

The Impact of Israeli Incursions on The Social and Athletic Conditions of Members of Sports Academies in Jenin Governorate

This study aimed to assess the degree of exposure of members of sports academies in Jenin Governorate to Israeli incursions and to examine their impact on social life and sports activities, in addition to identifying differences based on gender and place of residence. The study adopted a descriptive analytical approach using a mixed-methods design that combined quantitative and qualitative data. The sample consisted of (102) participants selected purposively from sports academies, in addition to (10) participants for the qualitative interviews. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS, while qualitative data were analyzed through thematic content analysis. The results showed that the level of exposure to incursions was moderate (2.32), while the impact on social life was high (3.91), and the impact on sports activities was also high (3.87). The findings also indicated statistically significant differences in exposure based on gender (0.004) in favor of females, while no significant differences were found based on place of residence (0.564). The study recommended adopting flexible training systems, providing alternative safe training spaces, enhancing psychological support programs, and strengthening institutional partnerships to sustain sports activities under crisis conditions.

Keywords: *Israeli Incursions, Sports Academies, Social Impact, Jenin Governorate*

Introduction

The Jenin Governorate can be identified as one of the most important arenas of the Palestinian territories where, in recent times, the Israeli army has made several incursions that have resulted in serious consequences on different levels of society, economy, and culture. The sports sector is among the most impacted areas where sports academies and youth clubs have been deliberately targeted with disruption, destruction, and prevention of access to a secure place to carry out their activities. This reflects the broader political economy of sport, where sporting structures are directly shaped by political and economic forces (Culpan, 2016). In Palestine, sport is not only seen as physical exercise but also a medium of fostering national identity, social bonding, and offering an alternate platform to counter psychological and political stress. This aligns with the argument that sport generates significant social benefits and strengthens community cohesion (Bozman et al., 2016).

Field reports have shown that the incursions in Jenin during 2025 resulted in the killing of approximately 30 Palestinians in the governorate since the beginning of the year, in addition to mass displacement estimated at around 20,000 residents of Jenin camp, and widespread destruction that included more

1 than 150 homes, which directly reflected on daily life and infrastructure
2 including sports facilities (United Nations OCHA, 2025; Al Jazeera, 2025).
3 Human Rights Watch also documented that these military operations led to
4 widespread forced displacement and created deep psychological and social
5 crises among youth (Human Rights Watch, 2023). On the economic level, the
6 Palestinian Economic Policy Research Institute showed that the losses in
7 infrastructure in Jenin and Nablus reached serious levels, leading to the
8 disruption of development projects including sports ones (MAS, 2024). In the
9 health field, the incursions hindered residents' access to health services, which
10 was reflected in the psychological and physical health of youth and athletes (The
11 Lancet, 2024).

12 The study by Devecioglu (2023) showed that wars and armed conflicts leave
13 direct economic effects on sports, as they lead to the destruction of sports
14 infrastructure, disruption of local and international tournaments, and reduction
15 of funding opportunities and institutional support for sports activities. These
16 results confirm that sport is not separate from the surrounding economic and
17 political context, but is directly affected by security disturbances.

18 The study by European Parliament (2023) on the Russian war on Ukraine
19 also showed that the conflict directly affected athletes through the exclusion of
20 Russian athletes from international competitions, and the use of sport as a field
21 of political and social pressure, in addition to the decline in opportunities for
22 professionalism and international participation for athletes. These results reveal
23 how sport turns into a political tool in times of armed conflict. Moreover, sport
24 becomes a platform through which war-related issues and societal crises are
25 communicated and shaped in the public sphere (Bertling, 2025).

26 The study by Rodríguez et al. (2025) showed that sports programs in conflict
27 areas can be a tool for peacebuilding, as they help reintegrate youth into society
28 after conflicts, enhance social cohesion among affected groups, and mitigate the
29 effects of violence through alternative activities. This study highlights the
30 positive role of sport as a soft means of resistance.

31 The study by Moreno-Chaparro et al. (2022) focused on the psychological
32 effects of armed conflicts on adults, including athletes, showing that conflicts
33 lead to increased rates of anxiety and depression, the spread of post-traumatic
34 stress disorder, and the loss of a stable psychological environment necessary for
35 athletic performance. These results confirm that mental health is a fundamental
36 element directly affected by wars.

37 The study by Al-Ajlouny et al. (2025) showed that wars affect even
38 indirectly impacted groups, as levels of anxiety and depression increase among
39 populations indirectly affected, and psychological symptoms related to fear and
40 continuous stress appear, and these crises are reflected in the social and athletic
41 performance of youth. These results clarify that the impact of wars extends
42 beyond the boundaries of direct conflict areas.

43 Finally, the study by Chatterjee et al. (2024) showed that wars leave deep
44 psychological and social effects, as they lead to social isolation and loss of
45 identity, and cause psychological disorders reaching 40–50% of the population,
46 and these disorders are directly reflected on athletes and youth in conflict areas.

1 This study highlights the psychological and social dimension as one of the most
2 dangerous consequences of wars on athletes.

3 Within this framework, studying the impact of these incursions on the social
4 and athletic situation of members of sports academies in Jenin gains special
5 importance, as it fills a knowledge gap in Arab and international literature, which
6 has often focused on security and political dimensions while neglecting the
7 athletic and social dimension. Within this perspective, this study seeks to analyze
8 the social, psychological, and athletic dimensions of the phenomenon of
9 incursions, by monitoring their repercussions on athletes and academies, and
10 providing a scientific framework that helps decision-makers and human rights
11 and sports institutions develop strategies to support Palestinian youth under the
12 exceptional conditions they are experiencing. It also aims to highlight the role of
13 sport as a soft means of resistance, contributing to strengthening community
14 resilience and providing educational and health alternatives for youth in the face
15 of violence and deprivation.

18 **Problem statement**

19
20 In the given situation, Israeli army incursions were frequent enough to affect
21 multiple facets of life and were more than just a threat to security. They were
22 also associated with social, psychological, and institutional challenges (Rabaya,
23 2022). In turn, physical activities, including sports, have always been regarded
24 as an essential factor in ensuring social integration, promoting good mental
25 health, and developing young people. Nevertheless, this role has been limited
26 due to occupation and instability (Rabaya, 2022). Based on available evidence,
27 it is possible to claim that the incursion activities of Israeli authorities have
28 resulted in the destruction of infrastructures, limitations of movement and
29 trainings and competition events, thus making it hard for sports institutions to be
30 effective in their work and develop athletes' abilities (Khalidi, 2024; Dart, 2019).

31 Moreover, apart from the above issues, there are several other factors linked
32 to the problem under discussion. Military activities, exposure to them, and the
33 constant fear of them being carried out result in high levels of fear and anxiety,
34 lack of motivation, and poor performance results of athletes who had to endure
35 them (Arafat et al., 2003; Alhalaseh et al., 2025). In case of sports academies,
36 the negative effects are likely to include deterioration of social relations between
37 its members, lack of participation in training events, and overall stability and
38 functioning of the organization (Woroniccka-Krzyzanowska, 2020).

39 In spite of the availability of a large amount of research regarding the effects
40 of occupation and war on civilians, relatively few studies were dedicated to the
41 question of exposure of members of sports academies to the Israeli incursions
42 and how much it affects their social activity and involvement in sports-related
43 matters. Therefore, the presented study is going to fill this gap and will try to
44 find out the level of exposure to Israeli incursions of individuals who are active
45 members of sports academies, particularly those located in highly affected area
46 of Jenin Governorate, and the effect that the incursions have on the social and

1 sporting aspect of their life and existence. Also, statistical analysis will reveal
2 the existing differences in exposure level depending on gender and location of
3 the individuals.

6 **Study Questions**

- 8 1. What is the degree of exposure to Israeli incursions among members of
9 sports academies in Jenin Governorate?
- 10 2. What is the impact of Israeli incursions on the social life of members of
11 sports academies in Jenin Governorate?
- 12 3. What is the impact of Israeli incursions on the practice of sports activities
13 among members of sports academies in Jenin Governorate?
- 14 4. Are there statistically significant differences in the degree of exposure of
15 members of sports academies in Jenin Governorate to Israeli incursions
16 attributable to gender and place of residence?

19 **Study Objective**

21 The objective of the study was to measure the extent of exposure of sport
22 academy students in Jenin Governorate to Israeli incursions, to investigate the
23 influence of these incursions on their social life and participation in sporting
24 activities, and whether there is a statistically significant difference between the
25 extent of their exposure due to gender and location.

28 **Significance of the Study**

30 This study is significant as it contributes to addressing a clear gap in the
31 literature concerning the impact of Israeli military incursions on the sports sector,
32 particularly at the level of sports academies and their members in Jenin
33 Governorate. It provides a deeper empirical understanding of how repeated
34 exposure to incursions affects the social life and sports participation of youth,
35 linking security conditions with behavioral and institutional outcomes. The study
36 also offers practical value by generating evidence-based insights that can support
37 decision-makers, sports organizations, and civil society institutions in designing
38 targeted interventions to sustain sports activities under crisis conditions.
39 Furthermore, it highlights the role of sports academies as spaces for social
40 resilience and psychological support, thereby contributing to broader discussions
41 on community stability and youth development in conflict-affected
42 environments.

1 **Literature Review**

2 **Sport in the Palestinian Context**

3
4 From the current literature review, sports in Palestine can be described as
5 social institutions with several dimensions including culture, politics, and
6 psychology. However, contrary to other sports that focus on competition and
7 physical activities, sports in Palestine are carried out within an atmosphere that
8 involves occupation. As such, it performs several functions in relation to the
9 formation of identity, social integration, and resistance to marginalization.
10 According to Rabaya (2022), institutions related to sports in Palestine have been
11 used historically as a part of the national struggle for reinforcing the sense of
12 identity and marginalization. Consequently, academies and clubs in this region
13 serve more than a training purpose since they become tools for protecting society
14 in turbulent situations.

15 Another critical aspect highlighted by the current literature regarding sports
16 in Palestine is that the involvement in sports is helpful for youths to engage in
17 social interactions and emotional expression while creating an environment that
18 helps them feel psychologically stable. Indeed, when practicing in a politically
19 unstable and violent environment, sports become important mechanisms that
20 allow individuals to create a sense of continuity and stability of their daily
21 routine and provide opportunities to express emotions. It is especially important
22 for youth athletes whose sports career depends not only on training but also
23 social interactions and personal discipline. However, the role of sports in
24 providing all these opportunities is directly linked to stability of the environment,
25 which usually faces numerous disruptions during armed conflicts.

26 27 28 **Impact of Military Incursions on the Structural and Institutional Aspects of** 29 **the Sport Sector**

30
31 One of the key themes emerging from the current literature is the direct
32 influence of military incursions on the structural and institutional aspects of the
33 sports sector. The research reveals that military operations conducted in the area
34 lead to destruction and/or damage of sports infrastructure which includes sports
35 fields, training facilities, and sports clubs. As reported by Khalidi (2024), sports
36 fields, training facilities, and clubs represent vital places where people come
37 together to practice and interact socially, and therefore, destruction leads to
38 disruption of the ability of the local community to continue with its sports
39 programs.

40 Along with physical destruction of the infrastructure, another critical
41 obstacle that negatively impacts sports practice in the area is restriction of
42 movement, which makes it extremely difficult to organize events and conduct
43 training sessions. Similar barriers in youth sports have been linked to institutional
44 and financial constraints that limit safe and consistent participation (Eperthener,
45 2022). And, according to Dart (2019), political and security situation in the area
46 affects athletes' and coaches' ability to access venues, participate in competitions,

1 and maintain regular schedule. These obstacles are even enhanced by
2 administrative barriers experienced by sports organizations operating in the
3 occupied territories. Thus, according to Woroniecka-Krzyżanowska (2020),
4 sports clubs in the West Bank need to constantly adjust to ever-changing
5 conditions including closures, checkpoint, and surveillance which disrupt the
6 entire organizational process.

9 **Social Consequences of Conflict on Sports Participation and Relationships**

11 The literature also emphasizes the substantial social impacts that arise when
12 militaries invade individuals engaged in sports. The first significant social
13 impact in this regard is the disturbance of social relations between people in the
14 context of sports practices. Sports by nature is a social activity where participants
15 are actively engaged in the development of their interpersonal relations, working
16 as a team, and developing common experiences. At the same time, conditions of
17 conflict create an environment when such opportunities are limited since
18 participation in the activity requires continuous communication.

19 Rabaya (2022) emphasizes that sport practice in Palestine plays a significant
20 role in creating social bonds and networks between youth; however, they are
21 disturbed because the practice becomes less frequent owing to security concerns.
22 Furthermore, limitations on participation created by restricted movements and
23 increased anxiety regarding the safety of athletes limit their attendance in
24 training sessions. In such a way, athletes lose a strong feeling of community spirit
25 and social cohesion. In addition, the deterioration of social relations in sports
26 organizations may lead to adverse effects related to the cohesion in the local
27 community.

28 Another aspect that should be considered in this regard refers to social
29 involvement in the form of family support for sports practice. In conflict areas,
30 concerns about safety issues become a crucial criterion of whether parents will
31 allow children to engage in the activity. Thus, sports in the context of conflict is
32 not considered as developmental anymore, rather it becomes a risky activity, and,
33 therefore, fewer people choose it. Consequently, sports academies suffer from
34 decreased enrollment rates.

37 **Psychological Effects of Exposure to Military Incursions on Athletes**

39 Several articles touch on the theme of psychological effects on those
40 experiencing conflict and military intrusions, with a special focus on the youth
41 population. According to Arafat et al. (2003), people who undergo political
42 violence become more anxious, fearful, and psychologically distressed, adding
43 that these states usually go hand in hand with sleep disturbance and insecurities.
44 In relation to sports activities, such psychological consequences are very
45 relevant because one's emotional state affects motivation and athletic
46 performance significantly.

1 Further, according to Alhalaseh et al. (2025), military incursions lead to
2 constant stress and low functional performance. This is consistent with findings
3 that stress significantly affects athletes' recovery and performance capacity,
4 while resilience plays a critical moderating role (Jaiyeoba et al., 2023). Such
5 psychological factors affect not only physical but also cognitive functioning. As
6 a result, athletes become less attentive, demotivated, and find it difficult to
7 engage in constant training. Therefore, the psychological burden caused by the
8 experience of living under such stressful conditions impacts negatively on their
9 athletic performance.

10 Moreover, the effects of psychological trauma caused by conflicts not only
11 concern the person himself or herself but also relate to group psychological
12 issues. Namely, fear and anxiety cause communication problems and distrust
13 between team members. Harker (2014) describes how occupational experiences
14 transform the experience of the individual and change their perception of safety
15 and comfort. The psychological effects of conflicts have serious implications for
16 the field of sport because a safe atmosphere is key in team games.

19 **Community Resilience and the Role of Sports Institutions**

21 As a means to address the issues raised by the existence of conflict, the idea
22 of community resilience has gained significant traction as a way of addressing
23 challenges and coping. Community resilience denotes an organization or
24 individual's ability to function and overcome disruptions. It becomes particularly
25 important when dealing with institutions that are operating within contexts of
26 instability and ongoing challenges. For example, according to Visweswaran
27 (2024), educational and other kinds of institutions in Palestine have continued to
28 function amid regular disruptions.

29 Academies represent the smallest level on which the issue of community
30 resilience can be addressed in terms of sports organizations. By establishing the
31 structure where people can engage socially and emotionally while gaining skills
32 and other benefits, they help build resilience amid difficult circumstances. As
33 pointed out by BADIL (2022), it becomes important to retain access to social
34 activities and opportunities in order to counter the impact of being displaced and
35 restricted.

36 Nonetheless, it becomes equally important to emphasize that resilience is
37 finite and constrained by various structural factors. Although institutions may
38 adapt to disruptions and continue functioning to some extent, they are often
39 unable to cope due to the presence of numerous issues. For instance, lack of
40 finances and damages done to infrastructure make it extremely hard for
41 institutions to continue functioning normally.

43 **Synthesis and Research Gap**

45 Overall, there are numerous insights obtained from the literature regarding
46 the effects of military incursions on the development of sports in terms of

1 different aspects such as structural, social, and psychological aspects. While
2 sport can become a means of enhancing social cohesion and resilience of people
3 in conditions of occupation, such activities have to be conducted within specific
4 limitations because of the realities of an occupied area. The existing academic
5 sources contain much information regarding general effects of conflict on sports
6 as well as youth. Nevertheless, the majority of these works are conducted at a
7 high level of abstraction.

8 There is still a need for empirical evidence on the experiences of individuals
9 associated with sports academies, especially those who experience incursions
10 frequently, as it takes place in Jenin Governorate. It is worth mentioning that
11 previous studies failed to consider the level of exposure to incursions and their
12 effects on social activity as well as sports practice of young members of sports
13 academies. Therefore, the necessity of empirical studies on this topic cannot be
14 disregarded. Overall, the current paper is supposed to add to the existing body
15 of knowledge regarding the influence of incursions on the social and sports
16 sphere in an area.

17 18 19 **Methodology**

20
21 This study utilizes the descriptive analytical methodology, which involves a
22 mixed-methods research design combining both quantitative and qualitative
23 techniques (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019). Quantitative data was obtained through
24 the use of a structured questionnaire given to sports academy members
25 comprising players, coaches, and managers. Meanwhile, qualitative data was
26 acquired through semi-structured interviews involving academy managers as
27 well as other stakeholders concerned. Field observations were employed
28 wherever appropriate to note firsthand any effect of the Israeli attacks on sports
29 facilities and activities.

30 The study's target population comprises all sports academies in Jenin
31 Governorate together with its members. Out of this pool, (102) participants who
32 had been subjected to the Israeli invasions were chosen to form the purposive
33 sample for this study. For the analysis of the quantitative data, SPSS was used to
34 produce basic statistics such as mean and standard deviation for the comparison
35 of variables. The qualitative data will be subjected to thematic content analysis.
36 The qualitative part of this study made use of semi-structured interviews among
37 a purposive sample of 10 participants, which comprised academy managers and
38 stakeholders having first-hand experience of Israeli attacks. An interview guide
39 was drawn based on thematic axes related to this study's purpose, namely:
40 general impacts of invasions; administrative and organizational challenges;
41 socio-psychological impacts; and future plans and responses. The interviews
42 gave the respondents ample opportunity to relate their experiences. The
43 interviews' consistency was maintained through careful documentation.

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1 **Validity and Reliability**

2
3 For ensuring the validity of the tools used for data collection, the design of
4 both the questionnaire and interviews was informed from relevant literature, and
5 tailored in accordance with the objectives of the research study (Barnes & Forde,
6 2021). Validity was ensured through the content validity approach whereby a
7 group of five experts in the field of sports science and social sciences reviewed
8 the relevance of questions in order to measure their suitability. Minor changes in
9 the phrasing of items were done as per the recommendations of experts.
10 Moreover, validity of the tool was ensured through internal consistency where
11 the correlation between item and total scores for different dimensions was
12 measured ranging from (0.61 – 0.84) (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019).

13 Cronbach's alpha value was used for assessing reliability of the quantitative
14 instrument where reliability was high as all dimensions showed a value of more
15 than 0.70. Reliability of the qualitative part of the study was ensured through
16 consistency in conducting interviews, transcribing, and coding process (Hennink
17 et al., 2020).

18
19 **Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients for Study Dimensions**

Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Exposure to Israeli Incursions	3	0.811
Social Life Impact	8	0.893
Sports Activity Impact	14	0.926
Overall Scale	25	0.901

20
21 The results in Table (1) indicate that all Cronbach's alpha values ranged
22 between (0.811–0.926), reflecting a high level of internal consistency and
23 confirming the reliability of the instrument for data collection.

24
25

26 **Quantitative Results**

27

28 The quantitative results are presented first to provide a general overview of
29 the patterns and relationships related to the study variables.

30

31 **Results of the first question:** What is the degree of exposure to Israeli
32 incursions among members of sports academies in Jenin Governorate?

33 To answer this question, means and standard deviations were calculated for each
34 item and for the overall score, as shown in Table (2).

35

36

1 **Table 2.** Means, Standard Deviations, and Levels of Exposure to Israeli
2 *Incursions among Members of Sports Academies in Jenin Governorate*

No.	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
1	Security events in my area were frequent during the past six months.	2.51	0.591	High
2	I live or train in an area close to locations of security events.	2.29	0.634	Moderate
3	The events caused noticeable disruption to my daily life (displacement, incursions, checkpoints).	2.15	0.798	Moderate
	Overall Score	2.32	0.550	Moderate

3
4 From the results presented in Table (2), one can conclude that the degree of
5 exposure of members of sports academies to Israeli incursions in Jenin
6 Governorate is characterized by a moderate level, with an average value of (2.32)
7 and a standard deviation of (0.550). As for the item concerning the number of
8 security incidents over the past six months, the result is high, which proves an
9 unstable situation in the security sphere in this area. At the same time, in relation
10 to the proximity to sites of security incidents and interference with everyday life,
11 there is a moderate level, which shows that the impact on different indicators
12 may vary.

13 From the obtained findings, one can note that the environment in which the
14 athletes live in Jenin Governorate is very insecure due to the presence of frequent
15 Israeli incursions and checkpoints, which have a direct impact on the athletes'
16 sporting activities. Such a high result in the first item shows a significant
17 perception by members of the threat of their surroundings. At the same time, the
18 medium-level value of the two other items shows that members do not feel the
19 effect of this instability to the full extent because of their adaptation or the
20 location of academies.

21 This conclusion may show that the level of impact on sports activity is also
22 moderate, which means that the incursions affect the athletes' work but do not
23 lead to its complete cessation. The fact may lie in the use of certain adjustment
24 mechanisms by academies and athletes. However, the presence of recurring
25 security events imposes severe challenges for the stability of sport activities.

26 **Results of the second question:** What is the impact of Israeli incursions on
27 the social life of members of sports academies in Jenin Governorate?

28 To answer this question, means and standard deviations were calculated for each
29 item and for the overall score, as shown in Table (3).

30
31

1 **Table 3.** Means, Standard Deviations, and Level of Impact of Israeli Incursions
 2 on the Social Life of Members of Sports Academies in Jenin Governorate

No.	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
1	The incursions restricted my movement and prevented me from reaching the academy.	3.99	0.876	High
2	My social relationships with fellow athletes weakened due to the security situation.	3.65	1.08	High
3	I feel fear for my family members during incursions.	4.44	0.933	Very High
4	Social participation and community activities decreased due to the security conditions.	4.17	0.980	High
5	Family tensions and problems increased due to the security situation.	3.66	1.28	High
6	My confidence in achieving social stability has declined due to recurring events.	3.97	1.12	High
7	I feel unsafe when moving to and from the academy and worry about exposure to risks.	3.62	1.20	High
8	I can access basic services (transportation, health, education) when needed.	3.80	1.05	High
	Overall Score	3.91	0.73	High

3
 4 According to the results in Table (3), the effect of Israeli incursions on the
 5 social life of members of sports academies in Jenin Governorate was relatively
 6 high, where the mean of the overall scale was (3.91) and the standard deviation
 7 was (0.73). The most affected item was "fear for family members during
 8 incursions" with very high mean (4.44), indicating the degree of social and
 9 psychological fear that athletes experience. Furthermore, there is a remarkable
 10 decrease in social activities, community events (4.17), restrictions on movement
 11 and access to academies (3.99), and weakened social relations with other athletes
 12 (3.65). All these results prove that incursions influence athletes not only
 13 concerning their sports activities but also concerning their social and
 14 psychological life.

15 The results above suggest that Israeli incursions impose notable stress on
 16 the social life of athletes in Jenin Governorate because they limit athletes'
 17 mobility, reduce their participation in the community, and cause social issues at
 18 home. The relatively high means of items that measure the impact on the social
 19 aspect of athletes' life such as family fears and problems suggest that athletes
 20 feel the impacts of Israeli incursions on their social life, which is consistent with
 21 the previous literature, indicating that unsafe environment decreases trust in
 22 society and its stability.

23 Moreover, the findings in Table (3) suggest that athletes have some
 24 challenges in gaining access to basic facilities (3.80), making it difficult for them
 25 to manage their lives. Besides, the decrease in confidence in achieving social
 26 stability (3.97) suggests a frustrating and stressful situation for athletes.

27 **Results of the third question:** What is the impact of Israeli incursions on
 28 the practice of sports activities among members of sports academies in Jenin
 29 Governorate?

1 **Table 4.** Means, Standard Deviations, and Level of Impact of Israeli Incursions
 2 on the Practice of Sports Activities among Members of Sports Academies in
 3 Jenin Governorate

No.	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
1	I attend my training sessions regularly.	4.04	0.913	High
2	I continue individual training when group sessions are disrupted.	3.83	1.16	High
3	Fields and halls are available and suitable for use.	3.85	1.13	High
4	Equipment and coaches are sufficiently available.	3.95	1.00	High
5	I feel that my fitness and skills have been affected by the security conditions in recent months.	3.88	1.11	High
6	My skills decline due to repeated interruptions.	3.84	1.14	High
7	I regularly participate in matches or tournaments.	3.65	1.06	High
8	Competitive events are canceled due to security conditions.	4.28	0.87	High
9	Sports training sessions stop frequently due to incursions and closures.	4.12	1.10	High
10	Some sports facilities or academies have been damaged due to military operations.	3.73	1.18	High
11	Academies face difficulty in continuing to provide training programs during crises.	4.00	1.17	High
12	Academies suffer from a shortage of staff or sports equipment.	3.72	1.21	High
13	Events have weakened team spirit and cooperation between players and coaches.	3.66	1.25	High
14	The academy provides alternatives for training during emergency periods.	3.58	1.14	High
	Overall Score	3.87	0.65	High

4
 5 As seen from Table (4), the impact of Israeli incursions on sport activities is
 6 relatively strong with the mean score reaching (3.87). Cancellation of
 7 competitive events is marked as (4.28), and often interrupted trainings reach
 8 mean value (4.12), which speaks about the direct influence of security conditions
 9 on the conduct of organized sport events and trainings.

10 However, despite that athletes can adapt themselves to the existing situation
 11 and attend training classes (mean score is equal to 4.04) or continue with
 12 individual training even if the group training has been interrupted (score is 3.83),
 13 there is a direct negative impact on the physical condition and skills of athletes
 14 as well as on their performances. As for the other impacts that are related to the
 15 sports environment, it is obvious that Israeli incursions led to such negative
 16 phenomena as the destruction of the facilities, shortage in personnel and
 17 equipment as well as reduced spirit of the teams and their members. Thus, the
 18 impact of the mentioned events was rather negative and strong both from the
 19 quantitative and qualitative perspective.

1 **Results of the fourth question:** Are there statistically significant
 2 differences in the degree of exposure of members of sports academies in Jenin
 3 Governorate to Israeli incursions attributable to gender and place of residence?
 4

5 **A. Gender variable**

6 To examine whether there are statistically significant differences in the
 7 degree of exposure to Israeli incursions according to gender, an independent
 8 samples t-test was conducted. The results are presented in Table (5).
 9

10 **Table 5.** Means, Standard Deviations, t-value, and Significance Level of
 11 *Exposure to Israeli Incursions According to Gender (n = 104)*

Variable	Category	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	Significance Level
Overall Score	Male	76	2.22	0.55	2.953	0.004*
	Female	28	2.57	0.48		

12
 13 According to the results shown in table (4), there are statistically significant
 14 differences regarding the extent of exposure to Israeli incursions as a result of
 15 gender because the value of significance is lower than (0.05). The results reveal
 16 that the mean score recorded for females is higher (2.57) compared to males
 17 (2.22). This means that females participating in the study reported higher
 18 exposure to Israeli incursions. Such difference may be explained by various
 19 factors like risk perception, vulnerability to incursion, and even environmental
 20 differences between both genders.
 21

22 **B. Place of residence variable**

23
 24 To examine whether there are statistically significant differences in the
 25 degree of exposure to Israeli incursions according to place of residence, an
 26 independent samples t-test was conducted. The results are presented in Table (6).
 27

28 **Table 6.** Means, Standard Deviations, t-value, and Significance Level of
 29 *Exposure to Israeli Incursions According to Place of Residence (n = 104)*

Variable	Category	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	Significance Level
Overall Score	City	73	2.30	0.52	0.579	0.564
	Village	31	2.36	0.62		

30
 31 As presented in Table (5), there are no statistically significant differences
 32 concerning the extent of exposure to Israeli incursions depending on the place of
 33 residence. In other words, the significance level (0.564) exceeds (0.05). Even
 34 though, the mean score for people living in villages (2.36) is slightly larger than
 35 for city dwellers (2.30), such difference is not considered significant. It can be
 36 concluded that members of the sports academy who live either in villages or
 37 cities have experienced equal exposure to Israeli incursions.

1 To complement the quantitative findings and provide deeper insight into the
2 experiences of participants, qualitative data from semi-structured interviews
3 were analyzed.
4

5 6 **Qualitative Results of the Study** 7

8 The qualitative portion of this research was completed via semi-structured
9 interviews of a sample consisting of ten representatives of sports academies who
10 had some involvement and experience with the Israeli intrusion into the region.
11 Selection of participants was based on the extent of their exposure to the events
12 and direct involvement in organizing sports activities to get relevant data for this
13 study. The instrument comprised key thematic axes that included various aspects
14 of influence of intrusions: overall impact on sports; administrative and
15 organizational factors; social and psychological aspects; and requirements for
16 further action and solutions. Interview questions allowed for flexibility within
17 the scope of discussion but ensured the standardization of the data collection
18 process.

19 It is necessary to state that the most influential consequence of intrusion of
20 Israel to the region is disruption of training activities. Interruptions of training
21 occurred quite often and became one of the major issues among participants. In
22 particular, they indicated that many training sessions have been either canceled
23 completely or conducted under less favorable circumstances, leading to
24 deterioration in performance and fitness levels among athletes. At the same time,
25 the number of participants dropped significantly because of parental concerns
26 about their safety, mostly due to exposure to frequent intrusions in the region.
27 Road closures, decreased mobility, and occasional interruption in
28 communication worsened the situation and made it difficult for participants to
29 attend the training sessions.

30 Regarding administrative and organizational aspects, the results obtained
31 indicate a complete change from systematic training to crisis management
32 approach. Training programs were revised frequently because of changing
33 conditions and inability to continue regular work. The focus shifted from
34 developing athletic skills of participants to maintaining basic activities or
35 providing some relief in terms of psychology. Finances were affected greatly,
36 especially considering that reduced number of participants resulted in fewer
37 incomes and increasing costs. Some academies tried to implement alternative
38 options to maintain activities to some extent; however, these solutions were not
39 always effective and could be applied only partially.
40

41 Social and psychological aspects of influence of intrusions into the region
42 on sports activities include fears, anxieties, and decrease in feeling of security
43 among participants and their parents. The discussed feelings impacted negatively
44 participants' ability to concentrate, motivation, and overall engagement in sports
45 activities in some instances. On the other hand, sports remain to be an essential
46 channel for expression of emotions, establishment of connections with other

1 participants, and development of resilience. Psychological problems among
2 participants have not received much attention yet. Therefore, only few sports
3 academies provide any systematic intervention in this area.

6 Discussion

8 The outcomes for the first question proved that the extent of exposure to
9 Israeli incursions amongst sports academies members in Jenin Governorate was
10 moderate. It shows that although incursions happen regularly and they are
11 significant, the impact varies from one academy to another because of proximity.
12 The variation of impact can be associated with the difference in locations and
13 the possibility of adjustment due to schedule changes or relocation. This
14 outcome proves the statement by Rabaya (2022) that Palestinian sports
15 organizations are functioning in a very unstable environment trying to ensure
16 continuity.

17 The results for the second question suggested that Israeli incursions had a
18 high impact on social life amongst the athletes since it created feelings of fear,
19 limitation of mobility, and deterioration of social relations. The explanation
20 behind these results is that incursions increase feelings of insecurity so that the
21 safety becomes prioritized above all else, limiting any social activity and
22 increasing stress in the family. Therefore, these findings confirm the conclusions
23 drawn by Arafat et al. (2003) concerning the psychological influence of exposure
24 to political violence as it causes a lot of fears and anxiety. Also, the weakening
25 of social ties correlates with the findings by Alhalaseh et al. (2025) concerning
26 the impact of military incursions on social health as they cause chronic stress in
27 athletes. Moreover, the negative impact on social health was proven by
28 Woroniecka-Krzyżanowska (2020), who claimed that instability and movement
29 restrictions negatively affect the social relations in sports organizations.

30 For the third question, the results suggest that there is a high impact of Israeli
31 incursions on the exercise of sports. It means that the impact occurs due to the
32 fact that incursions cause disturbances to training, cancellation of competitions,
33 and reduction of athletes' performance. These consequences were caused by the
34 inability of athletes to train regularly under such conditions of insecurity. These
35 results correspond to the information given by Khalidi (2024) about the effect of
36 conflicts on sports infrastructure and the continuation of sports exercises. They
37 also confirm the statement by Dart (2019) about the limitation of the
38 effectiveness of sports programs in an unstable political context. However, the
39 attempts of athletes to carry out the sports exercises individually contradicts the
40 statement that all sports-related activity stops in the period of conflict.

41 As for the outcomes for the research on gender differences, females felt
42 more exposed to Israeli incursions compared to males. It might be explained by
43 the different attitudes towards the problem and vulnerability of females to such
44 threats. In general, this finding is supported by the results of previous studies in
45 other conflict zones where different groups feel different levels of insecurity
46 depending on their perception of risks and vulnerability.

1 The lack of statistically significant differences based on place of residence
2 is also interesting. It suggests that there are similar experiences amongst all
3 Palestinians regardless of their residency place. As for the explanation, it should
4 be said that the reason for it might lie in the fact that such incidents are happening
5 everywhere, whether in cities or villages, due to the nature of the closures,
6 checkpoints, and movements restrictions. Such findings support the reports
7 made by BADIL (2022).

8 In conclusion, the outcomes indicate that Israeli incursions have a high
9 impact on athletes' life as they affect their exposure, social relations, and sports
10 performance. The latter happens because of the impact on the security
11 environment which causes psychological tension that has negative effects on
12 social connections and athletic activity. Therefore, all the findings prove that
13 sport in conflict zones works under the permanent pressure and its function as a
14 social institution is significantly affected.

15 16 17 **Results**

18
19 The results of the third question can be summarized through the following
20 key points:

- 21
22 1. Israeli incursions lead to frequent disruption and irregularity in training
23 sessions, affecting the continuity of sports programs.
- 24 2. Competitive activities such as matches and tournaments are often
25 canceled due to unstable security conditions.
- 26 3. Athletes attempt to adapt by continuing individual training, but this does
27 not fully compensate for the disruption of group training.
- 28 4. The security situation negatively affects players' physical fitness, skill
29 development, and overall performance.
- 30 5. Sports facilities, equipment, and human resources are impacted, with
31 some academies facing damage and shortages.
- 32 6. The overall sports environment is affected, including weakened team
33 spirit and limited effectiveness of alternative training solutions.

34 35 36 **Recommendations**

37
38 Based on the study results, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 39
40 1. Sports academies should adopt flexible training systems, such as modular
41 schedules and smaller group sessions, to ensure continuity during periods
42 of instability.
- 43 2. Establish safe alternative training spaces in less exposed areas, including
44 indoor facilities or shared community locations, to reduce disruption
45 caused by incursions.

- 1 3. Develop structured home-based training programs supported by video
2 content and monitored follow-up to maintain players' fitness and skills
3 during interruptions.
- 4 4. Create emergency communication systems, such as organized WhatsApp
5 groups and backup contact methods, to coordinate training schedules and
6 ensure consistent communication with players and families.
- 7 5. Provide basic psychological support programs within academies,
8 including regular group sessions, stress-relief activities, and partnerships
9 with local organizations specializing in mental health.
- 10 6. Strengthen financial sustainability by seeking partnerships with local
11 municipalities, NGOs, and private sponsors to cover operational costs
12 and support affected academies.
- 13 7. Organize local mini-competitions within safe areas to compensate for
14 canceled official tournaments and maintain players' motivation and
15 engagement.
- 16 8. Train coaches and administrative staff on crisis management strategies to
17 improve their ability to adapt training plans and respond effectively to
18 emergency situations.

21 **Limitations of the Study**

22
23 There are various limitations in this study that must be taken into
24 consideration when evaluating the findings. First, the purposive sampling
25 technique utilized for selecting participants limits the ability to generalize the
26 findings to other populations besides the selected sample of sports academies in
27 Jenin Governorate. Second, the use of self-reporting instruments could result in
28 response bias since the responses of the participants were potentially influenced
29 by their individual experiences. Third, the volatile and unstable security situation
30 at the time of the study could have an impact on the data-gathering process and
31 the responses of the participants.

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