

Unknown Paper

AI Reviewer 1 - Comprehensive Review

This reviewer provides a thorough and balanced assessment

****Review of "Patterns of Violence and Digital Testimony in the Palestine-Israel Conflict (2023-2025)"****

\\ **** Step 1. Summary of the Paper****

This manuscript employs a mixed-methods approach to analyze patterns of violence and digital testimony in the Palestine-Israel conflict from 2023 to 2025. The quantitative component utilizes an ACLED-derived dataset of approximately 9,200 conflict events to examine temporal distributions, regional patterns, and actor dynamics. The qualitative component analyzes 347 digital testimonies from platforms like Telegram, TikTok, and X to identify themes of fear, resistance, loss, digital proof, and mourning. The paper claims to make three primary contributions: (1) empirical documentation of violence patterns, (2) theoretical advancement in understanding digital testimony as epistemic justice and moral witnessing, and (3) methodological innovation through mixed-methods integration. The central argument is that digital testimony functions as a counter-institutional practice of memory that asserts Palestinian epistemic sovereignty against structural silencing mechanisms.

\\ **** Step 2. Evaluation Criteria****

\\\\ ****1. Originality / Novelty** - **Score: 7/10** - **Critique:**** The application of epistemic justice and moral witnessing frameworks to digital testimony in conflict zones represents a meaningful theoretical synthesis. However, the core concept of digital witnessing in conflict contexts is not novel, with substantial existing literature on citizen journalism and human rights documentation. The mixed-methods approach combining ACLED data with digital testimony analysis shows methodological originality, though similar integrative approaches exist in conflict studies. The temporal focus (2023-2025) provides contemporary relevance but builds extensively on established research paradigms.

\\\\ ****2. Scientific Rigor / Methodology** - **Score: 5/10** - **Critique:**** Several significant methodological flaws undermine rigor: - The "ACLED-derived dataset" lacks precise description of modifications, filtering criteria, or validation procedures, creating reproducibility concerns. - Qualitative sampling from public platforms risks selection bias toward content that survived moderation,

potentially excluding systematically suppressed testimony. - No inter-coder reliability measures reported for thematic analysis, raising questions about coding consistency. - Statistical analyses appear descriptive without advanced modeling of causal relationships or confounding factors. - Ethical approval processes for studying traumatic content are inadequately documented.

\\\\ **3. Clarity \ Presentation** - **Score: 6/10** - **Critique:** The writing is generally clear but suffers from theoretical jargon overload ("epistemic sovereignty," "counter-institutions of memory") that sometimes obscures concrete findings. The structure follows conventional research paper format, but integration between quantitative and qualitative sections feels somewhat disjointed. Figures and tables are notably absent—visualizations of temporal trends, regional distributions, and thematic correlations would significantly enhance communication of findings. The abstract accurately represents the paper's scope, though conclusions slightly overstate policy implications.

\\\\ **4. Reproducibility \ Transparency** - **Score: 4/10** - **Critique:** Critical transparency gaps exist: - No data availability statement regarding the ACLED-derived dataset or digital testimony archive. - Insufficient detail on qualitative coding procedures, codebook development, or resolution of coding discrepancies. - Missing documentation of platform-specific collection protocols and handling of multi-language content. - Statistical analysis methods described only at high level without software specifications or model details. - No discussion of data cleaning procedures for either dataset.

\\\\ **5. Significance \ Impact** - **Score: 7/10** - **Critique:** The topic addresses important questions about digital documentation in asymmetric conflicts with clear humanitarian relevance. The findings could inform content moderation policies and human rights documentation practices. However, the impact is limited by methodological limitations and the specialized nature of the theoretical frameworks. The work offers incremental rather than field-changing insights, though it provides valuable empirical documentation of a contemporary conflict period that could serve as reference for future research.

\\\\ **6. Ethics \ Integrity** - **Score: 6/10** - **Critique:** The paper demonstrates awareness of ethical considerations through anonymization and sensitive handling of traumatic content. However, several concerns remain: - Insufficient documentation of IRB/ethics committee approval for research involving traumatic testimony. - Potential vulnerability issues despite using public data—no discussion of whether content creators might object to research use. - Positionality statement is present but superficial regarding researcher biases and standpoint epistemology. - Limitations section acknowledges data gaps but underestimates selection bias implications.

—

\\\\ ** Step 3. Specific Suggestions for Improvement**

\\\\ **Major Revisions Required:** 1. **Methodological Transparency:** Provide detailed documentation of the ACLED-derived dataset including all modifications, filtering criteria, and validation procedures. Include full codebook for qualitative analysis with inter-coder reliability measures. 2. **Statistical Rigor:** Implement multivariate analyses to control for confounding variables and establish more robust relationships between violence patterns and testimonial themes. 3. **Data Availability:** Create and document access to a curated dataset (within ethical constraints) or detailed replication package. 4. **Visualization:** Add figures showing temporal trends, regional distributions, and thematic correlations to enhance data communication. 5. **Ethical Documentation:** Explicitly describe IRB approval process and detailed ethical protocols for handling

traumatic content.

\\\\ **Minor Revisions:** 1. Reduce theoretical jargon in results sections to improve accessibility. 2. Include software and package specifications for all analyses. 3. Add demographic metadata about testimony creators where available. 4. Improve transitions between quantitative and qualitative sections. 5. Correct minor formatting inconsistencies in citations.

\\\\ **Additional Analyses to Strengthen:** 1. Network analysis of testimony dissemination across platforms. 2. Sentiment analysis correlated with event types and fatalities. 3. Comparative analysis of testimony persistence across different platforms. 4. Examination of how verification practices (geolocation, timestamps) affect testimony credibility and survival.

—

\\\\ ** Step 4. Final Decision \ Justification**

\\\\ **Overall Score: 5.8/10**

\\\\ **Recommendation: Borderline**

\\\\ **Justification:** This manuscript addresses an important contemporary issue with relevant theoretical frameworks and a potentially valuable mixed-methods approach. However, significant methodological flaws—particularly regarding transparency, reproducibility, and statistical rigor—currently undermine the validity of its findings. The absence of critical methodological details, limited data availability, and insufficient documentation of ethical protocols prevent proper evaluation of the research.

The paper shows promise with its integrative approach and timely focus, but requires substantial revision to meet the standards of a high-impact journal. The borderline recommendation reflects that the core research questions and approach have merit, but the execution currently falls short of publication standards. With comprehensive methodological revisions and enhanced transparency, this could develop into a valuable contribution to the literature.

The decision is not "Reject" because the theoretical framework, contemporary relevance, and mixed-methods design represent a foundation worth developing. However, the required revisions are substantial enough that acceptance cannot be recommended without seeing how the authors address these fundamental concerns.

—

AI Reviewer 2 - Critical Review

This reviewer provides critical analysis and identifies potential weaknesses

****REVIEWER COMMENTS****

****1. Overall Impression**** My immediate reaction is one of significant methodological concern. While the topic is timely and important, the execution raises serious questions about validity and rigor. This feels like an overhyped study with ambitious theoretical framing but insufficient empirical foundation. The mixed-methods approach appears more aspirational than rigorously implemented, with questionable integration between quantitative and qualitative components.

****Strengths:**** Important topic addressing epistemic injustice; comprehensive theoretical framing; ambitious scope spanning 2023-2025; attention to digital testimony as counter-narrative.

****Concerns:**** Methodological transparency severely lacking; questionable data quality and sampling; potential confirmation bias in qualitative analysis; overinterpretation of limited evidence; ethical concerns about using traumatic content.

****2. Technical \ Scientific Assessment****

****A. Problem Definition: 3/5**** The research question is clearly motivated and non-trivial, addressing important gaps in conflict documentation. The authors convincingly argue why digital testimony matters in asymmetric conflicts. However, the problem definition assumes rather than demonstrates structural silencing.

****B. Methodological Soundness: 2/5**** Critical flaws undermine methodological rigor: - No documentation of ACLED data modifications or validation procedures - Qualitative sampling from only three platforms ignores crucial channels (WhatsApp, Facebook, encrypted apps) - No intercoder reliability measures for thematic analysis - Integration between methods appears post hoc rather than designed - Statistical analysis is rudimentary (correlations without causal inference)

****C. Results \ Evidence: 2/5**** - Claims of "9,200 records" but no data dictionary or variable definitions - Fatality numbers appear inconsistent with known conflict databases - No validation of digital testimony authenticity or verification procedures - Qualitative themes seem predetermined by theoretical frameworks - Missing crucial baselines: How does this compare to Israeli digital testimony? Other conflicts?

****D. Contribution to the Field: 3/5**** Theoretical contribution to epistemic justice is meaningful, but empirical novelty is limited. The mixed-methods approach, while flawed, represents an interesting direction for conflict studies.

****E. Writing \ Presentation: 4/5**** Well-organized and readable, with clear theoretical framing. However, methodological sections lack necessary detail for replication.

****F. Ethical \ Transparency Standards: 1/5**** - No IRB documentation for using traumatic content - No data/code availability statement - Anonymization procedures insufficient for highly identifiable content - No positionality statement despite clear theoretical commitments

****3. Strengths**** - Important theoretical contribution to epistemic justice literature - Ambitious temporal scope covering recent conflict escalation - Attention to platform governance as structural

constraint - Integration attempt between quantitative patterns and qualitative experience

****4. Weaknesses****

****Major Flaws:**** - ****Data Quality:**** ACLED-derived dataset modifications undocumented; no validation against original sources - ****Sampling Bias:**** Platform selection excludes crucial communication channels; maximum variation sampling not demonstrated - ****Verification Gap:**** No procedures to authenticate digital testimony or address potential misinformation - ****Integration Failure:**** Quantitative and qualitative components appear analyzed separately then forced together - ****Ethical Lapses:**** Insufficient protection for trauma content; no documented consent procedures

****Minor Flaws:**** - Inconsistent citation style - Vague description of "thematic saturation" - Overuse of theoretical jargon without operational clarity - Missing demographic details about testimony creators

****5. Recommendations for Improvement****

****Required for Acceptance:**** 1. Full documentation of ACLED data processing and validation against source 2. Detailed authentication procedures for digital testimony 3. Inter-coder reliability statistics for qualitative analysis 4. Ethical approval documentation and enhanced anonymization protocols 5. Comparison with Israeli digital testimony patterns 6. Statistical analysis beyond descriptive correlations 7. Platform selection justification including omitted channels

****Strengthening Revisions:**** 1. Pre-registered coding framework to reduce confirmation bias 2. Network analysis of testimony dissemination patterns 3. Content moderation impact quantification 4. Demographic analysis of testimony creators 5. Longitudinal analysis of testimony persistence across platforms

****6. Verdict****

****Overall Score: 2/5 - Weak Reject****

****Justification:**** While the topic is important and theoretically relevant, the methodological flaws are fundamental and undermine the validity of findings. The lack of data transparency, questionable sampling, absent verification procedures, and ethical concerns prevent meaningful evaluation of the claims. The integration between quantitative and qualitative methods appears superficial, and the analysis demonstrates significant potential for confirmation bias given the strong theoretical commitments. This paper requires substantial methodological revision and additional empirical work before it could meet publication standards at a Tier-1 venue.

****Reviewer 2 Style Addendum:**** The authors must provide substantially stronger evidence that their findings aren't simply artifacts of methodological choices and theoretical predispositions. The burden of proof for claims about epistemic sovereignty and structural silencing requires more rigorous documentation and analysis than currently provided. The field deserves robust evidence, not just theoretically convenient findings.

Human Reviewer

Expert human review providing domain-specific insights

Reviewer: Jabar

Scores (out of 10): - Question 1: 1.5 - Question 2: 1.5 - Question 3: 0.5 - Question 4: 1 - Question 5: 1 - Question 6: 1 - Question 7: 1

Total Score: 7.5 / 10

Reviewer Notes:

Submitted at: 2025-12-24 18:33:38

Aggregate Review

Combined assessment from all reviewers

Aggregate Review Report

This report combines the assessments from all three reviewers:

Individual Scores: - AI Reviewer 1 (Comprehensive): 7.0 / 10 - AI Reviewer 2 (Critical): 0.0 / 10
- Human Reviewer (Jabar): 7.5 / 10

Aggregate Score: 4.83 / 10

Overall Assessment: The paper received an average score of 4.83 out of 10 across all three reviewers.

Final Decision: Major Revision

Justification: The paper has potential but requires substantial improvements before it can be considered for publication.

Generated: 2026-01-06 14:16:25