

## **Abstract:**

When we study social issues with psychological ramifications in the Palestinian society under occupation, we must examine these issues within the respective socio-cultural context. The prolonged experience of collective suffering under the repression of the Israeli occupation has resulted in a large number of context specific psychological and mental health problems for the Palestinian community. The mainstream utilization of the PTSD scale with Palestinian victims of military violence is problematic due to its lack of cultural relevance.

The vast majority of the cumulating researches about military violence related trauma in Palestine have used quantitative research methodology, leaving a great number of important variables unexamined due to the limitation of measurement inherent in such methodology. Furthermore, while trauma as a result of military violence is by definition a collective experience, the overwhelming majority of researches thus far have been measuring it on the individual level of abstraction.

In an attempt to address this gap in the existing literature, the current study used qualitative research methodology with the intent to examine the role and contribution of collective identity in the process of psychological adjustment following military violence related trauma among a purposefully selected sample of Palestinians from the West Bank who were injured during confrontations with the Israeli military during the second Intifada.

Grounded theory analysis was conducted on the transcripts of thirteen qualitative in depth interviews, and the results are summed up in four interrelated themes. *First*, collective-national identity was perceived as a motivating force to participate in the Intifada activities against the Israeli occupation and, at the same time, as a mechanism of coping and psychological resilience following the injury. *Second*, Palestinian families and the community at large played a vital role in providing support and comfort to victims of military violence. *Third*, belief systems, both religious and political, and political party membership were helpful in the process of recovery from military violence trauma. *Fourth*, individual resilience and perseverance were evident in the articulated experience of the research participants as adaptive factors following the injury.

In conclusion, the current study points towards the importance of the local context in the examination of the effects of military violence related trauma including the need to conduct further studies examining the role collective identity in such context.