



A Childhood at Risk: The Child's Rights from Gaza's Children's
Perspectives During the Israeli Attack

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The ongoing Israeli attack on Gaza exposed the Palestinian children to tremendous experiences of fear, pain, hunger, thirst, and deprivation of family and housing. The current paper embarks on exploring the different dimensions of the child's rights as perceived by the Palestinian children who live in Gaza during the Israeli attack on their land after the seventh of October, 2023. **Methodology:** The paper tries to shift the spotlight onto the voices and experiences of children, reclaiming their rights within the narrative of war. Thus, video content analysis was used to examine 30 selected videos featuring 63 children, primarily from social media. **Results:** The findings reveal that most children's rights were violated during the Israeli attack on Gaza. Children were aware of their rights, recognized violations, and appealed to the world for support. Children expressed their rights to play, be safe, live with their families, eat, drink, and return home after displacement. **Recommendation:** The

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researchers recommend an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and the protection of children's rights, emphasizing the need to safeguard them as the highest priority during any crisis.

Keywords: Child's Rights, Palestine, Children's Voices, Israel Attack

طفولة في خطر: حقوق الطفل من وجهة نظر أطفال غزة خلال العدوان الإسرائيلي

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ملخص

الهدف: يتعرّض أطفال غزة، نتيجة العدوان الإسرائيلي المستمر، إلى تجارب قاسية يعانون فيها من الخوف والجوع والعطش والحرمان من الأهل والمأوى والأصدقاء. تسلط هذه الورقة الضوء على ما يعيشه الطفل الفلسطيني في غزة، من خلال ما هدفت إليه من استكشاف الأبعاد المختلفة لحقوق الطفل كما يراها الأطفال الفلسطينيون الذين يعيشون في غزة، وذلك خلال العدوان الإسرائيلي عليهم، وذلك من خلال الاصغاء لأصوات الأطفال التي تصف تجاربهم، ووجهات نظرهم حول حقوقهم كأطفال يشهدون ذلك العدوان على أرضهم ومن حولهم. **المنهج:** لتحقيق هذا الهدف، استخدم منهج البحث النوعي، وتمّ جمع البيانات النوعية من خلال ملاحظة وتحليل 30 مقطع فيديو عرضوا أصوات 63 طفلاً فلسطينياً من غزة خلال العدوان الإسرائيلي على أرضهم بعد أحداث 7 أكتوبر، وجمعت هذه المقاطع من وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. **النتائج:** أظهرت النتائج أنّ معظم حقوق الأطفال قد انتهكت خلال الهجوم الإسرائيلي المذكور. وتبين أنّ أطفال غزة كانوا يدركون تلك الحقوق، وصرّحوا بانتهاكها، وناشدوا العالم لتقديم الدعم لهم، ولو حظ أنّ نسبة كبيرة من الأطفال طالبوا بحقهم باللعب، والأمن والمسكن، والعائلة، والعلاج والطعام والشرب بعد أن باتوا نازحين، جائعين وعطشى، وفقدوا الأهل والأصدقاء. **التوصيات:** يوصي الباحثون، في ضوء نتائج هذه الدراسة، بوقف فوري لإطلاق النار على غزة، وحماية حقوق الأطفال، مع التأكيد على ضرورة تصدّر حقوق الطفل لأيّ أولويات خلال الحروب والأزمات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: طفولة في خطر: حقوق الطفل من وجهة نظر أطفال غزة خلال العدوان الإسرائيلي.

Introduction

During the wars, children suffer the first and the most (Zang, 2023). However, the tumultuous landscape and political discourse often overshadow the voices of children who struggle terrifying consequences

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of the war that acquires them a tragic experience that distorts their consciousness (Skrypnyk & Labenko, 2022).

Despite that, children should be protected and respected, and their voices during war must be amplified; to express the experiences and resilience that enable understanding of the full spectrum of the violation of the child's rights (Wells et al., 2024).

The Palestinian children in Gaza have had tremendous experiences of fear, pain, hunger, thirst, and deprivation of family and housing caused by the continuous Israeli attack on Gaza (Badawi, 2014), especially in October 2023. This ongoing Israeli attack murdered more than 30,717 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, 70% of whom are reported to be women and children. At least, 72,156 Palestinians were injured, including more than 11,785 children. More than 17000 children have been unaccompanied or separated from their parents (UNICEF, 2024).

In essence, the current paper embarks on exploring the different dimensions of the child's rights as perceived by the Palestinian children who live in Gaza during the Israeli attack on their land. It tries to shift the spotlight onto the voices and experiences of children, reclaiming their rights within the narrative of war. This can enrich the understanding of the war dynamics and its effect on the children as an essential pillar of justice and sustainable Peace.

Research problem

Accordingly, this study focuses on the semantic field, reflecting on the meaning of children's voices during the war on Gaza, expressing their needs, priorities, and rights during a crisis. Particularly, the study aims to listen to Gaza's children's voices; and to determine their needs during crisis time while the war is going on. Moreover, it sheds light on the violation of children's rights in Gaza. Mainly, the current study tries to answer these two questions:

- What do Gaza's children need from the world during wartime?
- What is the status of children's rights in Gaza during the war?

Literature review:

Analysis of the literature pertinent to this study unveiled the following recurring topics:

Children's rights during the war

Human rights encompass the protection of an individual's interests under international law and conventions, such as the right to citizenship, freedom, travel, housing, and other fundamental rights (Çevik, 2021). These rights are universal, applying to every human being globally, irrespective of race, colour, gender, language, religion, or any other status. They are grounded in universal values like dignity, freedom, equality, and justice (Hassan, 2023). Children, like adults, have the right to a dignified life, encompassing access to proper nutrition, care, early learning, health, and a safe environment (UNICEF, 2023a).

The United Nations has affirmed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that children are entitled to special care and assistance, as articulated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by the General Assembly in 1959. These declarations assert that "the child, because of their physical and mental immaturity, needs special guarantees and care, including appropriate legal protection before and after birth" (MacPherson, 1989). The 54 articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child constitute a comprehensive set of essential requirements identified for children to grow up in an environment of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, and equality (Jones & Manion, 2023).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) outlines a set of rights along with the responsibility of adults to ensure children enjoy these rights, including the right to education, housing, food, water, protection, play, non-discrimination, development, and other fundamental rights (Bürgin et al., 2022; Munongi, 2023). Unfortunately, millions of children worldwide experience rights violations, facing inadequate nutrition, limited learning opportunities, and exposure to unhealthy environments, violence, and stress, perpetuating cycles of poverty and deprivation that can span generations (UNICEF, 2023a).

Molloy (2022) reports that children in war-exposed countries face numerous risks directly linked to conflict. Goto et al. (2022) emphasize that children are particularly vulnerable during wars, facing the risk of death, orphanhood, or the development of mental health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, and behavioral problems. Bürgin et al. (2022) further highlight the distress resulting from forced separation from parents and fear for personal and family safety. Molloy (2022) explains that this is due to the psychological and physical harm that children experience during these wars and conflicts.

Bürgin et al. (2022) posit that children's exposure to war and military aggression should be considered a violation of their human rights due to its long-term impact on their physical and mental health and well-being. Critical examinations of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) reveal assumptions and biases that can exclude some children from participation and privilege certain voices and geographic areas (Jones & Manion, 2023). Anyone considering the situation of children in Gaza finds a violation of their rights by the Israeli occupation both during and before the war that erupted on October 7, 2023.

War experiences and displacement can profoundly impact children's emotional and physical development (Michalek et al., 2022). Eltanamly et al. (2022) state that exposure to violence hampers children's ability to adapt and live efficiently. Goto et al. (2022) confirm that war and aggression deprive children of the right to education and healthy development, while Mayai (2022) believes children in war zones are more likely to drop out of school, leading to difficulties in reading and low academic achievement.

Bürgin et al. (2022) argue that maintaining children's mental, psychological, and social safety during war must be achieved through multiple interventions targeting the child's needs. Burgin emphasizes the need for basic physical and emotional resources to help children regain external safety and internal security.

The War on Gaza:

The Gaza Strip, a component of the Palestinian territory, is facing a perilous war due to continuous attacks by the Israeli occupation since 2006, with five rounds of war occurring (Lea, 2023). The most recent, war on Gaza, began in October 2023 and is ongoing as of December 7, 2023.

During this ongoing war, Israel denied all entries into Gaza of medicine, food, and other basic needs, it also destroyed the hospitals and dislocated water and electricity supply, which caused death due to starvation and diseases. Most of Gaza's people have been displaced and their homes destroyed and remain living in tents or open air. This obstruction is a strengthening of the enduring Israel's restriction into Gaza that has been in place since 2007 (Wells et al., 2024).

The latest statistics of March 2024 reported that the Israeli attack on Gaza started in October 2023, and is ongoing, murdered more than 30,717 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, 70% of whom are reported to be women and children, and injured more than 11,785 children with children becoming disabled due to losing limbs or becoming blind. Besides, more than 17000 children have been separated from their parents (UNICEF, 2024).

UNICEF reports that children in Gaza are "dying at an alarming rate," with many displaced and suffering due to a lack of access to food, water, medicine, and fuel. During the war, 420 children in Gaza were injured or killed daily, and children faced hunger and the constant threat of death, resorting to writing their names on their hands in case they died in an Israeli bombing (Al-Jazeera, 2023). These indicators suggest that children in Gaza are living in a disaster, with potential violations of their rights during this war. It is crucial to hear from the surviving children about the rights that should be preserved, accomplished through the analysis of their voices.

Hearing Children's Voices during the War

In his work "Philosophical Investigations," Wittgenstein (1953) links the understanding of language with actions and contexts, emphasizing that

language has meaning correlated to the world, serving as a tool for actions and expressions with purposes. In dynamic micro-systems, children are active participants encountering perspectives related to the system (Tertoolen et al., 2017), making their language a tool for representing reality. Mkhize-Mthembu (2022) emphasizes hearing children's voices, as their emotions, expressions, and experiences are valid and not driven by discrimination or prejudice.

Harris (2013) recognizes children as competent individuals with the rights and capabilities to contribute to decisions affecting their lives. Lea (2023) believes that children's voices can contribute to justice and equality, supporting the rights of all children. As children constitute nearly half of the population in the Gaza Strip (UNICEF, 2023c), their voices become invaluable in Gaza.

Children's voices, including their expressions of meaning through talking or other methods (Harris, 2013), are expected to provide a specific perspective on the effect of the war on Gaza on children's rights. Listening to children's voices in crises is a moral and ethical responsibility, and a humanitarian obligation, recognized as one of the child's rights in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (Bürgin et al., 2022; Munongi, 2023). Children's expressions and views should be taken seriously, especially in times of crises and emergencies, where children should be part of the consultants expressing their needs and priorities (Save the Children, 2015).

Methodology

The researchers used a qualitative approach to gather the required data. Content analysis and Video content analysis were the methods used. The data was collected from social media, especially YouTube and Instagram, so the researchers didn't generate the videos but only collected them. Appendix (1) shows the descriptive and reflective notes of two researchers on the videos collected.

Chouliaraki (2006) stated that it is a normal methodology that researchers use and analyze secondary published data. This is done through detailed information on interactions, allowing repeated

examination of data (two researchers conducted the analysis), and allowing multidisciplinary analyses of a large amount of audiovisual data. Video content analysis (VCA) is a powerful methodology used in research to extract meaningful information from video data (Huber, 2020).

The researchers selected 30 videos from social media. These videos pictured the voices of 63 Palestinian children in Gaza that are silenced due to the war. Many children were interviewed and asked about their needs and wishes during World Children’s Day. The researchers repeatedly reviewed the videos following an examination of the articles in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, listened to children's desires and requirements, and linked each to the corresponding article. Three of the researchers did that to measure the percentage of matches to achieve a high rate of credibility, reliability, and accountability between different researchers. Table (1) shows the sample of this study which is composed of 30 videos. These videos include the voices of 63(35 males, 28 females) children from Gaza during the war.

Table (1): The sample of this study.

Video	Children	Male	Female
1	15	7	8
2	1		1
3	1	1	
4	9	5	4
5	1	1	
6	1	1	
7	1	1	
8	1	1	
9	1	1	
10	2	1	1
11	1	1	
12	1	1	
13	1	1	
14	1		1
15	1		1

16	6	6	
17	1	1	
18	1		1
19	2	1	1
20	3	1	2
21	1		1
22	1		1
23	1		1
24	1	1	
25	3	2	1
26	1		1
27	1		1
28	1		1
29	1		1
30	1	1	
Total	63	35	28

Transcription

Many researchers raise questions about video data transcription, such as what constitutes a suitable written record, and whether researchers should consider oral communications only, or also include body language and video contexts (Bezemer, J., and Mavers, D., 2011). In this research, each video was transcribed through its words, meanings, and feelings by two researchers to achieve validity and integrity.

Qualitative Content Analysis

The data obtained from the videos have been subjected to thematic analysis using the (Ary et al., 2010) data analysis model, where the model consists of three stages that start with organizing the data, then encoding and reducing it, and ending with its interpretation.

The data analysis process was done manually by the researchers. The analysis process in the study has been carried out as follows:

- Organization stage: where the data collected from the videos have been organized and then reviewed for a deeper understanding of its content.

- The coding and reduction stage: where the organized data have been encoded and then reduced to obtain a deeper understanding of the child rights that violated by the Israel occupation different. After the process of encoding all the data has been completed, the search for subjects that combine similar symbols have been carried out, and then the final subjects that answer the study questions have been identified.
- Interpretation stage: In this stage, the data have been interpreted. The voices of the children of Gaza and their rights that were violated were searched. The similarities, differences, relationships and connections between the viewpoints of these children were also searched.

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the qualitative approach is achieved by providing details that make data generation and management transparent and explicit. This can be done when the researcher maintains credibility (truth value or internal validity), applicability (the criterion for evaluating external validity by maintaining transferability of the research findings), and consistency (dependability of the results and the criterion for assessing reliability) (Hammarberg, Kirkman, & de Lacey, 2016).

To promote credibility, the videos were selected from trusted pages and platforms, mainly from Al-Jazeera. These videos were documented and provided via a Google Drive link. To promote dependability and consistency, two researchers analyzed the videos separately according to the same criterion. The results were nearly the same. Differences were compared and discussed. Applicability was maintained by achieving saturation in the analysis of the data, where the number of responses to each theme and sub-theme was determined and shown in the analysis. Besides, direct written quotes were incorporated from participants in this manuscript to establish transferability.

Results

To address the inquiries of this investigation, the utterances of 63 children from Gaza were scrutinized. These children appeared in the 30 expressive videos included in the sample of this study, expressing their

desires and necessities amid the conflict in Gaza. The emphasis was on observing the facial expressions, gestures, and responses of the children. The following themes outline the results that answer the first question of the current study:

Children's Needs During the War on Gaza from Their Perspective

During the war, children articulated their requirements through desires, appeals, and occasionally, direct requests. It was found that most children had only one request or one wish that expressed what they needed the most. This wish varied from one child to another, and few were those who asked for more than one request or added wishes to their basic needs. The largest number of children who appeared in the videos requested basic needs such as food, drinking water, a return to their homes as shelter, safety, reuniting with their families, especially their mothers, medical treatment, rest, and normal life. Additionally, one-third of the children included playing as part of their basic needs. Figure (1) illustrates the needs identified by Gaza's children during the war.

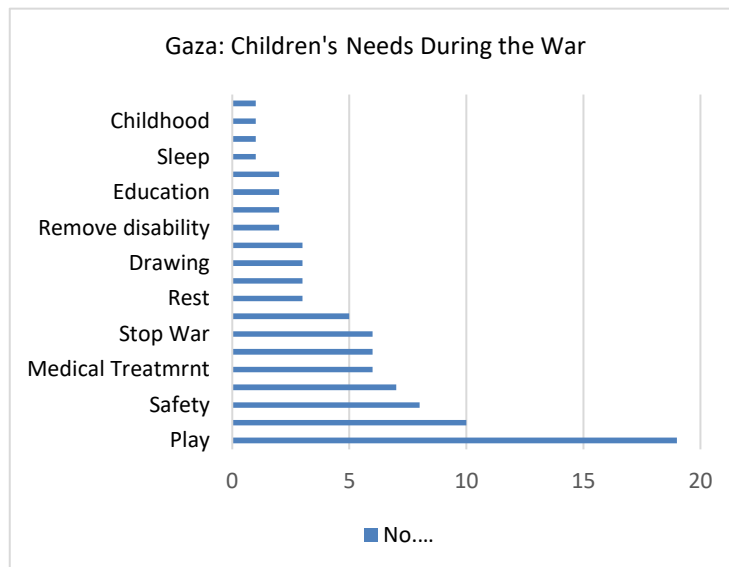


Figure (1): Children's needs from the perspectives of Children in Gaza during the war.

Figure (1) illustrates that the most repeated request identified by the children as a need was for playing. Following that was the desire to return to their homes, which represented shelter after their houses were destroyed during the Israeli bombings, causing them to reside in schools. In the third position, children reiterated their need for safety from the war and the airstrikes carried out by this enemy. Then, food came next; the children suffered from hunger due to the prevention of aid to Gaza during the war, insufficient food supplies, and the division and isolation between cities, preventing access to major centers in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, little food supplies were available. Video (29) shows a crying girl who, when asked about the reason for her tears, said: " I haven't eaten for days".

The children's request for medical treatment was repeated, as some of them requested treatment in local hospitals that were subjected to bombing and lost their ability to serve citizens. A child in the video (30) expressed this by saying, 'They bombed the hospitals that treat us.' Meanwhile, video (11) showed a child pleading to be transferred for treatment in Egypt to avoid losing his leg. He suffered bone fractures in his leg due to Israeli airstrikes, and it was understood that the local hospital wouldn't be able to treat him due to medication shortages. There was a possibility of leg amputation, and the child, lying in the hospital bed, pleaded to those around him, saying, 'Talk to the Egyptians to heal me, it's a matter of life and death. Why are they cutting my leg? Make a bone for me, put an artificial one, let me walk like I used to.'

The children's wish for the war to stop was reiterated, and video (3) showed a happy child during a temporary ceasefire. The child recorded himself laughing and saying, 'Look, everyone, no sound of planes! It's a ceasefire, everyone. Since I heard about the ceasefire, I've been very happy. But this ceasefire is only for four days. Oh God, may things be resolved and become an everlasting ceasefire. Life is beautiful like this.'

On the other hand, the children repeatedly requested water because the water supply was cut off during the war. This coincided with the rainfall in winter. Despite feeling cold due to the lack of shelter, a child in the video (8) appeared joyful and grateful to God for providing water to quench their thirst. The child said, 'Allah knew that we were suffering, and sent us water

from Himself. You see, sweet water, everyone.' At the same time, a girl in the video (15) expressed her coldness due to the same winter weather and the lack of warm clothes. Her house was bombed, and she went to a school shelter for displaced people without her clothes and belongings. She appeared shivering and requested warm clothes. Alongside her was a group of children in the same school competing to get a cover to keep them warm.

Children also repeatedly expressed the wish to return to their families after losing their mothers, fathers, and closest relatives. This caused despair for the girl who appeared in video (2), having lost all her family members. She expressed her desire for death, saying, 'If I died with my mother, it would have been better than witnessing this suffering and tragedy we're living through. Everyone I loved has died.'

Conversely, the girl who appeared at the end of the video (4) expressed her wish to stay alive and began praying to God, saying, 'Our lives are destroyed. I wish we could keep on living; God help us.' The desire to stay alive was also evident in the behavior of the child documented in the video (19) while in the hospital due to being injured by the Israeli bombing. He held onto a coin and didn't let go of it during treatment, displaying his determination to hold onto life until the very last moment.

Children who became disabled

The children who physically recovered desired to return to their normal lives. As for the children who lost limbs (legs and hands), and were classified as having special needs, they wished they could regain their limbs to play again. In the video (7), a child lying in the hospital after his leg was amputated wished to meet a famous football goalkeeper, as he was a football enthusiast before the war. However, due to his condition, he wouldn't be able to play football anymore.

Meanwhile, the wish of the child in the video (5) was to regain the ability to catch his right hand after losing it due to the brutal Israeli bombing. He appeared crying intensely, repeatedly saying, 'I want to hold my hand again.'

Children and education during the war

Moreover, figure (1) demonstrates a decline in the children's request for education, as if they didn't consider it a basic need during the war. Only two children requested it, with one saying that if schools were available, they wouldn't mind returning to learn. This indicates the absence of schools, which have become overcrowded shelters, often targeted and bombed.

Children and migration

Despite their hardships, the children didn't wish to leave Gaza. Only one of them wanted to travel for leisure, not with the intention of migration. Even though they were aware of the violation of childhood in Palestine, as expressed by the child in the video (13) responding to the interviewer who called him a child by saying, 'Child! There is no childhood. They wanted to stay in their homeland. A child in the video (17) appeared angry and shouted a message to the enemy, saying, 'You want to evict us from our homes, no way! This is our land and our honor. You won't take it from us, no matter what you bring, no matter what machinery or excavators. God is with us, protecting us, and as long as God is with us, nothing concerns us.'

Despite all their sufferings, the children reiterated their trust that God is with them, the only one supporting and assisting them in their turmoil and ordeal. They believed they would prevail, as the child in the video (13) said: 'We want to liberate Jerusalem against their will.'

Regarding the results that answer the second question, they revolved around the following:

Violated Children's Rights in War

The words spoken by children, their facial expressions, movements, and reactions shown in the videos, revealed the violation of most of the rights of the child as stipulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989. These rights were violated to varying degrees, as depicted in Figure (2), showing the rights of Gaza's children that were violated during the war, categorized based on the frequency of occurrence.

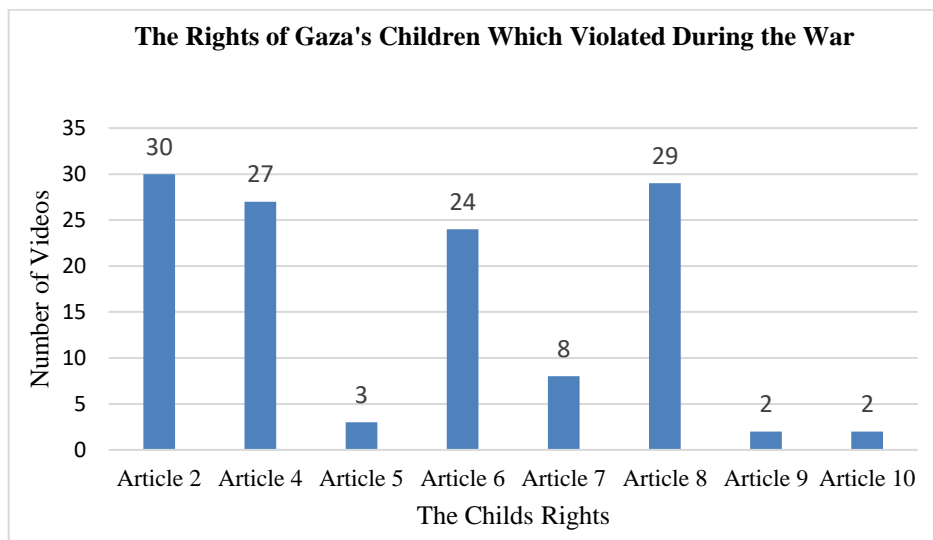


Figure (2): The violated rights of Gaza's children during the war from their perspectives.

Figure (2) reveals that the most violated right of children in Gaza was Right 2, which stipulates that a child shall be provided special protection and shall be afforded opportunities and facilities to enable them to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually, and socially in a healthy and normal manner, in conditions of freedom and dignity.

Violation of Right 2 was evident in all thirty videos. For instance, in the video (20), three children experienced displacement during the war. One child described their situation by saying, 'We stayed in the street after our house was bombed.' Another added, 'We moved to the Al-Shifa Hospital after being left without shelter.' While the third one expressed, 'Living in refugee schools is very bad.'

Next in line is Right 8, which is the child's right to protection and relief. The results indicated a violation of Right 8 in 29 videos. For example, in the video (21), a girl suffers while living in shelters. Her house was bombed, and several family members, including her mother, brother, and sister, were killed. She only has her father and sister left. She

expressed feeling terrible for losing her family and hopes for an end to the war.

Following that is Right 4, the right of the child to enjoy social security benefits, health development, and growth. Violations of this right were evident in the video (23), featuring a 9-year-old girl whose brother was killed on the first day of the war. When asked about her situation, she replied, 'I want a ceasefire, to return to our home, to play and study, because the situation is frightening due to the bombing, destruction, and the large number of martyrs.'

Violation of Right 6 came the fourth in frequency, indicating the violation of the child's right to love and understanding and to be raised in the care of their parents. This was shown in videos such as (26), capturing a screaming girl in the hospital, experiencing panic and calling for her mother, amidst the cries of many children in the hospital, and video (28) featuring a girl under six years old desperately calling for her mother.

After that, the children reiterated the violation of Right 7, which is the child's right to education. In video (9), a 14-year-old boy lost his home in the war on Gaza due to Israeli shelling and was seen searching under the rubble for things he lost, including his school bag and notebooks.

The videos documented the violation of Right 5, the right of physically or mentally disabled children to care, education, and attention. In video (5), the suffering of an 11-year-old boy who cried intensely due to losing his hand during the Israeli bombardment in Gaza was evident. He couldn't find proper care due to the hospital's poor conditions. Additionally, video (11) showed a child pleading to be transferred abroad for proper care after losing his leg.

The videos also revealed violations of other rights, such as Right 9, which indicates the child's right to protection from all forms of neglect, cruelty, and exploitation. Then, right 10, points to the child's right to protection from practices that might promote racial and religious discrimination or any other form of discrimination heightened by the war. This was evident when children in Gaza were compelled to work to obtain

food and water, as depicted in the video (27), which documented the hardship faced by a young girl from Gaza, not more than 10 years old, forced to carry a heavy gallon of water to ensure her family's drinking water supply. This was the case for children who became the breadwinners after losing their fathers.

The videos highlighted the suffering of Gaza's children from racial discrimination in the video (22), showing a girl around ten years old demanding to live a normal and safe life and expressing her belief that God is with Palestine's children: 'We want to live as they live. Why us? Why do we, the children of Palestine, see our families pulling out body parts from under the rubble? Why are we being trampled on? But on the contrary, God is with us, and I'm a Palestinian girl and I want to tell the Arab countries to intervene to end the war. Enough, you have killed the people.'

All of the above indicates the escalation in children's voices expressing their basic needs that the war deprived them of, and the violation of their rights, making childhood in Gaza endangered.

Discussion

The present study delves into the significance of children's voices in Gaza during the war on Gaza. These children, enduring Israeli bombings since October 7, 2023, were asked about their wishes amid the war. Notably, the majority of children expressed a single request, reflecting their most pressing needs. These varied from child to child, with priorities centered around survival essentials: food, water, family, warmth, rest, medical care, and a return to their homes. Given the widespread displacement caused by the bombings, where over 1.7 million people in Gaza, half of whom are children, have sought refuge in shelters or internal displacement camps (UNICEF, 2023), the children's requests align with Maslow's physiological, safety, and belongingness needs (Maslow, 1943).

This underscores that, even in times of crisis, children are acutely aware of their basic and urgent needs for survival. Listening to their voices becomes essential in addressing their needs and involving them in

decisions affecting their rights, as emphasized by Harris (2013) and Save the Children (2015).

An optimistic finding is that one-third of the children prioritized play as a fundamental need. This raises questions about childhood needs and recreation during crises. Essentially, play is vital and extremely important for children (Msaedeh, 2021), it serves as a psychological support and remedial tool, aligning with the views of philosophers and theorists such as Plato, Vygotsky, Piaget, and Rousseau (Wilkinson, 2016). The children's emphasis on the need to play, even amidst crisis, indicates their awareness of its positive impact on their psychological and mental health. This aligns with the findings of Ehntholt and Yule (2006), Clark et al. (2018), and Faisal (2017), highlighting the role of play in alleviating stress and supporting emotional well-being.

The children's refusal to surrender their lives to the chaos of war is evident in their dreams of playing, having toys, and seeking fun, despite facing fear, anger, loss of family members, and displacement. Even amid the harsh conditions, they fight for their childhood and peace, reflecting a resilient spirit. Children's hopes to draw, expressing their families, future, or memories, underscore the role of creative expression in stress release and meditation.

Another crucial finding is that only a small number of children prioritized education during the war on Gaza. This could be attributed to the fact that their schools now serve as shelters for those displaced by Israeli bombings. A deeper analysis suggests that education cannot be a priority when fundamental psychological, safety, and belonging needs remain unmet, aligning with Maslow's hierarchy (Maslow, 1943). This distinction is further reflected in the priorities of physically recovered children, who aspire to return to normal life, contrasting with those who lost limbs, prioritizing medical health and the recovery of their limbs.

Most alarmingly, it appears that numerous articles of the Convention on Children's Rights have been violated in Gaza since October 7. This aligns with Colton's (2020) study, concluding that governments are more prone to violating human rights in times of perceived threats to maintain

control. In this context, the Israeli occupation's desire to control Gaza clashed with the Palestinians' determination to preserve their homeland, evident in the children's continuous resistance despite suffering. This resulted in the violation of children's rights as part of the broader human rights infringement.

The findings suggest that children wish to be involved as witnesses during crises. They are cognizant of their basic needs and rights, vocalizing the violation of many of these rights. Despite facing adversity, they display resilience, striving to open new doors of hope and life without relinquishing their homeland. Children are advocating for equity and justice, questioning the world's silence on Palestinian deaths and injuries, and seeking help from the global community. All children's rights, as outlined in international conventions, were violated during the war in Gaza.

Recommendations

In light of these findings, the researchers recommend:

- Immediate ceasefire in Gaza and protection of all lives and rights.
- Prioritize the safety and well-being of children in Gaza living at risk due to the war, ensuring their rights are protected.
- Actively listen to the voices of Gaza's children, reflecting on their crucial needs when making decisions that impact them.
- Raise awareness about the violated rights of children in Gaza during the war, holding those responsible for these violations accountable.
- More research and emphasis on Gaza's Children need to be conducted. The number of children who died or injured due to the Brutal attacks of the Israeli army is superseded any known previous war on this earth.

Author Contributions

All authors contributed to conceptualization, methodology, validation, formal analysis, investigation, resources, data curation, and writing. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Ethical approval and consent to participate

Two ethical considerations were observed. Firstly, it is assumed that the institutes sharing the videos had the necessary permissions, allowing for the legitimate analysis of these videos. Secondly, efforts were made to mitigate researcher bias, given their Palestinian identity. This was achieved by transparently documenting the war's description, providing analysis results, and sharing all videos through a Google Drive link.

Availability of data and materials

Research data are available under request to the correspondence author.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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