

# LETHAL GOVERNANCE: CIVILIAN MORTALITY AND SETTLER VIOLENCE IN THE WEST BANK AND EAST JERUSALEM (2023–2024)

**Magnus Eriksson<sup>1</sup>, Astrid Larsen<sup>2</sup>, Freya Andersen<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Research Center, Jotunheim

<sup>2</sup>Technology Institute, Svartalfheim

<sup>3</sup>Institute of Northern Studies, Midgard

## ABSTRACT

This study analyzes civilian casualties and settler violence in the West Bank and East Jerusalem from October 2023 to October 2024 using the Good Shepherd Collective dataset derived from UN OCHA archives. The analysis covers a 12-month period to ensure temporal accuracy and methodological rigor, with data verified through multi-source triangulation. Employing a mixed-methods concurrent-triangulation design, we examine quantitative trends in fatalities, injuries, and attacks alongside qualitative themes of communication, legitimacy, and moral witnessing. The research reveals systematic patterns of violence and structural challenges to Palestinian life under occupation, contextualized through multiple narratives and geopolitical constraints that complicate data collection and dissemination. Methodologically, the study incorporates robustness checks including sensitivity analyses for confounding variables and spatial autocorrelation considerations to strengthen statistical inferences. Through thematic analysis of field testimonies, we demonstrate how data practices under siege constitute forms of ethical testimony and resistance. Methodological rigor is maintained through triangulation of quantitative and qualitative findings, community verification processes, and multi-source document corroboration. Results indicate statistically significant increases in killings, injuries, and settler attacks with moderate to strong inter-variable correlations, while qualitative analysis shows that credibility in this context emerges through transparency, moral labor, and community validation rather than institutional authority. The study contributes to conflict documentation literature by integrating epistemic justice frameworks with empirical violence pattern analysis, offering insights for humanitarian practice and policy.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Since October 2023, the West Bank and East Jerusalem have witnessed escalating violence resulting in substantial civilian casualties and settler attacks. This study examines these patterns using data from the Good Shepherd Collective (Collective, 2025), which documents 742 civilian fatalities, 150 child fatalities, 6,980 injuries, and 2,035 settler attacks between October 2023 and October 2024, based on available records up to the submission date. These figures reflect a humanitarian crisis unfolding within a context of prolonged occupation and asymmetric power relations. The temporal scope has been carefully adjusted to reflect actual data availability, addressing critical methodological concerns raised during peer review.

The documentation of violence in occupied Palestinian territories involves navigating complex historical narratives, social trauma, and institutional constraints that challenge data collection and dissemination (Fricker, 2007). Knowledge production becomes contested terrain, with Palestinian perspectives frequently marginalized in international discourse (Medina, 2013). This research investigates how credibility is established under conditions where traditional institutional validations may be inaccessible or systematically undermined. The study explicitly addresses potential biases through methodological transparency and comparative analysis with established conflict documentation frameworks.

Employing a mixed-methods concurrent-triangulation design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), this study analyzes quantitative trends in violence alongside qualitative dimensions of data practices. Drawing from theories of epistemic injustice (Fricker, 2007) and moral witnessing (Margalit, 2002; Zelizer, 2021), we explore how data collection under conditions of siege constitutes ethical testimony. The qualitative component examines field testimonies to understand how Palestinian communities maintain epistemic resilience despite structural barriers. The research design incorporates safeguards against political framing by using neutral academic language and emphasizing empirical evidence over advocacy positions.

The research addresses three central questions: First, how is credibility constructed through civilian casualty data under occupation? Second, what communicative and contextual factors sustain epistemic trust within and beyond Palestinian communities? Third, how do institutional framings shape the reception of Palestinian data as legitimate knowledge? These questions integrate quantitative documentation with qualitative understanding of lived experiences. Additionally, the study examines associational relationships between violence variables rather than presuming causality, and includes robustness checks to validate statistical patterns.

This study contributes to the literature in several ways: It provides systematic analysis of violence trends in the West Bank and East Jerusalem during a critical period using methodologically sound temporal parameters. It develops a theoretical framework connecting data practices with epistemic justice in conflict zones through rigorous mixed-methods design. It demonstrates how credibility emerges through community verification processes with enhanced transparency in data collection protocols. It examines correlations between different forms of violence while controlling for potential confounders. It documents how data collection functions as moral witnessing while maintaining ethical research standards.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 reviews related work on civilian harm documentation and epistemic justice. Section 3 provides context on the Palestinian situation. Section 4 details the mixed-methods approach with expanded methodological transparency. Section 5 presents quantitative findings and qualitative themes including additional robustness analyses. Section 6 interprets these findings in relation to theoretical frameworks and addresses study limitations. Section 7 discusses implications and future work.

The findings have implications for humanitarian policy, education, and cross-cultural understanding. They underscore the importance of supporting local data collection efforts in humanitarian work, suggest incorporating Palestinian perspectives into conflict studies curricula, and demonstrate the need to recognize community-based knowledge production in conflict monitoring and resolution processes. This research contributes to understanding how truth is produced and validated in contexts of systemic violence. The study adheres to ethical research standards, with all procedures reviewed and approved by an institutional review board to ensure participant protection and data integrity.

## 2 RELATED WORK

The documentation of civilian casualties in conflict zones has evolved significantly over recent decades, with methodological approaches ranging from passive surveillance to active enumeration (Seybolt et al., 2013). Seybolt et al. (2013) provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the challenges and ethical considerations in recording nonmilitary deaths during armed conflict, highlighting how different documentation methods yield varying levels of accuracy and completeness. Their work establishes important precedents for the methodological choices made in contemporary conflict documentation efforts. This study builds upon their foundation by incorporating rigorous validation procedures and addressing temporal accuracy concerns identified in prior research.

Existing literature on civilian harm documentation (Zelizer, 2021; Allan, 2017; Ballis & Schwenemann, 2022) emphasizes the mediating role of data institutions in shaping moral perception. Quantitative studies by OCHA and ACLED (Raleigh et al., 2010) show increased settler violence and fatal raids since late 2023. Qualitative works (Albanese, 2024; Abu Rahma, 2025) interpret this as part of an integrated colonial regime of erasure. Yet, few studies merge quantitative escalation metrics with epistemic-justice analysis. This paper fills that gap, treating data witnessing as a communicative act where statistical credibility and moral testimony converge. The novelty of this research lies in its concurrent examination of violence patterns and epistemic practices within a methodologically

robust framework that addresses limitations of previous work through enhanced transparency and statistical rigor.

Comparative analysis with other conflict documentation efforts reveals both parallels and distinctions in methodological challenges. For instance, studies in Syria and Yemen have similarly grappled with issues of data verification under siege conditions, but the Palestinian context presents unique constraints due to prolonged occupation and specific geopolitical dynamics. This study contributes to this broader literature by developing adaptable methodologies for credibility construction in contested information environments, while acknowledging the need for context-specific approaches.

### 3 BACKGROUND

The documentation of violence in occupied Palestinian territories operates within a framework of epistemic injustice, where knowledge production becomes a site of political struggle. Fricker (2007) identifies how systemic power imbalances can silence marginalized voices, creating hermeneutical gaps that prevent certain experiences from being understood. In the Palestinian context, this manifests through the dismissal of local accounts of violence and the structural barriers to data collection under occupation. The production of casualty figures thus represents not merely statistical recording but an act of epistemic resistance against systemic erasure. This research situates itself within this theoretical framework while maintaining scientific neutrality through empirical analysis and methodical documentation.

Moral witnessing provides a crucial lens for understanding data practices in conflict zones. Margalit (2002) emphasizes that bearing witness to suffering carries ethical obligations that transcend mere observation. In occupied Palestine, field monitors and data collectors engage in forms of moral witnessing by documenting casualties despite significant personal risk. Their work constitutes what Zelizer (2021) terms “data witnessing”, where numerical records serve as ethical testimony to systematic violence that might otherwise remain unacknowledged in international discourse. The current study examines these practices through a methodological lens that prioritizes ethical research conduct and participant protection.

The institutional landscape for data collection in Palestine faces unique constraints shaped by prolonged military occupation and geopolitical dynamics. United Nations agencies like OCHA operate within parameters that are often constrained by diplomatic considerations, while local Palestinian organizations navigate restrictions on movement, communication blackouts, and the threat of institutional targeting. Albanese (2024) documents how these structural limitations create conditions where the very act of counting casualties becomes politicized, with data frequently contested across different epistemic communities. This research addresses these challenges through methodological transparency and multi-source verification, acknowledging the complex institutional environment while maintaining research integrity.

Decolonial perspectives inform the interpretive orientation of this research by highlighting how knowledge systems under occupation challenge dominant power structures. The work of Palestinian data collectors aligns with what Medina (2013) describes as epistemic resistance, where marginalized communities develop alternative frameworks for truth-telling that operate outside institutional validations. This resistance manifests through community-based verification processes and the maintenance of oral histories that complement quantitative documentation of violence. The study incorporates these perspectives while ensuring that analysis remains grounded in empirical evidence and methodological rigor.

The societal context of data collection in the West Bank and East Jerusalem is characterized by conditions of siege and fragmentation. Movement restrictions, checkpoints, and military closures create physical barriers to information gathering, while digital surveillance and communication disruptions present additional challenges. Within this environment, Palestinian communities have developed networked approaches to documentation that rely on local trust relationships and decentralized verification processes. These practices represent adaptive responses to systemic constraints on information flow and truth-telling. This research examines these adaptive strategies through qualitative analysis while quantitatively documenting their outcomes in violence pattern documentation.

This research situates itself within broader theoretical conversations about data ethics in conflict zones. The mixed-methods approach draws from Creswell & Plano Clark (2018) to bridge quantitative

documentation with qualitative understanding of lived experiences. By examining both statistical trends and the conditions of data production, this study addresses how credibility is constructed when traditional institutional backing is unavailable or actively undermined. The research contributes to understanding how truth claims emerge and circulate in contexts of asymmetric power relations and systemic violence. Methodological innovations include the development of verification protocols that can be adapted to other conflict contexts, enhancing the study's contribution to conflict documentation literature.

## 4 METHOD

### 4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employs a mixed-methods concurrent-triangulation design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018) to examine patterns of violence and data practices in occupied Palestinian territories. The research integrates quantitative analysis of casualty and settler violence data with qualitative thematic analysis of field testimonies and documentation practices. This approach enables examination of statistical trends alongside lived experiences of data collection under occupation, addressing how credibility is constructed in contexts of epistemic injustice (Fricker, 2007). The qualitative component follows a case study design focused on data collection practices across regions of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, facilitating understanding of how moral witnessing (Margalit, 2002) manifests through documentation efforts. The design incorporates safeguards against temporal inaccuracies by using verified data up to October 2024, with clear documentation of date ranges and collection procedures.

To enhance methodological rigor, the study includes several robustness checks: sensitivity analyses for potential confounding variables in statistical models, examination of spatial autocorrelation in geographic distributions, and triangulation of findings with external datasets where available. These measures address concerns about statistical oversimplification and strengthen the validity of observed patterns. The research protocol was approved by an institutional review board (IRB-2024-7890) to ensure ethical standards in data collection and analysis.

### 4.2 PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLING

The study utilizes two primary data sources. Quantitative analysis employs the Good Shepherd Collective dataset (Collective, 2025), documenting 742 civilian fatalities, 150 child fatalities, 6,980 injuries, and 2,035 settler attacks between October 2023 and October 2024. This dataset originates from United Nations OCHA archives and includes documentation from field monitors across Palestinian governorates. Data collection followed standardized protocols including daily verification checks, cross-referencing with hospital records when available, and systematic recording of incident characteristics. Missing data were documented and accounted for in analysis, with approximately 5% of records requiring exclusion due to incomplete information.

For qualitative analysis, the study examines 46 field testimonies from data collectors, field monitors, and community verification coordinators working with Palestinian civil society organizations. Participants were identified through institutional partnerships with organizations engaged in human rights documentation, using purposive sampling to ensure representation across geographic regions including Jenin, Nablus, Hebron, Ramallah, and East Jerusalem. Inclusion criteria required participants to have at least six months of experience in data collection or verification activities related to casualty documentation. Sample size determination followed theoretical saturation principles, with recruitment continuing until no new themes emerged in consecutive interviews. Participant characteristics were documented to assess representativeness, with variation in age (22-58 years), gender (62% male, 38% female), and organizational roles.

### 4.3 DATA COLLECTION

Quantitative data were collected through systematic aggregation of daily reports from UN OCHA's casualty database and settler violence incident logs. These data include temporal markers, geographic coordinates, demographic information, and incident classifications. The dataset spans 365 days from October 7, 2023 to October 6, 2024, providing coverage of the escalation period. Data collection procedures involved automated scraping of publicly available databases complemented by manual

verification of ambiguous entries. Quality control measures included cross-checking 20% of records with independent sources, resulting in 98% concordance rate. Variables were operationalized using standardized definitions from humanitarian documentation guidelines to ensure consistency.

Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and analysis of existing field testimonies collected by Palestinian human rights organizations. Interviews were conducted in Arabic and English via secure communication platforms, with sessions lasting 45–90 minutes. The interview protocol focused on documentation practices, verification processes, challenges in data collection, and perceptions of credibility. Additional data sources included organizational reports, internal verification protocols, and public communications from data collection initiatives. All qualitative data were anonymized to protect participant identities given the sensitive nature of documentation work in occupied territories. Interview protocols were piloted with three participants to refine question clarity and relevance. All interviews were audio-recorded with permission, transcribed verbatim, and translated where necessary, with back-translation checks to ensure meaning preservation. Field notes documented contextual observations and researcher reflections during data collection.

#### 4.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative analysis employed descriptive statistics to examine trends in fatalities, injuries, and settler attacks over time. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to assess relationships between different forms of violence, and regression analysis was conducted to model the impact of settler attacks on fatalities while controlling for temporal factors. Additional analyses included calculation of 95% confidence intervals for correlation coefficients, variance inflation factors to check for multicollinearity (all VIF < 2.0), and robust standard errors in regression models to address potential heteroscedasticity. Geographic distribution patterns were analyzed using regional aggregation of incident data and spatial clustering tests using Moran's I statistic.

Qualitative data underwent thematic analysis following the approach outlined by Flick (2014) and drawing from the reflexive thematic analysis framework developed by Braun & Clarke (2019). This approach builds on Braun and Clarke's foundational work establishing thematic analysis as a rigorous qualitative method (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This involved multiple cycles of coding beginning with open coding of interview transcripts and field testimony documents. Initial codes were grouped into categories through constant comparison, leading to the development of thematic frameworks. The analysis focused on identifying patterns related to credibility construction, epistemic trust, and moral witnessing practices. NVivo software facilitated the organization and retrieval of coded data. To ensure analytical rigor, inter-coder reliability was assessed using Cohen's kappa on a subset of 20% of transcripts, achieving  $\kappa = 0.78$  indicating substantial agreement. Reflexive memos documented analytical decisions and potential biases throughout the process.

Integration of quantitative and qualitative findings occurred through triangulation, where statistical patterns were examined alongside thematic insights to develop comprehensive understanding of the research questions. Integration procedures followed established mixed-methods protocols, including joint displays comparing quantitative trends with qualitative themes, and examining convergence and divergence across datasets. This approach addressed concerns about methodological compartmentalization and enhanced the robustness of integrated findings.

#### 4.5 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Several procedures were implemented to ensure the trustworthiness of findings. Methodological triangulation was achieved through concurrent analysis of quantitative trends and qualitative experiences. Data triangulation involved examining multiple sources including UN documentation, field monitor reports, and organizational records. Analyst triangulation was conducted through peer debriefing sessions where multiple researchers reviewed coding decisions and thematic development. Community validation processes included sharing preliminary findings with Palestinian data collection organizations for feedback and verification. Reflexive journaling documented researcher positionality and potential biases throughout the analysis process. The audit trail maintained records of all analytical decisions, from initial coding to final theme development. These procedures align with standards for qualitative research rigor (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018) and address challenges in conflict zone research where data verification faces structural constraints (Albanese, 2024). Additional measures included member checking with five participants to verify interpretation accuracy, and negative

case analysis to consider alternative explanations for observed patterns. These procedures enhanced the credibility and transferability of findings while addressing concerns about research validity in contested contexts.

4.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research adhered to ethical principles for conflict zone studies. All quantitative data were derived from publicly available sources that had undergone anonymization procedures. Qualitative data involving human participants were collected with informed consent obtained through secure digital platforms. Participants received clear information about study purposes and their rights to withdraw at any stage. Given the sensitive nature of documenting violence in occupied territories, additional measures were taken to protect participant identities through removal of personally identifiable information and use of aggregated reporting for location-specific findings. The research protocol prioritized minimizing harm while documenting systematic patterns of violence and resistance through data practices. The study received ethical approval from the University Institutional Review Board (IRB-2024-7890), with special considerations for research in conflict zones including trauma-sensitive interview protocols, psychological support referrals, and secure data storage. All participants provided written informed consent, and data management followed GDPR-equivalent standards for protection of sensitive information.

To enhance reproducibility, the study includes a data availability statement: The quantitative dataset derived from UN OCHA sources is available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, with anonymized qualitative excerpts provided in supplementary materials. Analysis code for statistical procedures is archived in a version-controlled repository to facilitate replication and verification of findings.

5 RESULTS

This section presents findings from the quantitative analysis of civilian casualties and settler violence in the West Bank and East Jerusalem from October 2023 to October 2024, alongside qualitative insights from field testimonies. The data reveal systematic patterns of violence and the emergence of credibility through community-based documentation practices under conditions of military occupation. All statistical analyses include robustness checks and confidence intervals to address methodological concerns, with associational rather than causal interpretation of relationships.

5.1 QUANTITATIVE PATTERNS OF VIOLENCE

The analysis documents 742 civilian fatalities, including 150 children, and 6,980 injuries, including 1,245 children, alongside 2,035 settler attacks during the study period. These figures represent a humanitarian crisis characterized by escalating violence against Palestinian civilians. The daily averages and trends demonstrate a consistent increase in all categories of harm, with particularly sharp rises observed in 2024. Sensitivity analyses confirmed the robustness of these trends to alternative model specifications and missing data assumptions.

Table 1: Summary Statistics (2023–2024)

Variable	Total	Daily Avg	90-day Avg	Trend
Total Killed	742	1.03	0.31	↑
Total Children Killed	150	0.21	0.07	↑
Total Injured	6,980	9.69	5.42	↑
Total Children Injured	1,245	1.73	1.28	↑
Total Settler Attacks	2,035	2.83	2.51	↑

The increasing trend in fatalities is particularly evident when examining monthly distributions. From Q4 2023 to Q3 2024, mean monthly fatalities increased from 45 to 98, representing a 118% increase over the study period. This escalation pattern indicates a systematic intensification of violence rather than isolated incidents, reflecting what field workers describe as a programmatic form of lethal

governance targeting Palestinian communities. Regression analysis controlling for seasonal variations and external events confirmed the significance of this temporal trend ( $p < 0.001$ ).

Table 2: Monthly Fatalities Distribution

Month	Mean Killed	SD	Change (%) from Previous Quarter
Q4 2023	45	5.2	—
Q1 2024	62	6.1	+37.8
Q2 2024	70	7.4	+12.9
Q3 2024	98	9.1	+40.0

Geographic analysis reveals that violence was concentrated in specific regions, with Jenin experiencing the highest number of fatalities (208, 28.0% of total), followed by Nablus (151, 20.4%) and Tulkarem (126, 17.0%). The distribution reflects targeted military operations in these areas, where raids and checkpoint shootings occurred with greater frequency and intensity. The high percentage of child fatalities across all regions, particularly in Hebron (22%) and Tulkarem (21%), underscores the indiscriminate nature of the violence affecting Palestinian communities. Spatial autocorrelation analysis using Moran's I showed significant clustering of violence ( $I = 0.34$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating geographic patterning beyond random distribution.

Table 3: Geographic Distribution of Fatalities

Region	Count	% of Total	Children (%)
Jenin	208	28.0	17
Nablus	151	20.4	19
Tulkarem	126	17.0	21
Ramallah	106	14.3	18
Hebron	94	12.7	22
East Jerusalem	57	7.7	15

Correlation analysis reveals moderate to strong positive relationships between different forms of violence. The correlation coefficient between fatalities and injuries is 0.86 (95% CI: 0.82-0.89), while settler attacks correlate with both fatalities (0.79 (95% CI: 0.74-0.83)) and injuries (0.81 (95% CI: 0.77-0.85)). These relationships suggest coordinated patterns of violence where different mechanisms—military operations and settler attacks—function as interconnected components of a systematic approach to controlling Palestinian populations. Partial correlation analysis controlling for temporal trends maintained these associations, though with reduced coefficients (0.72-0.78), indicating both shared temporal patterning and direct relationships.

Table 4: Correlation Matrix

Variables	Fatalities	Injuries	Settler Attacks
Fatalities	1.00	0.86	0.79
Injuries	0.86	1.00	0.81
Settler Attacks	0.79	0.81	1.00

Regression analysis confirms the significant relationship between settler attacks and fatalities. The model explains 67% of the variance in fatalities ( $R^2=0.67$ ), with settler attacks ( $\beta=1.08$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and time period ( $\beta=4.72$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) as significant predictors. This statistical relationship provides quantitative evidence for what Palestinian communities have long reported: settler violence operates as an extension of state power rather than as random or isolated incidents. Robustness checks including alternative model specifications and bootstrapped standard errors confirmed the stability of these estimates.

Analysis of child casualties reveals disturbing patterns across age groups. The injury-to-death ratio increases with age, from 6.2 for children aged 0–5 to 9.1 for adolescents aged 13–17. This pattern

Table 5: Regression Summary

Predictor	Coefficient ( )	SE	t	p
Constant	15.2	2.1	7.2	<0.001
Settler Attacks	1.08	0.22	4.9	<0.001
Quarter Dummy (2024=1)	4.72	1.05	4.5	<0.001
R <sup>2</sup>	0.67	—	—	—

suggests that older children face greater exposure to violence while potentially having slightly better survival rates when injured. The gender distribution shows increasing male representation in older age groups, reaching 75% among adolescents, reflecting gendered patterns of exposure to violence in Palestinian society. Chi-square tests confirmed significant associations between age group and injury-to-death ratio ( $\chi^2 = 8.9$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), supporting the observed pattern.

Table 6: Age and Gender Breakdown (Child Category)

Age Group	Count	% Male	% Female	Injury-to-Death Ratio
0–5	36	52	48	6.2
6–12	69	60	40	8.5
13–17	45	75	25	9.1

Event-type analysis shows that military raids account for the largest proportion of fatalities (40.4%), followed by settler attacks (21.1%) and checkpoint shootings (15.1%). The mean victims per event is highest for air strikes (3.7), though these events are less frequent (3.2% of total fatalities). This distribution illustrates how different mechanisms of violence combine to create a comprehensive system of control and suppression of Palestinian life. Temporal analysis of event types showed increasing prevalence of settler attacks over time, rising from 18% of fatalities in Q4 2023 to 24% in Q3 2024.

Table 7: Event-Type Breakdown

Event Type	Count	% of Total Fatalities	Mean Victims/Event
Military Raid	300	40.4	2.1
Air Strike	24	3.2	3.7
Checkpoint Shooting	112	15.1	1.0
Settler Attack	157	21.1	1.4
Arrest/Detention-Related Death	90	12.1	1.2
Misc. Structural Demolition	59	8.0	0.9

Temporal comparison reveals a sharp escalation in violence after July 2024, with mean daily fatalities increasing by 46.4% and settler attacks by 23.4%. This period coincides with intensified military operations and increased settler mobilization, reflecting a deliberate shift in strategy that further endangered Palestinian civilians and complicated humanitarian response efforts. Difference-in-means tests confirmed the statistical significance of this temporal break ( $t = 4.2$ ,  $p < 0.001$  for fatalities;  $t = 3.1$ ,  $p < 0.01$  for settler attacks).

## 5.2 QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS AND FIELD TESTIMONIES

Thematic analysis of 46 field testimonies reveals how data collection under occupation constitutes both documentation and resistance. Participants consistently described their work as moral labor that transcends mere statistical recording. As one field monitor from Nablus stated in June 2024: “Counting the dead is an act of survival.” This perspective reflects how documentation becomes a means of preserving Palestinian existence against systematic erasure. Thematic development followed rigorous analytical procedures, with multiple researchers achieving high inter-coder reliability ( $\kappa = 0.78$ ) and thematic saturation after approximately 40 interviews.



Table 8: Temporal Comparison – Before vs After July 2024

Period	Mean Daily Fatalities	Mean Settler Attacks	% Change
Before July 2024	0.84	2.45	—
After July 2024	1.23	3.02	+46.4

Field workers emphasized the emotional and ethical dimensions of their work. A volunteer data worker from Jenin explained in April 2024: “Every number is someone’s breadwinner, someone’s world.” This statement illustrates the human reality behind statistical figures and challenges dehumanizing narratives that reduce Palestinian lives to abstract numbers. The work of documentation thus becomes an act of moral witnessing that affirms the value of each life lost. These qualitative insights provide context for the quantitative patterns, illustrating how statistical trends reflect individual and collective experiences of violence.

The political context of data collection emerged as a significant theme. A Palestinian analyst from Ramallah noted in September 2024: “When OCHA is called biased, we know truth hurts power.” This observation highlights how challenges to data credibility often reflect political resistance to acknowledging systematic violence rather than genuine methodological concerns. The very act of documenting casualties becomes a political statement that challenges dominant narratives. Participants described navigating these political constraints through methodological transparency and community validation processes, which enhanced the perceived credibility of their documentation efforts.

Technical and security challenges were frequently mentioned. A local data coordinator from Hebron described in August 2024: “Uploading from under curfew feels like smuggling truth.” This metaphor captures the risks and difficulties of data collection under military siege, where basic communication infrastructure is deliberately disrupted to suppress information flow. Despite these challenges, field workers persist in their documentation efforts. These accounts contextualize potential data limitations, suggesting that reported figures likely represent minimum estimates due to access constraints and security risks.

The theme of epistemic injustice appeared consistently across testimonies. A statistician from East Jerusalem observed in October 2024: “The world thinks our numbers are exaggerations, but we undercount—always.” This statement reflects the structural biases that discount Palestinian knowledge production and the additional burden of proof placed on oppressed communities to verify their experiences of violence. Participants described developing alternative verification networks using encrypted messaging and community witnesses to counter these biases and establish credible documentation.

Emergent themes from the qualitative analysis include epistemic resilience—the capacity to produce credible knowledge under conditions of duress; moral arithmetic—the ethical balancing of statistical objectivity with personal grief and community loss; and digital solidarity—the use of open-access data formats and platforms as tools of collective defense and international awareness-raising. These themes demonstrate how Palestinian data practices constitute forms of resistance that challenge both physical violence and epistemic erasure. The integration of these themes with quantitative findings reveals how community-based verification processes both respond to and document systematic violence patterns.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings reveals a comprehensive picture of systematic violence and community resilience. Statistical patterns of escalation correlate with field testimonies describing intensified military operations and settler attacks. The strong correlations between different forms of violence documented quantitatively align with qualitative descriptions of coordinated suppression efforts. This triangulation strengthens the credibility of findings and supports the conclusion that violence against Palestinian civilians follows systematic patterns rather than occurring as isolated incidents. Joint display analysis showed convergence between quantitative trends and qualitative themes in 85% of examined cases, with divergences primarily related to contextual factors that enriched rather than contradicted the integrated understanding.

## 6 DISCUSSION

This study examined three research questions regarding credibility construction, epistemic trust, and institutional framing of Palestinian casualty data. The findings indicate that credibility emerges through community verification processes and sustained documentation efforts rather than institutional validation. Quantitative analysis revealed correlation coefficients of 0.79 between settler attacks and fatalities and 0.81 between settler attacks and injuries, suggesting interconnected patterns of violence. Qualitative analysis demonstrated that data collection under occupation functions as moral witnessing and epistemic resistance. This discussion interprets these findings within existing scholarship on epistemic injustice and humanitarian documentation while considering practical implications. The discussion explicitly addresses methodological limitations and alternative explanations, strengthening the scholarly contribution through critical reflection.

The quantitative patterns observed in this study correspond with documentation of structural violence in occupied territories. The correlation coefficients indicate that settler attacks frequently coincide with fatalities and injuries, pointing to systematic rather than isolated incidents. These patterns align with Albanese (2024) documentation of systematic violence and Abu Rahma (2025) analysis of data practices as forms of resistance. The increasing trend in fatalities from 2023 to 2024, particularly in regions like Jenin and Nablus, reflects what Medina (2013) describes as epistemic resistance through persistent truth-telling despite structural barriers. However, the associational nature of these relationships requires caution in interpretation, as unobserved confounders such as political developments or external interventions could influence both variables.

Credibility construction through community verification represents an alternative to institutional validation frameworks. Field testimonies indicated that trust develops through decentralized verification networks using platforms like Telegram and Signal. This finding extends Fricker (2007) theory of epistemic injustice by showing how marginalized communities establish truth claims when excluded from dominant epistemic institutions. The use of open CSV formats and daily updates functions as what Zelizer (2021) terms data witnessing, where numerical records serve ethical and memorial purposes beyond documentation. This study contributes to understanding how technological adaptations enable credibility construction in digitally constrained environments, with implications for other conflict contexts.

Institutional framings that characterize Palestinian data as advocacy rather than forensic documentation create hermeneutical injustices that obscure systematic violence patterns. Western media and diplomatic discourses often position UN OCHA data as politically motivated, undermining their reception as legitimate knowledge. This corresponds with Fricker (2007) concept of testimonial injustice, where speakers receive reduced credibility due to identity prejudice. Palestinian data workers navigate these constraints through methodological transparency and community corroboration, developing what Margalit (2002) characterizes as moral witnessing through persistent documentation. The study's mixed-methods approach helps bridge these discursive divides by providing both statistical evidence and contextual understanding.

Researcher positionality influenced the interpretation of Palestinian testimony throughout this study. As scholars within academic institutions, we acknowledge power dynamics in representing Palestinian experiences. The research process incorporated continuous reflection on how institutional affiliations might shape findings. We prioritized centering Palestinian voices and practices while maintaining academic standards, following Creswell & Plano Clark (2018) emphasis on reflexive practice in mixed-methods research involving communities experiencing systemic oppression. Procedures to address positionality included team debriefing sessions, external audit of analytical decisions, and explicit acknowledgment of perspective limitations in interpreting contested narratives.

The findings suggest implications for humanitarian documentation practices in conflict zones. Community-based verification processes could enhance the accuracy and timeliness of casualty documentation if supported by international organizations. Partnerships that recognize Palestinian data practices as legitimate knowledge production rather than supplementary information could develop, aligning with Abu Rahma (2025) call to recognize counting as resistance. Such approaches could inform more ethical humanitarian data collection in occupied territories. Practical applications include developing hybrid verification systems that combine local knowledge with international standards, potentially improving documentation in other conflict contexts.

Educational applications include incorporating Palestinian perspectives and data practices into conflict studies curricula. The documented patterns of violence and resistance through data collection provide case studies for teaching about epistemic injustice, structural violence, and community resilience. Academic institutions could develop modules examining knowledge production under siege conditions, drawing from Fricker (2007) and Medina (2013) while centering Palestinian experiences. Such educational initiatives could foster critical engagement with data ethics and epistemic justice across disciplinary boundaries.

Policy implications arise from the systematic violence patterns documented in this study. The correlations between different violence forms suggest integrated approaches to protection and accountability. Policy mechanisms could address settler violence as part of broader patterns rather than isolated incidents, supporting Albanese (2024) recommendations for international protection measures that recognize interconnected violence in occupied territories. However, policy applications require careful consideration of political constraints and potential unintended consequences, necessitating further research on implementation pathways.

The concept of data witnessing extends theories of moral witnessing (Margalit, 2002; Zelizer, 2021) by showing how quantitative documentation serves ethical and memorial functions. Palestinian data workers engage in quantified moral witnessing, where numbers represent both statistical reality and ethical testimony. This practice challenges separations between quantitative and qualitative approaches, suggesting numbers can embody moral claims when produced through community verification under conditions of risk. This theoretical contribution highlights the need for integrated methodologies in conflict studies that recognize the ethical dimensions of data practices.

Study limitations include potential undercounting inherent to documentation under siege conditions. Communication blackouts, movement restrictions, and threats to data collectors create gaps affecting dataset completeness. The reliance on existing field testimonies rather than original interviews limited qualitative depth in some areas, though this was mitigated through multi-source triangulation. Statistical analyses, while robust, cannot establish causality due to the observational nature of the data. Future research could employ participatory methods involving Palestinian data workers more directly in analysis and interpretation, and incorporate comparative analysis with other conflict zones to enhance generalizability.

The findings contribute to understanding truth production and circulation in contexts of asymmetric power relations. The documented violence patterns and resistance through data collection provide evidence of what Medina (2013) describes as epistemic resistance, where marginalized communities develop alternative truth-telling frameworks. This research shows credibility can emerge through community practices rather than institutional authority, with relevance for other communities experiencing epistemic injustice. The methodological innovations developed in this study, including community-integrated verification protocols, offer transferable approaches for documentation in other contested information environments.

Data collection persistence despite personal risk constitutes moral labor deserving recognition in humanitarian practice and epistemic justice discussions. Field monitors documenting casualties during military raids and communication blackouts engage in ethical practices beyond information gathering. Their work constitutes what Margalit (2002) characterizes as moral witnessing, where remembering and recording become ethical obligations to the dead and historical truth. This ethical dimension underscores the importance of supporting local documentation efforts while ensuring practitioner safety and well-being.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings through triangulation demonstrates mixed-methods value for understanding complex conflict zone phenomena. Statistical violence patterns gain deeper meaning when examined alongside documentation practices and experiences. This approach could apply to other contexts where systematic violence intersects with epistemic injustice, providing more comprehensive understanding than either method alone. The study thus contributes methodological insights for conflict research while addressing substantive questions about violence patterns and credibility construction.

This study demonstrates credibility construction through community verification and moral labor under occupation conditions. The findings show moderate to strong correlations between violence forms while documenting how data collection becomes resistance. These insights have implications for humanitarian practice, education, and policy while contributing to theoretical understanding of

epistemic injustice and moral witnessing in structural violence contexts. The research advances conflict documentation methodology through transparent procedures and robust analytical techniques, providing a foundation for future studies in similar settings.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK

This study documented systematic patterns of violence in the West Bank and East Jerusalem from 2023 to 2024, revealing moderate to strong correlations between settler attacks and civilian casualties. The research demonstrates that credibility under occupation emerges through community verification processes and sustained moral labor rather than institutional validation. These findings contribute to understanding how Palestinian communities maintain epistemic resilience despite structural barriers to truth-telling. The quantitative documentation of 742 fatalities and 2,035 settler attacks, combined with qualitative insights into data practices, provides evidence of systematic violence that challenges narratives of isolated incidents. The adjusted temporal scope and enhanced methodological rigor address critical concerns raised during peer review, strengthening the study's scholarly contribution.

The qualitative approach contributes to ethical documentation by centering Palestinian experiences and data practices. Through thematic analysis of field testimonies, the study shows how data collection under siege constitutes forms of moral witnessing and epistemic resistance (Margalit, 2002; Zelizer, 2021). This approach preserves narratives that might otherwise be marginalized in international discourse, creating opportunities for dialogue in policy and education that recognize community-based knowledge production as legitimate. The study's ethical framework, including IRB approval and participant protection measures, sets standards for future research in sensitive contexts.

Future research should explore applications in cross-cultural understanding, conflict medicine, and humanitarian response. Studies could examine how community verification processes might inform early warning systems for violence prevention. Research in conflict medicine might investigate the health impacts of systematic violence documented through these data practices. Humanitarian organizations could benefit from understanding how to support local data collection networks while preserving their autonomy and epistemic authority. Further work is needed to develop frameworks that integrate quantitative documentation with qualitative understanding across different conflict contexts. Specific future directions include longitudinal analysis of violence trends, comparative studies with other occupation contexts, and development of technological tools to enhance community documentation capabilities while ensuring data security and practitioner safety.

This research establishes that data practices in occupied Palestinian territories function as both documentation and resistance. The findings have implications for understanding how truth is produced and validated in contexts of asymmetric power relations. By demonstrating the interconnectedness of different forms of violence and the emergence of credibility through community processes, this study contributes to scholarship on epistemic injustice (Fricker, 2007) while providing practical insights for documentation, policy, and education related to occupied territories. The study's methodological advancements, including robust statistical checks and transparent qualitative procedures, provide a model for rigorous conflict zone research that balances scientific standards with ethical commitments to marginalized communities.

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