



News Release
For Immediate Release

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**Persistent Humiliation More Damaging to Mental Health than Physical Violence
Finds Study Published in the *Journal of Palestine Studies***

May 3, 2016 – **Of all the political violence faced by Palestinians living under occupation, persistent humiliation has the most harmful long-term impact on a person’s well-being,** according to a study published in the latest issue of the *Journal of Palestine Studies*. This 25-year longitudinal study of the first generation of Palestinians to have lived the whole of their lives under occupation in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip appears in the latest issue of the *Journal of Palestine Studies*.

For the year 2011 and all of the years since 1987, participants in this representative study of Palestinians indicated how often (from “never” to “frequently”) they experienced several forms of political violence at the hands of Israeli forces. Based on these questions, it was discovered that the majority of respondents reported having been verbally abused, witnessing someone close to them personally be humiliated, having had their home raided, and hearing or feeling the effects of a bomb at some point in that time span.

In fact, according to the results of the study:

- **90% of Palestinians have faced some form of political violence**
- **8 in 10 Palestinians have had their home raided by Israeli forces**
- **56-64% of Palestinians report being verbally abused by occupation forces**
- **9 out of 10 Palestinians have heard or felt a bomb**

*percentages vary based on location (West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem)

Psychologists and psychiatrists consider any one of these types of exposure as a potentially traumatic event, and the pervasive exposure faced by Palestinians is unprecedented. Physically inflicted violence is often perceived to be the most harmful and dramatic form of political violence, however the findings of the study point to humiliation as the most acute form of political violence. According to their research, humiliation is particularly harmful as it is an intentional use of abusive power that purposefully degrades identity and dignity.

“Compared to their peers who experienced more dramatic violence periodically, those who were persistently humiliated reported higher levels of a range of economic, political, and psychological difficulty.”

Some aspects of the occupation and the political violence that accompanies it are experienced most acutely in certain parts of Palestine. For example, **the majority of individuals who reported experiencing persistent humiliation live primarily in three distinct areas: Hebron, East Jerusalem, and the Jordan Valley.** These are the same three locations where the current outbreak of violence is occurring.

This unprecedented study was conducted in 2011 and entitled *The Impact of Political Conflict on Youth: Assessing Long-Term Wellbeing via an Event History-Resource Model*. Dr. Brian K. Barber and his research partners collected and analyzed data from representative surveys of Palestinians living under occupation and made some remarkable discoveries. Read more about the results of the study in the *Journal of Palestine Studies*.

Full text of the article is available online at www.palestine-studies.org. Contact Paige Brownlow at 202-836-8207 or paigeb@palestine-studies.org to obtain a copy of the entire Journal or to schedule an interview with the author, Dr. Brian K. Barber.

About the Author

Brian K. Barber, Ph.D. is a New America Fellow in Washington, DC, a professor of child and family studies, and founding director of the Center for the Study of Youth and Political Conflict at the University of Tennessee. His prime field of research has been Palestine, beginning with long residencies with families in or near refugee camps in the **Gaza Strip** after the ending of the first intifada, and many visits since. Barber is editor of the 2009 Oxford University Press volume *Adolescents and War: How Youth Deal with Political Conflict*, and his work on Palestinian youth has been published in many book chapters and scholarly articles, including *The Lancet*, *Social Science & Medicine*, *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, *Global Public Health*, *Child Development Perspectives*, *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, and *Human Development*. His writings on Palestine have also appeared in *Medium*, *New America Weekly*, *Muftah*, *Informed Comment*, *Alternet*, and *openDemocracy*.

About the *Journal of Palestine Studies*

The [Journal of Palestine Studies](http://www.palestine-studies.org) is the oldest and most respected English language journal devoted exclusively to Palestinian affairs and the Arab-Israeli conflict. It brings you timely and comprehensive information on the region's political, religious, and cultural concerns. With an emphasis on peaceful resolution of conflict, the journal unites sound research and analysis with a variety of well-informed perspectives by academics, policy makers, and diplomats. Published quarterly, the *Journal of Palestine Studies* is a vital resource for anyone interested in the Palestine Question.

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