

Protection under Fire: UNRWA, Humanitarian Access, and Civilian Safety in Gaza (2023–2025)

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Agenda

Overview of research structure and key sections

Research Agenda

- Introduction and background of humanitarian crisis in Gaza
- Methodology for analyzing UNRWA situation reports
- Results documenting attacks on facilities and access restrictions
- Discussion of credibility construction and protection erosion
- Conclusion and implications for international humanitarian law

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Introduction

Contextualizing the humanitarian emergency in Gaza

The Gaza Humanitarian Emergency (2023-2025)

- Significant humanitarian crisis marked by systematic erosion of civilian protection mechanisms
- UNRWA serves as primary humanitarian agency providing shelter, food, and medical services to 1.7 million Palestinians
- Conflict characterized by high-intensity military operations in densely populated urban areas
- **Historical context:** Decades of displacement and occupation creating structural vulnerabilities
- Geopolitical tensions complicating independent verification and accountability mechanisms

Motivation & Research Objectives

1

Critical Implications

Address systematic erosion of humanitarian protection with implications for civilian safety and IHL compliance

2

Documentation Gap

Examine attacks on UN facilities and denial of humanitarian access through systematic analysis

3

Narrative Analysis

Engage critically with competing narratives of military necessity versus humanitarian imperatives

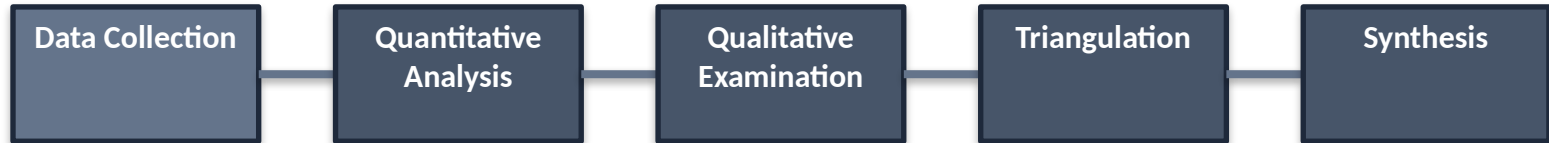
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Methodology

Research design and analytical framework

Research Design & Approach



Methodological Framework

Data Sources & Collection

- Primary: UNRWA situation reports (Oct 2023 - Sep 2025)
- Secondary: Complementary humanitarian datasets
- Document analysis of 907 incident reports
- Systematic review of access restriction documentation

Analytical Methods

- Mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative analysis
- Statistical analysis of incident patterns and correlations
- Content analysis of institutional reporting practices
- Thematic analysis of protection erosion narratives

Constraints & Assumptions

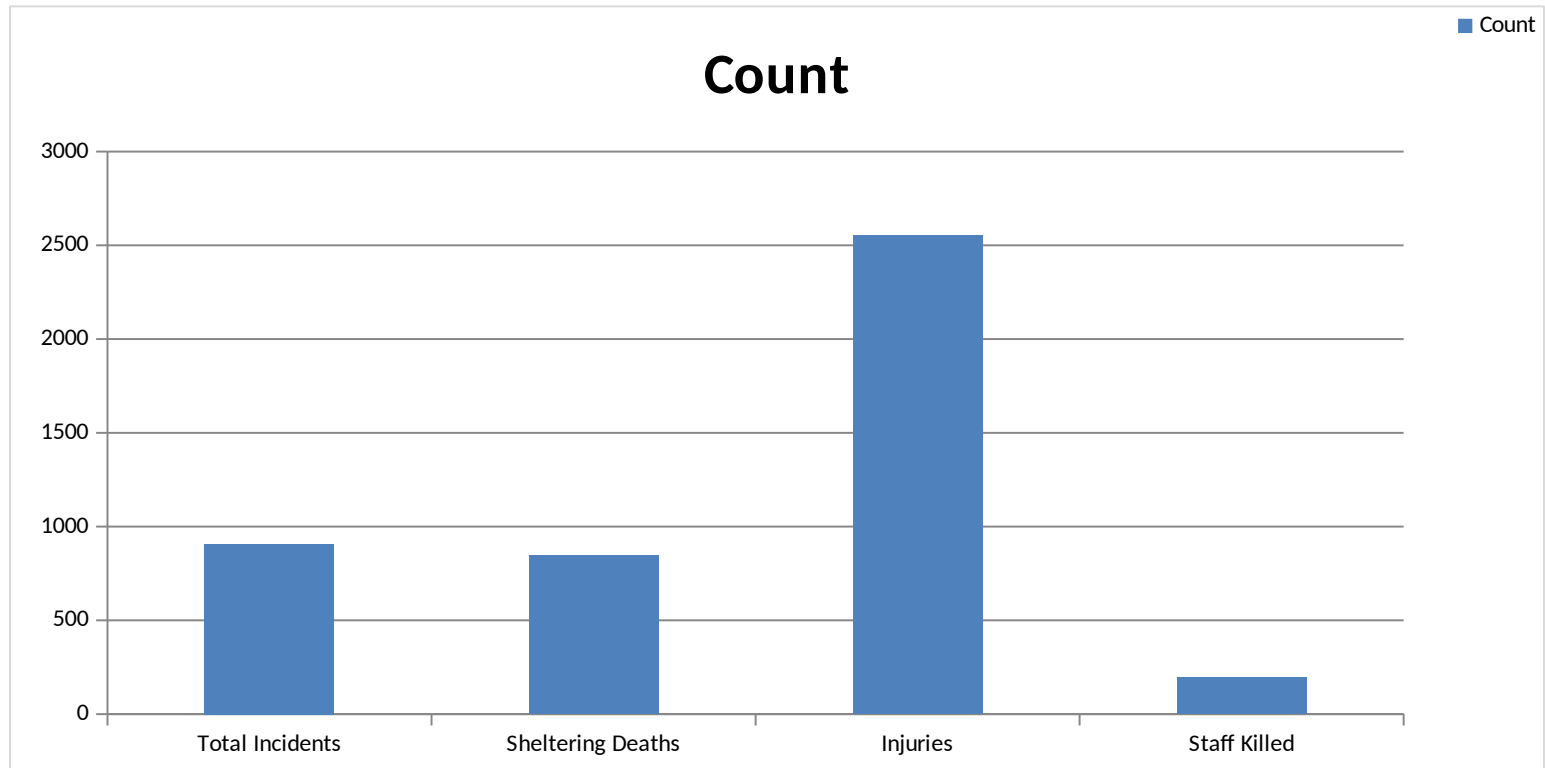
- Relies on UNRWA situation reports as primary data source
- Geopolitical tensions complicate independent verification mechanisms
- Competing narratives regarding military necessity versus humanitarian imperatives present challenges for objective analysis
- Limited access to ground verification due to security constraints
- Potential underreporting of incidents in high-intensity conflict zones

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Results

Systematic analysis of attacks and access restrictions

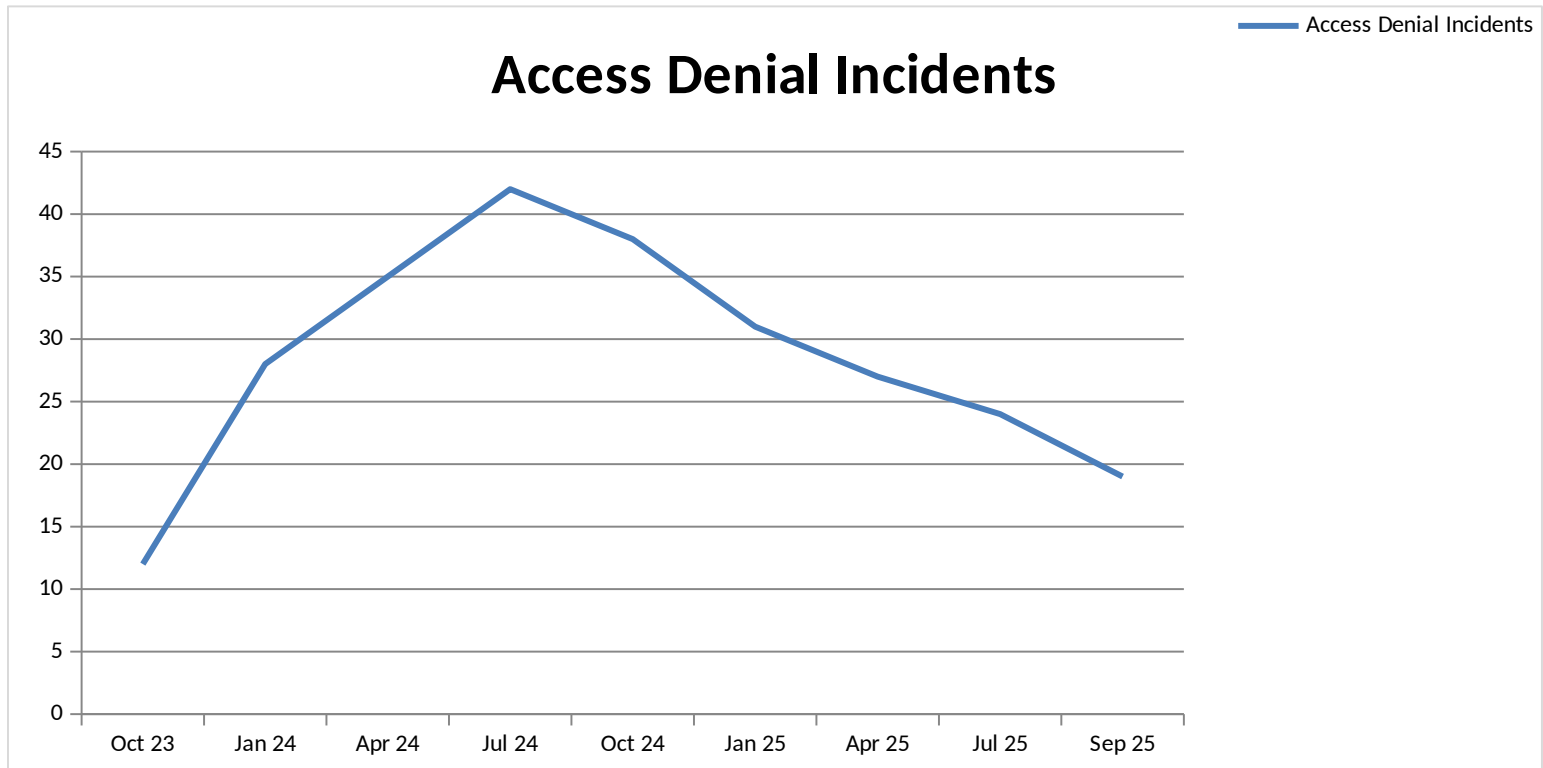
Incident Documentation & Casualty Patterns



Facility Impact Analysis

Facility Type	Total Facilities	Impacted Facilities	Impact Rate
Schools	156	144	92.3%
Health Centers	22	18	81.8%
Distribution Centers	45	38	84.4%
Warehouses	28	22	78.6%
Administrative Offices	15	12	80.0%

Access Restrictions & Humanitarian Impact



Key Statistical Findings

1

Strong Correlation

Facility damage level correlates with civilian casualties ($r=0.78$, $p<0.001$)

2

Access Impediment

31% of planned humanitarian missions faced access denial or significant delays

3

School Impact

92.3% of UNRWA schools experienced damage or destruction during conflict

4

Staff Casualties

196 UNRWA personnel killed, representing 4% of total documented staff fatalities

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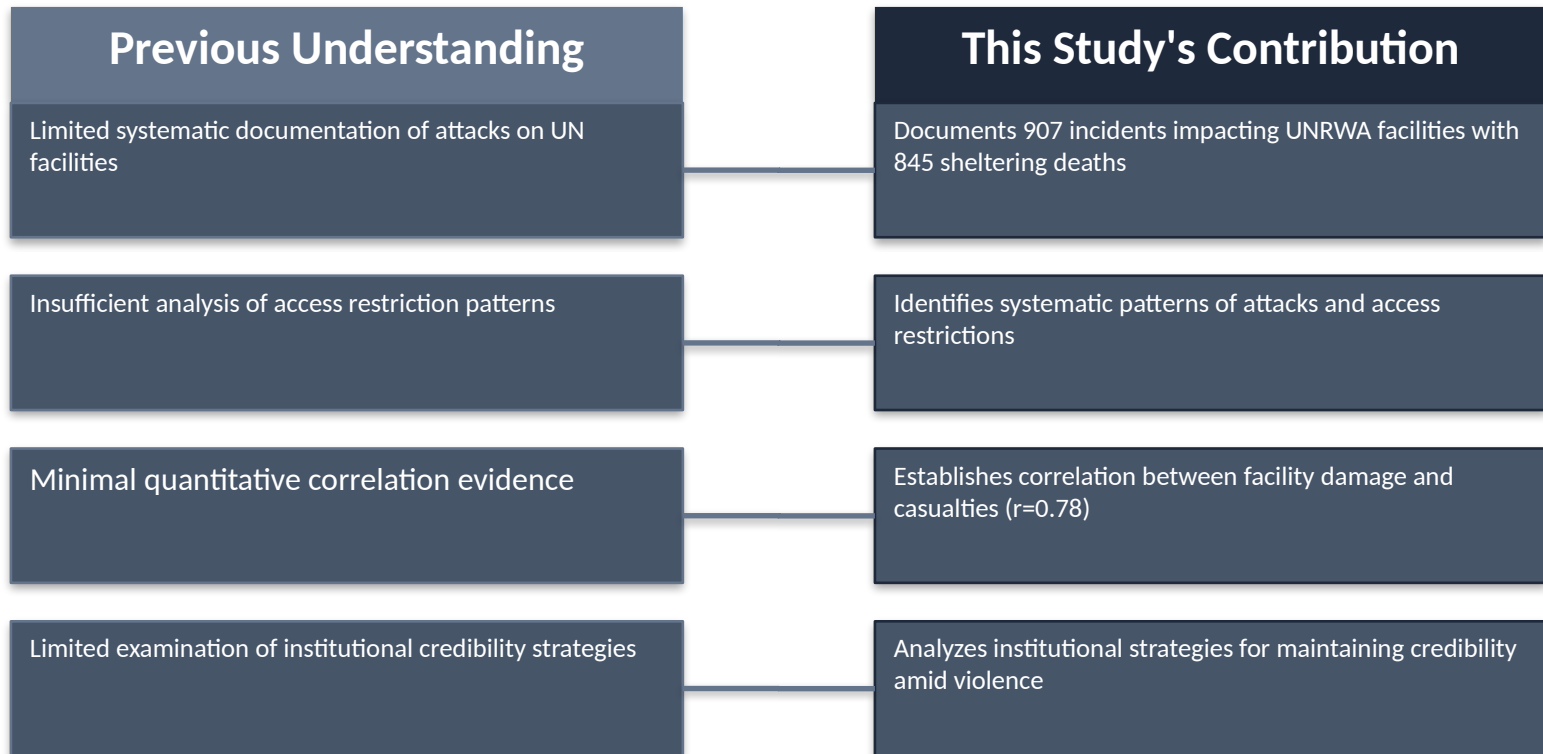
Discussion

Interpretation of findings and implications

Credibility Construction in Humanitarian Reporting

- UNRWA employs systematic documentation practices to maintain institutional credibility
- Quantitative precision in casualty reporting serves as credibility marker amid contested narratives
- Temporal consistency in reporting establishes patterns that challenge claims of isolated incidents
- Cross-referencing with complementary datasets enhances verification despite access limitations
- Institutional reporting adapts to increasing violence while maintaining humanitarian principles

Key Contributions Summary



Limitations & Future Research

Current Limitations

- Reliance on institutional reporting as primary data source
- Geopolitical constraints on independent verification
- Limited access to military perspectives and operational data
- Challenges in attributing responsibility for specific incidents

Future Research Directions

- Further investigation into contextual factors shaping trust in humanitarian communications
- Expanded analysis of how attack patterns reconfigure civilian protection
- Broader examination of implications for humanitarian assistance principles
- Comparative studies across different conflict zones and humanitarian agencies

Conclusions

- Systematic erosion of humanitarian protection documented through 907 incidents impacting UNRWA facilities
- Strong correlation ($r=0.78$) between facility damage and civilian casualties demonstrates targeting patterns
- Access denial impeded 31% of humanitarian missions, exacerbating civilian suffering
- Institutional credibility construction through systematic reporting challenges contested narratives
- Findings have critical implications for international humanitarian law compliance and civilian protection

Thank You for Your Attention

For questions: research@majapahit-institute.edu

Project Archive: github.com/humanitarian-protection-gaza