptebale in social science researches (Vehkalahti, 2000).

Table 1: Reliability statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.824	49

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The fourth chapter of this study presents the analysis of the role of sarcastic media in the formation of the Palestinian public opinion using the Palestinian sarcastic Facebook page of Mesh.hek. The researcher collected the answers of 500 respondents that represent the sample of the study through an online questionnaire. The collected data consisting the answers of 49 questions were analyzed later on through the (SPSS) software, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Software.

The chapter is divided into sections that presents analysis of the collected data, the first part includes the demographical characteristics of the participants. The following sections are divided in a way that delivers an answers for the research questions, these sections are related with level of interaction on Facebook, sarcasm in social network sites, sarcasm and the Palestinian public opinion, freedom of express in Palestine, social movements and finally the part which answer all the questions about Mesh.hek page through several sub sections before we come to the Results part.

4.1 The Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

In this part, six questions were asked to the respondents regarding their demographic characteristics including age, gender, educational level, working place, place of

residents and their political background weather they are member of any Palestinian political party or not.

Table 2: Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	366	73.2	73.6	73.6
	Female	131	26.2	26.4	100.0
	Total	497	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	3	.6		
Total		500	100.0		

The analysis results show that participants in the survey consist of 366 Male and 131 Female making a percentage of 26.2% for Female which equal nearly third of the Male percentage of 73.2%.

Table 3: Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	17-25	266	53.2	53.3	53.3
	26-30	134	26.8	26.9	80.2
	31-35	58	11.6	11.6	91.8
	36+	41	8.2	8.2	100.0
	Total	499	99.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.2		
Total		500	100.0		

More than half of the participants 53.2% (n=266) are in the age between 17 to 25 years while another 26.8% (n=134) participants are between 26-30 years, on the other hand, the percentage of participants over 36 years old is 8.2% (n=41).

The fact which can be seen is that youth are more interested in the pages that use sarcasm in delivering their news and information while old age people are more connected to the old traditional media channels like TV, Radio and Newspaper, moreover, old people prefer the serious classic way of delivering news.

The respondents are distributed into several educational levels, most of them are holding a Bachelor degree 61.8% (n= 309), 17.8% (n= 89) hold a Secondary school certificate or less while 15.6% (n= 78) are holding Master degree and another 3.4% (n=17) are holding doctorate or higher degree. The previous mentioned percentages reflect the reality of the education level and the importance of education in Palestine.

The respondents Place of residence has a perfect distribution in which all the existence areas of Palestinians are covered in an accepted percentage. These areas are not just geographically difference, each place has its own political, social and economic situation that affect their opinion. For instance, Mesh.hek concentrates its posts on criticizing the Palestinian authority in West Bank, this will lead to high percentage of followers from West Bank. The statistics show that 65.0% (n=325) of the respondents live in West Bank while 8.4% (n=42) live in Gaza. The second higher percentage of respondents according to the statistics live in Diaspora 20.4% (n=102). Finally, the minimum percentage of respondents live in the areas which Israel took control over it in 1948 marking 5.8% (n=29).

The working place also marked a significant distribution as all categories are represented in accepted percentage. This distribution guarantees the present of all the community layers within the study. One point deserves to be highlighted in this

question results is the high number of students among the respondents as they shape 38.6% (n=193) from the total number of the participants.

Table 4: Membership in political parties

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	185	37.0	37.3	37.3
	No	311	62.2	62.7	100.0
	Total	496	99.2	100.0	
Missing	System	4	.8		
Total		500	100.0		

It would be more beneficial for the study if the question aimed to know to which political party respondents belong, but such sensitive question might be a reason for the respondents not to complete the questionnaire as they fear to answer this. The statistics up show that 37.0% (n=185) are members of Palestinian political parties while 62.2% (n=311) are independents and has no relations with political parties. This percentage shows a decrease in the popularity of political parties in the recent year.

4.2 Facebook Usage

Through this group of questions, the researcher aims to get an overview about the use of Facebook, its ranking among social networks in term of use in Palestine and the interaction level of respondents with it.

The first sign of the high level of interaction on Facebook is the high percentage of users who prefer to access Facebook through smart phone, this shows that people need and prefer a device that allow them to access anytime in any place which is the phone. 84.4% (n=422) prefer to access Facebook through smart phone while 11.6

(n=58) prefer PC. Other signs that shows the level of interaction on Facebook is the number of friends that users have, in this research, 55.2% (n=276) have between 200- 1000 friends on Facebook.

Table 5: SNS in Palestine

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Facebook	388	77.6	78.5	78.5
	Instagram	43	8.6	8.7	87.2
	Twitter	12	2.4	2.4	89.7
	You Tube	39	7.8	7.9	97.6
	Other	12	2.4	2.4	100.0
	Total	494	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	6	1.2		
Total		500	100.0		

According to Table (5), Facebook is the most preferable social network site with 77.5% (n=388), while Instagram in second place with 8.6% (n=43) and You Tube is third with 7.8% (n=39). This statistic gave the same result of SNS ranking that Palestinian Social Studio Report (2016) mentioned.

The last question regarding the interaction and the use of Facebook examined how often users visit their Facebook accounts a day. The statistics that SPSS gave after analyzing the questionnaire data show that 44.4% (n=222) are visiting their accounts more than 11 times a day while only 2.6% (n=13) don't visit their accounts every day. The results clearly show that participants are attracted to SNS in general and Facebook specially in Palestine and using it become part of their daily life and practices, they are using it for different purposes including entertainment, connecting with others, news source and for spending free time.

4.3 The Use of Sarcastic Media on Facebook

The use of sarcasm in media has a historical root in literature and traditional media channels. The invention of Internet and the wide use of social media networks in the last years shaped a revolution in term of connection between people in all over the world and turned the world into a small village where people can connect and interact with each other without any difficulties. As sarcasm existed in the traditional media channels and literature it also exists in the world of social network sites, the open space of social media made it easy for anyone to create his own place within this world and use it the way he like, sarcasm art and media are heavily existed in the social network sites now a days and attract great number of followers.

In this section the researcher concentrates on the use of sarcasm in Facebook and the level of interaction with the sarcastic contents.

Table 6: The level of interaction with sarcastic pages on Facebook

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	204	40.8	41.0	41.0
	Sometimes	221	44.2	44.5	85.5
	Rarely	46	9.2	9.3	94.8
	Never	26	5.2	5.2	100.0
	Total	497	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	3	.6		
Total		500	100.0		

According to the statistic in the last table, 40.8% (n=204) are always interacting with sarcastic pages on Facebook while other 44.25 (n=221) answered that they sometime interact with it. 5.2% (n= 26) stated that they never interact with sarcastic pages on Facebook.

56

Another question in the questionnaire examined weather participants are interacting with political sarcastic contents in term of like, comment and share. The answer of participants shows noticeable difference between the previous table which tests the interaction with sarcastic pages in general. For instance, in table (7) 26.8% (n=134) answered that they always interact with political sarcastic content while in table (6) 40.8% (n=204) is the percentage of people who always interact with sarcastic pages in general, this lead to a fact that people who are interacting with sarcastic pages in general are not necessarily interact with political sarcasm. This fact might be related to the fears of getting involved in politics and it reflects the low level of freedom of express in Palestine.

Table 7: The level of interaction with political sarcastic contents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	134	26.8	27.0	27.0
	Sometimes	253	50.6	51.0	78.0
	Rarely	72	14.4	14.5	92.5
	Never	37	7.4	7.5	100.0
	Total	496	99.2	100.0	
Missing	System	4	.8		
Total		500	100.0		

One more point that we can notice in table (7) is the high percentage of the participants who answered with "Sometimes", 50,6% (n=253) among participants said that they interact with sarcastic contents sometimes, this mean that there is are specific points that shape the decision of the follower weather to interact with a specific political content or not, these points might include the limits of critic that is used in the content or the fears from authority. In general, this fact reflects the level of frustration that Palestinians reached about the political situation. After testing the

level of interaction with sarcastic political contents, participants answered a question related with sharing sarcastic political contents. This question is different than the last one, in the last one the participants were interacting with a political content which is shared from a page or account while this question examine if participants take a step to be the source which shares a political sarcastic content to other friends and followers.

Table 8: The relationship between gender and the level of interaction with sarcastic pages on Facebook

| | Do you interact with the sarcastic pages on Facebook? | | | | |
	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
Gender Male	147	155	39	22	363
Female	56	64	7	4	131
Total	203	219	46	26	494

The previous cross tabulation studies the relationship between the gender and the level of interaction with sarcastic pages in Facebook. The total number of the males who participated in the study is 363 while females are 131, according to this numbers we see that percentages of interaction with sarcastic pages has no significant differences which can be related to the gender. This shows that males and females are both interacting with sarcastic pages and interested in the political issues, although there are several cases where we can touch the gender issues in the Palestinian community and the social life but still there is no significant cap between the level of using social network sites or interacting with political sarcastic contents between males and females which keep the relation between gender and the interaction with sarcastic contents in the normal level.

Table 9: Sharing a sarcastic content on personal account

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	73	14.6	14.7	14.7
	Sometimes	225	45.0	45.2	59.8
	Rarely	101	20.2	20.3	80.1
	Never	99	19.8	19.9	100.0
	Total	498	99.6	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.4		
	Total	500	100.0		

The results in Table (9) show that very low percentage of 14.6% (n=73) are always sharing a sarcastic political posts, while 45.0% (n=225) answered with "sometimes" and 19.8% (n=99) stated that the never posted a sarcastic political content.

Table 10: Level of trust that participants have toward the sarcastic Facebook pages as a source of information

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	102	20.4	20.5	20.5
	Sometimes	316	63.2	63.5	83.9
	Rarely	64	12.8	12.9	96.8
	Never	16	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	498	99.6	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.4		
	Total	500	100.0		

According to Table (10), 63.2% (n=316) said that they sometimes trust information posted on sarcastic pages, this percentage shows the rational thinking of participants and reflect the fact that there is no specific source either in traditional media or in the modern media that can be trusted 100% so on sarcastic pages on Facebook. Despite the previous mentioned fact, 20.4% (n=102) claimed that they always trust

information posted in sarcastic page while 12.8% (n=64) answered with "Rarely" and 3.2% (n=16) pointed that they never trust information delivered by sarcastic pages. Another sign that shows the level of influence that sarcastic pages have over its followers is weather those followers are responding in positive or negative way to the calls of these pages to protest about a specific case.

Table 11: Joining a protest in respond to a call from a sarcastic page

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Always	53	10.6	10.6	10.6
	Sometimes	185	37.0	37.1	47.7
Valid	Rarely	105	21.0	21.0	68.7
	Never	156	31.2	31.3	100.0
	Total	499	99.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.2		
	Total	500	100.0		

The results on Table (10) shows that the role of sarcastic pages in turning the online calls into a real protest still low as 31% (n=156) never joined any protest after an online call from sarcastic page while very low percentage of 10.6% (n=53) stated that they always respond positively to this calls and 37.0% (n=185) said that they sometimes join.

4.4 Palestinian Public Opinion

In this section of question, the researcher aims to get results that clarify the level of influence that sarcastic media used through social media networks leave over the public opinion and the process of building a personal opinion. Moreover, it provides results related with the freedom of express in Palestine and the fears that users of social networks have from the Palestinian and Israeli authorities. The final part discuss social movements in Palestine and its relation with social media.

60

4.4.1 The Role of Sarcastic Media in the Formation of Public Opinion

The following results are delivering answers related with level of influence that sarcastic media have in building the public opinion or affecting it towards a specific political case in Palestine.

Table 12: Sarcastic pages play role in the formation of the Palestinian public opinion

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	223	44.6	44.7	44.7
	Sometimes	222	44.4	44.5	89.2
	Rarely	36	7.2	7.2	96.4
	Never	18	3.6	3.6	100.0
	Total	499	99.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.2		
	Total	500	100.0		

According to Table (12), participants are highly agreeing with the statement that sarcastic pages has an influence over the public opinion. 44.6% (n=223) said that sarcastic pages always play role in the Palestinian public opinion while very close percentage of 44.4% (n=222) said that this role sometimes exist.

Table 13: Sarcastic political contents play role in building the personal opinion

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	71	14.2	14.3	14.3
	Sometimes	269	53.8	54.2	68.5
	Rarely	98	19.6	19.8	88.3
	Never	58	11.6	11.7	100.0
	Total	496	99.2	100.0	
Missing	System	4	.8		
	Total	500	100.0		

In the previous table, the results related with building the personal opinion toward a

specific political issue depending on a shared sarcastic content on Facebook are stated as follow: 14.2% (n=71) stated that they are always influenced with this contents while 53.8% (n=269) clarified that sometimes they are affected with these contents through building their ideas and opinions toward a political issue.

Table 14: The relationship between adopting the opinion which state the high influence of sarcastic pages and its role in the formation of Palestinian public opinion and the membership in the Palestinian parties

| | | Do you think sarcastic pages can affect the Palestinian public opinion ? | | | | |
		Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
Are you a member of any Palestinian party?	Yes	82	81	12	10	185
	No	138	140	24	8	310
Total		220	221	36	18	495

Table (14) searches the relationship between adopting the opinion which state the high influence of sarcastic pages and its role in the formation of Palestinian public opinion and the membership in the Palestinian parties. There are several political parties in Palestine including Hamas, Fatah, PFLP, DFLP, Islamic Jihad and several other leftist parties and national movements. The authority and PLO are leaded by Fatah while the internal conflict made a division within the Palestinian community in several aspects that resulted with Hamas leading Gaza strip. I chose to study this relation for several reasons, one of these reason is the truth that the page is attacking Fatah as it leading the authority and cooperates in the security issues with Israel, this put Fatah under the heavy critics and attacks. Fatah as we mentioned in chapter 2 took several steps against the page and described the contents of Mesh.hek as a tools that increase the Palestinian Internal division and benefits Israel. This will lead the members of Fatah to adopt the opinion which that sarcastic pages doesn't play any role in the formation of the Palestinian public opinion. In the other side, we find

members of Hamas who support the sarcastic pages including Mesh.hek as it concentrate its critics on Fatah in a way that will influence people to lose trust and shape the Palestinian public opinion against it. Group of PFLP members according to the Palestinian security official spokesman are managing the page, this also affect this relation and the relation between Fatah and PFLP itself, PFLP members and supporters are supporting the page and will agree with the statement that sarcastic political pages like Mesh.hek is playing a positive role in the formation of the Palestinian public opinion, this come from the common principles that PFLP and the mangers of page as its clear in their post contents including the support of arm resistance and the bad view of the Palestinian security cooperation and the corruption among PLO and the Palestinian authority. For security issues Palestinians might hide the truth or ignore any question related with their loyalty or membership in any party, Moreover, Palestinians are affected from the current political situation and the internal conflict in a way that decreased the support and the trust toward the political parties.

The previous table shows that participants weather they are members of political parties or not are in very close percentages when it's come to their opinion in the role of the sarcastic parties in the formation of the Palestinian opinion, this raises another question to be asked and studied weather this influence seen positive or negative where we will face significant difference in the opinions of participants. Among the participants there are (n=278) 55,6% not party members who believe that sarcastic pages play a role in the formation of the Palestinian public opinion while only 6.4% disagreed with the high influence and the role of sarcastic pages. On the other side, there are (n=163) 32.6% of participants who are party members and replied positive

63

to the statement facing (n=22) 4.4% who disagreed with it.

4.4.2 Freedom of Express

The following analysis aim to examine the level of freedom of express in Palestine where people are governed and can be arrested and charged by both Palestinian and Israeli Authorities.

Table 15: Have you ever been threatened due to a shared political content?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Always	63	12.6	12.6	12.6
	Sometimes	164	32.8	32.8	45.4
Valid	Rarely	107	21.4	21.4	66.8
	Never	166	33.2	33.2	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

As we mentioned in chapter 3, Palestinians are facing difficulties and fears as they criticize the authorities or give their opinion in the political events and issue in a way that doesn't support the opinion of the authorities. In this results we are more interested in those who state that they have been threatened due a shared a political content, 12.6% (n=63) said that they always face threats while 32.85% (n=164) answered that they are facing threats sometimes. Both percentages make a total of 45.4% (n=227) of participants who faced threats. This percentage is very high and dangerous and gives a sign of the low level of freedom of express in Palestine.

The online threats are not the only way that authorities are using to face the criticizes and social media activists, the online threats can develop to real threats including security interviews or arresting either by the Palestinian or Israeli authorities.

Table 16: Have you ever been arrested by Palestinian or Israeli authorities due to a shared political content ?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	107	21.4	21.4	21.4
	No	393	78.4	78.6	100.0
	Total	499	99.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.2		
Total		500	100.0		

According to Table (16), 21.4% (n=107) have been arrested by either the Palestinian or Israeli authorities due to a shared political opinion, this percentage is very high and shapes a real threat for the freedom of express in Palestine. Moreover, it harms the basic rights of Palestinians and gives a general overview of the low level of freedoms and the absence of democracy.

Table 17: Media is a main player in the formation of the Palestinian public opinion

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	198	39.6	39.6	39.6
	Agree	242	48.4	48.4	88.0
	Undecided	38	7.6	7.6	95.6
	Disagree	16	3.2	3.2	98.8
	Strongly Disagree	6	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Table (17) shows the participants opinion towards the statement which say that media is a main player is the formation of the Palestinian public opinion. Few participants 4.4% (n=22) shape the total of whom disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement while 7.65 (n=38) don't have specific opinion toward the statement. On the other hand, a total percentage of 88% (n=440) support it.

Table 18: The Palestinian internal conflict divided the Palestinian public opinion toward the political issues

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	129	25.8	26.0	26.0
	Agree	279	55.8	56.1	82.1
	Undecided	76	15.2	15.3	97.4
	Disagree	12	2.4	2.4	99.8
	Strongly Disagree	1	.2	.2	100.0
	Total	497	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	3	.6		
	Total	500	100.0		

Table (18) shows a significant difference between participants who agreed and disagreed with statement. 81.6% (n=408) is total number of participants who agree and strongly agree with the previous mentioned statement. The statistics are reflecting the reality as each side of the internal conflict has his own political agenda and program, and Palestinians who are divided over the political agenda have different paths that shape the political opinion. This reality raised the fears of PA over the social media role in the formation of the Palestinian public opinion. 44.8% (n=224) of participants strongly agreed that Palestinian Authority fears the role of media and 38.2% (n=191) agree with the same statement (Table 19).

Table 19: PA fears the influence of SNS over the Palestinian public opinion

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	224	44.8	44.8	44.8
	Agree	191	38.2	38.2	83.0
	Undecided	73	14.6	14.6	97.6
	Disagree	9	1.8	1.8	99.4
	Strongly Disagree	3	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Participants in the study support the statement which says that Palestinian activists use social media networks to influence the public opinion. This seems rational as each person deliver his political opinion through social network sites seeks to influence others and gain their support. This influence is not just over the Palestinian public opinion but it also targets the Israeli public opinion and the international public opinion in a way that support the Palestinian rights of independence and freedom. To examine this influence, the researcher asked a question in which the influence of social media can be tested. For this aim, the researcher asked if social media networks influenced the voter choices in the universities election. 73% (n=365) is the total number of participants who answered with agree and strongly agree for the previous statement (Table 20).

Table 20: Social network sites influenced voters choices in the recent universities election and local councils and affected the results

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	116	23.2	23.2	23.2
	Agree	249	49.8	49.8	73.0
	Undecided	116	23.2	23.2	96.2
	Disagree	18	3.6	3.6	99.8
	Strongly Disagree	1	.2	.2	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

The study aimed to find out participant's general evaluation of the freedom of express in Palestine, for this, the researcher asked participants to give their opinion over the statement which say that Palestinians enjoy high level of freedom of express. The following table shows that 60.6% (n=303) replied in negative way to the statement as they disagree and strongly disagree with it. This percentage again gives a sign of the low level of freedom of express in Palestine.

Table 21: Palestinians enjoy high level of freedom of express

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	61	12.2	12.2	12.2
Agree	78	15.6	15.6	27.8
Undecided	58	11.6	11.6	39.4
Valid Disagree	154	30.8	30.8	70.2
Strongly Disagree	149	29.8	29.8	100.0
Total	500	100.0	100.0	

The previous table shows the participants ideas and evaluation about the freedom of express but this evaluation might be different from a place of residence to another due to several reasons including the rolling party as the internal conflict divided the Palestinian community and affect all the aspects of unity.

Table 22: The relationship between the freedom of express and the place of residences

		Palestinians enjoy high level of freedom of express.					
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Place of Residence	West Bank	37	54	28	102	104	325
	Gaza	7	6	9	13	7	42
	48-Pal	2	2	3	9	13	29
	Diaspora	15	16	18	30	23	102
Total		61	78	58	154	147	498

The previous cross tabulation shows the relationship between the freedom of express and the place of residence. In chapter 2, the research talked about the internal conflict between Hamas and Fatah and the result of this conflict over the Palestinian political and social life, both sides of the conflicts have been using different kind of policies

and strategies against each other within their conflict, these acts affected the normal life and forced changes over Palestinians including the dissatisfaction about the current political situation which will be discussed through the next cross tabulation. One of the policies that sides of the conflict are using is arresting people for their political background and their opinions. The percentage of this policy is different from Gaza where Hamas rule and West bank where Fatah leads the authority and PLO, among 42 participants from Gaza there are (n=13) 30% agreed that Palestinian enjoy high level of freedom of express while (n=20) 46.5% are dissatisfied. One the other side where the Palestinian authority which signed several human rights treaties and included the principles that protect the freedom of express in the Palestinian constitution is facing critics about the human rights issues, among 325 participants from West Bank there are (n=82) 25% who are satisfied with the level of freedom of express and (n= 206) 63% who are dissatisfied about the freedom of express.

Table 23: The relationship between the place of residences and the level of satisfaction about the current political situation

| | | Palestinians are satisfied about the current political situation. | | | | | |
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Place of Residence	West Bank	19	64	37	75	130	325
	Gaza	3	12	4	3	20	42
	48-Pal	3	7	4	1	14	29
	Diaspora	5	28	11	16	41	101
Total		30	111	56	95	205	497

Table (23) shows the relation between the place of residences and the level of satisfaction about the current political situation. 35.7% of participants from West Bank agreed with the statement while 54% are not satisfied about the current

political situation, it have to be mentioned here that Gaza is under siege since the beginning of the internal conflict where people are facing hard conditions that affects the main life aspects like electric and freedom of transportation in which all influenced the level of satisfaction about the current political situation. In West Bank, the percentage of participants who are satisfied with current political situation is 25.6% while 63% are expressing their dissatisfaction about it. In general, Palestinians are dissatisfied with the current political situation in what seems to be natural as there is no results or improvement in the negotiations with Israel in addition to the internal political conflict that kill the possibility of holding election and shaping any unity government.

4.4.3 Social Movements in Palestine

Social movements consist of group of individuals or organizations that gather together protesting a specific issue. Social Media sites are the best place to call for these protests and promote the ideas of the social movements to raise the awareness of people and community and encourage more people to join it.

Table 24: Palestinians use social media to create and launch social movements

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Agree	62	12.4	12.4	12.4
	Agree	286	57.2	57.2	69.6
	Undecided	111	22.2	22.2	91.8
Valid	Disagree	35	7.0	7.0	98.8
	Strongly Disagree	6	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Table (24) clarifies a significant difference between participants who agree and those

who disagree with the statement. 57.2% (n=286) of participants agree that Palestinians use social media to create and launch social movements while 7.0% (n=35) disagree and another 22.2 % (n=111) don't have specific feeling or opinion toward the statement so they choose "Undecided".

BDS (The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions), is one of the most important and famous social movement in Palestine. The movement aims to end the international support for the Israeli oppression of Palestinians. BDS now is one of the most affective global social movements as it has branches in most of the world countries and activists from different countries who participated in gaining success in many cases regarding the boycott of Israel.

Table 25: BDS is a social movement that has changed the international public opinion toward the conflict and achieved success in several spheres

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	113	22.6	22.7	22.7
	Agree	174	34.8	34.9	57.6
	Undecided	192	38.4	38.6	96.2
	Disagree	10	2.0	2.0	98.2
	Strongly Disagree	9	1.8	1.8	100.0
	Total	498	99.6	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.4		
	Total	500	100.0		

In Table (25), we can see that very low percentage of participants replied negatively to the statement as the total percentage of those who either disagree or strongly disagree with the statement is 3.8% (n=19) while on the other side, we clearly see that the highest percentage of participants replied positively to the statement as the

total percentage of those who agree and strongly agree is 73.2% (n= 366). This result supports the hypothesis within the statement which claimed that BDS gained several success and aims that changes the international public opinion towards Israel and gathered more support for the Palestinian cause and rights.

4.4.4 The Current Political Situation in Palestine

Many factors and facts shape the level of satisfaction that Palestinians have about the current political situation. In the internal level, Palestinians are divided mainly into tow political programs, one program believe in the peaceful solution and adopt negotiation as tool to gain this peace while the other side believe that the Palestinian rights can be gained only by powers and they adopt the arm resistance to gain their aims. This division in the political programs in addition to other reasons developed the conflict between the two sides following the Palestinian parliamentary elections of 2006. Externally, Palestinians in West Bank under the control of the Palestinian authority suffer from the fail of negotiation while other in Gaza have different kind of suffer resulted from the long years of siege. This fact drives Palestinians to feel frustration toward the political situation.

Table 26: Palestinians are satisfied about the current political situation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	30	6.0	6.0	6.0
	Agree	111	22.2	22.2	28.3
	Undecided	56	11.2	11.2	39.5
	Disagree	95	19.0	19.0	58.5
	Strongly Disagree	207	41.4	41.5	100.0
	Total	499	99.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.2		
	Total	500	100.0		

Table (26) shows that 41.4% (n=207) are against the statement and show unsatisfied level as they answer with "strongly disagree" in addition to another 19.05 (n=95) whom also answered negatively to the statement by "disagree" making a total of 60.4% (n=302) of participants who are not satisfied about the current political situation.

4.5 Mesh.hek

This section of analysis consists of different parts that all related with the case study of Mesh.hek. Within this parts, the researcher is analyzing results of questions related with the level of interaction with Mesh.hek, the credibility of information shared on the page, the political agenda which Mesh.hek adopts, the role of Mesh.hek is shaping the public opinion and finally the way that admins are managing the page.

4.5.1 The level of Interaction with Mesh.hek

The researcher asked several questions through the online survey that aim to provide a clear result about the level of interaction between followers of Mesh.hek and its sarcastic contents.

Table 27: How often do you visit Mesh.hek page?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Not every day	95	19.0	19.0	19.0
	Once a day	128	25.6	25.6	44.6
Valid	Twice a day	47	9.4	9.4	54.0
	More than twice a day	230	46.0	46.0	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Table (27) clarifies the level of interaction with Mesh.hek page depending on how often followers are visiting the page. The results show that only 19.0% (n=95) of the total number of the participants don't visit the page every day. One the other hand,

we see that 46.0% (n=230) of participants are visiting the page more than twice a day in addition to 25.6% of participants who visit the page once a day and 9.4% who visit it twice a day. The summary of this statistics show that 81% (n=405) are visiting Mesh.hek page every day. This high percentage gives positive sign about the level of interaction with Mesh.hek, moreover, it shows that followers of the page are interested with its posts and seek to know the page updates in a continuous way.

Table 28: How often do you interact (like, comment, share) on Mesh.hek posts?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Always	157	31.4	31.4	31.4
	Sometimes	206	41.2	41.2	72.6
Valid	Rarely	78	15.6	15.6	88.2
	Never	59	11.8	11.8	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

In the previous table, the researcher examined the level of interaction with Mesh.hek posts by pressing like, commenting on a content or share it. The results show that 31.4% (n=157) of participants always interact while 41.2% (n=206) of participants interacting sometimes with the shared content. One the other hand, 11.8% (n=59) of participants never interacted with Mesh.hek post although they are following it. Another way of testing the interaction with the page is by finding weather followers suggest the page for others or no, the following table clarifies this.

Table 29: Have you ever recommended Mesh.hek to other person?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Always	146	29.2	29.2	29.2
	Sometimes	224	44.8	44.8	74.0
Valid	Rarely	60	12.0	12.0	86.0
	Never	70	14.0	14.0	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

According to Table (29), 29.2% (n=146) of participants said that they always recommend the page to others in addition to 44.8% (n=224) of participants who stated that sometimes they recommend the page. This result is another sign of the high level of interaction with the shared posts of the page. In the previous three questions we examined the interaction with the page online, our next step in testing the influence of the page is testing weather participants interact and discuss issues shared on the page in the real life.

Table 30: Have you ever discussed about Mesh.hek with others in real life?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	129	25.8	25.8	25.8
	Sometimes	219	43.8	43.8	69.6
	Rarely	93	18.6	18.6	88.2
	Never	59	11.8	11.8	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Discussing topics and information posted in Mesh.hek in the real life gives another sign of the level of influence that Mesh.hek has. Followers of the page transfer their discussion about the shared contents of the page into the real life in a way that fulfill the aims of the page by spreading its message to wider number of people. 25.8% (n=129) of participants said that they always discuss the topics which is shared on the page into the real life, another 43.8% (n= 219) said that they sometimes do while another 11.8% (n=59) claimed that they never discussed these shared contents in the real life.

Table 31: Do you trust the information and news posted on Mesh.hek?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	268	53.6	53.6	53.6
	Sometimes	185	37.0	37.0	90.6
	Rarely	35	7.0	7.0	97.6
	Never	12	2.4	2.4	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

According to Table (31), 53.6% (n=268) of participants trust the information posted in Mesh.hek always in addition to 37.0% (n=185) of participants who sometimes trust that information. On the other side, only 2.4% (n=12) of participants said that they never trust information shared on Mesh.hek. The previous statistic shows that followers have big trust in Mesh.hek which gained this level of trust due to its polices of sharing information after making sure about it from different sources as it mentioned before in the literature review.

Table 32: Do you like the sarcastic way which Mesh.hek uses?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	323	64.6	64.7	64.7
	Sometimes	142	28.4	28.5	93.2
	Rarely	28	5.6	5.6	98.8
	Never	6	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	499	99.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.2		
	Total	500	100.0		

Table (32) shows the results related with the fact of weather followers of Mesh.hek like or dislike the sarcastic way that Mesh.hek uses in its shared contents. The result shows that 64.6% (n=323) of participants always like this way in addition to another 28.4% (n=142) of participants who stated that they sometimes like the page sarcastic

way. This numbers and percentages support the hypothesis that followers follow Mesh.hek for its sarcastic way, moreover, it's also support the idea that political sarcasm used by the page is accepted in the Palestinian community.

4.5.2 The Political Agenda of Mesh.hek

A fast view on Mesh.hek page by any Palestinian or an expert of Palestinian politics gives an impression that the page has specific political agenda that managers follow and shared their posts in accords. In general, Mesh.hek posts target the Israeli authority, the Palestinian authority, the political and economic corruption. On the other side, Mesh.hek supports the resistance acts against Israel.

Table 33: Mesh.hek criticizes one side of the internal conflict more than the other

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	120	24.0	24.0	24.0
	Agree	174	34.8	34.8	58.8
	Undecided	93	18.6	18.6	77.4
	Disagree	99	19.8	19.8	97.2
	Strongly Disagree	14	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

According to Table (33), participants support the statement that Mesh.hek criticize one side of the conflict more than the other. The total percentage of participants who agree and strongly agree with the statement is 58.8% (n=294) while on the other side, the total percentage of participants who disagree and strongly disagree is 22.6% (n=113), the static shows significant difference between supporters of the statement and the Opponents.

Table 34: There is a political message and agenda within the sarcastic
political posts of Mesh.hek

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	161	32.2	32.2	32.2
	Agree	189	37.8	37.8	70.0
	Undecided	75	15.0	15.0	85.0
	Disagree	58	11.6	11.6	96.6
	Strongly Disagree	17	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

In the previous table, participants answered in positive way to the statement which clarifies that Mesh.hek has a political agenda. A total of 70% (n=350) of participants supported the statement by answering with agree and strongly agree while 15% (n=75) answered negatively stating that Mesh.hek has no political agenda.

Table 35: Mesh.hek posts attack the corrupted figures

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	197	39.4	39.4	39.4
	Agree	186	37.2	37.2	76.6
	Undecided	98	19.6	19.6	96.2
	Disagree	13	2.6	2.6	98.8
	Strongly Disagree	6	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

This is another sign of the exist of political agenda that mange Mesh.hek shared contents and way of dealing with information in which political and economic corrupted figures are continuous topic of criticize and attack. 76.6% (n=383) of participants replied to the statement using agree and strongly agree options in a way that support the statement while only 3.8% (n=19) of participants replied against the

statement using both disagree and strongly disagree options and the rest of 19.6%

(n=98) of participants have no decision towards the statement.

Table 36: Mesh.hek posts influenced me and affected my political opinion

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	85	17.0	17.0	17.0
	Agree	207	41.4	41.4	58.4
	Undecided	125	25.0	25.0	83.4
	Disagree	71	14.2	14.2	97.6
	Strongly Disagree	12	2.4	2.4	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

The contents of Mesh.hek influence follower's opinion toward the political issues by using the previous mentioned tools of targeting corrupted economic and political figures and apply a specific political agenda. In the previous table, the participants are expressing their opinion about the level of influence that Mesh.hek shared contents has over receivers. According to table (32), 17.0% (n=85) of participants said that they strongly agree that Mesh.hek posts influence them while other 41.4% (n=207) of participants stated that they agree. One the other side, a total of 16.6% (n=83) of participants responded to this question with both disagree and strongly disagree options which basically means that they don't see that Mesh.hek posts are influencing them. The rest of participants consisting of 25.0% (125) of participants have no decision towards the statement.

Table 37: Mesh.hek aims to raise the awareness level of Palestinians toward
their political issues

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	240	48.0	48.0	48.0
	Agree	178	35.6	35.6	83.6
	Undecided	70	14.0	14.0	97.6
	Disagree	7	1.4	1.4	99.0
	Strongly Disagree	5	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

There is a significant result in table (37) shows that most followers of Mesh.hek see that the page aims to raise their awareness toward the political issues. In table (33) a total percentage of 83.6% (n=418) of participants clarified their positive position towards the statement by using agree and strongly agree options.

Analyzing the results of the previous tables raised a few facts including the fact that Mesh.hek has a specific agenda which admins work accords, this agenda put in top of its duties targeting the corrupted political and economic figures and adopts the arm resistance. Analysis shows that a total percentage of 83.0% (n=415) of participants see that mesh.hek has a national political agenda as its posts raise the awareness of Palestinians towards their political issues through supporting the resistance.

4.5.3 The Management of Mesh.hek

Followers of Mesh.hek are divided over many issues related with the page, one of the issues that both supporters and opponents agree about regarding the page is the professional management which delivers the contents through professional graphic designs and keep updating followers with news and information through its sarcastic style all over the day, moreover, its ability to relaunch the page and open alternative one when the page faced blocking from the Facebook company.

Table 38: Mesh.hek is managed by a professional group of admins

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Vali d	Strongly Agree	227	45.4	45.4	45.4
	Agree	146	29.2	29.2	74.6
	Undecided	102	20.4	20.4	95.0
	Disagree	22	4.4	4.4	99.4
	Strongly Disagree	3	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

According to table (38), 74% (n=337) of participants agreed and strongly agreed with the statement which stated that Mesh.hek is managed by professional group of admins. On the other hand, only 55 (n= 25) of participants replied against the statement. One more fact that makes Mesh.hek different from any other sarcastic political page in Palestine is managing it by unknown group of admins who were successful in hiding their identities since creating the page in 2013.

4.6 Results

In this part, the researcher is highlighting the major results of studying the role of sarcastic media in the formation of the public opinion toward the political issue in Palestine using the case study of Mesh.hek. These major results summaries the analysis After commenting on the tables in the previous parts.

- The research was conducted using the opinion of 500 followers of Mesh.hek Facebook page. The participants of this study consist of 73.2% males and 26.2% females. In general, most of the participants are educated youths who are living in different geographic areas in Palestine and diaspora and working for governmental, private, international and foreigner institutions while the biggest part of them 38.6% (n=193) are students. Among the participants there are 37.05

(n=185) who are members of Palestinian political parties while 62.2 (n=311) are independents and have no political loyalty for any political party. This differences that participants have in term of gender, age, education level, working place, place of residence and political loyalty guarantee that the survey covered all the community and follower's layers.

- Facebook is the most important and popular social network in Palestine, most Palestinians prefer smart phones to access their Facebook accounts. 44.4% (n=22) of the total participants are visiting their Facebook accounts more than 11 times per day.

- There is a high level of interaction with sarcastic pages on Facebook, 40.8% (n=204) are always interacting in addition to 44.25 (n=221) who are interacting sometimes with it. Interacting with political sarcasm also has a high level as 26.8% (n=134) of participants are always interacting with sarcastic contents and another 50,6% (n=253) are sometimes do.

- Sarcastic pages on social media networks are trusted source of information. 63.2% (n=316) of participants said that they sometimes trust sarcastic pages as a source of information in addition to 20.4% (n=102) who claimed that they always trust it.

- Sarcastic pages influence the public opinion. A percentage of 44.6% of the participants said that sarcastic pages always affected the public opinion while 44.4% said it sometimes leave an affection. 50.4% of participants evaluated the

role of sarcastic media in the formation of public opinion in Palestine with satisfaction, while only 10.8% gave dissatisfaction evaluation.

- The level of Freedom of express in Palestine is very low. Threating and arresting are tools used by Palestinian and Israeli authorities to ban people from giving opinion that criticize authorities. The result of the general evaluation about the freedom of express in Palestine shows that 63.8% of participants are dissatisfied about the level of freedom of express.

- 60.4% of participants are not satisfied with current political situation. This result back to the failing of negotiations that started since 1993 without reaching a final solution to the issue.

- There is a high level of interaction with the shared sarcastic political contents of Mesh.hek. 72.6% of participants gave positive answers replying to a question related with the level of interaction with Mesh.hek contents.

- Mesh.hek is a trusted source of information as 53.6% (n=268) stated their full trust of its contents while another 37.0% (n=185) clarified that they sometimes trust it.

- The sarcastic way that Mesh.hek uses in delivering its shared posts is popular, attractive and accepted within the Palestinian community. 64.6% (n=323) of participants said that they always like the sarcastic way of Mesh.hek while in addition to 28.4% (n=142) of participants who stated that they sometimes like it.

- Mesh.hek has a specific political agenda that organize and decide their shared contents and opinions. 70% (n=350) of participants see that Mesh.hek has a political agenda while other 15% (n=75) of participants claimed that it doesn't work according to any political agenda.

  1- 58.8% of participants see that Mesh.hek criticizes one side of the Palestinian internal conflict more than the other side which is rarely criticized.
  2- 76.6% of participants sees that Mesh.hek targets corrupted economic and political figures.

- Mesh.hek shared contents influenced the personal opinion of followers and so the public opinion. 58.4% of participants agreed with this statement while 16.6% of participants disagreed with it.

- 83.6% of participants think that Mesh.hek political shared contents raise the awareness of Palestinians towards their political issues, while only 2.4% of participants think opposite.

- Mesh.hek is managed by a professional group of admins who gained significant success in building specific sarcastic style for the page. Moreover, the team of Mesh.hek gained another success in term of keeping their identities unknown since the creation of the page in 2013. 74% (n=337) of participants are satisfied with management way of the page and the professional level of admins while only 5% of participants showed negative opinion toward this statement.

- The overall evaluation of Mesh.hek performance shows that 81.2% of

participants are satisfied, while 3.6% of participants said that they are not satisfied with its general performance.

The previous results will be used in answering the research questions in the following chapter.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study of the role of the sarcastic media in the formation of the public opinion toward the political issues in Palestine using the case study of Mesh.hek page on Facebook. The chapter includes a summary of the study, conclusion of the study and the recommendations for further researches.

5.1 Summary of the Study

This study uses Mesh.hek Facebook page as a case study for the role of sarcastic media in the formation of the public opinion toward the political issues in Palestine. The study aims to find out the level of sarcastic media role by analyzing the answers of the online survey. These analyses include the level of interaction with the sarcastic pages on social media, the level of influence that the shared contents of these pages have over the personal and public opinion, freedom of express, social movements, and the conditions related with the current political situation in Palestine. The results of this analysis helped to answer the research questions in chapter 1. This study considered important as it's the first of its kind in Palestine.

The study was conducted by quantitative methodology. The researcher created an online survey which consists of 49 questions that cover all sides of the study. The online survey was answered by 500 participants. The data collected through the survey were entered and analyzed by SPSS software.

The study shows the important role of sarcastic media in the formation of the public opinion in Palestine. Moreover, the study searched about the factors which participate and influence the process of building the public opinion. According to the study, Palestinians are suffering from the low level of freedom of express and the current political situation. Mesh.hek page uses sarcasm in delivering its messages to the followers according to specific political agenda that support any act against Israel and corruption within the Palestinian Authority.

The interaction with the shared sarcastic political contents on Mesh.hek is high, followers of the page discuss the topics of the page in the real life and suggested the page for others. This wouldn't happen if the followers don't trust Mesh.hek as a source of information and data, followers also know that Mesh.hek promote a specific political agenda that support any kind of resistance against Israel. Finally, there is no doubt that Mesh.hek is managed by a professional team.

5.2 Conclusions Drawn from the Study

The questions of the survey and the analysis which the researcher conducted in the previous chapter aimed to provide answers for the research questions listed in chapter 1. The analysis and results of the present study has main aim of finding the amount of influence and role that sarcastic media has in the formation of the public opinion in Palestine, all the questions were prepared to deliver answers that help and shape the final result that clarifies the role of sarcastic media and its limits of influence. The following part is discussing the research questions of the study and applying the theoretical framework of Uses and Gratification Theory and the Setting Agenda Theory.

RQ. 1 What is the level of interaction and use of social network sites in Palestine?

The use of social network sites shapes an important part of the Palestinians daily practices. The need for keeping updated with news and events in a country that suffers a continuous conflict with Israel and an internal conflict drove Palestinians to give up the traditional media channels and depend on the fast modern media in which they can log in through several devices like smart phones which allow users to access social networks and online media where ever they are in any time they want through Internet connection. The results of the study supported with other previous studies show a high level use of social media sites in Palestine, in top of these sites is Facebook followed with Instagram, You Tube, Twitter, … etc. The level of interaction with social networks sites in Palestine is very high, results show that 44.4% from the participants in the present study are visiting their Facebook accounts more than 11 times a day. In the recent years, Palestinians have started to use social network sites for purposes other than the social connections, among these uses is expressing their opinion towards the political issues, this wouldn't occur the same level its now if Palestinians are satisfied with the current political situation, the result shown in table 22 (chapter 4) clarified that 60.4% of Palestinians are not satisfied with the current political situation, this dissatisfaction related to the internal Palestinian conflict and the failing of reaching a final solution for the Palestinian – Israeli conflict. There is an exceptional situation in Palestine, the conflict going on and the news are heavy and rapid; actions, events, operations, protests and clashes are taking place all the time, therefore, Palestinians are in need to be updated with all news related with these events. The best way to fulfil this need is using social network sites as a fast source of news. Another fact related with the high level of use

and interaction with social network sites is the difficulties that Palestinians have in connecting each other in the real life, check points, settlements and the siege of Gaza forbid Palestinians from practicing the normal life, this situation drove them to compensate this problem by using social network sites.

RQ. 2 What are the limits of influence that sarcastic media used through social

network sites can play to drive the public opinion in Palestine?

The Palestinians interaction about the political issues on social media networks specially Facebook increased in rapid way in accords with the state of political frustration which resulted from the absence of elections since 2006 and the failing of all attempts to solve the internal conflict between Hamas and Fatah in addition to the continuous Israeli operations against Palestinians. Palestinian activists and political pages turned to use sarcasm in criticizing the whale political situation, in this period many sarcastic activists and pages gained success in attracting Palestinians to follow them. The level of interaction with the sarcastic political contents increased and the level of influence that these pages left over Palestinians increased in conjunction. Table 11 (chapter 4) shows that 89.2% stated that sarcastic media play role in the formation of the Palestinian public opinion.

RQ. 3 How social network sites can shape social movements and take the historical

role that the Palestinian political parties were playing before?

The influence of sarcastic political pages over followers participates in the formation of building their personal opinion and so the public opinion, this influence leads for more steps from the followers, these steps might include joining an online campaign

or responding to a call for a protest. The followers of the Palestinian sarcastic pages see their attempts to create and launch social movements by promoting an opinion or idea that followed with an online call to protest. The results of table 20 (chapter4) stated that 69.6% agreed that The influence of social networks and the political sarcastic pages over the Palestinian community drove the attention of the Palestinian and Israeli authorities. The influence of the sarcastic political pages over the Palestinian opinion is very high, results in table 12 (chapter4) clarifies that 53.8% of participants in the study stated that sarcastic political contents sometimes play role in the formation of their opinion.

RQ. 4 Do Palestinians enjoy high level of freedom of express?

The authorities use several ways to decrease the influence of social network sites and the political sarcasm and discourage people from expressing their opinions. Arresting and threatening people for their shared political opinion on social media is violation of the human rights. Table 19 (chapter4) shows that 60.6% stated that the level of freedom of express is low.

RQ. 5 Is the current Palestinian political situation gives media more space to affect and influence Palestinian public opinion?

Media is one of the most important and affective players in the formation of the Palestinian public opinion. The absence of elections and single leadership due to the internal division opened the way for media to increase its influence over the Palestinians public opinion. The ability of the authorities to control the traditional media channels and decide their agenda seems useless as Palestinians find their way

to express their political opinion and build strong public opinion through social media networks where any person can easily open free account and express his opinion. According to table 15 (chapter 4) 88.0% think that media play important role in the formation of the Palestinian public opinion

RQ. 6 What is the level of interaction with the shared materials on Mesh.hek?

Mesh.hek is Palestinian popular political sarcastic page on Facebook, the page has high level of interaction from more than 270.000 followers, those followers interact with the page sarcastic shared contents and recommend the page to other people. Moreover, they have high level of trust about the information shared on it, table 27 (chapter4) shows that 53.6% of participants in the study said that they always trust the shared posts in addition to 37.0% who stated that they sometimes trust it.

RQ. 7 How Palestinian people see and evaluate Mesh.hek limits of influence?

Followers of Mesh.hek are influenced with the sarcastic political shared materials, the study results in table 32 (chapter 4) show that 58.4% of participants agreed that Mesh.hek posts influenced their opinion toward the political issues.

RQ. 8 What are the aims and agenda of Mesh.hek?

The biggest factor that makes Mesh.hek this much popular in Palestine is the sarcastic style they use in posting their contents, statistic in table 28 (chapter 4) stated that 64.6% of the participants always like the sarcastic way that Mesh.hek uses. In addition to its sarcastic style, people are attractive to the page due the feeling that

Mesh.hek deliver and promote a national agenda; the page supports all kind of resistance and raise the level of awareness toward the political issues, it's also target and criticize the relation between the Palestinians authority and Israel specially the security cooperation, moreover, Mesh.hek targets political and economic corruption and criticize social bad traditions.

RQ. 9 What are the reasons behind keeping the admins of Mesh.hek unknown?

 Mesh.hek is managed by a professional team of unknown admins who gained success in keeping their identities unknown so they can continue working on the page and avoid themselves from getting arrested in addition to enjoy wide freedom that allow them to criticize any one including the Palestinian presidents in their sarcastic posts without fears.

The theoretical frame of the present study includes Uses and Gratification Theory and the Agenda Setting Theory. This part shows how these theories were applied on the study. The users of social network sites enjoy high level of freedom in term of expressing their opinion, the free open networks allow anyone to fulfil his needs of sharing and expressing all kind of data and information. Moreover, the users are choosing the network that fulfill their needs, for instance, most people prefer Facebook because of its popularity, features, characteristic, advantages and the wide use. This decision that they take provide them with high level of satisfaction. One the other hand, if we apply the theory on Mesh.hek we see that there was a reason behind choosing to share their posts through Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. They

concentrate on Facebook more than any other social network site because it fills their needs and aims to reach the highest number of followers.

Mesh.hek posts are chosen and designed in a way that gains the attention and interest of followers and cover there need of political news and information in a sarcastic style. One the other side, followers of Mesh.hek choose to follow the page and interact with it due to their need of getting updated with political news and information that might be not available in other places as other places have no enough courage to talk about these topics, moreover, the state of frustration from the political situation lead people to search for sources that deliver sarcasm not serious news and same way provides fun and entertainment which will decrease the frustration level. In general, followers of Mesh.hek follow and interact with the page because what the page is posting about and the way it posts using sarcasm is fitting the need and wishes of followers.

The researcher chose to apply the Agenda Setting Theory over this study to examine the ability of Mesh.hek in setting the agenda of its followers through social media sites. In general, Mesh.hek sarcastic political posts support the palestinian resistance and target the Palestinain authority for its relation and cooperation with Israel. Moreover, the shared contents of mesh.hek aim to improve the level of political awarness of the plaestinians by concentrating on specific topics that will increase their belive the resistance. Its clear for followers that Mesh.hek shared posts support any action or events against Israel and the palestinian authority, the admins are selecting topics carfully to support their agenda and promote their ideas whiel in same time they are posting contents that decreas popularity and support for the Palestinian authority.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research

The present study searches on the role of sarcastic media in the formation of the Palestinian public opinion toward the political issues. The study uses the Facebook page of Mesh.hek as a case study, it's also cover several topics related to the main subject including the social movements and the freedom of express. The recent development of internet and technologies and the wide use of social media networks in our daily life increased the focus on the topics and subjects related to them. There is lack of studies that discuss the role of sarcastic media in the formation of public opinion in all countries therefore I recommend future researchers to undertake researches in the same field.

Further studies should be conducted using cases from different social media sites and compare these cases together. Moreover, the role of sarcastic media in the formation of public opinion toward the social issues should be conducted. Regarding the methodology and the research instrument, further studies should be conducted depending on the analysis of interviews with activists and pages mangers. Another recommendation studies might include studying the social movements, the online camping, the freedom of express on social media websites in Palestine.

The researcher suggests that Palestinian sarcastic pages and activists should create English pages in which they can deliver their political sarcasm to the international level so they participate in introducing the Palestinian cause, Moreover, this will help the Palestinian who don't speak Arabic and live in diaspora since they porn to understand the situation in Palestine.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A : Questionnaire

Dear Participants,

I am a Master student at the Communication and Media Studies Faculty – EMU. I am conducting a research on "**The Role of Sarcastic Media in the Formation of the Palestinian Public Opinion; Case Study of "Mesh.hek" Facebook Page**". This questionnaire is meant to gather information for my research. I kindly request your cooperation in filling out the questionnaire and greatly appreciate the time you spent. All the given information will be treated as confidential; and will be used only for academic purpose. Your anonymity is guaranteed. Thank you.

Hatem Dawabsha

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First: General Information

1-Gender:

a) M   b) F

2- Age:

a)17-25   b)26-30   c) 31-35   d)36+

3- What is the highest level of education you have completed?

a) Secondary school or less   b) BA   C) Master   d) PHD or higher

4- Place of residence:

a) West Bank   b) Gaza   c) Palestinian-48   d) Diaspora Places

5- You are working for:

a) Unemployed   b) Government section   c) Private section

d)International institution   e) Foreign institution   f) Student

6- Are you a member of any Palestinian Political Party?

a) Yes   b) No

Second: Internet and SNS

7- Which device do you prefer to access Facebook?

a) PC   b) Smart Phone   c) Tablet   d) Other devices

8-How many Friends do you have in your Facebook friends list?

a)1-50   b)51-200   c)201-1000   d)1001+

9- what is your favorite social network site?

a) Facebook   b) Instagram   c) Twitter   d) You Tube   d) Other

10- How often do you visit your Facebook account per day?

a) Not every day   b) One Time   c)2-5 Times   d)6-10 Times   e)11+ Times

Third: Sarcastic Media and the Palestinian Public Opinion

11- Do you interact with sarcastic Facebook pages?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

12- Have you ever interacted (like, comment, share) on a political sarcastic content?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

13- Have you ever shared a sarcastic political content on your personal account on Facebook?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

14- Do you think sarcastic pages can affect the Palestinian public opinion?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

15- Have you ever built your opinion depending on a shared sarcastic content on Facebook?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

16- Do you trust information and news shared in sarcastic Facebook pages?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

17- Have you ever joined a protest responding to call from sarcastic political page?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

18- Have you ever been threatened due to a shared political content?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

19- Have you ever been arrested by the Palestinian or Israeli authority due to a shared political content?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

20- Media is main player in the formation of Palestinian public opinion.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

21- The Palestinian internal conflict divided the Palestinian public opinion toward the political issues.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

22- Palestinians express their opinion freely through social network sites.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

23- Palestinian Authority fears the influence of social network sites over the Palestinian public opinion.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

24- Palestinian activists are using social network sites to influence the public opinion.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

25- Social network sites influenced the voter's choices in the recent universities election and local councils and affected the results.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

26- Palestinian activists are using the social network sites to influence the Israeli and the international public opinion.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

27- Palestinians enjoy high level of freedom of express.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

28- Palestinians use social media to create and launch social movements

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

29- BDS is a social movement that has changed the international public opinion toward the conflict and achieved success in several spheres.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

30- Palestinian are satisfied about the current political situation.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

Fourth Section: Mesh.hek

31- How often do you visit Mesh.hek page?

a) Not every day   b) Once a day   c) Twice a day   d) More than twice a day

32- How often do you interact (like, comment, share) on Mesh.hek posts?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

33- Have you ever recommended Mesh.hek to other person?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

34- Have you ever discussed about Mesh.hek with others in real life?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

35- Do you use trust the information and news posted on Mesh.hek?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

36- Do you like the sarcastic way which Mesh.hek uses?

a) Always   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) Never

37- The sarcastic way that mesh.hek uses is accepted in the Palestinian community.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

38- Mesh.hek criticizes one side of the internal conflict more than the other.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

39- There is a political message and agenda within the sarcastic political post of Mesh.hek.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

40- Mesh.hek posts attacked the corrupted economic and political figures.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

41- Mesh.hek posts influenced me and affected my political opinion.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

42- Mesh.hek has a Palestinian National Agenda. Its posts support the Palestinian resistance.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

43- Mesh.hek aims to raise the Awareness level of Palestinians toward their political issues.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

44- Mesh.hek managed by a professional group of admins.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

45- Managing the page by unknown admins helps the page to continue and guarantee protection for the admins.

a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) undecided   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

Fifth: General Evaluation

46- What is your overall evaluation of the role of social media in the formation of the Palestinian Public opinion?

a) Satisfied   b) No specific feeling   c) Dissatisfied

47- What is your overall evaluation of the role of sarcastic media in the formation of the Public opinion?

a) Satisfied   b) No specific feeling   c) Dissatisfied

48- What is your overall evaluation of the freedom of express in Palestine?

a) Satisfied   b) No specific feeling   c) Dissatisfied

55- What is your overall evaluation of the performance of Mesh.hek?

a) Satisfied   b) No specific feeling   c) Dissatisfied