



The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem and the Protection of National Education (2011–2022): A Case Study¹

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Abstract

This qualitative study, designed as a case study, examines the experience of **The National and Civil Society² Action Committee in Jerusalem** (hereafter referred to as *the Committee*) as a community-based coordinating framework that sought to protect national education and confront Israelization policies in East Jerusalem during the period 2011–2022. It aims to analyze the Committee's mechanisms of action, the conditions of its effectiveness, and the limits of its sustainability in protecting national education. The study relied on the analysis of a range of documents, including position papers, reports, organizational documents, proposals, and archival materials, in addition to five semi-structured interviews with relevant actors. The study employed thematic analysis through coding, theme-building, and the triangulation of evidence between documents and testimonies.

The findings show that the targeting of education has taken on a complex character, involving symbolic and cognitive pressure on the curriculum and the national narrative, as well as continuous administrative and institutional regulation through control, inspection, requirements, and licensing, all of which raise the cost of

1 I would like to thank Dr. Maisa Abu Rmeileh for her valuable efforts in the linguistic editing and formatting of this study.

2 The Arabic term used in the original text is al-ahli (الأهلي), not al-madani (المدني), the latter being the standard Arabic adjective for «civil society.» The distinction is significant. Al-mujtama' al-ahli refers to a layer of social organization rooted in kinship, locality, religion, and customary forms of association. It encompasses a range of social units and networks, including families, clans, religious communities, neighborhood ties, patron-client relations, *as well as* civic society and other types of community-based organizations. In this sense, the term denotes a social sphere that is both broader and historically deeper than what is typically meant by «civil society» in modern political theory particularly in contexts where citizenship and civic institutions are negated or undermined by colonialism. A more literal translation might be «kinship-based society» or «the society of kin and communal ties.» Nevertheless, for the sake of readability and terminological consistency, this translation renders al-mujtama' al-ahli as «civil society,» while recognizing that the equivalence is imperfect.

educational decision-making and reduce the margin for maneuver within schools. In contrast, the Committee's effectiveness in transforming pluralism into organizational capacity was manifested through three clusters of intervention: coordination and organization; mobilization, awareness-raising, and the construction of the national educational argument; and intervention and response in times of escalation. Community partnerships, especially with parents' committees, played a pivotal role in reducing the isolation of schools and building a community protection network.

However, sustainability was constrained by fluctuating resources and internal governance challenges, including overlapping roles, competing reference points, and weak documentation. The study concludes that the Committee's impact ranged from a symbolic dimension that unified discourse to a practical dimension that requires the institutionalization of follow-up, an extended plan, and more stable resources. It also finds that the adaptability of this model in other contexts depends on the clarity of reference points, decision-making mechanisms, documentation, and community partnership.

Keywords: Israelization of education; The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem; community coordination frameworks; network governance; protection of national education.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

Education in East Jerusalem constitutes a critical arena of conflict, where the right to education intersects with struggles over identity, control of public space, and historical narrative. Palestinian scholarship shows that occupation policies treat the school as a tool for reshaping consciousness, language, and collective memory through the control of curricula, the monitoring of content, and the direction of the educational environment in ways that align with its political narrative (Thawqan, 2023; Masarwa, 2022).

Contemporary studies confirm that the targeting of education in conflict settings extends beyond material dimensions to include the destruction of opportunities for knowledge production, the continuity of society, and its capacity for adaptation, thereby making education a battleground over identity and existence (Desai et al., 2025). The Israelization of education in Jerusalem is manifested through the promotion of the Israeli curriculum, control over national and historical content, and the linking of financial support and licensing to discriminatory criteria, all of which affect students' sense of belonging and their future choices (Sandouka, 2025; Musa, 2025).

Human rights reports point to the effects of discriminatory measures, such as inadequate basic facilities and structural restrictions, on the right to education, alongside



attempts to influence students' culture and identity (Independent Commission for Human Rights, 2020). Palestinian research also highlights the cumulative impact of the occupation on the structure, resources, and educational content of the system (Masarwa, 2014; Shqoura, 2019).

In this context, diversity within the educational framework, including different regulatory bodies and curricula, reflects a margin for maneuver and for preserving national education, but it also increases tension and pressure on schools and families (Masarwa, 2022; Sandouka, 2025). The role of social actors, such as civil society organizations and parents' committees, therefore emerges in creating protective interventions for education through mobilizing public opinion, supporting schools, and developing advocacy initiatives (Thawqan, 2023; Musa, 2025). This study thus seeks to examine the case of **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** (2011–2022) as a community response to Israelization policies, while explaining its mechanisms of action, the factors that enabled or constrained it, and its implications for the protection of national education.

1.2 Research Problem and Its Dimensions

The problem addressed in this study stems from the limited analytical understanding of how community-based coordination frameworks operate in Jerusalem, specifically **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem**, in protecting national education within a restrictive political-legal context. While the education sector in Jerusalem faces mounting regulatory, administrative, and financial pressures, the central gap lies in understanding how organized community response takes shape in this field: how the Committee emerged as a coordinating framework, how it built its reference points and networks, and how it translated its position into interventions capable of implementation, continuity, and accumulation.

In this context, the Committee emerged as a grassroots coordinating framework seeking to safeguard national education through organizational, field-based, and awareness-oriented interventions. Yet assessing its effectiveness remains complex because political and legal constraints overlap with challenges of resources and sustainability, because of the entanglement of reference points and the multiplicity of actors within the Jerusalem context, and because of the difficulty of isolating the Committee's impact from the wider system of community action that has taken shape under changing pressures.

Although some studies have documented the pressures of Israelization and the mechanisms of administrative and financial control in education in Jerusalem (Thawqan, 2023; Masarwa, 2022), and despite the richness of the literature on participatory governance and network governance in explaining the conditions of cooperation and effectiveness (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Provan & Kenis, 2008; Emerson et al., 2012), understanding how community coordination frameworks operate locally, in terms of building reference points, making decisions, and translating positions

into interventions that are implementable and sustainable, remains limited in the Jerusalem context. Accordingly, the study problem lies in analyzing the effectiveness of the Committee as an organizational capacity, in terms of coordination, decision-making, implementation, and sustainability, rather than merely documenting the existence of interventions. This is pursued through triangulating evidence from interviews and documents in order to understand what enabled or constrained the Committee during the period 2011–2022. This time frame was selected because it covers the Committee's formation, the evolution of its patterns of intervention, and the accumulation of its experience through a complete cycle that allows for a comparative tracing of transformations and outcomes over time, reaching 2022 as an appropriate research endpoint at which a sufficient documentary and field-based body of evidence had become available for analysis. The study also seeks to derive lessons from the Committee's experience in transforming pluralism into coordinated action capable of implementation in defense of national education.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the study problem and its dimensions concerning the effectiveness of **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** as a coordinating framework for the protection of national education within the context of Israelization policies and political-legal constraints, the study questions are formulated as follows:

First: The Main Research Question

To what extent did **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** contribute to the protection of national education and to confronting Israelization policies during the period 2011–2022, and how is its effectiveness defined as an organizational capacity in terms of coordination, decision-making, implementation, and sustainability in light of the factors that enabled or constrained its role?

Second: Sub-questions

1. What are the features of the political-legal and administrative context within which **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** operated in the field of education, and how did this context contribute to the Committee's emergence and the formation of its organizational structure and core functions?
2. What programs, initiatives, and activities did the Committee implement to protect national education in Jerusalem, and how can their effectiveness, coherence, and cumulative character be assessed as interventions capable of implementation and continuity?
3. How did the Committee's pluralistic composition, including political forces, civil society organizations, and parents' committees, affect its capacity for coordination, decision-making, and the implementation of interventions in the field of education?
4. What were the most significant structural, political, and legal challenges facing



the Committee, how did it develop strategies to deal with them, and to what extent were these strategies successful in ensuring the continuity of coordinated action and the protection of national education?

5. How do the findings of the study, in light of political-legal constraints, resource fragility, and internal governance challenges, contribute to defining the conditions for the effectiveness of community-based coordination frameworks in protecting national education, and what organizational lessons can be drawn from them for use in similar contexts?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study aims to analyze the role of **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** as a community-based coordinating framework in protecting national education and confronting policies of educational Israelization during the period 2011–2022, with a focus on its effectiveness as an organizational capacity in terms of coordination, decision-making, implementation, and sustainability.

The following sub-objectives derive from this general objective:

1. To analyze the political-legal and administrative context within which the Committee operated, and to clarify its impact on the Committee's emergence, organizational structure, and functions in the field of education.
2. To analyze the programs, initiatives, and interventions implemented by the Committee to protect national education, and to assess their effectiveness, coherence, and cumulative character within the framework of community action in Jerusalem.
3. To analyze the impact of the Committee's pluralistic composition on its capacity for coordination, decision-making, and implementation, as both a source of strength and a source of cost.
4. To identify the structural, political, legal, and internal challenges faced by the Committee, and to analyze the strategies it developed to deal with them and ensure continuity.
5. To derive lessons and conditions for the effectiveness of community-based coordination frameworks in protecting national education, and to explore the possibilities of adapting the Committee's experience in similar contexts.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its focus on understanding the organizational effectiveness of **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** in protecting national education within a restrictive political-legal context. The study approaches the Committee's role as a form of community resistance embodied in the organization of collective action, the construction of reference points, and the

coordination of resources and partnerships. Instead of merely describing Israelization policies or their effects, it focuses on the question of how organized community action works; that is, how coordination and decision-making are produced, and how positions are transformed into sustained interventions during the period 2011–2022.

Academically, the study contributes to filling a knowledge gap concerning the functioning of coordination frameworks in complex environments: what enables them, what constrains them, and how external political-legal constraints interact with resource fragility and internal governance. It also develops an understanding of resistance as an organizational capacity that produces continuity and accumulation through governance, coordination, and the management of pluralism, thereby offering an interpretive reading of the Committee's experience as a model. Methodologically, the study relies on triangulation of evidence, documents and interviews, together with thematic analysis linking written discourse to field experience, thereby deepening understanding of the case context. Operationally, it offers usable outputs by identifying the challenges that weaken effectiveness, such as the cost of restrictions, funding, and governance, highlighting the mechanisms through which diversity is transformed into organized action, such as coordination, partnerships, and clarity of reference points, and deriving lessons for strengthening continuity and integration within pluralistic frameworks. Politically, the study provides decision-makers and Palestinian public and private institutions with a practical framework for supporting coordination structures capable of protecting national education in Jerusalem, by highlighting the organizational conditions of effectiveness that should be reflected in policies and programs, including clarity of reference points, decision-making mechanisms, documentation and follow-up, and resource stability, and by identifying intervention priorities that can be translated into supportive measures such as multi-year funding and regular channels of partnership with schools and parents' committees in order to reduce the isolation of schools and strengthen the community protection network.

1.6 Scope of the Study and Definition of Terms

First: Scope of the Study

This study is bounded by methodological, temporal, spatial, and epistemological limits that define the scope of its conclusions and prevent their generalization beyond their specific context:

1. **Spatial scope:** The study focuses on the city of Jerusalem as a specific political-legal context in which political restrictions intersect with the structure of community action, and its findings do not necessarily extend to other Palestinian areas that differ in administrative structure and governing policies.
2. **Temporal scope:** The study covers the period 2011–2022. The year 2011 marks the starting point because it was the year in which **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** emerged and its role as a coordinating framework in the field of protecting education began to take shape, while 2022



serves as the temporal endpoint as the last year covered by the study's data, interviews and approved documents. This period is considered sufficient to trace the formation, development, and transformations of the Committee's work through successive phases, allowing for an understanding of the dynamics of community resistance, coordinated action, and the evolution of its tools over time within the context of Israelization policies.

3. **Methodological and source limits:** The study relies on qualitative data derived from document analysis and five semi-structured interviews. Its findings therefore represent an in-depth interpretive understanding grounded in the evidence available within the limits of the study, and do not aim at quantitative measurement or statistical generalization. The primary unit of analysis is **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** as a coordinating framework, while the issue of education is treated as a field of intervention for the Committee rather than as a subject for detailed evaluation of curricula or school performance.
4. **Limits of access and documentation:** Some aspects of the analysis may be affected by limited access to documents that are not publicly available, by variation in the degree of detail and archiving across some materials, and by differing perspectives among participants, all of which are expected in qualitative research. These limits were addressed through the use of multiple sources and comparison between them to the greatest extent possible, with emphasis on points of convergence between interviews and documents to support the study's conclusions.

Second: Definition of Procedural Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms are used in the procedural meanings specified below:

1. **Community resistance (in this study):** A form of organized collective action developed by community frameworks, such as **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem**, to protect a national and identity-related sphere such as education through coordination, the construction of reference points and partnerships, the mobilization of resources, and the management of pluralism, thereby transforming a position into interventions capable of implementation and continuity under constraints.
2. **The effectiveness of the Committee / community effectiveness (procedurally):** The capacity of **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem**, as a coordinating framework, to produce cumulative impact in protecting national education through: (a) coordination and decision-making; (b) transforming decisions into implementable interventions; and (c) ensuring continuity, documentation, and institutional learning, while taking into account that effectiveness may be affected by the interaction of external constraints,

resources, and internal governance.

3. **Educational Israelization (in the context of Jerusalem):** Policies and practices aimed at reshaping curricula, historical narrative, and educational identity in ways that align with the Israeli narrative, through the introduction and imposition of content, standards, and curricula that weaken the Palestinian national reference point, together with regulatory and administrative tools, such as control, requirements, licensing, inspection, and resource allocation, that facilitate the imposition of this shift and narrow the scope for resisting it within the educational field.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Conceptual Introduction and Procedural Definitions

This study proceeds from the premise that protecting national education in Jerusalem is not merely an educational issue in a sectoral sense; rather, it is a field in which struggles over identity intersect with political, legal, and administrative mechanisms of control. This makes an effective response dependent on the existence of organized community action. Accordingly, the term **community resistance** is used here to refer to the ability of local actors to produce forms of organization, coordination, and mobilization—such as networks, committees, and reference frameworks—that protect a resource and an identity-related sphere, such as education, and transform it into a field of intervention rather than a series of fragmented reactions (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011).

The study defines **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** as a coordinating body and a multi-actor network operating across organizational boundaries, including political forces, civil society institutions, and parents' committees, with the aim of producing collective decisions and transforming them into implementable interventions. The concept of **effectiveness** is procedurally defined as an organizational capacity embodied in: (a) coordination and the construction of reference points and partnerships; (b) decision-making and the transformation of decisions into interventions; and (c) continuity and accumulation through follow-up, documentation, and resources.

2.2 Participatory Governance: Conditions of Cooperation and the Production of Impact

The literature on participatory governance suggests that cooperation among heterogeneous actors is not measured by intentions alone, but by the extent to which foundational and operational conditions are present. These include the history of conflict and cooperation, incentives for participation, imbalances of power and resources, clear institutional design, facilitating leadership, and internal dynamics such as direct dialogue, trust-building, commitment, and shared understanding. The



literature also indicates that cumulative small successes may generate a positive cycle that reinforces trust and commitment and increases the sustainability of cooperation (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

Applied to the case of the Committee, the analytical question becomes: did the Committee possess arrangements that enabled it to transform pluralism into decision-making and implementation, or did the cost of coordination and structural imbalances weaken the cumulative process?

2.3 Network Governance: Modes of Governance and Tensions (Legitimacy, Efficiency, and Sustainability)

Network governance offers a direct framework for analyzing coordinating bodies by distinguishing among modes of network management, namely shared governance among members, a lead organization, or a network administrative organization. It also highlights central tensions faced by networks: the pursuit of legitimacy and broad representation versus the need for efficiency and speed in decision-making, in addition to the challenge of sustainability and the ability to maintain regularity of work (Provan & Kenis, 2008).

In the Jerusalem context, where pluralism is high and constraints are severe, the question of internal governance acquires particular importance: clarity of reference points, distribution of roles, mechanisms of settlement and decision-making, regularity of meetings, and institutional documentation. Arabic scholarship on network governance supports this direction by emphasizing that effectiveness is not tied only to the composition of the network, but also to the way it manages interactions among actors, its institutional rules, and the reframing of their interests in ways that produce cumulative action (Badran, 2020).

2.4 Network Management: What Does It Mean to Manage a Coordinating Body?

The literature on network management makes clear that coordination is not an automatic process. Rather, it is a set of tasks that includes organizing interaction, building commitment, managing conflict, achieving a degree of flexibility without losing accountability, and measuring outcomes and outputs. It further emphasizes that networks in public administration seek a model equivalent to traditional hierarchical authority, because the effectiveness of a network depends on the capacity to manage the “black box” of coordination (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001). Accordingly, evaluating the Committee becomes closer to evaluating the capacity to manage a network than to evaluating a mere list of activities.

2.5 The Analytical Model of the Study (The Committee as an Organizational Capacity Under Pressure)

Based on the foregoing, the study adopts an analytical model that explains the effectiveness of the Committee through three interconnected layers:

1. Political-legal and administrative constraints that increase the cost of intervention and limit the margin for initiative;
2. Resources and sustainability as a ceiling for accumulation, including professional follow-up, the building of alternatives, and continuity of support;
3. The network's internal governance, including reference points, roles, documentation, and regularity of work, as a condition for transforming pluralism into decision-making and implementation.

Effectiveness is assessed qualitatively through indicators traceable in documents and interviews, namely: clarity of reference points and decision-making mechanisms, regularity of follow-up and documentation, and the ability of interventions to continue and accumulate. Another key indicator is the extent to which the Committee restructured its partnerships in order to reduce the cost of action and enhance implementation capacity.

3. Previous Literature

3.1 Jerusalem and Education: Israelization Policies as a Context of Pressure

Arab and Palestinian scholarship on Jerusalem indicates that education is targeted within a broader struggle over identity through organizational, administrative, and financial instruments. These include pressure to alter curricula and narrative, the linking of licensing and accreditation to supervisory procedures, and the production of educational alternatives aligned with Israelization policies. Some studies provide a historical and analytical account of the trajectory of creeping Israelization, its mechanisms, and its consequences for schools, students, and parents (Masarwa, 2022; Shqoura, 2019; Musa, 2025; Sandouka, 2025).

This study draws on that literature in order to identify the nature and characteristics of the pressure, but it shifts the center of analysis from the school alone to the following question: how are these pressures transformed into a field of organized community action led and coordinated by the Committee?

3.2 Community and Civil Resistance: Why Does Organization Precede Effectiveness?

The literature on civil resistance emphasizes that the central source of strength in campaigns of change or protection does not lie in symbolism alone, but in the capacity to organize, expand, build legitimacy, and bring about shifts in the environment of support and pressure. According to this literature, broad-based organized action tends to possess strategic advantages when compared with limited or individual action, because it accumulates participation and reshapes the balance of cost and benefit (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011).

Within this framework, the Committee is read as an attempt to build an organization capable of protecting an identity-related resource, namely education, through



coordination, mobilization, and the distribution of roles, rather than through direct confrontation alone.

3.3 Palestinian Civil Society and Funding: Sustainability and the Independence of Decision-Making

Some critical literature on Palestinian civil society indicates that external funding and its conditions may reshape priorities and mechanisms of action, and may affect independence, representation, and the capacity for accumulation. This means that sustainability is not merely a technical issue, but also a political-organizational one related to the limits of decision-making and the legitimacy of action (Abdel Shafi, 2004). This approach helps explain why some interventions may become short-lived responses, or why tensions may emerge between the need for resources and the preservation of independent decision-making.

3.4 Literature on Coordinating Bodies and Networks: The Gap of a Highly Restrictive Context

Although the literature on participatory governance and network governance is rich in explaining the conditions of cooperation and effectiveness, a considerable part of it proceeds from more stable administrative-political contexts. At the same time, this literature itself makes clear that the success of networks is strongly shaped by initial conditions, power imbalances, institutional design, and trust dynamics, and that different governance modes produce tensions among legitimacy, efficiency, and sustainability (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Provan & Kenis, 2008; Emerson et al., 2012). The significance of this study lies in transferring these analytical tools to the Jerusalem case, which is marked by severe restrictions, where coordination itself becomes costly and where documentation and internal governance become conditions for the survival of the process.

3.5 The Research Gap and the Contribution of the Study

The gap in the literature can be summarized in two interconnected points:

1. The abundance of literature describing Israelization policies and their effects on education, contrasted with the limited literature explaining how community coordination frameworks are formed, how they build their reference points, and how they transform diversity into organized action.
2. The availability of strong theoretical frameworks on networks and participatory governance, contrasted with the limited analytical application of those frameworks to coordinating bodies operating under shifting political-legal pressure, where constraints intersect with resources and internal governance.

Accordingly, this study contributes by providing an analysis of the Committee's effectiveness as an organizational capacity, in terms of coordination, decision-making, implementation, and sustainability, through triangulating evidence from documents

and interviews, and by deriving analytically grounded implications regarding the conditions of continuity and accumulation.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Study Methodology and Design

The study adopted a qualitative methodology using a case study design, as this was considered the most appropriate approach for understanding complex phenomena within their real-life context and for interpreting the “how” and “why” questions associated with the operation of community-based frameworks. The choice of the case study design is consistent with the central focus of the study, which seeks to explain how **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** functioned as a coordinating framework in the protection of national education during the period 2011–2022. Accordingly, the study does not treat education as an independent sectoral subject; rather, it approaches it as a field of intervention in which Israelization policies and political-legal constraints are embodied, thereby allowing for an analysis of the Committee’s effectiveness as an organizational capacity in terms of coordination, decision-making, implementation, and sustainability within a restrictive environment.

4.2 Study Community and Unit of Analysis

The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem constitutes the primary unit of analysis in this study, as it represents a framework that brings together multiple actors, including political forces, civil society institutions, parents’ committees, and Jerusalemite community actors, and assumes coordinating roles in the field of education. National education is treated here as an arena of intervention for the Committee rather than as a subject for evaluating curricula or school performance in detail. This is consistent with the objective of the study, which is to analyze the Committee’s effectiveness as a coordinating system and its capacity to transform pluralism into interventions that are capable of implementation and continuity.

4.3 Data Sources

The study relied on two main sources of data:

1. **Documents:** These included documents, position papers, minutes, and correspondence related to the issue of education and the role of the Committee, making it possible to trace the formation of the Committee, its functions, its paths of intervention, and its organizational discourse.
2. **Semi-structured interviews:** Five interviews were conducted with actors who had direct knowledge of the Committee’s work and the context of its intervention, with the aim of understanding the interpretive experiences associated with coordination and decision-making, external and internal challenges, and the



impact of resources and sustainability on the effectiveness of the work.

4.4 Sample and Interview Procedures

The study used a purposive sample in order to select participants who possessed direct or closely related experience of the Committee's work or of its coordinating environment, in a manner that served the interpretation of the paths of effectiveness and their limits during the period 2011–2022. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format that made it possible to unify the main themes while leaving room for expanding responses in accordance with each participant's experience. The questions focused on: the emergence and development of the Committee, mechanisms of coordination and decision-making, the nature of interventions, political-legal and administrative challenges, resources and sustainability, and issues of internal governance, including reference points, roles, and documentation.

4.5 Document Analysis and Indexing Procedures

Documents were treated as a source reflecting written discourse, mechanisms of work, decision-making, and communication, and as a means of tracing the development of the Committee's roles and paths of intervention. To strengthen the organization of the analysis, the documents were indexed in **Appendix (1)**¹ through a document matrix that included the document number, date, type, issuing body, receiving body, brief description, keywords, excerpts, and textual evidence related to the study's themes. Documents are cited in the main text in a fixed format consisting of the issuing body, year, and document number, while the full bibliographic data of the cited documents are included in the reference list in accordance with **APA 7**. Artificial intelligence tools, such as ChatGPT, were used to assist in categorizing, coding, and organizing the documents as support for the analytical work, while responsibility for verification, accuracy, and the formulation of the final conclusions remained with the researcher.

4.6 Interview Analysis and Coding Procedures

The study followed **thematic analysis** in analyzing the interviews, through repeated reading of the interview texts, extracting preliminary codes that reflected recurring meanings and indications associated with the effectiveness of the Committee, and then grouping those codes into major themes and broader analytical categories. These themes were aligned with the study's problem and questions, with a focus on the Committee's organizational capacity in terms of coordination and framework-building, decision-making, implementation of interventions, continuity, and documentation, in addition to external challenges such as political-legal and administrative constraints, resources and sustainability, and internal governance issues related to the management of pluralism.

1 **Note:** The study and all accompanying attachments are available for download via the following Google Drive folder: [Google Drive folder](#)

4.7 Data Triangulation and Reliability

The study employed triangulation of evidence through comparing what was found in documents with what emerged from interviews, with the aim of enhancing reliability and reducing bias. When contradictions appeared between sources, they were not ignored; rather, they were treated as analytical data. The point of divergence was identified, the temporal and institutional context of the relevant document was reconsidered, participants' interpretations were compared, and the conclusion was recorded in the analytical notes in order to clarify the limitations and implications of each source.

4.8 Study Parameters

The period between 2011 and 2022 was selected because 2011 marked the point at which Israel's policy of tampering with the Palestinian curriculum began to intensify, and because minutes and position papers relating to the formation of a coordinated response in the field of education became available from that year onward, extending to the most recent documented materials available up to 2022. This temporal delimitation does not suggest that earlier or later periods are unimportant; rather, it reflects the specific boundaries within which the study was able to examine the formation of the Committee, the development of its work, and the accumulation of its experience on the basis of the available documentary and field material.

4.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were observed throughout all stages of data collection and analysis. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, the nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequences. Their consent was obtained for conducting and documenting the interviews, and the data were used solely for the purposes of scientific research. Given the sensitivity of the context, any unnecessary identifying information that might expose participants or institutions to risk was omitted, and confidentiality was maintained in the storage and circulation of files within the scope of the research.

Participants were identified by name only on the basis of their explicit consent to be named, with care taken not to include sensitive details or information that could expose them to accountability or harm.

5. The Case Study

5.1 General Context

The city of Jerusalem is characterized by an exceptional educational-political context arising from a complex legal and administrative situation. This is reflected in the multiplicity of reference authorities, the overlap of levels of supervision and control, and the resulting accumulation of regulatory pressures on the educational field.



Within this framework, the struggle over education is not understood as a purely educational debate, but rather as a struggle over narrative and identity that takes daily procedural forms through instruments of administrative control, such as licensing, inspection, requirements, and follow-up, alongside interventions related to curricula and historical narrative.

The importance of this context for the study lies in the fact that it does not place pressure on schools alone; it also raises the cost of any organized community action aimed at protecting national education. Coordination, the construction of a shared position, follow-up, and the maintenance of cumulative action all operate within a narrow and shifting margin. Accordingly, this section is presented as an interpretive background for understanding why the effectiveness of coordinating frameworks varies between moments of escalation, when mobilization increases, and the conditions of everyday continuity, when the costs of control and attrition prevail.

During the period 2011–2022, the issue of curricula and educational tracks emerged as one of the most advanced arenas of pressure, alongside the growing use of administrative oversight mechanisms, the multiplication of educational pathways, and the associated social debate. At the same time, diverse forms of civic action took shape, including parents' committees, specialized frameworks, and field activities, with the aim of supporting the steadfastness (*sumud*) of national education through mobilization, public education, and organization. This, in turn, helps explain the emergence of umbrella coordinating frameworks such as The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, which is the subject of this study.

5.2 Definition of the Case Study: Emergence, Structure, and Mechanisms of Operation

The case study is represented by **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** as a community-based coordinating framework that emerged in response to a field-based need to unify efforts in confronting the challenges threatening national education in the city, foremost among them pressures related to curricula and the accompanying regulatory and administrative environment that places pressure on schools. The emergence of the Committee can be understood within the context of a widening gap between the scale of these challenges and the ability of dispersed actors to deal with them individually, which pushed toward the construction of an umbrella framework capable of coordinating among actors and strengthening unity of position, particularly in times of escalation.

In structural terms, the Committee is characterized by a pluralistic nature based on the participation of actors from multiple institutional and community backgrounds. This pluralism makes it possible to broaden the base of action, distribute roles, and exchange resources and expertise. At the same time, however, it imposes challenges related to managing difference, defining reference points, and determining decision-making mechanisms. According to participants' experiences, the Committee's

effectiveness was linked to its ability to transform pluralism into implementable coordination that balances the need for a unified position with the demands of everyday work and cumulative follow-up.

As for its mechanisms of operation, they are manifested through three interconnected tracks:

1. **Coordination and organization:** through building channels of communication among schools, parents' committees, and relevant actors; exchanging information; identifying priorities; and seeking to produce a common position when threats emerge that affect curricula or increase supervisory control over schools (Ratiba Al-Natsheh; Ziad Al-Shamali). This is also supported by joint documents with the Union of Parents on unifying the position and broadening the social base (Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2012 -109, 2015; DOC-2019 -048, 2019).
2. **Mobilization and awareness-raising:** through communication with parents and committees, organizing meetings and awareness messages, and providing an interpretation of the dangers of alternative educational tracks and interventionist practices affecting educational identity (Nabil Abdullah; E'tidal Al-Ashhab). This is reflected in campaign documents and awareness statements addressed to parents and students (National Civil Action Committee, Union of Parents, and Civic Campaign for Preserving the Palestinian Curriculum in Jerusalem (DOC-2015 -110, 2015) Civic Campaign for Preserving the Palestinian Curriculum in Jerusalem, (DOC-2015- 088, 2015).
3. **Intervention and response:** through action during periods of escalation, supporting schools in confronting pressure, and attempting to limit the effects of measures on the continuity of the educational process or on commitment to the national curriculum (Rasem Obeidat; Ratiba Al-Natsheh). This is supported by documents addressing response mechanisms, risk identification, and tools for dealing with such challenges (National and Civil Educational Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2019- 004, 2019).

Accordingly, in this study the Committee is presented as a model of organized community action that seeks to protect national education by linking position to mechanism, and discourse to practice, within a restrictive and shifting context. This description lays the groundwork for understanding the findings related to the patterns of challenges faced by the Committee and their impact on its effectiveness, as well as the strategies it developed to address those challenges during the period under study.

6. Discussion

6.1 The Political and Educational Context in East Jerusalem

Israelization is understood as a complex process that goes beyond changing educational content to restructuring the educational environment as a whole, including



licensing, funding, supervision, textbooks, and alternative educational tracks. In this way, it subjects educational decision-making to a daily administrative and political cost and narrows the schools' margin for maneuver (Ziad Al-Shamali; Ratiba Al-Natsheh; Nabil Abdullah). The documentary evidence supports this interpretation by showing the interweaving of administrative control mechanisms with their impact on educational identity, particularly through linking educational tracks to conditions of recognition and funding (Association for Civil Rights in Israel, 2017; Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem, 2018).

Within this restrictive context, **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** emerged as a coordinating response to a dual dilemma: the intensification of policy pressure on schools, and the fragmentation of reference points and actors, which increased the risk of a fractured collective position (Ratiba Al-Natsheh; Rasem Obeidat; E'tidal Al-Ashhab). What emerged, therefore, was the need for a framework capable of gathering information, unifying positions, distributing roles, and reducing the cost of confrontation for the school as an individual institution. The documents approach this in terms of a struggle over reference points and over the plan of response (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2012).

Summary of this subsection: The curriculum lies at the heart of the struggle over identity, yet this struggle also produces a broader environment of pressure that redefines the conditions of community action, thereby explaining the study's focus on the Committee as an organizational capacity.

6.2 The Conditions of the Emergence of The National and Civil Society Action Committee (2011), Its Organizational Structure, and Its Education-Related Functions

Field data and documentary evidence indicate that **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** began to take shape in 2011 during a meeting of civil society institutions at the Youth Development Department of the Arab Studies Society, as a response to escalating Israeli measures in the field of education in Jerusalem. One year later, the secretariat was formed and its main features became more clearly defined.

The interviews show that the Committee's emergence was linked to a cumulative realization that individual responses were insufficient, and that what was needed was a coordinating umbrella capable of transforming diagnosis into mechanisms of action: monitoring, information exchange, coordination of positions, and necessary intervention (Ziad Al-Shamali; Ratiba Al-Natsheh). The Committee's documents support this by emphasizing the formation of follow-up committees, the identification of partners, and the building of a reference framework capable of turning follow-up into an ongoing process (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2021).

Structurally, the Committee operated as a coordinating framework on two levels: a

daily leadership level (the secretariat) responsible for follow-up and urgent decisions, and a **broadier level** concerned with representation and consultation. Its functions included archiving, preserving decisions, organizing meetings, and ensuring regular periodic convening (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2021). This is consistent with participants' views regarding the importance of rapid response without losing representational breadth (Rasem Obeidat; Nabil Abdullah).

Summary of this subsection: The Committee constituted an organizational arrangement that balanced representation and operation, that is, reference point and network, decision-making mechanisms and follow-up, and capacity for intervention

6.3 The Committee's Initiatives to Protect Education in Jerusalem

The findings show that the Committee's initiatives took a multi-instrument form distributed across: (1) awareness-raising and the construction of a national educational argument, (2) organization and the building of reference-based partnerships, and (3) field intervention in times of escalation (Nabil Abdullah; Ratiba Al-Natsheh; Ziad Al-Shamali). The documents confirm this orientation by calling for the development of a response plan, the identification of partners, and the strengthening of reference points in the field of education as a condition for any cumulative process (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2021 -114,2021).

6.3.1 Awareness-Raising and the Construction of the National Educational Argument

The interviews indicate that the Committee, together with its partners, sought to shift the discussion from the level of reaction to the level of raising awareness about the dangers of alternative educational tracks and distorted textbooks, and to create a shared language capable of convincing parents and students that the targeting concerned identity and collective rights rather than separate school subjects (Nabil Abdullah; E'tidal Al-Ashhab). The documents of the civic campaign and its awareness statements reflect a direct discourse addressed to students and parents, linking the curriculum to rights and identity and warning against distortion as a gradual entry point for changing the narrative (National Civil Action Committee, Union of Parents, and Civic Campaign for Preserving the Palestinian Curriculum in Jerusalem, (DOC-2015-110,2015) Civic Campaign for Preserving the Palestinian Curriculum in Jerusalem in cooperation with the Civil Action Committee and the Union of Parents' Committees, (DOC-2015 -088,2015).

6.3.2 Organization and the Building of Partnerships and Reference Points

The interviews highlight the importance of building channels of action with parents' committees and local actors in order to unify the position and prevent the isolation of schools, thereby transforming pressure from an individual burden into an organized community matter (Ratiba Al-Natsheh; Ziad Al-Shamali). The vision documents issued in partnership with the Union of Parents support this direction by presenting the



confrontation of the Judaization of education as a process dependent on organization, role distribution, and the widening of the participation base (Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2019- 048,2019) Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2012 -109,2012).

6.3.3 Intervention and Response in Times of Escalation

The data indicate that field interventions were understood more as a function of a protection network than as a form of permanent confrontation; that is, action was taken when risks increased in order to reduce the cost of measures imposed on the school and to restore balance as far as possible (Rasem Obeidat; Ratiba Al-Natsheh). In this context, some of the Committee's documents reflect an attempt to move from fragmentation toward a vision of action for the education sector that would guide priorities and identify both the risks of the period and the tools of response (National and Civil Educational Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2019 -004,2019).

Summary of this subsection: The initiatives are embodied as a transformation of pressure into fields of action through awareness-raising, the building of reference points, and selective intervention in times of escalation, in a manner consistent with the study's understanding of the Committee as an organizational capacity rather than as a substitute for the school.

6.4 The Impact of the Committee's Pluralistic Composition on Coordination, Decision-Making, and Implementation

The findings show that pluralism was a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it gave the Committee the capacity to broaden the network and connect the political, the social, and parents, thereby increasing the potential for mobilization and the exchange of symbolic and organizational resources in times of escalation (Rasem Obeidat; Ziad Al-Shamali). On the other hand, pluralism imposed a governance cost: slower decision-making, overlapping roles, and competing reference points, especially when mechanisms of leadership, delegation, and follow-up were not clearly settled (Nabil Abdullah; E'tidal Al-Ashhab).

6.4.1 Pluralism as a Source of Strength: Broadening Partnership and Building a Protection Network

The interviews indicate that the presence of parents' committees within the Committee's environment made it possible to build a social support base for the school and to heighten society's sensitivity to any change affecting educational identity, thereby enhancing the potential for organized mobilization when needed (Ratiba Al-Natsheh; Rasem Obeidat). The joint documents with the Union of Parents support this logic by presenting a model of confrontation based on unifying the position and broadening the base (Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem,) DOC-2019 -048,2019).

6.4.2 Pluralism as a Cost: Slower Decision-Making and Fragmented Reference Points

By contrast, the testimonies show that the absence of clear mechanisms of decision can turn diversity into a source of obstruction: reference points compete, roles overlap, and action turns into circumstantial responses rather than a cumulative process (Nabil Abdullah; Ziad Al-Shamali). Some of the Committee's documents show an inclination to address this problem by calling for the development of the reference structure toward more institutionalized forms in the management of the education file (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2021- 114,2021).

Summary of this subsection: Pluralism produces effectiveness when it is transformed into organization through rules of decision-making, delegation, and follow-up; it produces cost when it remains without governance.

6.5 Structural, Political, and Legal Challenges Faced by the Committee and Their Impact on Its Societal Effectiveness in Protecting Education

The interviews show that the work of **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** took place in an environment of control marked by intensified supervision, inspection, and requirements linked to licensing and follow-up, thereby generating additional costs for schools and narrowing their margin for maneuver (Ziad Al-Shamali; Ratiba Al-Natsheh). Human rights documents support this by highlighting mechanisms of administrative control, disparities in services, and their impact on the stability of the educational environment (Association for Civil Rights in Israel, 2017).

The findings also indicate that this pressure pushed some schools toward less confrontational solutions or compelled them to make necessary decisions in order to ensure continuity, thereby placing the Committee before a sensitive equation: how to protect education without imposing unbearable costs on institutions (Rasem Obeidat; Nabil Abdullah). Awareness-oriented documents highlight attempts to create social support that reduces the school's isolation and contains the effects of pressure through a broader community base (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem & Union of Parents, 2015).

At the level of sustainability, unstable funding set the ceiling of response, turning interventions into fire-fighting rather than cumulative programs, and it could itself become an indirect source of pressure through attached conditions (Ziad Al-Shamali; E'tidal Al-Ashhab; Nabil Abdullah). The data also reveal internal challenges: fluctuating reference points, overlapping roles, and weak documentation, all of which made interventions dependent on individuals (Ziad Al-Shamali; Rasem Obeidat; Nabil Abdullah). The Committee's documents confirm the importance of archiving and preserving decisions as an organizational function (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2021).



Summary of this subsection: The challenges are embodied in three interconnected layers: political-legal-administrative pressure, fragility of resources and sustainability, and internal governance challenges. Together, these conditions transform the effort into a short-term defensive response rather than cumulative protection.

6.6 The Strategies Developed by the Committee to Address Challenges and Ensure the Continuity of Its Work

The interviews show that the Committee attempted to reduce the impact of constraints by moving from circumstantial response toward the development of tools for follow-up and monitoring, the expansion of partnerships, and the establishment of a clearer reference framework that would accelerate decision-making in times of escalation (Rasem Obeidat; E'tidal Al-Ashhab). This is consistent with the Committee's documents, which emphasize the need to move beyond waiting and reactive response toward anticipation, systematic monitoring, and the formation of committees to follow up on different files (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2021, DOC-2021- 114).

At the organizational level, there was also a clear tendency toward strengthening local action through geographically based committees and neighborhood-level structures that support schools and connect them to a nearby community base, thereby reinforcing the safety network surrounding the educational institution and reducing its isolation (Ratiba Al-Natsheh; Ziad Al-Shamali). The findings further show that one of the keys to sustainability lay in expanding partnerships with human rights organizations, media institutions, and civic frameworks in order to distribute the cost of confrontation and build supportive public opinion (Ratiba Al-Natsheh; E'tidal Al-Ashhab; Nabil Abdullah).

Finally, in confronting internal challenges, especially weak documentation, the findings point to attempts to strengthen the regularity of meetings, preserve archives and decisions, rotate responsibilities, and work toward establishing internal bylaws to regulate performance as conditions of institutionalization that reduce dependence on individuals. These functions are explicitly included in the description of the secretariat's work in the Committee's documents (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2021, DOC-2021 -114).

Summary of this subsection: The Committee's strategies tended toward reducing the cost of constraints through monitoring, committees, partnerships, and institutionalization, thereby transforming diversity into action capable of implementation and accumulation.

6.7 Evaluating the Committee as a Framework of Community Resistance for the Protection of Education and Its Applicability and Adaptability

When participants moved to evaluation, they distinguished between a **symbolic-political impact**) raising the voice and unifying discourse in times of escalation

(and a **practical-executive impact**) the capacity for follow-up, intervention, and sustainability. When unity of decision-making and organizational mechanisms were present, the Committee was able to function as a protection network linking the school to its social base, thereby reducing its isolation under pressure (Ratiba Al-Natsheh; Rasem Obeidat). Joint documents with the Union of Parents support this understanding by presenting the model of confrontation as a form of community organization rather than mere protest (Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2019).

By contrast, the transition from the symbolic to the executive level faltered when the costs of pluralism prevailed) such as competing reference points and slow decision-making (or when limited resources constrained continuity, leading to incomplete interventions (Ziad Al-Shamali; Nabil Abdullah). The Committee's documents provide evidence of awareness of this dilemma, calling for the development of the reference structure and for the identification of partners and institutionalized mechanisms of follow-up (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2021).

As for adaptability, the findings indicate that transferring the model requires transferring the **conditions of effectiveness**: a clear umbrella of reference, rules for decision-making, delegation, and follow-up, genuine partnership with parents, documentation and archiving to ensure accumulation, and a mobilizational discourse that links the right to education with identity without placing the burden on the school alone. This is reflected in awareness documents that address students and parents as part of the protection process (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem & Union of Parents, 2015).

Summary of this subsection: The Committee is more effective as a cumulative organizational capacity—coordination, decision-making, follow-up, documentation, and partnerships—than as a mere umbrella title; this, in turn, defines the limits of adapting the model in other contexts.

6.7.1 The Applicability and Adaptability of the Committee's Model in Other Contexts

Participants' testimonies indicate that the model of **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** is better understood as a model that is **adaptable** rather than a ready-made formula for replication. Its effectiveness rests on specific organizational conditions rather than on the institutional form itself. The first of these conditions is the existence of a clear reference framework and decision-making mechanisms capable of transforming pluralism into an implementable decision. The second is the availability of a community partnership network, especially parents' committees, capable of rapid mobilization and of linking the school to its social base. The third is the presence of a minimum degree of financial sustainability and documentation and archiving capable of ensuring the accumulation of experience and



preventing interventions from becoming dependent on individuals or on immediate circumstance (Rasem Obeidat; E'tidal Al-Ashhab; Nabil Abdullah).

Accordingly, transferring the experience to other contexts presupposes the adaptation of the organizational structure and follow-up mechanisms to the nature of local challenges, including the degree of political-legal control, the structure of relevant actors, and the resources of sustainability, while preserving the core of the model as a community-based coordinating framework that transforms diversity into organized action for the protection of national education (Ratiba Al-Natsheh; Ziad Al-Shamali). This result is consistent with what some of the Committee's documents reflect in emphasizing the institutionalization of follow-up, the building of partnerships, and the preservation of decisions as conditions for enhancing the capacity for cumulative action (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2021- 114,2021)

7. Discussion

7.1 Discussion of the Political and Educational Context in East Jerusalem

The findings of the study show that education in East Jerusalem operates within a political-legal context that transforms the school and the curriculum into an arena of struggle over identity and narrative, rather than a neutral service field. Israelization is understood as a complex process aimed at reshaping the conditions of meaning-making within the school through symbolic and cognitive tools, as well as administrative and institutional mechanisms of control. This, in turn, affects both identity and the school's capacity for continuity, while imposing a daily cost associated with licensing, supervision, and funding (Association for Civil Rights in Israel, 2017; Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem, 2018).

From the perspective of the research questions, the policies affecting Palestinian education may be read on two interconnected levels:

1. **A symbolic-cognitive level:** represented by pressure on the curriculum and the narrative, attempts to displace national meanings, and efforts to reshape students' consciousness, making the curriculum a matter of both choice and identity (Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem, 2018).
2. **An administrative-institutional level:** involving daily mechanisms of control such as supervision, inspection, and conditions linked to licensing and funding, thereby turning the targeting of education into an accumulated organizational cost (Association for Civil Rights in Israel, 2017).

Within this context, **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** acquires explanatory significance as an organizational and coordinating actor that reduces the cost borne by the school when acting alone, through the construction of a

shared reference framework and the broadening of community partnership, especially with parents' committees. In this way, it reduces the school's isolation and transforms confrontation into an organized community position capable of mobilization in times of escalation. This reading is consistent with the Committee's documents, which emphasize the institutionalization of follow-up, the building of partnerships, and the preservation of decisions as conditions for cumulative action (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2021).

The multiplicity of response patterns, including)awareness-raising, organization, curriculum protection, and the construction of a national educational argument(, may thus be understood as a shift from fragmented reactions to organized community resistance, which requires a coordinating framework capable of balancing representation and speed, as well as moments of mobilization and everyday work. This is reflected in the joint awareness documents addressed to students and parents as part of the protection of the curriculum and identity, thereby reinforcing the Committee's function in widening the social base and consolidating a shared discourse (National Civil Action Committee, Union of Parents, and Civic Campaign for Preserving the Palestinian Curriculum in Jerusalem, 2015).

Summary of the discussion: The targeting of education is structurally dual, affecting)identity, working conditions, and continuity(. The limits of effectiveness therefore require an understanding of how the context raises the cost of organized action, which makes the Committee central as a coordinating mechanism that transforms pressure into work files and partnerships, thereby laying the ground for understanding its emergence, structure, initiatives, and the limits of its effectiveness.

7.2 Discussion of the Emergence of The National and Civil Society Action Committee

The study's findings help explain the emergence of **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** as a response to the need for a coordinating reference framework within a context shaped by overlapping political, legal, and administrative pressures on education in Jerusalem, along with a multiplicity of actors and fragmented reference points. From the perspective of the research questions, the importance of this lies not merely in narrating the history of the Committee's formation, but in explaining why this coordinating framework emerged and how it sought to bridge the gap between the scale of the challenges and the ability of schools and institutions to confront them individually. This is consistent with the Committee's documents, which reflect an early awareness of the need to build a vision and mechanisms of action, identify partners, and form follow-up committees in order to move the response from reaction to organization (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2021; National Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2012).

The findings also indicate that the Committee's structure, comprising a (broader body



and a secretariat), is not merely an administrative detail, but a governance mechanism that determines the ceiling of effectiveness. The broader body provides legitimacy, representation, and an expanded partnership base, while the secretariat performs the role of daily leadership by translating agreements into follow-up, implementation, and documentation. In high-pressure settings such as Jerusalem, this structure becomes a condition for reducing the cost of slow decision-making and for avoiding symbolic or seasonal action that intensifies during crises and then recedes. This function appears in the policy and operational guidelines document, which emphasizes regularity of work, periodic meetings, preservation of decisions, and the formation of committees as foundational elements of effectiveness (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2021). The findings further show that the Committee's functions are distributed across three overlapping roles:

1. **A representative-reference role:** producing a collective position that reduces the school's isolation and strengthens unity of the community position in the field of education.
2. **A coordinating-networking role:** linking political forces, institutions, and parents' committees within a single working network, thereby increasing the capacity for mobilization during escalation and reducing the burden of confrontation borne by any single actor. This function is consistent with partnership documents bringing together the Committee and the Union of Parents as a model for broadening the social base and building a unified position (Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2019, DOC-2019 -048).
3. **A strategic developmental role:** pushing toward the formulation of a vision and plan for protecting education and strengthening its reference framework through partnerships that include community, educational, and human rights actors, thereby transforming pressure into work files that can be followed up (National and Civil Educational Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2019- 004,2019) National Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2012 -008,2012).

Accordingly, the Committee's emergence, structure, and functions help explain where the initiatives discussed in the findings came from, and why their success or failure was tied to the Committee's ability to manage pluralism and transform it into decision-making capable of implementation and accumulation. This idea becomes clearer in the subsequent sections dealing with pluralism, challenges, governance, and sustainability.

Summary of the discussion: The emergence and structure of the Committee may be understood as an attempt to build a coordinating reference framework in an environment of complex targeting of education. This structure becomes a decisive factor in explaining both the limits of effectiveness and the possibilities for its development, because it touches the core of the Committee's organizational capacity,

namely coordination, decision-making, follow-up, and documentation, rather than merely its symbolic existence.

7.3 Discussion of the Committee's Initiatives to Protect Education in Jerusalem

The findings of the study show that the initiatives of **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** represent a package of interventions that vary according to the level of threat and the intensity of escalation, combining symbolic and mobilizational tracks with organizational and field-based ones. From the perspective of the research questions, this demonstrates that protecting education in Jerusalem requires a framework of action capable of affirming the national legitimacy of the curriculum while reducing the vulnerability of the school to the instruments of daily pressure. This result is consistent with the Committee's documents, which focus on formulating a vision and plan of action, identifying partners, and establishing follow-up mechanisms instead of relying on circumstantial responses (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2021; National Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2012).

Interpretively, the initiatives of awareness-raising and the construction of a national educational argument represent a strategy for increasing the social cost of Israelization by transforming the issue from an administrative option into a broad community position. Awareness documents addressed to parents and students link the curriculum to rights and identity, reflecting the Committee's role as an intermediary between the production of discourse and the building of mobilizable local public opinion (National Civil Action Committee, Union of Parents, and Civic Campaign for Preserving the Palestinian Curriculum in Jerusalem, 2015; Civic Campaign for Preserving the Palestinian Curriculum in Jerusalem in cooperation with the Civil Action Committee and the Union of Parents' Committees, 2015).

Field interventions aimed at protecting the curriculum and preventing distorted copies also reflect a move from discursive rejection to direct action that obstructs the transformation of targeting into a *fait accompli*, while managing the cost of risk through organized collective work. Coordination is therefore a condition for both effectiveness and continuity, as the vision documents make clear (National and Civil Educational Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2019).

Likewise, partnership with parents' committees constituted a decisive axis for broadening participation and reaching schools and neighborhoods, thereby transforming initiatives into collective action that links the school to its social base and reduces its isolation (Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2019; Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2012).

The discussion explains the variation in the impact of these initiatives: mobilization and coalitions are effective in moments of crisis, whereas long-term programs are subject to fluctuation in the absence of stable governance, sustainable funding, and



documentation that guarantees accumulation. The analytical question here focuses on the conditions of accumulation, and the Committee's documents reflect this by linking effectiveness to follow-up, partnerships, and the preservation of decisions (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2021).

Summary of the discussion: The Committee's initiatives confirm that protecting education is a complex process requiring discourse, awareness, partnerships, mobilization, and field intervention. The role of the Committee lies in serving as a coordinating mechanism that transforms position into action, with its impact remaining dependent on institutionalization, sustainability, and documentation.

7.4 Discussion of the Impact of the Committee's Pluralistic Composition on Coordination, Decision-Making, and Implementation

The study's findings show that the pluralistic composition of **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem**—including political forces, civil society institutions, community actors, public figures, and links with parents' committees—is not merely a description of membership, but a factor determining both the nature of its effectiveness and its limits. From the perspective of the research questions, the value of this pluralism is defined by its ability to produce collective decisions that are capable of implementation in an environment in which education is subject to complex targeting and daily pressure, making coordination a decisive organizational resource.

Positively, pluralism helps explain how the Committee broadened the base of representation and built a wider network of relationships and trust, thereby enhancing the social legitimacy of its position and increasing its capacity for mobilization during periods of escalation. It also helped reduce the isolation of the school by transforming the decision into that of a network rather than of a single administration, and by facilitating the distribution of roles across awareness-raising, follow-up, mobilization, and communication. This is reflected in partnership documents with the Union of Parents, which transform the protection of education into a broad community-based act (Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2019; Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2012).

At the same time, the discussion explains the negative side of pluralism: slower decision-making, overlapping roles, and fragmented reference points, especially in the absence of a clear vision and mechanisms of settlement. In such circumstances, pluralism may turn into parallel positions or competition over reference, with weak accumulation and discontinuous response. The problem therefore lies not in pluralism itself, but in the way it is managed so as to transform it into practical agreements and a plan of implementation.

Interpretively, transforming pluralism into effectiveness requires clear governance conditions: leadership, an effective secretariat, task distribution, clarity of

competencies, and mechanisms of documentation and follow-up. Calls to regulate reference points help reduce friction, identify who leads the education file, and prevent contradiction in order to enhance continuity. The Committee's documents capture this by emphasizing work regulations, follow-up mechanisms, preservation of decisions, and regular meetings as elements that turn pluralism into cumulative action (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, 2021).

Summary of the discussion: A pluralistic composition can generate significant potential for influence if it is transformed into a partnership network and a decision-making structure capable of implementation, but it may weaken in the absence of governance, settlement mechanisms, and clearly defined competencies. The criterion is whether it can be managed in ways that allow the cumulative growth of coordinating action in the protection of national education.

7.5 Discussion of the Structural, Political, Legal, and Internal Challenges and Their Impact on Effectiveness

The results of the study show that the effectiveness of **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** is not determined by the willingness to intervene alone, but by its organizational capacity as a coordinating body, that is, its capacity to build a shared reference framework, make implementable decisions, and preserve continuity and accumulation. Interviews and documents reveal three interconnected layers of challenge that produce a complex effect on its effectiveness:

First: Political-legal constraints:

These constraints impose a high daily organizational cost, as supervision, conditions, and follow-up extend in ways that drain efforts and increase risks for schools themselves. This makes everyday work more costly than response in moments of escalation, when mobilization and partnership rise temporarily, while administrative control obstructs the consolidation of initiatives and their accumulation over the long term.

Second: Fragility of resources and sustainability:

Limited and unstable resources constitute a direct ceiling on effectiveness, as they constrain long-term programs, the building of professional follow-up systems, and cumulative support for schools and parents. This pushes the Committee toward short-term responses or dependence on voluntary effort, making impact fluctuate. Funding may also carry indirect pressures through its conditions, creating tension between the need for support and the preservation of decision-making independence.

Third: Internal governance challenges and the management of pluralism:

Although the Committee's pluralistic composition is a source of representative strength, it may also produce slow decision-making, overlapping roles, and competing reference points when mechanisms of settlement and prioritization are



absent. Added to this are weak documentation, unstable institutional regularity, and limited accumulation of experience, which make response dependent on persons and circumstances rather than turning it into a sustainable process.

Summary of the discussion: The limits of the Committee's effectiveness resulted from the interaction of external political-legal constraints with the fragility of financial sustainability and internal governance challenges. Its success therefore cannot be measured by the mere existence of interventions, but by the conditions that made those interventions possible, sustainable, and cumulative within a highly restrictive context.

7.6 Discussion of the Strategies Developed by the Committee to Address Challenges and Enhance Its Effectiveness

The findings of the study show that **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** did not merely diagnose challenges, but also attempted to develop strategies of action that would transform its existence from a symbolic framework into a coordinating actor capable of producing practical impact. These strategies may be understood as attempts to raise effectiveness through three interconnected tracks: (a) improving governance, internal organization, and decision management; (b) broadening partnership and turning it into an actionable protection network; and (c) strengthening sustainability and accumulation despite limited resources.

First: Governance and internal organization (decision management and follow-up)

At the level of internal organization, the Committee developed a strategy based on transforming pluralism into a distribution of roles rather than leaving it as a plurality of positions. The role of the secretariat is understood as an operational tool that accelerates decision-making and guarantees follow-up in urgent cases through organizing meetings, regulating the agenda, assigning members specific follow-up tasks, and preserving decisions and archives. These functions appear explicitly in the policy and operational guidelines document and the indicators of the work program, which makes them not merely procedural details but conditions for institutionalizing action and reducing the cost of slowness and overlapping roles (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2021 -114,2012). This strategy therefore aims to reduce internal obstacles that weaken the Committee as a coordinating reference framework by establishing operational rules that ensure continuity and accumulation.

Second: Broadening partnerships and turning them into a protection network

At the level of partnerships, the Committee, as reflected in the findings, adopted a strategy of broadening the community protection network around schools through partnership with parents' committees and educational actors. This path appears highly effective because it reduces the school's isolation and turns mobilization into operational capacity during escalation, while also broadening participation, increasing the legitimacy of the position, and reinforcing both the unity and direction

of discourse. The joint vision documents with the Union of Parents confirm this logic by presenting confrontation as a broad-based form of community organization rather than a temporary protest (Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2019- 048,2019) Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2012 -109,2012). From the perspective of effectiveness, the value of this partnership lies in the Committee's ability to function as an organizational mediator that brings together the school, parents, and institutions within a single organized collective act.

Third: Sustainability and accumulation (strengthening the reference framework and building an extended path)

At the level of sustainability and accumulation, the Committee attempted to strengthen the reference framework in the field of education through building broader partnerships involving official, community, and educational-academic actors, viewing this as a point of entry for developing long-term tools of intervention not restricted to confrontation in moments of crisis. Calls for an extended plan and supportive programs for students may be understood as an attempt to move beyond the limits of symbolic impact toward a more practical and sustainable impact. This is visible in proposal and vision documents that seek to organize work in the education sector and to define priorities of intervention that go beyond reaction (National and Civil Educational Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2019- 004,2019). Nevertheless, this track remains highly sensitive to limited funding and unstable resources, making its transformation into long-term programs dependent on the condition of sustainability discussed in the findings.

Summary of the discussion: The Committee's strategy lies in transforming its presence into organizational capacity through governance, namely a secretariat, distribution of roles, and documentation; through turning pluralism into actionable partnership, especially via parents' committees; and through seeking to build a reference framework and extended plan that move beyond reaction, while accumulation remains constrained by the limits of sustainability and resources.

7.7 Discussion of the Evaluation of the Committee's Model as a Framework of Community Resistance for the Protection of Education and Its Applicability and Adaptability

The study's results show that the evaluation of the model of **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem** should be based on distinguishing between **symbolic-political effectiveness** and **practical-executive effectiveness**, and between achievement in moments of escalation and the capacity for sustainability. On the one hand, the existence of the Committee provided an umbrella framework that strengthened the unification of discourse, the coordination of mobilization, and the reduction of the isolation of schools in moments of pressure. This effect



may be traced through indicators such as the expansion of partnerships, regular communication among actors, the ability for rapid mobilization, and the emergence of a unified community position in times of crisis. On the other hand, the findings show that the transformation of this effect into sustainable outcomes remained limited to varying degrees because of resource constraints, unstable funding, overlapping roles, fragmented reference points, and at times weak documentation. These factors may be traced through indicators such as the temporal continuity of initiatives, the presence of extended plans, the recurrence and accumulation of tools, and the Committee's ability to produce daily rather than seasonal follow-up. The Committee's documents capture this distinction implicitly by emphasizing the transition from reaction to institutional follow-up, through committees, decision-making, and archiving, as a condition for accumulation (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2021- 114,2021).

Accordingly, an objective evaluation of the model may be presented through its strengths and limits:

First: Strengths (sources of effectiveness)

1. **Coordinating legitimacy grounded in pluralism:** The Committee's pluralistic composition gave it the capacity for broader representation and for building a network of pressure and community protection around education, especially through partnership with parents' committees. This function appears in the joint vision documents, which present confrontation as a broad-based form of community organization with a shared reference framework (Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2019- 048,2019) Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2012- 109,2012).
2. **Reducing the isolation of the school:** The Committee helped transfer the issue of the curriculum from the level of an administrative decision within the school to that of a community issue open to mobilization and collective action, thereby reducing the extent to which the school alone bore the cost of the position. This is reflected in awareness documents that address parents and students as part of the protection of the curriculum and identity (National Civil Action Committee, Union of Parents, and Civic Campaign for Preserving the Palestinian Curriculum in Jerusalem, (DOC-2015- 110,2015).
3. **Multiplicity of intervention tracks:** The model made it possible to combine awareness-raising and the construction of a national argument with field action, coordination, mediation, and pressure, in ways that suited the complex nature of the targeting of education. This is consistent with proposal and vision documents that sought to organize work in the education sector and define multi-level priorities of intervention (National and Civil Educational Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2019- 004,2019).

Second: Limits of the model (factors of weakening)

1. **Fragility of sustainability:** The absence or weakness of stable resources turned part of the interventions into short-term responses that were difficult to accumulate, which explains the gap between strong presence in moments of escalation and weak long-term daily follow-up.
2. **The cost of pluralism without governance:** When clear mechanisms of settlement, role distribution, and regular documentation are absent, diversity turns into slower decision-making, overlapping roles, and parallel reference points, which weakens coherence and limits the capacity for expansion. The Committee's documents confirm the importance of work regulations, regular meetings, and the preservation of decisions as entry points for addressing this cost (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2021- 114,2021).
3. **A gap between the symbolic and the practical:** Symbolic impact appears quickly in moments of escalation, whereas practical impact requires daily tools of follow-up and extended plans, both of which are more sensitive to resources, organization, and governance.

Third: Applicability and adaptability (conditions of transfer)

The findings indicate that the model is more adaptable than replicable. Its success in other contexts requires the presence of minimum conditions:

- **A clear reference framework and decision-making mechanisms:** an effective secretariat, task distribution, documentation, and regular follow-up;
- **Functional community partnership:** not merely formal, especially with parents' committees as channels of mobilization and protection for schools;
- **Sustainable resources:** enabling the transformation of initiatives into extended programs, including support tools for schools, parents, students, educational alternatives, and professional follow-up;
- **Contextual adaptation:** because tools of action and the scale of risk vary according to the political-legal environment and the degree of openness of public space.

These conditions are consistent with what the Committee's documents propose regarding the institutionalization of follow-up, the building of partnerships, and the preservation of decisions as requirements for enhancing the capacity for cumulative action (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2021- 114,2021).

Evaluative summary: Objectively speaking, the Committee's model succeeded in building a coordinating framework that produced important symbolic and



organizational effects and created conditions for mobilization and community protection around education. Yet its capacity to transform this effect into sustainable outcomes remained limited unless the conditions of internal governance, sustainability, and the building of long-term tools of intervention were completed. The value of the model therefore lies in its being a community-educational structure of resistance capable of development, rather than a fully complete model in itself.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

8.1 Summary of the Answer to the Research Questions

This study concludes that education in East Jerusalem is administered within a political-legal context that turns the curriculum and the school into a field of struggle over identity, narrative, and knowledge, in which Israelization policies of a symbolic and cognitive nature intersect with administrative and institutional mechanisms of control over the school environment and the conditions under which it operates. In response to this context, the case study shows that organized community response, as manifested in the experience of **The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem**, relied on building a coordinating reference framework and networks of partnership, especially through parents' committees and local actors, thereby providing a supportive and advocacy umbrella that reduced the isolation of schools and enhanced the capacity for mobilization and intervention in times of escalation (Union of Parents of Jerusalem School Students & National and Civil Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2019- 048,2019).

However, the effectiveness of this model was not fixed; rather, it remained conditioned by internal and external factors affecting the Committee's organizational capacity, including sustainability and resources, clarity of reference points, distribution of roles, mechanisms of decision-making and follow-up, the ability to manage difference within a pluralistic structure, and the importance of documentation and archiving in guaranteeing accumulation and institutional learning (The National and Civil Society Action Committee in Jerusalem, (DOC-2021- 114,2021). The research therefore offers an explanation of how community response is formed through a coordinating framework in a restrictive Jerusalem context, and what enables or constrains it over time, thereby answering the main research question and its sub-questions concerning the Committee's emergence, initiatives, challenges, and strategies.

8.2 Suggestions for Further Research

This study opens several research paths that may deepen understanding and expand the possibility of comparison:

1. Conducting comparative studies between different community-based coordinating frameworks within Jerusalem, or between Jerusalem and other Palestinian cities, in order to examine the effect of differences in political-legal context, resources,

and the structure of actors on patterns of response and limits of effectiveness.

2. Expanding the research perspective to include students and teachers as everyday actors in the formation of identity within the school, thereby making it possible to connect coordinating action at the level of the Committee with lived educational experience inside the classroom and school.
3. Studying the impact of political and administrative transformations on education policies and their trajectories, as well as on the outcomes of pluralism in reference frameworks and actors, and how these transformations are reflected in governance and decision-making within coordinating bodies.
4. Developing longitudinal evaluative studies that trace the impact of community initiatives over extended periods of time, with the aim of uncovering the drivers of sustainability and accumulation, and identifying the factors that prevent response from turning into a temporary or seasonal pattern.



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Code	Interview Date	First Name	Last Name
1	2025/12/16	Ziad	Al-Shamali
2	2025/12/16	Ratiba	Al-Natsheh
3	2025/12/16	Rasem	Obeidat
4	2025/12/18	E'tidal	Al-Ashhab
5	2025/12/16	Nabil	Abdullah