

Posttraumatic Growth in Battered Women and the Reflection of Violence on Post-Divorce Growth: A Systematic Review

Şiddet Gören Kadınlarda Travma Sonrası Büyüme ve Şiddetin Boşanma Sonrası Büyümeye Yansıması: Sistematik İnceleme

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ABSTRACT

This systematic review aims to investigate existing literature regarding the phenomenon of post-traumatic growth among women who have experienced intimate partner violence. Five steps outlined by Arksey and O'Malley were followed to carry out this review. These steps are as follows: defining the research question, identifying relevant studies, selecting studies, and visualizing the results. When the 3,129 scientific studies obtained from the databases were evaluated according to appropriate criteria, they were reduced to 50 articles. Appropriate criteria have been defined as scientific articles scanned with the keywords divorce, post-traumatic growth, positive growth, and intimate partner violence. A total of 10 studies were included in this study due to a special focus on posttraumatic growth and intimate partner violence. According to the literature, it has been observed that intimate partner violence is associated with post-traumatic growth. In addition, the effects of intimate partner violence and post-traumatic growth on divorced women are explored in the discussion section. It has been observed that these effects are characterized by growth in the areas identified by Calhoun and Tedeschi after divorce. Although a specific tool is needed for these examinations in the literature, there are currently no standardized screening procedures in use. As a result, it is thought that this study will shed light on the literature on recognizing and evaluating post-traumatic growth symptoms and indicators caused by intimate partner violence.

Keywords: Divorce, post-traumatic growth, trauma, women studies, intimate partner violence

ÖZ

Bu sistematik incelemenin amacı, yakın partner şiddeti ile karşı karşıya kalan kadınların travma sonrası büyümelerine ilişkin literatürü incelemektir. Bu incelemeyi yürütmek amacıyla Arksey ve O'Malley tarafından özetlenen beş adım takip edilmiştir. Bu adımlar, araştırma sorusunun belirlenmesi, ilgili çalışmaların belirlenmesi, çalışmaların seçimi, verilerin görselleştirilmesi ve sonuçların raporlanması şeklindedir. Veri tabanlarından elde edilen 3.129 bilimsel çalışmanın uygun kriterlere göre değerlendirildiğinde 50 makaleye indirgenmiştir. Uygun kriterlerin ise boşanma, travma sonrası büyüme, pozitif büyüme ve yakın partner şiddeti anahtar kelimeleriyle taranan bilimsel makaleler olarak belirlenmiştir. Bu çalışmada, travma sonrası büyümeye ve yakın partner şiddetine özel olarak odaklanılması nedeniyle toplamda 10 araştırma dahil edilmiştir. Alan yazına göre, yakın partner şiddetinin neden olduğu travma sonrası büyüme ile ilişkili olduğu görülmüştür. Buna ek olarak, yakın partner şiddeti ve travma sonrası büyümenin boşanmış kadınlar üzerindeki etkileri tartışma kısmında incelenmiştir. Bu etkilerin ise boşanma sonrası Calhoun ve Tedeschi tarafından belirlenen alanlarda büyüme gerçekleşmesiyle karakterize olduğu görülmüştür. Alan yazında bu incelemeler için özel bir araca ihtiyaç duyulmasına rağmen, şu anda kullanımda olan standartlaştırılmış tarama prosedürleri bulunmamaktadır. Sonuç olarak bu çalışmanın, yakın partner şiddetinin neden olduğu travma sonrası büyüme belirtileri ve göstergelerini tanıma ve değerlendirme konusunda alan yazına ışık tutacağı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Boşanma, travma sonrası büyüme, travma, kadın çalışmaları, yakın partner şiddeti

Introduction

The phenomenon of violence against women is still not fully resolved. Many women still experience violence in their intimate relationships. It is considered a major social issue and is addressed as a form of negligence and cruelty. As is known, violence is a problem that does not depend on a single factor. Along with children and youth, some women are exposed to violence in their intimate relationships (Meloy and Miller 2010, Rasche

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2019). Violence against women, which is one of the most fundamental human rights violations, is an issue that needs to be examined in a socio-cultural and socio-psychological context (Tutarel-Kışlak 2016).

Many women who suffer from domestic violence around the world are increasing every day. Statistics on violence against women are now much more readily available, with information on the prevalence of intimate partner violence being available in at least 106 countries (UN Women 2022). According to the data, 286 out of the 355 women who experienced violence reported instances of psychological abuse. Some women who are victims of domestic violence can stand up against their abusive spouses in certain ways. However, some women have to continue their abusive relationships to maintain their basic needs (Itzhaky ve Porat 2005). It is a reality that applicants to the women's solidarity center experienced various forms of violence. Having been exposed to violence in the past and getting familiar with it makes some women reluctant to seek help.

According to the World Health Organization, "the totality of voluntary acts that result in injury, death, psychological harm, or negligence against the individual or others" is the definition of violence and trauma that is most frequently used (WHO 2013). The level of socioeconomic status in domestic disputes influences the age of marriage and domestic violence (TUİK 2018). Domestic violence occurs when negative actions within the family affect one or more members of the family. Besides, violence ranges from emotional abuse to death because of physical violence (UNICEF 2006).

The concepts of domestic violence, violence against women, and violence against spouses are frequently used together. The perpetrator of violence or the person to whom the violence is directed can be any individual or more than one person in the family. Women can be victims at different stages of their lives, and they can experience violence about their sex, race or ethnicity, age, class, and sexuality. The term "violence against women" is used to describe the global occurrence of men's violent actions targeting women. Typically, such occurrences predominantly manifest as situations wherein women and children assume the role of victims (Meloy and Miller 2010). Even though there are many reasons for the phenomenon of violence, gender inequality is considered an important factor that determines the power relationship between men and women (Bükecik and Özkan 2018). Gender-based violence against women reflects power dynamics, oppression, and destructive authority, which are consequences of a male-dominated societal structure (Altıparmak 2019). Men use violence as a tool to maintain the balance of power. Subjecting a woman to violence because she is a woman shows that violence is based on gender (Başar and Demirci 2016).

Even though disproportionately large percentage of women prefer to remain silent about their experiences of violence rather than actively cope with them, violence against women is still seen as a social issue that has to be addressed (Barnett 2000). The physical consequences of violence against women can be seen as concrete, and it is easier to intervene than with other types of violence. However, psychological health deterioration can be overlooked (WHO 2013). Being exposed to violence disrupts women's functioning in social life and self-perception (Kitapçıoğlu et al.2008), and interventions in this situation may be delayed for environmental and individual reasons. The content of psychological violence includes behaviors that have a negative impact on women's psychological health, such as insulting speeches, yelling, limiting social life, and being threatened by their children (Altıparmak 2015). Consequently, there is a growing prevalence of psychological problems, particularly among women who have endured domestic abuse and developed post-traumatic stress disorder. These issues include feelings of hopelessness, anxiety disorders, self-harming thoughts, psychosomatic symptoms, and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms (Clements et al.2004, APA 2013). Because of the experience of violation, women experience problems such as obsessive-compulsive disorder, sleep disorders, eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, somatization, anxiety, and guilt (Kıvrak et al. 2015). Even though it seems like only women are subject to domestic violence, they are not the only victims. Children are also affected by this situation, and even the child is exposed to violence. Although violence also affects the mental health of the mother, it is known that the same violence affects the child, and this will have great adverse effects on the child's development (Lewis et al. 2015). The effects of violence on women and children are not only physical but also psychological, emotional, and social. The realization of the possibility of positive changes in the great crises that are encountered in life has occurred since the early days of written history (Tedeschi and Calhoun 1995). However, this phenomenon has been systematically considered and evaluated in recent years. This reflects and increases awareness of the complex interplay between the positive potential inherent in coping with challenging life crises and the associated difficulties.

A painful or distressing event may catalyze for change for certain people. A crisis will provide an opportunity for development and growth, and that opportunity gives the person the chance to re-evaluate his relationships and priorities (Aldwin 1994). People, as part of their natural inclination to understand the world and their existence, seek to make sense of extraordinary events using their cognitive frameworks. Having certain assumptions about

the facts makes life easier for people and helps people make judgments about events. However, the occurrence of some unexpected events in a person's life can shake their belief in the world and events, making it difficult to explain the events with existing assumptions (Tedeschi and Calhoun 2004). Because of the negative experiences, the person has to cope with this new reality presented to her, continue her life, and eliminate the negative experiences she had. Considering it is a power given by the will to live, it is unlikely that people's coping mechanisms will not emerge (Bossick 2008). The earthquake metaphor is used to explain post-traumatic change and the individual's coping with this reality (Tedeschi 1998). The "Earthquake" metaphor, which is frequently mentioned in post-traumatic growth studies, is based on the removal of the ruins of a collapsed building to rebuild another destroyed building and the rebuilding of the building after the remains are removed. However, the thought that all the efforts made during the removal of the ruins and the construction of the building will be wasted by a new earthquake raises concerns, and as a result, negative emotions such as confusion and mourning may arise. Changing the perspective against all negativities will also help in coping with trauma and loss experienced will provide an opportunity for the individual to strengthen. As a result, PTG is not seen as a return to the old life, but as a transition to a new life because of positive progress.

The changes observed in self-perception are discussed within the framework of changes observed in relationships and life philosophy (Tedeschi and Calhoun 1995). In this context, it is seen that individuals who encounter a traumatic event experience improvement in interpersonal relationships; their self-perception improves positively; they become more resilient individuals, and thus their perspective on life has changed (Tedeschi et al.1998). Individuals experience this in five different areas (Tedeschi and Calhoun 2004). These sub-dimensions are known as changes in the perception of self, positive developments in interpersonal relationships, realizing the value of life, recognition of new options, and development in the belief system.

The dimension of "changes in the perception of the self" is divided into three main headings: seeing oneself as a survivor instead of a victim; self-reliance; and vulnerability. It was emphasized that the individual not expressing herself as a "victim" and instead qualifying them as "surviving" would help them feel stronger. Within the framework of these changes, an increase can be seen in a person's self-efficacy and sense of personal power. As the person copes with difficulties and develops feelings, they become less vulnerable (Tedeschi and Calhoun 1995). Self-confidence, on the other hand, indicates the prevalence of the thoughts of people who survive trauma, that there is nothing they cannot cope with. On the other hand, the vulnerability enables the person to realize that they are vulnerable, to try harder to hold on to life and to become aware of the need for social support. When considered in the context of personal empowerment, self-perception is important. The concepts of "power and healing" and "change in power," which are related to personal empowerment experienced after trauma, represent a change in self-perception well (Thompson 2000). Also, various concepts such as "making new adjustments in life" (Senter and Caldwell 2002), "focusing on oneself," "looking with hope for the future," and "self-reinvention" (Taylor 2004) have been introduced, and emphasized there are themes. Growth not only strengthens the cognitive aspects of the person but also behavioral factors play an important role in the change in perception of the world. The positive changes experienced with the perception of self, increase self-confidence over time, and the individual can initiate new roles that have not been tried before. Because of the PTG dimensions being interconnected, changes in the self-perception of the individual, the perception of life, and the environment also change. In this way, a person can understand the value of the life he/she lives, determine his/her priorities, think about the issues he/she has not thought about, and realize that the small and daily events in his/her life are important.

As empathic behavior increases in the development of interpersonal relationships, there is an increase in helping behavior and sharing feelings. In short, after traumatic and traumatic experiences, it is predicted that the person will go into an existential search, experience change, and shape. Realizing the value of life, one of the dimensions of post-traumatic growth is of great importance. A person may begin to give meaning to a subject that has never been valued or less valued before, and there is an increase in the search for the meaning of life and asking existential questions (Tedeschi et al.1998). The shaking of the person's basic values plays a role in the occurrence of this increase.

The realization of new options also helps the individual to determine what is important and not in life and to decide on the attainability of their goals (Berger and Weiss 2009). Individuals can realize that there are new options for them in life, change their priorities about what is important in life, and express that they are giving a new direction to their lives. This sub-dimension includes reviewing the goals and choosing between achievable and unattainable goals (Tedeschi and Calhoun 1995). The development in the belief system is evaluated spiritually, increasing the belief and devotion to religion; Engaging in religious change can be seen in these

individuals. The development of the belief system is explained as the individual's review of beliefs, their shaping, and the deepening of the existential experience after the threat (Tedeschi and Calhoun 1995).

Post-traumatic growth dimensions are conceptualized to explain post-traumatic growth and suggest that the pre-traumatic characteristics of the person are related to post-traumatic growth. These characteristics are frequently conceived as individual traits like optimism, hope, extroversion, openness to new experiences, creativity, self-efficacy, and self-esteem (Calhoun and Tedeschi 1998, 2006). It has been stated that income, education, and gender are associated with post-traumatic growth (Stanton et al. 2006). Pre-traumatic characteristics of individuals affect both the difficulties they face and their probability of participating in the rumination process for post-traumatic growth (Calhoun and Tedeschi 1998). Accordingly, the relationship between post-traumatic growth and divorce in women who have experienced intimate partner violence is a complex and multidimensional subject. Individuals who have endured traumatic experiences, such as intimate partner violence, may undergo a transformative process leading to post-traumatic growth. The growth after traumatic experiences can lead to positive psychological changes. Moreover, in the context of intimate partner violence and divorce, Sawyer et al. (2012) have underscored the relevance of examining post-traumatic growth as a crucial aspect of the recovery process for women navigating these challenging circumstances. Trauma, divorce, and growth persist as a fertile research area, particularly in terms of their implications for psychological well-being and personal strength.

The purpose of this systematic review was to comprehensively investigate several key aspects related to post-traumatic growth among victims of intimate partner violence. The goals encompassed a multi-faceted exploration, starting with identifying the specific characteristics of post-traumatic growth experienced by intimate partner violence victims. Additionally, the review aimed to discern the various variables that either facilitate or impede post-traumatic growth among women who have experienced intimate partner violence, thereby contributing to a nuanced understanding of the phenomenon. Furthermore, it sought to pinpoint gaps in current knowledge regarding post-traumatic growth in women affected by intimate partner violence, shedding light on areas requiring further research and exploration. Finally, the review examined the intersection of intimate partner violence, post-traumatic growth, and divorce among women, aiming to elucidate how experiences of intimate partner violence and subsequent post-traumatic growth might influence marital outcomes. Through these objectives, the systematic review aimed to offer valuable insights into the experiences, challenges, and potential growth trajectories of intimate partner violence survivors, thereby informing support, intervention, and policy efforts aimed at addressing this critical issue.

Method

Research Design

To assess the need for a comprehensive systematic review, it is advisable to initially employ the scoping review approach when the current literature's scope is perceived as limited (Levac et al. 2010). This systematic framework for the sample strategy ensures replicability and comprehensiveness in the search process, effectively identifying gaps in existing knowledge and potential avenues for further research (Arksey and O'Malley 2005). It is worth noting that this study focused specifically on post-traumatic growth associated with intimate partner violence in women, while acknowledging that intimate partner violence can manifest in various forms and affect other relevant populations (Haag et al. 2016). The study meticulously adhered to the five fundamental stages outlined by Levac et al. (2010) in the scoping review process, which encompassed identifying the research question, locating relevant studies, selecting studies, extracting and organizing data, and ultimately collating, synthesizing, and presenting the findings. The primary research question that guided our initial data exploration was centered on the extent to which existing literature acknowledges the association between post-traumatic growth and intimate partner violence (intimate partner violence). Using the most recent research, a protocol that guided the review was developed. Five electronic academic databases were used to retrieve the publications in January 2023: Web of Science, Science Direct, Scopus, EBSCO host, and MEDLINE with full-text articles. In February 2023, a second search was carried out, but no new articles matched the requirements to be included. Intimate partner violence (intimate partner violence), "women," and "growth phrases" were merged in the search. Post-traumatic growth, positive growth, stress-related growth, and positive change were also included. Removed duplicate entries from the results.

Data Collection Tools

This review adhered to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA)

criteria (Moher et al. 2009). Fig. 1 displays a flow diagram of the PRISMA-based literature search. Each retrieved article was screened against specified standards (Figure 1). Peer-reviewed studies addressing women's experiences with divorce, post-traumatic growth, positive development, and intimate partner violence were included. Exclusion criteria encompassed the filtering out of these, reviews, editorials, conference abstracts, and books to focus on related articles.

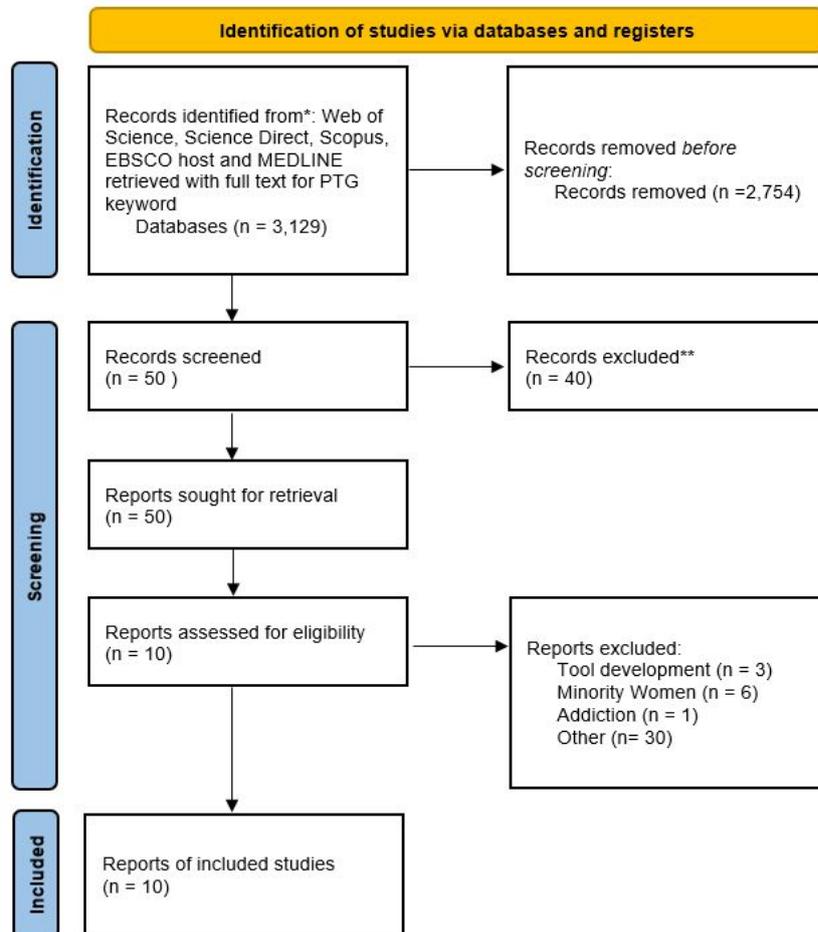


Figure 1. PRISMA flow chart

Data Analysis

The assessment of the included articles' quality was conducted using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool, as established by Pluye et al. (2011). Additionally, a predefined checklist facilitated the process of data extraction, aiding in the identification of recurring themes relevant to the overarching review topic. The initial task of categorizing publications related to various facets of post-traumatic growth was performed by the first author, and subsequently, these groupings were subjected to a comprehensive review. The original search yielded up to 50 articles, and the final sample also includes 11 articles. Three researchers separately collected data and compared conclusions using a charting technique to define relevant elements.

Results

Eleven studies published between 2015 and 2023 matched the inclusion criteria; an overview of study features is shown in Table 1 (author, purpose, key findings). Various methods were used to collect information on post-traumatic growth. Semi-structured interviews (Flasch et al. 2020, Bryngeirsdottir and Halldorsdottir 2022) and unstructured interviews have been used in depth in qualitative studies. To assess psychological strengths, psychological well-being, and post-traumatic growth, the research employed quantitative methodologies, utilizing the International Trauma Questionnaire, as outlined by Dokkedahl et al. (2022). Furthermore, the

study encompassed domains related to regulation, meaning-making, and interpersonal aspects, drawing on the Resilience Portfolio Measurement Packet developed by Hamby et al. (2015), along with the contributions of Gonzalez-Mendez and Hamby (2021). The Short Form of the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory, designed by Cann et al. (2010) and originally introduced by Tedeschi and Calhoun in 1996, was utilized to assess post-traumatic growth among trauma survivors in the research conducted by Bakaityte et al. (2022a).

The study has identified that all five dimensions of post-traumatic growth can be discerned as integral components within traumatic relationship experiences (Calhoun et al. 2010). These sub-dimensions encompass alterations in self-perception, positive enhancements in interpersonal relationships, a heightened appreciation for life, the recognition of novel possibilities, and the evolution of one's belief system.

Self-perception

Changes in relationships and life philosophy mirror changes in self-perception. (Tedeschi and Calhoun 1995). Participants in Flasch et al.'s (2020) study, which included as its subtheme "focus on self before getting involved," underlined the need to developing one's own identity before entering a new relationship. According to Hing et al. (2021), some women who experienced traumatic events had achieved a turning point in their rehabilitation, signifying a clear change in the direction of their life course. These women showed signs of posttraumatic growth, including a stronger sense of self, newfound roles that matter, and rearranged priorities. However, Bryngeirsdottir and Halldorsdottir (2022) discovered that for women, working on self-forgiveness, quitting self-blame, and returning the shame was a crucial step.

According to Barlow and Hetzel-Riggin's (2018) research, nearby cultural elements, such as gender norms, may benefit PTG. When confronted with interpersonal trauma, it's possible that a rigid adherence to gender roles buffers or lessens the threat to one's beliefs about oneself and one's identity (Janoff-Bulman 1992). To put it another way, a person who has experienced interpersonal violence could find it easier to reconstruct their sense of overall identity if they have a strong gender role identity. Because they have fewer options for self-definition, those who lack a strong sense of gender role identity may feel a larger danger to their identity as a result of interpersonal violence. Gonzalez-Mendez and Hamby (2021) conclude that, in addition to lowering dysfunctional interpretations and emotional reactions, this method may foster good self-image and broader ways of thinking.

Author (Year)	Method	Purpose	Key Findings
Valdez and Lilly (2015)	Traumatic Life Events Questionnaire World Assumptions Scale Posttraumatic Growth Inventory	The purpose is to find whether assumption change predicts post-traumatic growth in intimate partner violence survivors and was investigated using a longitudinal assessment of world assumptions.	Positive world assumptions change for women without second victimization, linked to higher post-traumatic growth results after initial interviews.
Barlow and Hetzel-Riggin (2018)	Posttraumatic Growth Inventory Gender Role Adherence	The goal of the current study was to investigate how gender role conformity and post-traumatic growth in male and female survivors of interpersonal violence relate to one another.	Instead of gender, gender role adherence may be a significant predictor of post-traumatic growth after interpersonal violence.
Flasch et al. (2020)	Open-ended questions	Examining intimate partner violence survivors' words of support, guidance, and optimism for people who had just left abusive relationships was the aim of the current study.	The results revealed distinct themes that might be investigated further and included in therapy strategies for those who have just left violent relationships.
Hing et al. (2021)	Unstructured Interview	This study looked at women's experiences with intimate partner violence at various points during their lives.	Interventions can benefit women's long-term wellness and aid in their recovery through post-traumatic growth.
D'Amore et al. (2021)	Detailed Structured Surveys	Intimate partner violence (intimate partner violence) has been linked to severe physical, emotional, and psychological implications in	According to research, women's recovery from the impacts of intimate partner violence entails a multifaceted,

Author (Year)	Method	Purpose	Key Findings
		women, according to research on the subject.	customized, nonlinear, and frequently transforming process that takes place both within the women themselves and within their relationships.
Žukauskienė et al.(2021)	Bosch Support Measure Posttraumatic Growth Inventory Dimensions of Identity Development Scale	This study's goal was to investigate how social support affects post-traumatic development.	The study's findings demonstrate the significance of social support in pursuing successful personal outcomes following exposure to severe intimate partner violence situations.
Gonzalez-Mendez and Hamby (2021)	Resilience Portfolio Measurement Packet Regulatory Strengths Scale Mean-making Strengths Scale Interpersonal Strengths Scale	This study investigated traits among women who had suffered intimate partner violence (intimate partner violence) that were linked to well-being and post-traumatic growth using the Resilience Portfolio Model as a guide.	According to the findings, post-traumatic growth was favorably connected with happiness and all of one's strengths.
Bryngveirsdottir and Halldorsdottir (2022)	Structured Interview Questions	This phenomenological study's objective was to examine post-traumatic growth from the viewpoint of women who had survived intimate partner violence and to learn more about how they perceived post-traumatic growth.	The participants' experiences had produced post-traumatic growth that they loved, despite the fact that experiencing intimate partner violence is a horrific event that no one should have to go through.
Bakaitytė et al. (2022a)	The Short Form of Posttraumatic Growth Inventory The Dimensions of Identity Development Scale The Centrality of Events Scale	The purpose of this study was to investigate the post-traumatic growth of women in Lithuania who had experienced intimate partner abuse in connection to the significance of the traumatic experience, identity discovery, and time since exposure to violence.	The results of this study showed the significance of the first two years following acts of violence, when post-traumatic growth is potentially increased.
Bakaitytė et al. (2022b)	Short form of Posttraumatic Growth Inventory Centrality of Events Scale Resilience Scale Impact of Events Scale Composite Abuse Scale	To look into possible subgroups of women intimate partner violence survivors based on their posttraumatic growth, centrality of event, resilience, and patterns of post-traumatic stress symptoms (PTSS), and look into the role of sociodemographic and violence-related factors in identifying these subgroups.	The study's findings add to the body of knowledge by identifying various intimate partner violence reactions and looking into several theoretical presumptions that haven't been thoroughly examined in the intimate partner violence literature.

With a few exceptions, the women in D'amore et al. (2021) study experienced changes in their sense of self and identity, empowerment sentiments, or health and lifestyle. A separate study discovered a substantial association between post-traumatic growth and identification processes such as making promises, identifying with commitments, and investigating in breadth. According to Bryngveirsdottir and Halldorsdottir (2022), overcoming intimate partner violence requires establishing connections with oneself, other people, and the outside environment. These connections play a pivotal role in creating a comprehensive framework for addressing and ultimately overcoming intimate partner violence. The research conducted by Bryngveirsdottir et al. (2022) highlights the multifaceted nature of intimate partner violence intervention and prevention, emphasizing the importance of focusing on various dimensions of connection.

Changed Relationship

Participants in the study by Bryngveirsdottir and Halldorsdottir (2022) were aware that they did not influence what other people did, said, or thought. The women asserted that they intentionally set boundaries with other people as well as with themselves because they were conscious of their desires and unhappiness. According to

D'Amore et al. (2021), a few of the women described in their accounts how they had rebuilt their lives, their relationships, and themselves.

The conclusions reached by D'Amore et al. (2021) after having experienced intimate partner violence, the process of rebuilding relationships, lives, and selves is a difficult and profoundly transformative one that will take place. This perspective is repeated in the women's experiences in Bryngeirdottir and Halldorsdottir's study (2022), which underscores survivors' incredible resiliency and agency in the face of hardship. Many people spoke about changes in their sense of self, their ability to assert themselves and set boundaries, their comfort with being alone, their sense of personal power, their physical and mental health, lifestyle choices, and relationships with family members and new romantic partners.

Gonzalez-Mendez and Hamby's (2021) research suggested that the connection between subjective well-being and post-traumatic growth might vary in strength based on the specific outcome being measured. This is understandable considering that a stronger ability to cope was associated with improved well-being for women who had left violent relationships, which was the focus of their study. In a related context, Bryngeirdottir and Halldorsdottir (2022) studied individuals who had experienced intimate partner violence (intimate partner violence) and subsequently embraced post-traumatic growth. These individuals demonstrated a clear understanding of their desires in current and future intimate relationships, suggesting a lower likelihood of falling victim to intimate partner violence again.

As per the findings by Hing et al. (2021), the narratives provided by women highlighted enduring impacts on their relationships, financial situation, and mental well-being long after leaving an abusive relationship. Statements designed to aid survivors in developing a fresh perspective and expectations concerning love and relationships were included in the "other" category in the classification by Flasch et al. (2020). Lastly, according to the research by Bakaityte et al. (2022b), diverse responses to intimate partner violence (intimate partner violence) exist among women, and the experience of post-traumatic growth can manifest in various patterns. The results underscored the importance of seeking psychological support, a factor that distinguished women with elevated trauma symptoms from those undergoing positive transformations.

New Possibilities

Hing et al. (2021) unveiled that a significant number of women shared accounts of substantial personal growth and the therapeutic value of leveraging their life experiences to assist others. This revelation introduces an intriguing facet to the ongoing discourse surrounding the outcomes of intimate partner violence. The acknowledgment that many women articulated genuine personal advancement underscores the potential for post-traumatic growth and transformation arising from extreme adversity. The rekindling of purpose, increased social engagement, and the public narrative of personal suffering and transformation all exert a substantial influence on post-traumatic recovery in the most challenging circumstances.

Conversely, Gonzalez-Mendez and Hamby (2021) substantiated that the activities reported by participants can be harnessed to address stressful situations, foster positive social interactions, and engage in purposeful introspection, all of which are pivotal for their overall well-being. In essence, these activities may present opportunities for enhancing regulatory, interpersonal, and meaning-making competencies. This perspective provides valuable insights into how individuals can effectively manage and navigate the challenges posed by stressful events, particularly within the context of intimate partner violence. The activities identified by participants not only function as coping mechanisms but also assume a central role in advancing their holistic well-being.

Zukauskienė et al. (2022) findings indicate that post-traumatic growth can serve as a valuable tool for reconstructing a fresh life following experiences of intimate partner violence. This concept is closely linked to the proactive pursuit of novel paths and objectives in life, the act of making deliberate decisions about these paths and goals, and the development of self-assurance in the chosen life pursuits. Additionally, the research by Bakaityte et al. (2022) revealed that women who actively contemplated their current and future aspirations, along with alternative life directions, were better equipped to engage in the process of post-traumatic growth, resulting in more rapid acquisition of post-traumatic growth.

Appreciation of Life

According to Bryngeirdottir and Halldorsdottir (2022) research, participants described their experience with intimate partner violence as difficult. Many of them, however, expressed that they would not want to be without that aspect of their lives because it had resulted in so many wonderful things for them. Gonzalez-Mendez and

Hamby (2021) Indeed, the findings concerning "facets of life" suggest that having opportunities for pleasant experiences is a key road to growth, as they are highly associated with post-traumatic growth. Indeed, the study emphasizes an important and remarkable feature of the relationship between positive experiences and personal growth in the aftermath of difficult and traumatic situations such as intimate partner abuse. The notion of "facets of life" suggests that providing opportunities for good experiences is critical to post-traumatic growth and well-being.

In D'Amore et al.'s (2021) study, the participants' enhanced relationships also manifested the theme of renewal. They articulated a newfound inclination and capacity to engage in social activities with friends, participate in community and religious organizations, and exercise greater discernment in selecting individuals to include in their social circles.

Existential Elements

By the outcomes presented by Hing et al. (2021), promoting interventions that involve encouraging survivors of intimate partner violence to assist others, raising public awareness regarding intimate partner violence, and advocating for transformative change are all efficacious approaches to facilitate post-traumatic growth in women and ensure sustained healing over the long term. Participants in the study conducted by Bryngeirsdottir and Halldorsdottir (2022) emphasized their heightened self-awareness and self-appreciation, indicating an acceptance of themselves in their current state as distinct from their prior perceptions.

According to Gonzalez-Mendez and Hamby (2021), thriving is thought to be related to various aspects of life where women find satisfaction. The significance of life circumstances can be explained by the possibility that they direct efforts related to particular skills. As a result, participants' proposed activities can be used to handle challenging circumstances, build strong social relationships, and consider their purpose- all of which are beneficial to their well-being. In other words, they might present chances to develop regulating, social, and meaning-making abilities.

As indicated by Barlow and Hetzel-Riggin (2018), gender per se did not emerge as a significant predictor of post-traumatic growth. However, gender played a crucial role in enhancing the predictive capacity of both conventional feminine and healthy masculine gender role norms about post-traumatic growth. In essence, post-traumatic growth appears to be associated with the interaction between an individual's gender and their adherence to gender role standards, rather than being solely dependent on one's gender identity. It is noteworthy to underscore that any form of conformity to gender role expectations—be it masculine, feminine, or a combination of both—exhibited associations with post-traumatic growth. On the contrary, individuals who did not strongly identify with a particular gender role reported a lack of post-traumatic growth. Lastly, according to Valdez and Lilly (2015), the recognition of life's inherent lack of meaning serves as a driving force that nourishes the development of post-traumatic growth.

The review could be influenced by publication bias, in which research with important findings about the effects of violence on post-traumatic growth in women who have experienced abuse or about the influence of violence on post-divorce growth is more likely to be published than research with negative or null results. This could distort the review's overall conclusions. Studies specifically addressing post-traumatic growth in women who have experienced violence and the impact of violence on post-divorce growth may be few. This lack of availability can limit the review's analysis and conclusions' scope and depth.

Discussion

The changes in the fields of self-perception, changed relationships, new possibilities, appreciation of life, and existential elements mentioned by Calhoun and Tedeschi are as follows, and our literature review supports that changes are taking place in these areas. Since there are not many specific studies on divorced women, these findings should be discussed in terms of divorced women.

Divorce is a process that pushes people to make major life choices. Although the majority of the stressors encountered by individuals going through a divorce process are not qualitatively different from other stressors, what distinguishes this process is that changes occur in many aspects of a person's life at the same time (Hetherington and Kelly 2002). When divorce literature is examined, although the idea that divorce harms people's lives is dominant, the possible positive effects of divorce are not discussed much. Booth and Amato (1991) found that the stress of divorced people generally increases before the divorce and that this level returns to previous levels only after about two years (Booth and Amato 1991). Divorce may be described as a "speed

bump on the road" and this speed bump is something that can jolt as it passes over it, but does not leave a good or bad effect in the end. That is, it can be overcome (Hetherington and Kelly 2002). Many individuals reported that they returned to their pre-divorce situations, namely self-esteem, stress, and psychological processes, after divorce. Divorce is a common life experience, yet its reception and narrative framing hold paramount importance for shaping an individual's identity, well-being, and personal growth (Jayawickreme et al. 2021). Discovering significance within moments of both triumph and sorrow has been linked to improved emotional regulation two years down the line. Moreover, when discussing health challenges, emphasizing themes of agency and redemption has been shown to predict more positive trajectories of mental health over a span of four years. However, the existence of psychological growth that could occur has often been overlooked.

Among the factors that can affect the adaptation process to divorce are cultural, social, legal, economic, and psychological processes (Can and Aksu 2016). The factors that contribute to coping in general and the coping factors used in the divorce process are similar. The ability to restore psychological balance after a crisis is realized by the combination of many variables. Having attitudes and skills such as seeing change as a positive opportunity and assuming control over it is important. These variables provide support networks, manage stress, solve problems, and evaluate potential dangers (Brammer 1991). Regarding coping, it is emphasized that sociodemographic characteristics such as age, education, gender, financial resources, and socioeconomic status are determining factors (Pledge 1992). Also, self-esteem, self-efficacy, extroversion, and social skills are known to be effective personality traits in the adaptation process to divorce (Birnbaum et al. 1997). Financial concerns, loneliness, and lack of education are the most stressful factors for women (Myers 1989). In particular, women who get married at a very young age may experience social difficulties after divorce due to being married during the identity development process (Guttman 1993).

In the divorce-stress-adaptation perspective, which is a similar model put forward by Amato, stress factors specific to divorce are defined as mediator factors (Amato 2000). This perspective views marital dissolution as a process. Stressful factors are considered as conflicts between spouses, decreased emotional support, deficiencies in parent-child relationships, and economic difficulties. Besides, factors that strengthen the individual from the negative effects of divorce are personal resources such as education and social support, as well as coping skills.

The likelihood of traumatic events that occur in people's lives turning into post-traumatic growth may vary depending on personal characteristics and the trauma. When an individual experiences post-traumatic growth, he or she experiences changes in their own lives. After the divorce, changes can be positive or negative, depending on the type of traumatic event that occurred. They may get along better with other people, give themselves a chance at new opportunities, feel stronger, feel more grateful for life, and experience a change in their beliefs. The growth experienced after trauma occurs when the person replaces old beliefs with new beliefs and perspectives. Therefore, the coping mechanisms of the person, the way they perceive the traumatic event, and the social support they receive are important. If divorce is a traumatic event; it is seen as a loss and a trauma due to the radical change in the person's life. This loss may be felt in different ways, such as permanent separation, feelings of loneliness and emptiness, or even depression. Like other traumatic events, it can push the person to change and grow. Thus, post-divorce adaptation is important. Some factors affect adaptation after divorce. According to Cabilar and Yılmaz (2022), divorce is a psychologically difficult life experience that causes confusion in people's lives and necessitates reorganization of the individual in numerous areas. A divorced person must receive accurate information and good psychological support during this process. These cultural, social, legal, economic, and psychological processes are important. In addition to these, the reason for the divorce is an important factor affecting harmony after divorce. When the reason for divorce stems from violent behavior, that is, divorce due to domestic violence, it can significantly affect post-divorce adaptation. Especially when women terminate their relationships due to violence, they may encounter some negative consequences. In a male-dominated society, women may feel powerless and experience difficulties, especially in economic terms, if they don't have any economic independence or social support. This makes it difficult for them to adapt to life after divorce, and the traumatic consequences of divorce and violence only worsen. The domains of post-traumatic growth as Calhoun et al. (2010) mentioned; self-perception, changed relationships, new possibilities, appreciation of life, and existential elements discussed in terms of divorced women literature. It is resulted that, five domains of post-traumatic growth apply to women's lives. As seen, the literature supports Calhoun and Tedeschi's post-traumatic growth domains, however, there is no research about divorced women specifically. Because of that, we can generalize these findings to divorced women in terms of post-traumatic growth.

Conclusion

Finally, the study of divorced women's experiences in the aftermath of violent relationships sheds light on the

complicated interplay of trauma, divorce, and post-traumatic growth. Despite the paucity of particular studies on divorced women, Calhoun and Tedeschi (2010) review the existing literature on post-traumatic growth, which provides a conceptual framework that connects with these women's narratives. Women who abandon relationships due to violence encounter a variety of problems that extend beyond the emotional and physical aspects of the traumatic experience, particularly in male-dominated communities. Economic reliance and a lack of social support exacerbate the problems these women confront as they negotiate the complex process of adjusting to life after divorce. The examined research emphasizes the possibility of negative outcomes in the lack of economic independence and a supporting social network, which can impede post-divorce adjustment.

Despite the difficulties, the study is consistent with Calhoun and Tedeschi's five domains of post-traumatic growth, which include self-perception, transformed relationships, new possibilities, life enjoyment, and existential components. Divorced women's narratives show the possibility for transformative growth in these domains, implying that the process of overcoming trauma and divorce might result in beneficial psychological improvements. While it is accepted that the extant literature does not primarily focus on divorced women, the application of Calhoun and Tedeschi's post-traumatic growth domains to this specific group looks justified. The scarcity of research focusing on divorced women highlights the need for more empirical studies to provide a more nuanced knowledge of their particular experiences and the elements that contribute to or hinder post-traumatic growth. In essence, recognizing the relevance of post-traumatic growth domains to the lives of divorced women provides useful insights for professionals, legislators, and support networks. Economic independence, social support systems, and tailored interventions aimed at supporting post-traumatic growth can all play an important part in assisting divorced women on their path to healing and resilience in the aftermath of violence and divorce.

Even though the experience of divorce is difficult, the state of crisis and trauma has the potential to develop and empower people. If a person does receive adequate crisis intervention and uses positive coping behaviors during this process, it will be possible to break the vicious cycle and to bring out all of their potential. So, it should always be remembered that a crisis can be an "opportunity". More empirical research focusing specifically on the experiences of divorced women after violent partnerships should be encouraged. This may include quantitative analyses, qualitative interviews, and longitudinal studies to provide comprehensive information about the challenges and opportunities in post-traumatic growth. Creating and implementing interventions appropriate to the needs of abused and divorced women are also among the options. In addition to addressing the psychological and physical effects of trauma, these therapies should also emphasize strengthening social support networks and promoting economic independence. Counselors, therapists, social workers, and legal advocates who work with divorced women must receive training so that they can better understand the specific challenges faced by this group and give them the tools they need to support these women and intervene on their behalf.

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