Authors notes:

1. "has sparked controversy and remains a deeply contentious issue" is often over used especially in an opening paragraph but it doesn't add any information. Additionally, "contentious" and "controversy" are nearly identical synonyms.
    a. Consider replacing with, "Israel's use of aggressive administrative detention measures violates fundamental human rights and perpetuates violence and insecurity in the region."
    b. If you want to keep it…add information about the two arguments that make it controversial/ a contentious issue.
2. "impact" is used earlier in the sentence. consider using "effect" because it refers to "the social and psychological" consequence of trauma.
    a. "Impact" is the influence of an action/phenomenon on something or someone.
    b. "Effect" is the consequence or outcome of an action or a phenomenon.
3. "works" works great if you are talking about works of writing or policy or stuff like that. But, if you are referring to the overall work that these organizations do, consider "efforts"
4. Does the paper or the mental health framework encourage engagement?
    a. If paper, remove comma.
    b. If framework, keep coma and change to "…comprehensive mental health framework, which acknowledges…"
5. It is ambiguous what "However" is contrasting with, consider removing and adjusting the sentence.
    a. Consider: "To understand and address the perpetuation of violence, it's necessary to take a broader look at global security paradigms and their inadvertent contributions to the escalation of conflict."
6. 1st First person POV, maybe think about making it consistent throughout the paper. You can use two
7. Sentence structure isn't parallel, consider: "My goal is to **amplify** the voices of those affected by violence *responsibly*, **approach** my analysis with *sensitivity and care*…"
8. Consider changing from the passive to the active: "The Israeli government disregards conditions governing its use,"
9. "Looking forward" needs to be followed by the subject. Consider: "Looking forward, community-centered mental health approaches must incorporate decolonizing methodologies that prioritize"
10. The conjunction has to be "not only…but **also**" consider changing to "Through this approach, individuals are uplifted, and the community as a whole is strengthened…"

Bailey Dressner

Beyond Security: Reimagining Mental Health Care in Palestinian Communities Affected by
Administrative Detention and Military Violence

ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine the profound impact of administrative detention and
military violence on Palestinian youth within the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict, particularly
focusing on the social and psychological impacts of trauma. Israel's use of administrative
detention has sparked controversy and remains a deeply contentious issue, as these aggressive
measures violate fundamental human rights and perpetuate violence and insecurity in the region.
This study seeks to highlight the works of organizations and medical professionals striving to
develop effective mental health interventions within this unique context. By challenging the
common perception of Palestinian youth as agentless victims, the objective is to advocate for a
comprehensive mental health framework that acknowledges the unique context of life within the
Occupied Territories, and encourages engagement in the collective anticolonial struggle for
freedom.

Administrative detention, defined by its arbitrary nature and indefinite duration, not only
violates the fundamental rights of individuals but also inflicts permanent trauma on the
collective consciousness of the Palestinian community. However, understanding and addressing
the perpetuation of violence necessitates a broader examination of global security paradigms and
their inadvertent contributions to the escalation of conflict. By examining the unintended
consequences of security strategies, the study aspires to pave the way for a global security
framework that transcends regional boundaries and promotes sustainable solutions by placing
human rights and collaboration at its core. My goal is to responsibly amplify the voices of those
affected by violence, approach my analysis with sensitivity and care, and advocate for

interventions that prioritize justice and security, extending this commitment to the well-being of

Palestinians and global citizens ~~alike.~~

ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION IN THE OPT

Since its establishment in 1948, Israel has employed administrative detention as one of its

core security strategies, directed explicitly at preventing terrorists from carrying out attacks

before they occur. However, beneath this stated objective lies an implicit function of these

arbitrary arrests – a function that goes well beyond prevention. These detentions are

systematically employed to contain, control, and intimidate the occupied population for the

larger purpose of deterring any form of resistance. Arbitrary detentions represent only one facet

of the broader array of security measures employed by the Israeli military to silence dissent,

maintain control, and prevent any disruption of the current status quo of Israel's occupation.

Inevitably, these intended effects are accompanied by a myriad of less desirable outcomes;

among them, the traumatization of an entire population, including children who make up almost

half of Palestinian society (Awad, PCBS).

Under international law, limited use of administrative detention is permitted only under

extreme circumstances, namely when there is a clear and imminent threat to the existence of a

state. "Israel has claimed to be under a continuous state of emergency" since its inception,

justifying its use of extreme measures to contain the supposed threat of Palestinian resistance

(Adameer, "Stop Administrative Detention"). ~~Conditions governing its use are disregarded by~~ (8)

~~the Israeli government,~~ as detainees are deprived of their fundamental rights to a fair trial, legal

representation, protection against abuse, and any opportunity to challenge their arrest or unjust

treatment. Not only does the state justify the arbitrary arrest of men and women loosely

suspected of being materially involved in terrorist networks, but it is also "the only country in the

world that automatically and systematically prosecutes children in military courts" (DCIP, "Military Detention"). Despite a universal consensus regarding the inherent innocence of children, particularly within discourses of armed conflict, Israel detains, interrogates, and prosecutes hundreds of Palestinian children annually. "Approximately 700 Palestinian children aged 12 to 17 are arrested by the Israeli army each year," raising concerns from the international community about the impact of these practices on the well-being and future development of this significant population (UNICEF, Question of Palestine).

IMPACT ON CHILDREN AND THE REPRODUCTION OF VIOLENCE

In addition to the unjust cause for the arrest of most of these children, human rights reports have cited countless instances of ill-treatment, including but not limited to slapping, beating, kicking, verbal and psychological abuse, humiliation, sexual harassment, and threats of rape (Addameer, "Children"). A study on the abuse of Palestinian children's rights reveals that over "90% of children have been arrested on suspicion of throwing stones at Israeli soldiers" - a crime which that has warranted a sentence of up to 20 years (Siraj Sait). This staggering statistic highlights the disproportionate measures employed against Palestinian children, amounting to the collective punishment of the entire population despite their innocence. A UNICEF report elucidates the horror of these experiences, finding that children are commonly "arrested at their homes between midnight and 5:00 am, blindfolded, painfully restrained, physically and verbally abused, deprived of water and food, and interrogated using physical violence and threats of sexual assault or death" (UNICEF, "Question of Palestine").

The short and long term consequences of these experiences cannot be understated and They must be acknowledged as a catalyst not only for developmental issues but also for the emergence of a violent sentiment that factors into the collective identity of the Palestinian people. Studies show

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that Palestinian children become increasingly aggressive, fearful, anxious, irritable, and rebellious as a result of this material reality. Even if they do not experience detainment firsthand, "traumatic events like the humiliating detention of fathers and brothers is causing irreparable damage to children… and they come to accept violence as a good method for resolving problems" (Siraj Sait). When children lose all faith in the authorities and institutions meant to keep them safe, they often learn from a young age that ensuring their own safety and that of their loved ones requires alternative, sometimes violent means.

Dr. Eyad El-Sarraj has written extensively about the psychological impacts of abuse by Israeli soldiers, explaining how "the suicide bombers of the second intifada are the children of the first Intifada – people who witnessed a great deal of trauma as children" (El-Sarraj, "On Violence and Resistance"). He goes on to warn that "violence against civilians only serves to deepen the fear and insecurity of any population, thus making it hostage to militaristic propensity, and dependent on extremist ideals" (El-Sarraj). By drawing a connection between the trauma endured during childhood and the emergence of violence later in life, he emphasizes the cyclical pattern that perpetuates violence through generations, particularly when feelings of injustice and victimization take root in children as young as 12 years old. The reproduction of violence that ensues from these experiences has therefore turned Israel, "which was supposed to be a safe haven for Jews of the world, into a slaughterhouse for both Israelis and Palestinians" (El-Sarraj). Unfortunately, Israel's strategy of ensuring the security of its own population through its heavy handed treatment of Palestinians, including children, has unintended consequences that ultimately undermine its own interests.

INTERVENTIONS AND CHALLENGES

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The plight of Palestinian children caught in the crossfire of Israel's occupation thus remains the focus of countless international organizations' advocacy efforts and campaigns. These institutions recognize that the arbitrary arrest of children as young as 12 years old cannot be justified by any claimed "necessity," but amount [sp: amounts] to a blatant disregard for the value of Palestinian life and for the standards enshrined in international law to protect innocent civilians and the fundamental human rights of all individuals regardless of race, religion, or nationality.

As the only supposed democracy in the Middle East, Israel should be pressured to uphold universal human rights principles and the rule of law, which are essential for promoting peace and justice both regionally and globally. Unfortunately, calls for greater attention to the rights of children have largely fallen on deaf ears. Israel continues to undermine international law, including the legal restraints in place to limit suffering, particularly of children. The United States, as Israel's strongest ally, has shown similarly limited responsiveness to the urgent need for reform in this regard. It is hard to ignore the irony of the situation, as the very principles and values that both nations profess to uphold for their own citizens, such as human rights and the protection of children, seem to be compromised when they apply to Palestinians. While organizations and individuals should continue to push for legal and political reform, other interventions are necessary as the situation on the ground grows increasingly dire.

In the aftermath of child detention, mental health care is not only essential for individual development, but also carries transformative potential, reshaping narratives of violence and victimhood into a collective commitment to empowerment and resilience. A liberation-based approach anchored in critical consciousness, social justice, and accountability provides survivors of violence with the tools to confront power imbalances and oppression, ultimately promoting resilience and facilitating healing (Rhea Almeida, "Liberation Based Healing Practices").

The obstacles to establishing a robust mental health framework in the OPT are plentiful, exacerbated by the daily challenges of life under military occupation. For instance, "when a nation is struggling with day-to-day survival, the development of evidence-based mental health policies and services is unlikely to be a priority" (Giacaman). The allocation of resources and attention to mental health needs may be overshadowed by more immediate concerns such as access to basic necessities, security, and survival, all of which are compromised for Palestinians in the OPT. The struggle to implement mental health services in the West Bank and Gaza goes back to 1967, when these efforts were "managed by the Israeli government and became neglected and underdeveloped" (Marie, Hannigan, and Jones). Efforts to revive these systems then became the objective of countless NGOs and international institutions, along with the Palestinian Authority who remained largely unmotivated in this regard. This brought forth new challenges to the struggle, notably the inapplicability of Western perceptions of trauma and rehabilitation to the context of Palestinian suffering. Western treatments narrowly focused on individual counseling "assume that the pathological effects of war are located inside a person, and can be cured through individual treatment, as if the individual was recovering from an illness rather than suffering from the long-protracted consequences of historical and contemporary political injustice" (Giacaman). The nature of violence and oppression experienced by Palestinians is deeply entrenched in the experiences of historical dispossession, displacement, occupation, and systemic discrimination, making it impossible to translate Western models of trauma to this unique context. Traditional frameworks for mental health care are therefore disempowering and reinforce patriarchal systems by framing survivors as mere victims, neglecting their agency and resilience and reducing their trauma to some universal experience that overlooks the contextualized nature of their suffering. As a result, efforts have been made by

Palestinians to move "away from hospital based in-patient services to community provision of

care" and familial support systems (Marie, Hannigan, and Jones).

For example, *sumud* is a "Palestinian anticolonial construct wherein the subject [of

violence] can be seen not only as a victim, but also as a resisting hero" (Meari). *Sumud* is a

mindset that redefines the experience of trauma within the Palestinian context. In interviews with

Palestinian boys who had been detained and abused, one of them recalls "suddenly feeling like a

lion– a powerful being" (Meari). They express discovering an inner strength within themselves

despite their physical pain. The focus shifts away from their own suffering toward protecting

their community and having pride in their resilience (Meari). Linking individual suffering to a

collective struggle of resistance empowers individuals to endure torture in defense of their

"comrades, political organizations, communities, and the Palestinian Revolution," thereby

continuing the process of resistance that Palestinians generate through these violent encounters

(Meari*).

Ignorant to this facet of the Palestinian identity, Western liberal human rights and trauma

discourses have been imposed on Palestinians, hindering their ability to heal from experiences

deliberately aimed at stripping them of their dignity and agency. For this reason, providing

mental health care that is truly empowering and liberating has been a struggle constrained by the

international community and Western NGOs, who bring preconceived notions and frameworks

that do not resonate with the realities and needs of Palestinians living under occupation.

The fragmentation of healthcare services, coupled with a reliance on international

funding and the Western agendas associated with it, has undermined efforts to deliver

comprehensive mental health services tailored to Palestinian youth impacted by administrative

detention and other forms of military violence. The organizations that do exist, like the

Treatment and Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture (TRC), have succeeded in part by providing "a healing space where victims of torture can talk about their brutalizing experiences," alongside providing psychological services to address medical ailments resulting from such trauma (Meari). In addition to offering rehabilitation and therapy services, TRC also organizes informational workshops for medical professionals and for the families of those affected by violence. These workshops serve as platforms for exchanging knowledge, encouraging collaboration; and enhancing treatment practices. The organization is committed to "reaching affected cases with maximum speed, using the latest methods and techniques of psychological treatment and intervention, and accelerating the recovery process of the affected and their reintegration into society" (TRC, Rehabilitation Department).

Despite their best efforts, they continue to be plagued by the same constraints and have embraced an ideology that perceives "torture and psychological traumas as individual experiences, thereby depoliticizing and decontextualizing matters of social justice, occupation, and dispossession" (Meari). They define themselves as an "independent and impartial entity," further emphasizing their oversight of the political significance inherent in resistance and healing practices. Dr. Ibrahim Makkawi would critique the impartial stance of the TRC, echoing his criticisms of the Gaza Community Mental Health Program (GCMHP). In his writings, he asserts, "Research which is carried out on colonized communities, such as the Palestinian people, with the presumption to address the psychological consequences of such colonization, cannot and should not be neutral research" (Makkawi). Maintaining these ill-suited paradigms poses the risk of perpetuating a narrative that downplays the specific injustices of the occupation. By applying trauma frameworks designed for Americans and Israelis to treat Palestinians, there is a risk of oversimplifying and homogenizing their experiences and suffering with those of individuals

facing vastly different forms of violence. This approach can reinforce an oppressive structure by disregarding the historical and political context of Palestinian trauma. Such oversight perpetuates a resort to the status quo, including systemic inequality, marginalization and extreme insecurity, directly undermining the healing process being sought. Renewed efforts are needed to address these limitations and integrate a more context-specific understanding of trauma within spaces dedicated to healing and empowerment in the OPT.

Looking forward, decolonizing methodologies must be incorporated into community-centered mental health approaches, which should not only prioritize therapeutic interventions but also "encourage community pride and participation in activities such as art, dance, film, sports, and political engagement" (Jabr and Berger). By leveraging the rich social fabric embedded in centuries of Palestinian history and communal identity, these initiatives have the power to cultivate holistic well-being within the community. Involving local leaders and inspirational speakers in the healing process would present a multifaceted intervention strategy by connecting individual struggles with the overarching values of collective solidarity and resilience. Through this approach, not only are individuals uplifted, but the community as a whole is strengthened, nurturing a sense of unity and shared purpose in navigating and overcoming challenges.

RESEARCH CHALLENGES

Amidst the ongoing massacre in Gaza since October 2023, and the subsequent violence and devastation throughout the Palestinian community in the West Bank, individuals are overwhelmed and unavailable to engage in discussions regarding the establishment of better-suited mental health services or the challenges they face. With the daily struggle for their lives and the safety of their loved ones, it would be unreasonable to expect them to allocate time

and energy toward contemplating these structural changes. In such dire circumstances, it becomes the responsibility of all who are invested in the future well-being of Palestinians, regional peace, and global stability to undertake these efforts and commit to future collaboration with the resilient communities that arise out of this crisis. By advocating for improved mental health services and addressing the systemic constraints, we can pave the way for the next generation of Palestinians to access the necessary resources to overcome the horrors they have endured and to continue the anticolonial struggle with a commitment to achieve true self governance and determination.

<u>METHODOLOGIES</u>

Pursuing future research on mental health in Palestinian communities will require a thoughtful and ethical approach. Upon arrival in the West Bank, my methodology will involve integrating into the TRC team, and aligning my research goals with their overarching objectives. This collaboration will provide me with access to resources, networks, and insights necessary to navigate the complexities of mental health care in the OPT. I will prioritize qualitative and semi-structured interviews with NGO leaders who have firsthand experience working and living within these communities. These interviews will hopefully shed light on existing mental health care practices, challenges, and potential areas for improvement. Immersion within Palestinian communities will be another cornerstone of my methodology, involving active participation in community events, gatherings, and activities. Through these experiences, I aim to build trust and gain firsthand insights into the lived experiences and perspectives of community members'. To this end, ethnographic methods will be an essential component of my research, employing participant observation and informal conversations to gain a deeper understanding of individual experiences with and perspectives on mental health. My hope is that these experiences will

provide a more contextually informed understanding of the subject matter. More importantly, in this process, I hope to build mutually beneficial relationships where I can offer support and assistance to the communities in as many ways as possible, recognizing the importance of reciprocity and collaboration in producing meaningful change.

GLOBAL RELEVANCE

While it is necessary to directly challenge the practice of administrative detention, it is also important to situate these issues within the broader context of global security. Drawing from the Israeli context, state-based security architectures often prioritize the safety and security of their own citizens, even at the expense of exacerbating the insecurity of others. Consequently, the heightened insecurity experienced by Palestinians exacerbates their sense of injustice, inevitably fueling a need for resistance which may manifest through violence. Therefore, it becomes evident that the challenge lies not in any inherently Palestinian predisposition to violent action, but rather in a collective learned experience of violence that is a result of the heightened securitization, militarization, and criminalization of everyday life in Palestinian communities.

A human security approach emphasizes addressing the root causes of insecurity, such as poverty, inequality, and lack of access to basic services, rather than solely focusing on military or state-centric solutions (Shannon Beebe). In the context of the OPT, implementing a human security approach would involve targeted interventions aimed at improving the socioeconomic conditions of the population, ensuring their basic rights and dignity, and creating spaces for inclusive dialogue and cooperation among all stakeholders to address underlying grievances and build trust. This might include initiatives such as investing in infrastructure, education, healthcare, and economic development, as well as promoting respect for human rights and facilitating meaningful participation of local communities in decision-making processes. This

approach stands in contrast to the Israeli occupation, where insecurity is heightened rather than alleviated, and so where violence is reproduced rather than diminished.

To intervene in the cycle of violent revolutions and counter~revolutions [hyphen] that have plagued this region for decades, and to safeguard the fundamental rights of Palestinians and human beings everywhere, we must reevaluate the effectiveness of modern security strategies to bring about sustainable peace. We must transcend the 'enemy-centric' perspective, which reproduces a cycle of conflict by framing the situation as an endless struggle for power and dominance between two peoples. Instead, we must be committed to ~~the implementation of~~ implementing human security for all people, across boundaries of political affiliation and national borders. In a world that prioritizes the security of all its inhabitants, conditions of peace will ultimately prevail. Palestinian doctor, psychiatrist, and human rights defender Eyad El-Sarraj places his hope in the possibility that "a movement is capable of inspiring the beleaguered masses into joining ranks and working together against the tyranny of militants and military dictatorship, in order to instill hope and stretch it to the borders of life" (El-Sarraj). We must carry this hope ~~with us~~ in our endless collective struggle for global security and justice.

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