

Research:7

Psychological effects of administrative detention on Palestinians

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Abstract

This study tackles and monitors the psychological effects of administrative detention resulting from different severe trauma's responses in certain circumstances and situations of prisoners' experience. Administrative detainees are an important sector of the Palestinian society, who struggled and sacrificed their best years of lives behind bars. Therefore, they should not be forgotten and we must shed light on this important experience.

Falling in captivity is one of the most traumatic situations in man's experience, with varying pressure and consequences, depending on the culture and ideology of the capturer, and the prisoner's himself. There are many psychological, mental, and physical changes and effects resulting from this experience.

The importance of this study stems from the need to raise and highlight this matter. Additionally, it aims at launching local, regional and international media and legal campaigns, in order to put an end to such acts and policies that violate basic human rights of Palestinians.

The research is a "Case Study" of a group of five administrative detention prisoners, who were recently released and showed acceptance and cooperation to participate and to be interviewed.

Data that was collected from five administrative prisoners show that all imprisonment stages were difficult, but the hardest of all was the one that precedes release. It shows that it has always been accompanied by fear of extension or renewal of imprisonment term(s), and worries about the family who impatiently awaits their release.

Results from the study indicate that administrative detainees suffer from the arrest trauma, accompanied by depression and apprehension. In addition, it also reveals physical, psychological, psychosomatic symptoms and weight loss due to medical negligence.

With regard to psychological reflections of the arrest process on administrative detainees, it is well known that the moment of falling into capture is in itself a sudden traumatic event with Long-term psychological effects that lasts even after the prisoner's release.

The element of surprise stimulates fear, tension, anxiety, amazement, denial and other physiological symptoms such as tremor, sweating and tachycardia. It also leads to other social consequences such as the prisoner's questioning his family's reaction to his arrest, fear and worries of their reactions, and other questions regarding the way they will live and cope with the fact of his being absent. The administrative prisoner also endeavors an internal self conflict inflamed by questions regarding reasons of his arrest, expected charges, and methods of interrogation.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were suggested:

- The need to conduct medical examinations on administrative detainees following their release, to examine the effect of detention on their physical state.*
- The importance of psychological and social care of administrative detainees.*
- The need to establish a specialized research center that investigates administrative detention and torture and its consequences with regard to the international humanitarian law and other binding laws.*

Key Words: *Administrative detention, secret file, Trauma, Palestine.*

Introduction:

Falling in captivity is one of the most traumatic situations in man's experience that varies in pressure and consequences, depending on the culture and ideology of the capturer, and the prisoner's himself. There are many psychological, mental, and physical changes and effects that result from this experience (Ezzat, 1996).

The process of arrest is a psychology of war exercised by the colonial power world wide. France, Britain, America and the Zionist state were the most known states that carry out this systematic, intended strategy which reflects itself in the following measures:

- Restricting the personal freedom of an individual or a group, by keeping them locked behind bars.*

- *Breaking the steadfastness, moral and will of the detainee, hoping that by practicing some psychological pressure like isolation, segregation, torture and prevention of interaction with others, the prisoner would regret his deeds.*
- *Extension of the administrative term is one of the most harming methods used by the occupying authorities to increase the suffering and harassment of prisoners and their families. Once the term of administrative detention is over and the detainee starts the countdown of his ordeal, the related authorities extend the term for two or three times, without prosecuting or pressing charges of any kind.*

Administrative detention is becoming a threat to all Palestinians. The fact that you are a Palestinian means that, at any moment, you might be targeted by administrative detention that is considered, by human right's laws and conventions, the most aggressive violation of human rights.

Depending on this measure, a prisoner is subject to administrative detention without charge or trial for periods ranging from three months to six months, with the possibility of renewal for a number of times at the discretion of the Israeli judge who usually bids by the will of the Israeli intelligence service. In such a case, the prisoner is denied the right to due process, s/he nor his/her attorney are given access to the file or any details regarding the reasons of the arrest or the kind of charges, which means that s/he is deprived of the right of defendants to state their case, and the presumption of innocence.

Interviews with the administrative detainees showed clearly that most of them received extension orders of their terms, for at least once or twice, under the pretext that they are "a threat to the security of the state", with no details mentioned about the nature of such "danger". Instead, the Israeli authorities claim to have "a secret file" against the prisoner, but never allow him or his attorney to study the evidence, making extension of the administrative term inevitable in such cases.

The study deals with administrative detention, a procedure or an order issued by the governing bodies of Israel related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and argue that "the accused is guilty until proven innocent". This kind of procedure does not depend on a proven charge or clear evidence or a specified period, but rather on confidential information.

Based on such practices, some prisoners under administrative detention terms in fact endure psychological disorder after being

released. Among the most common forms are psychosomatic (psychological-physical) disorders, depression, anxiety, problems of compatibility, drug abuse, and family problems. There are also factors that have an essential role in bringing about these disorders, including family unity and absence of social support after being released from prison (Ezzat, 1996).

The history of administrative detention in occupied Palestine goes back to the year 1945, when it was enacted by the British occupying government. They used it to detain a number of Palestinian militants, without prosecuting them, under the pretext of lack of sufficient evidence to prove them guilty. The Israeli occupation authorities inherited many measures of repression and abuse, from the British authorities, which were used latter against the Palestinians (Al-Haq Annual Report, 2008).

This law was also used by a number of colonial powers to combat activists who seek freedom of their country and their people. Nonetheless, its implementation has stopped after the end of the colonial era. Today, the Israeli authorities are the only recognized state who widely apply administrative detention, especially after the fall of the apartheid rule in South Africa.

With the beginning of the first Palestinian uprising (Intifada) on December 1987, occupation authority's decision-making circles have stepped up with the use of this measure, and they no longer felt satisfied with six months, the alleged administrative detention term, thus allowing the specialized levels to renew the administrative detention term for more than once. The authorities in the United States also began to use this kind of detention after the eleventh of September of 2001 events. (Al-Haq Annual Report, 2008).

Important to mention here that the Israeli intelligence services resort to apply administrative detention in the following cases:

- This form of detention is considered an alternative to imprisonment in cases when the Israeli security authorities do not have satisfying conviction evidence, but, at the same time, wishes to punish an individual.
- Administrative detention of Palestinians is often caused by receiving some information that they wish to keep the identity of its source uncovered, by not following due-process that might jeopardize their source of information.
- The desire to get rid of Palestinians seen as leaders of high charisma, or simply because they represent a threat to the state's

security in hard times, with no available conviction evidence to prosecute them.

- The wish to lead the Palestinian detainee into a state of confusion and frustration by targeting his freedom with repeated detention and extension of imprisonment terms, hoping that this will negatively affect his activity outside the prison.
- Double the harm and economic damage to Palestinian detainees and their families.
- For political reasons. A good example what happened during the great campaign of arrests, which included thousands of Palestinians following the swarming over of areas of the Palestinian autonomy in the mid of March 2002. Thousands of Palestinians were put under administrative detention to:
 - a) Satisfy and convince the Israeli public of the usefulness and success of their military campaign then named "Operation Defensive Shield" against Palestinians.
 - b) To take detainees as a means of pressure in the hand of the Israeli government and to use them in any negotiations with the Palestinians (Fouad Khujfash et al., 2008).

The administrative detention is usually authorized by an order of the military commander of the area. People taken to administrative detention are considered, nearly, the most sector that receive sympathy and respect among the Palestinian people, since they spent most of their youth and fruitful years in the occupiers' prisons and were administratively re-arrested in fear that they would renew their political activities.

The Trial of the administrative prisoners is held in a closed Israeli military court, where no member of the family is allowed to attend. The court is held in the presence of only the detainee, his attorney, the judge, the military prosecutor, and in some cases, representatives of the intelligence. Such trial is considered and seen as a denial of the detainee's right to a public trial, as guaranteed by article 14 (1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights "The right to public trial" (Al-Haq, Annual Report, 2008).

Usually, the judge's decision is read as follows:

"In front of me is new and qualitative intelligence information that demonstrates the fear of a definite threat to the security of the region if the detainee is released. The information, as well, show his involvement in new activities supporting terrorism, which constitute a danger to the security of both the region and the public. I think that a period of four

months is sufficient to thwart the threat to the region, and I assure, here, that this reduction of his imprisonment's term is not substantial but comes in order to examine his file again; therefore I approve the warrant and the period in question".

Usually, the information the judge refers to is considered in the form of "File/Files" that are kept away from the detainee attorney.

For Example, the "Secret File" is a cover brought by the Israeli General prosecution and the General Security Service "the Shin Bet"; in order to justify administrative detention or its extension for several times. The Israeli military courts, in general, and the Supreme Court present it as a judicial cover instead of disclosing confidential material, following the appeal of administrative detainees.

"The Wicked File" as called among Palestinian prisoners, is also sometimes known by its red color, as an indication that the prisoner is of a "dangerous type". In this file, the "Shin Bet" collects intelligence information about the detainee, which mostly consists of reports of collaborators working for the Israeli intelligence. These "confidential" reports implicate that the detainee is involved in hostile activities against the Israeli general security.

The administrative detainees are also faced with big charges, which, when heard, suggest that they will never be released from prison. This intended horror and exaggeration of charges lead to frustration among detainees who might be accused of being militant activists in military wings or movements, and that the Israelis have information indicating that they are dangerous to the security of the region. They might also tell them that they would spend long years of imprisonment without trial, and that they might stay twice as long as the time in case they plead guilty. The Israeli general prosecution exercises the role of the investigator at each extension of term, where he bargains with the detainee, whether s/he pleads guilty or s/he receives a renewal of his administrative detention term. There are many examples of prisoners who spent more than 8 years in repeated administrative extensions of terms (Khajfash et al., 2008).

Most of the administrative prisoners are subjected to difficult living conditions where they are being held in a number of prisons including the Negev Desert Prison, Cfer, Megiddo, Nissan and Ramleh Prison. Most prisoners live in crowded tents that never provide safe shelter from heat or cold. They are provided with meals that lack quantity and

quality, they are not even supplied with their needs of clothing, and they suffer from medical neglect and their families are prevented from visiting them under the pretext of security. Although the Israeli law guarantees them the right to two visits per month, prisoners are deprived from seeing their sons, their wives and their parents. In short, administrative prisoners are deprived from many rights guaranteed by the international conventions that deal with the prisoners' detention conditions.

There are three courts for administrative detention; the first is Ofer's Military Court, located near the city of Ramallah. The second is the Negev Military Court, located near the Negev deserts prison; and the third is the Supreme Court of Justice and its headquarter is in the city of Jerusalem. It should be noted here that the prison's authority may, sometimes, deliberately move the prisoner to another court that is far away from his place of detention in order to increase his agony. For example, when the day of trial approaches, a prisoner's file detained in the Negev Deserts Prison is transferred to the Court of Ofer near the city of Ramallah, meaning transferring the prisoner from the south to the north and causing a lot of suffering to the prisoner who had to travel long way and is transported hands and legs cuffed in a bus of poor conditions with iron seats (Mandela Foundation, 1995).

The verdict in any case ends with the end of the term leading to the release of the prisoner. In administrative detention, things are totally different, since it is extendable, and the detainee might be notified of an extension of term at the very last moment of his previous term; for example, while farewell his friends, or ascending the bus, or even at the moment he reaches his family outside the prison's walls. (Khajafash et al., 2008).

Problem of the Study:

The problem of the study is viewed in light of the findings of previous studies that dealt with prisoner's torture experience and its effects, especially on administrative detainees, whose character, feelings and behavior are shaped by it. The background shows that there is a need for such a study to investigate the challenges of detention and its negative consequences - if any - and to develop its positive outcome - if any - especially in light of the current Palestinian situation, where many youth and children were/are still going through the detention experience.

Questions of the Study:

- *What are the long-term effects of administrative detention, used by the Israeli occupation, on Palestinians?*
- *What are the long-term psychological and physical effects of administrative detention on detainees interrogated by the Israelis, in relation to physical and psychological chronic illnesses?*
- *What are the negative effects of administrative detention on the moral of administrative detainees?*

Importance of the Study:

The importance of this study stems from the need to identify, raise and highlight the issue of administrative detention, in local, regional and international media, and in legal campaigns, in order to put an end to these acts and policies that violate basic human rights against the Palestinians people.

Because administrative detention is seen as an international crime, it should be condemned by all means. It is hard to accept the fact that Palestinians are being arrested and detained for mere suspicion without charges, and under the cover of preventing future threat. The implications and psychological impact of detention, which may exist for many years, are not only limited to the prisoner himself; but affects his family, his relatives, beloved ones and the society at large.

Previous Studies:

Many researchers have tried to study the impact of detention of prisoner. Sutker suggested that there is a difference exists between veterans of the Korean War fighters who had been in captivity, and those who were never arrested. Whereas, the two groups are equal in terms of general background and personal characteristics; yet, prisoners' of war cognitive, emotional, and behavioral functions were permanently fixed, compared to that of the other group of veterans who did not fall in captivity (Sutker et al., 1991).

Other studies discussed two important issues linked to the effects of falling in captivity. The first is the psychological and illness symptoms disclosed after the liberation of prisoners. The second is the issue of sustainability of these symptoms.

Other studies revealed that symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) had lasted for forty years among former prisoners of war, who have been involved in different military acts. Results indicated that 67% to 85% of the prisoners of World War II suffered from these

disorders after returning home (Atkinson et al., 1984). On the other hand, prisoners of the Japanese camps suffered from severe and violent symptoms more than the rest of the prisoners of World War II (Query et al., 1986). Prisoners of the battles of the Pacific (Pacific Fiela) also kept complaining of deep depression (Miller et al., 1992).

A study by Rahe (1988) pointed out that circulatory system disorders, diseases related to gastrointestinal system and other problems of the reproductive system, were among the hostages and prisoners of war in particular, and were largely influenced by anxiety. The study also recommended that anxiety associated with severe pressure must be treated early in order to protect prisoners from chronic diseases that may last for a lifetime.

Watson's study (1993) which targeted a group of prisoners, who were being held in Japan during World War II, shows that the symptoms they had suffered, either during or after detention, were consistent with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Eysenck (1989) suggested that studies on pressure exposure and distress depend on the methods by which these pressures and attitudes are considered. There is no doubt that there is a physiology level of the nerves, but it is, or part of it, is an indicator of the individual's personality, cognitive interpretation, environmental conditions, and many other factors and social problems. It seems that the pressure's "Duration", contributes to determining the response's kind and degree. Severe stress factors may evoke a strong short-term response, since it disappears as soon as these stress factors are gone, while the impact of the chronic pressure and stress situations continues with a growing effect. The higher the pressure is, the higher are the potential psychological troubles faced by the prisoner (Gleser et al., 1981).

Another study by Cohen (1980) indicated that the "unpredictability" and the disability of expecting events can simply amplify their impact, since predictable events are met with preparations that allow the possibility of reducing their impact. Predictability of events is also associated with the ability to control them, or one's belief of the ability to influence attitudes and overcome their results.

Some studies, which had focused on the effect of detention's experience, examined the impact of this experience on the families of the prisoners. According to one of these studies (Hall & Simmons, 1973) such effects on families may be deep and large, or simple and incidental.

However, the prisoners' wives usually suffer mental disorders and symptoms of psycho-physiological disorder. Their children, as well, may suffer from anxiety of separation and sleep disorder.

With regard to the prisoner's reaction to detention's experience, other researchers say that the experience of prisoners of war is largely affected by environmental, social and cultural factors, which have to do with the atmosphere and conditions of the place where prisoners are being kept. Therefore, there are challenge mechanisms that are important to keep the cohesion of the prisoner, to preserve his wellbeing and to prevent his collapse. According to the research, these mechanisms include communication with other comrades in captivity, personal flexibility, and maintenance of social structure (Ursano & Rundell, 1990).

Other studies investigated the stability and continuity of disorder symptoms among ex-prisoners after they return home (Eberly et al. (1991). They revealed a high level of permanent negative emotional status. They also showed that the difficulty of detention was always associated with the fixed continuous diagnosis of disorders, along with a state of general widespread apprehension and depression.

Other studies looked at the continuity of the effects of falling in captivity. For example, Goldstein et al. (1987) confirmed this phenomenon. The studies showed that, despite the fact that more than forty years had passed to detention's experience, ex-prisoners still continue to suffer from sleep disorder in particular, accompanied by continuous disturbing dreams and apprehension.

Based on the above mentioned information, we may summarize a number of criteria that can help to identify pressure exposure and the extent of straitened circumstances effects on the mental health of the individual. The continuity of the event, its chronic nature, unpredictability, the disability to control it, and the absence of a specific finish point, all are factors that can increase the pressure associated with the event. However, individual differences and the variety of people's degree of response to pressure must be taken into consideration. These factors can provide an indication that might help to measure the extent of the event's mental disorder results (Baum and Davidson, 1986).

Objectives of the Study:

This study aims at identifying the psychological effects of administrative detention's experience, in order to know the different aspects, effects and suffering of administrative detention, including the interfering variables of its events; whether relating to the prisoner himself, or other external factors relating the detention's conditions. Hence, the framework is to identify appropriate means that support prisoners in the proper re-adaptation process together with other family, professional and social dimensions.

Definitions of Terms:

Administrative Detention (AD): *arresting someone by the occupation authority, without charge or trial, using administrative measures.*

According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, AD is defined as: Depriving someone of his liberty depending on the initiative or the order of the executive authority rather than by judicial decree, without even any criminal charge against the administrative detainee. (The explanation of the additional protocols issued on June 8, 1977, attached to the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949. (Geneva Convention, 1949).

The Secret File: *A cover used by the Israeli General Prosecution and the General Security Service "Shin Bet"; in order to justify administrative detention or the continued extension of orders of the imprisonment terms. Both, the detainee and his attorney are denied access to the file.*

The Shin Bet: *The Internal Security Agency in the occupation State, Israel. It is directly subordinate to the Prime Minister, and sometimes called the (Shin Bet) an abbreviation of its Hebrew name: (Sheroot Petahon Klaly), meaning the General Security Service.*

Study Procedures:

A. Methodology of the Study:

The research utilised the case study approach. This methodology is a distinct one that is based on the interest to study the social units in general, and then shifts to the particulars within their relation to the whole. The Case Study of this research was a group of former administrative detention prisoners, who were recently released. This study was conducting during the months of June – September 2010. Data was collected through interviews and were recorder using a video camera in order to literally and objectively summarize the prisoners' answers. A summary of the social, professional, detention's condition

and duration of each member of the group was provided. The names of the detainees were undisclosed and instead, codes were used, in order to maintain the confidentiality of the interviewees.

B. Sample of the Study:

The research sample was a group of five administrative prisoners, who were placed under administrative detention and were recently released. When offered to be interviewed for this study, they showed acceptance and cooperation. Their age ranged from 18 - 50 years old and their detention term ranged from 7 months to 16 years.

C. Presentation of the Cases

As indicated earlier, each of the five case studies were kept undisclosed and they were all asked the same questions as shown in the section below.

- ***First Case:*** *(A) is a 44 year old male, married with three children, He spent 16 years of imprisonment, among which 12 years of administrative detention.*
- ***First Question:*** *What is the psychological effect of administrative detention on both you and your family?*

It is known that the prisoner has the right to know the date of his release, the right for a fair trial that discusses his charges openly; , whereas the administrative prisoner faces unknown fate ...not knowing when he will be released, and this is a kind of psychological torture to the prisoner and to his family. There is also a permanent fear, by both the prisoner and his family, that, after his release, he might be arrested again and again. Now that the prisoners name had been added to the "Administrative List", nothing he do might end the way the intelligence perceives him, even if he stays away from politics and stay home ...since the Israeli intelligence agencies want to prove to their superiors that they work hard, even if it comes on our behalf.

- ***Second Question:*** *What is the difference between convicted prisoners and the administrative?*

The convicted prisoner knows that there is a date for his release and he can make plans for the day after ...also His family psychologically prepares themselves for that date ...there is no place for future plans, or any psychological or social stability in the life of the administrative detainee.

- **Third Question:** *What is the hardest stage in your detention experience?*

Torture, insult and oppression in general, especially during the interrogation period, although the majority of administrative prisoners do not go through this stage, but I personally passed it each time I was taken to prison ...and I did not confess. Intense psychological hardship starts also at the last stage of imprisonment, since the prisoner can't tell for sure whether he will be released or not ... or if it is better to tell his family or not, or even to plan for his future ...there is also the agony caused by the frequent movement of prisoners from one prison to another.

- **Fourth Question:** *What are the most difficult situations during your imprisonment?*

Extension is the hardest of all. The prisoner keeps thinking whether his term will be extended or not ...suddenly, while one sits dreaming of the future, they inform him of the new extension order. The extension orders in the past were for one whole year, but now they divide the term, thus, extending terms of activists for several months. I remember a case of a prisoner whose term was extended every two months ...renewed every two months until he spent 5 years in administrative detention and increasing his psychological suffering.

- **Fifth Question:** *What are the physical changes that you went through in prison?*

I have suffered from a severe weight loss ...in addition to other health problems including a break in the spine and constant daily vomiting resulting from torture during interrogation. Today, 3 years after my release, I still receive treatment.

- **Second Case:** *(A) is a 50 years old male, married and he is the sole breadwinner of his family. He has seven children and spent 4 years under administrative detention.*
- **First Question:** *What is the psychological effect of administrative detention on both you and your family?*

The administrative prisoner's psychological state of mind is particularly damaged on the very first day of his release ...the extension of term is a psychological trauma to both the prisoner and to his family, who waits for him impatiently ...the brutality of the way they arrest

someone, when the army surrounds the house ...intimidating children and women at midnight, this also strongly affect them.

- ***Second Question:*** *What is the difference between convicted prisoners and the administrative?*

The prisoner of the first case knows why he is in prison ...his charges and the day of his release. He is prosecuted based on his confession or the confession of others ...whereas, the administrative prisoner knows nothing of his release, and does not have the psychological readiness to be released, since he does not know how much he is expected to stay in prison ...,why he is here, or how many term extensions are left? In some cases, administrative prisoners who were released ...were arrested again near checkpoints only hours after their release. In other cases, administrative prisoners received extensions of their terms only one night before their supposed release date ...which leaves them with severe psychological effects.

- ***Third Question:*** *What is the hardest stage in your detention experience?*

First of all ...it is the way they arrested me ...I was kidnapped from the street and brutally beaten ...I saw it as an assassination attempt ...they wanted me to resist arrest so they find an excuse to kill me, but I did not. Second, my hunger strike at the very first week of my imprisonment, which lead to me being taken to hospital. Finally, the repeated extension of terms ...which severely affected me, my wife, my children and my family as a whole.

- ***Fourth Question:*** *What are the most difficult situations during your imprisonment?*

Prison in itself is a tough experience ...were you see detained children, elderly and patients who suffer without being given appropriate medical care ...in prison, you see incompetent and negligent doctors examining patients in an insulting way ...keeping them behind bars were a distance of two meters and barbed wires separate between doctors and sick prisoners ...the constant scene of soldiers surrounding you day and night ...during the counting of prisoners, which is done three times a day, time of food serving and when doctors check patients, and finally during family visits ...these are all factors of torture and humiliation to prisoners and their families.

- ***Fifth Question:*** *What are the physical changes that you went through in prison?*

The little amount of food served in prison ...its bad quality because food is cooked by criminal prisoners ...this cause loss of weight to many of us ...there are also other health problems such as teeth pain .. I used to spend many nights sleepless because of teeth pain ...and when once I went to the doctor of the prison, he treated the good tooth and left me with the bad one ...I also suffered from an stomach ulcer caused by bad food ...having dreams of being repeatedly arrested on checkpoints, or elsewhere, are also some of the prison's psychological problems that keeps me worried.

- ***Third Case:*** *(M) is a 34 years old male, married and he is the sole breadwinner cf his family. He has three children and spent 3 years cf administrative detention.*
- ***First Question:*** *What is the psychological effect cf administrative detention on both you and your family?*

The detained prisoner and his family live in a psychological crisis that reflects itself in a continuous state of frustration caused by repeated extension of terms ...Today, my kids wake up late at night looking for me, because they are still afraid that I might be arrested again ...the prisoner's psychological state of mind and his personality play a role in the acceptance of detention and the renewal of the administrative terms ...the prisoner must be psychologically prepared for the renewal of his term, since we do not expect any good from our occupier ...none the less, the psychological impact of detention is felt whether you are psychologically prepared or not.

- ***Second Question:*** *What is the difference between convicted prisoners and the administrative?*

In the case of conviction, a release date is set by the judge's decision in an open court ...while in the case of administrative detention, no release date is obvious, since it is up to the mood of the intelligence service officers to decide rather than the judge whose presence in such cases is for formality.

- ***Third Question:*** *What is the hardest stage in your detention experience?*

Transfer of prisoners from one prison to another and the continued extension of detentions terms.

- ***Fourth Question:*** *What are the most difficult situations during your imprisonment?*

Two situations ...the first when my wife gave birth to our second son and the second was when I received an extension of my term ... although the appeal court decided to shorten the previous term, which gave me great hope of freedom ...in spite of my psychological readiness for the possibility of an extension, I was very much disappointed, especially that it came one day before my family's visit ...and two days before my supposed release on the first of January ...one learns not to trust the occupiers and all their illegal acts in general and that relates to administrative detention in particular.

- ***Fifth Question:*** *What are the physical changes that you went through in prison?*

Certainly and at the very beginning of detention were tension causes weight loss of the prisonerin addition to poor health. Tension accompanied with questions about the new detention situation and the nature of detention ...these are all reasons for loss of weight. For example, I myself lost 27 kg of my weight at the beginning of detention, but later I got used to the new situation ...other health problems are related to the prison's circumstances and its living situation ...in Ofer and the Negev prisons, prisoners are kept in closed tents that are made of petroleum (plastic) ...these are very cold in winter, since there is no means of heating and very hot in summer, which affect the health of the prisoners ...in addition to poor quality and quantity of food.

- ***Fourth Case:*** *(S) is a female from Al-Khader village. She is 18 years old and single. A Tawjihi (Palestinian high school matriculation) student and she spent 7 months of administrative detention.*
- ***First Question:*** *What is the psychological effect of administrative detention on both you and your family?*

The administrative detention causes psychological disorders, especially that I knew nothing about its nature ...when I was arrested and placed under administrative detention, I was tense and shocked, since my release date was unknown ...and my detention may last for years without any specific charge ...when I met my family, only through prison visits, I did my best trying to hide fatigue and stress ...pretending to be strong and not worried of me being in jail, in order to reduce their worries and fear as much as I can.

- ***Second Question:*** *What is the difference between convicted prisoners and the administrative?*

I do not know much about administrative detention and all its related laws, but the only difference I found is the absence of the date of release ...so I kept thinking of the possibility of receiving an extension of my term till the last day of my first term ... although I have heard that administrative prisoners have more rights and privileges than convicted ones, I did not see it actually on the ground, since all prisoners were living the same conditions regardless of the nature of their detention.

- ***Third Question:*** *What is the hardest stage in your detention experience?*

At the beginning of detention, I could not cope with the new reality of prison ...this is beside the other problems in dealing with other prisoners, since it was my first experience in prison ...the fact that prison is a new reality that has its own laws and rules create challenges in coping which I had to face in a short time ...especially with the extension of administrative term which, psychologically, took me back to the starting point again. This state of mind continues even after being informed of the release decision and the preparations that followthe state of disbelief that develops only ends with my arrival at home and seeing my family ... administrative detention is a continued contradiction between the possibility of freedom and the certainty of extension.

- ***Fourth Question:*** *What are the most difficult situations during your imprisonment?*

The most difficult situation was when I received an extension of my term, the same week that I met my family on family's visit ...I was tired trying to hide my exhaustion and my hard psychological state of mind, but I failed ...my family was able to discover how bad I felt from the expression of my face ...that moment I felt torn into two ...on one hand, my difficult psychological condition as a result of the extension, on the other is my desire to hide these feelings from my family who were eager to see me in a new strong state of mind ...another difficulty was the repeated movement of prisoners with hands and legs cuffed while deported between prison and military courts in a closed bus (called by prisoners (Bostah) while passing through different and difficult stages ...we then have to wait for several hours in dirty rooms with no basic life necessities, were we stay for three to four days until the formal trial is over and, then again, to the trip of agony back to prison.

- ***Fifth Question:*** *What are the physical changes that you went through in prison?*

I say, in answer to this question, that each prisoner will suffer a series of problems, physical and psychological during imprisonment ...like the loss of weight, sleeping problems which kept bothering me ten months after my release ...I was also infected with amoeba accompanied with bad temper and nervousness.

- ***Fifth Case:*** *(N) is a 42 years old male, married and the sole breadwinner of his family. He has three children and he spent 8 years of administrative detention with three years of conviction, making his total imprisonment to 11 years..*
- ***First Question:*** *What is the psychological effect of administrative detention on both you and your family?*

It certainly has psychological effects on me, my wife and my children, who all went through this bad experience with me ...including detention, extension of terms and the resulting psychological pressure ...in fact, they grew up and became matured while I was still in prison away from them, which bothered me a lot as a father who wanted to be by their side ...they also suffered nightmares caused by my arrest and the seen of the soldiers storming the house and beating me ...my wife and my children.

- ***Second Question:*** *What is the difference between convicted prisoners and the administrative?*

Convicted prisoners know their release date and they are psychologically prepared for that moment, whereas the administrative prisoners don't ...administrative prisoners are in a continued state of waiting, since extension of terms is always expected, and they never feel safe until they meet their families at home ...extension of terms is up to the intelligence to decide rather than a judge or a court ... one might be released now and be arrested the same day on a checkpoint or his term might be extended on the night of his release ...this all causes psychological disorders to prisoners who, out of frustration, would never plan for their future.

- ***Third Question:*** *What is the hardest stage in your detention experience?*

Prison with its all stages, is full of pain ...from the moment your home is attacked, through arrest, interrogation, detention to release ...none the less, the first stage of detention is the hardest ...in the case of

administrative detention, each extension of term is the beginning of a new phase of pain and stress that is full of self concerns and questions about the future and its effect on the family ...the prisoner, who is also psychologically influenced by the extension of his term, tries to re-cope with the fact that he has to start counting the days again.

- ***Fourth Question:*** *What are the most difficult situations during your imprisonment?*

All prison's conditions are difficult ...the most difficult situation I witnessed in prison was when a prisoner who received the news of his son's death ...another was when I saw a prisoner meeting his son at family visit ...another difficult situation I used to witness when my family visited me and the humiliation my children has to experience.

- ***Fifth Question:*** *What are the physical changes that you went through in prison?*

Contrary to other prisoners, my weight in prison increased, which is something unusual, since weight loss is phenomenon in prison ...the fact that I was the oldest among many young prisoners helped me a lot, since they did not let me do any of the hard work like food preparation or laundry ...with my food being served, I scarcely moved, causing my weight to increase ...there are also health problems that resulted from long years of imprisonment, like stomach and arteries problems ...these illnesses increased by deliberate medical neglect in prison ...once these health problems are not serious and with failure to treat them properly by giving prisoners pain killers only ...this all aggravates the health situation ...for example, I was scheduled for a surgery in the stomach, but the prison authority continued to delay it by giving me pain relievers.

Implications:

The most important effects of the administrative detention can be summarized as the following:

- *Absence cf charge or indictment.*
- *Possibility cf re-arresting after immediate release.*
- *Unknown fate because cf absence cf exact release date.*
- *Continued thinking cf extension.*

As for the health and psychological effects, it can be summarized as the following:

Health Problems:

- *Clear Loss cf weight.*

- *Sleeping problems during and after imprisonment.*
- *Back ache, especially in the spine, due to torture.*
- *Physical torture during arrest in front of family members.*
- *Malaises linked to constant tense (in the stomach and arteries).*
- *Bad food in quantity and quality.*

Psychological problems:

- *Trauma and pressure due to extension of imprisonment terms.*
- *Instability due to permanent movement from one prison to another.*
- *Inability to cope with the new situation.*
- *Frustration due to extension of terms.*
- *Permanent humiliation and expression.*
- *Absence of psychological and social stability.*
- *Increase of nervousness, tension and anxiety following release from prison.*

Discussion and Conclusion:

A former detainee once said:

“None of the researchers, regardless of their ability, can describe the bad psychological effects, and the pressure experienced by Palestinian prisoners as a result of administrative detention and repeated extension of terms, nor can they describe the extent of their families' suffering, whose children fate is surrounded by mystery, because of the Secret File(s), and the reports of collaborators on one hand, and the general political situation and the mood of the military commander of the region on the other” (Khuffash et. el, 2008).

Answers to the different questions of the study clearly uncover the degree of pressure and emotional agony caused by administrative detention, which is for most of the people interviewed, is a psychological torture, both to the prisoner and his family. This was clearly expressed by one of the detainees when he said that “My family members were all living nightmares after my arrest”.

Regarding the differences between administrative and convicted prisoners, the study also showed that they all live the same conditions and go through similar procedures. Yet, the administrative prisoner, whose fate is usually in the hands of the intelligence, lives in a permanent state of waiting, in the absence of a verdict by the court. Therefore, administrative prisoners may be released and rearrested the same day, or their term might be extended the same night or day of their

release, causing instability and doubling their psychological disorder. This was clearly shown in the case of the female prisoner who felt shocked when she knew that she has been placed under administrative detention.

Most of the studies showed that lack of predictability, and absence of a specific end, are all pressure and increasing factors associated with the event (Cohen, 1980; Baun and Davidson, 1986).

Answers of the prisoners also showed that all stages of detention are difficult, with distinguished emphasis on the one that precedes release and when prisoners usually receive extension or renewal of the imprisonment term. At time of extension, prisoners are usually psychologically affected, especially when they think of their families who impatiently wait to see them in addition to trying to re-cope with prison conditions.

All prisoners agreed that the prison experience is accompanied with humiliation, torture, carelessness and absence of appropriate medical attention and care. They also confirmed physical changes in and after prison, like weight loss, diseases such as stomach ache, amoeba and mental disorders, which continued to affects some, years after their release including bad dreams, nervousness, and stress. The impact of weight loss, which in many cases, reach an alarming level, is seen as one of the main standards and variables, among others, when to examine the psychological, psychical and mental consequence of detention (Ezzat, 1996).

With regard to movement between prisons, prisoners clearly indicated that it is used as a mean of pressure by occupation in order to keep the prisoner in a state of restlessness and of, psychological and social instability. When a prisoner is used to the new surroundings in a prison, the authorities tend to move him/her to another prison to prevent him/her from developing new, stable and strong social relationship with other prisoners. This is a strategy used by the occupation as a tool for psychological torture that leads to frustration.

Perhaps the most important outcome of this theoretical study:

“Psychological Effects of Administrative Detention”, is to recommend to conducting further inclusive studies about prisoners, in addition to giving more attention, to social, psychological, and appropriate health care and support to the prisoners. It is important to

note here that the imprisonment experience may lead to several types of poor adjustment, personality disorders, behavioral or psychological disorders, mental or physical problems or even a combination of some of these manifestations and disorders.

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((نموذج اشتراك في مجلة دراسات عربية في التربية وعلم النفس))

سعادة / الأستاذ الدكتور : رئيس تحرير مجلة دراسات عربية في التربية
وعلم النفس السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد ،،

أرغب الاشتراك في المجلة لمدة : (سنة واحدة □)

على أن تصلني نسخ أعداد المجلة على عنواني البريدي الموضح بهذا النموذج.

الاسم
الوظيفة
جهة العمل
الجنسية
عنوان المراسلة
البريد الإلكتروني
الهاتف / الفاكس

اسم المشترك :

التوقيع :

- قيمة الاشتراك السنوي للأفراد بالدول العربية : (٥٠٠ ريالاً).
- قيمة الاشتراك للأفراد بباقي دول العالم : (٢٠٠ دولار).
- قيمة الاشتراك للمؤسسات بالدول العربية : (٧٥٠ ريالاً).
- قيمة الاشتراك للمؤسسات بباقي دول العالم : (٣٥٠ دولار).
- قيمة الاشتراكات هذه شاملة تكاليف البريد العادي ، ومن يرغب في البريد الممتاز يتحمل الفرق.
- تسدد قيمة الاشتراكات مباشرة أو بحوالة بنكية بالريال السعودي باسم رئيس تحرير المجلة (د / ماهر إسماعيل صبري) على بنك الرياض فرع حي أحد بالمدينة المنورة ، رقم أي بان :
SA1620000001070160599940
- يمكن سداد قيمة الاشتراكات بالجنيه المصري مباشرة لكتب المجلة بجمهورية مصر العربية ، أو بحوالة بنكية باسم رئيس التحرير (د / ماهر إسماعيل صبري) على بنك فيصل الإسلامي المصري فرع بنها رقم الحساب ١٨٥٠٦
- ترسل صورة من قسيمة تحويل الاشتراكات على البريد الإلكتروني لرئيس التحرير
mahersabry21@yahoo.com
- يرسل هذا النموذج بعد تعبئة بياناته عبر البريد الإلكتروني لرئيس تحرير المجلة ، أو عبر البريد العادي على عنوان رئيس التحرير الحالي : المدينة المنورة ، جامعة طيبة ، كلية التربية ، قسم المناهج وطرق التدريس . أو على عنوان مكتبنا بمصر : ١ش أحمد ماهر متضرع من ش الشعراوي ، أتريب ، بنها .