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A Socially Constructed Identity: Business Orientations and Home Country Nationalism of the Palestine Diaspora

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Abstract

Home country support from hardship nation émigrés is an under-researched topic area, particularly pertaining to Palestine which is a comparatively extreme case of oppression and apartheid. Some might consider it irrational to desire to return and invest in the nation, but we apply social constructivism theory in understanding the nature of the loyalty of these diasporans. A desire to live in Palestine in the future was not in itself significantly related to a favorable outlook for the country, or to a desire to support the nation. Findings indicate that family support and a sense of hopefulness for the future of Palestine influenced ethical orientations of home country nationalism in charitable investments to hospitals, NGOs, and educational institutions. Their direct portfolio investments tended to be mostly in real estate and to a lesser degree in business operations.

A Socially Constructed Identity: Business Orientations and Home Country Nationalism of the Palestine Diaspora

> I can't tell what this land could mean for someone else,
> for me it is my homeland, a tiny place, up in flames,
> it's the ever rocking cradle of childhood memories.
> I grew up out of all this, a twig out of the tree,
> and I hope it will be this soil where my body returns one day.
> I am home here…
>
> Miklós Radnóti   (Orbán, 2018)

Palestinians are peoples indigenous to Palestine. They are Biblical descendants of the sons of Abraham. The region was named during occupation by the Roman Empire. Subsequently controlled by the Byzantine Empire, Palestine became largely Muslim with the rise of Islam in the 1600s (Farsoun, 2005). Jews, also originating in this land, had experienced episodes of dispersal going back to the Babylonian exile of 586 B.C. During the past 2,000 years, along with the Palestinian majority, small populations of Jews and the earliest Christians lived in relative harmony as "People of the Book" (Vajda, 2012) until Israel was established in 1948. Soon thereafter, the Arab population was substantially driven into the modern diaspora through what is known as *Al-Nakbah* (Arabic for "The Catastrophe").

Today this diaspora is comparatively larger than the home population (6 million versus 4.5 million). Jordan has contained the largest contingent of Palestinians (at times as much as 60% of the Jordanian population), widely granting them citizenship, and gaining much from the highly educated and hard working refugees. Other countries such as Lebanon, Syria, and Kuwait have hosted large numbers of Palestinians. Many successful émigrés have established themselves in Europe and USA, as well as Chile which has 500,000 and is the largest Palestinian community outside the Middle East (Global Exchange, 2018).

Purpose of this paper

This project is inspired by Nielsen and Riddle's (2010) theory piece about ethical orientations of non-MNC private sector diaspora investors. It continues to be true in that "little is known about why diasporans invest in their countries of origin" (p. 435). Palestine is an extreme example (Botta and Vaggi, 2012) because it is a current conflict area, under occupation and apartheid, and the residents have very limited civil rights (Falah, 2004; Heacock, 2004; King-Irani, 2006). Externally it appears irrational that persons who have left, established themselves successfully in a host country, achieved financial stability and success would desire to return and make business investments in such a volatile homeland. The purpose of this study is to examine the nature of this motivation, in context to well known dynamics of diaspora behavior, to understand the social and psychological elements and the power of such ethical frameworks.

Empirical findings might further identify some of the non-pecuniary elements in conflict and risk environment investments (Feil, 2007) that are indeed more salient than financial motivations. The Palestine story has been an item of fascination, although much has happened economically and culturally since Schulz and Hammer's book "The Palestinian diaspora" (2003) which went deeply into the dynamics of the Palestine situation.

The project proceeds with a discussion of diaspora literature, particularly in relationship to the overseas Palestinians. We introduce social constructivism theory as a basis for five hypotheses. Then the mixed methods empirical framework is mapped out, followed by a discussion of findings. Business ethics in this sampling is driven by a socially constructed cohesion to the land, supported by family and traditions, despite lack of clear rationality.

BACKGROUND DEFINITIONS AND LITERATURE

Diaspora

The Greek root of the term diaspora is "to scatter and to sow" (Ember, Ember, and Skoggard, 2003). Its Biblical and anthropological context is a dispersal and displacement of peoples by conquest and mass deportations. A contemporary vernacular envisions émigrés who have a connection to their homeland. Often they wish to return, meanwhile supporting family remaining in the homeland through remittances. Traditionally the largest diaspora had been the 'overseas Chinese,' categorized as an economic diaspora, that numbered more than twenty million following the industrial revolution of the 1800s and continues today. Currently the top position is occupied by India with nearly 16 million overseas (World Migration, 2018). Other well known populations include Africans, Armenians, Jews, and Irish. In addition to economic and victim diasporas are several others which include religious and settlers. The long list would include Ukrainians, Italians, Afghans, Lebanese, Vietnamese, Iranians, Tibetans, Russians, Germans, Tamils, Sikhs, Hindus, Somalis, and Kurds (Cohen, 1992, 1994 ; Safran, 1991).

Diaspora is not synonymous with refugee status. Refugee invokes some element of helplessness and victimhood (Cohen, 2008) , which is only one of several possible features of diaspora membership. Categorizing people as refugees is a legal and administrative status, while 'diaspora' is more sociological (Hanafi, 2003). They rise above their refugee status as they endeavor to make a contribution to their homeland. Such people have the means to continue in the host environment, but are drawn to the needs of their homeland.

Palestine exiles have often been involved in homeland self-determination politics, which has never been very successful so far. It is notable that they typically do not enjoy talking about the hardships of exploitation and oppression. Such narrative involves the intolerable injustice of

dispossession, denial, and statelessness (Peteet, 1995; Sayigh, 1994; Schulz and Hammer, 2003). Their painful legacy is at an extreme of current diasporized cultures in the world. At the point of this data collection, we recognize the emotional bonds to the lands of Palestine, and endeavor to study the mechanisms of contribution and commitment from a cultural and economic standpoint, avoiding the polarizing occupation and reciprocal attack aspects to the extent possible. The focus here is more upon the dignity of a fine and highly educated people who are struggling mightily to preserve their identity, homeland, and a future for their country.

The Exiles and Returnees

Hanafi (2003) describes the diaspora culture as being constantly evolving. It is said that Palestinian national identity has developed in exile (Said, 1990: 360; Turki, 1994: 160). Those being away from the Middle East experienced freedom to express themselves and their dissatisfactions (Mavroudi, 2008). Palestinians abroad experience a wide array of economic and political realities. Whatever impediment they may have or not have in their host environments, there is an unmistakable vulnerability in their return to Palestine. Both socially and economically there is high uncertainty surrounding conditions in their homeland under occupation (Amer, 2012).

The most internationally mobile of the Palestinian diaspora would be those who emigrated voluntarily closer to the year 2000, mostly for the purpose of obtaining a well-paying job. Many of these have travel documents that enable them relatively easy access for return to Palestine. They are skilled and well educated. An earlier wave went out in the wake of the 1967 war, and they lost their residence rights. Prior to that was 1946 in which Zionists drove them out,

and Palestinians lost their right to return. Hanafi (2003) describes Syrian and Jordanian Palestinians as "partially diasporized" because of their high level of rights, benefits, and special status, just short of being granted citizenship. In fact, Jordan is the one Arab country that has frequently awarded its citizenship to Palestinians because of the very close ethnic ties.

Fantasy Bonded

Diaspora members are sometimes motivated by idealized memories of their land of origin (Collier, 2000) perhaps somewhat out of touch with reality, due to their living away from the homeland (Kaldor, 2012). An experience shared among Palestinians is that of being without a home. As they live their exile lives as strangers, they find themselves termed 'returnees' when re-entering to Palestine, and thus are strangers again. Said one of the respondents in this study:

> In Palestine everywhere I look people look like me, talk like me. Despite being born in the United States. I feel culture shock every day of my life here. It's exhausting to feel so 'other' all the time. (Q2–30)

Results from qualitative studies have shown that this homelessness ultimately crystallizes into a sense of identity, rather than disintegrating the sense of self and community that we might assume (Shulz and Hammer, 2003). There is a trauma in seeing the homeland and being unable to be a part of it. These sentiments transcend differences in class and religion. Frequently the children of overseas Palestinians may not identify with Palestine, but they identify with a parent's "Palestinian-ness" (Schulz and Hammer, 2003; p. 196). They feel a strong linkage to their adopted homes, while also aware of the deep differences of the Palestine situation that is their family legacy.

Although they establish a 'belongingness' with the places they live in exile, there is a sentiment of attachment to Palestine. The climate is mild, the terrain is distinctive, and the

historical context of the land is profound. Coming to the capital city of Ramallah, they encounter a lovely area that is not poor, overcrowded, or primitive. Typical impressions of respondents in this study are as follows:

> I like the food and culture of Palestine. When I go back, I always feel a sense of belonging and it feels like home. (Q3–37)

> It is the birthplace of my heritage and my culture. My parents and grandparents were born there and it holds a strong piece of mine and my family's identity. It has undeniably the most beautiful climate in the world. The land itself is beautiful, with blue beaches along the coast and mountains more inward. (Q1–19)

> It's a great county and I wish I had more time to spend there. It's not what the media portrays it. (Q4–19)

> I was privileged enough to be able to visit Palestine and everything about it was phenomenal. My experience made me want to stay longer. (Q1–23)

> Life is so much simpler. Plus the food quality is 100x better in Palestine. Fruits and vegetables taste better. When you go out to eat, the food is both more affordable than the US and more delicious. (Q1–28)

Making a return to this land represents a collective wish that is passed on to the next generations of Palestinians. Although a number of these exiles hold the original deed for their houses in Palestine, they understand that they will never re-occupy them. However, they have long held a hopeful claim of a right of return, that now in some cases becomes possible, and is an ultimate source of identity. Perhaps stronger than the term diaspora is long-distance nationalism (Schiller, 2005; Skrbiš, 2017) in which individuals experience strong national bonds and loyalty, even as they are away from their homeland. This has been experienced by other dispersed immigrants such as: Germans, Jews, Czechs, Serbs, Poles, Italians, Hungarians, Greeks, Irish, Cubans, Mexicans, Turks, and a variety of African nations. India, Ireland, Vietnam, and Philippines would certainly be included in a list far too exhaustive to deal with in this discussion.

Home country nationalism would be another term employed relating to these diaspora members scattered across the globe. We look here at unique aspects of the biological ties of Palestinian people through a powerful common history and destiny, compellingly articulated through legend, lore, and religious teaching of all monotheistic religions. Long-distance nationalists are characterized here as a dispersed population that would feel a call of loyalty to the homeland based upon an emotional attachment, activated by perceived requirements or events of urgency. It is not unusual for Palestinians to have attained a high level of education and financial success, even more so generally than many of the host country natives in the countries to which they have been dispersed (Cohen, 2008).

In this fashion, a disenfranchised diaspora would exist, particularly influenced by certain elites among them with resources or prominence (Tölölyan, 2000). The impact of their contributions is uneven because the successful migrant workers generally come from comparatively affluent and influential families, typically from urban households with high education and skills (Van Hear, 2005). This is what we may be seeing in Palestine of the early 21st century. Thus the concept of diaspora evolves into a fresh and exciting theme. Transcending the catastrophic horrors of forcible exile, a creative rebirth takes place, accompanied by a desire for a triumphal return to the homeland (Cohen, 2008).

Remittances and Contributions

Developing nations depend heavily upon remittance funds from their diasporas. These take the form of family support that distributes into the overall economy and compensates for weaknesses in the social safety net. Globally more than $420 billion was officially sent home in 2016 (World Bank, 2017), which is an increase of $150 billion from ten years prior (Mohapatra

et al., 2007). Unrecorded flows through informal channels may add 50% or more to these numbers. The value of this funding has not been lost on policymakers, who observe the efficiency and sidestepping of corruption that takes place in these direct forms of voluntary foreign aid. Data collection on this type of funding is patchy because of the varieties of funding mechanisms, and the lack of transparency engendered in confidential contributions to one's homeland (Van Hear, 2005).

In addition to sending money home are a substantial variety of indirect contributions, not technically remittances, for such items as payment for overseas education, knowledge acquired (Clemens, Özden, and Rapoport, 2014), and development. Palestine has a comparatively weak legal system internally, with serious problems in regulatory environment and corruption (Sabella et al., 2014). It ranks near the bottom internationally in business startup ease and credit availability (Doing Business, 2013). Questions that apply to Palestine relate to the motives and desires of the émigrés who contribute. How do migrants link to the homeland for developmental work? What are the best means to facilitate? Are there good practices that can be replicated? Which types of investments are more likely to be successful? Are the justifications rational?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

Social Constructivism Theory

Social constructivism is a learning theory. It focuses upon the influence of social construction in knowledge. It has roots in cognitive constructivism (Piaget, 1950) and is an outgrowth of Vygotsky's (1981) sociocultural theory recognition of both social and cognitive processes in learning. These viewpoints are at odds with objectivism (Burge, 2010) which approaches knowledge in terms of universal truths, as in mathematics.

Early identification of constructivism appears in Berger and Luckman's (1967) *The Social Construction of Reality*. Gergen (1985) elaborated upon schools of thought that would focus upon empiricist and rationalist orientations toward reality, or alternatively to recognize psychological constructionist process of knowledge influenced through social interchange. Social constructivist theorists postulate that knowledge is socially produced, without one necessarily understanding the basic processes involved (Prawad and Floden, 1994). As individuals evaluate events, actions of others, and their own responses, their own individuality emerges from "looking into a mirror that they themselves have created" (Hühn, 2017; p. 8). Imagination causes "social truth to be constantly re-imagined and reconstructed." Similar to the belief of Piaget (1974) is that human intelligence tends to interpret external information through internalized reconstruction of memory and perception.

Social constructivist theory initially appears in literature in the 1960s, appearing most commonly in education (O'Connor, 1998) in context to instructional design and the sociology of knowledge in literacy, math, and social studies. Gergen and Gergen (2008) describe the social context we are born into, and the assimilation of our language and culture (Becvar, 2000). Ultimately, we become socialized in our values and shared culture and the ways we understand our surroundings. Some of the earliest literature by Berger and Luckmann (1967) introduced the dichotomy of "objective facticity" and "subjective meanings" which we draw on for this Palestine study of a complex diaspora of contrasts.

Reality simultaneously exists on multiple dimensions but has similar meanings for those who share experiences (Gergen, 1988). Social constructivism has also been termed pragmatic social behaviorism (Garrison, 1995) as it embraces meanings that are not only cognitive but also moral and aesthetic. We see this in the Palestinian experience that often recalls olive trees and

mild weather and pleasant scenes from homes and villages as vividly as the hardships and indignities.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Furthering the work of Gillespie et al., (1999), we inquire what are some determinants of homeland investment interest? What compels emigrants to return to their homeland? What is it about Palestine that draws returnees? Logic would say that you would not be motivated to return to a land where the current occupiers view your people as a problem (Pappe, 2006). Why would persons be drawn to a situation that from outside analysis is untenable, particularly when they have been successful over a long period in host countries?

The following hypotheses are presented (Please see Figure 1):

As a diaspora member, the ethical application of social constructivism theory toward Palestine points to the operationalization of moral imagination described by Hargrave (2009) in which social processes, influenced here by social constructivism, lead to cognitively based conclusions. Werhane (1999, 2002) proposed that individuals use mental models to make sense of abstractions. These mental models encompass personal ethics and the combination of societal norms, family expectations, and the configuring of realities through reflection and judgment.

It would be irrational to suppose that overseas returnees would desire to bring their own resources home to a hopeless situation. We include moral energy in which action is shaped toward outcomes (Uygur et al., 2017) and new possibilities are triggered. Such energy is seen

through the passion, idealism, and commitment stemming from ethical imagination and the desire for a better society. Thus it is hypothesized that there is a significant linkage between hopefulness for the future of Palestine, and one's desire to contribute tangibly to this nation, beyond some tourist revenue:

H1: There is a desire to contribute to Palestine that is positively related to hopefulness for the country's future.

Students of recent history can confirm there is much reason for despair concerning the future outlook for Palestine. Typically each hopeful development has fallen again into ruins of failure and disappointment for the self-determination of this people. However, optimism itself burns eternal in some hearts. It is hypothesized that among those favorably disposed toward a hopeful future for Palestine, there would be a positive relationship to their happiness to see positive developments in the country. Visitors can observe signs of prosperity in the country, economic development, overseas retailers entering, etc. to which they might selectively attribute positive excitement or satisfaction. Feelings of hope for the future of Palestine would lead to a favorable outlook for the country through mental models (Werhane, 1999), despite the setbacks, that arise from imagining new possibilities. Moral imagination is involved with the sorting out of moral conflicts or dilemmas through self reflection, and envisioning favorable outcomes (Hargrave, 2009; Werhane, 2008). This leads to the following hypothesis:

H2: Having a favorable current outlook for Palestine arises from hopefulness for the country's future.

Typical of émigrés is an underlying fantasy of return. This is a compelling desire, especially if it is supported by family members. The socially constructed reality, bolstered by

multiple viewpoints, would be instrumental to attitude formation in diaspora members. An explanation for these attitudes is reflected in the type of moral imagination that is theorized in the ethical perspectives arising from moral imagination (Whitaker & Godwin, 2013). Moral imagination is a social process (Hargrave, 2009) influenced by collective action processes that can allow contradictions to be approached creatively. Taking into account the perspectives of other stakeholders, particularly those of valued family, an ethically charged situation becomes simplified, rationalized, and conceptualized favorably.

Palestinian diasporans may have an "ego ideal" (Freud, 1955/1921) arising from shared commonalities in their idealized self-concepts, although with a great deal of variation in "introjective identification" (Simola, 2018) in which they would unconsciously accept attitudes and expectations of other people (Klein, 1946/1975).

In order to justify the continuance of the dream of returning, one would need to be as hopeful for the country's future as possible. Any favorable evidence would be seized upon to create a positive outlook, at times flying in the face of a more somber reality. Thus we see a social constructivism of reality through the perceptions of these individuals and their families:

H3: The desire for a home in Palestine, buoyed by family members, contributes to hopefulness for the country's future.

The deeply heartfelt desire of return may not be in itself adequate for the operationalization of remittances, investment, and displays of home country nationalism. As much as these sojourners may be emotionally connected to their ancestral homeland, there are other ethical elements that would contribute to the sense of moral courage that would influence

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them to send financial support to the homeland. Ethics literature presents specific description of principled action, personal values, resistance to social pressures, and virtuous motives as themes in the competency of moral courage as a definable attribute (Sekerka, Bagozzi, & Charnigo, 2009).

H4: A positive desire to live permanently in Palestine is not by itself significantly related to a desire to support the nation.

Personal wishes for return to the homeland are not enough to influence rationality to believe the country is doing well just because one is bonded to that place. We have discussed the potentially irrational nature of loyalty to Palestine, and put it in context in this section as a possible dilemma for the overseas diaspora member. In addition to the ethical implications of moral imagination, at this point we introduce the concept of moral residue (Marcus, 1980) in which dilemmas confound the connection between attitudes and observation as individuals try to preserve the consistency of their moral reasoning.

Although one may feel drawn to Palestine based upon deep cultural connection, there could be uneasiness that resembles guilt in trying to reconcile feelings with realities. This is the nature of moral residue in the painfulness of compromising of one's deeply held and cherished beliefs and values (Bennett & Chamberlin, 2013), further accompanied by tactics to avoid the dilemma. In this fashion, the attraction to Palestine as an ancestral homeland does not in itself lead to positive outlooks despite the obvious hardships and limitations that are the daily ongoing reality, leading to the following hypothesis:

H5: A positive desire to live permanently in Palestine is not by itself significantly related to a favorable current outlook for the country.

METHODS

Procedure and Sample

This was a mixed methods field study. Quantitative elements were primarily Likert-style scale items and demographics. Qualitative responses are bracketed to fully preserve the wording conveyed, and grouped through thematic analysis. Palestinians are notoriously difficult to locate for diaspora study (Gillespie et al., 1999). A primary challenge is the sensitive nature of acquiring subjects willing to furnish candid responses to a researcher claiming not to be pursuing a political agenda. Said one respondent:

Israel's use of spies and foreigners in the West Bank can invoke suspicions. (Q2–17)

The ability to convince this many people of their complete confidentiality is one of the unique contributions of this study, as will be shown in the following sections. Questionnaire respondents were procured through several overseas Palestinian organizations in the United States, as well as some personal introductions while visiting Ramallah. A snowballing technique was utilized to encourage family and acquaintances to participate in either a written or online survey through Qualtrics. The only requirement for participation was to be of legal age, and having lived outside of Palestine. America had been a host country of all except one each in Kuwait, Germany, and Canada. All visit the West Bank, primarily the capital city of Ramallah, as well as some to Jerusalem. Seventy-four surveys were collected and 66 were complete. Table 1 shows the demographics of the sample. Genders were well balanced, as were the age ranges through working years and into retirement.

Many of the respondents were first generation born in Palestine, but an equal number were second generation. As is typical of Palestinians (Schulz and Hammer, 2003), the sample tended to be well educated and represented professional careers as well as those self-employed or business owners. Further demographics inquired into the amount of their personal financial resources they had brought to Palestine, as well as the types of investments they were making in the homeland.

Description of the Measures

Measures for this study were created and validated, as no previous research has established the survey items needed. All items are on a 5-point Likert scale of Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Desire to Support the Nation was measured with three items such as "I have a strong desire to contribute to the nation." Chronbach's alpha for this measure was 0.846 (See Table 2).

Favorable Current Outlook was captured through three items similar to "I believe there are good things happening in the country's development" ($α = 0.790$). Hopefulness for the Future is represented by three items, an example of which is "I see great potential for the future of Palestine" ($α = 0.847$). Family commitment is represented by a four-item scale ($α= 0.776$) with statements such as "My family is fully supportive of my interest in the homeland." The desire for a permanent home in Palestine is a two-item scale: "It is important to me to have a permanent residence in Palestine" ($α =0.796$). Please see Table 4 for all items.

The following five qualitative questions followed the quantitative section of the survey. Forty-three respondents participated.

1) What makes you want to come to Palestine?

2) In what ways do you experience culture shock when you return to Palestine?

3) What do you like and not like when you return to Palestine? Please give the reason.

4) What is your impression of Palestine, after you have been abroad?

5) What do you experience in Palestine that is different from what you expected? In what

   ways are you disappointed? In what ways are you positively surprised?

ANALYSIS

Structural equation modeling was conducted through PLS-SEM, which is a variance-based approach to SEM (Hair et al., 2017). It is useful in exploratory research in the social sciences, and is particularly robust with small sample sizes in its predictive capabilities (Cassel, Hackl, and Westlund, 1999). At a minimum sample size of ten times the number of structural paths, our usable survey $n = 66$ meets that hurdle (Barclay, Higgins, and Thompson, 1995). Qualitative responses were evaluated through thematic coding and bracketing (Boyatzis, 1998; (Gearing, 2004).

RESULTS

Measurement Model

The model features five latent variables, comprised of the indicator variables (See Figure 1). All of the indicators in the five variables loaded distinctly in factor analysis performed through SPSS with Varimax rotation. Internal consistency reliability of the measures is measured with Cronbach's alpha. All latent variables in the study are at 0.7 or greater (Nunnally, 1978). Correlation matrix appears in Table 2 with reliabilities on the diagonal. Discriminant validity is

assessed through heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) criterion analysis (Table 3). Henselar et al. (2015) found this method to perform better than AVE analysis through the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Voorhees et al., 2016). Values are in the favorable target range of < 0.85 level in this data set.

Collinearity

Variance inflation factor (VIF) of the indicator variables are shown in Table 4. All of the values are less than a VIF value of 5, which is an indication of item collinearity not being a problem (Hair et al., 2011).

Validation of the model

SmartPLS version 3.2.7 was used to evaluate path analysis in testing significance of the hypothesized relationships, with nonparametric bootstrapping re-samples of 500 (Chin, Marcolin, and Newsted, 2003) procedure to account for any non-normal distribution in the sample (Davison and Hinkley, 1997; Efron and Tibshirani, 1993). PLS-SEM does not require that data be normally distributed (nonparametric). Figure 1 shows the relationships between latent factors, with t-test values and R^2. Relationships with t value of 1.96 or greater, and path coefficients with standardized values in excess of 0.20 are deemed to be significant ($\alpha = 0.05$; two-tailed test) (Hair et al., 2017).

The model accounts for 63% of the variance in Positive Outlook for Palestine and 48% of the variance in Desire to Support the Nation. Those persons who have a desire for a permanent

residence in Palestine tend to be supported by the commitment of their family ($\beta = 0.317$, $t = 3.178$). Family commitment is positively related to being hopeful for Palestine's future ($\beta = 0.534$, $t = 4.595$). This hopefulness leads to a desire to support the nation ($\beta = 0.679$, $t = 7.345$) and a favorable current outlook ($\beta = 0.761$, $t = 11.79$). In examining whether a desire for residence in Palestine relates to a desire to support the nation or a favorable current outlook, there is not a significant path relationship ($\beta = 0.039$, $t = 0.377$ and $\beta = 0.091$, $t = 0.996$ respectively).

QUALITATIVE STUDY

Qualitative elements from this study appear throughout the paper and particularly in the next section, derived from thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998) and bracketing (Gearing, 2004). The use of qualitative responses from a survey clarifies and complements the quantitative findings (Saldaña, 2015) as well as avoiding an overemphasis on hypothesis testing (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). One hundred eighty-five qualitative comments were collected along with the original survey.

Emerging themes were established by observing dominant elements from each response, and coding them categorically (Boyatzis, 1998). Code was developed inductively by using criterion referenced subsamples of each query. Written replies were divided into a positive or negative reply for each item. In general, the positive comments outnumbered the negative, and the first open-ended question on why they would come to Palestine was all positive. By revisiting responses by code, themes emerged indicating elements of either commonality or

individual differences. Grounded in theory, the qualitative conceptual framework adds richness to the quantitative findings.

Potential bias in analysis is dealt with through bracketing (Gyulay et al.,1994) which is intended to set aside internal suppositions of the researcher as well as external suppositions that might be based upon history, definition, and larger environmental factors (Gearing, 2004). Qualitative responses are reported under rigid boundaries in which the respondents' wording is precisely retained in their authentic voice (LeVasseur, 2003). This method is known as Ideal (Philosophical) Bracketing (Husserl, 1970, Spiegelberg, 1973). It is intended to leave the phenomenon bare, crystallizing to the greatest extent possible the respondents' meaning. Themes with numerous responses are aggregated and reported through bracketed comments reflective of the broadest sense of the replies.

Themes that had the greatest number of comments were 28 mentions of the occupation, followed by hopelessness and restrictions (16). Thirteen commented in terms of Palestine being pleasant and beautiful, 11 talked favorably about the food and nightlife, 10 appreciating the people, 8 were put off specifically by pileups of trash, and 7 were impressed with the resiliency of the people. In inquiring why they would come to Palestine, a majority (28) cited family history. Among other themes noted in the responses were women's issues, high commitment to education in the country, apartheid, and various elements of the business climate.

FINDINGS

The first hypothesis, linking hopefulness for Palestine's future to a desire to make contributions there, was supported in the quantitative analysis. This hopefulness for the future, in light of the particular ongoing hardships in Palestine is observed in the qualitative replies of the

respondents in general terms of resiliency of the people. Said Respondents 57, 3, 53, and 35

respectively:

> I'm positively surprised that no matter the circumstances in Palestine, life always goes on. (Q5–29)

> My impression of Palestine is mostly that of awe and inspiration. I am in awe and inspired by a people who live with resiliency and tenacity in the face of true hardship. (Q4–2)

> Palestinians are innovators. Even with the high unemployment and hardship in water and electricity we are always working with it and around. Coming up with ideas and solutions to make things work. Giving the kids of the Palestine the best they can is every parent top priority. (Q4–29)

> I was privileged enough to be able to visit Palestine and everything about it was phenomenal. My experience made me want to stay longer. (Q4–23)

Those who contribute economically to Palestine are often excited by a vision of what the country

could be, based upon the attributes of its people. Said one respondent:

> It's catching up with the rest of the world! One thing about Palestinians, that the world really doesn't give us enough credit for, is that we turn out highly educated people. In Palestine and the Palestinians in the United States. We are one of the most educated people in the Middle East. So, we bring all of our resources back to educate I our hospitals, doctors, dentists, etc. (Q4–5)

One ardent respondent articulated his justifications for financial, political, and cultural support of

the homeland in the following comment:

> I am in the twilight of my life, but I rest confident that my wife and I through living examples have instilled the same passion and connection of our Palestinian identity, culture and narrative to our children and their children. They have picked up the torch and will carry on with the struggle restoring human rights to our people. (Q1–27)

Such charitable desires go beyond remittances, and speak to the ethical orientations of

home country nationalism that is a characteristic of many in this diaspora. It is notable that 31%

of respondents did not report the return of any of their personal financial portfolio to Palestine

(Table 1), and another 38% were keeping ninety percent or more of their financial resources

outside of the country. However, the nature of their investments and contributions is informative. Consistent with Nielsen and Riddle (2010) is evidence of altruism in the 39% who put money into charities and NGOs, tangibly supporting their personal hope for Palestine's future. Nearly as many had invested in a personal residence. To what extent the purpose of buying real estate was for financial return is unclear. We know there has been appreciation in values in the capital city of Ramallah as well as in Jenin. At the same time, real estate markets are overheated and substantial amounts of the new construction lie vacant.

Emotional returns (Nielsen and Riddle, 2010) are indicated in the twelve percent of diasporans in the study buying real estate for family members, and a similar number making charitable investments in schools and colleges. Human capital is the primary natural resource of Palestine, predicated upon families' commitment, achieving 96.7% literacy rate for the most educated population in the Middle East (Literacy, 2018). Eight percent of respondents were financially supporting health care organizations in their homeland. Eleven percent were directly funding businesses in Palestine either as an owner or partner. Here again, it is unclear whether the returns on investment were deemed to be superior in Palestine, or if the motivation is "psychic income" from ethical investment (Michelson et al., 2004).

The second hypothesis of this study was supported, in finding that those who are hopeful for the future of Palestine tend to also focus on the favorable aspects of the current outlook for the country. For natives who have spent time in the homeland, their optimism shines through, tempered by the realities:

> I do not like the occupation, I do not like the wall that was built to form a so called jail. I do not like the way jews treat the people. I do not like the road check points. I do not like the control. I do like the country. I do like what is developing and moving to the future. (Q3–27)

Several respondents indicated surprise and delight in how much their children enjoyed finally visiting the homeland after being born and raised abroad:

> The love of the land, sense of nationalism. Food, Family, and general ease of life. Ramallah specifically has a thriving night life and I just came back from a 2 week trip that I wish could have been longer. Took my eldest child (14 years old) for the first time, and he loved it! (Q1–10)

Similarly:

> It was amazing for me to see how my 20 year old son fell in love with Palestine, Ramallah. (Q5–2)

Some respondents clearly were not hopeful for the country's future, associated with an unfavorable current outlook as follows:

> Living in Palestine would be like experiencing daily trauma. I did not feel I was so resilient to manage so much stress of not having a reliable income, having to go to court for my rights (did that enough for a divorce) and to be at the mercy of an occupier who could take my home at any time. The trauma my mother suffered to see her home lost was one that we lived with as children. It bred a sense of anxiety and insecurity she passed on to me. Having a home, a roof and the prospect of losing it was a constant fear. We lost our homes in Lebanon as well during the civil war. Palestine would feel like a prison to me. At present, I like being able to drive and do things without assistance, just relying on myself. I did not feel that would be possible in Palestine. (Q5–25)

The third hypothesis linked the fundamental émigré desire to have a home in Palestine, with the social aspects of family encouragement, and hope for the next generation. Support of this hypothesis is a key finding of the study, in establishing the social and ethical influences to positive attributions toward the future. Indeed, reinforcement and affirmation did take place for these respondents, with returnees who experienced social and family support expressing hope and positive affectivity toward their country. Typical comments in this context invoke love of their country, recreating the magic of their dreams of what Palestine could hopefully be for them and their descendants:

> But on a personal level, there isn't a single thing that I do not love about Palestine. I love the food, how warm and caring people are. I love that I can walk down the street and know people and be known. I love the history of my town and my country. I love the weather. I love the shopping. I love the nightlife. (Q3–33)

> No one can imagine what that feels like. My wife is second-generation Palestinian born in America, brought up with deep cultural roots. She went home to Ramallah and came back with the same sense of awe that I have. (Q1–6)

Hypotheses 4 and 5 were not supported in the main effects of a positive desire to reside in Palestine, in either positive attributions toward the current outlook, or in a desire to personally support the homeland. In examining the ethical orientations toward investing in this uniquely troubled homeland, it was shown that the diaspora attraction was not in itself sufficient to encourage investment, or to even feel particularly good about the current developments in Palestine. Said a respondent who was born in America (second generation Palestinian):

> After the first time I visited, I was full of hope. After the second time I visited, I became slightly jaded. (Q4–10)

In absence of family support, the outlooks could be quite dismal:

> Corruption is rampant and specifically found in the issue of land considering prices are so expensive these days in Palestine because of the scarcity of land. I think the Land Authority only have their best interests in mind and always look more favorably on locals than those of us who live in the US. Unless you are 'in the know' and go there often, you WILL BE cheated by the government and often times by your own family. (Q3–10)

DISCUSSION

The objective of this study was to understand the socially constructed orientations of returning émigré investors, particularly to a hardship nation. Certainly we see evidence of moral imagination, as they create mental models to comprehend the varieties of abstraction (Werhane, 2008). In observing the ethical contexts of moral imagination, we are consistent with the conceptualizations in Kohlbergs's (1976) post-conventional stage of moral development in which the individual selects their own criteria. The application of moral imagination is in "a pragmatic conceptualization of moral understanding" (Whitaker & Godwin, 2013: p. 62). The

Palestine diasporans' personal financial resources put them in a position of economic leadership in a comparatively impoverished homeland, and they are likely to perceive themselves as having moral agency (Sekerka et al., 2009). Indeed, those that support the homeland would be characterized as being a moral responder in terms of moral courage.

Moral courage involves the ability to personally reconcile the ethical uncertainties of directly participating in such a place as Palestine. Simola (2018) describes 'negative capability' to tolerate conditions of mystery, doubt, and uncertainty (Bion 1970/1984). The counter to this would be 'positive capabilities' in which negative projections and emotions are adequately reconciled. Inasmuch as it is crucial to have 'positive capabilities' in which one is able to identify and illuminate underlying unconscious processes and patterns such as those involving projection of anxieties and other painful emotions, "it is also important to have 'negative capabilities' through which one can abide states of suspension" (Simola, 2018: p. 176).

A key finding in this study relating to the influence of family upon one's positive attributions toward the future of Palestine, is an applied case of moral imagination and moral courage as well as the moral residue that arises from trying to deal with dilemmas (Marcus, 1980). Ethics research on moral residue originated in the study of health care providers and the dilemmas, withdrawal, and burnout that they experience (Moland, 2006). We see evidence in this field study pertaining to the numerous dilemmas our diasporans confront individually on moral grounds, especially in relation to influence from other stakeholders, including the negative affectivity some experience from the legacy of hardship.

It was only through the social constructivism influenced by family support, along with the individuals' personally buying into the dream for a bright future, that the positive outcomes significantly emerged. Thus these favorable experiences are beyond long distance nationalism of

typical diaspora members and invoke emotional aspects even to the point of distortion of reality in order to operationalize. This is where rational as well as emotional processes of social constructivism are required through the interactions with family and a related sense of hopefulness toward the future of Palestine. These particular findings are a contribution of this empirical work that have not been previously explored.

IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE STUDY

This exploratory diaspora study has limitations, and requires additional research. We hope it creates a useful starting point, particularly for this under-researched population. Perhaps it would be a catalyst for respondents to come forward, notwithstanding possible serious personal misgivings about being candid in such sensitive political environments. The sample size needs to be larger, and draw from greater diversity in overseas locations, as well as respondents representing Gaza and Israel locations. Objective outcome variables would be desirous as well, representing actual investment amounts, perhaps through banking and lending organizations.

"Peace through Commerce" (Greenwood and Freeman, 2018) is an emerging markets ethical topic area worthy of research when considering conflict zones (Katsos and AlKafaji, 2019). In a country such as Palestine where peace may be an elusive and highly complex goal to study, we might begin with "Legitimacy through Commerce." Private and SME investments that modernize the systems and infrastructure of Palestine create a legitimacy observable to the external environment that is hard to ignore, and negates negative stereotypes. This includes visible real estate development, people employed in exciting professions, and the emergence of

city life that features a café society with shopping and entertainment venues. Katsos and Forrer (2014) found a recurring ethical business theme in social cohesion as an influential factor toward promoting peace.

Social cohesion and a sense of community (Dworkin and Schipani, 2007; Fort and Schipani, 2004; Oetzel et al., 2009; Spreitzer, 2007) in the country can be termed as an essential tool for business to enhance peace. Along with this is local commitment (Katsos and AlKafaji, 2019) that makes a more favorable impression than resources furnished by non-Palestinians. Future research could examine perceptions both inside and outside Palestine of various efforts to create legitimacy through commerce, as well as mechanisms for neutralizing the social problems that would discourage investment.

Social constructivism distills the contribution of this work concerning the Palestine diaspora, possibly generalizing it beyond this country. "Constructivists in general emphasize the importance of culture and identity, as expressed in social norms, rules, and understandings. The social and political world is made up of shared beliefs rather than by physical entities. For constructivists, that must always be the starting-point for analysis" (Fietta, 2014, p. 6).

CONCLUSIONS

Westerners may have difficulty comprehending the depth of one's profound grounding to ancestral lands. Business is based on rational assumptions in a competitive world, and many theories of ethics, expectancy, CSR and the like do not inform the type of deep powers driving diaspora motivations. Some might believe that policy and politics can explain and structure human realities. We see evidence in the Palestine case that flies directly counter to fiscal

rationality. Kahneman and Tversky (1979) spoke of the power of a person's beliefs and assumptions that would cause them to ignore factual information that does not fit their wishes. Perhaps some of the deepest values of humanity are not rational. Possibly these values have epic linkage to the depth of the human psyche in ways that demand respect and dignity across cultures and generations, illustrated in this land that is in the cradle of civilization and human history.

Remittances and contributions are notoriously hard to track and analyze in any economy. Nonetheless, we see interest in our sample for support of the Palestine homeland. The substantial personal resources in our sample that goes toward charities and NGOs is not technically an investment, but the larger combined amounts for personal and family real estate is a clear commitment of tangible assets that are fixed and illiquid. Thusly remittance support is supplemented in Palestine by direct investments that also include business ownership, as well as education and health care organizations which are more in the category of charitable investments rather than remittances.

Ultimately we confirm findings of Elmuti et al. (2011) that business motivations of Palestinian diasporans are much more subjective (personal ethics and cultural identity) than objective (economic and political). One respondent, a successful merchant, business, and real estate owner age 64, had been in United States for more than 50 years, visiting Palestine only a few times. She related:

> America has been very good to me. But in my home the food is all Arabic. In my dreams at night I am never in America. I am always in my father's home in Palestine. (Q4–35)

The motivating elements of diaspora loyalty which would lead to remittances and investment from abroad are deeply altruistic in this sampling. In fact, the social constructivist

identity (Tanui, 2015) supersedes nearly all other considerations. "Constructivists argue that the most important aspect of international relations is social, not material" (Wendt, 1999, p. 257). Psychological ties to the home country for Palestinians are anchored in shared suffering, a sense of historical destiny, and a strong culture.

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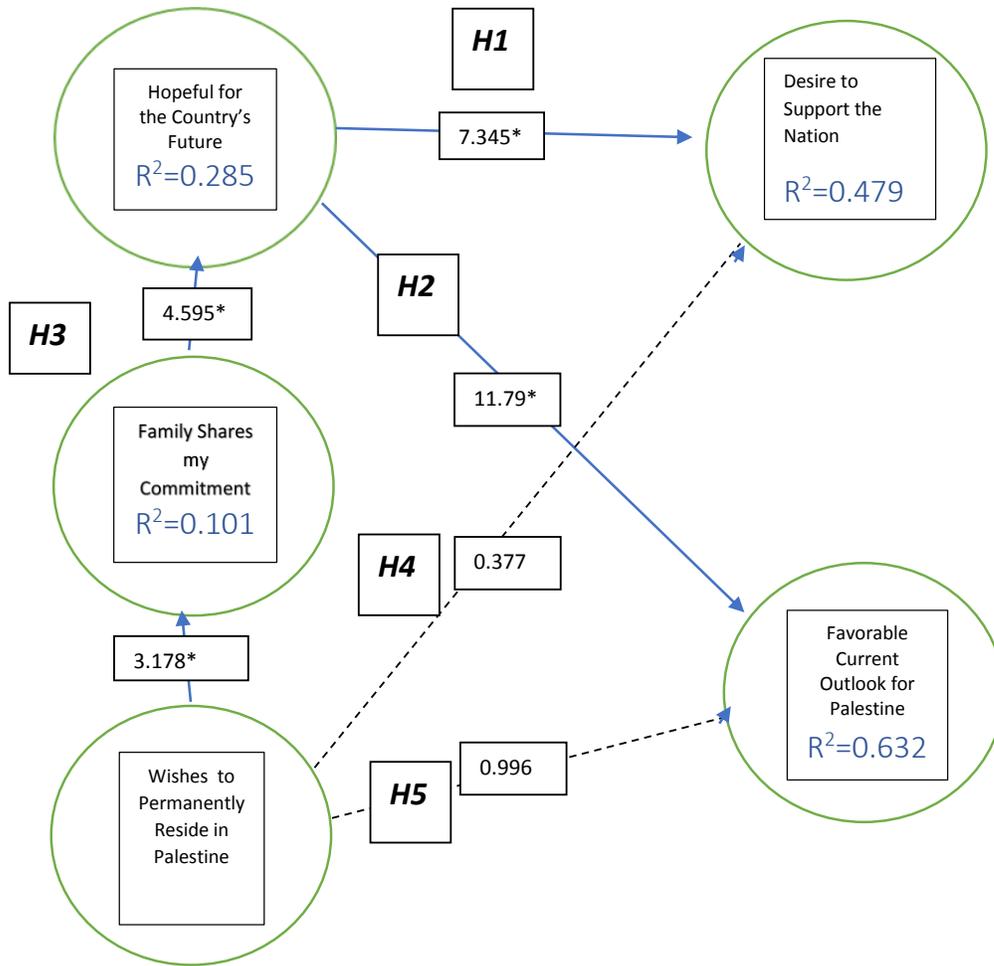
Figure 1: Model

significant *p<.05

Table 1: Selected Demographics			
Variable	*Categories*		*Percentage*
Gender	Male		49
	Female		51
Age	23-30		15
	31-40		17
	41-50		10
	51-65		36
	66-88		22
First generation			47
2nd Generation			47
3rd Generation			5
Married into family			1
Education	High School		13
	Some College		10
	Undergrad.		37
	Masters		28
	Doctorate		12
Children	0		22
	1-2		32
	3		24
	4 or more		22
Occupation	Self E./Bus. Owner		27
	Medical		11
	Technical		10
	Education		10
	Finance/Banking		10
	Others		32
Investments	Charities/NGOs		39
in Palestine [a]	Personal Residence		35
	R.E. for Family Meml		12
	Schools/Colleges		10
	Health Care Organiza		8
	Business that I contr		6
	Business Partnership		5

Note: [a] *Some selected multiple investments*

% of Personal Financial Resources Brought			
to Palestine	0		31
	1-4		16
	5-10		22
	11-50		22
	51-100		9
Total Times Returned to Palestine			
	0		5
	1-2		34
	3-9		36
	10-14		16
	15-40		9
Times Visiting Palestine per year			
	0		10
	1-2		31
	3-4		39
	5-7		6
	8-12		14
Longest Visit (months)			
	0		3
	1-2		25
	3-4		30
	5-11		23
	1-4 yrs.		13
	5-25+yrs.		6

Table 2: Correlations and Reliabilities							
Constructs	*Mean*	*SD*	*PALPERM*	*FAMCOM*	*PALFUT*	*PERSSUP*	*CURCOND*
Desire Perm. Home in Palestine (**PALPERM**)	3.23	1.37	.796				
Commitment From Family (**FAMCOM**)	4.35	0.77	.320*	.770			
Hopeful for the Future (**PALFUT**)	3.80	1.06	.337*	.531**	.847		
Desire to Support the Nation (**PERSSUP**)	4.35	0.88	.270	.513**	.690**	.846	
Favorable Current Outlook (**CURCOND**)	3.32	1.09	.350*	.344*	.785**	.547**	.790

Notes: Chronbach's α on diagonal

*p <.05, ***p <.001

Table 3: Discriminant Validity: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)					
	PALPERM	FAMCOM	PALFUT	PERSSUP	CURCOND
PALPERM					
FAMCOM	0.642				
PALFUT	0.385	0.389			
PERSSUP	0.809	0.649	0.312		
CURCOND	0.839	0.416	0.418	0.650	

			VIF
Table 4: Collinearity			
			VIF
PERSSUP	CNTRIB	*I plan to continue helping my Homeland.*	2.43
	DSRCTBT	*I have a strong desire to contribute to the nation.*	3.43
	PALSUP	*Palestine is deserving of my personal support.*	3.03
FAMCOM	FAMSUP	*My family is fully supportive of my interest in the Homeland.*	2.34
	FAMUND	*My family fully understands my commitment to my Homeland.*	3.50
	FAMYNG	*Younger generations of my family share my commitment to Palestine.*	2.69
	FAMIMED	*Members of my immediate family also like to spend time in Palestine.*	2.59
CURCOND	GDOTLK	*I feel good about the general outlook for Palestine.*	2.29
	IMPPAL	*I am favorably impressed with what I see in Palestine at this time.*	4.43
	GDDEV	*I believe there are good things happening in the country's development.*	3.48
PALFUT	PALPOS	*I anticipate positive development in Palestine.*	2.51
	PALPOT	*I see great potential for the future of Palestine.*	4.87
	PALHOPE	*I feel hopeful about the next generation in Palestine.*	4.35
PALPERM	RESPAL	*It is important to me to have a permanent residence in Palestine.*	3.43
	STYPAL	*I plan to stay in Palestine permanently, at some point.*	2.75