Psychological Resilience among Palestinian Adolescent Ex-detainees in Israeli Jails

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Abstract

The current study is designed to identify factors that affect the psychological resilience of Palestinian adolescent ex-detainees of Israeli jails and understand the meaning and content of psychological resilience. This study utilizes qualitative data collection and analysis methods, mainly conducting semi-structured interviews and thematic analyses of interview content. The study sample consists of ten adolescent ex-detainees and uses purposeful selection to ensure the inclusion of ex-detainees from the southern areas of the West Bank (Bethlehem and Hebron), aged between seventeen to nineteen. The findings indicate that resilience is based on a high tolerance of stress resulting from traumatic events, such as arrest, and the ability to control life events, along with the reinforcement of a positive attitude toward social and political experiences, and the capacity to transform stress into an opportunity instead of a debilitating threat. The results also show that resilience is correlated with various factors, including secure attachment, supportive relationships, social support systems, conflict relationships – personal and collective aggression, challenge, commitment to principles (i.e. nationalism) and post hoc engagement in public events (community and voluntary work, solidarity visits with families of ex-detainees, participation in public discourse).

Keywords: Resilience, torture, ex-detainee, adolescents

الصلابة النفسية لدى المراهقين الفلسطينيين المعتقلين السابقين في السجون الإسرائيلية

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الملخص

الدراسة الحالية اتت للتعرف على العوامل التي تؤثر في الصلابة النفسية لدى المراهقين الفلسطينيين من المعتقلين السابقين. ولفهم معنى / مضمون الصلابة النفسية لدى المراهقين الفلسطينيين المعتقلين السابقين الذين احتجزوا في السجون الإسرائيلية، تم استخدام منهجية البحث الكيفية وتم جمع البيانات عن طريق إجراء مقابلات شبه منظمة، واعتماد أسلوب التحليل الموضوعي (الثيمات). وتألفت العينة من ١٠ من المراهقين المعتقلين السابقين، وقد اعتمدت العينة القصدية في الدراسة والتي شملت معتقلين سابقين من جنوب الضفة الغربية (بيت لحم والخليل)، وتتراوح أعمارهم بين سبعة عشر وتسعة عشر عامًا. وقد بينت نتائج الدراسة أن الصلابة النفسية تستند إلى قدرة عالية على تحمل الإجهاد الناتج عن الأحداث الصادمة مثل الاعتقال، والقدرة على التحكم في أحداث الحياة، وتعزيز الموقف الإيجابي للتجارب الاجتماعية والسياسية، والقدرة على تحويل التوتر إلى فرصة بدلاً من كونها تهديدا كما وتظهر النتائج أيضًا أن الصلابة مرتبطة بعدة عوامل منها التعلق الامن، العلاقات الداعمة والعلاقات الاجتماعية الايجابية، علاقات صراع وعنف على المستوى الشخصي والجمعي، التحدي ، التزام بالمبادئ كالثوابت الوطنية، المشاركة والانخراط المجتمعي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الصلابة النفسية، تعذيب، مراهقين، معتقلين سابقين

Introduction

For more than seventy years, Palestinians have been enduring various forms of traumatic events. Beginning from 1948, Palestinians have been confronting the Ongoing Nakba's violence that has led to their displacement from their hometowns and the murder, detention, and torture of thousands in Israeli jails. Since 1967, the Israeli occupation has arrested an estimated 750,000 Palestinians for resisting the occupation. According to the Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees' Affairs, the Israeli occupation forces have detained 6742 Palestinians

from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including 1467 children and 156 women in 2017 (The Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees' Affairs, 2018, p.1).

Most of the Palestinian prisoners, including children and adolescents, are subjected to systematic physical and psychological torture, such as sleep deprivation, beatings, prohibition on family visits, psychological manipulation, humiliation, exposure to aversive environmental conditions, and forced stress positions (Alissa, 2016). Most of the children and adolescents arrested are taken from their homes during the night or early morning while sleeping (Defense for Children International, 2018). According to several human rights organizations, Palestinian children face torture and ill-treatment: they are forcibly taken from their home, blindfolded, threatened, and interrogated, without the presence of a family member or a lawyer (Save the Children and YMCA East Jerusalem Rehabilitation Program, 2012; the World Organization against torture, 2001). The Israeli policies toward Palestinian children and adolescents have a severe negative impact on their mental health. Children and adolescents who experience torture suffer in silence and experience feelings of shame, which often prohibit them from speaking about their experience in-depth (Afana, 2009).

Despite the rarity of studies that focus on the effects of detention and torture on Palestinian adolescents, those that do exist have shifted scholarly attention to Palestinian adolescents' resilience. Resilience is a psychological term that denotes an "interactive concept that is concerned with the combination of serious risk experiences and a relatively positive psychological outcome despite those experiences" (Rutter, 2006). Resilience reflects individuals, groups, families, and communities' capacity to deal with traumatic events, life challenges, and stressful situations, such as losing a family member or being exposed to torture. Rutter argues that resilience includes positive mental health and social competence in dangerous situations. Norma Garmezy, widely considered to be the founder of the research on resilience, defines resilience as "not necessarily [being] impervious to stress," but as "the capacity for recovery and [. . .] [the] adaptive behavior that may follow initial retreat or incapacity upon initiating a stressful event" (as cited in Shean, 2015, p.8). Other researchers emphasize this capacity for positive reaction and adaptability in the context of traumatic life events (Shean, 2015).

Generally, we can divide the literature that tackles the traumatic psychological effects of torture into three main analysis trends. First, some studies highlight the

negative impacts of physical and psychological suffering on Palestinian children and adolescents' mental health (Afana, 2009; Abu El-Hen, 2010). However, by adopting Western terminology such as PTSD, these researchers ignore these terms' inapplicability to the Palestinian context, which is necessarily characterized by continued oppression. In other words, there is no "post-trauma" in the Palestinian context in light of the ongoing Nakba and the current occupation.

Second, many other studies focus on factors that affect resilience, such as family support, parenting style, mothers' mental health, spirituality, and cultural and educational policies (Quota, Punamäki, & El Sarraj, 2008; Massad, Nieto, Palta, Smith, Clark, & Thabet, 2009; Punamäki, Qouta, & El-Sarraj, 2010; Abualkibash & Jose Leara, 2015). This perspective includes an increasing number of researchers who adopt a positive outlook and study resilience in the context of an individual's ability to cope with stressful events, such as detention and torture. Furthermore, these researchers use the term "psychological resilience" to refer to individual strength, capability, and inner resources, without giving attention to the socio-political and economic context (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Shean, 2015). Others, including Rutter (2006), argue that discussions of resilience must extend beyond the scope of the individual to showcase the capability of groups, families, and the community to cope with traumatic events.

The third group of studies explore the meaning of resilience among Palestinian adolescents in general (Nguyen-Gillham et al., 2008). A glaring limitation to these studies, however, is that very few target ex-detainee adolescents specifically. Adolescent ex-detainees constitute an incredibly vulnerable and, for the most part, voiceless segment of the population; thus, there is a dire demand for a study dedicated to their experiences and struggles, including how they define and experience the notion of resilience. More importantly, researchers should lend Palestinian adolescent ex-detainees a critical voice through their scholarly work not only because of their vulnerability but also because of the sheer fact that a high percentage of Palestinian adolescents suffer from imprisonment and torture. According to DCI (2020), each year, approximately 500 to 700 Palestinian adolescents are detained by Israeli occupation forces, which is guaranteed to have an adverse effect on their mental health. Despite the urgency of this issue, researchers in Palestinian studies have, for the most part, neglected and ignored this topic. Therefore, this study seeks to identify factors and strategies for preventing the psychological and social difficulties resulting from arrest and torture. Understanding the concept of psychological

resilience among ex-detainee adolescents as one of the basic concepts in mental health could benefit Palestinian society and mental health institutions that deal with adolescents and young people. In the broader context, the current study can help shed light on young people's psychological resilience who live in conflict areas where arrest is one form of collective punishment they face. This study thus explores the following two questions: first, what are the factors that affect Palestinian adolescent ex-detainees psychological resilience, and second, how is psychological resilience defined among Palestinian adolescents ex-detainees?

Methodology and Instruments

This study utilized a qualitative data collection and analysis approach. The data were collected by conducting semi-structured interviews, and the thematic analysis method was adopted. Each interview lasted between forty-five to sixty minutes. The interview consisted of questions about the participants' detention experience, including socio-demographic questions, number of arrests experienced, the first experience of arrest, duration of detention, exposure to torture, and degree of religiosity. The participants were also asked about the factors that helped them cope with torture and how they define resistance in light of their detention experience.

The sample in the study, made up of 10 ex-detainees, was purposefully selected based on the following criteria:

1. The participants took part in an earlier study (Alissa, 2016) that revealed their increased resilience level.
2. The participants were receptive to openly discussing the sensitive subject matter with the researcher.
3. All participants were males aged seventeen to nineteen years old.

According to the participants' place of residency, six were from refugee camps: two from Aida, one from Alaza, two from Dehasha, and one from Alaroub; two were from the cities: Bethlehem, Hebron; and two from Al-Khader village in Bethlehem. Additionally, three of the participants have primary education, six have a high school education, and one has a diploma. Five of the participants experienced detention more than once. Furthermore, eight out of ten participants experienced torture. Finally, five participants were detained between four weeks to six months, four were detained between seven months to twelve months, and one was detained for eighteen months.

Results and Discussion

The study revealed various factors that influence the participant's ability to cope with the aftermath of traumatic events and their resilience in said cases. These factors can be summarized as follows:

1. Secure attachments.
2. Supportive relationships and social support systems.
3. Conflict relationships – personal and collective aggression.
4. Challenge.
5. Commitment to principles (i.e. nationalism).
6. Post hoc engagement in public events (community and voluntary work, solidarity visits with families of ex-detainees, participation in public discourse).

Furthermore, psychological resilience among the participants is understood as the result of 1) self-affirmation, 2) positive self-conceptualization, 3) self-efficacy, 4) self-regulation, 5) internal locus of control, as well as 6) social and national identity. I will assess each of these components in relation to the cases of the participants below.

The participants in the study have suffered from two primary forms of traumatic events: detention and torture. The findings revealed that five of the participants had been detained more than once. One of the participants, "M" (19 years old), mentioned that he had been arrested several times. "M" describes his experience: "I was arrested three times, but it was not as scary as the first time. I knew how they would treat me, and I was mindful of their methods of torture, and I was constantly developing my ability to endure." The results suggest that the participants considered traumatic experiences as a chance to grow and thrive rather than remain passive, which reflects a strong internal locus of control.

The findings also showed that eight out of ten participants experienced torture from the moment of the arrest. The forms of torture experienced by Palestinian respondents fit the definition of torture in the United Nations convention against torture. Article 1 of the UN convention against torture, defines "torture" as "any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when

such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions" (Ohchr, 1984).

The diversity and cruelty of psychological and physical torture methods have short and long-term effects on the detainees. The Israeli Intelligence Agency (Shabak) employs psychologists to interrogate the detainees and cause chronic harm to them to "neutralize" and adapt them according to the Israeli policy (Alissa, 2017). For example, "I" (17 years old) details the ill-treatment he experienced during arrest and interrogation:

> They blew up the door of the house instead of waiting for us to open. When I woke up, I found the soldiers over my head, pointing their fingers in my face. They beat me and beat my family. My mother began to cry, and my father tried to keep them away from me. They broke my nose, and now I need a platinum transplant. The scars of the handcuffs can be seen on my hands. They were very tight to the extent when they pulled them out of my hand; they plucked part of my hands' skin.

Despite the aforementioned traumatic events, the participants possess developed resilience that has mitigated the post-detainment psychological effects. The factors that have contributed to the participant's resilience are explored below.

Factors of resilience among adolescent ex-detainees:

Secure attachment

Bowlby introduced this concept in his attachment theory-in the early seventies, where he explained the importance of the relationship between mother and child (as cited in Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012). Bowlby argues that the early bonds built between mother and child play an essential protective role in the child's development and help keep them from engaging in risky behavior. However, an insecure attachment is associated with anxiety and personality disorders, thus reducing the resilience and the ability to cope with traumatic events (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012).

The current study's findings confirmed the importance of safe attachments with caregivers once again, especially mothers. Of the participants, five out of ten mentioned that they have some form of a secure attachment. For instance, "A" (17 years old) reports, "my mother taught me to persist. I was thinking of my

mother all the time. That is why I decided not to confess. I wanted to return and see her; you decide to be strong because you know that your family is waiting for your release. You try not to feel broken for them; otherwise, they feel sad and continue to be concerned about you." Similarly, another participant, "R" (19 years old), explains, "I decided that they cannot break my will, and not let detention affect my life and my family. I convinced myself that detention would end, and I will return to normal life. When I was released, I used to spend much of my time with my father. I see him as a source of power for me."

These findings can be interpreted by adopting the concept of secure attachment with caregivers (mothers, fathers, etc.) as a protective factor for adolescents that prevents them from developing mental disorders like anxiety and depression resulting from detention. Additional studies have supported this finding. For example, Marriner, Cacioli, & Moore (2014) argue that there is a correlation between secure attachment and resilience. Secure attachment and resilience also correlated with greater use of proactive coping strategies.

Furthermore, Palestinian mothers play a significant role in their children's imprisonment experience. In most cases, mothers are the only family members who receive permits to visit their children in jail, so mothers are the only possible connection many prisoners have with the outside world, creating even stronger bonds between mothers and their children. Mothers continue visiting their children in jail twice a month despite suffering humiliation and ill-treatment due to Israeli security procedures. Since mothers are the only available attachment figure, this creates a stronger sense of secure attachment for the child and allows them to learn to practice emotional regulation and maintain emotional balance, thus enabling the detainee to cope with stressful events (as cited in Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012).

During their children's imprisonment, mothers also play a protective role by preventing emotional breakdown and despair by encouraging the detainees to be tough and strong. As aforementioned, mothers are often the sole caregiver and the exclusive provider of "secure attachment" that is allowed access to the detainees. Thus, they disproportionately contribute to the resilience of the detainees in question.

The dynamics by which mothers' support and encouragement are manifested remain unclear. One interpretation of this kind of motivation and support can be exemplified in mothers' imperatives to their children. For example, "*kon zalma*,"

literally meaning "be a man" in Arabic, and "*asmud*," which is a verb that means "be resilient and steadfast," yet, in this context, it means "be brave and not to give confession," specifically. From the perspective of Palestinians, the "*sumud*" – meaning steadfastness – of their children during interrogation is a source of pride and honor. This dynamic is a subject ripe for further exploration in future studies.

Supportive relationships and social support system

Participants indicated the importance of peer support in prisons, which enables them to continue persevering despite their problems. "Y" (18 years old) and "R" (19 years old), for example, highlight the importance of supportive relationships and social support systems in enabling them to resist: "I think that good relationships enable us to resist the stressful conditions of the prison." Also, "E" (19 years old) said, "solidarity with the families of the prisoners makes me less concerned about my mother. I have the feeling that there are people who take care of her".

The social support system has multiple layers, including family, schools, friends, and the community at large. These supportive systems provide the person with love, trust, and encouragement; they play a role in helping the detainee develop positive coping mechanisms and resilience.   The present findings are consistent with previous research. For example, Thabet and Thabet (2015) mention that participants use various coping strategies, such as family support. Similarly, Qouta et al. (2008) argue that a good parenting style, social support and good peer relations are protective factors from mental health problems.

In Palestine, detainees usually receive support within the family and the entire community, building on collective cultural values. One of the crucial components of Palestinian culture is defending their rights against the occupation despite the consequences. Due to this structure, the ex-detainees' community has an outstanding reputation and is well-respected. Social support factors in a collective reward system that enhances their resilience. In other words, "resilience does not occur in isolation. It is an interactive process that requires something or someone to interact with. It is dependent upon context or environment, including our most important relationships" (Kent, 2012, p.111).

Conflict relationships – personal and collective aggression

The collective trauma resulting from organized violence and collective punishment leads to existential threats for individuals and society; this influences the victim to adopt group survival techniques, which prompts them to find the collective meaning of their suffering and create a trans-generational collective self (Hirschberger, 2018).

The respondents of the current study experienced individual and collective aggression, as reflected in the interviews. Four out of ten participants said that they energize and motivate themselves to confront Israeli violence. They believe that Israeli aggression targets them personally and collectively, so they must show strength to deal with it well. For example, "B" (18 years old) testified:

> I used to remind myself that they are our enemies to increase my indignation against the occupying forces. What makes me stronger is self-incitement. The conflict with the Israeli intelligence officer was a matter of the death of life. It was a matter of conflict, not peace. They shot and detained me, but they could not kill me. However, they may kill others. They are our enemies. I was haunted by these thoughts all the time, and that is why I felt strong.

Despite the feeling of isolation and being targeted as individuals, the adolescent detainees showed resilience by maintaining collective thinking. Their political education taught them to understand that Israeli collective punishments aim to destroy the entire Palestinian society – not only targeted individuals. Even when they target individuals through arrests, excessive torture, and humiliation, they aim to create a collective sense of fear among Palestinians to stifle resistance. At the same time, there are cases where collective oppression is turned into a personal conflict, such as during a one-on-one interrogation session with an Israeli intelligence officer. In this case, both the detainee and the intelligence officer try to take the session to a conclusion that supports his/ her interest. On the other hand, respondents also received benefits from discussing their personal experiences with others. "D" (17 years old) mentions that "[he] raise[s] awareness among children today about detention and methods of defiance. [He] teach[es] them the history of [their] great country. When [he] help[s] others, [he] feel[s] like [he is] doing something valuable, and [that] people do respect[him]".

This study's findings indicate that respondents maintain their social, psychological and political commitments despite the stressful experience. The results revealed that both individual and collective trauma influence Palestinian adolescents' mental health. In general, the beliefs and behaviors of Palestinians are driven by collective consciousness. Due to these beliefs, adolescents turn their traumatic experience into preventive tools and resilience.

Challenge

Kobasa (1979) argued that challenge is one dimension of psychological hardiness. This dimension demonstrates that the individual believes in their ability to change their life; as a result of this change, an opportunity for a better future emerges (Tantry & Singh, 2016). Five out of ten respondents said that defiance is the best way to strengthen resilience. For example, "N" (19 years old respondent) reports,

> I did everything that would provoke my enemy though I know he can kill me. I was doing that intentionally to anger him. The conflict between the intelligence officers and the youth is personal. I always think that the Israeli intelligence officer is nothing though he threatened to kill me. He told me, "I'm going to kill you the same way as I killed your friend." I challenged myself and my style of life. I never give in. I never allow them to steal my life. My steadfastness and ability not to confess made me stronger.

The language and attitude that the participant expresses above are a clear indication of proactivity and defiance – a textbook definition of "challenge" as defined by Kobasa.

Further, the previous sentiment, and similar others by other participants, can be interpreted by adopting some concepts of developmental psychology that view adolescence as a stage of rapid changes in several aspects of life, including on the biological, emotional, social, moral, and psychological levels, in addition to being the stage of challenges and risk-taking. Palestinian adolescents experience similar changes and challenges as adolescents in other parts of the world. Yet, their lifestyle is made unique because they were born, raised, and live their entire life under occupation. The Israeli military forces target them by various forms of oppression, such as torture and detainment, which creates more rejection, resistance, risk-taking, and challenges against the occupation despite the

consequences. The more they are oppressed, the more they develop political commitment, a sense of belonging, collective and individual identity, self-mastery, and personal control; some of these are direct results of a challenging attitude.

Commitment to principles

The interviews revealed that the responders have a genuine interest in public concerns such as commitment to the Palestinian national rights despite the risks they face. Three out of ten participants said that they are very committed to the national Palestinian case and principles, enabling them to handle difficulties and ill-treatment. "I" (17 years old), for example, says:

> commitment to the thought and principles, such as the right of return, freedom of movement, as well as awareness and knowledge, strengthen us in prison. The idea is to defend the value of the human being. We defend this idea; I always expect detention, injury, or martyrdom. Faith makes me resist and confront all difficulties. My beliefs determine how my life should look like.

These results can be explained based on what is known in Palestine as the "Jail literature." Jail literature refers to the documents, stories, and political education materials that detainees write to educate the new generations on resilience mechanisms to handle the jails' inhuman conditions. It also provides education on Palestine people's rights, such as the right of return and freedom and right to resist the occupation such as Marwan Barghouti's book, *One Thousand Days of Solitary Confinement* (2011), and Waleed Daqa's book, *Smelting of Awareness: The Redefinition of Torture* (2010).

Through generations of detainees, Palestinian were able to challenge and change the jails and turn them into "schools" and places to restructure the sense of belonging, commitment, and resilience. The results also showed that adolescents have an ideological commitment toward the national case, which is reflected in their tendency to actively engage and participate in activities rather than act as passive observers.

Engagement in public activities

Engaging in voluntary work and conducting solidarity visits for marginalized persons are ways to give back to the community. The participants have a better sense of community and belonging, and they show it by engaging in public life rather than being isolated or depressed. The participants did not mention any link to political parties; at the same time, they are active in social and political activities. Five out of ten respondents said that they overcome the negative impact of arrest through community engagement, as "Y" (18 years old) mentioned, "after detention, I was more involved in humanitarian activities. I no longer cared about political affiliations. I used to join volunteering and humanitarian organizations. I participated in the Life Artery Campaign in support of al-Yarmouk Refugees Camp". Similarly, "M" (19 years old respondent) said, "when I am at the sit-in tent in solidarity with prisoners, I feel peace of mind. When I do voluntary things or visit a family of a martyr or a prisoner, I feel that I give something".

The notion that Palestinians of independent political affiliation have a feeling of inclusion and dignity through active participation in the struggle against Israeli occupation was introduced previously by Giacaman, Mitwalli, & Hammoudeh (2017). Similarly, Khatib (2018) showed that youth engagement in political activities improves psychological well-being. The respondents mentioned that they share the pain, traumas, and life-threatening violence; at the same time, they support each other, their families, and their community. They also shared commitment and connectedness; this reflects one of the definitions of resilience in the Palestinian context.

The meaning of resilience

The second part of the study, i.e. the meaning of resilience in the Palestinian context, is equally layered.

First, Cohen and Sherman argued that self-affirmation enables individuals to face daily challenges regardless of their difficulty and even if they constitute a threat to their lives. Thus, self-affirmation helps individuals adapt and increases their self-confidence in their ability to face future challenges; this increases flexibility and psychological resilience (Cohen & Sherman, 2014).

In line with this definition, multiple participants expressed emotions that reflected characteristics associated with self-affirmation. For example, participant "B" (18 years old) said, "I trust my abilities and I know that I can withstand torture. I was

in a stressful position without food or sleep. They brought a friend of mine who mentioned me in his confession. Still, I endured."

Second, positive self-conceptualization in this context means an individual's understanding of himself or herself, i.e. how one feels about oneself or assesses one's "goodness" (Wehrle & Fasbender, 2018). Karatas and Cakar argue that positive self-conceptualization is positively correlated with psychological resilience (Karatas & Cakar, 2011). Participant "D" (17 years of age) presented an understanding consistent with our definition of positive self-conceptualization. He said, "the detention experience allows us to know ourselves and each other. Who can endure and who cannot? From the first second I knew that I would endure and that I won't stay there long. That is what I told my family the night I was detained." Here we can see the participant's positive self-comparison vis-à-vis his peers. Through it, we can infer his positive self-conceptualization.

Moreover, participant "E" (19 years old) was more direct in his positive self-conceptualization, "I know that I am able to endure all the conditions that I am passing through and I have passed through. Detention will not weaken me and I shall not give up."

Third, self-efficacy is conceptualized as "individuals believe in their capabilities to mobilize their motivation, cognitive resources, and agency to extend control over a given event" (Bandura, Pastorelli, Barbaranelli & Caprara, 1999, as cited in Skoch, 2003). Sarah Skoch discovered in an experimental setting a positive link between self-efficacy and psychological resilience. Participant "E" (19 years old) offers a direct example of this concept. He said, "I do not regret the time that I have spent in detention, including the lost school year. After I was released, I reenlisted as a home-schooled student. God willing, I will pass and enter university".

Fourth, self-regulation "refers to those processes, internal and/or transactional, that enable an individual to guide his/her goal-directed activities over time and across changing circumstances (contexts). Regulation implies modulation of thought, affect, behavior, or attention via deliberate or automated use of specific mechanisms and supportive meta-skills. Self-regulation processes are initiated when routinized activity is impeded or when goal-directedness is otherwise made salient (e.g. the appearance of a challenge, the failure of habitual action patterns, etc.) (Karoly, 1993, p.25). Artuch, González-Torres, De la Fuente, Mariano Vera, Fernández, & López-García (2017) argued that self-regulation plays an integral part in psychological resilience. Participant "B" (18 years old) puts it succinctly,

"endurance and fortitude mean the forgoing of our needs: sleep, food, and even going to the toilet. When the detainee leadership decided to commence a food strike, the suffering was real. However, we obeyed the decision."

Fifth, internal locus of control, Julian Rotter (1966) defined the locus of control in opposition to external control, i.e. that the source of control is internal rather than influenced and is external to the subject. In positive cases, the individual perceives that he or she possesses an ability to control outcomes or behavior, making him or her more adaptable and able to cope with events. Further, this perception makes the individual more resilient. This attitude is reversed in cases when the individual perceives the control to be external.

This attitude is demonstrated in the statements made by the participants. For instance, participant "B" (18 years old) states, "we are internally strong. Nothing can weaken our morale". Similarly, participant "Y" (18 years old) says, "in detention, one learns how to depend on one's self and how to confront and persevere during integration; this is because you are alone and if you do not control yourself and your tongue you are lost."

Sixth, social and national identities in this context contribute to values and ideals adopted by the individual. Resilience on the group, social, and national level increases resilience on the individual level. Thus, the occupation is perceived as a common enemy of the group, society, and the individual among the participants. Participant "M" (19 years old) sums up the sentiment succinctly: "I am like the others. I am not the only one to be detained for Palestine and the right of return. There are thousands of others. I am not better than them." This reflects a sense of community and depicts the group as a source of the individual's understanding of their values and ideals.

Resilience is part of the participants' everyday practice; it is a style of life and a normal reaction to abnormal experiences, a way to maintain dignity, and defend the rights –a result consistent with previous research (Giacaman, 2019). The search for psychological well-being and justice are interrelated and inseparable in the Palestinian context. Psychological resilience means transforming personal losses into a collective force of change and construction. For adolescent detainees, resilience has implications on the individual, group, and community levels. As "B" (18 years old) summarizes, "it is an idea and a way of life," he said. "It is not enough to bear the pressure, face the crises, and return to your natural life. It must turn the pain into a source of tenderness and inspiration to others and become a philosophy of life."

To summarize, resilience is the ability to control and believe in one's ability to influence life events and give a positive meaning to life experiences. It links the detention experiences with life, social reality, economic and political issues, cultural beliefs, and hopes for the future. It is to engage in public life and objective activities to transform stressful events into development and peace opportunities.

Conclusion

The study explored two major issues namely, the factors that constituted psychological resilience among Palestinian adolescent ex-detainees, who went through the trauma of detention, and the meaning of resilience for these participants in the Palestinian contexts.

The findings indicated factors that enhance adolescent ex-detainees' psychological resilience, such as safe attachment, supportive relationships, social support system, conflict relationship, personal and collective aggression, challenge, commitment to principles, and public engagement.

The adolescent ex-detainees gave a unique meaning to resilience. Resilience has personal as well as collective components. The results confirmed the link between psychological resilience and self-affirmative, positive self-conceptualization, self-efficacy, self-regulation, internal locus of control, and social and national identity. This is not a unique observation to the Palestinian context. While few cases compare perfectly to the nature of the conflict in Palestine, Kirmayer, Dandeneau, Marshall, Phillips, & Williamson (2012) studied the concepts of resilience in indigenous Aboriginal communities in Canada, which has similar components as among Palestinians. Resilience in both the Canadian-Aboriginal and the Palestinian entails a collective sense of belonging, a sacrificial attitude, connectedness to the land, the preservation of cultural and national rights, social solidarity, and restoring dignity by being politically active against the occupation. It is up for future research to compare these experiences, while possibly including other similar experiences that are yet to be explored.

To conclude, studying resilience should involve socio-political and cultural contexts. More studies that compare the content of resilience in different contexts are recommended. Also, further studies with larger sample sizes, different age groups should be undertaken to explore the relationship between the frequent exposure to traumatic events, including torture and other forms of Israeli oppression, and its impact on the meaning of psychological resilience.

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