

Free research proposal on the effects of israel's incursions on palestinian childr...

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



Abstract

The physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of the children living in Palestine is one for concern. The horrifying tales of waking up or going to sleep in the sounds of bombs and gunfire cause posttraumatic stress disorder on everyone, including children. The incursion of the Israeli military in Palestine since the 1940s has left the nation with limits to their freedom of movement, limits to fair and free education, verbal and physical assaults, and the undeniable possibility of a troubled future. There is no doubt that within this troubled future lays an uneducated population that has seen and known only the negative aspects of war. With this in mind, the following pages will analyze the historical data, gathered from reputable journals and newspaper articles and explore how these facts impact on the lives of the children in Palestine. The writer seeks answers to the following questions: How can the future of Palestinian children be productive if their educational opportunities are limited in their childhood? Who suffers the most from the Israeli occupation of Palestine? What are the results of the Israeli incursions on Palestine? The following paper is designed to educate the wider society about the challenges that the children in Palestine face during the occupation of Israel in their country. The paper does not seek to analyze the role of the Israeli military in Palestine, but seeks to highlight the major effect of the Israeli incursion on the children of Palestine.

Imagine living in a world where dawn brings the sounds of gunfire, death, restrictions of every movement, and the inevitable physical and verbal abuse of strangers in your homeland. Then imagine being a child facing torture and the ultimate choice of either betraying your family and friends to strangers

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who will surely kill you if you lie. Then, imagine the feeling of knowing that life has always been like this and will always be like this. The very thought brings fear to the minds of compassionate people. Yet, the children in Palestine wake up each morning to the horrifying presence of the Israeli military in their homeland. They face the physical abuse, verbal abuse, and violence which plague and haunt their young life, and they learn quite early to grow in the face of the incursion of the Israeli soldiers in their country. The psychological impact of the Israeli incursion forms the foundation for the terror that these children face and will continue to face.

In recent years, human rights groups argue that children around the world face an increase in the level of violence in their surroundings. Many of these children live in areas where war is common to their daily lives. The children deal with the violence in different ways. In addition, the violence they experience alters their lives emotionally, psychologically, mentally, and physically. Everyone suffers from the exposure to war and violence, and eventually the individuals learn to adjust to the violence they see around them. Nevertheless, the damaging effects of the exposure to war and violence have a more profound impact on children than on adults. The children in Palestine also face the war and violence that is integrated into their daily routine. They suffer silently every day as their lives remain in turmoil. The truth is that the negative effects of Israel's incursions on Palestinian children will continue to shape the way they live and the inevitable acceptance of the war and violence as part of their daily lives. It is therefore clear, that the children in Palestine are the most helpless victims of the Israeli incursion in Palestine.

During March 29, 2002 to April 22, 2002, Israel's military forces carried out Operation Defensive Shield. The operation saw the demolition of belongings, arrests and torture of innocent Palestinians, mistreatment of adults and children, and the firing at houses and Palestinians. The Israelis imposed restrictions on the movements of Palestinians in their country. In addition to the general movements of the Palestinians, the Israelis controlled the movements of humanitarian support workers, human rights observers, the news media, medical patients, and other innocent civilians.

Ghussain (2013) notes that the humiliation that the Palestinian's face in the Gaza and West Bank is the ugliest type of structural violence. This humiliation strengthens the fact that the Palestinians are a subjugated people. Arguably, this subjugation is revolting. With the changes in the rights of the human to freedom and free speech, the Israeli's rob children of the world where they can practice free speech in the years to come. Instead, they are bound to a life of subjugation, and there is the likelihood that the cycle of suppression will continue for many years. The move to restrict the movement of these individuals stemmed from Israel's need at the time to protect the Israelis citizens as they attempted to destroy the terrorist organization in Palestine. In an effort to help their own, the Israeli leaves the scars of psychological sufferings on the people of Palestine. Conversely, the invasion of Palestine by the Israeli is more than just a physical problem for children, or simply a battle for land; it is, in fact, a battle against the mind as well as the body (Ghussain, 2013). Therefore, the world needs to join forces and help these children against the harsh realities that exist in Palestine. However, in their effort to protect their fellow Israeli, the Israelis violated the

rulings of the Geneva Conventions, which stipulated that the Palestinian children should be protected. Was that a fair move by the Geneva Convention? The unrealistic stipulation by the Geneva Convention led to the sufferings of the children living in Occupied Palestinian Territory. There is no question as to the fact that this stipulation was next to impossible. The truth is that in war, no one can truly protect and defend the innocent victims while trying to stay alive. People always get hurt in a war and the sad reality is that, it is the children who cannot fight back, who suffer the most. Since the invasion of Palestine by the Israeli military, the children and the country as a whole have suffered in every way. Jones (2014), notes that Israel's military operations caused much destruction to the Palestinian schools, medical offices, and other civil institutions. Thousands of people suffer as they have no water, electricity, medical supplies, food, or other services that keep the country connected to the global market. The harsh fact is that these people live in fear for their lives as they face " Israel's indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force" in the form of abuse of against everyone, including children. Israel's military group spares no one as the invasion heightens. Quota & Odeh (2005) supports the view that children are living in a situation where war and political violence runs rampant; they tend to mature beyond their years in a short period of time. Furthermore, this early maturity leads to negative psychological consequences.

In Al-Amari, for example, the Israel army destroys musical instruments, furniture, and computers. The cruelty of these acts leaves one to wonder at the compassion of these soldiers. They obviously do not care about the impact that their actions have on the educational and medical infrastructure

of the Palestinians, and in particular the future generations of the world. These inhuman acts lead one to question the morality and values of such a nation that was founded on the Jewish principles of love for self and others. The conclusion is frightening – the influence of war and the material possession of land and wealth supersede the ethical and moral values of love and kindness. Jones (2014) reinforces the facts that the Palestinian children suffer through the hardships of the invasion by Israel. Statistics from Jones' (2014) report points to the reality that many of these children pay the price of suffering. Many children lose their lives as over three hundred Palestinian children died and over seven thousand children suffered live with the scars as reminders of the Israeli military operations in their country. The cruelty of the invasion leaves the world with a feeling of rage as the horrific stories presents themselves across the world. One does not have to be a Palestinian to grieve with those who suffer because they cannot leave their homeland. The reality is that these people are not fortunate enough to be able to get out of the country. As a result, they sit back and suffer silently as they watch their children die and nurse the injuries of war. The truth is that no one, especially a child, should live in fear of wondering what will happen in the next second, minutes, or hours. Will they live or will they die? This life of fear is the norm for many people in Palestine since the invasion of Israel, and truthfully it should not be made to continue.

The results of the war span further than just physical injuries and emotional disturbance. It encompasses the increase in poverty and limits to educational opportunities. The cycle of poverty continues and creates greater problems for those involved. The level of malnutrition increases and

medical problems arise from this poverty. In essence, the invasion created an increase in poverty for the Palestinians. With the ongoing war and the fear of death and injuries, educational opportunities are no longer a priority. The harsh reality is that the children are afraid to face the world on the outside, and this should not be this way. Children have the right to be free from pain, distress, and torture. The painful revelation of the findings of the Israeli Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories as cited by Afana (2009), points to the methods of suffering these children face on a daily basis. One cannot help but feel pity for any child whose head gets flushed in a toilet bowl or stand in painful positions for extended periods and have icy cold water splashed on their faces to keep them awake. One would think that somewhere in the hearts of these cold-blooded soldiers lays some amount of love for children. However, that is merely wishful thinking as Israeli soldiers do not care if the detainee is a child or an adult during the process of the torture.

The suffering of these children has touched the lives of many people in the world today. It serves as one of the “ world’s secrete and embarrassing scandals” (Afana, 2009) as an appeal for the implementation of policies that will help these individuals at the national and international levels, grow stronger. A number of these children suffer their dilemma silently. They are scared to tell the horrifying tales of the abuse they face and the forced labor they undertake to survive the hardships associated with the incursion. The children are often the targets of interrogation as they provide the weakest link to the society. Their silence breaks easily as they reveal what knowledge they have of the events in their immediate surroundings. One cannot begin

to understand the thoughts of the military groups that wield this power over the children. Human rights groups fight for the rights of the child, but it is quite obvious that this news reached the military that controls Palestine, or the sufferings of the Palestinian children would have stopped ages ago.

Education in Palestine becomes more difficult for the Palestinian children on a daily basis as, according to Education under Occupation (2010), the Gaza Strip has a severe lack of classrooms because of Israel's bombing raids and the fact that Israel refused to allow building materials into the territory. As a result, the education system is under severe strain. One may say that this is preposterous. How can the nation move forward when one group is uneducated, and the rest of the world is moving forward? Measures must be taken to help these children in Palestine as a "universal primary education is an essential condition for development and poverty reduction" (Education under Occupation, 2010). The injustice meted out to these Palestinians is unfair and unjust. Since the 1940s the population has changed, the people have changed, yet they live the lives of their fore-parents and have embraced the place of the Israeli in their country.

The way of life of these children cannot be fair or just. Through no fault of theirs, they pay a high price through their lack of human rights. Palestinian children, across generations, have never felt safe or sheltered even before the 1967 Israeli incursion of the West Bank and the Gaza strip, (Afana, 2009).

As such these children encounter subjugation, exposure to painful experiences, social segregation, subjugation, and political and socioeconomic difficulties. These hardships are imprinted on the social consciousness of these childlike and impressionable minds. In addition, the

Palestinian children have to deal with the loss of their livelihood and home. Needless to say, such catastrophic events lead to disintegration in the society and the destruction of their culture.

Researches show that many children living in the occupied territories are subject to depression, nervousness, and a decline in academic performance. Of course, this is inevitable as not many teachers are equipped to identify and treat psychological problems. In any case, how could they treat these problems when they too face similar problems of verbal and physical abuse from the illegal Israeli settlers? However, it is the duty of the Israeli soldiers to protect the civilians, but they turn a blind eye as they silently encourage the many forms of intimidation. Nevertheless, there are a number of other students who have no school to go to. Afana (2009) reinforces the idea that carried out by the United Nations in 2008. The studies show “ children have a high level of distress and fears” as they are exposed to the harsh realities of violence, war and suppression. The innovative minds of these children grow stagnant as they do not have the opportunities of educational stimulation that is necessary for the growth and development in the future of Palestine.

Kafri (n. d.) notes that the occurrence of the Israeli attack on September 28, 2000 created a “ wide-scale calamity” for the people of Palestine, and induced a considerable cut in the drop-out rates of children in Palestinian schools. He further notes that the decline in the numbers fell from approximately eleven percent to approximately nine percent, while the numbers in the children who worked fell from seven percent to approximately three percent. Such statistics suggests that the school is the

most important alternative to the work force. Child labor laws do not apply to the Palestinian in their quest to survive. In fact, child labor is common in the territory and forms part of the widespread occurrence within the labor market. This economic dependence on child labor stems from the occupation of Israel in Palestine since the 1940's and the total control of the borders and the local economy. Kafri (n. d.) reiterates the disturbing fact that the Israeli measures against the people of Palestine forms the main reason for the damages to the Palestinian social and economic demise as well as the psychological well-being of the children. Baker & Kanan (2003) point to the researches of mental health researchers who confirm that “ exposing children to military violence is detrimental to their psychological well-being” (p. 19), while Ahmed (et. al) (2013) adds that the experience with war related events is traumatic and leads to high levels of Post Traumatic Disorders (PTSD) in children.

In concluding, the government continues to make empty promises to fix the problem that the incursion of the Israeli military in Palestine has on the educational system. The promise comes because of a direct order from the High Court. These futile promises are yet to be seen, and the children in Palestine continue to suffer from a lack of free and fair education in their homeland. Still more needs to be done for the children in the country. The psychological, physical, and emotional damage of the constant presence of the soldiers in the country has a deeper impact than the lack of schooling. The fact is the incursion affects everyone and everything in Palestine. Most of the children and younger population currently living in Palestine only knows of the torture, destruction of houses, physical and verbal abuse,

political violence, and wholesale killings. It is absurd that the greed for land overrides the need for the generation of healthy and productive citizens. The harsh reality is that a child can only live what they learn. In Palestine, these children live through violence, and they learn this violence and will practice this violence in the years to come. Where does that leave the world in another twenty years? The answer is simple the world will continue to experience violence, incursions, and insurgence, because, in the eyes of any Palestinian child, oppression is the normal way of life. The war does not have to continue as both groups and come to a working agreement where Israel go back to their territory and Palestinians remain in their territory.

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