

THE PLIGHTS OF INNOCENT CHILDREN IN SYRIAN CIVIL WAR

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Abstract

This research explores the humanitarian crisis faced by children of Syria due to the Syrian civil war which lasted nearly 14 years from March 2011 to December 2024. The armed conflicts in various cities of Syria impacted the physical, emotional and psychological condition of Syrian innocent children. The prolonged civil war in Syria generated a serious humanitarian crisis, leading to displacement of nearly one third of total population. The United Nations declared the Syrian crisis as one of the greatest tragedies of the 21st century which killed millions of people including children. This study employs Foucault's theory of biopolitics to understand how state powers control people and their lives by using violence and power. A qualitative research approach has been adopted to conduct this research, mainly focusing on the international reports and surveys conducted on destruction caused by armed conflicts in Syria.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Regardless of time and location, the pain and challenges of children belonging to war ravaged areas remain the same (Armitage, 2022; Alnabih et al., 2024; Shorrah et al., 2024). Stripped of all political, social and legal rights, their lives are reduced to bare lives. The sniper attacks and the widespread killing of children during the civil war in Syria have been reported on a global level. A research that was conducted by examining the emergency reports of the Education and Research Hospital of Syria from 2011-2019 revealed that many children from 0-18 years had surgeries after being shot in abdominal and other sensitive areas (Celikkaya et al., 2020). This random shooting on children and their severe injuries shows the vulnerability of children under conditions of war.

Approximately 2 million Syrian refugees are residing in neighbouring countries such as Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon. (Noor, 2016) Among the displaced refugees, children are more prone to exploitation and harm. They often become lonely after losing their parents and become deprived of a protective environment and familial support. The strategies of oppression by powerful authorities against children remain parallel. They claim to bring democracy while acting like dictators and they pretend to be peacemakers when in reality they are the real culprits. The dominance of political powers and sovereign states on the lives of common people become more convenient after they create conditions of war and armed conflicts as mentioned by Michel Foucault in his idea of biopolitics.

Literature has been playing a significant role in addressing the lived experience of war affected people. Although the statistics and international reports explain the sufferings of people who belong to war torn areas, they are mostly formal records which fail to elaborate the real emotions of people. Literature is one of the most reliable mediums that deeply scrutinize the challenges and hardships faced by war affected people and children. While statistical reports view people as numbers, literature has the potential to portray the real experiences of affected people. The contributions of writers and scholars who sincerely write in order to address the real problems of society play a crucial role in the restoration of dignity and personhood of war-torn people including children who were previously dehumanized by the cruel policies of political powers.

From the masterpiece of Hussein's *Kite Runner* (Hosseini, 2003) to Kanafani's *Return to Haifa* (Kanafani, 1969) and Abawi's *A land of Permanent Goodbyes* (Abawi, 2018) to Lefteri's *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* (Lefteri, 2019), writers have been playing a significant role in showcasing the actual sufferings of war affected people and regions to the world. These literary discourses help people in better understanding of children's hardships during and post war conditions and how critical it is to prevent wars to happen as every war that happens in any region of the world is a war against humanity and defenseless innocent children. The challenges that children of Syria faced during the long civil war are identical to the catastrophic conditions that children of Gaza and other war-torn regions have been encountering for decades.

1.1 Research Objectives

1. To demonstrate the devastating consequences of armed conflicts on physical and mental health of children
2. To examine the dynamics of Syrian civil war using Foucault's theory of Biopolitics

2. Literature Review

Perkins et al. (2018) investigated the impact of Syrian conflict on mental health of children by closely examining 492 school children, located in Damascus and Latakia. The children were aged from 8-15 and screening tools including CRIES-8 and RCADs-25 were used to monitor them. Trauma exposure data was also used to analyze their mental condition and history. The research revealed that 60 percent of children had psychological issues. 35% of children showed symptoms of PTSD and 32% had depression. 29.5% of children had a serious anxiety problem. At least 50 percent of children faced displacement at such an early age, triggering their cognitive health. The causes of this extreme level of stress in children were found out to be displacement, war-related terror events and exposure to violence. The study also highlighted the significance of school as a powerful accessible medium to collect data and evaluate the mental condition of children.

Abu Ras et al. (2023) in scholarly investigation indicated that the global healthcare and financial crisis have intensified the devastating condition of war-affected countries like Iraq and Syria. The issues of child labour, poverty and educational disruption have exacerbated, leading to serious mental and psychological challenges. A structured and broader approach rooted in cultural and social foundation should be adopted to tackle concerns of war-devastated children.

Sensin (2020) interacted with Turkish primary school teachers to evaluate the condition of Syrian refugee children studying in Turkey. In research, semi-structured interviews were arranged with 13 teachers and the outcomes indicated that war had negatively affected the children of Syria.

Teachers had observed psychological disruption and behavioral disorder in Syrian children, and they believed that this was strongly linked with their war experiences. Teachers also assured that they had observed the decrease in these complications with the passage of time.

Similarly, Devakumar et al. (2015) explained the psychological sufferings of children during armed conflicts, living in war-torn regions like Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. In research, authors mentioned that several studies and surveys repeatedly show that 36 to 76 percent of children living in war-ravaged areas have clear symptoms of PTSD. Nearly 44-45 percent of the war-affected population shows serious mental disorder. Studies also report that 70 percent of children show mild symptoms of PTSD and 41% of children show moderate to extreme symptoms of PTSD. Besides mental health problems, war also affects education and healthcare of affected areas. Reports highlight that 72 percent of the Syrian population did not get vaccinated during the war. Fifty percent of school aged children lost access to education completely. A large number of children population also went through repeated displacement where they also faced problems of poverty and child labour. Thereby, the study highlighted the devastating impact of war on children's health, education and psychology.

Solberg et al. (2020) investigated the commonness of PTSD symptoms in children of war-affected countries like Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq in systematic study. The participating children were aged between 16-18 years and the results revealed that minors from Afghanistan had the highest rate of trauma with an average of 56%. 36.8% of Iraqi minors and 33% of Syrian children exhibited symptoms of depression and PTSD. The study highlighted the impact of war related incidents on psychology of displaced and refugee children. Alsharif et al. (2024) in survey study interviewed parents of war-affected Syrian children living in Damascus aged between 2 to 17 years. "Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)" was used for these interviews and the investigative results revealed that 74% of children went through drastic behavioral changes. Children who experienced more violent incidents of war showed high prevalence of behavioral dysregulation. Alhaffar et al. (2018) in an exploratory article evaluated the health condition of Syrian children after they experienced exposure

to long periods of violence in their country. The results uncovered that 86% of children had dental disease while 91% had PTSD, revealing the connection between oral and mental health of children.

Examining the impact of war on mental condition of children, Hazer and Gredeback (2023) compared the psychological condition of Syrian refugees with other war torn areas like Yemen, Afghanistan and Myanmar in research work. The study categorized the traumatic events of migration into three phases. First is the "pre-migration stage" where war victims experience trauma of directly witnessing violence, second phase is during migration where people are used and exploited. The third phase refers to postmigration problems such as socio-economic challenges. These adversities lead to developmental impairment in victims of war, particularly children.

Parson (2000) also investigated the mental health of children living in war torn areas including the Middle East, Rwanda, Liberia, Bosnia and El Salvador. The article introduced new terms to discuss the mental health problems of war-affected people. The terms are "WZTrS" and "WZTrT". WZTrS stands for "war zone traumatic stress" and WZTrT stands for "war zone trauma therapy". Psychological methods such as psycho dynamics, behavioral and cognitive therapies are included in the war zone trauma therapy model. Parson stated that these new specified terms will help in better understanding and treatment of people affected by war-induced trauma. The author argued that unlike previous treatment models, there is a need for a more flexible and sensitive intervention model to treat war-affected people. Different people go through different levels of trauma during war, and it should be treated accordingly.

Kampalath et al. (2023) provided a comprehensive review after conducting intensive reading of existing 982 articles on health of war-affected Syrian children. The researchers claimed that only 16 articles provided evidence-based statistics. Four

main repeated themes that were present in almost every research done on Syrian children included the prevalence of infectious diseases, severe injuries, malnutrition and psychological disruption among children. The direct exposure of violence and destruction of healthcare departments had greatly affected Syrian children. Ullah (2018) analyzed the struggles of lonesome displaced children of Syria in a scholarly article. The study underscored the reasons due to which those children separated from their parents and relatives. The interviews with relief workers and unaccompanied children, residing in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria revealed that most children drifted apart from their parents because they were either killed or detained. Many relatives intentionally went their separate paths, leaving children behind to avoid responsibility. The research asserted that the Syrian civil war caused destruction of family systems, drifting children away from their parents.

Highlighting the displacement catastrophe in Syria, Aburas et al. (2018) in literary inquiry reported that the Syrian civil war has resulted in one of the largest displacement crises in human history. Within the seven years of war, 6 million Syrian people have suffered from internal displacement, endangering the lives of millions of innocent children. The maternal and child healthcare in Syria has deteriorated considerably, but there are some local humanitarian foundations and hospitals that are trying to assist displaced people. "Brotherhood medical center" in Atimah is a prime example of that where free medical services are provided to displaced women and children. The paper reaffirmed that localized NGOs and relief programmes play a vital role in providing support to war victims but there is need for expanded support programmes from international humanitarian institutions.

Catani (2018) analyzed how both children and adults suffer mentally and psychologically due to armed conflicts. Direct observation of violence and destruction turns a normally functioning human being into a victim of trauma and severe

depression. Although adults also suffer during war, the mental effect of violence on children goes beyond limits. This war-induced trauma goes with them for a lifetime, affecting their relationships, communication skills, memory and career. The struggles of children also depend on their socio-ecological context, making children of low-income countries more vulnerable to trauma because of poverty, less resources and a miserable healthcare system. The study also discusses the relationship between "dose and response", highlighting that more exposure to struggles and violence triggers more symptoms of PTSD in children. "Cycle of violence" is also an important aspect of this study where the author signaled that prolonged exposure to violence can make children's personalities violent once they become adults, prevailing violence in communities and societies. This pattern was seen in post-war Uganda and Sri Lanka.

Rosa et al. (2022) addressed the humanitarian responsibility of giving basic human dignity to people belonging to war-torn areas. The study urged the availability of proper health facilities for terminally ill people and children, living in armed conflict settings. Those living in areas of armed conflicts such as people of Ukraine need basic health facilities including adequate amounts of medicines and doctors. The article also criticized the systematic divide between high and low-income war-torn countries. While the problems of West-favoured countries are addressed again and again, poor countries like Afghanistan and Democratic Republic of the Congo continue to suffer in silence. The hardships of dying and seriously ill people multiplied during war which caused a large number of deaths that could be prevented if proper healthcare was provided. Therefore, it is imperative that the properly systematic medical facilities should be provided to sick people living in war torn regions so that the precious innocent human lives can be rescued.

Elsafti et al. (2016) shared that among the 1001 children they closely studied, most of them had lost their parents at a very early age due to war. In

field research, authors revealed that the Syrian civil war had a great negative impact on children's lifestyle, education and health. The participating children in study were from Idleb, Aleppo, Latakia and Hamah and most of them lost their family and suffered from lack of basic human facilities including medicine, food, water and sanitation. Many children lost access to basic school education due to poverty and shortage of facilities. Children faced outbreak of diseases because of lack of vaccinations and proper healthcare.

Alsayed (2018) in an analytical study analyzed the mental health of displaced Syrian children living in the city of Turkey, Antalya by comparing their psychological condition with their Turkish class fellows. The children who participated in the research were aged between 9-15 years and SDQ method (Strength and difficulties questionnaire) was used to examine their emotional responses and social behaviour. Results indicated that Syrian refugee children exhibited greater intensity in their emotional reactions than their Turkish peers, unveiling the fact that Syrian minors face extreme levels of mental stress and war-induced psychological trauma.

Smeeth et al. (2023) scrutinized the prevalence of PTSD among refugee children of Syria in evidence-based research. Children living in camps and settlements in the neighbouring country of Lebanon and falling in the age group of 6-18 were interviewed and examined, focusing on the examination of HPA axis and hair cortisol concentration (HCC) in participating children. The outcomes revealed that children who experienced longer exposure to war incidents had high levels of cortisol within them, leading to distress and anxiety. However, after leaving war-torn Syria and resettling in stable countries, the cortisol level decreased to a considerable extent, pointing towards mental and psychological healing. The exploratory research asserted that prolonged violence and conflicts can transform the stress biology of children by increasing their cortisol level, eventually triggering PTSD.

3. Theoretical Framework

This research employs the theory of Biopolitics proposed by Foucault, explaining how sovereign powers control human life by creating the conditions of war and emergencies. While Aristotle divided human life between two categories of 'oikos and polis', Foucault merged the biological and political domain and named it 'Biopolitics'. Sovereign powers are no longer controlling territories and resources only; they are controlling human bodies and their full course of life. The concept of relation between politics and life that Foucault shared in his book entitled *The History of Sexuality* in 1978 were explained twenty years earlier by Arendt in the book titled *The Human Condition* in 1958, but the dimensions and focus remained different (Arendt, 1958).

Arendt focused on totalitarianism while neglecting biopolitics and Foucault explored dominance of political powers over human life but didn't focus on concentration camps and emergency situations which are the clearest form of biopolitics in modern world, according to Agamben. (Agamben, 1998)

According to Foucault, modern powers have the dual ability to protect life as well as to administer the killing of humans on a massive scale. They try to create "docile bodies" in society who don't have their own autonomy, independent thoughts and consciousness. As Orwell stated in his book 1984: "War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength" (Orwell, 1949). These human bodies are obedient, controlled and trained to follow the instructions given by institutions, leading to the escalation of capitalism across the world.

Foucault proposed the concept of "Biopower" to scrutinize how human life is being governed by state authorities. They control human life by monitoring and controlling private matters such as population growth, birth rate, health status and mortality rate (Lazzarato, 2002). Strict surveillance

systems have been employed in the modern world by using tools like CCTV cameras, digital monitoring and GPS trackers (Best, 2010; Rudschies, 2022). Every aspect of human life from life to death is being recorded and controlled by supreme authorities, as portrayed by George Orwell in his book *1984* (Orwell, 1949).

Foucault explained that biopower functions at two different levels. In the basic level, they target individuals in order to make them disciplined, afraid and controlled which basically operate in schools, offices and prisons settings (Banovcanova and Masarykova, 2014). At the second level of their operation, they target entire populations by creating pandemics, generating wars, producing immigrant or refugee crises, creating vaccines and by monitoring birth and death rates (Philo, 2001). Thus, the modern logic of power is biopower which exercises domination over people by controlling human bodies and ultimately the entire population (Genel and Carson, 2023).

The literary contribution of Foucault is commendable as he developed a groundbreaking theory which rejected conventional views about how power operates. The former works focused on the authority of legal institutions while Foucault scrutinized the direct involvement of sovereign powers in regulating human life. Foucault elaborated in his work that power maintains its control over human life and their psychology by following two strategies. The first phase is to introduce political tactics on the state level, by introducing new policies and population control or monitoring. He named the second strategy as 'technologies of the self' and it is achieved by making people live in such a way that they start disciplining themselves. In social settings, factories, prisons and school, people are forced to act in a certain way by injecting fear in their souls and bodies that they are being observed. After living under such conditions for a considerable period of time, there comes a time when they start living as passive bodies who are always acting in a way of conformity even when no one is monitoring them. This strategy to control people

and turn them into docile bodies not only controls people's bodies, but it also completely alters their thoughts, behaviors, actions and ideology.

Nazi Germany used the strategy of biopolitics during 1933-1945 to dictate people's lives, particularly Jews. The biologists also contributed to the extermination of common people by developing theories like Aryan supremacy, eugenics and racial hygiene (Einspruch, 1989; Pander and Schwinger, 1995; Weindling, 2022). The director of the human heredity department wrote a book entitled *Racial Hygiene as Science and State Task*, stating that: "*Politics is giving form to the life of the people*" (Verschuer, 1936). Agamben proclaimed that Nazi biopolitics was contradictory and paradoxical. On the one hand, Nazis declared through prominent biochemists and biologists such as Ernst Rudin and Verschuer that human heredity was natural and Jews should be removed from society, alternatively it also imposed the idea on people that they must act politically against Jews to protect their homeland (Joseph and Wetzal, 2013; Schretter et al., 2024). The biological existence of people is treated politically and at the same time, political powers make the biological life of common people as their central target to control and manipulate.

The totalitarian regimes such as the 'German Reich' maintained their authority and power over people by the convergence of politics and life. Thus, the domination on people's lives is exercised by controlling them both biologically as well as psychologically. The decision making authority lies in the hands of the sovereign, and they use every source available to suspend law for the people they want to dehumanize. The sources of dehumanization are countless including media, technology, wars, conflicts, colonization, stealing resources and manipulating the psychology of people into believing that they don't deserve any better. Normal life is always at the brink of turning into bare life because of the control of powerful states over people's lives. (Sanders, 2018).

State authorities control human life externally by exerting new policies as well as internally by turning them into docile bodies through self-discipline. Foucault named this strategy as 'double bind'. The prominent feature of modern biopolitics is the ability of sovereign powers to include and exclude chosen people into 'polis'. The refugee crisis is one of the biggest crises present in modern times and sovereign powers are the one behind the prevalence of it (Silove et al., 2017). Suffering of stateless refugees clearly shows the deprivation of legal and human rights that a common person faces in an excluded state (Bazirake, 2017; Borges, 2024). Schmitt explained the term of sovereignty in his book titled *Political Theology* stating that: "Sovereign is he who decides on the state of exception" (Schmitt, 1985). The power of command remains in the hands of supreme rulers, and they are the ones who decide who gets to live under legal protection and who will be treated as inferior and precarious. The sovereign powers have the ultimate 'authority to inclusively exclude' the selected people from the legal and political sphere (Aker, 2025).

4. Results and Discussion

In the modern times of technological advancement and human development, humanity is still crying in the corner because the atrocities against children of war does not seem to end. The miseries of innocent and defenseless children are only intensifying and no amount of global laws and conventions seem to have any impact on the welfare of children. Children are still bleeding and the entire world is silently watching them getting slaughtered in the name of war.

4.1 The dehumanization of children in Syrian civil war 2011-2024

According to UNICEF reports, millions of children in Syria suffered from shortage of basic human needs. Syrian cities including Homs and Aleppo became the center of violence and destruction. The medical workers in one of its field hospitals elaborated that snipers even shot children in the head, killing and injuring thousands of innocent souls (Attar, 2014). The

Syrian civil war impacted the health and well being of children including new born babies in the worst ways possible. New born babies in war torn Syria died in incubators. Children experienced amputation and suffered unimaginable pain as doctors had to perform surgeries on them without anesthesia (Cousins, 2014; Krisberg, 2014). Various international researches reveal the attack on the healthcare system in Syria by the Assad government, resulting in the destruction of hospitals, ambulances and medical equipment (Trelles et al., 2016; Wong and Chen, 2018).

People were forced to leave their homeland in order to survive because of the violent circumstances created by armed conflicts (Doocy et al., 2015; Yazgan et al., 2015). War related forced migrations and displacement increased the risk of PTSD in approximately 1 percent of the entire global population (Hinchey et al., 2023). Studies conducted on refugees who left Syria during war revealed that they are still haunted by the memories of terror they witnessed directly in Syria, leading to higher rates of depression in refugees (Ghumman et al., 2016; Kreidie et al., 2016).

The chemical attack on people happened during the civil war in different cities of Syria. In 2013, Sarin was used against Syrian people in Ghouta (Pita and Domingo, 2014; Patocka, 2016). The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) investigated the chemical attacks that happened in Syria and found that the Assad regime used them against people intentionally (Koblentz, 2019). Reports show that 97 percent of those chemical attack victims were civilians including children. In Khan Sheikhoun which is located in the northwestern region of Syria, plume chemical was released in April, 2017, resulting in 'the death of 83 people including 28 children' (Bhaganagar and Bhimireddy, 2017; Brooks et al., 2018).

Chemical weapons were used on people in the city of Douma in 2018. The Syrian city Moadamyah suffered from chemical attack in August 2013,

resulting in hundreds of deaths. Medical documents of 2014 report the higher rate of miscarriages and birth of defected children in Moadamyah, revealing the disastrous consequences of exposure to chemicals for people including women and children (Al-Khatib and Jabri, 2015). The international community failed to give legal and political protection to people of Syria even after the observation of chemical attacks on Syrian civilians, exposing the impotence of international humanitarian institutions (McCormack, 2016).

Researchers claim that war is one of the main reasons which increases the mortality rate of pregnant women as women don't get enough physical and emotional support during this period (Kanawati and Dagdeviren, 2021). Women, particularly pregnant women faced great difficulties during the Syrian civil war due to the non-availability of 'reproduction health services' (Ahmad, 2025). According to the reports of the United Nations, nearly 1.4 million women in Syria don't have access to basic reproductive health services as a result of protracted war (Shalak et al., 2023). The painful and heartbreaking photographs and videos shared by Syrian activists illustrate the cruelty of war, sharing the pain of Syrian people and children with the global community (Jabbour et al., 2018).

People of Syria didn't only suffer from physical pain and loss, they had to tackle social anxiety, PTSD, depression and war induced trauma (Marwa, 2016). Studies conducted on healthcare workers working in field hospitals of Idlib and Aleppo revealed that they suffered from psychological harm and also felt reluctant about staying in Syria, leading to moral ambiguity and distress (Abbara et al., 2023). Children were greatly affected by the long exposure to violence in Syria which harmed their physical and mental health (Uysal et al., 2022). According to online surveys, people living in sensitive areas or 'hot zones' which were more prone to violence during war, showed severe symptoms of depression and

anxiety as compared to areas less touched by conflicts (Selmo et al., 2021).

A comprehensive ecological approach is needed to heal traumatized children. War has a negative impact on the psychology of children. There is a need to create safe spaces like communities for children where they can feel free. (Boothby, 2008) The treatments for psychologically affected children are still underdeveloped and need reconsideration. Children who have experienced atrocities of war need their family, community and proper society to feel secure and protected but unfortunately, these are the very first things that war takes away from them. Most children lose their parents and family during war and become more vulnerable to difficulties. This affects their condition even more both physically and emotionally. This calls for the creation of places with a friendly environment for war-affected children where they can rely on elders, friends and proper support systems.

War causes generational trauma in affected families. Children feel the fear and horrors of their parents and grandparents which affect their mental health and brain development (Devakumar et al., 2014; Forrest et al., 2018). Research done on war affected children indicates that unaccompanied displaced children suffer more in coping with their traumas than those who have parents (Drury and Williams, 2012). Children belonging to war torn Bosnia and Herzegovina suffered from great adversities in 1992-1995 which affected their mental health (Hasanovic, 2011). War generates poverty in affected region, resulting in child labour which increase the rate of PTSD in children, as was noticed in the context of Afghanistan war (Catani et al., 2009). The global priority should be to provide psychological intervention to war affected children (Masten and Narayan, 2012).

The recruitment of children as soldiers in war is another major child rights violation that happens often during times of conflicts. During the civil war of Sierra Leone, thousands of children were

included in armed conflicts, clearly violating the doctrines of international law (Denov, 2010). Children face deprivation of every basic human need during war times which impact their health in the harshest way possible. Lack of basic nutrition leads to the weakened immune system which then results in the prevalence of diseases like anemia, hepatitis and other respiratory health problems in children. Rohingya children faced poverty, shortage of basic human needs and violence during war which affected their psychological health (Frounfelker et al., 2019). A study conducted on Lebanese children aged between 3 to 9 was conducted to evaluate the consequences of war on their mental health. Findings revealed that children who were exposed to trauma of losing relatives or faced forced displacement had more distress and anxious behaviour than those who did not directly experience it (Chimienti et al., 1989).

The addition of modern advanced technology and AI in contemporary warfare has only intensified the difficulties of war affected children. The reason is the undeniable fact that most of the technological advancement and capitalist resources are in the hands of universal child killers. The children belonging to war affected countries including Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Iran and Palestine are subjected to the same kind of trials and tribulation. The war between US and Iran holds a significant place where the first attack was conducted by the US on the elementary school of Minab on 28 February, 2026, killing 156 people including 120 little school girls (Devi, 2026). It reflects how powerful states kill children intentionally without any thought of accountability. Law does not give protection to people whom the global powers deny to see as humans. did not have the audacity to call upon the war criminals who committed such grave crimes against innocent children. The Minab school attack is proof that the international legal system including The International Criminal Court, ICJ or UN is frail and ineffective in providing security to the children of the world (Abbasi, 2026).

The politicization of children's representation in Western and Eastern media is notable. Western media which is dominant all over the world chooses the war-torn children selectively. For instance, they emphasize on the sufferings of Ukrainian children while overlooking the hardships of Palestinian children who have been under constant challenge of destruction for decades. Similarly, Eastern media might focus on the problems of their own chosen ethnicity of children, neglecting the other side of the world. (Gumusboga, 2026) Thus, the sufferings of children living in war-torn regions are used by the media for their political interests, turning the children from victims into political tools.

The evolution in nature of war, particularly in the context of children's involvement is deeply concerning. In modern times, wars are often fought internally and there is high risk for civilians to get harmed and killed. (VanBueren, 1994) Children and innocent civilians become easy targets of opponents, and they mercilessly kill them as was seen in wars of Sudan, Somalia, Angola and Yugoslavia. As the civilian casualties have increased to a great extent, the laws to protect children during war should be strengthened and refined. The condition of various countries in the Middle East including Syria has deteriorated due to never-ending wars. (Snoubar and Duman, 2016) Women and children living in the Middle East face endless hardships and challenges, both physically and psychologically. The humanitarian work should be done on a large scale in the war-torn regions of the Middle East to mitigate the damages caused by war.

5. Conclusion

The Syrian civil war is one of the darkest chapters of the 21st century which caused a lot of misery to civilians of Syria particularly affecting the innocent children. The social infrastructure, healthcare and educational departments turned into disastrous conditions which led to disrupted family systems due to displacement and forced migration issues. In order to ensure the safety of children, it is

imperative to reduce armed conflicts and violent activities across the world. Effective and robust measures must be taken on legal, social and humanitarian levels to mitigate the risks of children rights violations.

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