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Environmental Pressures Facing Palestinian Managers on the West Bank

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Abstract :

For managers to achieve their objectives and fulfill their responsibilities serious considerations should be given to the environment in which they operate. This study which covered West Bank managers from the private and public sectors has examined the environmental pressures that managers face, and later examined the effect of these pressures on them.

The findings have revealed that managers on the West Bank suffer from internal and external pressures. Internal pressures mean the pressures which managers can control. External pressures have been classified as socio-cultural, business community pressures and military occupation pressures. The internal pressures, however, have constituted only 22 per cent of the total pressures. It was evident from the findings that almost 55 per cent of managers feel nervous, sometimes, as a result of the pressures being faced.

ملخص البحث

لتحقق الإدارة مسؤولياتها يجب أن تأخذ بالاعتبار ليس فقط الاعتبارات الخاصة بالعاملين والمنظمة فحسب بل يجب أن تعطي الإدارة اعتبارات خاصة للبيئة والمجتمع الذي تعمل فيه. أجريت هذه الدراسة في الضفة الغربية حيث شملت العديد من المديرين في القطاعين العام والخاص هذا وتبين من خلال الدراسة أن المديرين يعانون من ضغوطات داخلية وخارجية. هذا ومن أجل تسهيل عملية التحليل قسمت الضغوطات إلى داخلية وخارجية: الضغوطات الداخلية وتشمل الأمور التي يمكن للإدارة السيطرة عليها. فيما تشمل الضغوطات الخارجية الضغوطات الاجتماعية والثقافية، الضغوطات من المجتمع، والضغوطات الناجمة عن الاحتلال. هذا وشكلت نسبة الضغوطات الداخلية ٢٢% من مجموع الضغوطات. كما وهدفت الدراسة إلى دراسة مدى تأثير هذه الضغوطات على المديرين حيث تبين من خلال الدراسة أن نسبة ما يقارب ٥٥% من المديرين يعانون أحيانا من توتر في العمل.

Environmental Pressures Facing Palestinian Managers on the West Bank

“ Nature has neatly packaged people into skins, animals into hides, and allowed trees to enclose themselves with bark . It is easy to see where the unit is and where the environment is . Not so for social organizations “ (1) .

Introduction

Management has been defined as the process where all the resources of an organization including its human resources , are marshaled for the achievement of the organizations objectives . (2) In carrying out its responsibilities managers should take into consideration not just the responsibility to their employees and organization , but an overall consideration should be given to the community which enables the organization to exist and prosper .

The process of management is very heavily influenced by societies' social structure as well as the values, norms, and expectations of its people . Massie has emphasized that an environment cannot be completely divorced from other aspects of national life, from sociological, cultural , legal, political, technological and economic factors . (3)

What is an environment ? Robbins has defined the environment as composed of those institutions or forces that affect the performance of the organization, but over which the organization has little control . (4)

The environment structure relationship has received a large amount of attention . The reason behind this attention is that organizations must adapt to their

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environments if they are to succeed because organizations are dependent on their environments if they are to survive . (5)

In this paper we aim to look at management in the West Bank environment and I hope that the readers will put aside all the preconceptions that they may have . This paper is twofold . first, it aims to identify, describe and classify the critical environmental factors facing West Bank Managers . Second, it aims to investigate the effect of the environmental factors on managers health and practice .

The Sample

The findings of this research are intended to be generalized to all of West Bank managers and administrators . In order to ensure representatives of the sample, respondents were selected from all of the seven major districts in the West Bank . The districts are : Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin and Tulkarem . All of these districts were under Israeli control and have been transformed to the Palestinian Authority with the exception of Jerusalem .

The sample was designed to include respondents from both public and private sectors in the occupied West Bank . The targeted sample was 200 top managers and administrators , but due to unforeseen difficulties in arranging interviews and in obtaining the cooperation of respondents, a final sample of 177 respondents (88.5%) was achieved .

To obtain lists of subjects, the researcher contacted city chambers of commerce and head of unions in the West Bank . The Yellow pages of the West bank, Telephone

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Directory, (Daily Zahav) were also consulted . To ensure representativeness in each district. systematic random sampling was utilized in obtaining names of respondents and companies to be visited in each district .

Managers Characteristics

Managers Age

The top managers and administrators Participating in the study are employed in different organizations . Table (1) presents a brief profile of their age .

Table (1) Managers Age

	Frequency	% Frequency
Less than 30 years	21	11.9
30 to 39 years	38	21.5
40 to 49 years	51	28.8
50 to 59 years	38	21.5
60 years and over	29	16.4
Total	177	100.0
Mean 45.2	STD Dev. 12.57	

Kind of Business

The companies and organizations involved in the study range from small to large organizations . Table (2) gives a clear picture of the type of businesses in the sample .

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As seen from the table the service sector is the largest sector in the sample . The service sector constitutes 53.7 percent of the total sample .

Table (2) kind of business

Kind	Frequency	% Frequency
Construction	2	1.1
Hospitality (Hotels & restaurants)	12	6.8
Insurance	1	0.6
Manufacturing	47	26.6
Services	95	53.7
Transport	9	5.1
Press	6	3.4
Islamic Wakf	5	2.8
Total	177	100.0

Public = 56.5 percent

Private = 43.5 percent

Environmental Pressures

Before proceeding to the discussion of the various pressures, it is necessary to examine the extent of those pressures on the managers surveyed . as see table (3). In order to do this, the researcher has classified the various pressures into exogenous and endogenous . Exogenous pressures are those that are out of management control . Endogenous or internal pressures are those that management can control . Exogenous pressures include, socio-cultural, business-community and others pressures resulting

from the occupation . Each of these types of pressures will be evaluated, discussed and analyzed .

Table (3) shows that not all managers in the sample are facing pressures . This may be due to the nature of work performed, type of ownership and personality of the manager .

All in all, the findings in table (3) indicate that out of the 177 managers surveyed 93.2 per cent are suffering from socio-cultural pressures, 97.7 percent suffer from business and community pressures, 70.1 per cent from the occupation and its repercussions, and 71.8 per cent encounter internal pressures or problems .

Table (3) types of Pressures and their Weights

Type of pressure	Exogenous Pressures			Endogenous Pressures
	Socio Cultural	Business Community	Military Occupation	Internal
Percentage	93.2	97.7	70.1	71.8

Socio-Cultural Pressures

The managers participating in the study were asked to name the main social cultural pressures that make constraints on their performance . Only 93.2 percent of the managers interviewed admitted to having socio-cultural pressures . Of these managers

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51.5 per cent have complained of the low value placed on time by the people in their culture . 12.1 per cent have complained of having advertising and marketing problems as a result of the prevailing norms and values. 7.9 per cent have complained of the envy pressure, 7.3 per cent suffer from the lack of industrial mentality , and the remaining managers suffer from pressures such as the continuous demand for help, lack of technicians , low cultural level, lack of awareness of the nature of work performed and people's resistance to change . See table.(4) Only those pressures that are mentioned most frequently will be discussed and analyzed .

Low Value of Time

Of the various pressures mentioned, this one came up most frequently . 51.5 per cent mentioned it in one way or another . Managers complained about the lack of concern for time by the people . Many of them complained of the lack of punctuality and exactness .

The Arab concept of time is another cultural theme that sets Arab culture apart as being distinctive . (6) To the Arabs the values attached to exactness and punctuality may differ virtually from the values the westerners attach to such exactness and punctuality . As anyone who has lived or is living with the Arabs can testify, it is natural to see carelessness about time . Many managers interviewed have voiced their paramount concern over people not keeping their appointments and working schedules.

Many have complained of the procrastination attitude . Some managers went on to say that “ rarely do people finish the assigned jobs by the time promised . They procrastinate, and do not feel pressed by the value of time . Nor do they operate on schedule and when they do they are either too early or too late ”.

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The lack of concern for time can be attributed to the occupiers behavior and to the peoples own perception of time . To illustrate this, let us take the following observation by the researcher . Usually a journey inside the West Bank from Hebron south to Nablus north by car will take two hours. But during the occupation this same distance takes even more than three hours . On the road one will be stopped many times and searched by soldiers, and on many occasions Palestinian travelers will be stranded on the road by the military checkpoints for hours . As a result one needs to commence a journey two hours earlier than is normally necessary. One has to spare some time for those unexpected delays . Besides that, some Palestinians are unable to secure travel permits from the Israeli authority to allow them to enter certain cities like Jerusalem thus compelling them to spend longer times travelling because they have to take by pass roads in the country . Therefore, time becomes less important and people become accustomed to wasting time . Curfews and general strikes have also contributed to the waste of time by managers .

As for the people , lack of concern for time, Middle Easterners in general, especially where the predominant type of religion is Islam, view themselves as humble creatures, for whom life at any moment will become whatever God wishes it to become .

Therefore, the Islamic values and traditions influence behavioral attitudes toward the conduct of business and attendant management practices. (7) As a result, at an individual level, the Arabs main focus is religion-Islam- and all his actions are controlled by God.(8) He then prays that his aspirations will be met as he tries to fulfill them . The traditional Arab believes that he only receives what God has allocated and promised him, no matter how hard he works to attain his goals. Although he is asked by God to work hard and to do his work effectively.

Ahmad Abdin, manager and owner of a plastic manufacturing company in Bethlehem, spoke out on the problem of low value of time by saying “

In the West Bank, the majority of the people have in their homes what is called Al-Jalsa Al-Arabiyya, an Arab living room . These rooms are normally furnished with very high mattresses , sometimes two or three on top of each other with many pillows in the corners and against the walls . When you visit any family having such a room, even for ten minutes, they will insist that you sit down and relax in that room . In the mean time drinks will be served and sometimes dinner will be prepared . After the last cup of coffee one would be free to leave”.

Mr. Abdin believes that this is a good example of the low value of time as manifested in the daily practices and behavior of the people .

The lack of both concern and appreciation of time is not only felt by managers . The researcher also experienced this . The incident occurs while the researcher was travelling by bus from Dura to Hebron . The bus had to stop and wait for a passenger who went to negotiate a business deal with a man on the road . The bus had to wait for the man for more than 15 minutes without any regard for the passengers on board . However, managers' view of time is totally different from the way it is viewed by the traditional people . Managers have more value for time and as a result managers nowadays conduct special training courses on “ time management” for their employees . However, before turning to discuss another pressure, it is important to note that the low value of time pressure as found in this study collaborates with the findings of Sulieman (1984) where he found that the low value of time pressure was mentioned by 41 per cent of the Iraqi managers interviewed. (9) Similar findings were also

reported by Muna (1980) where he found this pressure to be one of the most frequently mentioned by the Arab executives interviewed .

Advertising and Marketing Constraints

More than 12 per cent of the managers have voiced their paramount concern over the marketing pressures resulting from the prevailing values and norms .

In an interview with a manager of a food production company, who asked to remain anonymous, the manager commented” :

“I am unable to run an attractive advertisement for a line of our products in local newspapers . If I show a nice and attractive woman promoting some of our products in local media, people will look down upon me even though they will like the woman . I will fall flat on my face . I had a problem finding a girl from the area to promote some of our products at a at a notional products exhibition held in Nazareth”.

Another manager, Abed Al-hay Shahin, manager and owner of Shahin Bus Company in Hebron, said during an interview’ :

“I have one of the best bus companies in the West Bank . Most of the buses are very modern Many of them have television sets on board . I know there is a need for a hostess on the bus, but I am unable to find a girl to do the job, and if I do find one, it will be the end of my business’.

It is necessary to point out that in the Arab World in general and in the West Bank in particular not all professions are acceptable to females. Only professions like education, nursing, secretarial work and social services are socially acceptable .

However, some of the females are self- employed as hairdressers, seamstresses or managers of retail outlets . In the West Bank honour and respectability continue to be operative in defining female professions . The family reputation is placed above all

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economic needs. The majority would rather be poor than allow their daughters to be singers or dancers . Nakhleh (1980) in one of his studies on Palestinians found that recent Palestinian immigrants from Israel to Canada are adamantly opposed to their women being employed as waitresses . (10)

Envy (Evil Eye)

This problem is mentioned by 7.9 per cent of the managers interviewed . Envy or what is called in the Arab and Moslem World, the “ evil eye” is the most widespread of the animistic beliefs among the Arabs . Sulieman (1984) found that the belief in the evil eye in Iraq is still widespread .

The evil eye is a mysterious and hateful power carried by the glance of a certain person . Belief in the evil eye is different from witchcraft in that everyone can be an agent of the evil eye . It is a projection of the destructively envious feelings that large numbers of people harbour . (11)

The evil eye implies that things or persons one holds dear are continually vulnerable to damage or destruction caused by other peoples envy projected through their eyes .

The possessor of an evil eye usually has no control over his unconscious wishes and their working .

The relatively small percentage of managers, 7.9 per cent, still believe that the evil eye can cause sickness, death and bad luck . They also believe that the evil eye may also be propitiated by partaking of excitement, success and blessings, or what is known as “ baraka” blessings.

The belief system itself includes no cures for the evil eye, however, a large number of defensive and protective measures and devices are to be used.

The hanging of shoes on cars and taxis, the attachment of blue beads and colours to animals and children are all used as symbolic protection against the evil eye. (12)

Lack of Industrial Mentality

The lack of industrial mentality attitude is seen as a constraint on managers performance. As Table 1.2 shows 7.3 per cent of the managers view this value as a pressure . The lack of industrial mentality or what others might call “ lack of industrial consciousness” can best be illustrated by the following two examples as provided by two managers . Juneidi,

a well known Arab manager in the West Bank commented :

“ One of our major problems in the West Bank is the lack of industrial mentality, consciousness and skills . Our industries bear the brunt as a result . For example, I remember one of our machines was broken down for more than a week because it needed a screw which was not worth a penny but which was only manufactured in Tel-Aviv, an hour and a half drive from here . ”

Another example of the lack of industrial mentality was given by a manager of a textile factory in Bethlehem. He commented :

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“ It is a pity to see that when any of our machines break down for the simplest reason, we have to depend on the mercy of the Israelis or foreign experts to come and fix it for us” .

The problem, lack of industrial mentality, can be attributed to the Arabs dislike of manual labour, the absence of industrial and vocational teachings and disciplines in West Bank schools and universities, and to the absence of National Government that safeguards the interest and well being of its people and economy . Now with the Palestinian Authority taking control, more attention is given to vocational education .

As has been mentioned in previous sections the education in the West Bank is more theoretical than it is practical . Therefore, reorganization and reconstruction of the educational programmes in the West Bank was considered . Personal and vocational training schemes were emphasized and adopted by the Palestinian Authority.

This concludes the major socio-cultural pressures as mentioned by the managers . However, there are other pressures that have been mentioned by a small number of subjects like the continuous demand for money and help by the community, lack of technicians, low cultural level of the people in the country, lack of awareness and understanding of the nature of work performed, and people's resistance to change .

Business and Community Pressures

Only 97.7 per cent of the managers interviewed have admitted to facing this kind of pressure . Business and community pressures include : reputation in the community 26 per cent, social visits at the office 22.5 per cent, top man syndrome 13.3 per cent, fusion of business with social and personal life 10.4 per cent, higher expectation for

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success 9.2 per cent, nepotism 9.2 per cent, not respecting business rules by visitors 9.2 per cent and the traditional mentality pressure 1.2 per cent (See table (4).

Reputation in the Community

This pressure came out most frequently, 26 per cent of the managers mentioned it .

They complained of the sensitivity of one's reputation. As one manager said : "We are always concerned about what people think about us and not what we think as right or wrong". It is worth noting that even they think in this way it is in the business interest to know what people think about them in order to build a better image for their business .

Some of the pressures are caused as a result of bad behaviour of some of the family members . A manager of Silvana Ckhhocolate Company expressed his worry of this pressure by saying " why should my business suffer because of my son ill behaviour" . It shows that family reputation pressure can sometimes inflict bad results only the business .

The importance of reputation stems from the close-knit society of the West bank where any dent to one's honour may damage or bring dishonour to the extended family as a whole .

Social Visits at the Office

More than 22 per cent of the managers interviewed view this as a problem. This response demonstrates that over 70 per cent of the managers do not view this practice as a problem even though they recognize it in time costs. Some of the managers who view this practice as not being a problem say that it is difficult to discourage such practice because it is part of our hospitality . Though they want people to understand

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the difference between hospitality and business . Managers who view this as a problem say that “ business is business”. These managers were very sensitive though in wording their response . Some of them kept telling the researcher “ please do not misunderstand us . We are hospitable, but there should be a separation between hospitality and business . One can only be hospitable at home”.

The problem of social visits at the office is felt almost throughout the Arab World, for example, Muna (1980) in his study of the Arab executive, found social visits at the office to be one of the major problems faced by the executives interviewed .

In one case he found that one executive from the Gulf area admitted to having two offices in the same city, mostly to escape from visits by friends and colleagues .

Sulieman (1989) also indicated that 41 per cent of the Iraqi managers interviewed complained of relatives and friends dropping into their offices during working hours for non business chats over coffee .

The problem of social visits to the office is interestingly revealed by an administrator in Beit Jala, a predominantly Christian city . The administrator commented : “ For us as Moslems, Friday is the day off. A day when all the Christians in the area are working . When I am at work on Sunday, all my Christian friends from Beit jala and the surrounding area come to visit me at my office . It is their holiday but, it is the beginning of a working week for me. They come to visit me when I am extremely busy”.

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To discourage the practice of visitation at the office some managers decided to install intercoms at the main entrances of their buildings where every visitor has to give his name and to indicate the name of the person whom he intends to visit . The managers believes that the use of intercoms will limit the number of visits because visitors are sometimes more reluctant to visit friends at work when they have to go through some hassles. Intercoms make the visits more formal by taking the name of the visitor and the name of the person to be visited . In other words, the intercom will give the visitors the hint that it is not so easy to make social visits .”

To discourage this practice some managers have displayed signs in reception areas of their offices saying “ please make an appointment with secretary first and before you come in”. Other signs say “ employee’s time is company time .”

Top Man Syndrome

This pressure has been cited by more than 13.3 per cent of the subjects . These managers have complained of people and clients bypassing their subordinates and coming to them for every single matter .

In an incident and during an interview with Jibril Natsheh, Manager of Reem Sport Shoe Factory in Hebron, the researcher saw a client come into his office and ask the manager personally to sell him a pair of shoes for one of his sons even though salesmen have offered their help .

The problem of the top man syndrome can be attributed to the widely held belief that the organization design in the West Bank is highly personalized, and in order to achieve things or do things faster one should always go to the top of the ladder . In

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the West Bank people go by the popular saying. " It is better to drink out of the source river than from the lake".

This attitude by people as one manager complained is very costly. " It costs me my time, it shows lack of trust for my subordinates, and demonstrates the lack of recognition of their abilities and skills".

Fusion of Business with Social and Personal Life

This problem is mentioned by only 10.4 per cent of the managers. The heading refers here to the inability of managers to separate their personal affairs from their business responsibilities . Managers have complained of people coming to their homes to talk about their business problems .

Such pressure and influence was best expressed by one mayor who told the researcher a story of a man coming to his home to complain about an electricity bill he had received . The mayor said that the man rang the door bell as early as 6.30 a.m. the time when he was in the bathroom shaving and getting ready for work .

The problem of fusion business with social and personal life was also voiced out by the mayor of Dura who complained of widowed women coming to his home at night to ask for the exemption of payment for electricity and water bills .

The problem of fusing business with personal and family life can also be attributed to the structure of West Bank society where people are very closely-knit and where nepotism and connections are becoming a very common practice .

Higher Expectation of Success

This problem has been felt by 9.2 percent of the subjects. These managers complained by saying that people in the community have no mercy for us especially when we fail in any venture we undertake and especially if we have university degrees . One manager went on to say “ It is good to see that people have faith and trust in us, but they should give us chances. Some of their expectations are, sometimes, unreasonable high”.

Nepotism

This pressure is felt by less than 10 per cent of the managers. The majority of managers, however, do not see nepotism as a problem even though 81.10 per cent think that nepotism exists in the West Bank . It is believed that the majority of managers interviewed are business oriented and as such they are more keen about the success of their business . Managers who view nepotism as a problem are afraid of their business being labeled as “ family business”. The problem of nepotism is not just limited to private businesses . Just recently, Israeli Television has broadcasted a report on the misuse of power by the newly appointed Palestinian ministers for appointing immediate family members and friends in their ministries .

Lack of Respect of Company Rules by Visitors

More than 9 per cent of the managers interviewed have complained of the problem of lack of respect of business rules by visitors. This problem was widely felt by

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administrators in the public sector . For example, Dr. Suleiman Mattock, Edinburgh graduate and administrator of Red Crescent Hospital in Jerusalem commented :

“ Health regulations prohibit the bringing of food to the patients by visitors . But we still have visitors bringing cooked meals daily for patients . In one case we had to conduct another surgery on a patient because he was given food by his family at a time when he was not allowed to eat” .

To me, I believe that this is a result of people lack of awareness of the negative impact a cooked meal might have on the health of patient . A bank manager has also commented : “ We are facing the problem of keeping law and order in the bank . We cannot make people wait in queues . The girls object to such practice . They refuse to stand in line with other males” . I believe that this is caused as a result of the lack of enough space in reception areas for clients in addition to the Islamic tradition which does not allow for friction between men and women .

Therefore, I suggest that to solve such a problem managers of such banks should have different waiting areas for men and women .

The problem of lack of respect of business rules has now been tackled by the Palestinian authority who now hire Palestinian police force to enforce rules and regulations in public institutions under their control and even in some banks .

Military Occupation Pressures

More than 70 per cent of the managers participating in the survey have complained of the pressures resulting from the Israeli occupation . The military occupation pressures

include : the occupation discriminatory policies 69.4 percent, marketing problems 8.1 per cent, low tourism level 4.8 per cent, and other pressures like the military censorship, travelling difficulties, denial of permits, and communication with the outside world. See table (4) .

Occupation Discriminatory Policies

More than 69 per cent of the managers who have admitted to having occupational pressures are suffering from the discriminatory policies of the occupation. Discriminatory policies and practices which militate against Palestinian businesses are becoming obvious . The discriminatory policies as given by the managers are always manifested in the closure of business organizations like the closure of newspaper establishments and the closure of educational institutions in Jerusalem and parts of Hebron which are still under Israeli control. The discriminatory policies of the occupation are also seen in the denial of expansion and travel permits to businesses and businessmen from the West Bank. In a study carried out in 1981, Abu kishik found that more than 60 per cent out of the 276 managers interviewed have expressed their desire for expansion of their businesses but their main obstacles were political . Another form of discrimination is manifested in the continuous harassment of business managers and teachers in the community especially in East Jerusalem .

To give an example of discrimination, only few Palestinian trucks and vehicles with yellow plates are allowed into Israel to bring goods, thus raising the costs of transportation highly as a result .

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Marketing Problems

Although these problems are interrelated, the marketing problem is considered by 8.1 per cent of West Bank manufacturers as a serious threat to the success and survival of their enterprises.

Many managers have complained of the denial of import and export permits by the Israeli authorities. Most of these managers have complained of the closure of Palestinian territories thus closing West Bank markets. Businesses face the problem of severe competition with the Israeli subsidized goods. It is important to point out that Israeli products compete with Palestinian goods even in Palestinian markets.

Palestinian markets are open for Israeli products and not vice versa . In addition, and following the signing of peace accord with Jordan, the Palestinian market is now flooded with goods from Jordan and Syria. Such goods include biscuits and textiles while on the contrary, only few Palestinians are allowed to export such products.

Despite the peace accord with Palestinians, Palestinian businessmen are still have to pay the same sort of taxes levied by the Israelis even though the tax authority now is in the hands of Palestinians . However, Palestinians believe that it is a national duty to pay taxes to the Palestinian authority while before that boycotting the Israeli tax authority was considered as a national duty .

Low Tourism level

This problem has been mentioned by 4.8 per cent of the managers in the lodging business . These managers have expressed their concern over the Israeli practice of snatching visitors away from the West Bank . One of the managers told the researcher that “ the ministry of tourism in Israel is always developing various campaigning

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programmes in order to attract people to Israel . “The ministry advises tourists where to stay and where to go and in fact discourage them from not going to Palestinian areas for the fear of terrorism as they say . Israelis pick tourists from airports and crossing bridges . They do not care for us “.

The problem of low level of tourism is also caused by the ongoing instability in the region . As the manager of the Holy Land Hotel in Jerusalem said : “ tourists do not like to come to a boiling spot “ .

It is worth mentioning that Palestinians do not yet control the borders and ports. They are still in the hands of the Israelis.

While collecting data in the Jerusalem area, the problem of low tourism, was clearly observed by the researcher where he remembered seeing hotels having there lights put off in the middle of the day; and in one incident in Jerusalem the researcher saw the employees of one hotel play cards and drink Turkish coffee in the middle of the reception area with some female barefooted receptionists . However, this incident can be seen as an example of employees behaviour in a non business like way .

The problem of low tourism level is now eased especially following the peace process where tourists see the West Bank area as becoming more stable. Cooperation's between the ministries of tourism of both Jordan and Israel have also activated tourism in the region.

This problem concludes the discussion of the pressures resulting from the military occupation . There are other problems which are not discussed like the problem of

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military censorship . travelling difficulties, communication difficulties caused by the denial of telephone services to some businesses which are still under Israeli control .

Internal Pressures

These pressures or what is called “ internal problems” are problems within management control . See table (4) Although the majority of us know this many of the internal problems are interrelated with the uncontrollable pressures . To find out the main internal pressures faced by respondents all managers participating in the study were asked to name the main internal pressures they are facing . 71.8 per cent of the total sample have admitted to having internal pressures . The true response could be much higher, but West Bank managers are conservative and do not want to show that they are having internal problems because to them this may imply bad management or mismanagement .

The most frequently mentioned problems include ; financial problems 42.5 per cent , irresponsibility 15.0 per cent absenteeism 7.1 per cent, lack of training programmes 5.5 percent, employee conflicts 5.5 percent, lack of skilled employees and technicians 3.1 per cent, and others such as lack of initiative by employees, lack of authority, and the lack of cooperation between workers .

Financial Problems

Of the main problems mentioned, this problem came up most frequently. 42.5 per cent of the managers mentioned it in one way or another . They complained about the

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shortage of money due to the latest Israeli measures resulting in the closure of territories and declaring it closed military areas.

Such action caused unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza to rise enormously.

As we have seen, this problem came about as a direct result of the occupation, therefore, influencing the economic conditions and well being of the Palestinians .

Taking these problems into consideration, one would argue “ how do Palestinians start their business in the first place ?” . The response to such argument is simple . In a study carried out by Abukishik in 1981, it was found that more than 90 per cent of the industrial firms in the West Bank started their investment directly from private funds or from partnerships. (13) Many businesses today, however, get loans from Palestinian credit institutions and from local banks . It is important to point out that following the Oslo agreement several Palestinian banks have opened in the West Bank, among them: Jordan Bank, Palestinian Commercial Bank . The Arab Bank, Beit Al - mal, and the Arabs Islamic Bank .

Irresponsibility by Employees

This problem has been cited by only 15 per cent of Employees the sample thus indicate that the majority of businesses sampled are not suffering from such a problem . The lack of responsibility by employees can be seen as a direct result of employees inadequate salaries where it was found that the annual average wage in Israel is four times as high as West Bank industrial wages . (14) Another possible reason could be

the lack of motivation where only 0.6 per cent of the managers thought that employees need good training programmes . The problem of lack of motivation is recommended as a future research topic .

Absenteeism

The problem of absenteeism has been cited by 71 per cent of the subjects . The problem of absenteeism can be attributed to the difficulty in getting to work due to military checkpoints, curfews, and general strikes and to employees dissatisfaction either with their pay or with their working conditions. Robbins (1988) found that satisfaction appears to be negatively related to absenteeism and turnover . (15)

Lack of Training Programmes

This problem has been cited by only a small proportion of managers, 5.5 per cent . This small percentage implies that the great majority did attend training programmes. The findings have indicated that 106 managers (59.9 per cent) have attended training programmes either sponsored by local employers, government, or by international institutions like Amideast or the British Council in Jerusalem which is operating under the slogan "Promoting cultural, educational and technical cooperation between Britain and other countries" (16)

Employees Conflicts

This problem has been cited by very small proportion , 5.5 per cent Although some conflicts are positive and constructive, these managers have perceived them as destructive . Commonalties among most conflicts definitions are the concepts of

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opposition, scarcity, and blockage, and the assumption that there are two or more parties whose interests or goals appear to be incompatible (17) . Robbins has defined conflict as a process in which an effort is purposely made by A to offset the efforts of B by some form of blocking that will result in frustrating B into attaining his goals or furthering his interests . (18)

The problem of conflict between employees in the West Bank businesses can be interpreted as a result of family feud at home . In the West Bank family conflicts can be easily carried to the work environment as one manager told the researcher. The problem of conflict can also be attributed to the various political leanings and factors in the West Bank as one university president has pointed out .

It is important to point out that in the West Bank there are various national and religious groups. Therefore, different ideologies lead to conflict of interest, and as a result conflict sometimes occurs between loyalists to some groups and other factions .

The majority of managers who did not mention employees conflict as a problem think that conflicts are in their business interest. One manager in Hebron has justified it in the following example when he said :

“ Imagine having two night guards working at the same time in your company. One of them is guarding the southern entrance of the building and the other is guarding the northern entrance. If these two guards are on good terms with each other, then they are most likely to slack off and get together for social chats at work, thus neglecting their duties. But if they are at odd with each other then the chances of them getting to gether at work will be nil. This will be in the interest of the company and I

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am sure both of them will keep watch on each others work and they are more likely to report each others misconduct if there is any ,therefore conflicts can help uncover plots and conspiracies against management and the firm if there is any ”.

This concludes the list of the most frequently mentioned internal problems. There are other problems, however, which have not yet been discussed such as the lack of initiative by employees , and the lack of cooperation. These problems are not discussed because they have been mentioned only by a small proportion of the managers .

Extent of Pressures on Both the Private and the Public Sector

After having identified the major pressures mentioned by the respondents, the researcher finds it necessary to measure the degree of influence of these pressures on both the private and public sectors in the survey . Table (5) shows that the private sector is the sector to be suffering the most in all areas of pressures with the exception of the internal pressures

These results are not unexpected, however,because in the private sector managers tend to be more careful about the success of their business. Hence previous findings have indicated that 35 per cent of the managers interviewed are owners of their firms . Therefore they are more willing to sacrifice in order to make business succeed and prosper. Although the results in table (5) indicate that there is no association between the types of pressure, and the types of ownership . Where the Chi-square value is 2.11 with 3 degrees of freedom at 0.5 level of significance .

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Table (5) Weight of Pressures on both the Private and the Public managers

pressures					
	Occupation	Socio- Business		Internal	
	Pressures	Cultural	Community	Pressures	
Private	76.6	96.1	98.7	63.6	77
Public	65.0	91.0	97.0	78.0	100
	X ² =2.11	df=3	sig.= 0.5		

Managers and Nervousness

In light of all these pressures each of the respondents was asked to respond to the question about nervousness. To measure their nervousness, managers had to choose from a set of given alternatives ranging from “Always” to “Never”.

The findings in Table (6) show that almost 55 per cent of the managers do feel nervous at work, 6.2 per cent of the managers usually feel nervous, while 2.3 per cent always feel nervous at work. The table shows that 29.9 per cent of the managers seldom feel nervous, whilst only 8.5 per cent never feel nervous. Figure (1) summarises these findings. These results are not surprising. The researcher believes that the main reasons for them being nervous are the various types of pressures mentioned. As for those who never feel nervous at work, the researcher believes that this is because of

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their adaptability to the environment , and because of their Islamic faith. Where Islamic values and traditions influence behavior towards the conduct of business , and where an individual's main focus is religion, then he believes that there is no need to worry over every difficulty .

And as the Quranic verse says “ So verily, with every difficulty comes relief, verily with every difficulty there is relief”. (19)

Table (6) Managers and Nervousness

Degree of Nervousness	Frequency Of Mention	% Frequency
Always	4	2.3
Usually	11	6.2
Sometime	64	53.1
Seldom	53	29.9
Never	15	8.5
		Total
		177
		100.0

Summary

This paper has provided us with distinctive characteristics of the West Bank environment and the businesses operating in that region. It also outlined the basic environmental constraints which is believed to have a direct bearing on the behaviour and practice of managers . it is obvious from the discussion that West bank managers are functioning under enormous types of pressures which make their working environment unique . The researcher has classified what makes their working environment unique . The researcher has classified the pressures into two different types, exogenous and endogenous .

Exogenous pressures include socio-cultural, business-community and occupation pressures. Endogenous pressures include those faced by managers inside their organizations .

Unlike the exogenous pressures the latter pressures can be controlled or managed by managers of the organizations.

The Paper also examined the effect of pressures on managers. The study has indicated that almost 55 per cent of managers feel nervous as a result of the pressures .

Endnotes

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