Strategic Planning in Palestinian Public Universities and Its Role in Sustainable Development

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Abstract. This study aimed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Palestinian Public Universities and their opportunities and the threats they face, and the role that strategic planning has in sustainable development, the study used the descriptive analytical method, the study population was all the administrative and academic employees in the Palestinian public universities (PTUK and Al-Istiqqlal university) with a total of 923 employees, a sample of 278 employees was taken based on, a questionnaire was developed to collect data on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and development strategies and was distributed on the study sample.

The study used Structural Equations Modeling (SEM) to analyze the data using the advanced statistical program Smart PLS-3, the study concluded that the Palestinian public universities take into consideration the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the development of their strategies and administrators and academics participate in developing the Palestinian public universities strategic plan.

The study recommended that the Palestinian public universities should provide new programs needed by the Palestinian market, in partnership with the local community and the commercial and industrial sectors, and to develop a plan for open and E-education and developing programs that guarantee the efficiency of outputs, in partnership with virtual universities that have long experience in such programs, and to support scientific research within the universities.

Keywords: Development strategies · SWOT analysis · Strategic planning

1 Introduction

There is no doubt that the development of education and universities’ contributes to the development of society (Neupane 2020), and it is a process that requires an innovative
vision and effective strategies at a time when competition is raging over the production of knowledge and its multiple applications (Хакимов 2020). Consequently, the role of universities has shifted from merely awarding certificates for the purpose of jobs to leading the entire development process in the country, where societies transform from consuming knowledge to producing-knowledge societies, thus stimulating the economy, industry and multiple production sectors (Szekely and Mason 2019).

University development plans should be carried out through a holistic vision that all higher education institutions should contribute to, in partnership and coordination with the state sectors, and the Ministry of Higher Education (Dweikat 2020). The development plans should be based on two basic principles, achieving the requirements for financial and administrative independence, and evaluation for the purpose of development not control (Qablan et al. 2019).

In the context of the global transformation towards an information and knowledge society, development and change have become a feature of the millennium and one of the inevitable components of this era, and this has become a vital and necessary priority for institutions with a future orientation, whatever their field of activity or nature (Glukhova et al. 2019). The most important characteristic of this period is the growing developments in information and communication technologies and their applications in all fields of activity, and this was mainly reflected in the multiplication and accumulation of human knowledge, and the strength of any country has become its accumulation of knowledge, and all organizations must adapt to this era and its requirements (Lahikainen et al. 2019). And, in particular, with different roles, universities stand as the most important organizations and the most influential of the repercussions of this era.

Universities are institutions of scientific innovation and a basic means for the advancement of societies; universities are the forerunners of any society that strives for progress (Kassenboehmer et al. 2018). They have profound effects on their societies as they lead the processes of development and work as agents of change. Therefore, they cannot be transformed into static organizations, they are characterized by continuous development, updating and improvement in order to renew their roles and increase the effectiveness of their contributions to community service as well as knowledge development (Boguslavskii and Neborskii 2016).

Universities are the home of knowledge and its growth, and they are the factories of scientific thought. The basic pillars of postgraduate studies in these universities are based on the production, transfer and application of knowledge as well as community service by supporting the fertility of interaction and intermarriage between scientific research in higher studies and the needs and requirements of community development (Kulikova et al. 2019).

The contemporary knowledge revolution and its technological extensions have made facing the challenges that our societies face in all their economic, political, social, cultural and other dimensions depends mainly on human effort, thought and advanced knowledge, especially in the fields of scientific research, innovation, creativity and discovery. There is no doubt that this depends mainly on the sufficiency of universities and institutions (Holbrey and Parkhurst 2020).

And in light of the current situation in Palestine and the economical and political difficulties that face the public sector (Adeniji & Chijioke), and the constant need for
development in all aspects of the public life especially in the higher education sector, this study will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Palestinian Public Universities and their opportunities and the threats they face, and suggest some development strategies based on that analysis.

The importance of this study stems from the importance of higher education in the social and economical development of countries especially underdeveloped countries like Palestine, and the unique circumstances that face the Palestinian public universities due to the economical and political crisis that the country faces, in an effort to establish mechanisms for development in those universities.

2 Study Hypotheses

This study will test the following hypothesis:

H01: There is no relationship between the strengths that Public universities in Palestine have and sustainable development.

H02: There is no relationship between the weaknesses that Public universities in Palestine have and sustainable development.

H03: There is no relationship between the opportunities that Public universities in Palestine can exploit and sustainable development.

H04: There is no relationship between the threats that Public universities in Palestine should avoid and sustainable development.

3 Methodology

This study used the descriptive analytical method, the study population was all the administrative and academic employees in the Palestinian public universities (PTUK and Al-Istiqlal university) with a total of 923 employees, a sample of 278 employees was taken based on, a questionnaire was developed to collect data on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and development strategies and was distributed on the study sample.

The study used Structural Equations Modeling (SEM) to analyze the data using the advanced statistical program Smart PLS-3.

4 Statistical Analysis

After collecting the data via a questionnaire prepared for testing the research model, in this chapter that data was analyzed and the results were reported, the research hypothesis was tested using structural equation modeling (SEM), and Smart-PLS3 was used to analyze the data.
4.1 Demographics

Questionnaire Response Rate
The questionnaire was distributed via Google forums to the research sample due to the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing laws, 278 questionnaires were sent and 253 were collected with a response rate of 91%, in the possess of entering the data 7 questionnaires were eliminated due to missing data, the final number of questionnaires was 246 which brings the response rate to 88.5%, this percentage is sufficient and represents the research population.

Participant Profile
The following table shows the descriptive analysis of the research sample:

Table 1. Sample distribution according to each demographic variable.

| Variable   | Variable level | Number | Percentage |
|------------|----------------|--------|------------|
| Sex        | Male           | 178    | 72.4%      |
|            | Female         | 68     | 27.6%      |
|            | Total          | 246    | 100        |
| Age        | less than 30 years | 26  | 10.56%    |
|            | between 30–45 years | 118  | 47.96%    |
|            | more than 45 years | 102  | 41.46%    |
|            | Total          | 246    | 100        |
| Experience | less than 5 years | 18   | 7.31%      |
|            | between 5–15 years | 45   | 18.2%      |
|            | more than 15 years | 183  | 74.39%     |
|            | Total          | 246    | 100        |
| Education  | bachelors      | 35     | 14.22%     |
|            | masters        | 84     | 34.14%     |
|            | PHD            | 127    | 51.62%     |
|            | Total          | 246    | 100        |

Source: Researchers Analysis

A descriptive frequency analysis of the demographic data for the research sample shown in Table 1 showed that with regard to gender (sex), males form (n = 178, 72.4%), and females form (n = 68, 27.6%) of the research sample, and with regard to age, more than 45 years old (n = 26, 10.56%) and the employees between 30–45 years (n = 118, 47.96%), and less than 30 years (n = 10, 8.85%). As for years of experience the first group had more than 15 years of experience (n = 183, 74.39%), the second group had between 5–15 years of experience (n = 45, 18.2%), and less than 5 years experience (n = 18, 7.31%). And with regard to education (n = 35, 14.22%) hold a bachelors degree, and (n = 84, 34.14%) hold a masters degree, and (n = 127, 51.62%) hold a PHD.
4.2 Questionnaire Analysis

In this section the researcher analyzed the responses on each factor in the questionnaire, showing the mean, Std dev, and weight, with a brief discussion for each factor as follows:

1. **Strengths**

   **Table 2.** Means, standard deviation, and relative weight.

   | Item                                                      | Mean | Std Dev | Relative weight % | Rank |
   |-----------------------------------------------------------|------|---------|-------------------|------|
   | The university provides practical and academic training in its various programs | 2.79 | 1.299   | 55.80%           | 4    |
   | The academic staff at the university is highly qualified | 2.11 | 0.712   | 42.20%           | 5    |
   | The university’s image is positive in the local community | 3.63 | 0.497   | 72.60%           | 2    |
   | Material and human resources are available for administrative development within the university | 3.21 | 0.488   | 64.20%           | 3    |
   | Administrators and academics participate in developing the university’s strategic plan | 3.72 | 0.796   | 74.40%           | 1    |

Source: Researchers Analysis

Table 2 shows that strengths are moderate with an average mean of (3.092), and according to the research sample, Administrators and academics participate in developing the university’s strategic plan had the highest mean of (3.72) and a relative weight of (74.4%), and the lowest was that The academic staff at the university is highly qualified with a mean of (2.11) with a relative weight of (42.2%) which is low.

2. **Weaknesses**

   **Table 3.** Means, standard deviation, and relative weight.

   | Item                                                      | Mean | Std Dev | Relative weight % | Rank |
   |-----------------------------------------------------------|------|---------|-------------------|------|
   | The programs offered by the university are limited and not varied | 4.71 | 0.728   | 94.20%           | 1    |
   | The university is not financially independent              | 2.96 | 1.47    | 59.20%           | 5    |
   | The university follows a bureaucratic administrative system in its administrative transactions | 2.73 | 1.02    | 54.60%           | 2    |
   | The conditions for admission to the university are complex and difficult | 3.82 | 0.984   | 76.40%           | 3    |
   | There are no financial resources and allocations for administrative development at the university | 3.16 | 0.743   | 63.20%           | 4    |

Source: Researchers Analysis

Table 3 shows that the weaknesses are moderate with an average mean of (3.47), and according to the research sample, The programs offered by the university are limited
and not varied, had the highest mean of (4.71) and a relative weight of (94.2%), and the lowest was that The university is not financially independent, with a mean of (2.73) with a relative weight of (54.6%).

3. **Opportunities**

| Item                                                                 | Mean | Std Dev | Relative weight % | Rank |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------|---------|-------------------|------|
| There is a possibility of increasing the demand for university education | 3.65 | 0.972   | 73.00%            | 4    |
| There is a possibility in cooperation with Arab and foreign universities | 3.69 | 0.964   | 73.80%            | 3    |
| Local official support is available to develop the infrastructure and improve the quality of university education | 4.4  | 0.912   | 88.00%            | 1    |
| The increasing need for continuous learning due to the tremendous growth in knowledge and the great acceleration of societal and technological changes | 3.44 | 0.865   | 68.80%            | 5    |
| The existence of positive trends among new generations to use modern technology | 4.11 | 1.03    | 82.20%            | 2    |

Table 4 shows that opportunities are high with an average mean of (3.86), and according to the research sample, The increasing need for continuous learning due to the tremendous growth in knowledge and the great acceleration of societal and technological changes, had the highest mean of (4.4) and a relative weight of (88%), and the lowest was that Local official support is available to develop the infrastructure and improve the quality of university education, with a mean of (3.44) with a relative weight of (68.8%).

4. **Threats**

| Item                                                                 | Mean | Std Dev | Relative weight % | Rank |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------|---------|-------------------|------|
| The delay in aid provided by donor countries to education in Palestine negatively affects the university’s ability to complete the planned development projects | 2.12 | 0.709   | 42.40%            | 4    |
| Strong competition from other Palestinian universities               | 2.73 | 0.916   | 54.60%            | 3    |
| The poor infrastructure of the Palestinian telecommunications network makes the adoption of e-learning difficult | 3.12 | 0.709   | 62.40%            | 2    |
| The state of uncertainty and political instability in Palestine negatively affects the university’s development plans | 3.2  | 0.983   | 64.00%            | 1    |

Table 5 shows that threats are high with an average mean of (2.79), and according to the research sample, The state of uncertainty and political instability in Palestine negatively affects the university’s development plans, had the highest mean of (3.2) and a relative weight of (64.0%), and the lowest was that The delay in aid provided by donor countries to education in Palestine negatively affects the university’s ability to complete the planned development projects, with a mean of (2.12) with a relative weight of (42.4%).
Table 5 shows that threats are moderate with an average mean of (2.79) and according to the research sample, the state of uncertainty and political instability in Palestine negatively affects the university’s development plans. had the highest mean of (3.20) and a relative weight of (64%), and the lowest was that the delay in aid provided by donor countries to education in Palestine negatively affects the university’s ability to complete the planned development projects, with a mean of (2.12) with a relative weight of (42.4%).

5. Development Strategies

Table 6. Means, standard deviation, and relative weight

| Item                                                                 | Mean | Std Dev | Relative weight % | Rank |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------|---------|-------------------|------|
| Work has been made to develop the e-learning system at the university | 4.33 | 0.574   | 86.60%            | 1    |
| University employees have been trained and qualified on the e-learning system and distance education | 3.63 | 0.661   | 72.60%            | 2    |
| The number of programs offered by the university has been increased, similar to that of other universities in Palestine | 3.46 | 0.552   | 69.20%            | 4    |
| The university supported student learning by employing different educational media and technologies | 3.61 | 0.49    | 72.20%            | 3    |
| Research capabilities of faculty members have been developed         | 3.32 | 0.468   | 66.40%            | 5    |
| The university provides publishing knowledge resources and research platforms | 2.33 | 0.647   | 46.60%            | 7    |
| Saving the university’s general expenses does not affect the effectiveness of performance | 2.78 | 0.884   | 55.60%            | 6    |
| Development Strategies                                               | 3.35 |         |                   |      |

Table 6 shows that development strategies in the Palestinian Public Universities are high with an average mean of (3.35), and according to the research sample, work has been made to develop the e-learning system at the university had the highest mean of (4.33) and a relative weight of (86.6%), and the lowest was that the university provides publishing knowledge resources and research platforms, with a mean of (2.33) with a relative weight of (46.6%).
4.3  Research Data Analysis

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is considered one of the best ways to test multivariable models, and the researcher can test the relations between those variables at the same time and test if the proposed model fits the collected data through a number of conformity indicators (Hair Jr. et al. 2016), based on this the Structural Equation Model (SEM) was used in this research using Smart-PLS3 to test if the model fits the sample data.

Assessment of two parts of the model will be carried out using Smart-PLS3 as follows:

1. **Measurement assessment (external model)** is that part of the structural equation model, which deals with the research variables with its indicators, where it determines the relationships between observed variables (indicators or questions) and unobserved (latent) variables, and it also describes the validity and consistency of observed variables.

2. **Structural assessment (internal model)** is the model that explains the causal relationships that exist between the research variables, as it clarifies the nature of the relationship between independent and dependent factors, and also shows the ratio of impact and interpretation factor to each of the independent factors in the dependent factor. Through the results of the structural model, it is possible to clarify the results of the research hypotheses and the value of relationships and their indication (positive or negative).

**Measurement Model Assessment**

In this section, the researcher examines the convergent and discriminant validity of the model in order to answer the hypothesis of the research and its questions as follows:

**Convergent Validity**

Convergent validity or the degree of consistency can be measured according to (Hair Jr. et al. 2016) using three indicators:

A. Internal consistency - Factor loading
B. Reliability- Composite Reliability (CR)
C. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

The criteria for accepting convergent validity indicators are shown in Table 7 below:

| Indicator                        | Accepted values   |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Factor loading                   | Higher than 0.5   |
| Composite Reliability (CR)       | Higher than 0.7   |
| Average Variance Extracted (AVE) | Higher than 0.5   |

Source: (Hair Jr. et al. 2016)
A. Internal Consistency – Factor Loading

Table 8. Cross loadings

|      | Development strategies | Strengths   | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats  |
|------|------------------------|-------------|------------|---------------|----------|
| D1   | 0.622                  | 0.550       | 0.356      | 0.254         | 0.303    |
| D2   | 0.822                  | 0.105       | 0.725      | 0.340         | 0.413    |
| D3   | 0.585                  | 0.531       | 0.416      | 0.158         | 0.621    |
| D4   | 0.819                  | 0.353       | 0.679      | 0.674         | 0.559    |
| D5   | 0.752                  | 0.346       | 0.555      | 0.919         | 0.495    |
| D6   | 0.635                  | 0.051       | 0.556      | 0.368         | 0.398    |
| D7   | 0.359                  | −0.095      | −0.309     | 0.222         | 0.250    |
| S1   | 0.279                  | 0.640       | 0.264      | 0.235         | 0.143    |
| S2   | 0.452                  | 0.887       | 0.324      | 0.104         | 0.448    |
| S3   | 0.350                  | 0.771       | 0.309      | 0.345         | 0.733    |
| S4   | 0.102                  | 0.733       | 0.150      | 0.030         | 0.411    |
| S5   | −0.117                 | 0.172       | 0.555      | 0.079         | −0.217   |
| W1   | 0.386                  | 0.521       | 0.686      | 0.147         | 0.206    |
| W2   | 0.721                  | 0.305       | 0.829      | 0.417         | 0.650    |
| W3   | 0.233                  | 0.218       | 0.614      | 0.104         | 0.361    |
| W4   | 0.762                  | 0.195       | 0.871      | 0.470         | 0.328    |
| W5   | −0.061                 | −0.349      | 0.153      | −0.298        | 0.345    |
| O1   | 0.697                  | 0.344       | 0.366      | 0.969         | 0.546    |
| O2   | 0.646                  | 0.178       | 0.328      | 0.902         | 0.445    |
| O3   | 0.485                  | 0.243       | 0.391      | 0.872         | 0.518    |
| O4   | 0.577                  | 0.115       | 0.481      | 0.739         | 0.146    |
| O5   | 0.122                  | −0.061      | 0.125      | 0.578         | −0.090   |
| T1   | 0.669                  | 0.619       | 0.532      | 0.421         | 0.937    |
| T2   | 0.661                  | 0.667       | 0.553      | 0.394         | 0.928    |
| T3   | 0.320                  | 0.149       | 0.182      | 0.564         | 0.582    |
| T4   | 0.377                  | 0.233       | 0.334      | 0.248         | 0.637    |

Source: Researchers analysis
B. Composite Reliability (CR)

(See Fig. 2).

From Fig. 1 and Table 8 and as per (Hair Jr. et al. 2016; Hulland 1999) factor loading criteria to assess convergent validity the cutoff point must be more than (0.5), and (CR must be greater than 0.7), and (AVE also must be greater than 0.5), so the indicators (S5, W5, D7) have low factor loading’s and therefore were eliminated as shown in Fig. 1.

C. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

From Figs. 3 and 4, we found that the variables used in this research are reliable and had an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of more than (0.5) which is in the
acceptable range, and Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability values larger than (0.7). All values of the variables are in the acceptable range to conclude good reliability.

**Discriminant Validity**

Table 9 suggests the AVE and cross component loading extracted for all latent variables. All the objects have a better loading on their corresponding construct than the move loadings on the other constructs in the model. The AVE for every component exceeded the respective squared correlation among elements, giving proof of discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker 1981).

| Development strategies | PQ  | PCM | PRM | PPM | CM  |
|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Development strategies | 0.508 | 0.712 |     |     |     |
| Strengths              | 0.582 | 0.449 | 0.763 |     |     |
| Weaknesses             | 0.573 | 0.781 | 0.372 | 0.786 |     |
| Opportunities          | 0.765 | 0.698 | 0.256 | 0.443 | 0.875 |
| Threats                | 0.796 | 0.663 | 0.585 | 0.528 | 0.476 | 0.797 |

Source: Researchers analysis
Structural Model Assessment
After accepting the results of the convergent validity of the measurement model, we evaluate the results of the structural model. This involves studying the predictive capabilities of the model and the relationships between research variables. A set of criteria has been tested and should be used to evaluate the structural model. The basic criteria for testing the structural model include:

A. Coefficient of determination ($R^2$)
B. Effect size ($f^2$)
C. Predictive Relevance $Q^2$
D. Goodness of Fit of the Model (GoF)
E. Hypothesis testing

A. Coefficient of determination ($R^2$)

The coefficient of determination is the most popular indicator for evaluating the structural model, this indicator tests the predictive strength of the model, the researcher found that $R^2$ for the structural model for this research was 79.9%, which means that 79.9% the development strategies were explained by the independent variables, and that is considered according to Table 12 of high explanatory value.

B. Effect size $f^2$

Effect size shows how every independent variable affects the dependent variable on its own, from Table 10 we notice that Strengths have a high effect on the development strategy with a 80.3% value, and weaknesses have a high effect on development strategies with a value of 47.8%, and threats have a high effect as well on the development strategy with a 49.9% value, while opportunities have a low effect on project quality with a 8.9% value.

|        | Value | Result |
|--------|-------|--------|
| Strengths | 0.803 | High   |
| Weaknesses | 0.478 | High   |
| Threats   | 0.499 | High   |
| Opportunities | 0.089 | Low    |

Source: Researchers analysis
C. Predictive Relevance $Q^2$

While the R square values denote predictive accuracy the Predictive Relevance $Q^2$ “Indicates the model’s predictive relevance which is called ‘Stone-Geisser’s Q² value’” (Hair Jr. et al. 2016). The $Q^2$ values that greater than zero for a certain reflective endogenous variable indicate the path model’s predictive relevance for the construct (Hair et al. 2013).

Running the blindfolding procedure with omission Distance (D) value = 7, we got the $Q^2$ values greater than zero as shown in Table 11 which indicate our path model’s predictive relevance is high.

| Total              | SSO  | SSE  | $Q^2$ ($= 1 - \frac{SSE}{SSO}$) |
|--------------------|------|------|-------------------------------|
| Development Strategies | 678.000 | 421.510 | 0.778                         |
| Strengths          | 452.000 | 452.000 | 0.318                         |
| Weaknesses         | 452.000 | 452.000 | 0.315                         |
| Opportunities      | 452.000 | 452.000 | 0.603                         |
| Threats            | 565.000 | 565.000 | 0.391                         |

Source: Researchers analysis

D. Goodness of Fit of the Model (GoF)

The purpose of GoF is to account on the research model at both levels, namely measurement and structural model with focus on the overall performance of the model (Esposito Vinzi et al. 2010; Hair Jr. et al. 2016). The calculation formula of GoF is as follow:

The criteria of GoF to determine whether GoF values are large, small, medium, or no fit to be consider as global valid PLS model were given by (Henseler and Sarstedt 2013).

$$GOF = \sqrt{R^2 \times (AVE)}$$

$$GOF = \sqrt{0.799 \times 0.508}$$

$$GOF = \sqrt{0.406}$$

$$GOF = 0.637$$

The value of the Gof is (0.637), it can be said that the GoF of the model is large enough to be considered a sufficient global PLS model validity.
Hypothesis Testing
From Table 12 we find that the standard beta is positive, so the associations are positive, also we find that the values of (T) are significant at \( P \leq 0.01 \) which indicates a strong significance level, and the hypothesis testing results are as follows:

| Path Coefficients of the research hypothesis | Std. | Std. error | T-value | P-value | Decision |
|---------------------------------------------|------|------------|---------|---------|----------|
| H01: Strengths → Development Strategy       | 0.751| 0.048      | 9.378   | 0.000   | supported** |
| H02: Weaknesses → Development Strategy      | 0.383| 0.062      | 4.374   | 0.000   | supported** |
| H03: Opportunities → Development Strategy   | 0.677| 0.370      | 11.283  | 0.000   | supported** |
| H04: Threats → Development Strategy         | 0.603| 0.043      | 11.288  | 0.000   | supported** |

Source: Researchers analysis Significant **\( P \leq 0.01 \), *\( P \leq 0.05 \)

H01: There is no relationship between the strengths that Public universities in Palestine have and sustainable development.
The analysis shows that the T-Value of (9.378) is significant at P-value = 0.000 ≤ 0.05, this means that the null hypothesis is rejected and that there is a relationship between the strengths that Public universities in Palestine have and sustainable development.

H02: There is no relationship between the weaknesses that Public universities in Palestine have and sustainable development.
The analysis shows that the T-Value of (4.374) is significant at P-value = 0.000 ≤ 0.05, this means that the null hypothesis is rejected and that there is a relationship between the weaknesses that Public universities in Palestine have and sustainable development.

H03: There is no relationship between the opportunities that Public universities in Palestine can exploit and sustainable development.
The analysis shows that the T-Value of (11.283) is significant at P-value = 0.000 ≤ 0.05, this means that the null hypothesis is rejected and that there is a relationship between the opportunities that Public universities in Palestine can exploit and sustainable development.

H04: There is no relationship between the threats that Public universities in Palestine should avoid and sustainable development.
The analysis shows that the T-Value of (11.288) is significant at P-value = 0.000 ≤ 0.05, this means that the null hypothesis is rejected and that there is a relationship between the threats that Public universities in Palestine should avoid and sustainable development.

5 Discussion
As per the analysis the results show that Palestinian public universities take into consideration the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the development of
their strategies, and the strategic planning process that those universities do contributes
to sustainable development, and administrators and academics participate in developing
the Palestinian public universities strategic plan.

It also shows that the programs offered by the public universities are limited and not
varied; and there are low financial resources and allocations for administrative devel-
opment at the public universities, on the other hand, local and non official support is
available to develop the infrastructure and improve the quality of education.

The increasing need for continuous learning due to the tremendous growth in knowl-
edge and the great acceleration of societal and technological changes is a driving factor
when developing strategies. Also, the state of uncertainty and political instability in
Palestine negatively affects the universities development plans, and the delay in aid pro-
vided by donor countries to education in Palestine negatively affects the universities
ability to complete the planned development projects.

6 Recommendations

After reviewing the results, the study suggests a number of recommendations, mainly,
to provide new programs needed by the Palestinian market, in partnership with the local
community and the commercial and industrial sectors, and develop a plan for open
and E-education and developing programs that guarantee the efficiency of outputs, in
partnership with virtual universities that have long experience in such programs.

Universities should also support scientific research and train the academic staff on
modern scientific methods in using virtual and technical means of education and reducing
dependence on indoctrination, develop partnerships with local community institutions,
commercial companies and factories in order to provide job opportunities for university
students upon graduation.

The development of these university’s infrastructure and facilities enables them to
keep pace with the technological developments, in order to attract and retain a larger
number of students, they should also apply the principles of governance in managing
university affairs and increase the participation of academic and administrative staff and
the local community in formulating the universities strategic plans.

They should also seek support from the local community and the state to increase
the number of colleges and centers within the university in line with the increase in the
number of specializations, and increase the number of scholarships for academics and
administrators, each in his or her specialization that the university lacks.

The Palestinian public Universities should Support the strategic directions in bringing
sustainable change through; developing university policies and structures that support
sustainable change, and conducting an evaluation study of the policies of university
structures in light of the principles of sustainable development.

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