

Motives of Palestinian Women Working in Israeli Colonial Settlements: Al-Zbedat Village as a Model

Raja'a Bledy

Abstract

The study aims at identifying the motives of Palestinian women working in Israeli colonial settlements, Al-Zbedat village as a model from the working women point of view. The study approached the literature as a multi-dimensional phenomenon, which addressed both theoretical and applied research. The significance of this recent study is the first, which dealt with the social and economic motives, and the challenges facing the Palestinian women working in Israeli colonial settlements, to the author knowledge, which in turn encourages other researchers to work on further research on this important issue.

To achieve this end, the study adopted the qualitative, research approach using the case study method. The interview is appropriate for the exploratory nature of the research. A 27-item interview questions were formulated which was divided into five sub-scales as follows: the basic information of the participants (7 items); the second section dealt with the view of Palestinian women working in the Israeli colonial settlements toward themselves and their role within their families (8 items), the third section included the social and economic motives (5 items), while the fourth section addressed the challenges facing the Palestinian women working in Israeli colonial settlements (6 items), and the fifth section included the role played by the Ministry of Labor or the worker unions towards the problems faced by the Palestinian women working in Israeli colonial settlements.

The sample comprised of (10) Palestinian women working in Israeli colonial settlements at Al-Zbedat village, West Bank using the convenience sampling during 2021. The collected data was analyzed manually, calculating the frequencies, percentages, the means, and standard deviations.

The findings revealed that Palestinian women working in the Israeli colonial settlements have accepted, in one way or another, the harsh reality that was imposed on them in terms of their acceptance of the work itself, the low wages, and the work conditions in general. Additionally, the working women felt the dissatisfaction with themselves, had generated a feeling of fear, anxiety,

and a sense of mistrust of themselves or others, social stigma, and they were unable to take care of their children.

The study also identified the increasing financial burden that played a major role in forcing those women to accept such work. All those life elements contributed to changing those Palestinian working women roles and responsibilities within their families, which may be viewed as a positive role, such as the change in their stereotypical social roles, while giving them some authority, power, and control within their families.

Furthermore, the study results found different motives among Palestinian women working in Israeli colonial settlements, mainly, their families' difficult economic conditions, the highly poverty rate, in addition to their families daily urgent needs especially the health expenditures, which constituted as one of the most motives to work in the Israeli colonial settlements. Other motives were as follows, the ease of access to the Israeli colonial settlements, the short working hours, the lack of work opportunities, and the ease of obtaining a continuous annually work to supporting their families.

Finally, the study revealed the challenges faced the Palestinian women working in Israeli colonial settlements, as follows, the early departure to go to work, the danger of daily movements and the process of adapting to them. In addition to the exposure to financial and health exploitation, insults and profanity forcing them to give up their rights, the un appropriate wage that suits their work, and their right to obtain health insurance. One of the major challenge was the refusal of the competent authorities to recognize work in Israeli colonial settlements, and a more serious issue, the workers themselves do not have the knowledge nor have they been advised of their labor rights, and there are no legal laws to protect these female working category.

Keywords: Motives, labor, women, challenges, economic, Israeli colonial settlements, Al-Zbedat, Palestine.

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Number of Pages: 111. Number of References: 72. Defense Date: August 23, 2021.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

HOW TO CITE THIS PAPER?

Bleady, R. (2022). Motives of Palestinian Women Working in Israeli Colonial Settlements: Al-Zbedat Village as a Model. *International Humanities Studies*, 8(3), 68-66.

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