



The Role of Palestinian Teachers in Resisting the Israelization of Education in East Jerusalem (2015–2024): Strategies and Experiences

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This study examines the role of Palestinian teachers in East Jerusalem in confronting policies of Israelization within the education system between 2015 and 2024. These policies, implemented through ministerial directives and Israeli five-year plans, seek to reshape the cognitive and cultural orientations of Palestinian students. Within this context, the study conceptualizes teachers as pedagogical and cultural actors whose role extends beyond the transmission of knowledge to include diverse forms of educational resistance. This resistance is manifested through both overt and covert practices, including alternative pedagogical approaches and extracurricular activities that aim to cultivate critical consciousness and reinforce cultural belonging.

The study employs a qualitative methodology based on two case studies conducted in East Jerusalem schools (J/M Boys' School and R/W Girls' School). It analyzes variations in teachers' practices along a continuum ranging from resistance to compliance with Israelization policies. The findings indicate that Palestinian teachers function as a primary agent of educational resistance to these policies. Moreover, the effectiveness of such resistance is closely associated with the level of community engagement and institutional support within the school environment.

Despite fieldwork limitations and security-related constraints that restricted access to certain educational settings, the study underscores the centrality of education as a site of cultural and political contestation. It further positions teachers as key actors in resisting cultural domination and in reframing education as an emancipatory practice within East Jerusalem. The study concludes by recommending the strengthening of pedagogical, institutional, and community-based support systems for Palestinian teachers in order to mitigate the impact of Israelization policies on students.

Keywords: Israelization of Education; East Jerusalem; Liberatory Education; Israeli Five-Year Plan; Bagrut

Introduction

Since 2015, the education sector in East Jerusalem has faced a marked escalation in Israeli efforts to impose a state curriculum. This strategy is primarily executed by tying school funding to the adoption of the *Bagrut* (the Israeli General Secondary

Education Certificate) and by ramping up administrative and security oversight within Palestinian institutions. According to various research and human rights reports, this pressure has been effective: the number of schools implementing the Israeli curriculum—either in full or in part—surged from fewer than 15 prior to 2012 to over 50 by 2020. This trend is mirrored by a growing student body in the *Bagrut* track, incentivized by financial rewards and organizational mandates embedded in the Israeli Five-Year Plan (2018–2023). Collectively, these shifts have fundamentally reshaped Jerusalem’s educational landscape, transforming Palestinian schools into a primary site for direct political intervention (Badawi, 2021).

A series of successive Israeli policies—ranging from the Naftali Bennett initiative (2015–2018) to the first (2018–2023) and second (2023–2028) Five-Year Plans—have shared a central objective: the «Israelization» of East Jerusalem’s school curricula. However, Palestinian teachers have emerged as the chief obstacle to these goals. Because they serve as the vital link between the curriculum and the student, these educators operate at the front lines, where official mandates collide with the daily lived reality of the classroom.

In this environment, «Israelization» policies do more than just alter textbooks; they specifically target Palestinian teachers through a compounding array of professional, administrative, and security pressures. This creates a paradox for the educators: they are simultaneously the primary targets of these policies and the most essential figures in resisting and mitigating their influence.

Consequently, this study explores a central question: In what ways do the efforts of Palestinian teachers in East Jerusalem schools help counteract the «Israelization» of curricula for their students?

While several scholars and organizations have examined the teacher’s role in resisting curriculum «Israelization»—including Ghabariya (2021), Qadah (2023), Masarwa (2022), and Allayan (2019), as well as reports from the Parents’ Committees (2023), Al-Haq (2023), and the National Coalition (2022) a gap remains in the literature. Most existing studies have not sufficiently addressed the immediate, personal risks these teachers face, particularly as Israeli policies intensify under the second Five-Year Plan (2023–2027) and amidst the ongoing war on Gaza.¹

This study seeks to bridge that gap by analyzing the impact of Israeli policies on Palestinian teachers in Jerusalem between 2015 and 2024. It highlights how education has transformed into a site of direct confrontation, where the teacher is no longer a mere conduit for information, but a symbol of cultural resistance. Beyond its academic contribution, the study holds practical significance by examining the role of education in shaping the consciousness of Palestinian students.

1 The occupation’s targeting has become more evident; the most recent was the arrest of teacher Mohammed Abu Lafi on February 2025 ,1, on the pretext of distributing the Palestinian curriculum. According to Wattan News Agency, February 2025 ,1 (wattan.net), and based on a report by «Ir Amim» regarding Israeli educational policy in Jerusalem, the construction of classrooms and schools is conditional upon joining the Israeli curriculum.



The research is grounded in the concept of «liberatory education» as proposed by Paulo Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire argues that educational institutions are never neutral spaces for knowledge transmission; rather, they serve as tools for reproducing identity and fostering intellectual resistance against colonial hegemony. In this context, liberatory education is approached as a critical pedagogical practice that goes beyond teaching facts to dismantle power dynamics within the educational field, empowering educators to produce alternative knowledge that challenges authority (Freire, 1970). From this perspective, education in East Jerusalem is viewed not as a neutral process, but as a theater of cognitive and cultural engagement where Israeli educational policies intersect with the daily practices of teachers, resulting in varying patterns of resistance and compliance. Consequently, the Palestinian teacher stands at the heart of this struggle—acting simultaneously as a pedagogical agent and a direct target of Israelization policies.

The study posits that the efforts of Palestinian teachers in Jerusalem help limit the impact of Israelization on student consciousness. This occurs not only through classroom teaching strategies but also through their roles as cultural mediators who strengthen the bond between the school and the local community. In this sense, education becomes a vehicle for reproducing knowledge as an act of cultural resistance.

This resistance is neither linear nor static; it manifests across a broad spectrum of responses ranging from individual steadfastness to collective action. It is a dynamic and evolving process, embedded in the details of daily life, that continuously reshapes a resistant consciousness. Rather than moving toward a fixed endpoint, this resistance evolves in response to shifting contexts.

To achieve these research findings, the author examines two case studies reflecting different school models in East Jerusalem: the J/M Boys' School and the R/W Girls' School. The former serves as a model of resistance and defiance against «Israelization» policies, while the latter exemplifies direct compliance with them. Although these two cases do not encapsulate the entire educational landscape of Jerusalem, they offer a comparative lens through which to deeper understand the impact of Israelization on both students and teachers, highlighting the varied institutional responses between resistance and alignment.

The Evolution of Palestinian Teachers' Strategies in Resisting the Israelization of Education in East Jerusalem (1967–2024)

This historical review examines the role Palestinian teachers in East Jerusalem have played since 1967 in countering Israeli attempts to impose its curriculum. Their efforts have centered on a variety of strategies designed to safeguard the national narrative and instill a sense of Palestinian cultural identity among their students.

Since the beginning of the Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967, Palestinian teachers have served as the first line of defense against the imposition of Israeli curricula. This was most notably demonstrated by the teachers' strike in late 1967,

which lasted several months in protest of the occupation authorities' decision to abolish the Arabic curriculum. As studies in *Al-Maqdisiya* journal indicate, this strike was instrumental in thwarting the initial attempt, forcing the authorities to retain the Jordanian curriculum as the primary reference. This set a historical precedent that solidified the teacher's role as the guardian of national consciousness within Jerusalem's schools (Abu-Asbah, 2011).

With the implementation of the compulsory education law in 1976, educational control shifted into a more sophisticated phase. Policies began integrating Jewish identity into the curricula, particularly through «Civics» courses and the reframing of historical content. In response, Palestinian teachers utilized alternative instructional strategies to re-present lessons in a way that preserved the national narrative and mitigated the impact of the imposed content—practices categorized in educational literature as «silent resistance» (Al-Ghoul, 2018; Salem, 2024).

During the 1990s, despite the introduction of «peace» concepts following the 1993 Oslo Accords, Israeli educational content remained biased toward the Zionist narrative. This prompted teachers to expand their pedagogical influence beyond the classroom, using extracurricular activities and cultural programs to foster critical thinking and national belonging (Harel, 2005). Research from *Al-Maqdisiya* suggests this period marked a shift from direct confrontation toward more flexible educational strategies that nonetheless maintained their national core (Salem, 2024).

At the turn of the millennium, the Israeli Ministry of Education mandated the teaching of «the history of the Land of Israel» as an exclusive historical right. This forced dozens of Palestinian schools in East Jerusalem to adopt the curriculum as part of a comprehensive Israelization track. However, as documented by *Al-Maqdisiya*, teachers continued to develop pedagogical alternatives that asserted the Palestinian narrative, even in the face of oversight bodies like the «Keryat» Institute, which monitored both curricula and staff (Pappé, 2008; Salem, 2024).

In the last decade—particularly during Naftali Bennett's tenure as Minister of Education (2015–2019)—coercive policies escalated by linking school funding to the adoption of the *Bagrut* system and increasing security and administrative interference. This phase represented a qualitative shift: the focus of the occupation expanded from targeting content to targeting the teachers themselves, recognizing them as the central actors in any project of resistance or compliance within the school (Ghabariya, 2015; Masarwa, 2022; Salem, 2024).

These policies intensified further with the 3970 Five-Year Plan (2018–2024)¹. In response, Palestinian teachers developed alternative strategies, most notably the use of national literature and poetry, as well as cultural and community activities

1 Plan 3970 is the five-year plan approved by the Israeli government in 2018 for the development of East Jerusalem. It included provisions for the education sector focused on promoting the Israeli curriculum and linking education to employment in the Israeli labor market. Additionally, the term «pedagogical resistance» is used to describe the efforts of teachers and educational institutions to counter hegemonic policies aimed at erasing national identity.



to strengthen the connection between students and their Palestinian heritage. These educators have come to embody a model of pedagogical resistance, maintaining their pivotal role in safeguarding national consciousness against ongoing efforts of Israelization (Al-Ju'beh, 2014).

Literature Review

This literature review examines previous research regarding the role of Palestinian teachers in confronting Israeli policies within East Jerusalem schools, with a specific focus on their efforts to mitigate the impact of these policies on their students. To achieve this, the review is organized into three primary sections:

1. **Israeli Policies and the Israelization of Curricula:** Teachers between resistance and adaptation.
2. **The Role of Teachers in Building Community Partnerships** to counter Israelization.
3. **Extracurricular Activities** as a tool for resisting Israelization.

Israeli Policies and the Israelization of Education: The Role of Teachers Between Resistance and Adaptation

Liberatory and Resistant Educational Strategies: A Case Study of Jerusalem and Algeria in the Face of Israelization and Cultural Colonialism

Existing literature reveals that the Palestinian teacher in Jerusalem does not function as a neutral conveyor of information. Instead, they are educational actors in direct contact with policies that target the educational sphere and utilize the curriculum as a tool for control and the reshaping of consciousness. In this context, scholarship on Palestinian education in Israel highlights how education is intertwined with a logic of «empowerment versus control» within the state system, placing teachers in a state of permanent structural tension (Al-Haj, 1995). This aligns with the work of Ismael Abu-Saad, who argues that the Arabic curriculum in Israel was designed to strip education of authentic Palestinian history and memory, thereby entrenching the state's narrative and marginalizing the Palestinian voice (Abu-Saad, 2008).

In response to these policies, Palestinian teachers have turned to alternative teaching strategies to counter Israelization. As Qadah (2023) notes, they have worked to reinterpret texts in ways that bolster national identity. This approach resonates with Freire's vision in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, where education is viewed as a liberatory tool that fosters students' critical consciousness. These ideas further intersect with Hamdan's work on how education in Algeria was used as a means of resisting cultural colonialism, where the promotion of national language and culture served as a primary tool against colonial policies (Hamdan, 2019).

Liberatory Education Between Silent Resistance and Adaptation: Strategies of

Palestinian Teachers in Confronting Israelization

Although many Palestinian teachers in Jerusalem have adopted liberatory and resistant strategies to face Israelization, these efforts have not always been feasible or sustainable. Teachers have encountered significant political and financial constraints, leading some to adopt adaptive strategies to ensure their continued employment within the Israeli educational system. In this regard, Abu al-Saud (2021) points out that teachers were not always able to express their resistance explicitly; circumstances often forced them to strike a balance between steadfastness and compliance.

Masarwa (2022) echoes this, explaining that some teachers felt compelled to partially accept Israeli curricula as a survival mechanism within these institutions. This created a state of constant negotiation between maintaining one's livelihood and continuing to convey the Palestinian narrative through indirect means.

Within this framework, the strategies of certain Palestinian teachers can be understood through the concept of «silent resistance.» Here, resistance manifests in indirect, unannounced practices that challenge the prevailing authority without open confrontation. Teachers who find themselves forced into outward compliance with Israelization policies may rely on subtle methods, such as reinterpreting textbooks, emphasizing national identity through the «hidden» or informal curriculum, or fostering critical thinking in ways that do not overtly clash with the official framework. In this sense, resistance is not necessarily a direct or explicit act; it can take the form of quiet, daily practices that have a profound, long-term impact on students' consciousness and cultural identity (Allyan, 2022, Salem, 2024).

On the other hand, Al-Ju'beh's research on the socio-economic landscape of Jerusalem offers a compelling counter-perspective to the findings of Abu al-Saud. Al-Ju'beh argues that Palestinian teachers have been far from passive recipients of Israeli policy; instead, they have pioneered alternative educational tools—such as poetry recitals and field trips—that actively reinforce Palestinian identity (Al-Ju'beh, 2014). From this vantage point, the researcher contends that the liberatory framework evident in East Jerusalem schools is not merely a collection of ad-hoc practices, but a deliberate educational strategy forged through daily resistance to Israelization. These findings suggest that this framework, with its critical content and resistant pedagogical practices, necessitates more robust educational policies capable of institutionalizing the school's role as a site for critical thought and the protection of students' national consciousness. Moving beyond a reliance on individual teacher initiatives toward structured, systemic support is essential to ensuring the steadfastness (*sumud*) and survival of Palestinian education in the face of forced integration and annexation.

The Israelization of Education: Tying Funding to Israeli Curricula

With the implementation of Plan 3970 (2018–2023), 445 million NIS was earmarked to promote Hebrew language instruction and mandate extracurricular activities



designed to bolster Israeli identity. This has placed immense strain on Palestinian teachers, who must navigate the difficulties of advocating for the future of Palestinian education while facing personal harassment (Qadah, 2023).

The organization Ir Amim confirms that these policies have led to a sharp rise in the adoption of the Israeli curriculum; the number of participating schools grew from 14 in 2012 to 50 by 2020. This shift has significantly hampered the ability of Palestinian educators to deliver a curriculum that centers on the national narrative (Ir Amim, 2021).

Figure 1 illustrates the shifting enrollment trends across various educational tracks, clearly reflecting the impact of Israeli policy on educational choices in East Jerusalem. However, Allyan (2019) maintains that Israel's efforts to impose its curriculum have not been entirely successful, as teachers continue to weave Palestinian content into their lessons even within the Israeli framework. Ghabariya (2021) concurs, pointing out that existing research has yet to fully analyze the specific ways teachers navigate these classroom challenges amidst constant political and security pressures.

Beyond academic oversight, Masarwa (2022) observes that Israel has involved the Shin Bet (Shabak)¹ in the educational process, requiring security clearance for the appointment of both principals and teachers. This has noticeably escalated the pressure on the workforce. While the researcher notes that Masarwa's work on «creeping Israelization» highlights this security intervention, it tends to overlook the specific counter-strategies teachers use to circumvent these policies. Other literature, such as Qadah's study, identifies several «hidden» tactics, such as providing neutral responses during security interviews, utilizing informal recruitment networks, and conducting lessons beyond official surveillance (Qadah, 2023). However, scholars like Jaber (2020) caution that these strategies, while effective in the short term, are not a sustainable solution. As Israeli authorities refine their surveillance methods, the legal and professional risks for teachers continue to grow.

In this context, recent debates in the Israeli Knesset indicate a further escalation in policies targeting Palestinian teachers. Proposals have been introduced aimed

1 The Shin Bet (Israeli Security Agency) is Israel's internal security and intelligence service. It operates under the authority of the Prime Minister's Office and is primarily responsible for internal security matters. Its stated duties include countering what it defines as "security threats," such as militant activities, espionage, and attempts to destabilize areas under Israeli control. The agency is also responsible for intelligence gathering, security investigations, and the protection of sensitive persons and facilities. According to the agency's official website, its mission is "to protect the security of the State of Israel, to thwart and prevent terrorist and subversive activities," and it operates within a legal framework under direct governmental authority. Israeli Security Agency (Shin Bet / ISA), "About the ISA," official website: <https://www.shabak.gov.il/en/about/about/>

at tightening security oversight over recruitment procedures and institutionalizing the requirement of prior security clearance as part of hiring processes. During a session held on 20 December 2024, chaired by Member of Knesset Avichai Boaron, Palestinian teachers were broadly characterized (estimated at 90%) as “terrorists,” with accusations that they disseminate anti-Israel ideology. The discussion further called for increased security monitoring and for the formal and direct integration of the Israeli Security Agency into teacher recruitment mechanisms (Knesset, 2024).

These developments suggest that security involvement in the education sector may already exist in a less formalized or less publicly acknowledged manner, while current legislative debates seek to transform such involvement into an explicit and institutionalized framework within state procedures. Accordingly, a distinction can be made between an existing level of indirect or partially covert security engagement and an emerging process of formalization and overt incorporation of security structures into educational employment systems. In contrast, al-Ju’beh (2014) argues that Palestinian society, particularly through parents’ committees, continues to play a crucial role in sustaining informal educational initiatives. These initiatives include organizing activities and events that reinforce national identity, thereby constituting a form of community-based steadfastness (*sumud*) against attempts to regulate or monopolize the educational sphere.

Similarly, Mansour (2014) argues that the intensification of Israelization has moved beyond the curriculum, driving teachers to forge deep partnerships with the local community to fill the resulting educational gaps. This has led to an academic debate over whether these community-based strategies can provide a sustainable form of resistance in the face of ongoing escalation. The following section examines the specific mechanisms of these partnerships and how teachers leverage community ties to counter educational Israelization.

The Role of Teachers in Building Community Partnerships Against Israelization

As Israelization policies in Jerusalem have ramped up, the role of Palestinian teachers has expanded from traditional instruction to the cultivation of community-wide partnerships aimed at preserving national identity and resisting the imposition of Israeli curricula. Al-Haj (as cited in Mi’ari, 2013) describes this resistance as a series of informal strategies, such as the subtle integration of Palestinian history into lessons and the organization of extracurricular activities that foster cultural belonging. Al-Haj (2014) further notes that the Israeli Ministry of Education exerts significant pressure on schools through the threat of license revocation and funding cuts. In response, teachers have adopted informal educational programs—often with direct parental support—to maintain the integrity of the original curriculum and encourage critical thinking.



Qadah (2023) emphasizes that the success of these initiatives hinges on a genuine partnership between educators and families, often manifested through financial and moral support campaigns that bolster the school's ability to resist external pressure. However, Ghabariya (2021) points out that the lack of a comprehensive, unified alternative curriculum remains a significant challenge in the struggle against imposed frameworks. This suggests a need for a more holistic approach to ensure the long-term sustainability of such resistance. Consequently, academic discourse is now focused on whether these teacher-community alliances can offer a viable, long-term model of educational resistance amidst tightening restrictions and escalating Israeli intervention.

The Importance of Social Initiatives in Limiting Israelization

A study by UNESCO underscores the vital role community initiatives play in bolstering Palestinian national identity through activities such as poetry evenings, musical events, and fine arts exhibitions. Within this framework, Palestinian teachers act as essential bridges to the local community, coordinating efforts to integrate these social initiatives directly into the educational process by bringing them into the classroom (UNESCO, 2022). In a similar vein, the Parents' Committee of Al-Iman Schools expresses a view shared by the author regarding the limited role of the Palestinian Authority, which they argue is restricted to monitoring and issuing condemnations without providing actual support to the schools. The committee emphasizes that resisting Israelization policies often falls upon the individual initiatives of private school owners, while teachers shoulder the primary burden of protecting national identity. As the committee aptly put it: «There is no fear for our children as long as the teacher is Palestinian» ¹(Al-Iman Schools Parents' Committee, 2023, p12-). In the absence of official institutional backing, Palestinian educators rely heavily on extracurricular activities to cultivate national identity and resist Israelization. The following section explores how these activities serve as a defense against Israeli policies within the schools.

Extracurricular Activities as a Tool of Resistance

Extracurricular activities have emerged as a primary mechanism for countering Israelization, as they foster cultural belonging and historical awareness among students. The Arab Educational Council notes that these programs provide a space to present a national narrative that runs parallel to the Israeli curriculum, thereby preserving the collective Palestinian consciousness. However, these activities face significant hurdles due to Israeli restrictions on funding and the imposition of rigorous censorship (Arab Educational Council, 2010).

1 Al-Iman Schools Parents' Committee. (2023). *Education: The silent war in Jerusalem*. Retrieved from https://www.jnagency.net/en_us/3816/

Among the activities designed to strengthen identity and collective memory against Zionist narratives are:

First: National, Cultural, and Artistic Activities

Research by Peled-Elhanan (2012) indicates that Israeli curricula do more than just omit the Palestinian narrative; they actively distort the image of Palestinians, portraying them as a security threat. This environment compels teachers to adopt alternative strategies to reinforce national identity, such as organizing poetry competitions, art exhibitions, and musical performances that celebrate Palestinian heritage. Zahdeh (2016) agrees, noting that cultural events are a cornerstone of resistance, particularly given the lack of an effective official role for the Palestinian Authority in Jerusalem.

Similarly, Ibrahim (2020) highlights the «dual narratives» students face—the imposed Zionist version versus the national version provided by teachers and the community. Commemorating national events like Land Day and the Nakba is a crucial extension of these efforts, playing a decisive role in strengthening national belonging and resisting the internalization of Israeli narratives. This makes such activities an inseparable part of cultural resistance within the school system.

These findings align with Alayan's (2021) study, which demonstrates the importance of national activities in reconnecting students with their Palestinian heritage. These events are not merely about reviving collective memory; they function as a mechanism for anchoring national identity in the face of Israelization attempts. Based on these studies, the author maintains that such activities heighten students' awareness of their history and cultural legacy, making them more deeply connected to their educational and social environments. alongside cultural events, the promotion of the Arabic language serves as a key tool of resistance through literary competitions and discussion circles that solidify the use of the language within the system and push back against attempts to marginalize it.

Second: Strengthening the Arabic Language

To counter the imposition of Hebrew, Ibrahim (2020) confirms that linguistic activities—such as literary competitions and language clubs mitigate the influence of the Israeli curriculum on students' linguistic consciousness. The Al-Haq Foundation (2021) supports this view, highlighting the role of such activities in resisting «Hebraization.» These efforts are not confined to the schools themselves but extend into «popular education» initiatives, opening the door for further study into how community partnerships preserve cultural heritage.

Third: Popular Education and Community Partnerships

Ghabariya (2021) points out that popular education—a model famously utilized by teachers during the First Intifada—remains an effective tool for bypassing Israeli restrictions. Today, this model is employed to organize workshops and awareness programs in partnership with the local community to confront Israelization.



This review concludes by reaffirming the pivotal role that community partnerships play in strengthening resistance to educational Israelization. Reports from Al-Haq (2021) suggest that these partnerships empower students to develop the critical tools necessary to challenge the influence of Israeli curricula, creating supportive learning environments outside the formal school structure. In this context, the Palestinian teacher emerges as the central actor in activating these partnerships, leading and organizing extracurricular activities that transcend the classroom to foster national identity and cultural awareness. The literature demonstrates that these activities are not merely a pedagogical supplement; they are a strategic extension of educational resistance, serving as alternative spaces for the reproduction of national knowledge. Consequently, teacher-led extracurricular activities represent one of the most effective paths for resisting educational hegemony, especially given the structural and political challenges facing the Palestinian educational environment in East Jerusalem.

Hypothesis and Counter-Hypotheses

Much of the existing literature has discussed Israel's stance on education in Jerusalem, identifying it as a primary battleground between Palestinians and the Israeli occupation authorities, who seek to impose Israelized curricula to alter students' consciousness and national identity. In light of this, the present study adopts one central hypothesis while rejecting two others that are inconsistent with the reality presented here.

The fundamental question remains: to what extent can the efforts of Palestinian teachers help reduce the impact of curriculum Israelization? To address this, the study tests a **primary hypothesis**: that the efforts of Palestinian teachers in East Jerusalem effectively mitigate the impact of Israelized curricula on student consciousness, not only through classroom strategies but by acting as cultural mediators between the school and the community.

A **second counter-hypothesis** suggests that resistance to Israelization is not the sole province of teachers, but extends to other influential actors. East Jerusalem schools across various categories play a significant role in countering Occupation policies; for instance, some private and *Waqf* (religious endowment) schools actively limit the use of Israelized curricula by adopting Palestinian or international alternatives. Meanwhile, parochial and religious schools strive to bolster national education despite the pressures they face, making the school environment itself a key factor in mitigating the impact of Israelization.

Furthermore, a **third counter-hypothesis** posits that the cohesive nature of Jerusalemite society, coupled with its overt rejection of Occupation policies, provides a supportive framework for resisting Israeli curricula. Local families and institutions work to reinforce students' cultural and national identity, which in turn diminishes the influence of Israelized content within the school setting.

Despite these arguments, the primary hypothesis remains the most compelling. The role

of Palestinian teachers extends far beyond the mere delivery of academic content; they are the agents who cultivate critical thinking. This is supported by Qadah (2022), who notes that despite the immense pressure from Occupation authorities, teachers have successfully exerted a positive influence through innovative instructional strategies and the use of cultural and artistic activities to strengthen national consciousness. This intersection with Ghabariya's (2022) study—which confirms that teachers continue to play an active role in confronting curriculum Israelization through these methods—further reinforces the primary hypothesis. Moreover, the findings of this study suggest that while the roles of schools, local communities, and political or religious forces are important, they are less effective than the role of the teacher. This is because these other frameworks tend to have an indirect impact, whereas teachers engage directly and daily with students in the classroom, positioning them as the central actors and the first line of defense against Israeli educational policies.

Teacher testimonies further support this view. As one history teacher remarked: «Teaching today has become more than just the transfer of knowledge; it is a tool for cultural steadfastness» (Personal Interview, 2024). To maintain ethical standards, the participant's identity has been kept confidential. Additionally, reports from the Al-Haq and Alyan's field study indicate that teacher-led activities have contributed to a 40% increase in the proportion of students who reject the Israelized curriculum (Al-Haq, 2021; Alyan, 2022).

Proposed Research Methodology

This study utilizes a **qualitative methodology**, as it is the most effective approach for deconstructing complex colonial phenomena and understanding the underlying educational and cultural dimensions of educational Israelization in East Jerusalem. In this research, the qualitative method is treated not merely as a tool for data collection, but as a flexible, critical practice that allows for the production of in-depth knowledge through direct interaction with educational actors—primarily Palestinian teachers—within a highly sensitive political and security context.

This approach aligns with the perspective of Gerring (2006), who emphasizes the importance of qualitative methods and case studies in uncovering causal mechanisms and understanding complex social contexts. Such contexts cannot be reduced to quantitative approaches, particularly in educational environments defined by unequal power dynamics, such as those found in East Jerusalem.

Study Design: Qualitative Case Study

The study employs a **within-case study design** combined with a **crucial case study** approach to analyze the experiences of Palestinian teachers within two school environments subject to direct Israeli educational policies. This design allows for a focused examination of how teachers interact with Israelization policies within



a specific spatial and temporal context, while highlighting variations in patterns of resistance and compliance both within a single school and across different institutions.

Study Field and Case Selection

The study focuses on two schools in East Jerusalem:

1. **J/M Boys' School:** A government school under the jurisdiction of the Israeli Ministry of Education.
2. **R/W Girls' School in Beit Hanina:** A private school operating under the supervision of the Jerusalem Municipality.

These two schools were selected because they operate within a mixed educational system that offers both the Israeli *Bagrut* and the Palestinian *Tawjihi*. This makes them ideal models for understanding the impact of Israelization policies on educational practices and student national identity, as well as for analyzing the differences in how government and private schools strategize in response to these policies (Jerusalem Municipality, 2024).

Study Sample

The sample consists of a selected group of male and female teachers from the aforementioned schools who have direct experience teaching either the Israeli or the integrated curricula. The sample included:

- Seven teachers from the boys' school.
- Three teachers from the girls' school.

Participants were selected based on specific criteria:

- Teaching experience within the Jerusalem context.
- Direct involvement in teaching the mandated curricula.
- Willingness to participate in the research under conditions of confidentiality and ethical protection.

Data Collection Tools

The research relied on several qualitative tools, including:

1. **Semi-structured interviews** with teachers, focusing on:
 - Their daily experiences dealing with Israelized curricula.
 - Their pedagogical strategies for resistance or adaptation.
 - Their perceptions of how educational policies affect students.
2. **Direct and participant observation**, drawing on the researcher's prior experience working in schools under the Ministry of Education. This provided a deep understanding of how educational policies are implemented and their

impact on the school environment.

3. **Digital source analysis**, which involved examining the schools' official social media pages as spaces that reflect educational discourse, extracurricular activities, and community engagement strategies.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data was processed using thematic analysis through the following steps:

1. Transcribing the interviews.
2. Coding the data according to themes derived from the theoretical framework (e.g., Israelization, silent resistance, compliance).
3. Comparing cases to identify patterns of similarity and difference.

To ensure the credibility of the findings, the study employed:

- **Methodological triangulation** between interviews, observation, and digital sources.
- **Repeated analytical review** of the data to ensure internal consistency.
- **Ethical Considerations**
 - Given the sensitive political and security landscape in East Jerusalem, the research adhered to strict ethical standards:
 - The identities of all participants were concealed, and pseudonyms or codes were used instead.
 - To protect the safety of all those involved, the names of schools and specific details that could expose participants to professional or security risks were omitted.
 - The researcher secured informed verbal consent from all participants before conducting interviews, ensuring they clearly understood the study's objectives and boundaries.

Research Constraints

The study faced significant field and security constraints, including restricted access to certain educational settings and movement limitations within Jerusalem. While these factors influenced the sample size and the scope of direct observation, they did not undermine the study's ability to provide a profound qualitative analysis of teachers' experiences and their strategies for confronting Israelization.

In this context, the call for further field research is not an admission of incomplete data or procedural flaws; rather, it is a scientific conclusion drawn from the study's findings. It underscores the vital importance of deepening our understanding of these



pedagogical practices and developing sustainable support frameworks for Palestinian teachers as Israeli interventions—tied to five-year plans and educational surveillance policies—continue to escalate. Consequently, by adopting a qualitative and case-study approach, this research helps fill critical gaps in contemporary literature, particularly regarding the 2023–2024 period, which has seen varying degrees of attention in legal and analytical scholarship (Masarwa, 2022; Muftah, 2021).

Definitions and Indicators

This section conceptualizes the shifting role of teachers in these schools, moving from mere conveyors of information to influential actors and resisters in the face of current events. It clarifies what is meant by educators as «producers of knowledge» or «resisters» of these policies and identifies the indicators used to track the implementation of such strategies.

Dependent Variable: The Role of Teachers in Mitigating the Impact of the Israeli Curriculum on Palestinian Students. This role is manifested through pedagogical strategies and resistant cultural practices that blend liberatory education with silent resistance. These efforts aim to foster critical consciousness and national identity among students operating under Israeli hegemony.

The indicators for the roles performed by Palestinian teachers in East Jerusalem schools are as follows:

1. **Knowledge Production and Engagement with the Imposed Curriculum.** This component refers to the ability of Palestinian teachers to develop alternative educational materials and lesson plans that reflect Palestinian culture and heritage. This transforms them into producers of knowledge rather than passive transmitters. This role is measured by the quantity and quality of national educational materials produced, particularly in journalism, history, and religion classes (Masarwa, 2022).
2. **Cultural Resistance.** This refers to the teacher's role in organizing extracurricular activities that bolster national identity, providing an educational alternative to the mandated Israeli policies. Its significance lies in the strategic use of education as a tool of resistance, measured by the nature of non-classroom activities that enhance students' sense of cultural belonging (Ghoul, 2022).
3. **Interaction with the Educational Environment.** This concept describes how Palestinian teachers respond to the pressures and policies imposed by Israeli authorities by developing innovative teaching methods. This interaction reflects the educators' capacity to adapt to a challenging environment and utilize education as a form of resistance. It can be assessed by analyzing the resistant content provided by teachers and the extent to which it bypasses imposed restrictions during the delivery of the curriculum (Ghabariya, 2022).

4. **Promoting Critical Thinking and Utilizing Technology to Support Resistant Education.** This aspect focuses on the teacher's role in encouraging students to critically analyze curriculum content within the context of their lived reality, thereby strengthening their capacity for intellectual and liberatory engagement. This is measured through the evaluation of student projects, class discussions, and the employment of digital tools as means of resistance and liberation (Freire, 1970; Qudah, 2022).

Case Study: A Comparison of the J/M Boys' School and the R/W Girls' School in Mitigating the Impact of the Israeli Curriculum

This section provides an analytical case study focusing on the policies implemented by Israeli occupation authorities between 2015 and 2024, examining their impact on the curricula of East Jerusalem schools. It specifically highlights the resistant role played by Palestinian teachers, with a particular focus on J/M Boys' Secondary School and R/W School.

This case study offers an analytical framework for understanding the transformations within East Jerusalem's education sector from 2015 to 2018—a pivotal phase that preceded the expansion of Israeli Five-Year Plans. This period saw a surge in political and administrative interference in Palestinian schools, directly affecting educational practices and the status of Palestinian students within the system.

The Tenure of Naftali Bennett as Minister of Education (2015–2018)

This era was marked by intense security and political escalation, followed by a concentrated effort to expand «Israelization» after 2015. This was evidenced by the policies of the Israeli Ministry of Education, which imposed strict censorship on East Jerusalem curricula and tightened restrictions on the pedagogical methods used by Palestinian teachers (Masarat, 2019).

In a notable press statement, Bennett asserted: «The time has come to teach the Israeli curriculum in East Jerusalem from the earliest grades. Jerusalem must be unified academically, not just in slogans. The more we rely on the Israeli curriculum, the stronger Jerusalem's educational system becomes and that is how we build a shared future» (*Haaretz*, 2021).

These remarks underscore the Israeli objective of securing total control over the educational process in Jerusalem, a goal reflected in the modifications the Israeli Ministry of Education forced upon the curricula. Research indicates the Ministry designed courses specifically to reshape the political consciousness of students to align with the Zionist narrative, introducing fundamental changes to Arabic language, Religious Education, and History textbooks. These revisions promote concepts tailored to the Israeli vision of the conflict (Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, 2020).



Assessing Progress During the Bennett Era (2015–2018)

Despite the escalating pressure to enforce the Israeli curriculum between 2015 and 2018, these attempts failed to achieve a breakthrough in implementation. This can be attributed to a complex interplay between the collective rejection of Jerusalemite society and the stance of Palestinian teachers, who acted as central agents capable of disrupting the path of Israelization within the school.

During this period, organized yet quiet forms of educational resistance emerged, led by Palestinian teachers who found themselves on the front lines of the struggle over educational content. A testimony from a teacher at J/M Boys' School captures this spirit of defiance; he recounted his refusal to modify course materials to include terminology aligned with the Israeli narrative, insisting: «If we lose our curricula, we lose our memory and our culture entirely.»

This testimony, along with others, demonstrates that the teachers' stance helped sensitize students and parents to the dangers of the Israelized curriculum, serving as a pillar for ongoing community rejection. In accordance with ethical research standards, this interview was documented with the participant's identity strictly concealed to prevent professional or security repercussions (Personal Interview, M.A., Dec 30, 2024).

This resistance was not confined to the classroom; it spilled over into the broader social sphere. Local committees emerged as powerful actors in organizing collective efforts to oppose the imposed curricula. Notable groups included the Parents' Committee of the Ibrahimieh College, the Union of Parents' Committees in East Jerusalem, and the Al-Bustan Association. These organizations documented the changes made to textbooks and issued comprehensive reports that provided teachers with practical guidance on how to integrate Palestinian content into their lessons, reflecting a synergy between educational and social activism (Al-Haq, 2023).

The actions of the Union of Parents' Committees in East Jerusalem were particularly public and well-organized between 2015 and 2018. In 2017, a large-scale meeting of parents and teachers was held at the R/W Girls' School in Beit Hanina to discuss the policies of the Israeli Ministry of Education. During this meeting, a history teacher voiced a sentiment that defines the core of this educational resistance: «If the books are forced upon us, it is we who interpret them inside the classroom.»

This testimony, gathered during qualitative research interviews, highlights how the teacher's role intersects with organized community action such that the rejection of the Israelized curriculum is not merely a rhetorical stance; it is a conscious pedagogical practice supported by a social safety net that shields teachers from isolation and bolsters their ability to navigate these challenges. This interview was also documented with full confidentiality regarding the participant's identity and workplace (Personal Interview, H.R., 2024).

The Five-Year Plan (2018–2023) and Its Implementation

On May 18, 2018, coinciding with the 51st anniversary of the occupation of East Jerusalem, the Israeli government sought to tighten its grip on the educational process by launching Resolution 3790, known as the Five-Year Plan (2018–2023). Although presented as a measure to reduce socio-economic gaps, the plan carried political weight aimed at entrenching Israelization in East Jerusalem (Al-Qawasmi, 2021).

Statements by Ze'ev Elkin, the Minister of Jerusalem Affairs responsible for the plan, reveal the underlying security dimensions of these policies. He noted: «As the gaps between East and West Jerusalem narrow, the cost East Jerusalem residents pay in the event of security friction increases, thereby reducing the threat they pose.» This reflects a broader Israeli strategy of using economic and service improvements as tools for political control, tying daily stability to security compliance (*Haaretz*, 2021).

These policies posed a direct threat to Palestinian cultural and educational identity, prompting teachers to develop alternative strategies to counter Israelization within the school. This context makes the comparison between the J/M and R/W schools particularly illuminating, as they represent contrasting patterns of educational resistance: direct confrontation on one hand, and conditional, gradual adaptation on the other (Muftah, 2021).

J/M Boys' School: Resistance Through Education and Community

This school adopted a more resistant posture against the Israeli curricula, relying on critical thinking, digital communication with students, and deep engagement with the local community. These strategies likely became more pronounced as Israeli pressure intensified, particularly during the 2023 war on Gaza, making the school a prominent model of defiance.

A case involving a teacher (E.G.) recently transferred between schools serves as a revealing example of classroom dynamics under the Israeli curriculum and the high level of student awareness regarding its political implications. The teacher described how students expressed an immediate understanding of the imposed content, questioning whether he would follow the path of previous teachers who taught Palestinian content covertly or if he would stick strictly to the official Israeli version.

When the teacher explained that he would teach the officially mandated curriculum, one student responded with sharp irony: «Ah, now we know why they call the people of Abu Ghosh spies.» This pointed remark illustrates how the classroom becomes a space for social judgment and labeling. Compliance with Israeli educational content is reframed as a betrayal of loyalty and belonging, placing the teacher in an incredibly delicate position where they must negotiate professional requirements against their cultural identity.

This scenario demonstrates that the struggle over the curriculum is about more than just textbooks; it extends to the symbolic relationships within the classroom, where the teacher themselves becomes a subject of student scrutiny. This testimony was



documented with strict adherence to participant confidentiality (Personal Interview, E.G., 2024).

This scene reflects the students' awareness of the Israelization process and their rejection of it. It also shows how the teachers at J/M School, despite mounting pressure, sought to preserve national identity within the formal system. One successful strategy involved using WhatsApp groups as informal channels for student communication, which proved particularly effective during the 2023 strike in the village of J/M.

Visual evidence (**Figure 2**) clearly depicts the nature of the educational strike in Jabal Mukaber, where teachers and students publicly rejected the Israeli curriculum; a sign expressing this defiance was posted at the school entrance. Faced with Israeli pressure to keep schools open, teachers implemented a clever alternative: they officially announced the school was open, but the students were quietly informed not to attend.

This pattern of resistance was not merely an individual act but part of a broader strategy to foster critical consciousness. For example, while teaching a lesson on the Palestinian Intifada to *Tawjihi* students, a teacher (M.A.) utilized technology as a tool of resistance, instructing students to download the Palestinian history textbook onto their smartphones. He explained: «We know students are searched at the school gates, so bringing physical books made no sense. The solution was digital copies, allowing them to access national knowledge without raising suspicion» (Personal Interview, M.A., 2024).

This approach demonstrates how teachers effectively leverage digital resources to circumvent the constraints imposed by the Israeli Ministry of Education. However, this specific pattern of practice was not as prevalent at the R/W School. At R/W, adherence to Israeli curricula was likely much stricter because the school falls under the direct supervision of the Jerusalem Municipality. This disparity raises an analytical question regarding why these strategies succeeded specifically at the J/M Boys' School. It is probable that the robust interaction between teachers and the local community was the deciding factor. Ongoing communication with parents' committees significantly bolstered their ability to challenge Israelization policies, a dynamic clearly illustrated by the decision to shut down the school for an entire academic year (2022/2023). This strike eventually forced a settlement that allowed the Palestinian curriculum to remain alongside the Israeli *Bagrut* track (Personal Interview, A.A., 2024).

Such interaction was not as powerful in other schools, which may explain the variations in how they navigated the Israelization process. In this context, the R/W School offers a different model, where teachers faced challenges stemming from much more stringent administrative interventions. Consequently, it is essential to examine how they responded to these pressures. Their response can be understood through the lens of «silent resistance,» where some educators turned to the reinterpretation of educational texts, focused on national identity through indirect means, and utilized «hidden» instructional strategies. These methods allowed them to preserve the Palestinian narrative without inviting a direct confrontation with the mandated

policies.

R/W Girls' School: Partial Compliance and Negotiation

In contrast to the J/M School, the position of the R/W Girls' School was far more complicated due to its direct ties to both the Jerusalem Municipality and the Israeli Ministry of Education. Burdened by heavy financial and administrative pressures, the school felt compelled to adopt the Israeli *Bagrut* system. This move sparked significant pushback from parents, who demanded that the Palestinian curriculum be maintained alongside the Israeli track without any reduction in the number of classes offered (The Unified Parents' Committee in East Jerusalem, 2022).

Facing this reality, teachers were caught in a dilemma: how could they teach the Israeli curriculum without becoming conduits for the «Israelization» of their students? One solution adopted by several teachers involved the internal reinterpretation of texts within the classroom. As one teacher from the school explained: «Even if these books are forced upon us, we are the ones who interpret them in class. We try to present the content in a way that does not conflict with our Palestinian consciousness» (Personal Interview, H.R., 2024). This mode of resistance was never easy; many teachers faced direct pressure from the school administration, which mandated their enrollment in training courses focused on the Israeli curriculum. One teacher recounted: «We were ordered to register for a Civics course sponsored by the Jerusalem Municipality. The principal personally monitored our commitment to the new content, as it was a fundamental condition for the school to continue receiving government funding» (Personal Interview, H.R., 2024).

Conversely, there were also efforts within the school to foster a positive view of the Hebrew language, framing it as a tool for professional integration. This was voiced by a teacher, L.G., originally from the village of Abu Ghosh, who stated: «I am here to break the barrier of fear for the students and motivate them to learn Hebrew, as they will need it for their psychometric exams and for working within Israel» (Personal Interview, L.G., 2024).

The drive toward integration at R/W School was not limited to the curriculum; it extended into school events as well. This was most visible during a graduation ceremony for seventh-grade students, where the Israeli flag was raised a clear signal of the school's commitment to Israeli standards. This act triggered widespread protests from both parents and teachers, eventually leading to the principal's resignation. This incident highlights the profound tension that exists between administrative policies and the local community, particularly regarding symbols of sovereignty and identity (Ultra Palestine, 2023).

This event underscores that the move toward integration into the Israeli system is not always a welcome choice for parents or teachers. There is often a significant gap between what school administrations attempt to impose and the desires of the local community. In contrast, the J/M School represents a different model, adopting much



more resistant strategies that permeated not just the curriculum but also school events and activities.

The Role of Management in Resisting or Entrenching Israelization

The role of the administration proved to be a cornerstone of this steadfastness (*sumud*). At J/M, the school leadership's support for national and educational activities was vital in confronting Israelization, as they encouraged «Open Days» to commemorate events such as the Nakba and Land Day, and other activities that likely helped cultivate an educational environment where students' immunity against «Israelization» was strengthened (*Al-Araby Al-Jadeed*, 2024).

In contrast, the administration at R/W School sought to adapt to Israeli mandates. The Jerusalem Municipality and the Israeli Ministry of Education imposed clear conditions for continued funding, such as requiring teachers to attend «Civics» training and subjecting instructional content to rigorous oversight. This effectively neutralized any activity that might have bolstered Palestinian identity within the school grounds.

The Contrast Between the Two Schools and the Risks of National Activism Under Surveillance

Despite being fully aware of the potential consequences, the teachers and administration at J/M Boys' School insisted on maintaining national activities, such as commemorating Land Day and the Nakba, regardless of the threat of direct punitive measures. This defiance was starkly evident during a school inspection in the first semester of the 2024/2025/ academic year, when Israeli police and Ministry of Education inspectors raided classrooms and confiscated educational materials on the pretext of monitoring curriculum compliance. As teacher A.G. noted: «During a visit by a Ministry inspector from the *Bagrut* department, the students openly expressed their national positions. This later led to even tighter surveillance of the teachers within the school» (Personal Interview, A.G., 2024).

By comparison, the oversight imposed on the R/W School was less confrontational in nature but perhaps more profound in its impact. While it lacked the direct security raids seen at J/M, the school was subjected to strict administrative monitoring through funding conditions that made it more receptive to Israeli policies. Through these gradual mechanisms, the educational environment was reshaped without the need for the direct friction witnessed at the boys' school.

This analysis is supported by testimonies from an official at the Ministry of Social Affairs responsible for East Jerusalem schools. In keeping with ethical research protocols, these statements were documented with the participant's identity and specific job details strictly concealed (Personal Interview, Ministry of Social Affairs official, 2024).

Despite these differences, both cases reveal a shared core: the pivotal role of the teacher as a negotiating agent. Whether through overt confrontation or silent, daily practices that permeate the classroom and extracurricular spaces, these educators

strive to protect Palestinian content and the cultural identity of their students. This intersection of resistance and compliance demonstrates that Jerusalemite schools are not merely sites for implementing educational policy; they are dynamic spaces where the struggle over knowledge and identity is constantly reproduced.

Based on this comparative analysis—drawn from qualitative interviews, field observations, and digital source analysis—(Table 1) presents an abridged summary of similarities and differences in how these institutions navigate institutional pressure, teacher strategies, community involvement, and the impact of these educational policies on students. This table does not replace the analytical narrative, but aims to condense its conclusions and present them in an organized formula that facilitates comparison and supports the conclusions that this study reached.

Table 1: Paradoxes of Continuity and Resistance between J/M School and R/W School based on Field Observations

Dimension of Comparison	.School J./W	.School J./A
Type of Supervision	Israeli Ministry of Education	Israeli Ministry of Education
Nature of Oversight	Private oversight under inspection supervision	Direct security oversight and inspection
Type of Curriculum	Mixed Israeli Bagrut and Palestinian Tawjihi	Mixed Israeli Bagrut and Palestinian Tawjihi
Level of Institutional Pressure	High and confrontational	High and confrontational
Teachers' Response	High but gradual	Direct and silent resistance
Role of the Local Community	Conditional adaptation and undeclared resistance	Direct support and public protests
Tools of Resistance	Extracurricular activities and informal communication	Content reinterpretation and informal communication
Impact of Policies on Students	Cautious and gradual critical awareness	High and confrontational critical awareness

The comparisons presented in this table were constructed through a qualitative analysis of data gathered from semi-structured interviews with male and female teachers at both schools, supplemented by field observations and an analysis of digital records associated with both environments. This data was coded according to analytical themes, including the nature of institutional surveillance, teacher strategies for dealing with the Israelized curriculum, the role of the local community, and the resulting impact of educational policies on the student body. The process of comparison between these factors at the two schools contributed to the deducement of distinct patterns of resistance and compliance, which are summarized in the table as a conceptual synthesis of the analytical findings and is intended to complement, rather than replace, the detailed narrative presented in this study.



Case Study Findings

The results of this case study demonstrate that Palestinian teachers are the decisive factor in countering the «Israelization» of education in East Jerusalem, far outweighing the roles of the school institution or the local community as general frameworks. This finding raises an important analytical question: why have teachers, rather than institutional structures or broader community frameworks, become the decisive factor in this process? The data reveals that through their direct, daily interaction with students in the classroom, teachers possess a tangible ability to reinterpret educational content and deliver it in a way that fosters critical thinking—despite the severe Israeli restrictions and pressures imposed on the educational process.

Furthermore, these findings reveal that the effectiveness of these practices does not stem from individual teacher efforts alone. Rather, it relies on a relative integration between the teachers' role and the available administrative and community support, even though this support remains uneven across different schools. This confirms that the most sustainable form of educational resistance is that which bridges daily classroom practice with a supportive school and community environment, however minimal that support may be.

These findings align with existing literature that views education in colonial contexts as a central arena for the struggle over knowledge and consciousness. It reaffirms that the teacher does not function as a neutral implementer of curricula but as a pedagogical and cultural actor who maintains a margin for initiative and resistance within a coercive structure. In this context, the practices of teachers in East Jerusalem represent a practical application of «liberatory education»—in both its silent and overt forms—by redirecting knowledge rather than merely consuming it.

When comparing the results of this study to previous research on Jerusalem's education, this paper stands out by highlighting the internal disparities between schools, rather than treating Jerusalemite education as a monolithic entity. The results show that the nature of institutional supervision and oversight, along with funding conditions, play a critical role in shaping the patterns and boundaries of educational resistance. This intersects with recent studies on the impact of Five-Year Plans and financial surveillance on East Jerusalem schools.

In this framework, the study helps fill a research gap regarding the position of the Palestinian teacher within this complex equation. It shows that they operate within a complicated «negotiated space,» balancing security and administrative pressures on one hand with professional and ethical obligations toward their students on the other. These findings add an analytical dimension that directly links educational policies, classroom practice, and the pedagogical actor within a contemporary colonial context.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This research has examined the Israeli policies seeking to force changes upon the curricula in East Jerusalem, alongside the efforts of Palestinian teachers to counter them through liberatory educational practices. The study sought to answer how

teachers contribute to limiting the impact of these trends; the findings indicate that their role extends beyond traditional instruction to fostering critical consciousness among students.

It is evident that the educational process in Jerusalem has transformed into a theater of intellectual confrontation. Teachers participate in the reproduction of knowledge and the strengthening of cultural belonging through both silent resistance and daily pedagogical practices, both inside and outside the classroom. Consequently, the study reaffirms that education is not a neutral academic vehicle but a space reflecting the political and social challenges facing the city. The research began with the hypothesis that Palestinian teachers contribute effectively to mitigating the impact of Israelization policies—a premise that the research results have confirmed and validated.

Evidence drawn from interviews and digital sources, including photos and videos, has supported this hypothesis. The data showed that the J/M School, for example, adopted educational methods that diverged from the mandated content, reflecting a clear presence of resistant practices within the educational process. Accordingly, the results confirm that teachers are not mere implementers of curricula but primary actors in shaping student consciousness and strengthening their cultural ties.

This study faced several challenges that affected the depth of the research and data accessibility. Most notably, the researcher was barred from entering Jerusalem and was unable to obtain a permit to visit the schools. This prevented the conducting of interviews within the educational environment itself and limited the use of broader direct or participant observation.

Research Recommendations

Based on the findings highlighting the pivotal role of teachers in confronting Israelization policies, the study offers the following recommendations:

- **At the School Level:** Strengthen pedagogical spaces that allow teachers to exchange expertise and develop alternative educational strategies, thereby bolstering their ability to protect Palestinian content within the classroom.
- **At the Community Level:** In light of the importance of community support, the study recommends enhancing the role of parents' committees and community frameworks in accompanying and supporting teachers—not just during moments of protest, but in daily educational work.
- **At the Scientific Research Level:** Future studies should rely on field researchers residing in Jerusalem to bypass access restrictions, while providing research funding that allows for deeper and more extensive studies.

Furthermore, it is advisable to expand research into the impact of Knesset legislation targeting Palestinian teachers and to analyze its repercussions on the educational environment and alternative teaching strategies. In this context, exploring the



role of non-formal education institutions remains a promising research area for a broader understanding of ways to strengthen the Palestinian narrative and cultural consciousness amidst current educational and political challenges.



Figure 1: Trends in the number of students enrolled in various educational tracks in East Jerusalem schools within the context of «Israelization» policies (Source: Masarwa, *Creeping Israelization*, citing Jerusalem Municipality data, 2022, p. 38).



Figure 2: A scene from an educational strike at a school in J/M village (2023), expressing the rejection of the Israeli curriculum by teachers and students as part of a collective pedagogical protest (Source: Documentary material captured by a teacher and provided to the researcher during fieldwork, with a commitment to maintaining anonymity, 2023).



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