



# Understanding the Complexity of Conflict Trauma: A Systematic Review

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## ABSTRACT

One of the most serious repercussions of war is the influence it has on the mental health of individuals. New types of violence require different approaches in understanding conflict. To this end, the central aim of this review is to understand and form an appreciation towards the phenomenon of conflict trauma. An in-depth systematic review was carried out with deductive-inductive thematic research design to explore patterns within the paradigm of trauma studies. Themes found over the span of the last 22 years in research literature revealed that conflict trauma studies are generally centered around three basic types of trauma exposure; socio-political, gender based and transgenerational trauma. The findings indicate exposure to traumatic events in conflict-affected groups underpins distinct patterns with an underlying theme of post-traumatic growth as essential to help survivors move on from the trauma. It is assumed through the analysis of this research that in some cases conflicts make communities more resilient and form an important catalyst for personal growth.

**Keywords:** conflict trauma, socio-political trauma, gender-based trauma, transgenerational trauma

## **INTRODUCTION**

This paper employs a thematic approach to gain a better understanding towards conceptualizations around conflict trauma. Today, there exists a gap in psychoanalytic literature which isolates the impact of trauma and our approaches to dealing with it from our knowledge and strategies for dealing with intrapsychic conflict. The present research hopes to fill up this gap through highlighting themes by providing a historical overview within conflict trauma studies. Furthermore, it proposes mapping a field of study around the prevalence of three major types of traumas i.e., sociopolitical trauma, gender-based trauma and transgenerational trauma within conflict trauma research. In the end, a discussion on current trends proposes that a proportional relation exists between trauma and positive personal growth. Resiliency in some categories proves to be a positive variable associated with complex trauma and can be considered a prerequisite for human development and progress.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Most of psychiatric research can be attributed to increasing wars and conflicts around the world (Lakshminarayana, 2006). During the first part of the twentieth century, psychological therapies were needed as a means to cope with shocks and after effects of post combatant conflicts. The National Institute of Mental Health was founded in the United States in response to the understanding that a part of the population was psychologically unsuitable for army recruitment during WWII. In fact, in terms of understanding the link between conflict and mental health, the year 2005 is crucial. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the conclusion of the Vietnam War and the beginning of the Lebanon War. Signifying that wars and armed conflicts have unfortunately become an evidentiary part of human life. Mass exodus and migration as a result of full-fledged wars between countries have created issues from housing to long term PTSD hampering the ability of people to be human labor resource for the global community.

Thus, mental problems are becoming more common and prevalent among the general population. A great number of publications and documents have been published in recent years that discuss the impact of war on mental health. "Mental health and conflicts – Conceptual framework and approaches" describes how mental health problems arising from conflicts can be deeply personalized (Murthy, 2007), the United Nations (UN) book "Trauma interventions in war and

peace: prevention, practice, and policy" describes how the idea of divine religion can be used as a ruse to persecute minority groups and interventions that can be introduced (Green, Friedman, de Jong et al (eds) 2003); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) document "The state of the World's Children – Childhood under threat" (UNICEF, 2005); the book "Textbook of Global Mental Health: Trauma and Recovery" (Mollica, 2011); and War and Mental Disorders in Africa (Njenga, Nguithi, & Kang'ethe, 2006) all strive to comprehend the different facets of mental health complications caused by macro traumas.

Suffice to say both soldiers and civilians suffer physical and mental consequences as a result of war. However, women, children as well as non-armed individuals become 'collateral damage' in these cases and the focus of this study is to investigate the different types of trauma civilians have to go through as a result of armed conflicts. Non-combatant civilians are commonly affected by the combined consequences of war, torture, and repression, particularly those captured in conflict zones or compelled to participate in war-related actions such as murder or rape against their will. The defenseless victimized children and families caught up in the experience of war are dubbed the "collaterally injured" population as cited by Elbedour, Bensel, and Bastien (1993). War-related emotional suffering occurs not only as a result of direct exposure to life-threatening situations and violence, but also as a result of indirect stressors such as the injury or death of family members or caregivers, economic hardships, geographic displacement, and ongoing disruptions of daily life. These long-term disruptions in the daily necessities of life massively overwhelms children's cognitive plasticity and defense systems (Jensen & Shaw, 1993; Suleman & Mohamed, 2019). "10% of people who experience traumatic experiences will develop serious mental health illnesses, and another 10% will develop behavior that will limit their ability to operate properly" in armed conflicts throughout the world (McDonald, 2007). This is why in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of conflict trauma is essential to illuminate coping strategies that could be introduced in conflict resolution and peace negotiation studies.

### **Defining Conflict Trauma**

Despite the fact that trauma is typically studied as an individual experience, it is also experienced from a group dynamic perspective. Whole communities are traumatized, and trauma dynamics influence us all and change the course of history (Audergon, 2006).

The nature of armed conflict has evolved significantly over time, and most strategic analysts think that modern wars are more about internal warfare than a problem between countries in the second part of the twentieth century. The structural reasons of ethnic strife, political violence, and conflicts that currently shape many parts of the world are complex. Economic and environmental degradation, asset depletion, and erosion of the subsistence basis in poor and heavily indebted countries lead to greater poverty and food insecurity for large segments of the population. Predatory activities, competitiveness, political violence, and internal warfare are frequently accompanied by growing ethnic and religious tensions over a decreasing resource base (Pedersen, 2002; Suleman et al., 2021).

Armed conflict frequently results in forced relocation, long-term refugee issues, and infrastructure loss. Institutions in the social, political, and economic realms can be permanently harmed. War, particularly civil war, has far-reaching repercussions for the growth of society. Violent wars and systemic human rights violations are classified as conflict trauma. Several studies conducted in Africa have established the high prevalence of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression as a result of traumatic events during these conflicts (Seedat et al., 2004). Thus, it is important to understand patterns evident in conflict trauma research considering the pervasive effects rising occurrence of inter-state wars, non-state conflicts and ethnic violence have on the general population. Therefore, to understand the psychopathology involved in trauma exposure the prevalence of these three variables will be sought after; trauma caused due to socio-political conflicts, gender-based conflicts and Intergenerational strife.

### **Socio-Political Trauma**

In governance procedures, trauma may be caused for certain minority groups as well as majority groups due to a lack of humanitarian intervention for a number of political and resource concerns. In order to become trauma-informed, a model of care must show that it understands and recognizes trauma as both interpersonal and sociopolitical, and it must promote safety, dependability, choices, cooperation, and empowerment at all levels of treatment delivery (Fallot, 2011; Suleman et al., 2021). For instance, the Balkan conflict and the mental health of survivors has been one of the most widely examined phenomenon (di Giovanni, 2004; Rose, 2001; Beloff, 1989) in the early years of the 21st century.

A preliminary study (Cole & Flanagan, 1999) among Bosnian refugees found a link between psychiatric problems (depression and post-traumatic stress disorder) and disability. Former Bosnian refugees who remained in the region after the first assessment and analysis continued to demonstrate psychological problems and incapacity, according to a three-year follow-up research (Mollica, Sarajlic & Chernoff, 2001; Suleman & Rahman, 2020; Suleman, Mohamed & Ahmed, 2020).

Poor social support was found to be a higher predictor of depressed morbidity than trauma variables in a study of 84 Iraqi male immigrants (Gorst Unsworth & Goldenberg, 1998). PTSD was found in 87 percent of children and 60 percent of caregivers in a study of 45 Kurdish families living in two camps (Ahmed, Sofi & Sundelin-Wahlsten, 2000). In a study conducted in Beirut, the link between a mother's anxiety and her child's mental health was investigated (Bryce, Walker & Ghorayeb, 1989). The severity of mothers' perceptions of the negative impact of war-related events tended to be significantly linked to greater degrees of depression and somatic symptoms among the participants.

### **Gender-Based Trauma**

In hostilities, humanitarian crises, and displacement, the likelihood of Gender based violence (GBV) and sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) increases. Combating GBV, including sexual violence, has been identified as a global challenge, with international agencies. "More than a third of women and girls worldwide will experience some form of violence in their lifetime," and that this experience has negative effects on survivors' overall health, education, and livelihood (United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [UNOCHA], Bennett. C. 2002). GBV is a specialized issue for investigation as well as for prosecution, and victim and witness protection (Ozcurumez, Akyuz, & Bradby, 2021).

Women are tactical targets of exceptional significance when it comes to destroying a culture because of their crucial roles within the family system (Seifert, 1993). Because of their uneven place in society and their sex, girls and women are disproportionately harmed by armed conflict, according to the UN Plugin for Action (Gardam, 1993). Displacement, loss of home and property, loss or involuntary disappearance of close relatives, poverty and family separation and disintegration, victimization through acts of murder, terrorism, torture, involuntary disappearance,

sexual slavery, rape, and sexual abuse are among the specific effects experienced by women of all ages (Annan, Blattman, Mazurana, & Carlson, 2009). Navigating landmines and facing shelling and bombing in search of food, water, and shelter puts their lives in jeopardy (Gardam, 1997). According to Human Rights Watch Africa, in some war-torn nations, such as Rwanda (where women now account for 70% of the population), there may be so few men that women are expected to take on the roles of both mother and father while also dealing with their own deep emotional scars (Rone, 1996).

Intermittent Explosive Disorder is common and crippling among women in conflict-torn Timor-Leste, affecting their health, raising children, and capacity to fully engage in economic productivity (Rees, Silove, Verdial, Tam, Savio, Fonseca, & Steel, 2013). This just goes to show that conflicts have a deep and profound impact on the depressive symptomatology based on gender. Furthermore, the link between the type of trauma, gender, and the risk of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is largely unknown in current literature and remains to be assessed.

### **Transgenerational Trauma**

Post-traumatic stress, anxiety, and depression symptoms are still prevalent in civilian adults and their children eleven years after the Kosovo conflict. Because the symptoms of parents and children are linked, mental health issues in family members should be actively assessed and accounted for in comprehensive treatment programs utilizing a systemic approach (Schick, Morina, Klaghofer, Schnyder & Müller, 2013). Transgenerational trauma occurs when a parent's experiences influence the development of their children and, in some cases, grandchildren. It can manifest physiologically, socially, intellectually, or emotionally, and is also known as intergenerational trauma (Frazier, West-Olatunji, St. Juste, & Goodman, 2009).

Transgenerational trauma is defined as a distinct type of both individual and communal trauma in which the trauma is passed down from one generation to the next (König & Reimann, 2018). Through this review, behavioral analytic interpretations of this phenomenon and other relevant themes will be explored. The phrase "intergenerational trauma" refers to the fact that trauma experienced directly by one generation (for example, Holocaust survivors or witnesses to various forms of violence) can have an impact on the mental health of their descendants (Weingarten, 2004). Verbal behaviors and narrations play an important role in transmitting transgenerational

trauma as evidenced in Northern Ireland (Fargas-Malet & Dillenburger, 2016). Theoretical parameters of transgenerational memory will be looked into for this analysis. As slavery, genocide, domestic violence, sexual abuse, and extreme poverty are all examples of origins of trauma that contribute to intergenerational trauma transmission especially evidenced in case of Lebanon (Larkin, 2012). It is for the interest of this essay to understand the push and pull which exists as a result of vicarious trauma that generations carry with them long after a conflict. Thus, reflections over the deep-rooted relationship between transgenerational trauma and conflict trauma is necessary for the purposes of this analysis.

Despite the rising frequency of armed conflicts and wars around the world, the local patterns of distress and the long-term health and psychosocial implications of various types of political violence against people, communities, or specific ethnic groups have received insufficient attention. Short- and long-term effect assessments on civilian populations in poor nations devastated by conflict are rare, and research focusing on collective suffering and trauma-related disorders among survivors are emerging in the scientific literature (Pedersen, 2002). This research is being conducted in order to assist this goal. The discovery of underlying trauma patterns and their consequences could help enhance mental health care in war-torn areas. Moreover, it will inform mental health theoretical practice on a micro-level.

### **Research Questions**

Several research questions were introduced into the preliminary phase in order to give some structure to the thematic composition of the analysis. Relevant search terms were identified; *Conflict Trauma, Ethno-political trauma, gender-based trauma, Intergenerational trauma.*

These research questions are based on a careful analysis and review and strives to comprehend themes better within popular literature around conflict trauma.

1. What is the relationship between war-trauma exposure & reduced mental health?
2. What themes are prevalent in different types of trauma exposure among the affected populations?
3. Based on these key themes, what are the trends in traumatic responses?

4. What patterns emerge as a result of this research?
5. Over the span of 22 years how trauma responses have changed around the idea - of building '*resilience*'?

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

For the purposes of this study thematic analysis is viewed as a core method for qualitative analysis since qualitative methodologies are immensely diverse, complicated, and subtle (Holloway & Todres, 2003). A method for detecting, analyzing, and reporting important patterns or themes within data is known as thematic analysis (Braun, Clarke & Hayfield, 2022). Apart from the fact that the iterative thematic approach is beneficial for qualitative analysis, it is a method that is independent of theory and epistemology, and may be used in a variety of theoretical and epistemological contexts (Aronson, 1995; Roulston, 2001). Furthermore, within psychology, analysis based on overarching themes is consistent with both individualist and constructivist theories (Braun & Victoria Clarke, 2006). Lastly, thematic approach has the capacity to offer '*flexibility*' to its theorists. It is a versatile and valuable research approach that can possibly produce a comprehensive, yet objective description of data giving a nuanced understanding for a hypothesis.

### **Data Analysis**

For the purposes of this review, ATLAS.ti software was used. This software has been used since 1989 in the field of creating content analysis. Therefore, a justified choice in conducting research for this paper. The feature of auto coding will be used to decipher the relevant quotations and associate a code for the appropriate label.

Furthermore, to identify themes and patterns around 'Conflict Trauma' found over the span of 22 years in conflict trauma research literature a deductive or 'top-down' approach will be implemented (Boyatzis, 1998; Hayes, 1997). Furthermore, meaning and experience, according to the constructionist approach, is socially constructed and reproduced rather than inherently present in people (Andrews, 2012). As a result, we will use the constructionist framework which does not



strive to focus on motive or individual psychologies, but rather seeks to explain the sociocultural settings and structural circumstances that permit the individual narratives presented.

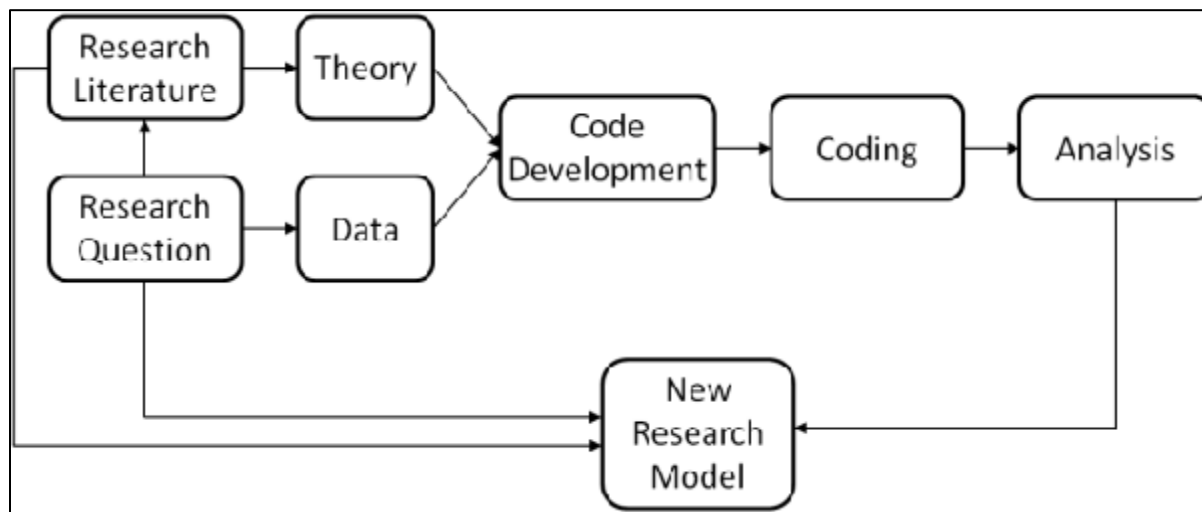
The study aims to map out a historical timeline with regards to ‘conflict trauma’. Another aim is to follow thematic analysis principles to manage, analyze and interpret data for ‘Prevalence’ of three main themes evident within conflict trauma research. I.e., Socio-political trauma, gender-based trauma and transgenerational trauma. Prevalence within my particular thematic analysis will be measured as how many times a particular coded theme surfaces in existing literature. Additionally, the number of distinct journals or articles who have articulated the topic over the full data set, or each unique occurrence of the theme across the complete data set, will be coded and recorded. Constant identification and comparison of conflict related trauma exposure and their relation to psychopathology will be reviewed through this narrative analysis.

### **Data Analysis Pathway**

The six steps within the framework for this analysis will be as predicted by Braun and Clarke;

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Examples of procedure for each step</b>
1. Familiarising oneself with the data	Transcribing data; reading and re-reading; noting down initial codes
2. Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the data-set, collating data relevant to each code
3. Searching for the themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme
4. Involved reviewing the themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data-set; generate a thematic ‘map’
5. Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme; generation of clear names for each theme
6. Producing the report	Final opportunity for analysis selecting appropriate extracts; discussion of the analysis; relate back to research question or literature; produce report

\*(Szedlak, C., Smith, M. J., Day, M. C., & Greenlees, I. A. (2015).



Coding Techniques

Type	
Open coding	Refers to the process of generating initial concepts from data. Concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions discovered.
Axial coding	Through axial coding, categories and their related subcategories and concepts were refined to form more precise explanations.
Selective coding	Selective coding is used to integrate and refine categories to form a larger theoretical scheme.
Source: Strauss and Corbin (1998)	

**Data Collection Mediums & Timeline**

The study uses a systematic mapping technique with the timeline starting from January 2000 to June 2022. Data has been collected from public domain, mainly from WHO’s Global Health Observatory as well as SCOPUS, Medline, PubMed, CINAHL, PsycINFO, and Google Scholar to collect, collate, and present conflict trauma findings.

66 articles were used to review the data. Familiarization of data was essential in creating key themes. An initial coding of the main concept framework (see Table 1 below) was carried out based on the research questions devised during the research design phase.

**Table 1:***Coding Types*

Open Coding for <i>Conflict Trauma</i> Themes	'Previous research suggests exposure to trauma and bereavement is common in conflict-affected regions'
Axial Coding for <i>Conflict Trauma</i> Themes	'Specific symptom profiles emerged following exposure to trauma and loss'
Selective Coding for <i>Conflict Trauma</i> Themes	'Profiles were associated with distinct types of traumatic experiences, the degree of closeness to the person lost, the amount of social support perceived, and gender.'  *Heeke, Stammel, Heinrich, & Knaevelsrud, 2017

**RESULTS**

As a result of preliminary coding of literature review subcategories and sub themes were highlighted (see Table 2.)

**Table 2:***Description of Emerging Themes*

Theme	Description
<b>Conflict Trauma</b>	Prolonged trauma caused by civil disputes, global conflicts or ethnic clashes

<i>Subcategories</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Significant Statement Examples</i>
Socio-political Trauma	Relationship of conflict trauma with socio-political factors	"The past decade has seen rapid growth in an interdisciplinary body of research examining the legacy of war on social and political behavior." (Bauer, Blattman, Chytilová, Heinrich, Miguel & Mitts, 2016)
Gender-based Trauma	Impact of conflicts on gender-based distribution among target group samples	"This framework is inclusive of the intersectionality of gender, race, and class and lends credence to how

		women's sociocultural position interacts with the other aforementioned systems of power and oppression to determine making meaning of their lived experiences.” (Quiros & Berger, 2014)
Transgenerational Trauma	Carrying residual and generational trauma	“In this article, we explore how intergenerational transmission of trauma can be understood through a behavior analytic understanding of verbal behavior and narrative.” (Fargas-Malet & Dillenburger, 2016)
Resilience	Showing perseverance in the face of adversity for prolonged periods of time	“Resilience has been frequently viewed as a unique quality of certain ‘invulnerable’ children.” (Betancourt, 2012)
Personal Growth	Exploring the impact of trauma on positive personal growth of individuals & communities	“Literature that provides evidence of individual differences, the magnitude of the trauma and the growth processes facilitating a changed sense of self, changed relationships, existential and spiritual growth.” Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2001

### Outcome 1

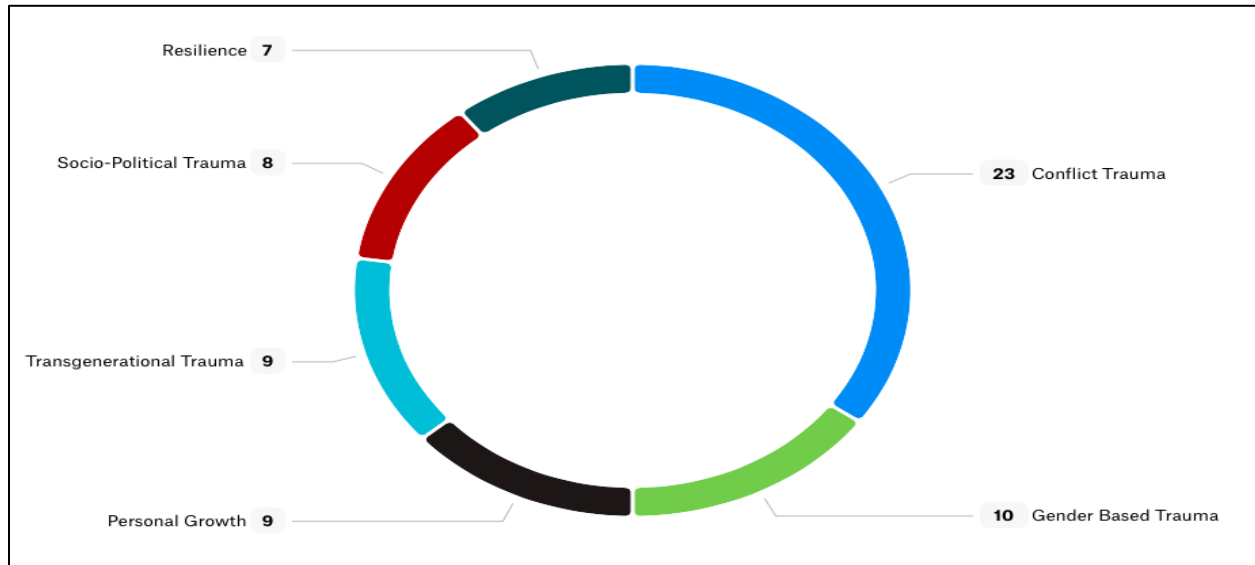
Out of the 66 articles, 23 were based on ‘Conflict Trauma’ themes. 8 studies highlighted socio-political trauma, 9 studies illuminated themes on transgenerational and residual trauma out and 10 studies quoted gender-based trauma to be a recurrent factor in conflict trauma research. It is interesting to note that the highest frequency in the sub themes was on gender-based trauma work. After which Transgenerational trauma studies ranked second and the highest number of sub category themes recorded were for socio-political trauma impacts.

### Outcome 2

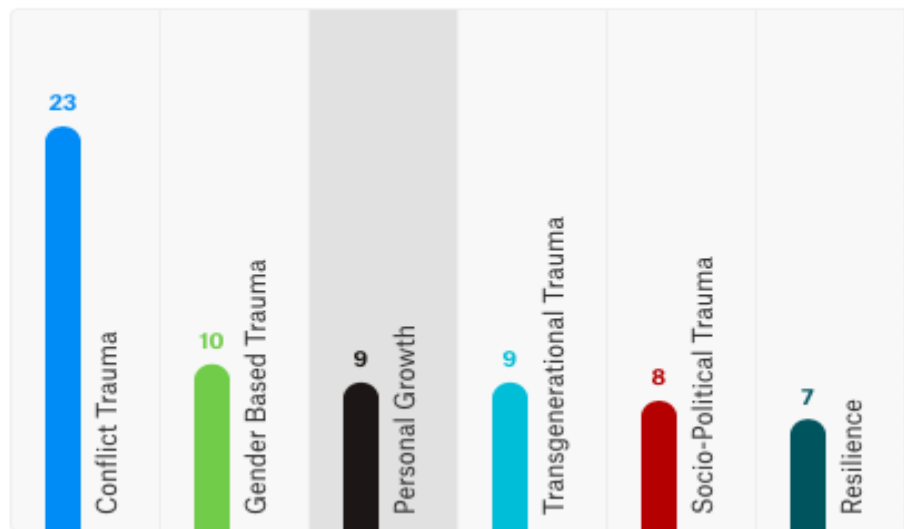
Another broad outcome that presented itself during thematic analysis were the overarching themes of Positive personal growth and resilience in terms of conflict trauma research. 7 studies recorded resilience as an important factor prevalent in conflict trauma studies. 9 studies highlighted the role

resilience and perseverance plays in creating positive post traumatic growth labeled as ‘Personal Growth’.

A pictorial representation of this data is presented in the form of a beta pie chart and bar chart below (see Figure 1.).



**Figure 1:** Beta Pie Chart.



**Figure 2:** Bar Chart.

## DISCUSSION

Some general risk factors and connections may be derived from the plethora of research evaluated. One of the most serious repercussions of war is the influence on the mental health of civilians. Mental problems are becoming more common and prevalent among the general population with the highest proportion of it impacting women and children. Women are more vulnerable to the psychological effects of combat than males. In a conflict environment, there is evidence of a strong link between mothers' and children's discomfort. The link between gender-based violence and prevalent mental illnesses is acknowledged. Despite their susceptibility, women's resilience under adversity has been recognized, as has their importance in supporting their families. There is consistent evidence that children have greater incidence of trauma-related psychosocial issues. The accounts from Palestine are the most amazing. Adolescents are the most susceptible of the various age groups.

A lot of studies have found a clear link between the severity of the trauma and the severity of the psychological issues. The symptoms become more prominent as the amount of trauma — both physical and psychological — increases.

Furthermore, in the last half-century, about half of the world's countries have suffered some type of foreign or internal armed conflict. In fact, after an analysis of the literature present conflict can be regarded as "development in reverse" (Collier et al., 2003), since it has long-term negative consequences for all development determinants – physical, human, and social capital.

However, wars and armed conflicts have had differential outcomes as well as identified by the themes highlighted. For instance; war aided the evolution of society from chiefdoms to states and reinforced existing states (Carneiro 1970; Flannery & Marcus 2003; Tilly 1985; Choi & Bowles 2007; Morris 2014; Diamond 1999). Meanwhile, economists and evolutionary biologists have claimed that conflict has accelerated the evolution of more sophisticated forms of social organization, possibly through modifying people's psyche (Bowles 2008; Turchin 2015).

The usefulness of both physical and psychological assistance in limiting the consequences of war-related traumas, as well as the role of religious beliefs and cultural customs as means of coping with conflict circumstances, is consistently demonstrated in studies.

Intergenerational trauma emphasizes that trauma is not limited to those who directly witness or experience violence. Instead, the behaviors and qualities it elicits might be passed on to victims' children, leading to long-term impacts.

A thematic analysis was carried out on studies that highlighted the ethnic cleansing of Native Americans and the genocides in Rwanda and Cambodia as well as the Holocaust survivors, American soldiers stationed in Iraq and the slavery of Africans as part of the Atlantic slave trade. Anxiety, tension, embarrassment, distrust, and dread were shown to be present in these people, among other things. They also acquired coping methods and 'survival mode' techniques from their parents and grandparents, such as overeating, hoarding material belongings, food stockpiling, an overemphasis on food, social animosity, a lack of trust and collaboration with others, and a general disrespect for others. The transfer of features and resiliency patterns beyond direct conflict victims lends validity to theories regarding intergenerational trauma and illustrates how war's echoes continue to devastate societies.

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Lastly, in terms of categorizing and understanding conflict trauma in the socio-political context, it can be theorized that while war has many bad consequences for individuals and society, it does appear to have a positive impact on local cooperation and civic involvement. The central empirical conclusion we detect is consistent with many war-torn economies' experiences of quick post-war political, social, and economic recovery, as well as their predisposition to enact egalitarian social policies, such as progressive taxation and gender equality reforms (Tripp 2015; Scheve 2010; Stasavage 2012). However, some data shows that if people become more parochial and less cooperative with out-group members, this behavioral response might solidify social divisions, contribute to conflict cycles, and help explain why at times countries return to the same old patterns of violent behaviors.

## CONCLUSION

When considering the volume and prolific creation of research in this field over the past 22 years, providing a complete literature review on combat trauma and its subcategories, as well as overarching themes of positive post-traumatic growth, is a challenging endeavor. To handle the large amount of data, this literature review focuses mostly on reviews and meta-analyses rather than seminal work to cover many of the most important topic interests.

It posits that conflicts establish a strong correlation with deteriorating mental health symptoms. It also highlights that within conflict trauma research, most of the research has centered around gender-centric trauma encounters, with socio-political trauma affecting civic and social aspects within communities and lastly, transgenerational trauma carrying the brunt of it. Sub themes which were categorically evidenced through all of these three areas of interest was of positive self-growth and positive post traumatic growth. It was seen that resiliency in the face of trauma proved to be an important factor in the growth and progress of communities' weather they were the Afro American community or Palestinian immigrants living abroad. This essential component of perseverance and endurance also proved to be an important factor for positive post traumatic growth for target group samples.

## LIMITATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Understanding the consequences of war in all of its complexities, including post-war patterns of individual social behavior, is crucial. That is why it is suggested that as part of thematic analysis, based on grounded theory principles; individual experiences and analysis could be done. This will help in a better understanding of not only the prevalence of the sub themes of socio-political trauma, gender-based trauma and transgenerational trauma but give a sound footing in providing an in depth understanding of these sub themes as well.

Furthermore, while thematic analysis is adaptable, it might result in inconsistencies and a lack of coherence when constructing themes based on research findings (Holloway & Todres, 2003). Thus, in order to limit the anomalies that may occur due to the subjective nature of qualitative data, more structure may have been provided in terms of coding sub category themes as there were a multitude of new concepts that were coming up.



Lastly, when theme analysis is compared to some of the other qualitative analytic methodologies, further drawbacks emerge. For example, unlike narrative or other biographical techniques, you won't be able to maintain a feeling of continuity and contradiction between different narratives, and these inconsistencies and consistencies may present a skewed image of the findings.

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