
FAMILY SUPPORT AND ITS ROLE IN PALESTINIAN WOMEN'S ACCESS TO POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN THE WEST BANK

RAWIA FAYEZ BARHAM YOUSEF

UNIVERSITY OF GRANADA, ACADEMIC LEVEL: PHD STUDENT

PHD SPECIALIZATION: WOMEN'S STUDIES. DISCOURSES AND PRACTICES OF GENDER

PURPOSE OF PUBLISHING THE RESEARCH: TO OBTAIN A PHD DEGREE

EMAIL: rawyahshouli7@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aimed to determine the role of family support and its impact on Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank, descriptive analytical method was used, and the questionnaire was used as a tool to collect data from the study sample members, which are (53) women in Palestinian society, specifically in the West Bank, from various women's sectors (associations, parties, school teachers, and university professors). The results showed that there is a role for family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank from the point of view of study sample. This highlights the importance of raising awareness and educating about Palestinian women's rights and their role in society to help them meet the challenges of reaching political leadership positions.

Keywords: Family Support, Political Leadership, Palestinian Women.

INTRODUCTION

Women are considered the cornerstone of societies and an important element in social life. Therefore, international law and national legislation have focused on protecting women's rights from any threat or assault that threatens them or could lead to the degradation of their dignity. They provide numerous guarantees that ensure non-discrimination between women and men in these rights or even in the privileges granted to them (Al-Hajj, 2020).

In the same context, women in some societies may suffer from discrimination and lack of full rights compared to men, especially political rights. According to Moore (2009), this is due to several reasons, most notably government policies, which may contribute to some extent to creating a gap between women and men in this regard, the lack of political empowerment programs for women, and the prevailing principles and ideologies in society regarding women's rights, the nature of the family, parenting, the society's view of women, and the form of support provided to them compared to men. In the Palestinian case, although women constitute half of society and are a prominent element in its formation and development, as is the case in most Arab countries, there are differences in gender relations and roles in Palestinian society, which form the basis of the patriarchal system. The feminist movement, with the support of a number of local and international organizations, has attempted to pressure official institutions to establish the necessary legal frameworks to enable Palestinian women to reach leadership positions, including political ones. In response, the Palestinian Authority's position on women and their rights was amended, and women were granted additional seats in the electoral law. The Ministry of Women's Affairs was established in 2003, and its priorities have steadily shifted over the past few years in line with the government's priorities. The ministry's strategy has been based on emphasizing the role of Palestinian women in building the state, their right to education and vocational and technical training for girls, and their economic and political empowerment (Islah, 2014). In the same context, Palestinian laws have been keen to respect the political rights of Palestinian women, particularly their right to hold leadership positions, in accordance with international conventions and agreements related to addressing women's political issues. This includes their right to hold leadership positions of a public political nature, such as ministers and governors, in accordance with Article 21/2 of the Universal Declaration

of Human Rights of 1948, which states: "Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country."

However, the Palestinian reality indicates the weak representation of women leaders in decision-making positions or political office. Erekat (2025), based on the latest report issued by the Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, indicated that women's participation in leadership positions has reached only 14.9%. The report also indicates that in the Palestinian governorates, only one woman out of 16 governorates holds leadership positions in local government. The report also showed that women are not represented in leadership positions in the party. This requires examining the true reasons behind the weak political participation of Palestinian women and their access to political leadership on a par with men. Hence, the idea of this study emerged, which explores the role of family support and its impact on Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank.

Problem statement

Despite the ambitions and efforts of Palestinian women to reach leadership positions, and despite the fact that they constitute a significant percentage of the population (approximately 49.3%) and enjoy the highest rates of education, their representation in political leadership and leadership positions does not reflect these realities. According to a 2025 report issued by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, women's participation in leadership positions was weak, reaching only 14.9%. This report shows that only one woman out of 16 is represented in leadership positions in local government, in addition to the lack of women's representation in party leadership positions. (Erekat, 2025). Hence, the study's problem appears to be posing a question about the reasons for the weak representation of Palestinian women in political leadership positions, and whether the family plays an influential role in this. These are the questions that some studies have sought to answer. study by Shava et al. (2021) It showed that female school principals in several areas of Zimbabwe are viewed as incompetent and incapable of assuming leadership positions due to an entrenched male-dominated culture and negative parental attitudes in some families, which lead to gender discrimination. Similarly, a study by Al-Hajj (2020) It revealed the existence of many obstacles that limit women from assuming leadership positions, the most prominent of which are bias towards men and lack of family support. Furthermore, a study by Chaudhary and Dutt (2022) showed that women's representation in leadership positions remains limited in some areas of Pakistan due to a lack of family support, in addition to the role of prevailing ideologies in those societies.

In light of the above, the study's problem emerged in determining the influence played by the family on Palestinian women's access to political leadership positions, particularly with regard to patriarchal ideas or male dominance, especially in light of the scarcity of previous studies that addressed this topic in the Palestinian context.

Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following three questions:

1. What are the attitudes of the study sample members towards the role of family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank?
2. Is there a role for family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank?
3. Is there significant differences at ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) between the answers of the study sample members regarding the role of family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank due to the variables (age, educational level, marital status)?.

Research Importance

The importance of this research is represented as follows:

1. **Scientific importance:** The scientific significance of this research lies in its treatment of a topic of utmost importance and vitality in Palestinian society: the role of the family and its impact on Palestinian women's political leadership. This is evident in the scarcity of previous studies in the Palestinian context that have addressed this topic, which represents a valuable and new scientific addition to this type of study and serves as an incentive for further research and investigation in this area.
2. **Practical importance:** From a practical perspective, the importance of this study stems from its ability to shed light on the extent to which family roles influence Palestinian women's political leadership. Accordingly, the study presents its findings and recommendations to Palestinian decision-makers seeking to

empower Palestinian women and grant them their full rights, including the right to assume leadership positions.

Research Objectives

This research aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Determine the attitudes of the sample members towards the role of family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank.
2. Determine whether there is a role for family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank.
3. Determine whether there is a significant differences at ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) between the answers of the study sample members regarding the role of family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank due to the variables (age, educational level, marital status).

Literature Review

In this part of the research, previous literature will be discussed, through what was stated in specialized books and previous studies, as follows:

The Role of Palestinian Women in Society

In light of the difficult circumstances that Palestinian society has experienced for decades, Palestinian women play a significant role in this context. Despite the harsh reality facing Palestinian people, also the state of disparity and weakness that the Palestinian situation is witnessing, Palestinian women play a prominent economic role in seeking a source of income to support their families. They also play a prominent social role in maintaining Palestinian society's cohesion by confronting all attempts to dissolve identity and destroy the fabric of society (Palestinian Women's Rights Document, General Union of Palestinian Women and Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2008). They also play a prominent role in preserving Palestinian cultural heritage by educating their children about the dangers of Israeli policy to the future of Palestinian identity and the Palestinian cause as a whole. They also play a prominent role in preserving Palestinian culture and traditions by innovating various methods in this context (Shadid, 2022).

Despite the difficult circumstances in which Palestinian women live, these circumstances have not been able to break their resolve or undermine their resilience. Rather, through their patience, resilience, and steadfastness, Palestinian women have set a powerful example for the Palestinian Arab woman, and have become responsible for building an entire society. Palestinian women continue to work, struggle, and resist the "Israeli occupation" in all fields and all forms of resistance in order to achieve a better life. This requires them to exert great effort to confront challenges in the presence of an occupier that does not allow any form of confrontation or resistance (Abu Khadura, 2023).

The difficult family and living conditions of the Palestinian people under the Israeli occupation have imposed numerous challenges on Palestinian families, particularly women, whose role has shifted from that of homemaker to an active economic player, strengthening their resilience and resistance. Due to circumstances such as the death, arrest, or injury of their husbands, or even the divorce and separation of their wives, Palestinian women have been forced to seek employment opportunities to support themselves and their children. Official Palestinian statistics indicate that the percentage of families headed by women (widows, divorcees, or separated) is approximately 11% of all Palestinian families. This high percentage demonstrates the significant economic role played by Palestinian women in the absence of their husbands, helping them cope with difficult living conditions and support their families and children. This enhances their resilience and resistance. The absence of a husband, whether through martyrdom, arrest, or injury, is a cause of suffering for the family in general and the wife in particular (Erekat, 2025). In cases of arrest, Palestinian women are forced into a cycle of legal proceedings and the appointment of lawyers, in addition to the psychological and physical suffering resulting from the accumulation of responsibilities at home and in the family, meeting their needs, and perhaps even finding work if they are unemployed.

In an attempt to confront the difficult conditions imposed on the Palestinian people by the Israeli occupation forces, including the siege, restrictions on freedom, and lack of suitable job opportunities, the researcher believes that the original and natural role of Palestinian women has changed due to the difficult economic conditions created by the Israeli occupation. Traditionally, women are housewives, devoting themselves to managing the affairs of their families and children, ensuring their care and attention. However, this role has changed to confront these difficult circumstances, with Palestinian women now working and seeking suitable employment opportunities, either to help their husbands cope with their daily lives and obligations, or to

primarily support their families due to the husband's absence due to martyrdom, death, imprisonment, or severe injury (Khalaf Allah and al-Farjani, 2022).

Regarding education, Palestinian women have become an active player in this area. Official Palestinian statistics issued by the Central Bureau of Statistics for 2022 indicated an increase in the gender parity index at universities, favoring females. The index reached 1.65 in 2021, compared to 1.38 in 2011. The statistics also showed a clear dominance of female students enrolled in Palestinian higher education institutions in health, welfare, and education specialties. Female graduates in these specialties accounted for 63% of all students during the 2021/2022 academic year, with 30% of graduates in business, administration, and law. Accordingly, the above-mentioned percentages related to Palestinian women's education are likely to contribute to change, development, and strengthening the role of Palestinian women in economic aspects, provided that political and social conditions are met without the interference of the "Israeli occupation." Here it is necessary to point out that the Palestinian woman's tendency towards learning and working more, is due to the Palestinian woman's belief that this path is the most appropriate for providing financial and psychological support to her families and children, and thus helping them to stand firm and resist the occupation and all the circumstances resulting from it. The Palestinian woman has always been and still is at the forefront of those who do everything in her power to preserve the family and maintain family solidarity during difficult circumstances, as the Palestinian woman has played a prominent role in working and providing sources of income to preserve her family and its cohesion, and to strengthen its steadfastness and resistance to the Israeli occupation (Erekat, 2025).

Therefore, educating and empowering Palestinian women is essential to improving their economic and social conditions, helping them adapt to the changes around them, supporting their families, and helping their husbands cope with the difficult living conditions facing the Palestinian people under the Israeli occupation (Khalaf Allah and al-Farjani, 2022). In light of Israeli policies aimed at forcing Palestinians to emigrate externally from their country or migrate internally as displaced persons to safer and less violent areas to implement its colonial plans, the role of the Palestinian family in general, and the Palestinian woman (mother) in particular, comes to bear. This is to establish their children in their land, Palestine, and to strengthen family cohesion and adapt to various circumstances. In this context, some reports indicate that although Palestinian migration in the 1970s and 1980s was characterized by a comprehensive nature, and by collective family migration that included the husband, wife, and children, the migration of the family (particularly the wife and children) lasted for limited periods, followed by the return of the wife and her children to the homeland of Palestine. This was due to the mother's desire to raise her children with an Arab upbringing and preserve their national identity, thus strengthening the steadfastness of the Palestinian people, their persistence on their land, and their resistance to the Israeli occupation. With the increasing population and population density in Palestine, and the social, economic, and security conditions facing the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation, including limited financial resources, unemployment, and poverty, in addition to the occupation's confiscation of Palestinian land, the construction of settlements, and many other difficult circumstances, all of these have posed challenges to Palestinian families and forced them to find appropriate solutions and seek employment opportunities to meet their daily family needs (Shadid, 2022).

Palestinian women, in particular, have played a prominent role in this context in effectively organizing family life to confront these difficult circumstances. Palestinian women are considered an essential component of society when it comes to their role within the family and their bearing of the burdens of work to contribute to meeting the family's needs and building generations. Consequently, Palestinian women are a unique example of embodying all forms of giving, suffering, and steadfastness (Abu Khadura, 2023).

The reality of women's political rights in Palestinian society

The competent authorities in the Palestinian Authority have endeavored to give Palestinian women significant attention, granting them their full rights without any obstacles, in addition to providing them with the necessary opportunities to empower them and enable them to participate in political issues, leading to political leadership. With the issuance of the Palestinian Basic Law of 2003, the Palestinian legislature recognized many forms of women's rights, beginning with its emphasis on the principle of equality and fair participation with men. This was emphasized in many aspects of this law, specifically Article (10). Although it did not explicitly and directly mention women's rights, the Palestinian legislature, within the context of this article, guaranteed non-discrimination on the basis that women's rights are ultimately human rights. This can be inferred from Article (10) of the Basic Law, which states:

1. Human rights and fundamental freedoms are binding and must be respected.
2. The Palestinian National Authority shall work without delay to accede to regional and international declarations and conventions that protect human rights.

Article (9) explicitly stipulates non-discrimination among Palestinians on the basis of gender, meaning that the rights of Palestinian women are fully protected, just like those of men. It stipulates that Palestinians are equal before the law, with no discrimination between them in rights and duties, even if they differ in race, language, or religion. The Basic Law also guarantees equal political rights for all Palestinians. Article (26) affirms that Palestinians—without discrimination or distinction, men and women—have the right to participate in political life, both individually and in groups. This is consistent with the rights recognized by the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which affirms the following rights:

1. The right to form and join political parties in accordance with the law.
2. The right to form trade unions, associations, federations, leagues, and clubs in accordance with the law.
3. Participate in elections to choose representatives from among themselves, elected by universal suffrage in accordance with the law, whether by ballot or by candidacy.
4. The right to hold public office and positions on the basis of equal opportunity.
5. The right to hold private meetings without the presence of police personnel and within the limits of the law.

In the same context, the Palestinian Authority's engagement with international conventions began in 2012, when the United Nations granted it non-member observer state status. This allowed it to accede to many of these conventions, which it did in April 2014 without making any reservations regarding any of them. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women topped the list, which was considered a major victory for human rights activists at the time (Randall, 2023). It is worth noting in this context that the Palestinian Authority has also supported the political rights of Palestinian women, particularly their right to hold leadership positions, in accordance with international conventions and agreements related to addressing women's political issues. This includes their right to hold leadership positions of a public political nature, such as ministers and governors, in accordance with Article 21/2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, which states: "Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country." Article (25) of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights stipulates the right of both sexes to hold public office. Article (4) of the 1967 Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women affirms women's right to hold public office through national legislation. Palestinian women have held numerous leadership positions, including the following (Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2025):

- Membership in the Palestine Liberation Organization in 2009.
- Minister in several ministries.
- Chairwoman of the Capital Market Authority in 2009.
- Governor of Ramallah and Al-Bireh Governorate in 2010.
- Chairwoman of non-governmental organizations.

However, despite the adoption of the Palestinian Basic Law on Women's Rights, in addition to some related laws, equality between men and women in Palestine remains elusive. The status of women in Palestine is inseparable from the existing legal foundations there, as citizenship rights for Palestinian men and women are not equal. The ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict further exacerbates the situation of women. Through their loss of educational opportunities, the conflict and successive wars have impacted Palestinian women's mental and psychological health and family status (Nidatya et al., 2024). Furthermore, society still views women's roles as secondary, rather than agents of change. Despite the important role played by Palestinian women, particularly in the period before the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, their role in public life, especially in leadership and decision-making positions, has been marginalized and diminished. National laws and presidential decrees have not recognized the importance of respecting the rights of Palestinian women and their essential roles in society. Women have been clearly excluded from decision-making circles and leadership positions, which has led to the emergence of the women's movement to protect the right of Palestinian women to political participation and to occupy leadership positions. (Zaqzouq and Zayed, 2025). For example, election laws were passed without affirmative action for women, and women's quotas were only established after years by the women's movement. Although Palestinian women have paid the price for

the political split between Fatah and Hamas, they have been largely excluded from numerous national reconciliation meetings. Some women's presence at reconciliation meetings has been limited to formalities, with no effective or fundamental role for them or any decisive decision-making in this regard. Meanwhile, the Palestinian Authority has ignored the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325, which requires women's participation in conflict resolution, and no practical steps have been taken in this regard. Although Palestinian women constitute 49% of the total population, according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, their contribution to public life remains far below their proportion in society. According to the PCBS, women will constitute 19% of the labor market by 2023. In the high- leders positions, Women's participation remained below the required level, among the lowest in the arab region. Data from 2021 showed that women constitute approximately 23% of Central Council members, 19% of National Council members, and 12% of Cabinet members. Only one out of every (15) governors in Palestine is women, while women constitute about 19% of judges. These facts reflect the clear disregard for Palestinian women in leadership positions and the belittling of their sacrifices, which negatively impacts their status in society and deepens the gap of inequality with men, and simultaneously prevents society from fully utilizing their capabilities and contributions to public life. Despite the prominent role played by Palestinian women in the crises and wars witnessed in the Palestinian arena, such as their steadfastness during the war on the Gaza Strip, which came after years of siege that exacerbated the suffering of the Palestinian people, the general trend has not been fair to women in their right to access leadership positions. (Zaqzouq and Zayed, 2025).

The Importance of the Family Role in Women's Access to Political Leadership

Women face obstacles that limit their access to political leadership related to societal views that still adhere to traditional stereotypes about women's roles and responsibilities. There is an assumption that a woman's primary role is to care for the home and family (Arisa et al., 2025).

To address these obstacles, family support for women is crucial, as it encourages women to engage in political and party work and increases their chances of attaining political leadership positions. This was confirmed by a study conducted by the Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (2024), which indicated that family support is of paramount importance for developing leadership skills among young women in Arab countries. This support helps young women exploit their potential and participate effectively in leadership activities and active political participation, as the family often constitutes a barrier to societal pressures and judgment on women's access to political leadership positions.

A study by Tjahjana et al. (2024) showed that despite the influential role played by women's leadership in various sectors, including political institutions, family responsibilities negatively affect women's leadership ambitions, therefore, the support provided by the family is essential to achieving their political leadership ambitions.

Chaudhary and Dutt's study (2022) showed that women in some countries do not have equal opportunities with men to reach political leadership positions, and weak family support may be the main reason behind this, due to the patriarchal view and societal customs and traditions. Family support plays an important role in encouraging women to engage in political work and reach political leadership positions.

Based on the above, the researcher believes that family support plays a key role in Palestinian women's access to political leadership positions, by enhancing women's self-confidence and supporting their leadership ambitions. An upbringing that instills the values of equality and justice from childhood enables girls to develop their leadership abilities and skills, and gives them the strength to confront societal pressures and political challenges. Practical support from the family, whether through sharing household duties or encouraging education and engagement in public work, allows women the time and resources necessary to engage in political work. When the family believes in their daughter's right to influence and participate, it directly contributes to the development of a confident political leader, capable of representing her community's issues in decision-making positions.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the presented study problem, the descriptive analytical approach was used. In the theoretical part, some basic concepts related to the study topic were identified, and scientific material was collected from

various sources, then classified and categorized. The applied part was conducted through a field study targeting a number of Palestinian women in the West Bank who have political activities or future political ambitions. A questionnaire was used as a data collection tool, followed by statistical processing using a computer and the statistical analysis program (SPSS).

Study Tool

To collect and analyze data to answer the study's questions, the researcher relied on a questionnaire, which included several paragraphs to identify the attitudes of sample members regarding the role of family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank. The questionnaire followed the cognitive style that is based on 5-point Likert scale in order to identify the Approval degree of the study sample individuals regarding the items of the research instrument based on the answer weight, as follows:

Approval degree	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Weight	5	4	3	2	1

Study population and Sample

Population consist a number of women in Palestinian society, specifically in the West Bank, from various women's sectors (associations, parties, school teachers, and university professors), who are active in political participation. Women who are active in political work or have future ambitions in this field were selected. The researcher attempted to reach the largest possible number of Palestinian women in their various job positions, especially in light of the security conditions that have been witnessed in the West Bank for some time. The researcher was able to collect (53) responses, which represented the study sample. The data was successfully collected and entered into the statistical analysis program (SPSS) to extract the results.

Description Of The Study Sample Characteristics

This part of the study aims to show the frequencies and percentages of the personal characteristics of the study sample members related to the first part of the questionnaire, as follows:

Table (1): Characteristics of the study sample members

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Reality of political participation	currently a political activist	22	%41.5
	Have a political ambitions	31	%58.5
	Total	53	%100
Age	Less than 25 years	5	%9.4
	25- Less than 35	13	%24.5
	35- Less than 45	27	%50.9
	more than 45 years	8	%15.1
	Total	53	%100
Qualification	Diploma and less	6	%11.3
	Bachelor's	29	%54.7
	Postgraduate	18	%34
	Total	53	%100
marital status	Single	17	%32.1
	Married	27	%50.9
	Widowed	5	%9.4
	Divorced	4	%7.5
	Total	53	%100

Table (1) show that the majority of the study sample members Have a political ambitions, whose percentage reached (58.5%) of the study sample, while (41.5%) of the study sample have currently a political activist. The results showed that the age of the half of study sample (50.9%) is (35- Less than 45). This is an indication that the sample members have good political experience. Also, most of the study sample members hold a

bachelor's degree, with a percentage of (54.7%). Regarding the marital status variable, the results showed that the majority of the study sample members have Married at a rate of (50.9%), while (32.1%) single.

Research results:

This part of the study presents the data analysis and the results, leading to answering its questions, as follows:

First question: *What are the attitudes of the study sample members towards the role of family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank?*

To answer this question, the mean and standard deviation of the responses of the study sample members were extracted to each question. Based on the 5-point Likert scale, the level of relative importance of items, dimensions and variables were identified according to the following formula (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013):

$$\text{Relative importance} = \frac{(\text{Upper limit of the alternative} - \text{lower limit of the alternative}) / \text{Number of levels}}{(5-1)/3} = 1.33$$

The level of relative importance depending on the value of the mean of the study sample responses weights on items of the research instrument, and the dimensions and variables of its model according to three levels, as follows:

Mean	Relative Importance
1 – less than 2.33	Low
2.33 – less than 3.66	Moderate
3.66 – 5.00	High

Table (2): means and standard deviations of the attitudes of study sample members towards the role of family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership.

No.	Items	Mean	Standard deviation	Relative importance	Rank
1	Family support boosts my self-confidence to participate in politics and political leadership.	4.169	0.545	High	3
2	My family members support me in facing the challenges I face in my ambition to reach political leadership.	4.094	0.628	High	5
3	Family support encourages me to pursue new experiences in the political arena.	4.321	0.727	High	2
4	Family support helps reduce the fears I face when making decisions related to my ambition to participate in politics.	4.396	0.493	High	1
5	Having strong family support contributes to providing a suitable environment for achieving my leadership ambitions.	4.019	0.693	High	6
6	My family members express their pride and encouragement when I participate in political activities or run for leadership in political fields.	3.792	0.987	High	13
7	Family support helps me organize my time between family commitments and my political career.	3.755	0.676	High	14
8	I find that my family's support helps alleviate the psychological pressures associated with my work or political ambitions.	3.830	0.671	High	11
9	My family members feel confident in my political abilities and believe in my ability to reach leadership positions.	3.868	0.589	High	10
10	Family support motivates me to pursue political ambitions despite the challenges.	3.962	0.758	High	7
11	My family provides me with the emotional support I need to face the challenges that stand in the way of my political ambitions.	3.698	0.638	High	15

12	I believe that family support plays a significant role in enhancing my ability to make critical political decisions.	4.151	0.769	High	4
13	Family support enhances my continuity in politics and encourages me to develop my leadership skills.	3.924	0.755	High	8
14	I consider family support one of the most important factors that helped me reach leadership positions in politics.	3.887	0.776	High	9
15	I believe that family support contributes to empowering women to reach political leadership and gives them a greater opportunity to participate in political decision-making.	3.811	0.833	High	12
	Total	3.978	0.314	High	

It is clear from the results presented in Table (2) that the attitudes of the study sample members towards the role of family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership were at a high level, with a mean of (3.978) and standard deviation of (0.314). The results also shown in Table (2) indicate that paragraph (4), which states that "Family support helps reduce the fears I face when making decisions related to my ambition to participate in politics" came in the first rank with a mean of (4.396), followed by paragraph number (3) which states that "Family support encourages me to pursue new experiences in the political arena" came in the second rank with a mean of (4.321), followed in the third rank by paragraph (1) which states that "Family support boosts my self-confidence to participate in politics and political leadership" with a mean of (4.169). On the other hand, the paragraph number (11) which states that "My family provides me with the emotional support I need to face the challenges that stand in the way of my political ambitions" came in the last rank of importance, but at the high level with a mean of (3.698).

Second question: *Is there a role for family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank?*

To determine the role for family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank from the point of view of study sample, a one-Sample t.test was applied, and the results were as shown in the following table:

Table (3): Results of applying (One-Sample t.test) to determine the role for family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank.

	Mean	Standard deviation	Df	T	Sig.
Total	1.150	0.361	52	1044.401	* 0.000

*Statistically significant at a level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

It is clear from the results presented in Table (3) that the value of (T) reached to (1044.401) and it is statistically significant at the level of significance ($0.05 \geq \alpha$), and this indicates the presence of an a role for family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank from the point of view of study sample.

Third question: *Is there a statistically significant differences at ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) between the answers of the study sample members regarding the role of family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank due to the personal variables of the study sample members (age, educational level, marital status)?*

To answer this question, (One Way ANOVA) will be used with regard to the variables (age, educational level, marital status), as follows:

Table (4): One Way ANOVA test for the differences in answers due to the variables (age, educational level, marital status)

Variable	Source of variance	Sum of square	df	Mean of square	F	Sig.
Age	Within groups	1.102	1	1.102	1.576	0.215
	between groups	35.653	51	0.699		
	Total	36.755	52			

Educational level	Within groups	0.028	1	0.028	0.051	0.822
	between groups	27.519	51	0.540		
	Total	27.547	52			
Marital status	Within groups	0.287	1	0.287	0.391	0.534
	between groups	37.411	51	0.734		
	Total	37.698	52			

It is clear from the results presented in Table (4) that there is no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) between the answers of the study sample members about the role for family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank due to the personal variables of the study sample members (age, educational level, marital status), based on the calculated (F) values of (1.576, 0.051, 0.391), respectively, which are not statistically significant at the significance level ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) and at the significance level (Sig=0.215, 0.822, 0.534) respectively, which are greater than (0.05). Accordingly, the answer of the third question is that: there is no statistically significant differences at ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) between the answers of the study sample members regarding the role of family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank due to the personal variables of the study sample members (age, educational level, marital status).

DISCUSSIONS

The results showed that the attitudes of the study sample members towards the role of family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership were at a high level, with a mean of (3.978) and standard deviation of (0.314), as the most of the study sample members believe that family support enhances their self-confidence in participating in political work and political leadership, and contributes to overcoming the challenges they face in their ambition to reach political leadership. It also contributes to empowering them and giving them a greater opportunity to participate in political decision-making, on an equal footing with men.

Also, the study concluded that there is a role for family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership in the West Bank from the point of view of the study sample. This demonstrates that family support plays a pivotal role in empowering Palestinian women to reach political leadership positions. This support boosts women's self-confidence and ambitions, and provides them with the time and resources needed to engage in political participation. This result is consistent with the findings of Tjahjana et al. (2024) study which showed that despite the influential role played by women's leadership in various sectors, including political institutions, family responsibilities negatively affect women's leadership ambitions, therefore, the support provided by the family is essential to achieving their political leadership ambitions. This result also agrees with the findings of Chaudhary and Dutt (2022), which showed that women in some countries do not have equal opportunities with men to reach political leadership positions, and weak family support may be the main reason behind this, due to the patriarchal view and societal customs and traditions. Family support plays an important role in encouraging women to engage in political work and reach political leadership positions.

CONCLUSION

Despite the active participation of Palestinian women in many professional and community activities, and despite their active role in the political struggle against the Israeli occupation, their participation in political leadership positions is limited and weak compared to men. In light of this problem, a number of questions were posed to a number of Palestinian women in the West Bank about the role of family support in Palestinian women's access to political leadership. The results showed that family support plays a significant and influential role in this area. This requires efforts to raise community and family awareness and change men's perceptions of women and their role in political life.

REFERENCES:

1. Abu Khadura, I. (2023), The Struggle of Palestinian Women in the City of Jerusalem (2000-2022), *Journal of Jerusalem Studies*, 23(1).
2. Al-Hajj, A. R. (2020), *Guarantees of Women's Rights in Jordanian Legislation and International Conventions: A Comparative Study*, Master's Thesis, Middle East University, Jordan.
3. Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD), the Role of the Family in Shaping Female Leadership (2024). <https://ardd-jo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/SheLeads-Raising-Future-Leaders.pdf>
4. Arisa, I. N.; Privia, M. Musa, D. TH. And Junida, D. S. (2025). Women's Political Leadership: An Analysis Of Gender Equality In Legislators In SEKADAU, *Journal Sosiologi Dialektika Sosial*, 11(1).
5. Chaudhary, N. and Dutt, A. (2022). Women as Agents of Change: Exploring Women Leaders' Resistance and Shaping of Gender Ideologies in Pakistan, *Front. Psychol.* 13.
6. Erekat, D. S. (2025). *Palestinian Women in Diplomacy and Political Leadership*, an article published on the Al-Quds website, dated 3/9/2025, available at the link: <https://www.alquds.com/ar/posts/154094>
7. Islah J., The Palestinian Women's Movement after Oslo: A Bitter Harvest in Self-Empowerment and Homeland Liberation, 24/3/2014, accessed at: <https://bit.ly/3g6sYPy>
8. Khalaf A., Baha' al-Din A R., and al-Farjani, AF. M. (2022). The Role of Palestinian Women in Social and Political Change under the Israeli Occupation, *Journal of Scientific Development for Studies and Research*, 3(12).
9. Moore, H. L. (2009). *Anthropologic y feminism*, Basil Blackwell Ltd, 5TH edition.
10. Nidatya, N.; Darmastuti, S. and Saraswati, D. (2024). Protection of Women's Rights in the Escalating Conflict in Palestine, *Journal Sejarah*, 8(1).
11. Randall, A. (2023). Women's Rights and the Palestinian Authority, *Almuntaqa*, 6(1).
12. Shadid, R. (2022), *The Role of Women in Preserving the Palestinian Identity between Tradition and Nationalism*, The Palestinian Resource Center for Residency and Refugee Rights (Badil).
13. Shava, G. N., Chasara, T, Tlou F. N., and Mathonsi, E. (2021). Leadership and Gender, women management: the social realist analytical theoretical view point, *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, Volume V, Issue V, 94-101.
14. Tjahjana, D.; Dwidienawati, D.; Rohayati, T.; Kenziro, K.; Wijaya, F.; Nathania, S.; Gandasari, D. (2024). The Role of Family Responsibility, Assertiveness, and Networking in Building Female Leadership Aspirations. *Sustainability*, 16, 5194.
15. Zaqqouq, M. and Zayed, D. (2025). *Palestinian Women: Between War Resilience and Their Role in Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Gaza*, Palestinian Civil Society Contributes Actively to Shaping the Palestine's Future.