



## The Reality of Traffic Crimes in Palestinian Society

Issam Al-Atrash<sup>1\*</sup> and Waseem Mohammad Ameen Shahwan<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Criminology and Law, Al-Istiqlal University, Palestine*

<sup>2</sup>*Palestinian Union of Social Workers & Psychologists, Palestine*

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### Abstract

This study aimed to identify the reality of traffic crimes in the Palestinian society, by identifying the factors leading to traffic crimes, the effects of traffic crimes, and combating traffic crimes, and the researcher used in his study the analytical method, and the study reached a set of conclusions, perhaps the most prominent of which is that excessive speed and wrong overtaking are the most prominent factors leading to traffic crimes, and that traffic crimes have human, economic, social, health, and psychological effects, and the study also found that the fight against traffic crimes focuses on behavior. The study recommended a set of recommendations, most notably tightening the penalty and actually applying it to traffic crimes, tightening the granting of vehicle licenses through an official body and not an unofficial body, and stressing the procedures for granting driving licenses to individuals.

### Corresponding Author:

Issam Al-Atrash

*Department of Criminology and Law, Al-Istiqlal University, Palestine*  
[esamalattrash@yahoo.com](mailto:esamalattrash@yahoo.com)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The history of traffic accidents dates back to the first traffic accident in the world in 1896, where a London newspaper announced that what happened should not be repeated, prompting the World Health Organization to call on all governments and civil society institutions to join hands to stop the bloody bleeding on the road and consider addressing this issue<sup>1</sup>. Traffic crimes are defined as an interdiction event that occurs without prior planning by one or more vehicles (vehicles) with other vehicles(s), pedestrians, animals or objects on a public or private road. A traffic accident usually results in injuries ranging from minor property and vehicles to serious injuries leading to death or permanent disability. It is every accident that results in material or physical damage and is unacceptable, which

occurs to the vehicle or from it during its travel, it is every act If traffic accidents are material and moral injuries that affect the vehicle (small or large car) due to a collision or technical deviations in the vehicle or the bad behavior of the driver of the vehicle, which causes material and moral losses, which are called traffic accidents<sup>2</sup>. The World Health Organization defines a traffic accident as an unintentional incident resulting in visible injury. According to a study the European Economic Commission of the United Nations defines a traffic accident through the availability of the following elements: It occurs on the public road - those results in the death or injury of one or more people - that one of the moving vehicles on the road participates in it<sup>3</sup>. It is clear to us that from the previous definitions, the following elements must be available in the definition of a traffic accident:

- Error: It is the act of the person unintentionally and this act is achieved due to negligence and non-observance of laws, regulations and regulations or lack of precaution.
- Vehicle: that this wrong act results in damage caused by the vehicle, and the knee is everything prepared for walking on the public road such as cars, tractors, trailers ... Etc.
- Public Road: By which we mean that this wrong act that resulted in the damage occurred due to the use of the vehicle on the public road.
- Material or human losses: We mean losses resulting from deaths, injuries and damage to public and private property.

The definition of a traffic accident in economic terms is that unintentional accident that resulted from the use of the vehicle on the public road, and results in loss of life and property that directly or indirectly affects the national economy<sup>3</sup>. Traffic crimes have become a source of concern for all members of society in most countries of the world, as they deplete the human and material resources of society in addition to being the cause of psychological and social problems, that confronting this problem must be a confrontation based on scientific foundations based on concerted efforts and disciplines<sup>3</sup>. Especially since it is in an upward trend, which leaves large human and material losses, imposing heavy burdens on countries, where traffic accidents represent a modern dilemma resulting from violations committed by an individual and harming another individual or individuals, as they eliminate the lives of many and result in many injuries and disabilities, and cause massive damage to public and private property, and it is not exaggerated if we say that the victims of road accidents exceed the victims of wars and terrorist operations, and in countries they compete with diseases and epidemics as causes of death<sup>4</sup>. Statistics issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) indicate that the world loses about (1.2) million people annually, and about (20-50) million people are injured annually as a result of traffic accidents in the world, and the annual material losses resulting from these accidents are estimated at (518) billion US dollars for all countries of the world, constituting (1%-3%) of the GDP, and many countries of the world have reached the need to develop national traffic mechanisms and strategies to meet the traffic safety challenges associated with many sectors and entities. Related<sup>5</sup>. Traffic accidents are the second leading cause of death for the age group from 5 to 29 years, and are the third cause of death for the age group between 30-44 years, and the World Health Organization estimates that the number of deaths will increase by 80% in developing and low-income countries by 2020 if immediate action is not taken to address these accidents and their causes, and the world loses daily more than (3000) people as a result of road accidents, but at the level of the Eastern Mediterranean in the World Health Organization, which includes most of the Arab countries, more than 130,000 people die annually<sup>6</sup>.

## 2. STUDY PROBLEM

The phenomenon of traffic crimes is not a local phenomenon suffered by one country without another, but it is a global problem suffered by all countries of the world, in disagreement between them in the percentage of accidents, and in their negative repercussions on society, and recently deaths and serious injuries resulting from car accidents have become one of the main problems that threaten humans, and represent a real detail at all levels, Arab, Islamic and global, and the status of crimes Traffic in the Arab region is worsening as a result of the absence of a regulatory framework and the current weak efforts in the field of road safety. Palestine is not far from this problem and its negative effects that affect all classes of society, as traffic accidents in Palestine represent a deadly fierce war, a danger to society and threaten the lives of its children, and raise many conflicts and social, health and psychological problems, and leave many family and social tragedies, in addition to the financial and economic costs that exhaust the state budget, and disrupt the development process in all its aspects. The number of injured and dead in our country as a result of traffic accidents is increasing continuously from year to year, and in this context, statistics issued by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, the Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Palestinian Police give a clear picture of the size and results of traffic accidents in the West Bank, according to the statistics of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. The number of traffic accidents in Palestine escalated from about 5,408 thousand in 2010 - with the omission of accidents that were resolved amicably - where the total number of injuries reached 7,033 between minor, moderate and serious injuries, and the number of deaths reached 132, while the number of accidents escalated in 2018 to 12,829, and the total number of injuries reached 9,561 between simple, moderate and serious injuries, and the number of deaths reached 125. This requires obtaining the necessary data to study the traffic situation and find practical solutions to develop it, and accordingly the current study came to answer the study's main question, which is: What is the reality of traffic crimes in Palestinian society? The following sub-questions emerge from the main question

- What are the factors leading to traffic crime in Palestinian society?
- What are the effects of traffic crimes on Palestinian society?
- What are the mechanisms for combating traffic crimes in the Palestinian society?

### 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study attempts to achieve the following objectives

- Identify the factors leading to traffic crimes in the Palestinian society.
- Illustrate the effects of traffic crimes on Palestinian society.
- Clarify the mechanisms of combating traffic crimes in the Palestinian society.
- Identify the concept of traffic crimes.

### 4. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The theoretical importance lies in the importance of the study from a theoretical point of view as it is related to revealing the reality of traffic crimes in Palestinian society, and it is considered one of the rare studies that dealt with this topic, and therefore this study will contribute to enriching the theoretical literature and the Palestinian library on such a topic, which makes it easier for other researchers to benefit from this study and refer to it. As for the practical importance of the study lies in practice as it will help the competent authorities, especially supervisors and specialists in the field of traffic prevention, with the most important factors leading to traffic accidents and mechanisms to confront them, and in light of the results and recommendations of the study, those in charge of developing traffic prevention programs can benefit from developing preventive plans and programs and targeted and scientific educational campaigns that contribute to reducing traffic accidents, especially the traffic police.

### 5. LITERATURE REVIEW

Road traffic accidents constitute a pressing global issue with far-reaching implications, necessitating a multidimensional approach that encompasses analytical methodologies, health and social consequences, and legal enforcement frameworks. underscores the unresolved methodological challenges in driver behavior and accident research, arguing that inconsistencies in data collection impede a comprehensive understanding of accident causation<sup>7</sup>. Complementing this, the analysis highway traffic accidents to identify black spot locations through statistical modeling, though their focus on specific geographic contexts overlooks broader socio-economic factors. provides a worldwide review of traffic accidents, pinpointing recurring causes such as speeding and inadequate infrastructure, yet their study lacks depth in exploring legislative influences<sup>8</sup>. In the Palestinian context, offers a practical road safety guide, but it remains a policy-oriented document rather than a research-based analysis. These works collectively highlight the need for an integrated framework that bridges behavioral, infrastructural, and legal dimensions, a gap particularly evident when examining traffic accidents in understudied regions like Palestine. The

consequences of road traffic accidents extend beyond immediate physical damage, significantly affecting health, social structures, and human security. The examination of the health and social ramifications of traffic accidents, emphasizing their long-term impact on victims' quality of life, though her findings are primarily rooted in European settings, leaving developing regions underexplored<sup>9</sup>. Similarly, present a retrospective study of road traffic accidents in Nineveh Province (2017– 2021), documenting injury and mortality trends, yet they fail to connect these outcomes to governance or enforcement mechanisms<sup>10</sup>. Frames traffic accidents as a human security concern, arguing they threaten societal stability, but his analysis lacks empirical grounding in specific legal systems. This body of literature reveals a critical research gap in linking the health, social, and security impacts of traffic accidents to local legal and cultural frameworks, particularly in contexts like Palestinian society where such connections remain insufficiently examined. Legal and enforcement perspectives are pivotal in mitigating traffic accidents, yet their effectiveness varies across jurisdictions, underscoring the need for context-specific analysis<sup>11</sup>. Traffic Law Number (5) (2000) establishes a regulatory foundation for road safety in Palestine, but its practical impact remains unassessed in academic research. Advocate for stronger criminal justice responses to traffic accidents causing loss of life, though their theoretical approach lacks empirical validation. Wu and Lum (2020) explore proactive traffic stop as a policing strategy to reduce accidents, demonstrating potential efficacy, but their findings are anchored in Western contexts, limiting relevance to emerging legal systems<sup>12</sup>. The propose optimizing law enforcement in traffic accident cases to enhance justice and road safety, yet their prescriptive recommendations overlook contextual enforcement challenges. These studies collectively highlight a gap in evaluating the alignment of traffic laws and enforcement practices with societal realities, particularly in Palestine, where the interplay between legal frameworks, cultural norms, and the prevalence of traffic crimes remains underexplored<sup>13</sup>. Despite these contributions, a research gap persists in integrating analytical, social, and legal dimensions within developing regions like Palestine. Global studies lack local specificity. Palestinian works are limited in scope, and enforcement efficacy (e.g., Traffic Law Number (5), 2000) remains unexamined. This study addresses this by exploring traffic crimes in Palestinian society holistically<sup>14</sup>.

### 6. STUDY METHODOLOGY

In his study, the researcher will use the analytical method, by analyzing all jurisprudential concerns and official and unofficial statistics related to the subject of traffic crimes.

#### 6.1 First Requirement

### 6.1.1 Factors Leading to Traffic Accidents

There are a range of factors that are involved together in traffic accidents, and these variables can be classified in terms of the human being as a present element in traffic accidents, the place and area where the accident occurred, in addition to the vehicle<sup>15</sup>.

**Subchapter I: Man:** It is clear that man plays a fundamental role in traffic accidents, not only as a perpetrator or victim, but goes beyond that to emphasize the human element as the one who shapes other elements such as the popularization of the car and the road, and other aspects within which driving takes place<sup>15</sup>. However, we are interested here in clarifying the direct role of the human element in the occurrence of the traffic accident, that is, as a human being as a driver whose behavior led to the occurrence of the traffic accident, or as a pedestrian, and therefore he led His behavior due to the occurrence of a traffic accident. In this paragraph, we are concerned with the human being as a driver, and the nature of his performance, and his role in the occurrence of traffic accidents, the driver may cause the accident for purely biological and psychological reasons related to his person, or for reasons related to his skills, or because he is going through an exceptional circumstance that formed a framework for the accident. Therefore, the reasons that are due to the driver as a participant in traffic accidents can be stereotyped into four types, the first type is a set of reasons related to the physical nature of the driver and includes fatigue and fatigue, which would play a role in increasing speed and thus not controlling the vehicle, in addition to that fatigue and fatigue would reduce the human ability to observe traffic rules or rules for dealing with the vehicle itself in addition to the second factor, which is sleep<sup>16</sup>.

There is also a range of individual and societal drivers that have an impact on traffic accidents.

- Age: The minimum age to obtain a driving license in Palestine is 17.5 years, and information indicates an increase in road accidents for drivers between the ages of 17.5 and 24 years.
- Driving experience: which affects his lack of experience and awareness of the necessary driving methods and limited skills to traffic accidents.
- General commitment to traffic safety: There are societies in the world that are aware and committed - to a large extent - to the foundations of traffic safety, and this stems from awareness, regulations and their strict applications in these communities, so a traffic island may be planned to mean it is forbidden to park in it, but in other societies, the height of the curbstone must be high enough to prevent cars from parking on traffic islands, due to the general lack of compliance with traffic laws and inadequate monitoring and accountability<sup>17</sup>.
- Drinking alcohol: The need for devices to check the level of alcohol in the blood, and the laws in this regard range

from zero alcohol in the blood (this means an alcohol content of less than 0.1%) to a blood alcohol level of 1%

- Drug abuse: This is a scourge that is rejected and lawless in all places and times, not only while driving, and of course it negatively affects traffic safety and must be confronted.
- High speed: which would lose the driver's full ability to control his vehicle in addition to weakening his ability to control the variables in which he drives, because it reduces the separation between the perception of the variable and the decision to deal with it, and also greatly reduces the place between the two variables, and therefore high speed would increase traffic accidents<sup>18</sup>.

**Subchapter II: Place:** The place of the accident is one of the important variables causing traffic accidents, and the place ranges from being the area of the accident, to the nature of this area in terms of its terrain nature, or the nature of its use and the form of life in it, as well as the scope of the place. The point at which the accident occurred, is it a one-lane or two-lane road, is it a roundabout (focus) or an intersection, as well as the condition of the road itself, and its suitability to walk on it, as it is also considered one of the elements that have a role in the occurrence of a traffic accident. With regard to the area of the accident as the first element in the place of the traffic accident, the area of the accident has been divided into three types of areas, the first type includes the residential area, the second the commercial area, and the third outside the city on the highways. The residential area is the area where the population lives, and the residential area with a relatively high population density and relatively heavy traffic was chosen, while the commercial area is characterized by a high degree of congestion, which makes the area dense in terms of the presence of people in it, and in terms of traffic congestion, while the area outside the city we find that the road network linking cities to each other is almost devoid of people, so the speed of driving increases further, causing larger and more serious accidents. In addition to the obsolescence and weakness of public infrastructure (especially within cities) such as lighting poles and traffic signals, light and non-light traffic signals, non-conformity of roads to international specifications and standards with no maintenance, lack of modern monitoring devices, and the large number of two-lane roads without the presence of median islands<sup>19</sup>.

**Subchapter III: Vehicle:** As the unsuitability of the car to drive, especially in the brake part and tires, plays an important role in the occurrence of accidents, as well as the presence of other reasons related to this matter such as the use of non-original spare parts, and the invalidity of lighting devices while driving at night and others. The percentage of traffic accidents in the Arab world resulting from negligence and error in maintenance was estimated at about (67%) of the total other factors, while sudden malfunction was recorded by (10%) only, while the percentage of deficiencies in engineering design did not exceed (23%)<sup>20</sup>.

## 6.2 Second Requirement

### 6.2.1 Effects of Traffic Crimes

In the second requirement, we will address the effects resulting from traffic crimes, which are related to human losses, economic effects, health effects, social effects, and psychological effects, where I will present them as follows:

**Subchapter I: Human Casualties:** Traffic accident deaths and injuries have presented the biggest challenge. There are typhoons in Palestine and are killed by traffic accidents Hill more than (1,300). In 2016, the number of deaths from traffic accidents has reached 1300 deaths and 6244 injured according to traffic show traffic statistics issued by the General Directorate of Traffic.

**Section II: Economic Effects:** Traffic accidents have significant economic implications for countries. These losses may be invisible or indirect and difficult to calculate, and this impact extends to the individual and society so that insurance companies bear the repair of damaged vehicles, pay the blood money of the deceased and compensate for injuries, and thus the aggravation of the problem of traffic accidents leads to insurance companies raising their prices to avoid loss, which negatively affects the individual, but in terms of its impact on society, the individual works in the state as a humanitarian factor for the benefit of his community and his country and is not compensated for a price.

**Section III: Health Effects:** The information issued by the Ministry of Health on the burden of disease for the year 2002 shows the injury of a quarter of the victims of accidents who were admitted to the hospital according to studies conducted in Palestine that traffic accidents are the main cause of brain injuries, and studies found that: Road accident patients constitute between (13%) and (31%) of the total injuries in hospitals. Road accident patients in some countries (48%) of the beds in the surgery department. Studies have also shown that road accident victims are the most common patients in operating rooms and intensive care units.

**Subchapter IV: Social Impacts:** The social effects of traffic accidents are summarized in the poor ability to perform work for injured in traffic accidents as a result of permanent disability, delinquency, evasion of children and poor upbringing due to the absence of the head of the family or both parents. Therefore, their absence is an absence of control and a deterrent to the child, and some studies have shown the importance of the father's presence in raising children, as they showed that families in which the mother or grandmother is the main responsible are less cohesive in all aspects of family cohesion for those families for which the father or one of the brothers is the main responsible.

**Subchapter V: Psychological Effects:** Injured people in traffic accidents alone may suffer psychological trauma, and not only the person who caused the accident, but also the companions accompanying him, all their families and even the bystanders witnessing the accident. Symptoms of either of these disorders may present weeks after the trauma, or months or even years later, depending on the nature of the individual case. The following are the main signs of psychological stress: Retrieving painful memories during nightmares or dreams about the accident; recovering painful memories while driving a car, watching traffic, or entering a police station; acute emotional disorders, such as anxiety; persistent stress; unjustified obsessive-compulsive disorders; guilt complex; feelings of loneliness and alienation; and loss of hope, which can weaken one's ability to build and maintain social relationships with others<sup>21</sup>.

## 6.3 Third Requirement

### 6.3.1 Mechanisms to Combat Traffic Crimes

The rapidly growing political awareness in the country has led to the establishment of road safety departments, to put forward coordinated and multisectoral funded action plans<sup>18</sup>. Traffic accidents are often the product of a series of root causes: the vehicle (which accounts for 5 to 10 per cent of accidents), road infrastructure (10 to 20 per cent is attributed), the behavior of road users is at least partly responsible for at least 80 to 90 per cent of road accidents, it is important to consider the vehicle, the road, the road user as a system, and the interactions between Users and physical elements are crucial, so roads and vehicles must be designed to take into account human errors. Technical safety standards and annual vehicle testing are mandatory in high-income countries, but manufacturers tend to agree that it will take time for future advanced technologies to make more sophisticated safety improvements, and another source of concern in low- and middle-income countries is the overloading of commercial vehicles to transport goods or passengers (or both at the same time). as is often the case). Regulations for maximum loads and regular inspections are essential, and further improvement in the public and commercial transport sectors is one of the best ways to avoid such overloads<sup>19</sup>. Basically, it is necessary to check the presence of the main safety tools in the vehicle, which are lamps in terms of clarity, color and level of lighting, and light signals in the vehicle indicating turning or alerting, and tires in terms of size, quality and endurance. The average speed, year of production and storage places, reflective mirrors to detect the road in front of drivers, rain wipers, brakes and parking brakes that control the movement of the vehicle, and must make sure that the doors are locked, the seat belt is placed, and the presence of Airbags<sup>22</sup>.

**Subchapter II: Road Infrastructure:** Road infrastructure as a whole (including road surface, road marking and design) is a

major safety factor. Road designs should recognize that humans make mistakes and try to minimize the consequences of human error, some low-cost improvements in infrastructure have been shown to significantly reduce the incidence and severity of road accidents. Safer paths for pedestrians and two-wheeled vehicles, building sidewalks or paved surfaces on both sides of the road, especially within cities and villages on both sides of the road, pedestrian crossings or pumps, and slower speeds for traffic, and driving must be safe at night and day and not in the day alone, and this means that the lighting in the streets is sufficient for the driver for traffic signals, and when pedestrians are present, especially at intersections, and speed limits must be reduced at night within the range of 10-15 km / h, and must Roads are prepared for different weather conditions, whether rainy, humid or even in severe snow, and do not forget the problem of advertising signs and their impact on traffic safety, so there must be a certain strategy in placing these advertisements and not be too attractive to the driver<sup>23</sup>.

**Subchapter III: Human Behavior:** The behavior of road users is in fact, the main cause of road accidents, injuries and deaths resulting from them, among the many risk factors involved in causing road accidents, and the driver is the effective element and engine of the traffic process, so it is necessary to provide several qualities in the good right:

- Integrity of the senses.
- Know and abide by traffic regulations and instructions.
- Focus while driving.
- Sense of responsibility.
- Familiarity with the vehicle's mechanics and maintenance on an ongoing basis.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of what has been presented, the researcher recommends a proposal to reduce traffic crimes in the Palestinian society based on the following:

- The need to tighten the penalty for traffic crimes, especially excessive speed and wrongful overtaking, in addition to their actual application, not only legislative texts.

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- Tightening the procedures for licensing vehicles in terms of ensuring their validity by an official authority and not an unofficial body as is the case.
- Tightening the procedures for granting driving licenses to individuals, in aspects related to the age of individuals and the examinations that must be passed to obtain a driver's license.
- The need to increase the personnel working in the traffic police and equip them with modern means of vehicles and cameras, so that they can monitor and control the largest possible number of roads.

## 8. CONCLUSION

This study examines traffic crimes in Palestinian society, identifying excessive speed and wrongful overtaking as key causes that significantly increase accident rates and endanger road safety. These crimes have widespread consequences, affecting the economy, public health, social stability, and psychological well-being. The financial burden of accidents, including medical costs and infrastructure damage, strains national resources, while victims and families suffer lasting social and emotional distress. Addressing this issue requires a comprehensive approach that integrates human behaviour, infrastructure development, and vehicle safety regulations. Strengthening penalties, enforcing strict licensing procedures, and improving traffic education are crucial to reducing crime rates. Ultimately, combating traffic crimes demands collective efforts from governmental bodies, law enforcement, and the public. Through stricter regulations and responsible driving practices, Palestinian society can work toward safer roads and minimize the negative effects of traffic-related offenses.

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Conflict of interest declared none.

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