



Fathers detained, contact restrained: Experiences of Palestinian children visiting their fathers in Israeli detention

Mahasin F. Saleh^{a,*}, Yoke Rabaia^b, Corey Balsam^b, Zeina Amro^b, Samar Kassis^b, Rita Giacaman^b

^a Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, Al Tarfa Street, Zone 70, PO Box 200592, Al-Daayen, Qatar

^b Institute of Community and Public Health, Birzeit University, PO Box 14, Birzeit, Palestine

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
Palestinian children
Political detainees
Families of political detainees
Parent-child contact
Fathers

ABSTRACT

Background: Very little is known about the experiences of children of political prisoners internationally, because of the challenges of researching within politically oppressive contexts.

Objective: The aim of this secondary analysis was to explore and understand Palestinian children's experiences visiting their fathers in Israeli detention.

Participants, setting and methods: Qualitative data from sixteen in-depth interviews with thirty-one children were analyzed. Structural and longitudinal coding cycles were employed and focused upon the timeline of the visitation process.

Results: Three overarching themes emerged, which included: Children's experiences 'before the visit', 'during the visit', and 'after the visit'. Subthemes related to the distressing and at times traumatic experiences the children suffered throughout the process of preparation for, going through, and the aftermath of the visit. This included reports of experiencing punitive measures at checkpoints and waiting areas and humiliation and maltreatment by the Israeli authorities during the visitation process. These findings are discussed with reference to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was clear that the children's best interests were denied and contact and interaction with their fathers was restrained under the Israeli visitation scheme. Despite the arduous visitation process that children often hated, they loved to see their fathers. **Conclusions:** Even though the children's rights were infringed upon, they still endured hardships to maintain whatever contact was possible. International advocacy for the realization of the 'rights of the child' for Palestinian children, as well as other children of political detainees is warranted.

1. Introduction

The ongoing and protracted Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory since 1967 has negatively impacted Palestinians' realization of basic human rights. In the West Bank, these include restrictions on movement, such as checkpoints, roadblocks, and permit systems for employment in Israel or for visits to Jerusalem to seek health care and other services or to reach religious sites. They also face collective punishment, including curfews and home demolitions. Israeli violations of international law and basic human rights have been widely reported (Dugard, 2008; Human Rights Watch, 2017) and human-security threats in the occupied Palestinian territory

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: mahasin.saleh@dohainstitute.edu.qa (M.F. Saleh), ymeulen@gmail.com (Y. Rabaia), coreybalsam1@gmail.com (C. Balsam), zeina.amro@kcl.ac.uk (Z. Amro), syasser@birzeit.edu (S. Kassis), Rita@birzeit.edu (R. Giacaman).

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2019.104071>

Received 2 January 2019; Received in revised form 1 July 2019; Accepted 3 July 2019

Available online 07 August 2019

0145-2134/ © 2019 Published by Elsevier Ltd.

have been clearly documented (Batniji et al., 2009).

Since the beginning of the occupation, Palestinians have faced arrest and detention by the Israeli authorities. At the end of February 2019, there were 4954 West Bank Palestinians detained in Israel Prison Service facilities (B'Tselem, 2019). In a population of roughly 3 million Palestinians in the West Bank (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), 2017), this equates to a detention rate of more than one in every thousand Palestinians. Amnesty International (2002) defines a political prisoner as “any prisoner whose case has a significant political element. This may include the motivation of the prisoner’s acts, the acts in themselves or the motivation of the authorities in imprisoning them” (p. 40–41). Given this definition, Palestinian detainees held by Israel are political prisoners. Moreover, Israel holds these Palestinians in approximately 20 detention centers and prisons all located within Israel (except for Ofer Detention Center near Ramallah). This practice is in explicit violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949), which prohibits forcible transfer of protected persons outside of occupied territory, including for the purposes of detention (Articles 49 and 76).

Many Palestinian political detainees are held by Israel without charges and without a right to a trial (Caabu, 2012; Hakala & Ishaq, 2013). Although both *asra*, “detainees”, and *soujana*, “prisoners” (Arabic terms) are used in popular and legal discourses about Palestinian captives, the authors have decided to use the term “political detainees”. The term “political imprisonment” often refers to imprisonment of citizens by a repressive regime in their own country. Palestinians in the West Bank are not citizens of Israel, but are living under Israeli occupation. In recent years, the Palestinian Authority has also incarcerated Palestinians for political reasons. This study, however, is restricted to the experiences of children visiting their fathers in Israeli detention centers.

1.1. Literature review

The bulk of studies about the effects of imprisonment on families does not focus on political prisoners, but rather concentrates on *criminal prisoners* in industrialized nations such as the United Kingdom (Light & Campbell, 2006), the United States (Chung, 2011; Hagan & Dinovitzer, 1999; Wilbur et al., 2007), Australia (Cunningham, 2001), New Zealand and Sweden (Murray & Farrington, 2008; Murray, Farrington, Sekol, & Olsen, 2009). Often governments are not willing to admit that they detain ‘political’ prisoners (Van Zyl Smit, 1998). While it is clear that families of both political and criminal prisoners are often dramatically affected by incarceration (Rolston et al., 1986), there are major differences between these types of prisoners’ families and their experiences. Political prisoners may be less stigmatized in their societies and communities may be more supportive (McEvoy, O’Mahony, Horner, & Lyner, 1999).

Most research on political detention of Palestinians by Israel has focused chiefly on Palestinian political prisoners themselves (Aruri, 1978; Baker & Matar, 2011; Hanieh, 2003; Nashif, 2008) or aspects of detention within the context of political violence on Palestinian families (Baker & Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 1999; Giacaman, Abu-Rmeileh, Saab, & Boyce 2007; Quota, Punamaki, Montgomery, & El-Sarraj, 2007; Veronese, Castiglioni, Barola, & Said, 2011). More recently the impact of political imprisonment on the families of Palestinian prisoners and detainees is a subject that has received some attention in the literature (see Buch, 2010; Giacaman & Johnson, 2013; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2005; Srour, 2008).

Of the few studies, that specifically examine families’ experiences related to visiting the spouses, children, or parents in political detainment, most focus on the Palestinian context, with one exception of a Northern Ireland study which explored the experiences of partners and children visiting political detainees in the early 1990s (McEvoy et al., 1999). Spouses of political detainees in Northern Ireland reported how often they brought their children with them on visits. Families from the rural areas were only able to visit on a monthly basis due to transportation issues as compared to those residing in urban areas. Partners also related that their children had problems with school work if they had witnessed their fathers being arrested (McEvoy et al., 1999).

Women’s experiences with a spouse, child and/or father in political detention have been the focus of the few qualitative studies in the Palestinian context. Giacaman and Johnson’s (2013) study of Palestinian wives and mothers of detainees detailed a range of feelings and narratives about their experiences. Issues that emerged in relation to the prison visitation included that the women felt as if they too were prisoners being humiliated and living from visit to visit. Shehadeh, Dawani, Saed, Derluyn, and Loots (2016) explored wives of Palestinian prisoners’ overall experiences and found that wives reported numerous difficulties both with obtaining permission to visit and throughout the visits and being denied visitation. In Shalhoub-Kevorkian’s (2005) intervention study, participants shared stories of various forms of humiliation they experienced when visiting their husbands, sons or fathers in prison, including forceful strip-searches and being forced to show menstrual pads to soldiers on duty. Such humiliating practices are widespread, nearly all of the 358 family members interviewed by the West Bank based Treatment and Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture (TRC) reported being subjected to extreme and humiliating searches, including a third who stated they were strip-searched (Sohwail, Rasras, & Sohwail, 2011). In an ethnographic study about Palestinian wives of detainees, Buch (2013) analyzed the women’s painstaking narratives and accompanied women on the bus to a prison visit. She pointed out that children are often mediators of the marital relationship, by passing letters and photos to their incarcerated father when the mother is not allowed to visit her husband.

Only a few studies focus on Palestinian children whose fathers are in detention. One study found a large negative impact upon Palestinian children’s psychological well-being and recommended “in-depth” support for children whose fathers are imprisoned (Shehadeh, Loots, Vanderfaeillie, & Derluyn, 2015). These authors also found that Palestinian adolescents whose fathers were detained were negatively impacted in terms of their mental health, including that they were at a higher risk to develop symptoms of post traumatic stress as compared to other youth whose fathers were not detained (Shehadeh, Loots, Vanderfaeillie, & Derluyn, 2016). Some researchers emphasize, however, that reactions to traumatic events in ongoing political conflicts should not be

pathologized, but rather the socio-political contexts should be taken into account when designing culturally sensitive assessments and interventions (Bracken, Giller, & Summerfield, 1995).

1.1.1. Palestinian detainees and visitation

Even though it is an obligation under international law, according to the Regulations Attached to the Hague Convention Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land of 1907, Article 43, Israel does not arrange or facilitate family visits with Palestinian detainees. Instead the visits are organized through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Family members 16 years and over with West Bank identification cards must apply for special permits through the ICRC. In turn, the ICRC submits the applications to the Israeli Authority who reviews the applications and sends a decision to the ICRC who then notifies the applicants of the response (Ben-Ari, 2012). Families often experience both long bureaucratic processes and if they are granted a permit, they have to travel long distances on an ICRC bus to cross and reach detention centers (Addameer, 2014b). Palestinian residents of Jerusalem are an exception and are able to travel to the detention centers on their own, since they are allowed to travel inside the Green Line. Israel Prison Service (IPS) restrictions and cancellations of family visits are often arbitrary and are an infringement on human rights (Addameer, 2014a; Ben-Ari, 2012; B'Tselem, 2006b).

According to the IPS, detainees may receive visits from first-degree relatives every two weeks following three months of detention and telephone contact is generally prohibited. The detainees and their families face considerable limitations, as IPS allows visits by sons between the ages of 16–35 only twice and by siblings only once per year (B'Tselem, 2006b). Visitation permits, required for those 16 years and over, are furthermore often denied on so-called 'security grounds'. No explanation is provided to family members whose permits are denied, except for the form response: "forbidden entry into Israel for security reasons" (Addameer, 2014b). In theory, this type of denial is supposed to be decided upon on a 'case by case basis' and only in exceptional circumstances, but Israel has reconfigured this as a blanket response including for elderly persons and those who have never been detained or interrogated (B'Tselem, 2006b). This selective and infrequent allowance of family visits for Palestinian detainees by Israel is also in contravention of international law, including Article 116 of the [Fourth Geneva Convention \(1949\)](#), which states that "every internee shall be allowed to receive visitors, especially near relatives, at regular intervals and as frequently as possible."

If permits are granted a maximum of three adult permit holders and two children at once from the same family can arrange for seats on the special buses organized and facilitated by the ICRC. When there are no family members or siblings over the age of 15 to escort younger children (who do not yet require permits), the family may coordinate with the Red Cross to find an adult guardian, who is visiting a family member on the same day and who is willing to accompany them. However, in the past, many minors traveled alone due to the unavailability of guardians (B'Tselem, 2006a). Children must be prepared to take at least one day and sometimes two days off school: one for the visitation itself and the second as a consequence of arriving home very late at night after the visit (B'Tselem, 2006b).

At the detention center, each family is typically allotted approximately 45 min to meet with their detained family member. They are separated by a glass panel and must communicate via a telephone. Often the telephone has very poor sound quality. Children 8 years and under and sometimes elderly or sick parents, may be able to go inside and have physical contact with their fathers at the end of the visit no more than once every two months. The age for children was increased from six to eight years old in 2010 after the *Hakim Cana'ana et al v. the Israel Prison Service* case was won against the IPS in Israeli High Court. IPS visiting conditions and age restrictions have changed in the past and are subject to change in the future (B'Tselem, 2006b).

1.1.2. Convention on the Rights of the Child

It is important to point out that Israel ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991. Three key mandates of the Convention are that the "best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration" (Article 3(1)); that "States Parties shall respect the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal relations and *direct contact* with both parents on a *regular basis*, except if it is contrary to the child's best interests" (Article 9(3)); and State Parties are also required to "ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and *development of the child*" (Article 6(2)) ([The United Nations, 1989](#)).

In 2012, the time of data collection, the total number of Palestinian children with a detained father was 3041. The overall number of Palestinians detained in Israeli prison was 4006 and of those 1250 were married. About half of the married men had a sentence of 0–9 years, while a quarter had 10–20 years and the remaining men had 20 years to multiple life sentences. The detained fathers who numbered 1065 had an average of three children with a range of children between one and ten ([Palestinian Authority Ministry of Detainee & Ex-Detainee Affairs, 2012](#)). Visitation challenges among families of 'political detainees' may differ by country and the accompanying jurisdictional and prison regulations. However, there is a lack of research on the firsthand experiences of children visiting a parent in political detention in the occupied Palestinian territory or any other location.

1.1.3. Purpose of the study

Very little is known about the firsthand experiences of children of political prisoners anywhere in the world, because of the challenges of researching within politically oppressive contexts. One of the main purposes of this study is to begin to fill the gap in this understudied area and illuminate the experiences of Palestinian children visiting their fathers in Israeli detention. This study aims to understand children's experiences and the conditions they face in trying to maintain contact with their fathers as this can help provide insights, awareness and recommendations for advocacy for all children of political detainees and the rights they are entitled to. The main research question for this study was "*What are Palestinian children's experiences visiting their fathers in Israeli detention?*"

2. Methodology

This study is a secondary data analysis based upon data previously collected by a Birzeit University research team. The in-depth interviews with children yielded rich and multi-faceted information about how children of Palestinian political detainees are affected by their father's detention, how they cope, what types of support are available within the community, and if the support resources match the needs of the children. The original study focused upon multiple aspects of Palestinian children's coping with parental political detention (see [Rabaia, Kassis, Amro, Giacaman, & Reis, 2018](#)). Given the breadth and depth of the children's insights about visiting their fathers in detention, it was evident that there was an opportunity to specifically analyze their visitation experiences in a supplementary analysis in order to understand what children experience during the visitation process. As noted by [Heaton \(2008\)](#) supplementary analysis is a type of secondary analysis and is helpful to fully explore an aspect of the original study that was previously only partially addressed.

2.1. Recruitment, sampling, instrument and procedure

Participants in the original study were recruited with assistance from the Palestinian Ministry of Detainee and Ex-detainee Affairs (MDEA), which identified prospective families of detainees with children. Once a family was identified, a research team member contacted the mother to explain the study and asked if she would agree to an interview with at least one of her children fifteen years old and over. If both she and her child/ren agreed, an interview at the home of the family or another agreed upon location was arranged. The children were told that they could stop the interview at any point, that there were no right or wrong answers, and that they did not need to answer a question if they did not want to. The research protocol was approved by the Institute of Community and Public Health Research Ethics Review Committee at Birzeit University.

Purposive sampling was utilized in order to encompass various family demographics and circumstances, including families who resided in urban areas, villages, and refugee camps, along with the length of the father's sentence in detention. A semi-structured interview guide was developed for the original study that was based upon a review of the literature on families of political prisoners/detainees and the impact of political detainment on families. The interviews consisted of an explanation of the purpose of the study, demographic questions and then general questions about school or family to put the interviewees at ease. Finally, the bulk of the interviews focused on children's experiences, feelings, coping, support, and resources.

Sixteen in-depth interviews were undertaken with a total of 31 children including 18 females and 13 males (see [Table 1](#) for Characteristics of the Participants). Pseudonyms were selected for all participants. Nine of the 16 interviews included more than one child in each family and one interview was with two families, including two pairs of siblings. In consideration of the sibling

Table 1
Characteristics of Interviewees.

No.	Name (pseudonyms)	Sex	Age	Locale type (U = urban; C = refugee camp; V = village)
1a ^a	Samia	f	19	U
1b	Lama	f	16	
2a	Ruba	f	19	C
2b	Salma	f	18	
3	Ahmad	m	16	U
4a	Saleem	m	21	C
5	Taima'	f	19	V
6	Ramah	f	15	V
7 (4b)	Halimeh	f	19	C
7(4c)	Duja	f	16	
8	Tarek	m	15	V
9	Omar	m	15	C
10a	Basel	m	20	V
10b	Souzan	f	18	
11a	Manal	f	17	V
11b	Abed	m	14	
12a	Kawther	f	19	C
12b	Nayrouz	f	17	
13	Ramzi	m	14	U
14a	Sameh	m	19	U
14b	Khaled	m	16	
14c	Noor	f	15	
14d	Reem	f	11	
15a	Jihan	f	18	U
15b	Adam	m	14	
15c	Hilmi	m	13	
15d	Hala	f	11	
16a	Lo'ai	m	16	U
16b	Kamal	m	15	
16c	Jamileh	f	15	U
16d	Khadijeh	f	13	

^a Participants with the same numbers mean siblings in the same family.

Table 2
Overarching Timeline Themes and Subthemes.

Overarching Timeline Themes		
Before the Visit	During the Visit	After the Visit
<i>Subthemes</i>	<i>Subthemes</i>	<i>Subthemes</i>
<p>Permits and Denials Family applies for permits for relatives aged 16 + If permits denied, family tries to find guardian for children to visit father.</p> <p>On the Way There Taking the day off from school Long bus trip Checkpoint searches Humiliation</p> <p>The Waiting Area Long waiting periods Finding out whether or not the children will see their father</p> <p>The Search Room Body searches Finding out whether goods brought for father are allowed in Humiliation</p>	<p>The Glass Denial of physical contact children with their father</p> <p>Communicating with Father Communicating through the 'telephone' Limited amount of time Typical subjects of conversation Humiliation</p>	<p>More Waiting Long waiting periods Humiliation</p> <p>On the Way Home Long bus trip Checkpoint waits Very late arrival home</p> <p>Back at Home Reporting back to family and community Missing another day of school because of physical exhaustion</p>

participants and in order to provide a broader familial context, in all but one instance siblings were interviewed together. The interviews ranged from one to three hours. Two of the interviews held outside of the home were not audio recorded, since those participants preferred not to be taped.

It is important to note that the intention of the original study was to interview children 15 years and older, however, given the reality of the context in family homes, younger siblings and mothers were also present for parts of the interview. Mothers provided refreshments and occasionally joined the interview briefly, but still allowed their children the space they needed to speak freely. In four of the interviews, younger siblings spontaneously joined in the conversation and provided additional insights and further enhanced the supportive interview environment. This serendipity is important in qualitative research (Åkerström, 2013) and is also congruent with culturally sensitive research practice (Henderson, Sampelle, Mayes, & Oakley, 1992).

2.2. Data analysis

The interview transcripts were coded by the first and third author of this study in two cycles as described by Saldaña (2009). The first cycle included 'structural coding' which involved categorizing the data and coding everything that was related to the visits. In the second level of coding, we chose to utilize 'longitudinal coding', which entailed coding the timeline of the visit.

3. Findings

The three overarching timeline themes that emerged included children's experiences 'before the visit', 'during the visit' and 'after the visit'. Subthemes further illustrate specific aspects of each of the three timeline stages of the visit (See Table 2). The subthemes will each be defined and related to the children's experiences within these three timeline themes. Selected quotes will be used to validate these interpretations.

3.1. Before the visit

3.1.1. Permits and denials

This subtheme involves the families attempting to obtain permits from the Israeli authorities to visit their detained fathers. The related obstacles, barriers and complexity that children experience even prior to actually boarding the bus on visitation days clearly emerge. This subtheme also includes Israel's withholding of visitation rights due to the detainees' isolation as well as partial or complete denial of permits to particular family members and the negative impact this has on the children.

Participants reported that family members 16 years old and above had to submit visitation permit applications and often the waiting period for the outcome was one month or more. Most of the families included at least one family member who was denied visitation by Israel on 'security grounds'. The participants said that the reasoning behind visitation restrictions were often unknown and it would leave family members wondering if and when they could ever maintain a regular visitation schedule. In these common instances of permit denials, the family would have to find an alternative adult who could accompany the child (usually a family member of another detainee) and then arrangements would need to be made with the ICRC a week in advance. Older siblings with a permit could accompany a younger brother or sister. Ramah talked about how she was in charge of her young brother during the visit,

while another child said how she went with her older sister. However, Omar explained that his family had not always been able to find a guardian to accompany him, which resulted in him not being able to visit his father.

We found close to half of the mothers of the children in this study were restricted from visiting their husbands on a regular basis. Some mothers were able to attend visits twice a year; others were less fortunate and could only attend once every two to three years. Male relatives were also often denied a permit. In a few cases, interviewees said that their grandparents were not allowed to visit. In a follow-up interview with Ramah who had then just turned 16, she sadly told us that her application for a visit permit had been denied on security grounds.

In relation to the denial of visitation, two of the interviewees stressed the problem of not being able to share important news with their fathers. Saleem, for instance, expressed regret that no one from the family was able to talk to his detained father when his paternal grandfather had passed away. Ruba was disappointed that her father still did not know that she had held her engagement celebration.

3.1.2. On the way there

The second subtheme encompasses all that pertains to the process of reaching the detention center by bus on visitation day. It includes details of the arduous process, searches, checkpoints and maltreatment by soldiers.

Visitation day begins in the early morning and is exhausting. Participants said they often have to leave their homes at three or four in the morning to catch the ICRC bus at the checkpoint. Ruba said that she arrived at about five o'clock in the morning at the Qalandia checkpoint (dividing the West Bank from East Jerusalem and Israel) and then had to wait an hour and a half and then she was searched. She described the searches along the way using the term "*thul*", Arabic for a collective type of humiliation. She mentioned that one time a young man had a drawing of a bullet on his belt, and the Israeli soldiers made them all stay at the checkpoint for an extra hour. In another instance, Samia said that a soldier even closed the bus window on her fingers after she handed him her papers while saying that "he wanted to go get breakfast!"

Two of the children stated that they actually enjoyed some aspects of the journey, which may be, because living under occupation, they are mostly deprived of travel opportunities. Ramzi said that in the bus he would feel "happy," an emotion presumably attributed to the anticipation of seeing his father. Salma revealed that she usually sleeps until she crosses the so called "Green Line" which separates the West Bank from East-Jerusalem and Israel, where she then enjoys the scenes from the window. "We see trees and water, gardens and really nice houses," she told us, only to be suddenly shocked at destination, when "all that can be seen is razor wire."

As alluded to in the earlier subtheme of 'permits and denials', some children were escorted by an adult guardian going to the same detention center on the same day from the same point of departure. In terms of their experiences, Ramah said that her family found guardians for her and she told us that she has mostly had good experiences with the guardians: "They've always been good, we've had good luck," she said. Still, she found it difficult to attend a visit with strange people who she did not know, and without the support of her mother.

3.1.3. The waiting area

The third subtheme comprises the experiences of the interview participants between arrival at the detention center until they are called in to the search room. It includes finding out if they are able to see their fathers, the conditions of the waiting room, and how they are treated by prison guards.

The amount of time that families have to wait to see their loved ones depends on the number of visitation rooms available in the detention center and the number of families in attendance. Taima' told us that it usually takes about three hours before their names are called. The conditions in which families must wait at the detention centers before visiting their loved one vary. Most detention centers have indoor waiting rooms, but some, such as Ofer, apparently do not. Because of this, for Duja, the wait at Ofer is "the worst" since "it is either very hot or very cold." For younger children, however, being outdoors means that they have much more room to play. In what was the only account of anything positive reported about waiting at detention centers, Hala, told us that she often enjoyed playing games of catch between the cars at Ofer. She also told us that at one detention center there was even a playground with a slide. This was the only case in which the children mentioned the existence of such facilities for children at an Israeli detention center.

In some of the interviews, participants described how they arrived at the detention center, only to learn that they are unable to see their fathers. Nayrouz said that on one trip, she and her family had travelled four hours from Qalandia to the Naqab for nothing as her father had been moved to a different detention center. "They moved him without informing us!" Sameh remarked that on several occasions when they arrived at the detention center they found out that their father was in solitary confinement and was not permitted visitors. "They did that often" he said. "They don't tell the Red Cross." Salma spoke about how the Israeli soldiers did not allow her sister Ruba to take her infant, the grandchild of the detainee, out of the waiting area to the next stage of the process, despite being permitted to travel to the detention center by the ICRC.

3.1.4. The search room

The fourth subtheme details information shared by the participants regarding the search room. It includes humiliating searches, checks of goods brought by families to the detainee and being called into the visitation room.

Two of the interviewees stated that they had been subjected to searches in which the Israeli soldiers forced them to remove certain articles of clothing, including headscarves and bras. Salma told us that because of this, she and her sisters were afraid to go on visits. "When we would go in to the search room, we see people crying and then my mother would start crying" she said. On one occasion, they made her take off her *abayeh* (long coat worn over regular clothes as a form of modesty) and go in to see her father wearing *only*

a short blouse. She said that her father told her, “You should have not continued with the visit, they humiliated you.”

It is also at this stage that Israeli prison guards check anything that the family has brought for their detained loved one. Omar said that he brings his father cigarettes and clothing. “He trades the cigarettes for other things from the canteen.” Samia explained that she “of course” takes him money for the detention center canteen and often brings him clothes. However, they must be careful not to bring blue socks, since blue is the color of the prison guards and is therefore prohibited. She mentioned that once they brought him heavy blankets, but the prison guards refused to let them through.

From the search room, family members are called into the visitation room by a prison guard. One of the interviewees told us that the soldier would call them in speaking Hebrew and she could not understand. “When I didn’t respond, he would start saying ‘Do you want me to talk Lebanese?’” She said, “they mock us” and in various ways they “humiliate us a hundred times.”

3.2. During the visit

3.2.1. The glass

The first subtheme of the actual visit focuses on the glass barrier separating the detainee and his family in the visitation room. It includes experiences of denial of physical contact and the impact of this on the children.

Not being able to have physical touch with their fathers was one of the most devastating and frustrating aspects of the visitation for many of the interviewees and their siblings. The emotional pain felt by children of being denied physical touch with their fathers during visits was expressed powerfully in the following experience recounted by Lo’ai:

The last time we visited my father in prison, my grandmother and my father were getting their pictures taken and my father passed by. My father warned me to not approach him, so I didn’t get up. I was scared. But when he came back, I pounced on him [attempting to embrace him]. At that moment, the soldiers attacked both of us, so as to make sure we didn’t touch.

This traumatic experience left Lo’ai wishing he had not even gone to see his father in the first place. “At least my sister managed to grab a hold of his leg. If I had not visited it would have been better. If I had died it would have been better.”

Ramah mentioned how terrible it made her feel when her grandmother was able to enter to take a photo with her father while she was prohibited: “I asked the soldier if I could go inside also, but he said no. I ended up sitting alone outside. It was unbearable!” She told of how jealous she felt on another occasion when her younger brother was allowed in behind the glass. “Why did he get to go in but not me?” she asked. Ruba also expressed frustration at being denied physical contact with her father. When she started visiting at the age of five, she “used to hug him and kiss him and entwine [her] fingers with his,” but she was no longer able to have physical contact with him when she became a little older and had to stay behind the glass.

The interviewees also reported traumatic experiences in which the glass and denial of visitation affected their younger siblings as well. For example, Lama told us that on the first visit of her younger brother, who was one year old at the time, he rushed toward his father only to find glass between them at the beginning of the visit. “The situation was very intense and sad, and it made everyone cry,” she said. In another case the younger brother of Nayrouz and Kawther was denied entry behind the glass because they did not believe he was only five years old. The story was detailed by their mother:

Once he went with his sisters to visit their father. Because he has a big body they didn’t believe that he was still a young boy. So they refused to let him touch and hug his father, but the other children entered. His sister noticed a change in his appearance and all the way home he was crying. When he came home, I noticed that he was not well. That day he didn’t eat. In the middle of the night, his sister found him hugging his father’s picture and he was very upset. We had to take him to hospital and later to the Treatment and Rehabilitation Center for the Victims of Torture.

This child had a series of therapy sessions at the Center in order to help him deal with the trauma he experienced. (The Center provides psychosocial support to others, not only those who are victims of torture.)

3.2.2. Communicating with father

The second subtheme of ‘during the visit’ includes reactions to seeing the father, the ‘telephone’, the limited amount of time children have to engage with their fathers, and the typical subjects of conversation.

Sometimes the first sight of the father was difficult for children. In one example Manal and Abed said they were upset when they saw their father was maltreated and brought in shackled. They said that for their younger sister it was difficult just to see him in prison. “She cries, and her face becomes red and she can’t bear it, she can’t repress it.” Upon sight of her father, she would cry uncontrollably, to the point where she did not visit during his last detention, because it was too hard on her father and relatives to see her crying.

Several of the interviewees stated that only having 45 min for the three to four persons visiting was too short. It meant that they only have about 10–20 minutes each with their fathers. Due to this time constraint, participants said that families often limit the number of people who go on a particular visit in order to give each family member more time. Combined with the typical poor quality of the telephone receiver they are forced to communicate through, the experience can be very frustrating. “You can barely hear him, and all I had was 20 minutes” said Samia.

Conversations seem mostly to revolve around school, news of the family and community, and life inside the detention center: “the urgent things” as Omar mentioned. The children are excited to share news with their fathers. Ramzi said that he likes to “tell him the secrets of the house.” Lama said that she likes to visit her father after receiving her school report card so that she can show it to him. One exception to the general rule of children being excited to see their fathers was Taima’s younger sister who did not want to talk at

all with her father because he scared her. Taima' explained that their father had been arrested when she was very young and she does not remember him. A few of the interviewees suggested that they limit what they say in order not to upset their father. "We don't tell my father everything," said Taima'. Before we tell him the nice things, the good things, but the not so nice, no..." Taima' also mentioned how difficult it was to communicate with soldiers present in the room. "We can't speak properly with a soldier behind him and one outside."

This impetus to limit the subject of conversation seemed to be a form of self-censorship, but in other cases, it came at the behest of mothers and other family members who emphasized the time limitations and the need to talk about the most important things such as news from relatives. Omar said that he likes to talk to his father about sports, but his uncle and grandmother do not let him because they want to talk about important matters, such as relatives and news from the refugee camp where they live.

3.3. After the visit

3.3.1. More waiting

The first subtheme covers the time families spend after visiting their fathers and before traveling home. It includes experiences in the waiting room before leaving and crossing the checkpoint on the way back, which involved more maltreatment by soldiers and long waiting periods.

When their time is up, families return to the waiting area of the detention center until everyone on their bus has had their turn before returning home. Some of the children shared how they were subject to punitive measures in the waiting area toward the end of the long day. Taima' reported that on one visit, someone wrote something on the wall of the waiting room, and they made the entire group stay for an extra three hours. Ruba told us that the soldiers demanded that they sweep the floor of the waiting room before leaving "so that they could humiliate us even more. We were so tired and bored that I just took the broom and swept the whole place myself," she said. Ruba also said that while in the waiting room, she told the Israeli soldier that a young boy needed to go to the bathroom. The soldier answered that the captain was not there, so she could not allow him. Ruba explained that the "poor boy" was about 5 years old and he started crying and went on the floor.

3.3.2. On the way home

This subtheme included the journey home, which entails traveling on the bus and more checkpoints that need to be crossed. This journey is similar to the traveling to see their fathers, since it also takes a long time and searches may occur. Omar mentioned that since they often arrive at the checkpoint at the time when Palestinian workers are returning to the West Bank, the checkpoint can get very crowded. His grandmother and uncle are able to cross in an ICRC ambulance, but he along with his younger brother and the other people on the bus must cross on foot. Several interviewees said by the time the families arrive at home it is often close to midnight.

3.3.3. Back at home

The third subtheme concerns what happens following the return home. It includes reporting back to family and community members about the visitation experience.

The children said they would bring back news of their detained fathers and report on his health, especially if their mothers were denied a permit. A few of the children said that family and community members are often eager to engage with the children after the visitations, but in some circumstances the youth felt like their friends did not understand their circumstances. One interviewee explained:

My friends at school ask about my dad when I have visited. But on other days they don't ask. Only after the visit. The ones who have the same situation can feel what you are going through. But the girls who don't experience fathers' imprisonment can't understand what we went through. They didn't experience father's imprisonment.

Many children felt their teachers and schools were supportive and some said that the teachers would postpone exams that were scheduled during the visit, however a few children said that a teacher or the school was not as supportive as they could have been. One interviewee mentioned that her teacher told her that she should not miss school to visit her father and that her other family members could go instead. She said that her teacher did not understand what the visit meant and she thought her teacher did not care about her situation.

Two sisters said that fellow visitors were eager to reach out to them after the visits and the older sister in particular spoke of her growth and connection through this hardship. "The prison visits made a man out of me!" said Samia explaining that her years of visitations have made her stronger and more outgoing. She said that although she used to be shy, the visits have changed that: "Now in Ramallah all the women say hello to me, because they know me from the visitation." "We have lots of friends from the visitations," added her sister, Lama. "With them, we can talk about everything."

In the end, despite all that the children endured, the positives of seeing their father seemed to outweigh the negatives associated with the arduous process of visitation for most of the children interviewed. "It is very important to us," said Noor, for example, "even though it is very far [travel] for a visit of three-quarters of an hour." For Halima the desire to keep attending visits falls likewise on the importance she attributes to spending time with her father. "After they made us take our clothes off, I stopped wanting to go," she said, "but now we like to go more, because of my dad." This ambivalent love-hate relationship many children have with visitations is further unpacked by Lama. "I hate the visit the most," she said. "Every visit, I say it's the last time. Then once we see our dad, I would change my mind and say I want to keep going; every time I go through this."

There were only two exceptions to the general rule of positivity towards visiting their fathers. The sisters Salma and Ruba, who after 13 and 14 years of attending visits respectively, have notably grown tired. "It's not because we don't like going to see our father, but three-quarters of an hour?"

4. Discussion

This research begins to fill a gap in the literature as the only qualitative study that focuses specifically on Palestinian children's experiences visiting their fathers in Israeli detention to date. The study provided an opportunity for children to share their experiences and insights. The three overarching timeline themes and corresponding subthemes that emerged presented a structured description illuminating the children's lived experiences of the visitation process or visitation denial. The findings make it clear that the children face many barriers in their attempts to maintain contact with their fathers as was also reported in studies of wives of detainees (Buch, 2013; Giacaman & Johnson, 2013; Shehadeh, Dawani et al., 2016).

The overarching theme 'before the visit' included the most subthemes and was the most time consuming. In essence, 'before the visit' was an arduous front-loaded process that children experienced prior to even attempting to see their fathers. In another study, one participant declared traveling for the visit is "like going to Puerto Rico, not the Naqab" (Giacaman & Johnson, 2013, p. 63). This process requires much effort for the families and attests to their endurance and desire to remain in contact (Buch, 2013). The study presents children's perspectives and experiences of what has been described by human rights organizations as arbitrary and often changing policies (Addameer, 2014a; B'Tselem, 2006b). Their stories illustrate how a regime of unsubstantiated visitation permit denials is both common and unsettling to families (B'Tselem, 2006a; 2016b; Buch, 2013 Giacaman & Johnson, 2013).

The children's descriptions of the process: unnecessarily intrusive searches, long waits with no activities and limited access to toilets, and punitive measures at checkpoints and in waiting areas support Sohwaile et al.'s study (2011), which reported that almost 90% of 358 families members of detainees who visited were intimidated, harassed and experienced excessive physical searches which were "abusive and humiliating" (p. 3). In a similar vein, female participants in another study about loved ones who were imprisoned reported that they were required "to stand naked in front of female soldiers" before they could see their family member in detention (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2005, p. 331).

In contrast to the multiple subthemes of 'before the visit', the shortest and yet most important experiences for the children occurred 'during the visit'. The maximum amount of time to visit their father across the glass barrier was 45 min, however, this typically was much shorter for the children at about 10–20 minutes if other family members were also visiting. Children over 8 years old experienced the prohibition of physical contact due to Israeli policies, while children under 8 who were supposed to have physical contact with their fathers during the last 10 min of the visit were at times arbitrarily denied by the Israeli prison guards. Other children were told by the prison guards they could not see their fathers at all. Such last minute denial of visits and the resulting emotional suffering and exhaustion has also been documented by other researchers and includes the experiences of children's mothers (B'Tselem, 2006b; Buch, 2013; Giacaman & Johnson, 2013; Shehadeh, Dawani et al., 2016).

The children's descriptions of being humiliated by the Israeli soldiers and prison guards throughout the visitation process corroborate documentation of humiliation and maltreatment throughout prison visits by human rights groups (B'Tselem, 2006b; Sohwaile et al., 2011). Intentional humiliation is a strategy of war and is a major violation of human rights and dignity and has been found to negatively impact Palestinian youth's health (Giacaman et al., 2007). Furthermore, experiencing the humiliation as a child in the visitation context seems inextricably intertwined with the emotion of missing their fathers and then only briefly seeing them or even being denied at the last minute. Some of the children articulated a love-hate relationship with the visits. Despite the lengthy visitation process that children often hated, they still loved to see their fathers and they endured significant hardships to maintain whatever contact possible. This love-hate relationship with the visits could be compared to the experiences of partners of political prisoners in Northern Ireland, who reported that they had the most negative feelings such as anxiety, tension, and irritability prior to the visit and then again after the visit, while many had positive feelings such as being relaxed or excited during the visit (McEvoy et al., 1999).

The overarching theme 'after the visit' consisted of three subthemes, 'more waiting' before leaving, 'on the way home' traveling home, and then 'back at home' which included what happens following the children's return. Waiting after the visit and traveling home was time consuming and typically children did not arrive home until around midnight. Some children reported missing a second day of school due to being physically exhausted. Their experience waiting to go home was often similar to waiting for the visit and included feeling exhausted as well as additional humiliation or maltreatment by the Israeli guards. Similar findings are corroborated in other studies in the Palestinian context (B'Tselem, 2006a, 2006b; Buch, 2013; Giacaman & Johnson, 2013; Shehadeh, Dawani et al., 2016).

When the children were back at home they would report about their father to family and friends in the community who were mostly supportive. Even though there were only a few children who said their teacher or school was not supportive, more research needs to be undertaken in this area. It has been suggested that schools can be an entry point to connect with children of detainees and educational counselors could provide support and referrals (Shehadeh et al., 2015). This could include social workers and counselors providing support to children before and after visits. Some recommend building increased capacity for social workers to work with detainees' families which would require funding and material and technical support (Sohwaile et al., 2011). The earlier analysis of the children's interviews also recommends continued capacity building (Rabaia, et al., 2018) and schools are an important venue.

In essence, the limited and arbitrary nature of the visitation scheme is not in the children's best interest since in many cases *direct contact on a regular basis* with their fathers is severely restrained. According to Israel's obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to physical contact with their fathers in detention except in circumstances where "authorities have a concrete basis for believing that physical contact would create real danger" (The United Nations, 1989). As was clearly

expressed by some children in this study the sudden, last minute and arbitrary denial of children's physical contact with their fathers by the Israeli authorities was particularly traumatic. Denying children physical contact with their fathers has negative implications for parent-child attachment and child development and researchers have found that father absence harms children (McLanahan, Tach, & Schneider, 2013).

5. Conclusion

The findings depict a picture of Palestinian children's experiences visiting their fathers in Israeli detention. Throughout the interviews, participants described various ways in which they or their siblings' contact and interaction with their fathers was restrained under the current Israeli visitation regime. Israel's denial of children's physical contact with the parent is an infringement on their rights as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (B'Tselem, 2006b), while transfer of their fathers outside the occupied Palestinian territory is in itself a contradiction of international law (Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention, 1949).

International reports on the Convention on the Rights of the Child in relation to Palestinian children do not mention the specific circumstances and rights of children of Palestinian political detainees (See UNICEF, 2010; UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2013). Indeed, these children seem to be a forgotten group. International attention and advocacy for the rights of *all* children of detainees globally is warranted. Palestinian children, like children around the world, need to be recognized and treated as independent right holders (Sait, 2004). Ultimately, in order for Palestinian children's rights to be realized, the long-standing occupation must end (Rabaia, Saleh, & Giacaman, 2014; Shehadeh et al., 2015).

Funding

This work was supported by UNICEF [grant number 626064].

References

- Addameer (2014a). *Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons*. Retrieved from Ramallah: Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association. [http://www.addameer.org/files/Palestinian%20Political%20Prisoners%20in%20Israeli%20Prisons%20\(General%20Briefing%20January%202014\).pdf](http://www.addameer.org/files/Palestinian%20Political%20Prisoners%20in%20Israeli%20Prisons%20(General%20Briefing%20January%202014).pdf).
- Addameer (2014b). *Fact sheet: Families and family visits*. October 2014. Retrieved August 18, 2018 from <http://www.addameer.org/publications/families-family-visits-0>.
- Åkerström, M. (2013). Curiosity and serendipity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Sociology Review*, 9(2), 10–18.
- Amnesty International (2002). *Amnesty International handbook*. Retrieved from London: Amnesty International Publications. <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/120000/org200012002en.pdf>.
- Aruri, N. H. (1978). Resistance and repression: Political prisoners in Israeli occupied territories. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 7(4), 48–66.
- Baker, A., & Matar, A. (2011). *The Palestinian prisoners: Politicization and depoliticization. Threat: Palestinian prisoners in Israel*. London and New York: Pluto Pressvii–xi.
- Baker, A., & Shalhoub-Kevorkian, N. (1999). Effects of political and military traumas on children: The Palestinian case. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 19(8), 935–950.
- Batniji, R., Rabaia, Y., Nguyen-Gillham, V., Giacaman, R., Sarraj, E., Punamaki, R., Saab, H., & Boyce, W. (2009). Health as human security in the occupied Palestinian territory. *Lancet*, 373(9669), 1133–1143.
- Ben-Ari, S. (2012). *Family prison visits by Palestinians with relatives held in prisons inside Israel*. Retrieved from Hamoked: Center for the Defence of the Individual. http://www.hamoked.org/files/2012/114180_eng.pdf.
- Bracken, P. J., Giller, J. E., & Summerfield, D. (1995). Psychological responses to war and atrocity: The limits of current concepts. *Social Science & Medicine*, 40(8), 1073–1082.
- B'Tselem (2006a). *The prisoners' children. Documentary film*. Jerusalem https://www.btselem.org/publications/summaries/200609_barred_from_contact.
- B'Tselem (2006b). *Barred from contact: Violation of the right to visit Palestinians held in Israeli prisons*. Jerusalem: B'Tselem.
- B'Tselem (2019). *The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories. Statistics on Palestinians in the custody of the Israeli security forces*. Jerusalem: B'Tselem. Retrieved from: https://www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners.
- Buch, L. (2010). *Uncanny affect: The ordinary, relations and enduring absence in families of detainees in the occupied Palestinian territory*. Institut for Antropologie: Ph.d-række, Københavns Universitet.
- Buch, L. (2013). Enduring presents: Living a prison sentence as the wife of a detainee in Israel. In P. Morten Axel, & H. Martin (Eds.). *The times of security: Ethnologies of fear, protest and the future* (pp. 122–140). London: Routledge.
- Chung, Y. (2011). Children's exposure to paternal imprisonment: Incidence, evolution, and correlates among young nonmarital children. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(5), 575–587.
- Council for Arab-British Understanding (Caabu) (2012). *Palestinian detainees: No security in injustice*. Retrieved from https://www.caabu.org/sites/default/files/resources/0802_CAABU_Palestinian%20detainees_singles%20SMALL.pdf.
- Cunningham, A. (2001). Forgotten families: The impacts of imprisonment. *Family Matters*, 59, 35–38.
- Dugard, J. (2008). *Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967* UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), A/HRC/7/1721.
- Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention) (1949). *Geneva convention relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war (Fourth Geneva Convention)*, 12 August 75 UNTS 287.
- Giacaman, R., Abu-Rmeileh, N., Saab, H., & Boyce, W. (2007). Humiliation: the invisible trauma of war for Palestinian youth. *Public Health*, 121(8), 563–571.
- Giacaman, R., & Johnson, P. (2013). "Our life is prison": The triple captivity of wives and mothers of Palestinian political prisoners. *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, 9(3), 54–80.
- Hagan, J., & Dinovitzer, R. (1999). Collateral consequences of imprisonment for children, communities, and prisoners. *Crime and Justice*, 26, 121–162.
- Hakala, P., & Ishaq, N. (2013). *Violating international legal obligations: Israel's treatment of Palestinian prisoners*. Retrieved from Brussels: European Parliament. [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/briefing_note/join/2013/491484/EXPO-AFET_SP\(2013\)491484_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/briefing_note/join/2013/491484/EXPO-AFET_SP(2013)491484_EN.pdf).
- Hanieh, A. (2003). From state-led growth to globalization: The evolution of Israeli capitalism. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 32(4), 5–21.
- Heaton, J. (2008). Secondary analysis of qualitative data: An overview. *Historical Social Research*, 33(3), 33–45.
- Henderson, D. J., Sampelle, C., Mayes, F., & Oakley, D. (1992). Toward culturally sensitive research in a multicultural society. *Health Care for Women International*, 13(4), 339–350.
- Human Rights Watch (2017). *World report 2018 events of 2017* https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/world_report_download/201801world_report_web.pdf.
- Light, R., & Campbell, B. (2006). Prisoners' families: Still forgotten victims? *The Journal of Social Welfare & Family Law*, 28(3-4), 297–308.

- McEvoy, K., O'Mahony, D., Horner, C., & Lyner, O. (1999). The homefront: The families of politically motivated prisoners in Northern Ireland. *The British Journal of Criminology*, 39(2), 175–197.
- McLanahan, S., Tach, L., & Schneider, D. (2013). The causal effects of father absence. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 39, 399–427.
- Murray, J., & Farrington, D. P. (2008). The effects of parental imprisonment on children. *Crime and Justice*, 37(1) 133-120.
- Murray, J., Farrington, D. P., Sekol, I., & Olsen, R. E. (2009). *Effects of parental imprisonment on child antisocial behaviour and mental health: A systematic review*. US Department of Justice.
- Nashif, E. (2008). *Palestinian political prisoners: Identity and community*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Palestinian Authority Ministry of Detainee and Ex-Detainee Affairs (2012). *Statistics on Palestinians in the custody of the Israeli Prison Services*. November.
- Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) (2017). *The Commission of Cetainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs and Palestinian Prisoners Club and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics press release on the occasion of Palestinian Prisoners' Day, on 17th April*. Retrieved from <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/site/512/default.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=1905>.
- Quota, S., Punamaki, R. L., Montgomery, E., & El-Sarraj, E. (2007). Predictors of psychological distress and positive resources among Palestinian adolescents: Trauma, child, and mothering characteristics. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 31, 699–717.
- Rabaia, Y., Saleh, M. F., & Giacaman, R. (2014). Sick or Sad? Supporting Palestinian children living in conditions of chronic political violence. *Children and Society*, 28(3), 172–181.
- Rabaia, Y., Kassis, S., Amro, Z., Giacaman, R., & Reis, R. (2018). Coping and helping to cope: Perspectives of children of Palestinian political detainees. *Children and Society*, 32(5), 345–356.
- Rolston, B., Tomlinson, M., Rolston, B., & Tomlinson, M. (1986). *The expansion of European prison systems*. European Group for the Study of Deviance and Social Control.
- Sait, M. S. (2004). Have Palestinian children forfeited their rights? *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 211–228.
- Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Shalhoub-Kevorkian, N. (2005). Voice therapy for women aligned with political prisoners: A case study of trauma among Palestinian women in the second intifada. *The Social Service Review*, 79(2), 322–343.
- Shehadeh, A., Loots, G., Vanderfaeillie, J., & Derluyn, I. (2015). The impact of parental detention on the psychological wellbeing of Palestinian children. *PLoS One*, 10(7), e0133347. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0133347>.
- Shehadeh, A., Loots, G., Vanderfaeillie, J., & Derluyn, I. (2016). The association between parental imprisonment and the mental health of Palestinian adolescents. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 21(3), 154–160.
- Shehadeh, A., Dawani, S., Saed, M., Derluyn, I., & Loots, G. (2016). Imprisoned husbands: Palestinian wives and experiences of difficulties. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 52(1), 118–125.
- Sohwail, M., Rasras, K., & Sohwail, W. (2011). *The impact of detention on Palestinian detainees' families in Israeli prisons "Secondary victims of torture, pain and suffering"*. Ramallah, Palestine: Treatment and Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture (TRC).
- Srouf, A. (2008). *Psychological effects of women imprisonment on their families*. Palestinian Counseling Center.
- The United Nations (1989). Convention on the Rights of the Child. *Treaty Series*, 1577, 3.
- UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2013). *Committee on the Rights of the Child reviews periodic reports of Israel – Rights of Palestinian children*[Press release]. June 3 Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/committee-on-the-rights-of-the-child-reviews-periodic-reports-of-israel-rights-of-palestinian-children-press-release/>.
- UNICEF (2010). *The situation of Palestinian children in The Occupied Palestinian Territory, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon: An assessment based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/oPt/PALESTINIAN_SITAN-final.pdf.
- Wilbur, M. B., Marani, J. E., Appugliese, D., Woods, R., Siegel, J. A., Cabral, H. J., et al. (2007). Socioemotional effects of fathers' incarceration on low-income, urban, school-aged children. *Pediatrics*, 120(3), 678–685.
- Van Zyl Smit, D. (1998). Political prisoners. *UNESCO Courier*, 51(6), 31.