**The Effectiveness of the Public Relations Department of the Palestinian Police in Raising Public Awareness of Cyber Blackmailing during the Covid-19 Pandemic**

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**Abstract**

The study aimed at identifying the effectiveness of the public relations department of the Palestinian police in raising public awareness of cyber blackmailing during the Covid-19 pandemic. The study adopted a descriptive research method, and a two-form questionnaire was developed as the research tool to obtain relevant data from two study samples of the target population. The first study sample included a public audience. The researchers used simple random sampling and collected (469) valid questionnaires that achieved conformity to the specified requirements. The second study sample included the Palestinian police personnel. Using simple random sampling, the researcher collected (50) valid questionnaires that achieved conformity to the specified requirements.

**Keywords: Palestinian police, Effectiveness, public relations, public awareness, cyber blackmailing, COVID- 19.**

**Introduction**

Public relations in the police force are of immense importance; given the importance and sensitivity of the security apparatus, as it is responsible for the security and stability of society. Public relations in the police apparatus takes on the task of building and strengthening relations with citizens to accept decisions related to controlling behavior and compliance with laws in terms of application and practice. Public relations are considered a link between the higher administrative levels in the police and employees on the one hand, and between the police and citizens on the other hand, which means that they have a great responsibility in the communication processes, facing crises, and phenomena facing society, such as: the phenomenon of cybercrime in general, and extortion Email. The crime of electronic extortion is one of the forms of electronic crime, a phenomenon that penetrates society and threatens its foundations, and strikes in the hindering of the most important goals of any civilized society in achieving security for its members. The reason behind criminalizing electronic extortion is the threat, extortion, and pressure exerted on the victim by threatening to divulge a secret as disgrace and shame. Additionally, forcing the victim to submit to the offender’s desire, and to fulfill their legitimate or illegitimate demands and coercion in fear of scandal (Abdulaziz, 2018).

**The problem of the study**: A unit has been established in the Palestinian Police Service to investigate cybercrime and collect its evidence, consisting of a limited number of cadres, devices, and programs. However, the work of this department faces many difficulties, the most important of which are: the legislative shortcomings, and the inadequacy of the provisions of the Palestinian Penal Procedures Law No. 3 of 2001 to investigate and collect evidence of this type of crime, as the aforementioned law does not include texts that clarify how to deal with electronic evidence (digital / intangible), especially with regard to the collection of digital evidence, or its value in evidence. Based on the foregoing problem of the study is represented in the following main question: **How effective is the public relations of the Palestinian police apparatus in educating the public about the crimes of electronic extortion?**

**Study Hypotheses**: The study seeks to test the following null hypotheses:

1. There are no statistically significant differences at the level (α ≤ 0.05) in the average responses of the study sample members towards the effectiveness of the public relations of the police apparatus in educating the public about cyber-extortion crimes, according to the gender variable.

2. There are no statistically significant differences at the level (α ≤ 0.05) in the average responses of the study sample members towards the extent of the effectiveness of the public relations of the police apparatus in educating the public about electronic blackmail crimes, according to the educational qualification variable.

3. There are no statistically significant differences at the level (α ≤ 0.05) in the average responses of the study sample members towards the effectiveness of the public relations of the police apparatus in educating the public about electronic blackmail crimes, according to the work variable.

4. There are no statistically significant differences at the level (α ≤ 0.05) in the average responses of the study sample members towards the extent of the effectiveness of the public relations of the police apparatus in educating the public about electronic extortion crimes, according to the monthly income variable.

5. There are no statistically significant differences at the level (α ≤ 0.05) in the average responses of the study sample members towards the effectiveness of the public relations of the police apparatus in educating the public about electronic blackmail crimes, according to the marital status variable.

**Study tool**

The researchers used the questionnaire tool.

**Theoretical framework**

**The theory of dependence on the media:** Since the media has become an essential part of the lives of citizens in various societies, including the Palestinian society, as it provides them with satisfaction for some of their needs, to become a part of citizens' lives and the basic structures of society. The importance of the media is enhanced by its ability to influence public opinion, when the media perform their functions and roles effectively, so citizens depend on them as social systems, and dependent relationships arise among them on the means of communication, which provide and direct those goals, which in turn guide individuals (Devler and Rokic, 1999).

**1.1 Cognitive Effects**

The cognitive effects of the media, according to the theory of media dependence, include the following: Ambiguity, Attitude Formation, Agenda Setting, Enlargement Ideas, by influencing individuals’ belief systems by increasing them, either from by increasing the categories that join these beliefs and organize them in a specific framework, or by increasing the beliefs in each category. Values.

Affective effects, which are the effects related to feelings and sensations, such as love, hate, and others, where the media plays a significant role in emotional and emotional influence through these effects: Desensitization, Fear and Anxiety), Morale support and alienation (Morale and Alienation).

**1.2 Behavioral Effects**

Among the most important behavioral effects of the media are: the act, or the loss of desire for this act, and these two effects are a direct result of the cognitive and emotional effects, and the behavioral effects are divided according to the dependence model into: First: Activation)), which means that the individual does something as a result of exposure to the means The media, which is the final product to link the cognitive and emotional effects, and activation may be a socially useful act as in quitting smoking, political participation, or socially harmful, as in simulating bad behaviors such as violence and crime. Second: Deactivation, and inactivity is the avoidance of action, and this effect may occur because of exaggerated media coverage, which is reflected on the personal behavior of the recipient, such as: reluctance to participate in politics, or stay away from community activities.

The theory of media dependence is based on two main pillars: goals and sources; For to achieve the personal and social goals of individuals, groups, and organizations, they must rely on resources controlled by other persons, groups, or organizations, and vice versa. Devler and Rokich believe that the goals that individuals seek to achieve are understanding (Understand social world), guidance and counseling (Act Meaning Fully & Effectively), Fantasy & Escape), and providing information.

**The concept of electronic extortion:**

Electronic extortion is defined as: obtaining money or benefits from a person by force and coercion by threatening to reveal his secrets that he possesses, where extortion involves the use of threats of physical or psychological harm, or damage to reputation and social standing by fabricating scandals, accusing, and publishing secrets, forcing the blackmailer to Payment is forced to those who extort them. And extortion is the behavior of pressure and coercion to do a forbidden act, either because of the victim’s weakness or need (Shater, 2020: pg. 428).

It is a process of threatening to publish photos, videos, or personal and sensitive information if the victim does not submit to the extortionist’s requests, as defined by Mada Company, a Palestinian company specialized in providing communications, (internet) and added services, as it considers that most of the requests are related to the crime of extortion The email is as follows:

1. Pay money.

2. Doing illegal activities.

3. Carrying out immoral acts.

4. Disclosure of confidential institutional or political information.

5. Working with the enemy (mada.ps, 2020).

**The role of the Palestinian police in confronting Corona:**

The Palestinian Police Authority declared a state of emergency in the face of the Corona pandemic in the Palestinian territories, as it did the following:

1. Follow-up procedures for banning shifts, and not moving between regions.

2. Disseminate awareness and guidance messages or any message that the police want to convey to the public, such as: awareness of preventive measures to confront the Coronavirus.

3. Conducting the necessary sterilizations for vital streets in the center of Palestinian cities.

4. Sterilization of buildings, mosques, and churches in cities.

5. A special corner for the locations of the police stations on the map linked with the (GPS) of the phone, making it easier for users to reach the nearest police station when needed.

It is worth noting that the Palestinian Police receives and deals with more than one million emergency calls annually, i.e., an average of 3,500 calls per day, and handles more than 30,000 real emergency events annually (the website of the Palestinian Police).

In recent years, through the establishment of units and sections specialized in law enforcement and investigation in search of evidence. The digital blackmail associated with cybercrime, the most important of which is electronic extortion, as the investigation stage in cybercrime goes through two phases, as explained (Abdul-Baqi, 2018: 286), which are:

The first stage: includes the procedures related to the crime scene, such as: closing the crime scene to avoid losing evidence.

The second stage: includes a set of tasks performed by specialists and others from the crime scene team.

The Anti-Cybercrime Prosecution was established for the first time in Palestine, in (2016); To follow up on issues that fall within the framework of the (internet), such as: extortion, information theft, hacking, defamation, spreading viruses, and violations that take place through the (internet), and later, specifically in (2018), a crime law was introduced. The electronic system, where it allocates a specific penalty for each crime between threats and extortion, (Scholi, 2020).

According to the statistics issued by the Palestinian General Investigation Department in the year (2019), there is a noticeable increase in this crime, which was monitored by the police for years, where the year (2015) recorded the occurrence of (502) cases, and in (2016) 1327 cases were recorded. , It also increased in (2017) to (2025) cases, but rose in (2018) to (2568) cases, an increase of (26.6%) over the year (2017). (Dunia Al-Watan, 2019). Hence, the Public Relations Department of the police has a great responsibility; As one of the most widely used communication patterns, which has the ability to communicate its communication messages to the target audience, through the implementation of a set of communication activities, programs and events, which are consistent with the rapid global developments, especially with regard to technology and digital communication tools, and this is reflected in the increasing use The Internet and social networking sites educate the public about the crime of electronic extortion, and the mechanism for dealing with it and confronting it (Al-Anzi, 2020).

**Palestinian Police Service**

Police work is governed by a set of laws, including: Criminal Procedures Law No. (3) of (2001), Palestinian Correctional and Rehabilitation Centers Law No. (6) of (1998), Traffic Law No. (5) of (2000), and General Assembly Law No. ( 12 of the year (1998), the Firearms and Ammunition Law No. 2 of the year 1998, the Palestinian Police Draft Law, in addition to the regulations, instructions and regulations issued by the Minister of Interior and the Director General of Police.

The objectives and tasks of the Palestinian Police Service are as follows:

1. Maintaining public order (internal security).

2. Protection of the public and its property.

3. Work to spread a sense of security and reassurance.

4. Adopt all measures to prevent crime in accordance with the law.

5. Protection of public facilities, infrastructure, and places of special importance.

6. Confronting acts of violence and terrorism and preventing incitement to commit them.

7. Carrying out regular police work (Al-Jazeera. Net, 2016).

Public Relations Department in the Palestinian Police Service:

The Public Relations Department is one of the most important specialized departments in the Palestinian Police Service, which works on:

1. Linking the police institution to its internal and external audience.

2. Enhancing the image of the police institution in society.

3. Enhancing the affiliation and loyalty of its members to the institution.

4. Strengthening cooperation between civil society institutions and the police to provide the best service to citizens.

5. Promote a culture of rule of law.

First: Study Methodology:

To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher used the descriptive-analytical approach, which attempts to assess the effectiveness of the public relations of the police apparatus in educating the public about cyber-extortion crimes considering the Corona pandemic (COVID-19), and the descriptive-analytical approach tries to compare, interpret, and evaluate in the hope of reaching meaningful generalizations. It increases the balance of knowledge about the subject, and data has been collected from secondary and primary sources.

Second: Population and sample of the study:

The study community is represented by the people living in the West Bank, using the simple random sampling method, and the number of valid questionnaires for analysis reached (384).

Third: The study tool:

According to the nature of the research, the researchers used the questionnaire as a tool in their study due to its relevance to the study’s objectives, methodology, and society.

The characteristics of the study sample:

Frequencies and percentages were calculated for the study sample members according to gender, educational qualification, work, and marital status.

Distribution of the study sample by gender:

It was found through the results that (23.4%) of the study sample members are males, while females constituted (76.6%) of the study sample.

1. Distribution of study sample members according to academic qualification:

The results show that (20.8%) of the study sample have a scientific qualification (high school), and (13.8%) have a diploma (diploma), and (51.3%) have a bachelor's degree, while (13.3%) of the individuals the study sample had a scientific qualification (Master's), while (0.8%) of the study sample had a scientific qualification (PhD).

2. Distribution of the study sample according to work:

It was found through the results that (42.7%) of the study sample members work, while (57.3%) do not work.

3. Distribution of the study sample members according to marital status:

It was found through the results that (36.5%) of the study sample have their marital status (single/single), and (57.8%) of the study sample have their marital status (married/married), and that (3.4%) have their marital status (separated/separated).), while (2.3%) of the study sample have their marital status (widower).

 Analysis of the study axes:

The two researchers used the five-point Likert scale; To obtain the study vocabulary responses, according to the following degrees of agreement: (strongly agree - agree - neutral - disagree - strongly disagree). And then expressing this scale quantitatively by giving each of the previous statements a score, according to the following: Strongly agree (5) degrees, agree (4) degrees, neutral (3) degrees, disagree (2) two points, strongly disagree (1) one degree.

The researchers conducted an analysis of the study axes, to know the reality of these axes in the study community, and the results of the analysis of the study axes can be clarified through the following:

**Result Analysis and Discussion**

1. The results of the analysis of the first axis (the programs and activities that the citizen receives from the police to raise awareness of the crimes of electronic extortion):

To identify the responses of the study sample members about the programs and activities that the citizen receives from the police to raise awareness of the crimes of electronic extortion, the arithmetic mean, the standard deviation, the relative weight of each of the paragraphs of the axis, and the total score of the axis were calculated. And the standard deviation is equal to (0.820), and the relative weight is equal to (53.60%), and this indicates the approval of the members of the study sample on the programs and activities that the citizen receives from the police with the aim of raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes to a moderate degree.

It is clear from the results that the fourth paragraph (I follow guidance and awareness programs on the Internet in relation to cyber-extortion crimes), is the most important paragraphs of this axis, as it obtained the highest relative weight (67.20%) and that the lowest paragraph is the seventh (I receive tips and awareness instructions using the messaging method Direct (SMS)) with a relative weight (44.40%), and based on the relative weight of the axis as a whole, which reached (53.60%), it turns out that the members of the examined sample agree to a moderate degree on the programs and activities that the citizen receives from the police in order to raise awareness of the crimes of electronic extortion.

The researchers attribute the result of the highest paragraph to the citizens' interest in following up guidance and awareness programs via (internet) networks; To protect themselves and their families from the danger of cyber-extortion crimes, and thus their feelings of complacency and heading towards a better life, free of any loopholes.

The researchers attribute the result of the lowest paragraph to the fact that the broad base of subscribers to direct messaging services (SMS) cannot be reached all, and therefore it is difficult to warn and provide instructions through it, which naturally reduces its use, in addition to the fact that some warnings may be lengthy, and therefore cannot be Send it via SMS.

2. Results of the second axis analysis (public satisfaction with the effectiveness of public relations in raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes):

 To identify the responses of the study sample members about the public’s satisfaction with the effectiveness of public relations in raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes, the arithmetic mean, the standard deviation, the relative weight of each of the paragraphs of the axis and the total score of the axis were calculated, where it was found that the arithmetic mean of all paragraphs equals (3.14), The standard deviation is equal to (0.689), and the relative weight is equal to (62.80%), and this indicates the approval of the members of the study sample on the public’s satisfaction about the effectiveness of public relations in raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes to a moderate degree.

It is clear from the results that the fifth paragraph (the method of providing awareness of cyber-extortion crimes suggests trust and seriousness) is the most important paragraphs of this axis, as it obtained the highest relative weight (67.60%) and that the lowest paragraph is the third (there is awareness among citizens of safe methods when using the computer And the smartphone) with a relative weight (58%), and based on the relative weight of the axis as a whole, which reached (62.80%), it turns out that the members of the examined sample agree to a medium degree with the public’s satisfaction about the effectiveness of public relations in raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes.

The researchers attribute the result of the highest paragraph to the interest of the staff working in the police department, which is public relations, to highlight their interest in seeking to provide the necessary awareness, which shows the extent of their seriousness and interest, as well as complete confidence in providing awareness, which comes through public satisfaction with the police apparatus and the Public Relations Department This would indicate that the work is progressing in full swing, according to what is planned and what achieves the acceptance and conviction of the public.

The researchers attribute the result of a lower paragraph to the fact that in recent times it has become clear that all segments of society have used computers and smartphones in the processes of communicating with others, and accessing (internet) sites of all kinds, as they are browsing more, which makes them vulnerable to hacking and piracy, especially If there is sensitive information for them, and thus the increase in the public's demand for those sites, it warns of a lack of awareness about safe methods, in addition, their recklessness and blind trust in the sites that are browsed.

The second question: What is the extent of the public’s satisfaction with the effectiveness of public relations in raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes?

1. The results of the analysis of the second axis (the means used by the Public Relations Department to educate the public about the crimes of electronic extortion):

 To identify the responses of the study sample members about the means employed by the Public Relations Department to educate the public about crimes of electronic extortion, the arithmetic mean, the standard deviation, the relative weight of each of the paragraphs of the axis, and the total degree of the axis were calculated, where it was found that the arithmetic mean of all the paragraphs is ( 3.32), the standard deviation is equal to (0.773), and the relative weight is equal to (66.40%), and this indicates the approval of the study sample members on the means employed by the Public Relations Department to educate the public about crimes of electronic extortion to a moderate degree.

It is clear from the results that the tenth paragraph (there is an independent unit or department that follows up on crimes of electronic extortion) is the most important paragraphs of this axis, as it obtained the highest relative weight (77.20%), and that the lowest paragraph is the eighth (the necessary financial resources are available in the police force to Confronting the crimes of electronic extortion), with a relative weight (58%), and based on the relative weight of the axis as a whole, which reached (66.40%), it turns out that the members of the examined sample agree to a moderate degree on the means employed by the Public Relations Department in educating the public about the crimes of electronic extortion.

The researchers attribute the result of the highest paragraph to the fact that security is a necessity to maintain the confidentiality of information, as well as to combat any electronic extortion, as a special and independent department has been allocated, its first goal being to follow up on cyber-extortion crimes, as the developments that the world has witnessed in recent decades, due to the communications and transportation revolutions And information technology has reflected on all human activities with its positives and negatives, and this is what has established in the police apparatus the importance of dedicating a full circle to the task of following up on any electronic extortion crimes.

The researchers attribute the lowest paragraph result to the reluctance of the department responsible for allocating the financial resource necessary for the electronic extortion department to follow up on its work to the fullest, as some of the work entrusted to them requires the presence of a financial resource that contributes to obtaining the necessary programs, through which the owners of cybercrime can be reached and followed up and reach them as quickly as possible.

2. The results of the analysis of the third axis (programs and activities implemented by the Public Relations Department of the police to educate the public about extortion crimes):

In order to identify the responses of the study sample members about the programs and activities implemented by the Public Relations Department of the Police Service in educating the public about extortion crimes, the arithmetic mean, the standard deviation, the relative weight of each of the axis’s paragraphs, and the total score of the axis were calculated, where it was found that the arithmetic mean of all the paragraphs (2.94), the standard deviation equals (0.976), and the relative weight equals (58.80%), and this indicates the approval of the study sample members on the programs and activities implemented by the Public Relations Department of the police in raising public awareness of extortion crimes to a moderate degree.

It is clear from the results that the fourth paragraph (Guidance and Awareness via the Internet) is the most important paragraphs of this axis, as it obtained the highest relative weight (66.40%), and that the lowest paragraph is the eighth (Awareness using the direct message method (SMS)) with relative weight. (45.60%), and based on the relative weight of the axis, which reached (58.80%), it turns out that the members of the examined sample agree to a moderate degree on the programs and activities implemented by the Public Relations Department of the police in educating the public about extortion crimes.

The researchers attribute the result of the highest paragraph to the fact that in the last decade, all segments of society have increased their demand for the use of the Internet and its websites, which make it easier for them to access and deal with them. (Internet), and providing them with the correct ways to evade any extortion, and thus the (Internet) network is considered easy to reach for the largest mass base that launches for them tips and advice through its various sites.

The researcher attributes the result of the lowest paragraph to the fact that it is difficult to reach the largest possible number of audiences through direct messaging services (SMS); Due to the vast number of users of the websites, in addition to the excessive cost of using these messages periodically to reach the masses, and this limits their use.

3. The results of the analysis of the third axis (the Corona pandemic and the crimes of electronic extortion):

 To identify the responses of the study sample members about the Corona pandemic and cyber-extortion crimes, the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, the relative weight of each of the paragraphs of the axis, and the total score of the axis were calculated, as it was found that the arithmetic mean of all paragraphs equals (3.52), and the standard deviation equals ( 0.686), and the relative weight is equal to (70.40%), and this indicates the approval of the study sample members on the Corona pandemic and cyber-extortion crimes to a high degree,

It is clear from the results that the third paragraph (the Corona pandemic has caused an imbalance in the educational sector in Palestine and the world) is the most important paragraphs of this axis, as it obtained the highest relative weight (87.20%), and that the lowest paragraph is the fourteenth paragraph (there is an independent unit or department to confront Corona), with a relative weight (53.60%), and based on the relative weight of the axis as a whole, which reached (70.40%), it turns out that the members of the examined sample highly agree with the Corona pandemic and cyber-extortion crimes.

The researchers attribute the result of the highest paragraph to the fact that the Corona pandemic ravaged all educational levels, because of its danger and ease of transmission between people, which may lead to their lives to death, and which caused cracks and gaps at the educational level, as well as at the level of cognitive achievement, and accordingly the demand of students to use websites increased. The website, which requires them to be aware of the dangers of using these sites and falling prey to others.

The researchers attribute the result of the lowest paragraph to the lack of prior planning for the police apparatus to develop an emergency plan to work with in the presence of an unprecedented and planned situation, so that it can continue to work and continue its work without obstacles in front of it.

**Hypothesis Testing**:

• First: Testing the public questionnaire hypotheses

The third question: Are there statistically significant differences between the views of the study sample members about the effectiveness of the public relations of the Palestinian police in educating the public about cyber-extortion crimes according to demographic variables (sex, educational qualification, work, marital status, and place of residence)?

1. Differences according to the sex variable:

To find out whether there are statistically significant differences in the responses of the study members according to the gender variable, an (Independent Sample T-test) test was conducted; To clarify the significance of the differences in the responses of the study members according to the gender variable, it is clear from the results that there are no statistically significant differences at the level (0.05) or less in the study members’ attitudes about (public satisfaction with the effectiveness of public relations in raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes) according to a variable Gender, while it is clear that there are statistically significant differences at the level (0.05) and less in the study members’ attitudes about (programs and activities that the citizen receives from the police in order to raise awareness of cyber-extortion crimes) according to the gender variable in favor of males.

2. The differences according to the educational qualification variable:

To identify whether there are statistically significant differences in the responses of the study members according to the difference in the educational qualification variable, "One Way ANOVA" was used; To clarify the significance of the differences in the responses of the study members according to the difference in the educational qualification variable, it is clear from the results that there are statistically significant differences in the attitudes of the study members about (programs and activities that the citizen receives from the police system with the aim of raising awareness of crimes of electronic extortion, public satisfaction about the effectiveness of public relations in awareness). with electronic extortion crimes) according to the educational qualification variable.

In order to determine the validity of the differences between the categories of academic qualifications, the (LSD) test was used, as it becomes clear from the results that there are statistically significant differences at the level of (0.05) and less between the study members whose academic qualifications are (Bachelor) and those whose educational qualifications are (high school). , diploma, master’s, and doctorate) on (programs and activities that the citizen receives from the police with the aim of raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes), for the benefit of the study members whose scientific qualification is (PhD), and the study members who have their scientific qualification (PhD), and the study members whose qualification is (PhD). High school, diploma, bachelor’s, and master’s degrees), for the benefit of study members who have a scientific qualification (PhD).

3. The differences according to the work variable:

To find out whether there are statistically significant differences in the responses of the study members according to the difference in the work variable, the (T: Independent Sample T-test) was tested to clarify the significance of the differences in the responses of the study members according to the difference in the work variable, it is clear from the results that there are no differences Statistically significant at the level (0.05) or less in the study members’ attitudes about (programs and activities that the citizen receives from the police in order to raise awareness of cyber-extortion crimes, and public satisfaction about the effectiveness of public relations in raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes) according to the work variable.

4. The differences according to the marital status variable:

To identify whether there are statistically significant differences in the responses of the study members according to the difference in the marital status variable, the "One Way ANOVA" was used; To clarify the significance of the differences in the responses of the study members according to the difference in the marital status variable, it is clear from the results that there are no statistically significant differences in the attitudes of the study members about (programs and activities received by the students).

**Results**

1. The approval of the study sample on the programs and activities that the citizen receives from the police to raise awareness of the crimes of electronic extortion to a moderate degree, as the arithmetic mean of all the paragraphs of the axis was (2.68), while the relative weight of all the paragraphs of the axis was (53.60%).

2. The approval of the study sample members of the public’s satisfaction about the effectiveness of public relations in raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes to a medium degree, as the arithmetic mean of all the items of the axis was (3.14), while the relative weight of all items of the axis was (62.80%).

3. There are no statistically significant differences at the level (0.05) or less in the study members’ attitudes about (public satisfaction with the effectiveness of public relations in raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes) according to the gender variable.

4. There are statistically significant differences at the level of (0.05) or less in the study members’ attitudes about (programs and activities that the citizen receives from the police to raise awareness of cyber-extortion crimes) according to the gender variable in favor of males.

5. There are statistically significant differences at the level of (0.05) and less between the study members whose academic qualification is (Bachelor) and the study members who have their academic qualification (high school, diploma, master’s, and doctorate) regarding (programs and activities that the citizen receives from the police force with the aim of Awareness of cyber-extortion crimes), for the benefit of study members who have a scientific qualification (PhD), and between study members who have a scientific qualification (PhD) and study members who have a scientific qualification (high school, diploma, bachelor’s, and master’s), for the benefit of study members who have a scientific qualification (PhD).

6. There are statistically significant differences at the level (0.05) and less between the study members who have a scientific qualification (PhD), and the study members who have a scientific qualification (diploma, bachelor’s, and master’s) regarding (public satisfaction with the effectiveness of public relations in raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes). ), for the benefit of the study members whose academic qualification is (PhD), and between the study members who have their scientific qualification (high school) and the study members whose academic qualification is (diploma, bachelor), for the benefit of the study members who have their scientific qualification (high school).

7. There are no statistically significant differences at the level (0.05) or less in the study members’ attitudes about (programs and activities that the citizen receives from the police to raise awareness of cyber-extortion crimes, and public satisfaction about the effectiveness of public relations in raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes) with a variable difference the work.

8. There are no statistically significant differences in the attitudes of the study members about (the programs and activities that the citizen receives from the police to raise awareness of cyber-extortion crimes, and public satisfaction about the effectiveness of public relations in raising awareness of cyber-extortion crimes) according to the variable of social status.

**Recommendations:**

Based on the above-mentioned findings, the following recommendations can be given:

1. Strengthening the Police Department's Public Relations Department for its programs and activities to serve the public and strengthen relations with them.

2. The importance of spreading awareness among citizens about safe methods when using computers and smartphones considering the era of rapid technological development.

3. The importance of letting the employees in the Public Relations Department of the Police Service convey the opinions and attitudes of the masses about the nature and their satisfaction with the work of the police.

4. Allocating the necessary financial resources in the police apparatus to confront electronic extortion crimes.

5. Allocate a unit or department to operate under any emergency, so that the work of the police does not stop in following up on any acts of extortion that occur among citizens.

The two researchers suggest conducting future studies related to the following: the role of public relations in limiting the spread of the phenomenon of electronic extortion, the effectiveness of public relations in improving the image of the Palestinian police apparatus in front of the public, and the extent of the public’s satisfaction with the nature of public relations in warning them against electronic extortion, social responsibility and national affiliation among Workers in the Palestinian Police Service.

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